

Educator's Guide



Educational extensions for the **December/January 2013** issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

In **“Your Best Shots”** (pages 4-5), two of the winning images utilize unusual perspectives (from below and from underwater). Equip students with cameras and head outside, challenging them to photograph something in nature from a new viewpoint. Set up a gallery or slide show to display the photos. Ask students to reflect on what these perspectives reveal and to write captions that explain their thoughts.

SNOW LEOPARD LORE

The snow leopard (**“Ghost Cat,”** pages 6-11) is solitary and rarely seen. In folklore, the cat often takes the role of a shape-shifter and mountain spirit. Engage students in a discussion about which other animals have roles in myth and legend based on their unique characteristics. Seek out some examples of these tales to read together.

HOLIDAY TRASH CHALLENGE

“The Buzz” (pages 12-13) describes the winning entry in a zero-waste packaging competition. Can your students think of other clever ways to rethink packaging and reduce the amount of trash generated during the holidays? Organize a contest or design fair and invite students to show off their best ideas for the rest of the school or even the whole community.

WRITING ABOUT WINTER ANIMALS

Have students take the quiz in **“The Buzz”** (pages 12-13) about how animals survive winter. Discuss other adaptations for cold and snow. Then ask students to choose an animal native to cold climates and research its winter survival strategy. Have them create a story, a poem, or a picture book about the animal's life, incorporating the facts they've gathered.

ANIMAL INVASIONS

Read about the red crab migration on Christmas Island in **“The Red Crabs Are Coming!”** (pages 18-23). Then give students a chance to discuss their reactions to this event. How would it feel to have these animals enter their neighborhood in huge numbers? Would students be bothered or scared? Or would they help the crabs as the Christmas Islanders do? Why?

SNOW SCULPTURES

Does snow fall where you live? If so, organize a snow-sculpting party! Read about **“The Coolest Show on Earth”** (pages 26-29) and get tips in **“Sculpt a Snow Show”** (pages 30-31). You might choose a theme, such as arctic animals or storybook characters. Have teams of students plan and create their sculptures. Then award prizes or just tour all the amazing creations. (No snow? Try something similar with sand.)

ADVENTURES OF ANIMAL SUPERHEROES

After reading **“Superheroes”** (pages 33-36), brainstorm with students about what kinds of adventures and missions these animal-inspired superheroes might take on. Then invite students to draw a comic or make a video featuring the daring deeds of the animal superhero they like best.

TRUNK FOR A DAY

The **“Just for Fun”** games (pages 37-39) depict the many ways an elephant uses its trunk. Ask students to imagine they have awakened one morning with an elephant's trunk. How would they use it? In what ways would it make the things they do each day easier? In what ways would it make their lives more difficult? Invite them to make up a skit or story about their day.



A Red Crab's Life



Read about the lives of red crabs in "The Red Crabs Are Coming!" (pages 18-23). Then put the following sentences in order by writing the correct number in each blank space. The first one is done for you.

- _____ Female crabs release eggs into the ocean and then return to the forest.
- 1 The red crabs of Christmas Island spend most of the year in burrows in the forest.
- _____ Baby crabs come ashore and walk from the beach to their new home in the forest.
- _____ Female crabs stay in the nesting burrows for two weeks while their eggs develop.
- _____ In late fall, adult crabs leave the forest and walk through town to the beach.
- _____ After mating, the males crabs return to the forest.
- _____ Larvae hatch and drift in the water for a month. Then they turn into tiny crabs.
- _____ Male crabs dig burrows in the sand and wait for females to choose them as mates.

Now draw a small picture to go with each numbered sentence.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

The people of Christmas Island do many things to help the red crabs survive their journey. What are a few of the things they do?

