Raising Robins

Surprising SKIN

Rainforest ANIMALS

Step into SPRING

April 2021

** Award-Winning Fun **
Celebrate
backyard birds
with this
lunchtime treat.

TOASTY ROBIN SNACK

RangerRick.org/RobinSnack

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

PHOTO TAKEN UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS

PHOTO RETOUCHED
Prairie dogs live in groups called “towns.”

An ocelot is twice the size of a house cat.

Dung beetles eat other animals’ poop.

Giraffes hum at night.

A mockingbird imitates the sounds of other birds.

Many sharks need to keep moving in order to breathe.
You know it’s spring when you see a robin building a nest and raising a family.

Mother Robin sits on her eggs to keep them warm. In two weeks, the chicks will hatch.

Robins

Baby robins are helpless when they hatch. They do not have any feathers and their eyes are closed.

Mother Robin collects twigs and dry grasses. She will weave them together with mud to form a nest.
Father Robin pulls a worm out of the ground. He will take the worm back to the nest to feed the chicks.

The tiny chicks squeak when they are hungry and want to be fed.

The little chicks gobble up the worm. Mother and Father Robin also feed the chicks insects and berries.
Next spring, the chicks will raise families of their own. How did the robins change as they grew?

The chicks have started to grow feathers, but they won’t leave the nest until they are two weeks old.

The chicks grow quickly. As they get bigger, the nest gets more and more crowded.

The chicks leave the nest when they have enough feathers to fly. But they stay close to their parents for three more weeks.
"Let’s go get Flora Skunk and Mitzi Mink to join us," said Ricky.

Ricky and Flora formed one team. And Bizzie and Mitzi formed the other.

"Flora and I will go first," Ricky said. "Give us time to put out the strings. Then try to follow our trail."

Ricky and Flora headed off into the woods. Each held a bunch of strings.

"Where should we put the first string, Ricky?" asked Flora. "Do you have any ideas?"

Ricky thought for a minute. "I know!" he said suddenly. "We can use it to make a secret trail!"

"What do you mean?" asked Bizzie.

"Well," said Ricky, "I could go through the woods and leave a trail of short strings behind me. Then you try to find out where I went by following the trail!"

"That sounds like fun!" said Bizzie.

The friends walked a bit farther. "This looks like a good place for the next one," said Ricky. He hung a piece of string on the humpy bark on a tree trunk.

They walked on, hanging strings here and there. "This is fun!" said Flora.

Meanwhile, Bizzie and Mitzi were telling each other jokes to pass the time. "OK, here’s one," said Bizzie. "What has more spots than a leopard?"

"Hmmm," said Mitzi, thinking. She looked around and noticed a spotted mushroom. "A mushroom?" she asked.

"Nope," said Bizzie.

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"Where should we put the first string, Ricky?" asked Flora.

Ricky looked around. "How about hanging it from this tree branch?"

He hung the string from a low branch.
Mitzi looked around again. This time she saw a ladybug. “I know!” she exclaimed. “It’s a ladybug.”

“Nope,” said Bizzie again, giggling.

“Okay, I give up,” said Mitzi. “What has more spots than a leopard?”

“Two leopards!” said Bizzie. Mitzi and Bizzie both laughed.

“I think we’ve waited long enough,” Bizzie said. “Let’s go!”

Bizzie and Mitzi started off into the woods to look for strings. “There’s one!” said Mitzi. She pointed to a string hanging on a low branch.

“Awesome!” said Bizzie. He squinted as he looked around for more strings. Suddenly he spotted one on a tree trunk. “Aha!” he said. They went over to the tree and searched around for the next string. But they couldn’t see any.

“That’s strange,” said Bizzie. “I know they had more than two pieces of string.” Bizzie and Mitzi looked high and low but saw no more strings.

After a while, Ricky and Flora returned. “What’s taking so long?” asked Ricky.

“Well,” said Mitzi, “we found the first string…”

“…and the second,” added Bizzie. “But after that we couldn’t find any more!”

“That’s funny,” said Ricky. “The third one was right around here.”

“And I thought I put the fourth one on that bush over there,” said Flora, looking confused.

“You certainly did!” a voice sang out above them. “And my friends and I really appreciate it!”

The animals looked up to see their friend Mrs. Cardinal.

“What do you mean?” asked Ricky.

“It was such a nice idea—hanging pieces of string around the woods for the birds to use to build their nests!” said Mrs. C. “How did you ever think of it?”

The friends all looked at each other with big grins on their faces.

“Oh, that!” said Ricky. “I guess you could say it just came to us!”

Note to Parents: If you want to leave out string for the birds, make sure the pieces are only a few inches long and are made of a natural material such as cotton.
Not all skin is soft and smooth. Look at the skin some animals are in!

**HARD SKIN**
An armadillo has really hard skin. It protects the armadillo from an enemy’s sharp teeth and claws.

**STRETCHY SKIN**
A pelican has a pouch of stretchy skin that hangs down from its bill. The bird uses it as a fish net.

What would it be like to have hard skin like an armadillo’s?
An elephant has thick, wrinkly skin. These large animals often bathe to cool off. Water stays in the wrinkles, keeping them cool longer.

Can you see the frog’s red heart?

The spiky skin on this sea star keeps the animal safe. Any creature that tries to bite it will get a very sharp surprise.

This glass frog has see-through skin on its belly. Scientists are not sure why.
A *chameleon* can change the color of its skin to match its moods. That is how it tells other animals what it is feeling.

Thin skin connects the long fingers of a *bat*. The skin forms wings that allow the bat to fly.

**THIN SKIN**

**TALKING SKIN**

¡Hola!

Read the story in Spanish.
RangerRick.org/SkinSP
Use a tape measure to mark off 15 feet. How long does it take you to move that far?

Hooray, the sun is finally shining!

It’s spring! It’s spring!

You sure are happy today, Chester.

I’m happy because it’s spring. The sky is blue and the sun is shining.

The birds are singing and there are buds on the trees.

I know where I see spring. I see it in your step!

April 2021

Step into Spring

I’m happy because it’s spring.
The sky is blue and the sun is shining.
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Animal Fun

Use these clues to name each bird.
Cardinal has red tail feathers.
Crow has feathers that are all the same color.
Robin has different colored feathers on her chest and back.
Goldfinch has a ring of white feathers around her neck.
Oriole has orange tail feathers.

Now help each bird find her nest.

My eggs are white.

My eggs are green with brown splotches.

My eggs have purple speckles on them.

My eggs are the color of the sky.

My eggs are tan with dark blotches.

Take Another Look
How many eggs can you count?
We live in a... **RAINFOREST**

Our rainforest home is always hot and wet. Tall trees and many kinds of plants grow here.

**Snake** wraps itself around a branch.

**Macaw** flies among the treetops.

**Monkey** eats fruit.

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I live in a rainforest, too. **Guess who I am.**

1. I’m so small, I could fit on an eraser.

2. I love when it rains.

3. My eyes are the color of a stop sign.

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[STOP]

Turn the page to see who I am.
This treefrog has sticky pads on its toes that let it climb without slipping.
What does a fox kit do when it is hungry?

Watch it

RangerRick.org/FoxKitEat