POUCH PERFECT
After reading “Life Down Under” on pages 6-11, children might think the pouch life is a great way to grow up! But do all marsupials have the same pouch experience? Assign your children to investigate a marsupial other than the kangaroo (for example, a koala, wombat, or opossum). Have them explore the young’s pouch experience and compare and contrast that experience to that of a young western gray kangaroo. Leave it up to each child to share their findings creatively with the family. Ask your children to share their response to one final question, “Which perfect pouch life would you pick and why?”

TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT
As we read in “Hooray for Harpies” on pages 14-19, deforestation and urbanization have created dire circumstances for the harpy eagle. Work with your children to define deforestation and urbanization so they start from the same understanding. Identify the consequences of urbanization and deforestation, thinking beyond impacts on wildlife, to include the economy and people in and around these areas. Have your kids look for:
- examples of deforestation and urbanization in the United States,
- patterns of deforestation and or urbanization (location within the United States or proximity to specific communities), and
- ideas for solutions.

GREAT ADAPTATIONS
Animals around the world use adaptations to catch prey, hide from predators, and find mates. After reading “Cuttlefish” on pages 22-27, discuss the ways these ocean animals have adapted to survive and succeed. Discuss the cuttlefish’s adaptations (changing color and pattern, shooting blobs of ink, gathering in groups).
Have your children identify three animals found in their own community and identify one adaptation each uses to survive. Survival adaptation can include predator/prey interactions and mating. Set time aside for each of your children to share what they learned.

NATURE’S RECYCLERS
All living things are producers, consumers, or decomposers. A producer makes its own food from soil, sunlight, and air. A consumer gets its energy by eating food. And a decomposer gets energy by breaking down dead plants and animals. Decomposers are nature’s recyclers, and earthworms are a great example. Ask your children to reread “Earthworms” on pages 32-36. Then discuss the following questions.
- What is a decomposer? What living things, besides the earthworm, are also decomposers?
- How is a decomposer different from a producer? What living things are examples of producers?
- How is a decomposer different from a consumer? What living things are examples of consumers?
With answers in hand, have your children create a visualization/graphic organizer that defines these terms and provides some examples.
A secondary activity would be to complete an earthworm dissection. Here you can identify the body parts talked about in the story. Check out this virtual earthworm dissection, [https://youtu.be/aCnwF6vtE2g](https://youtu.be/aCnwF6vtE2g).
You learned a lot about the harpy eagle in “Hooray for Harpies” on pages 14–19. Food gives harpy eagles the energy they need to take care of their day-to-day needs, such as hunting, grooming, and taking care of their young. Check out the food choices from the images below. Circle the foods below that will provide the harpy eagle with energy.

Circle: sloth, snake, parrot, armadillo, monkey

PIQUIÁ FLOWERS
AÇAÍ BERRIES
PARROT
SLOTH
AÇAÍ BERRIES
SNAKE
BRAZIL NUTS
UXI FRUIT
PATAUÁ FRUIT
MONKEY
Ranger Rick and friends learned in “Making a Magazine” on pages 28-31 that it takes a lot of work to bring Ranger Rick magazine to readers each month. Let’s pretend! You are a Ranger Rick magazine staff member. Your assignment for an upcoming issue is to write about an animal of your choice. The editor says your article must be no longer than 300 words and include three pictures. Write a list of questions you need to answer in order to write your article. Here’s one question to help you get a jump start.

1. Where is the animal found?

2. [Blank]

3. [Blank]

4. [Blank]

5. [Blank]

After writing your questions, find the answers in books or online. When you have your answers, write and illustrate your story using the template on the next page. Remember to review the editor’s story requirements.
# NEST QUEST

Spring is nesting time for birds of all kinds. Go on a quest to see what nests you can find! Of course, be sure not to get so close that you disturb the bird families.

## Keep a Record!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Helpful Things to Take Along

- [ ] Binoculars
- [ ] Field guide to birds

In the boxes below, record the nests you find. Is the nest on a tree branch, in a tree hole, on the ground, or somewhere else? Is it made from grass, sticks, mud, or other materials? Do you see any signs of birds working on the nest, sitting on eggs, or feeding chicks? If you find more than two nests, you can make more copies of this page or use the back.

### NEST 1

- **Location:**
- **What it is made from:**
- **Signs of birds using it:**
- **Draw the nest.**

### NEST 2

- **Location:**
- **What it is made from:**
- **Signs of birds using it:**
- **Draw the nest.**