Make Way for DUCKS

September 2020  ** Award-Winning Fun **
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ON THE COVER
Follow this ruddy duck straight to page 6 to learn all about ducks.

September 2020

that’s Wild!

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Let’s play a game! Try to find me 4 more times in this issue!

Find me on pages 24, 25, 26, and 27.

Submit your drawings and photos online at RangerRick.org/rickysmail.

Or mail them to
Ricky’s Mail
11100 Wildlife Center Drive
Rexton, VA 20190

Include your name, address, and age on the back of your drawing or photo.

Use a QR reader to see more photos and drawings online.

Draw, Make, or Do!

Discover how a single shape can become two very different animals.

Duck or Bunny?

RangerRick.org/Duck-Bunny

POISON FROG
by Evan, age 4

LEOPARD
by Leo, age 5

PEACOCK
by Willa, age 5

SNOW MONKEY
by Connor, age 6

OWL
by Alexis, age 5

PALLAS’S CAT by Ruby, age 6

Collin O’Mara

your drawing or photo.

Include your name, address, Reston, VA 20190

11100 Wildlife Center Drive

Ricky’s Mail

RangerRick.org/rickysmail.
Narwhals are called "unicorns of the sea."

Jellyfish are made mostly of water.

Rhinos have poor eyesight.

Red deer can roar.

The world's largest spider is the size of a small puppy.
Discover the world of ducks through these definitions.

**duck** (duk)
A short-legged bird that lives near water.

**bill** (bil)
The broad, flat beak of a duck.

**mallard**

**FUN FACT**
All ducks have waterproof feathers.
**diver** (DYE-vur)
A kind of duck that dives far beneath the surface to eat.

**dabbler** (DAB-lur)
A kind of duck that turns bottom up to find food in shallow water.

**quack** (KWAK)
A sound that some female ducks make.

**FUN FACT**
Only female ducks quack.

**FUN FACT**
Dabblers are often called puddle ducks.
web-footed (WEB-fut-id)
Having toes that are connected by skin.

preen (PREEN)
To clean feathers with a bill.

duckling (DUK-ling)
A baby duck.

tufted ducks

red-billed teal

The words in our DUCK-tion-ar-y are all mixed up. Can you put them in alphabetical order?
Ricky Raccoon and his friends were going to have a picnic. Ricky had planned to bring a salad, so he headed out to his garden to get some lettuce. But what he got instead was a surprise. All his bright green lettuce leaves had been chomped!

“Hey!” Ricky exclaimed. “Someone’s been eating my lettuce!”

Later, he met up with Flora Skunk, Mitzi Mink, and Bizzie Beaver for the picnic. They had all gathered at Flora’s house. Her picnic table was covered with sandwiches, fruit, and lots of other tasty treats.

“I couldn’t make the salad,” Ricky told his friends as he walked up. “Somebody ate my lettuce!”

Bizzie was holding a book of world records. He had been reading it all week. “That’s too bad,” he said. “Now you won’t have a chance to grow the world’s biggest head of lettuce.”

“I’ll bet it was a rabbit,” said Flora. “They love to eat lettuce.”

“Maybe so,” said Ricky.

The next morning, Ricky went out to his garden again. This time the tops of his carrots had been chomped, and his bean plants and his peppers, too!

“Wow,” Ricky said. “That is one very hungry rabbit!”

When Ricky met up with his friends later, he told them about all the vegetables that had been eaten.

Bizzie was still thinking about world records. “It could be a giant rabbit,” he said. “It might even be the biggest rabbit in the world!”

“Well,” said Ricky, “I don’t know if it could be a record-breaker. But it sure does eat a lot.”

The next morning, Ricky headed out to his garden again. “I’m not sure I even want to look,” he said to himself. But he did look, and he could hardly believe his eyes. The lettuce, carrots, beans, and peppers had been chomped even more! And now the spinach and tomatoes had been eaten, too.

“Wow!” said Ricky. “How could one rabbit eat so much food? That must be one big bunny!”
That afternoon, as the friends were relaxing at Shady Pond, Ricky told them about all the other vegetables the rabbit had eaten.

“I think it really is a record-breaking rabbit,” said Bizzie. “It must be huge! I'll bet its ears are taller than I am!”

“And maybe its cottontail is the size of a basketball,” said Mitzi with a giggle.

“You should try to take a picture of it, Ricky,” said Flora. “Think how famous you will be if you get a photo of the world's biggest rabbit.”

“Well, the rabbit always comes to eat during the night,” Ricky said. “Maybe I could camp out and try to get a picture.”

“We'll camp out with you,” said Flora.

“It will be an adventure,” Mitzi agreed.

So that night as it was getting dark, the friends put their sleeping bags along the edge of Ricky's garden. They crawled inside and waited.

“It's great that there's a full moon,” said Bizzie. “We'll be able to see the rabbit easily.”

Ricky put his camera next to his sleeping bag. “When the rabbit shows up, I'll be ready,” he said. Then he yawned. That yawn made Flora yawn. Then Mitzi yawned. And Bizzie yawned, too. And in no time, although they tried to stay awake, they were all asleep.

Later that night, Ricky woke to a munching sound. “The rabbit!” he whispered. He began to reach for his camera. Then he stopped as he looked around. A big grin spread across his face. “Wake up, you guys,” he whispered. The others woke up and looked.

Now they were all grinning big grins. “Oh!” Bizzie said. “I get it now.”

The rabbit wasn't the biggest in the world. It didn't have ears the size of Bizzie or a tail the size of a basketball. Actually, it wasn't even a rabbit at all. It was . . .

“Ten rabbits!” exclaimed Flora.

“Well,” said Ricky with a smile, “if I can't be famous for having the world's biggest rabbit in my garden, maybe I can be famous for having the biggest number of rabbits in it!”
Animals can’t always take care of themselves. So sometimes they team up with surprising partners.

Pesky bugs live on a warthog’s skin. Mongooses gobble them up. The warthog gets clean, and the mongooses fill their bellies.
A clownfish has slime on its body that keeps it from being stung. So the clownfish can safely hide in the tentacles. In return for the hiding spot, the clownfish attracts other fish that become the anemone’s dinner.

An impala welcomes a feathered friend for lunch. The bird eats tiny bugs it finds in the antelope’s hair.

This sea anemone (uh-NEM-uh-nee) looks like a big, yellow plant. But it’s really a hungry animal. It eats fish that it has stung with its waving tentacles.

A clownfish has slime on its body that keeps it from being stung. So the clownfish can safely hide in the tentacles. In return for the hiding spot, the clownfish attracts other fish that become the anemone’s dinner.

Watch how animals help their buddies stay clean.
When fish eat the algae that grow on a sea turtle’s shell, it helps everyone. The fish get a good meal, and the turtle gets a cleaning.

The shrimp digs a burrow that the two buddies share. The goby keeps watch outside. When an enemy comes near, the goby flicks its tail. That warns the shrimp to hide in the burrow.

An ostrich has good eyesight. A zebra has sharp hearing and a great sense of smell. So, they team up to look, listen, and smell for enemies.
Very few animals see colors the way most people do. Dogs and cats, for example, can’t see red or green. They can see only shades of blue, yellow, and gray.
Each animal here has a name that begins with a different letter of the alphabet. Name each animal. Then put the animal names in alphabetical order.
We live in a ... SAVANNA

A savanna has lots of grass and only a few trees. It is always hot here.

Oxpecker picks bugs off impala.

Zebra grazes on grass.

Elephant sprays water on its back.

I live in a savanna, too. Guess who I am.

1

I have poor eyesight. If I could, I would wear glasses.

When I was born, I was the size of three first graders.

2

I weigh as much as a pickup truck.

3

Open the flap to see who I am.
The name *rhinoceros* means "nose-horn." When this calf grows up, the horn on her nose will be as long as her mom's.
How many pages can you find that have rabbits on them?

Gorilla Music

This young gorilla has got the beat. It’s time to dance. Get on your feet.