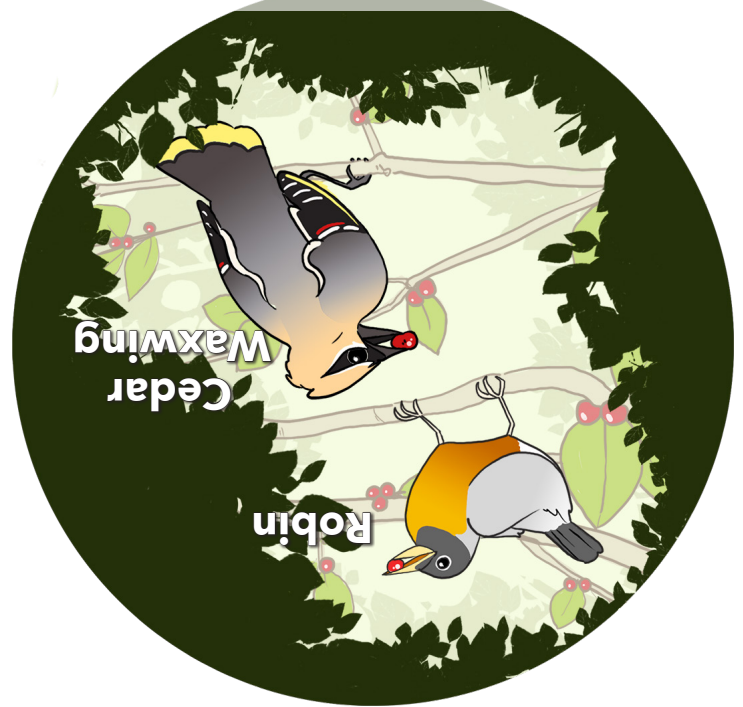


These birds live in open woodlands and back yards throughout North America. Especially in the winter, when insects are hard to find, they eat mostly berries. They get fruit from bushes and trees like mountain ash, dogwood, juniper, hawthorn, and others. It's common to find them flocking together, eating from the same trees.

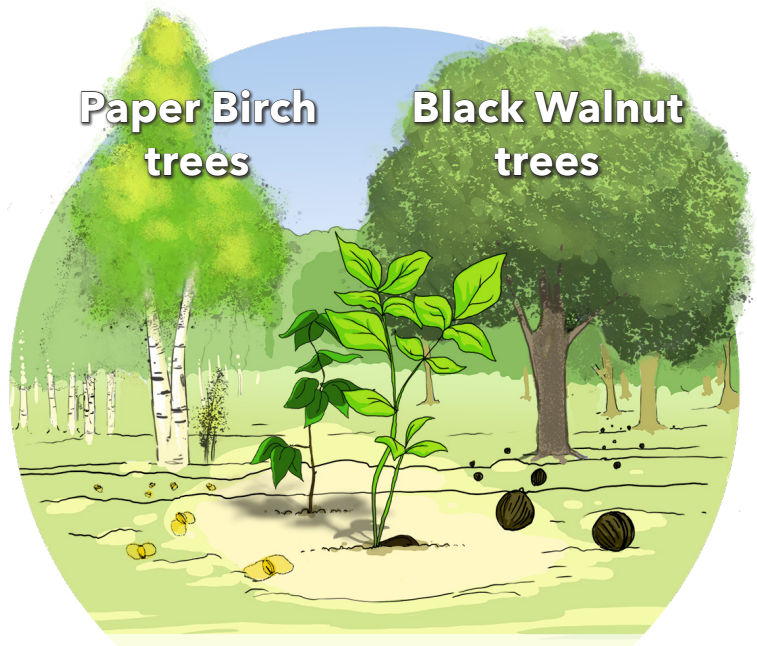


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These trees live together in wooded areas in the northeastern United States. Both trees grow easily on land that has recently been cleared or burned. If they can get enough water, nutrients, and sunlight, they will grow quite large.

Black walnut trees make a chemical in their leaves and roots that is toxic to some kinds of plants, including birch trees. This toxin helps to clear space around the black walnut tree, so it can get more water, nutrients, and sunlight.

The dry, rocky landscape of the southwestern United States is home to both sidewinder snakes and great horned owls. They both eat small mammals that live there, including rock pocket mice and kangaroo rats.



**Sidewinder** Rattlesnakes live in the deserts of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. They eat a variety of small reptiles and rodents.

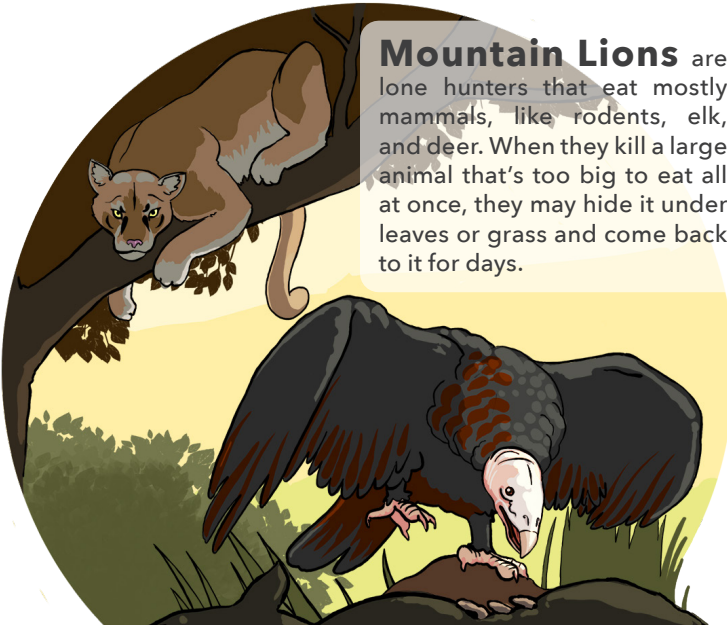
**Great Horned Owls** live in most habitats across North America. They eat a varied diet – mostly small mammals and birds, and sometimes a scorpion or snake.

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**Mountain Lions** are lone hunters that eat mostly mammals, like rodents, elk, and deer. When they kill a large animal that's too big to eat all at once, they may hide it under leaves or grass and come back to it for days.

**Turkey Vultures** are opportunistic eaters known for their keen sense of smell. They prefer meat, but they hardly ever kill to eat. Instead, they eat roadkill, animals that die naturally, or prey animals killed by a predator.

Turkey vultures can't tear through the skin of large animals that are freshly killed. But once a predator tears into it, vultures can get to the flesh and organs. Sometimes large groups come to eat.

**Tobacco Hornworms** are huge caterpillars that grow up to 7 cm long. They can eat many types of plants, but they prefer tobacco and related plants. The nicotine in tobacco doesn't harm them. In fact, when the caterpillars eat nicotine, it protects them from being eaten by other insects! The tobacco hornworm is a larva. In its adult form, it's called a hawk moth (also sphinx moth). The adults eat nectar.



**Tobacco plants** make the toxic chemical nicotine in their leaves. It's what makes cigarettes addictive. But its real purpose to protect the plant from being eaten.

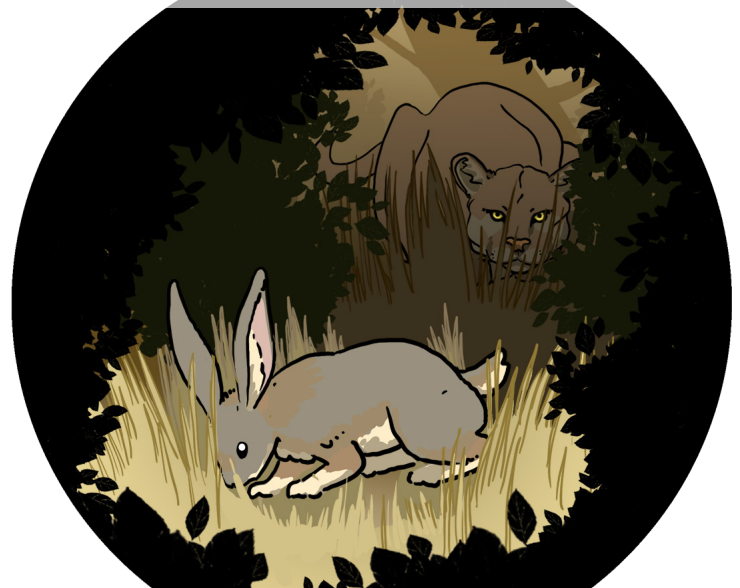
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**Mountain Lions** are lone hunters. In the western United States, they mostly hunt and eat large animals, like elk and deer. But they also eat smaller animals, like rabbits, mice, and even insects.



**Desert Cottontails** live in the western United States and Mexico. They stay safe in underground burrows, and come out to forage for plants to eat. Their large ears help them hear other animals that may be hunting for their next meal.

**Blue Mussels** are animals that live near ocean coasts around the world. As adults, they attach themselves to rocks and other objects. They eat tiny plants and animals that they filter out of the water. A hard shell protects their soft bodies.



**Common Starfish** crawl around on rocks and gravel at the bottom of the northeastern Atlantic Ocean. A starfish uses its tube feet to pry open the shells of mussels, clams, and other animals, inserts its stomach, then eats the soft insides. They also eat small, soft-bodied animals and scavenge from larger corpses.

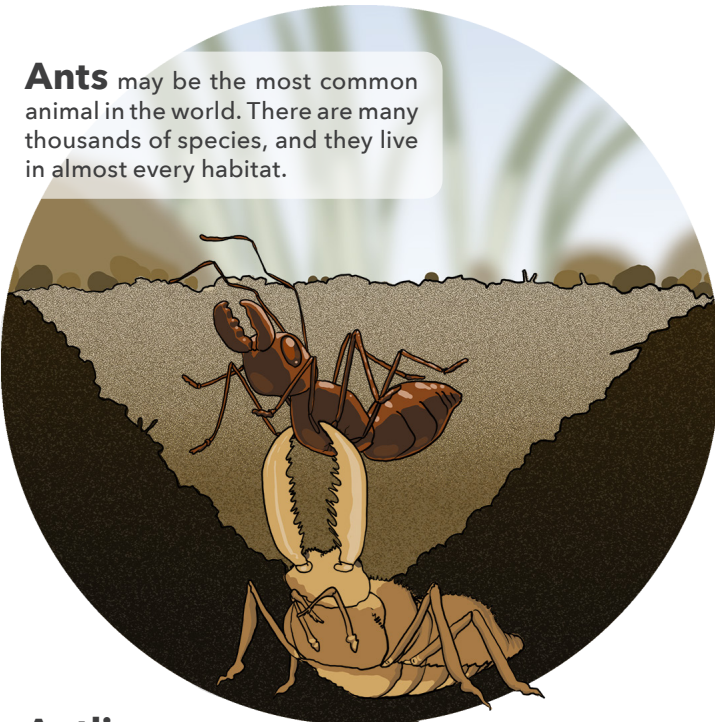
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**Ants** may be the most common animal in the world. There are many thousands of species, and they live in almost every habitat.



**Antlions** are the larval form of a large flying insect that looks a lot like a dragonfly. An antlion digs a funnel-shaped pit in sandy soil. Then it hides at the bottom, under a thin layer of soil, with its jaws open wide. If an ant or other small insect falls into the hole, the antlion grabs onto it, injects it with venom and digestive juices, and sucks out its insides.



**Live oak** is just one of more than 60 types of trees that mistletoe can grow on. Trees that have mistletoe growing on them are more vulnerable to pests and infections, and they may grow more slowly than usual. Some trees lose their own branches and leaves, turning into just a trunk and roots that support a full crown of shrubby mistletoe plants.



**Mistletoe plants** use photosynthesis to make their own food. But they can't live on their own. To get water and nutrients, they use a modified root system to burrow into a tree and take what they need.

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**Gall Flies** lay eggs on goldenrod stems in the spring, as the plants start to grow. Soon a fly larva hatches and burrows into the stem. As it eats, it causes the plant to grow a large, round gall. The larva uses the gall for food and protection, even spending the winter inside. It emerges as an adult the next spring.



**Tall Goldenrod plants** grow in open areas across North America. Plants with gall flies inside make fewer seeds than usual, but they can still grow and reproduce.

**Common Cuckoos** live in many habitats across Europe and Asia. This bird can't raise its own chicks. Instead, it tricks other types of birds into doing it. The female sneaks into another bird's nest to lay her eggs. Soon after it hatches, the young cuckoo pushes the other eggs out of the nest so it won't have to share its food. The parents feed and care for the chick as if it were their own.



**Reed Warblers** nest in wetlands in Europe and western Asia. They make basket-like nests among the reeds and lay 3–5 eggs.

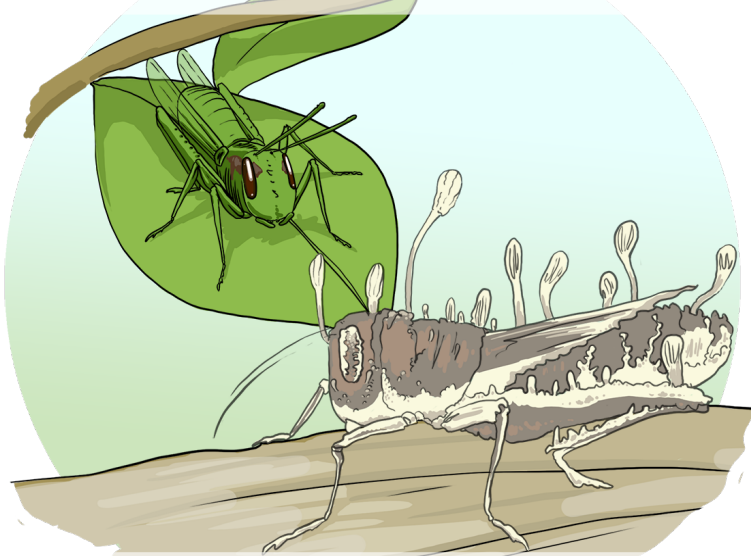
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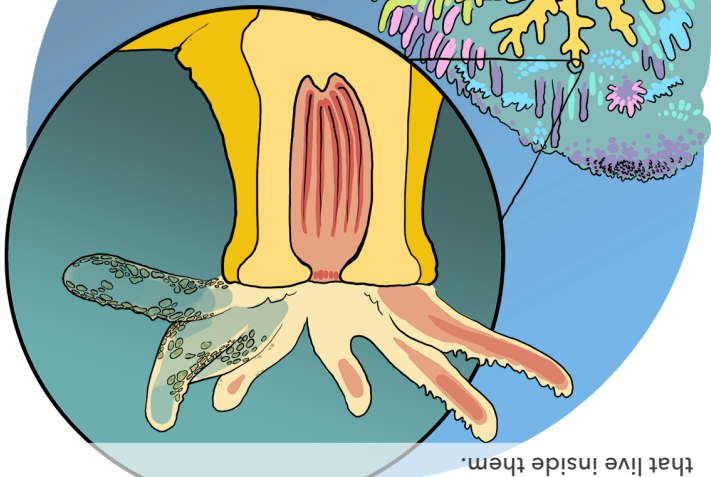
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**Grasshoppers** living in South American tropical rainforests have lots of food to eat. But they also run into lots of danger—including a deadly species of cordyceps fungus.



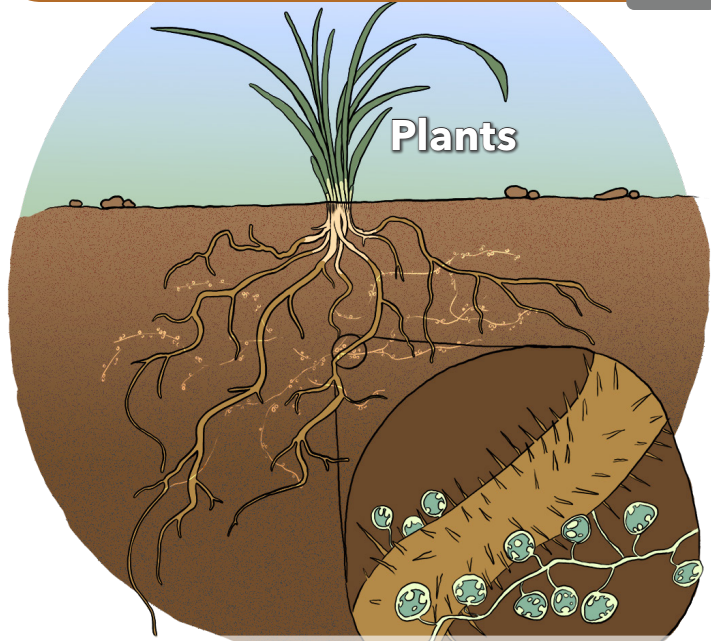
**Cordyceps fungi** are a group of hundreds of species, each specialized to grow in only one type of insect. When a spore lands on the right type of insect, it grows into a network of nutrient-absorbing fibers that enter its body. When the fungus matures, it grows mushroom-like reproductive structures that punch through the exoskeleton and release millions of spores, killing the insect in the process.

**Algae** live inside the coral polyps' cells. Here they get protection from being eaten, access to sunlight for photosynthesis, and useful waste products from the coral.



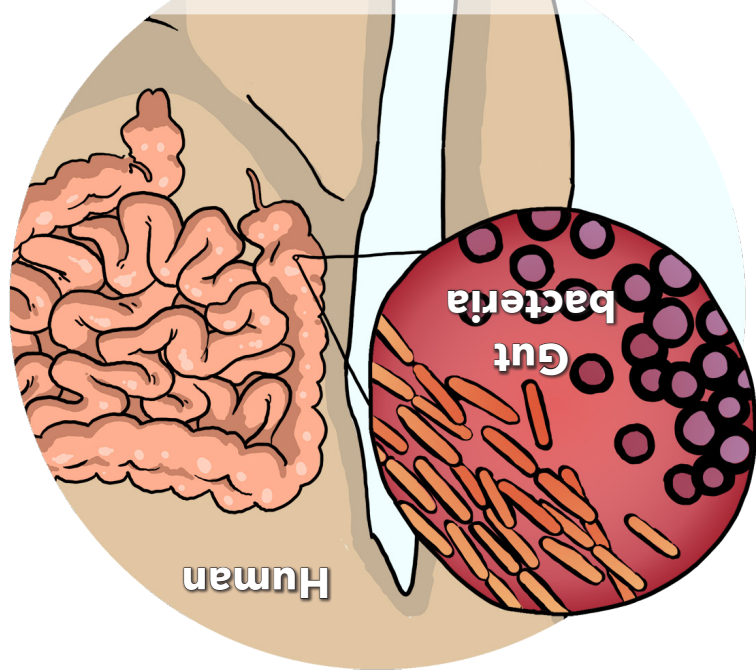
Coral reefs support large, diverse communities of living things whose lives are closely tied together. One of the closest—and most important—relationships is between tiny coral polyps and a type of single-celled algae. **Coral polyps** are the individual animals that make up a coral head. They can filter out tiny living things from the water to eat, but more than half their food comes from algae that live inside them.

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**Glomeromycota fungi** form large underground networks of interconnected fibers. The fungal fibers gather water and nutrients from the soil. They also tap into plant roots. The fungi squeeze tightly against the plant root cells, gathering food from the plant. In return, the fungi give water and nutrients to the plant, making it healthier than it would be without the fungus. A single network of fibers can connect with many different types of plants at once, forming an extended system for communication and nutrient exchange.

For blood to clot properly, you need vitamin K. You get some vitamin K from food, but it also comes from a few types of bacteria that live in your gut. These helpful bacteria are all around us, and babies end up swallowing some soon after they're born. Inside the human gut, the bacteria are warm and protected, and they get all the food they need.



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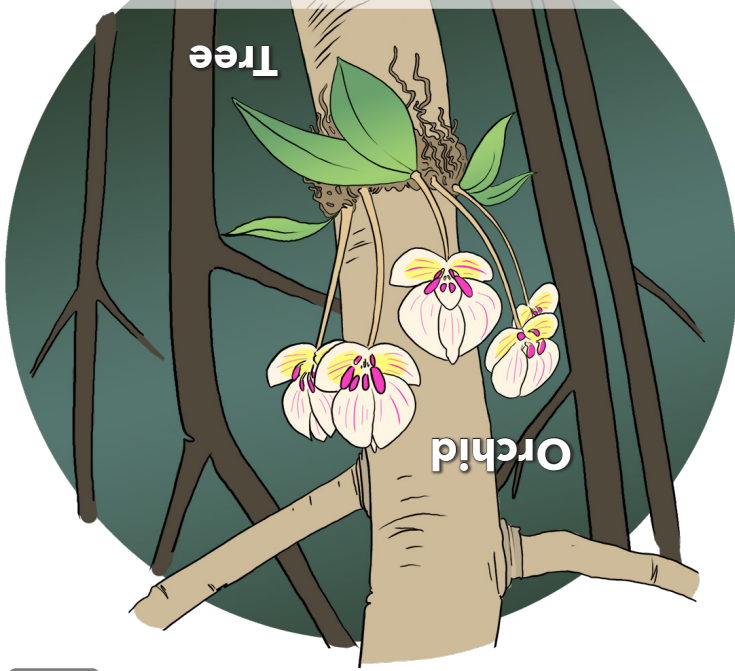
**Greater Honeyguides** live in open woodland areas in Africa. They have the unusual ability to digest beeswax, which they eat along with bee larvae, waxworms, and other insects. They sometimes attack bee hives, usually when they are abandoned or less active. But they are best known for using a special song and dance to get people's attention—and their help.



**Humans** who notice a honeyguide performing its song and dance know that it will lead them to wild bees' nests. After the people gather the honey, the honeyguide gets to eat the larvae and waxy bits that are left behind. Honeyguides have a close relationship with people who make a living harvesting and selling honey.



Most species of orchid plants live in warm, rainy forests. Here, they don't grow their roots into the soil. Instead, they perch on tree branches. Orchids use photosynthesis to make food, and they use their roots to take in rainwater and nutrients from the environment. If there are too many of them, orchids can cause a tree branch to break. But some trees have bark that peels away from time to time, which helps them drop their heavy orchid load.



Tree

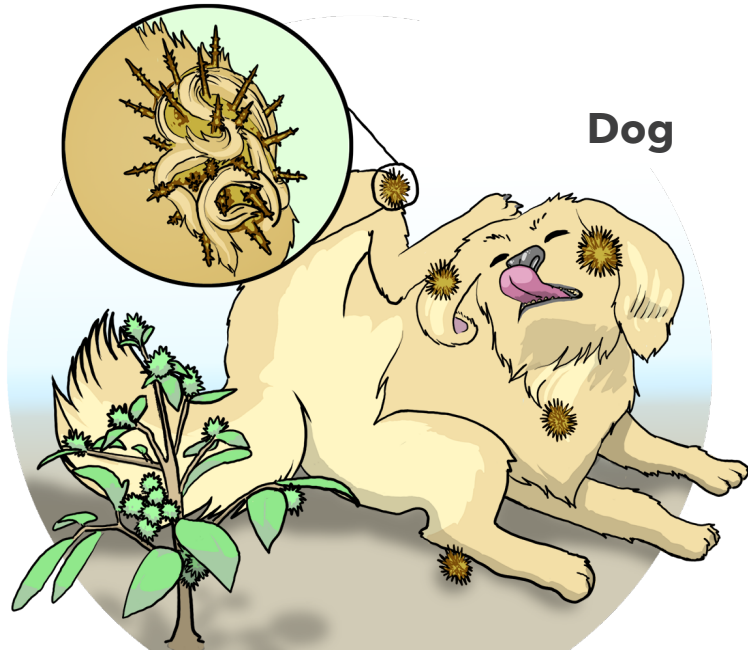
Orchid

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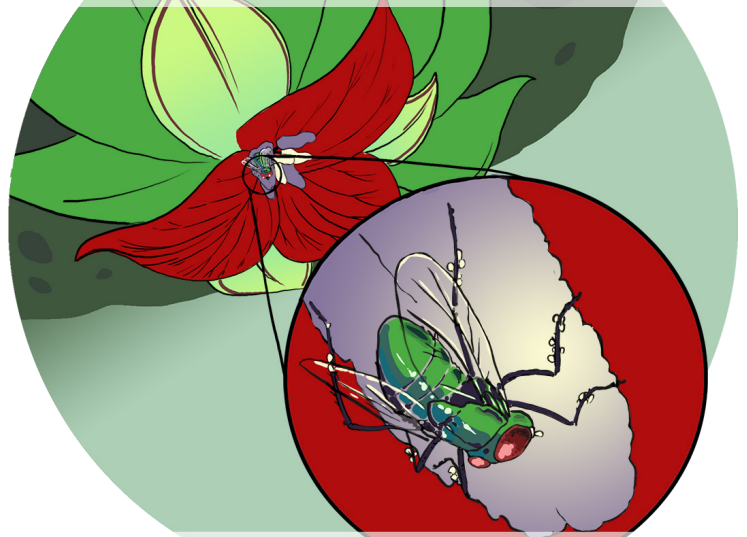
L



Dog

**Common Cockleburs** are weedy plants that live in many areas across the United States. Its seeds sit inside a hook-covered burr, which helps the plant spread its seeds far from the parent plant. The hooks act like Velcro®, sticking to your dog's fur, your socks, or basically any furry or fiber-covered animal that brushes against it. The seeds inside get a free ride to a fresh piece of ground, where they can grow into a new plant.

**Carion Flies** normally eat from and lay their eggs on dead animals. The aroma of rotting flesh also draws them to red trillium flowers. As the fly digs around looking for food, it picks up tiny grains of pollen and moves them to the flower's female reproductive parts.



**Red Trillium plants** live in the dark woods of eastern North America. Their flowers have no nectar or sweet scent, so they're not attractive to bees. Instead, they draw beetles and carion flies to pollinate them. Trillium flowers release an aroma of rotting flesh, and their petals (really modified leaves) are the color of meat.

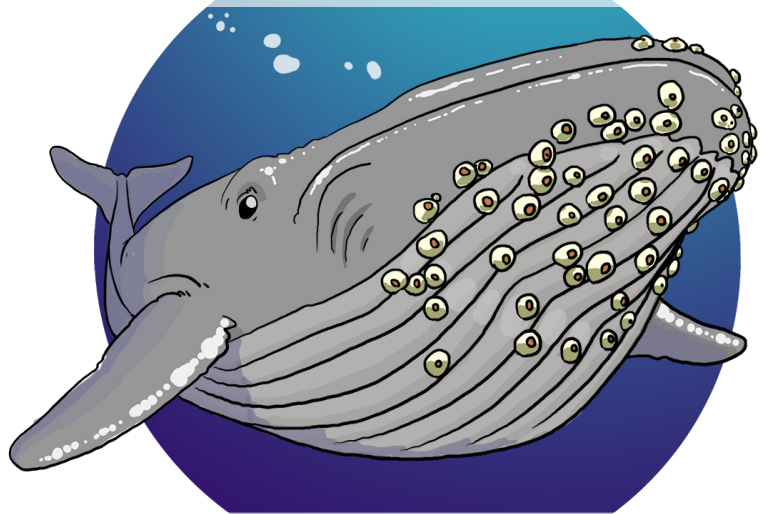
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**Barnacles** are shell-covered animals that attach to just about anything near the ocean's edge. They survive by filtering tiny bits of food out of the water, and they don't crawl around. So they do best in places where water can move across them—like attached to a rock or pier where waves move back and forth.



**Whales** offer an way for some barnacles to travel through the water. As the whale goes about its business, it carries the barnacles attached to its body into nutrient-rich water. Barnacles, it turns out, eat the same food as krill, the whale's favorite food. And most of the time, the whales don't seem to notice their stowaway cargo.