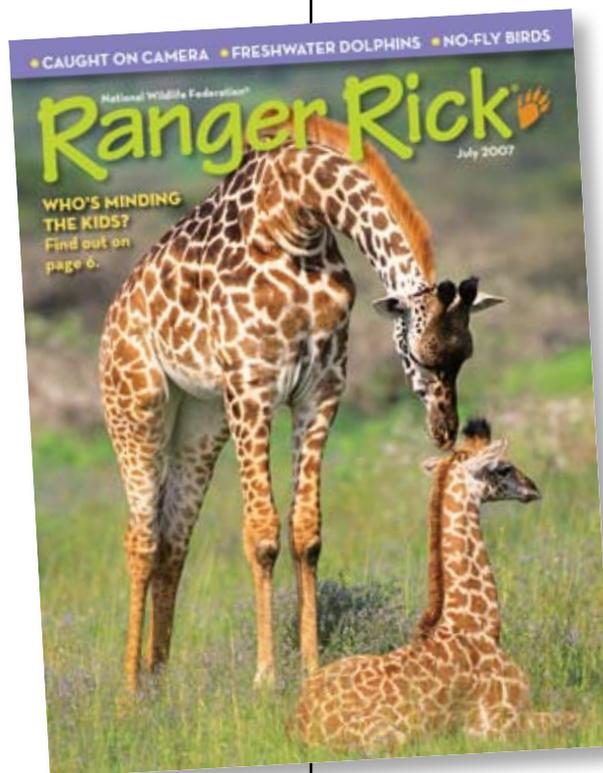


JULY 2007

Ranger Rick®



# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



This guide is designed to complement the July 2007 issue of National Wildlife Federation's *Ranger Rick*® magazine.





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## Introduction

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### Welcome to the *Ranger Rick Educator's Guide!*

This guide provides you with educational activities to bring **National Wildlife Federation's** *Ranger Rick*® magazine alive in the classroom and beyond. Using *Ranger Rick* feature articles as an entry point, this guide engages students ages 7-12 in exploring the natural world to build literacy, critical and creative thinking skills, and understanding across the disciplines. Activities are correlated with the National Education Standards for science and language arts, and are designed to assist you in meeting required curriculum objectives.

### Can we have class outside today?

Find out how you can say "Yes!" at [www.nwf.org/backyard](http://www.nwf.org/backyard). The outdoor environment offers excellent opportunities for active, hands-on, interdisciplinary learning. You can enhance the learning experience by creating your own habitat site. Revitalize an entire schoolyard, a garden, or even a rooftop, windowsill, or balcony by creating an outdoor classroom and sanctuary for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.

### How To Use This Guide

Each section of the guide is matched with a specific *Ranger Rick* feature. After you read through the magazine, choose the stories and activities that complement your curriculum and that will interest your students. Sections include:

- **Learning Links.** A summary of concepts presented in the article.
- **Discussion Questions and Writing Prompts.** Entry points to engage students in discussion or writing to develop literacy and thinking skills.
- **Resources.** Web sites and books where you can find further information.
- **Activity Ideas.** Quick investigations and extended projects to complement article topics.
- **Student Pages.** Ready-to-copy activity sheets for students.

We have also provided a **Family Fun** activities page for you to copy and send home with students.

**Subscribe to *Ranger Rick!***  
**Special rate classroom subscriptions available.**  
Details at [www.nwf.org/rangerrick](http://www.nwf.org/rangerrick)

# Who's Minding the Kids?

pages 6-13

1



## Learning Links:

**Animals have many different strategies for taking care of young. In some species, moms play the main role. In others, dads do. Sometimes they share the responsibility, and sometimes other family members or members of a group pitch in.**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & WRITING PROMPTS

### Pre-Reading Questions:

- Who takes care of the kids in your family?
- Do you ever have babysitters? How do they help you? How do they help your parents?

### Comprehension Check:

- This story is organized around three main categories of “who’s minding the kids.” What are they?
- Compare and contrast the parenting styles of the alligator, parent bug, and chimp moms on pages 8 and 9.
- How is a male seahorse a superstar dad?
- For animals that live in groups, why is it helpful to share the care?
- Which animal in this story takes care of its young for the longest amount of time?

### Critical and Creative Thinking Connections:

- What are some qualities that all good caregivers should have?
- Using examples from this story and other animals you know, name an animal that is:
  - Not raised by its parents at all
  - Raised mostly by mom
  - Raised mostly by dad
  - Raised by mom and dad equally
  - Raised by many members of a group
- Parents—animals and people both—work very hard to protect their young. Why do you think that is?
- In what ways are humans similar to other animals in how they take care of their young? In what ways are they different?
- Which animal family in this story is most like yours?

## RESOURCES

**Animal Baby Sitters** by Gail Jarrow and Paul Sherman (Franklin Watts, 2002). Here’s a closer look at animals that “share the care” by living in groups and taking care of each others’ offspring.

**Animal Dads** by Sneed B. Collard III (Houghton Mifflin, 1997). Learn more about some of the super-dads in the animal kingdom.

➤ <http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?issueID=54&articleID=612> Meet more animal dads online in this story from National Wildlife magazine.

**ACTIVITY IDEAS****Babysitters in a Box**

Hand out copies of the [Who's Minding the Kids? student page](#) and have students fill in the chart. They will demonstrate their understanding of the examples in the story and also make connections with their own lives. For each animal listed on the chart, they should write a brief description of which parent or group member takes care of the young and how. Then they should, if possible, provide an example of how people do something similar. For instance, like the terns, many humans leave their children at day care while they hunt for (that is, earn money to buy) the things the family needs to survive.

**TIME:****30 Minutes****MATERIALS:**[Who's Minding the Kids? student page](#)**Offspring Observations**

Can students find examples of "bringing up baby" in their own neighborhood? Send them out to a park or other public place with a notebook to record their observations. They can record interactions between humans and their young and, if the chance arises, any parenting behavior they observe in pets or wild animals. For example, notes might include: "Kid falls down and cries. Mom picks him up and comforts him." "Bird flies to nest with worm in beak." As a group, have students share the examples from their notes and sort them into categories according to criteria they devise (such as feeding, protecting, teaching, etc.).

**TIME:****60 Minutes****MATERIALS:****Notebooks and pencils****Mommy Swap**

Reality shows in which people with different child-care styles swap places are all the rage. Just imagine if animals swapped places! What might happen if a rhea dad stepped in to take care of a litter of wolf pups? Or if a chimp mom baby-sat a baby alligator? Just for fun, have students invent some of these impossible scenarios and write skits about what might ensue.

**TIME:****60 Minutes****MATERIALS:****Assortment of props for skits****Who's the Boss?**

Have students brainstorm a list of all the different people who help take care of human kids (moms, dads, grandparents, siblings, babysitters, teachers, principals, coaches, nurses, doctors, counselors, etc.). How do these roles differ? Divide students into groups to interview as many of these caregivers as possible, or simply discuss and list the responsibilities of each one. Then use the information you've collected to initiate a discussion about why there are so many different caregivers who share the role of minding human kids. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy? How is it similar to and different from what happens in the animal world?

**TIME:****60 Minutes****MATERIALS:****Paper and pencils**



# Who's Minding the Kids?

For each of the animals in the chart below, fill in the blanks in the following order:

1. In the first column, describe who takes care of the babies and how.
2. In the second column, see if you can think of something people do that is similar.

|                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>Grizzly Bear</b></p>        | <p><i>Mom protects them, feeds them, and teaches them how to survive on their own.</i></p> | <p><i>Human moms keep their kids safe, feed them, and teach them lots of important things.</i></p> |
| <p><b>Alligator</b></p>           |  |  |
| <p><b>Chimpanzee</b></p>          |  |  |
| <p><b>Rhea</b></p>                |  |  |
| <p><b>Seahorse</b></p>            |  |  |
| <p><b>Wolf</b></p>                |  |  |
| <p><b>Lesser Crested Tern</b></p> |  |  |

# Up Close and Personal

pages 15-19

2



## Learning Links:

**Photography is a vehicle for close observation of the natural world that can lead to deeper awareness and care. The Honduran kids in this story, participating in the programs of an organization called Guaruma, experience this firsthand. Through their photos and reflections, they offer perspectives on their tropical home and on photography.**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & WRITING PROMPTS

### Pre-Reading Questions:

- Do you like taking pictures?
- If so, what do you like about it?
- When and where do you most like to take pictures?

### Comprehension Check:

- In what country does this story take place?
- What do the kids learn in the Guaruma program?
- Describe the environment where the kids live. What plants and animals live there?
- What are some things that the kids captured with their cameras?
- Has photography changed their lives in any way? If so, how?

### Critical and Creative Thinking Connections:

- Some photographers specialize on nature, taking pictures of animals, plants, and landscapes. What are some other kinds of photography?
- How is nature photography similar to and different from other kinds of photography? What are some of the special challenges of nature photography?
- To be a good photographer, what kind of attitude do you need? What skills or techniques are helpful?
- In the story, Edwin says, "I see things differently when I have a camera." What do you think he means by this?
- Would you like to try this kind of photography? Why or why not?

## RESOURCES

*The Kids' Guide to Digital Photography* by Jenni Bidner (Lark Books, 2004). Here's a kid-friendly guide to taking photos with a digital camera, covering all the basics and encouraging kids to build skills through a variety of hands-on projects.

- [www.nwf.org/kidzone/kzPage.cfm?siteId=3&departmentId=80](http://www.nwf.org/kidzone/kzPage.cfm?siteId=3&departmentId=80) At Ranger Rick's PhotoZone, kids can find tips on taking their own photos and learn how to enter the Ranger Rick photo contest (for ages 13 and under).
- [guaruma.org](http://guaruma.org) Learn more about Guaruma and its projects at this Web site. Click on "Photo Gallery" to see more photos by the Guaruma kids.

## ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Meet a Photo Pro

Do you know a nature photographer? If so, or if you can find one by contacting a local interest group, camera shop, or publication, invite this person to spend an hour or two with your students. Suggest that the photographer's presentation include examples of his or her work, how-to tips, and interesting experiences obtained through photography. Encourage students to ask questions and, after the presentation, make connections between what this photographer shares and the experiences of the kids in the *Ranger Rick* story.

**TIME:**

**60 Minutes or more**

**PREPARATION:**

**Arrange a visit from a nature photographer**

### Art Critics

Using insights gained from a photographer's presentation (see above) or simply your own opinions, take a careful look at each of the photos in this story. Engage students in small-group discussions about the photos using the following guiding questions:

- What is your first impression of the photo?
- What does it make you think of? How does it make you feel?
- Does it make you wonder about anything?
- Do you like this photo? Why or why not?
- What qualities make this a good or interesting shot? (Notice lighting, framing, angle, focus, colors, etc.)
- What idea do you think the photographer is trying to get across?

If students enjoy this analysis, encourage them to do the same with other photos in *Ranger Rick* or with their own photos.

**TIME:**

**30 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

**Board or chart paper to write questions**

### Nature Photo Club

Use the Guaruma program as a model for your own photo unit or club. Photography will provide students with opportunities to explore, understand, and value the natural world. Teach basic skills (see resources such as Ranger Rick's PhotoZone: [www.nwf.org/kidzone/kzPage.cfm?siteId=3&departmentId=80](http://www.nwf.org/kidzone/kzPage.cfm?siteId=3&departmentId=80)). Then encourage students to immerse themselves in the places and subjects that capture their interest. Be sure to provide opportunities for students to reflect on their work and share it with one another and the community.

**TIME:**

**Variable**

**MATERIALS:**

**Internet access  
Digital cameras  
Computers**

### Gallery of a Place

The photos in "Up Close and Personal" focus on the Honduran landscape, highlighting what makes it unique and important. Engage students in a similar project focusing on your own place. If possible, carry out the project over different seasons so that you can track changes month by month. Create a gallery, a slideshow, or a magazine illustrated with photos taken by students. Include some of their thoughts about what they learned by taking the pictures and what they intend to communicate with their photos.

**TIME:**

**Variable**

**MATERIALS:**

**Variable**

## Fishing Buddies

pages 22-26

3



### Learning Links:

**When Irrawaddy dolphins and fishermen in Myanmar cooperate, everybody wins. The dolphins drive fish into the fishermen's nets. Then they easily snatch up the fish that leap out. But Irrawaddies don't fare so well in other interactions with humans. They need protection from harmful fishing gear and river pollutants.**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & WRITING PROMPTS

### Pre-Reading Questions:

- Look at the photos of Irrawaddy dolphins on pages 24-25 of *Ranger Rick*. What do you think the dolphins are doing in each photo?
- What do these actions suggest about Irrawaddy dolphins?
- Read the title of the story. What do you think this story is going to be about?

### Comprehension Check:

- Where do Irrawaddy dolphins live?
- How did they get their name?
- What's so special about the Irrawaddy dolphins that live along the Ayeyarwady River?
- How do these dolphins help people fish? Outline the steps.

- How do the dolphins learn to do this kind of fishing?
- Why are Irrawaddy dolphins in trouble?
- How are some people trying to help?

### Critical and Creative Thinking Connections:

- Why do you think some Irrawaddy dolphins are willing to fish with people? Do you think this kind of fishing is easier for them? Why or why not?
- What do you think would happen to people along the Ayeyarwady if the Irrawaddy dolphins became extinct?
- Why do you think Irrawaddy dolphins spit?
- Turn to page 26 and look at the pictures of two other kinds of dolphins. How are Irrawaddies like these dolphins? How are they different?
- What other dolphins do you know about? How are they like Irrawaddies? How are they different?

## RESOURCES

***Dolphin Diaries*** by Ben M. Baglio (Scholastic). In this fiction series of 10 books, Jody McGrath and her family sail around the world to investigate different dolphin species. In Diaries #10, the family has an adventure with an Irrawaddy dolphin.

- [www.miragehabitat.com/pages/student\\_lessons\\_echolocation.asp](http://www.miragehabitat.com/pages/student_lessons_echolocation.asp). See how river dolphins use echolocation to find their way through murky river waters and to locate food.

## ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Interview with a River Dolphin

Invite students to write a newspaper interview with a river dolphin. They can use the information they read in "Fishing Buddies" as well as gather facts from other sources. The interview questions listed on the [Interview with a Dolphin student page](#) will guide your students through the process, or they could write their own questions.

**TIME:**

**30 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

[Interview with a Dolphin student page](#)

### Go Fish

As a class, review the four steps Irrawaddies follow when they help people fish. Tell students that lots of other animals fish for their food, too, but they don't catch fish the same way. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different "fishing animal." (For instance: raccoon, grizzly bear, spoonbill, puffin, fishing cat, frogfish, kingfisher, fishing spider.) Ask each group to find out how its animal fishes and to illustrate or pantomime the process, step by step, for the class.

Alternatively, have groups research other animals that spit. Dolphins aren't the only ones—so do llamas, camels, spitting cobras, archer fish, fruit bats, and some millipedes and clams. Have each group research how and why an animal spits and incorporate this knowledge into an action-packed cartoon strip. Then assemble the strips into a booklet called Spit-Toons!

**TIME:**

**30-60 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

[Internet or library access](#)  
**Paper and markers (optional)**

### Flipping Over Dolphins

Dolphins are great acrobats. A dolphin can leap high out of the water, flop onto its side with a huge splash, slap the water with its tail, and perform other stunts. Have students view animated dolphin acrobatics at [www.wdcs.org/dan/publishing.nsf/allweb/FF5D4CC68205142180256E6E003C826C](http://www.wdcs.org/dan/publishing.nsf/allweb/FF5D4CC68205142180256E6E003C826C). Then ask each student to make a flip book that animates one of the stunts. A flip book contains a series of pictures that vary gradually from one page to the next, so that when you turn the pages quickly the pictures appear to animate. Learn how to make a simple flip book at [home.att.net/~RTRUSCIO/FLIPBOOK.htm](http://home.att.net/~RTRUSCIO/FLIPBOOK.htm).

**TIME:**

**60 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

[Library/Internet access](#)  
**Small notepads (one per student)**  
**Transparent tape**  
**Pencils or markers**

### Fish Stories

This article invites the reader to "Imagine that you live in a world very different from your own." Have students write a story as if they really were the son or daughter of a fisherman living along the Ayeyarwady River. As a class, find out more about the area: the landscape, village, homes, climate, clothing. Then ask students to put themselves in the scene and tell the story of a day's fishing trip. Encourage them to give the story structure by including a culminating event (something funny, scary, sad, or exciting) and to add details about what they saw, thought, and felt to bring the story to life.

**TIME:**

**60 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

[Library/Internet access to research life in Myanmar](#)  
**Paper and pencils**



# Interview With a River Dolphin

The *Underwater Times* has asked you to interview a river dolphin for its next edition. Use what you learned in “Fishing Buddies” and information from other knowledgeable sources to complete the following interview.

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| Interview Headline: _____ |
| By _____<br>(Your name)   |

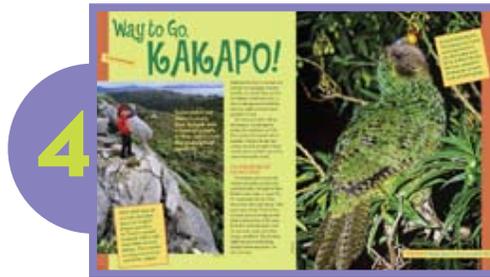
1. What kind of river dolphin are you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Where do you live? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why don't you live in the ocean like other dolphins? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What's your favorite sound? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How's life treating you these days? Any complaints? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What do you do for fun? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  

(Write your own question above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Way to Go, Kakapo!

pages 34-39



## Learning Links:

**The kakapo was once an abundant bird in New Zealand. But when humans arrived, bringing new animals that preyed on the parrots, the population plummeted. Now the kakapo is making a comeback—with lots of help from a very attentive conservation team.**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & WRITING PROMPTS

### Pre-Reading Questions:

- Describe a parrot. What are some of the main characteristics of these birds?
- Look at the pictures in “Way to Go, Kakapo!” Based on what you see, how would you say kakapos are different from most parrots?

### Comprehension Check:

- What kind of bird is a kakapo?
- How is it different from most other kinds of parrots?
- Where did kakapos once live?
- Why are they endangered?
- Why did scientists move them to a new home?
- What are three things that scientists do to help the kakapos survive and raise chicks?
- How often do kakapos breed?

- What is “booming”? Why do male kakapos do it?
- How many kakapos are on the planet today?

### Critical and Creative Thinking Connections:

- Why do you think a year with plenty of rimu fruit might be a good breeding year for kakapos?
- What kakapo characteristics might make it difficult for scientists to study and protect this bird? What characteristics might make the bird easier to study and protect than some other animals?
- The experts who work with the kakapos are very “hands-on” with the birds—outfitting them with transmitters, giving them vet checkups, providing extra food when it’s scarce, and even hand-raising chicks. Do you think all this help from humans would be appropriate for other wild animals? Is it necessary under these circumstances? Why or why not?

## RESOURCES

- [www.kakaporecovery.org.nz/kids](http://www.kakaporecovery.org.nz/kids) Visit the Kids Track of the Kakapo Recovery Programme to meet some kakapos and the research team that’s working hard to save them. When you’re confident that you’re a kakapo expert, test your knowledge with an online kakapo quiz.
- [www.kcc.org.nz/birds/kakapo.asp](http://www.kcc.org.nz/birds/kakapo.asp) The Kiwi Conservation Club has a good fact sheet on kakapos for kids.

## ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Kakapo Timeline

As students read "Way to Go, Kakapo," ask them to note the important events in the birds' history. Then have them make a timeline of the events that contributed to the decline and slow recovery of the population. Students can visit the Web site of the Kakapo Recovery Programme (the people watching over the kakapos' progress) to find additional details: [www.kakaporecovery.org.nz](http://www.kakaporecovery.org.nz). Click on "Then and Now" for more history. Alternatively (or in addition), students could draw scenes depicting kakapo life before the arrival of humans in New Zealand, after, and on the refuge islands where the birds live now.

**TIME:**

**45 minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

Paper and pencils  
Art supplies

### A Series of Fortunate and Unfortunate Events

The story of the kakapo is one of many ups and downs. Once abundant, the birds all but disappeared after the arrival of human colonists. Recently they have been making a slow recovery. Now every year brings another series of good and bad news, depending on whether or not the birds breed, the eggs hatch, and the chicks survive. Have students write a story following the "Fortunately . . . Unfortunately" format to recount some of these ups and downs. For example, "New Zealand is home to an amazing bird, the kakapo. Fortunately, there were once thousands of these parrots. Unfortunately, many were eaten by cats, rats, and dogs. Fortunately, some survived . . ." Provide students with a fun example of this format by reading aloud the book *Fortunately* by Remy Charlip (Aladdin, 1993).

**TIME:**

**30 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

Paper and pencils  
*Fortunately* by  
Remy Charlip

### From a Scientist's Notebook

Have students imagine they are scientists who want to find out how kakapos breed. (This was a mystery for many years.) Using the details provided in the *Ranger Rick* story, they can write a description of the kakapo's courting behavior as if they have discovered it and are witnessing it firsthand. Encourage them to make a careful, detailed record so they can tell other scientists about the amazing things they observed.

**TIME:**

**30 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

Paper and pencils

### Kakapoems

Have some fun creating poetry with the kakapo as inspiration. Here are some options:

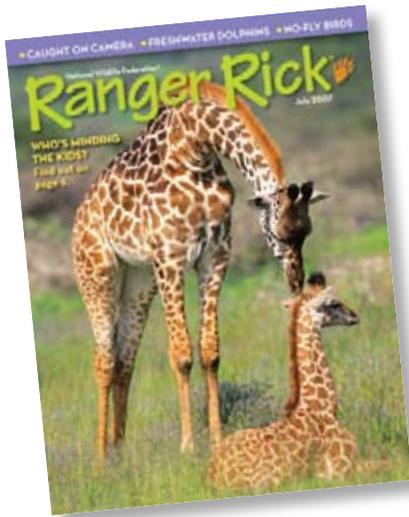
- Brainstorm a list of words that rhyme with "kakapo." Then have students make up poems using these rhyming words.
- Create an acrostic poem by writing the word "kakapo" vertically down the page and beginning each line of the poem with one of the letters.
- Write a haiku or cinquain describing a kakapo.
- Write a poem in the shape of a kakapo, outlining or filling in the shape with descriptive words about the bird.

**TIME:**

**30 Minutes**

**MATERIALS:**

Paper and pencils



Ranger Rick®

# Family Fun!

**Dear Parent or Guardian,**

**Your child is reading Ranger Rick magazine in class. Each month, amazing photos, feature articles, and activities bring nature, wildlife, and conservation to life. You can extend the learning and fun at home with these engaging family activities.**

## GET OUT!

An outdoor “Green Hour” is healthy and fun. As mentioned in “Dear Ranger Rick,” (page 5), you’ll find good ideas for outside time in each issue of the magazine. To learn more, check out [www.greenhour.org](http://www.greenhour.org). See how *Ranger Rick* and the National Wildlife Federation are helping kids get outside—and find lots of other great outdoor activities for your family.

## THE BUZZ ON MOSQUITOES

Have you ever taken a really close-up look at a mosquito? You can see one on paper in “Mosquito Quick Bits” (pages 20-21). Next time you spot a live one (and you know you will!), try catching it in a clear glass or plastic container. Can you identify all the parts shown in the picture? What else can you learn about it?

## BATS EAT BUGS

Mosquitoes may be interesting to look at, but they sure can be annoying. Other bugs can be a bother, too. Never fear—just bring in the bats! As you found out in “Ranger Rick’s Adventures” (pages 30-33), a bat can eat many, many insects in a single night. As a family project, put up a bat house in your yard and invite bats to a feast.

## CAN YOU “C” THEM?

This month’s “Fun on the Run” games (pages 40-42) are all about sea creatures and creatures whose names begin with the letter “C”. How many of them can you spot? If you live near the sea, go searching there. And whether you’re near the sea or not, investigate your neighborhood for things in nature that start with “C.” For even more fun, try to find something for every letter of the alphabet!

## SHORE-EXPLORING

What’s better on a hot day than getting your feet wet in the nearest ocean, lake, river, stream, or pond? Check out the list of things to do in “Explore a Shore” (page 43). Then choose your favorite down-by-the-water activities for a fun summer day.

**For more interactive family fun, be sure to visit [www.nwf.org/kids](http://www.nwf.org/kids).**

