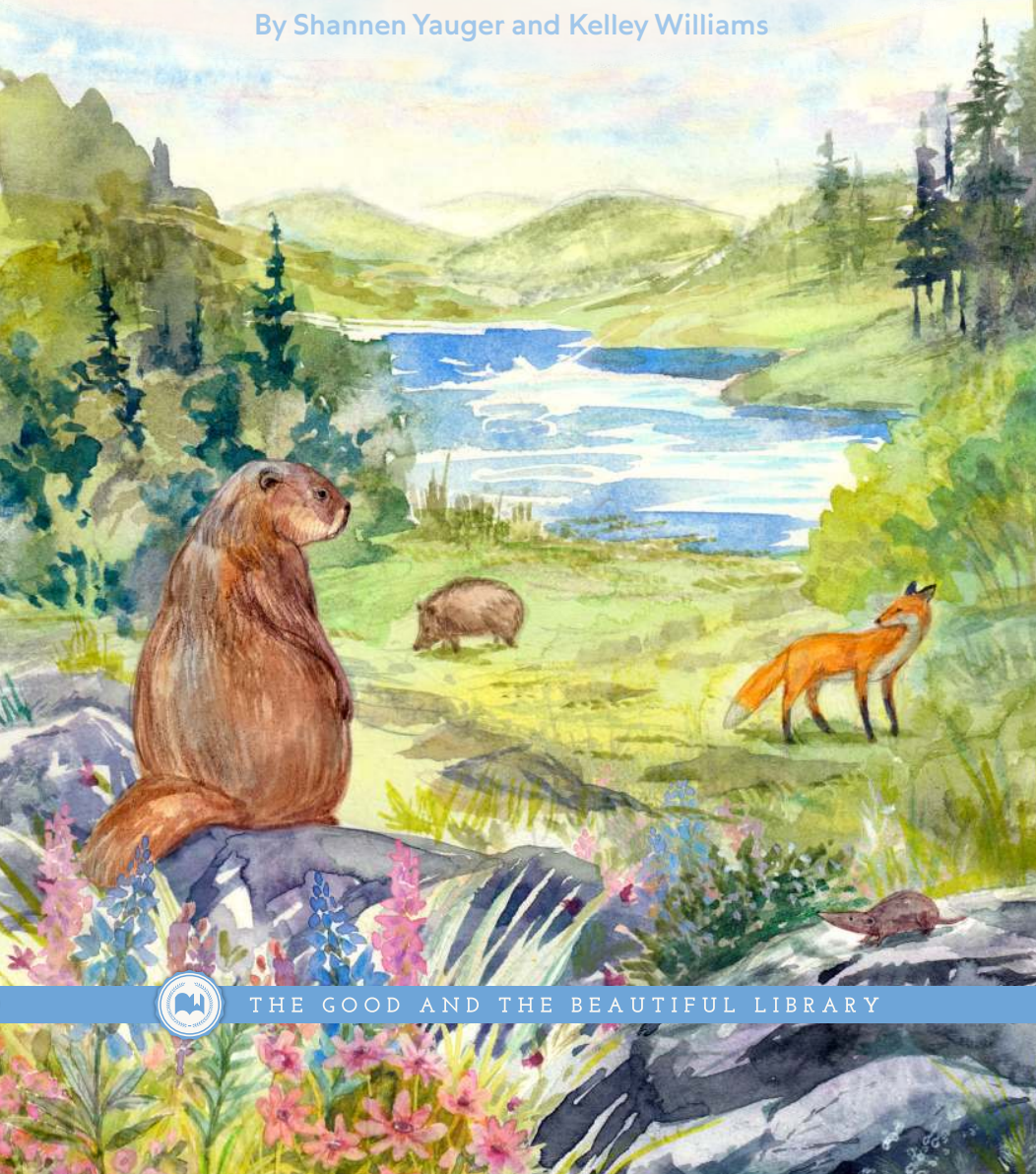


Along the **MOUNTAINSIDE**

By Shannen Yaeger and Kelley Williams



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

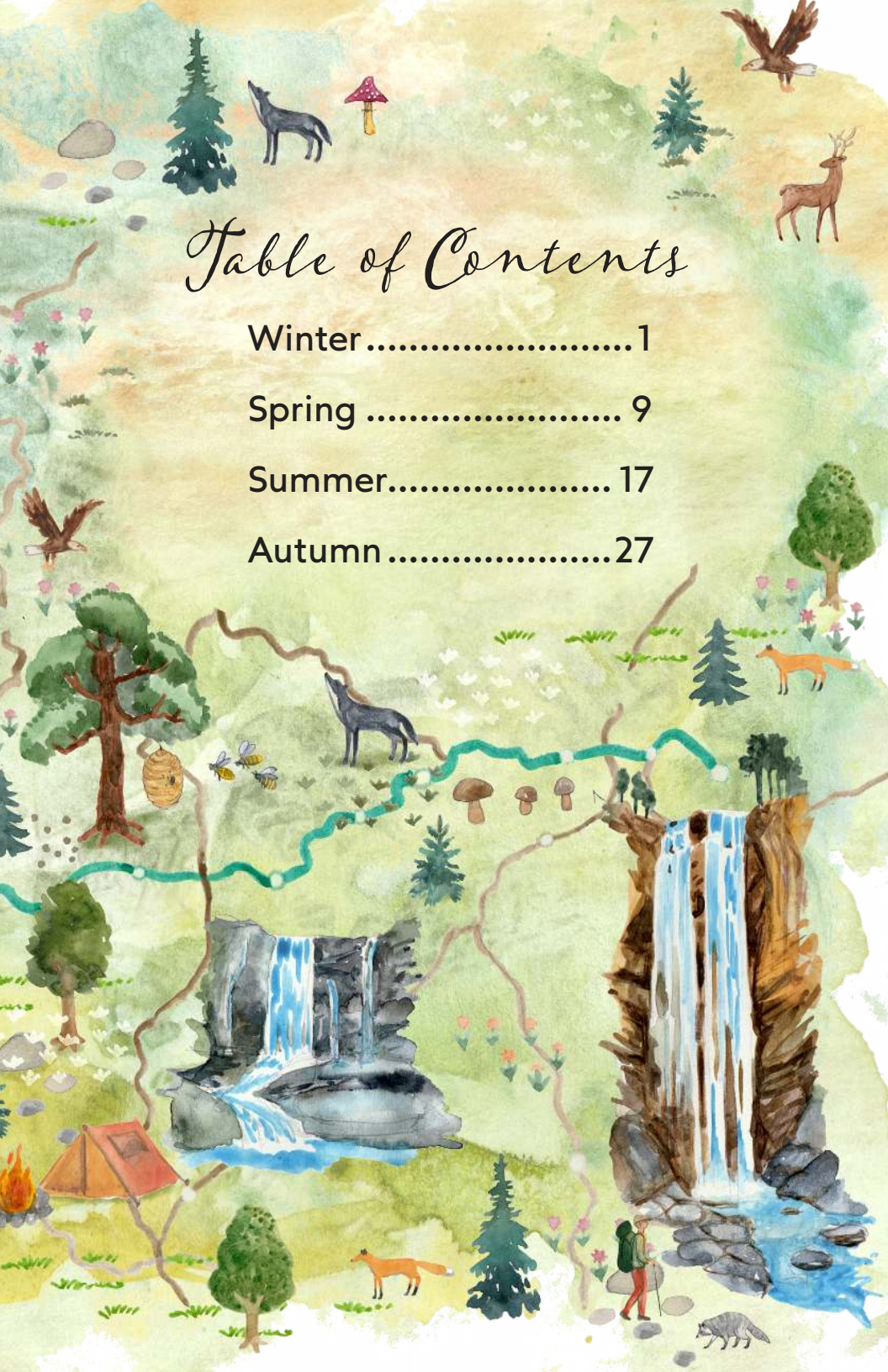


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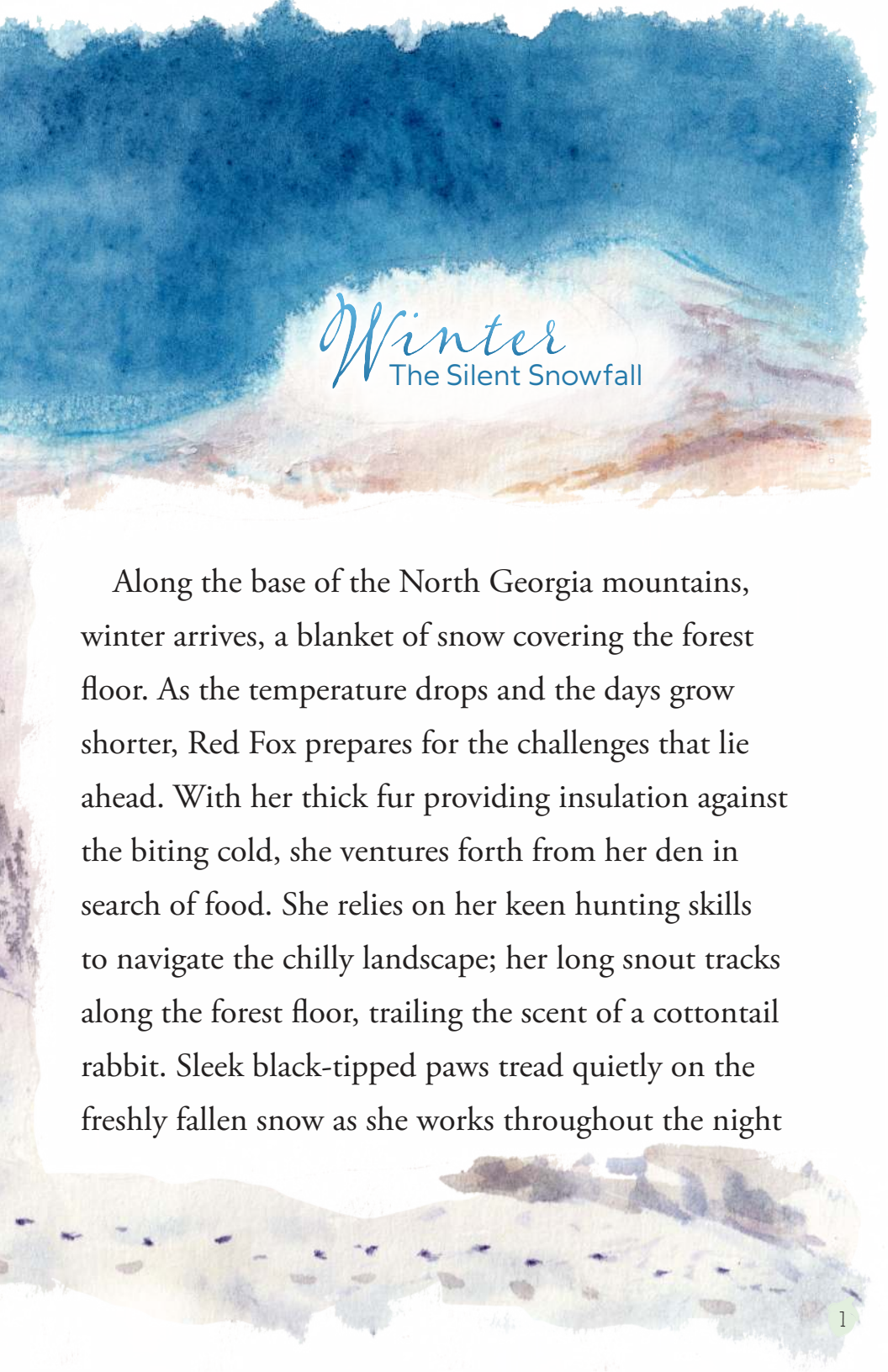
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Winter

The Silent Snowfall

Along the base of the North Georgia mountains, winter arrives, a blanket of snow covering the forest floor. As the temperature drops and the days grow shorter, Red Fox prepares for the challenges that lie ahead. With her thick fur providing insulation against the biting cold, she ventures forth from her den in search of food. She relies on her keen hunting skills to navigate the chilly landscape; her long snout tracks along the forest floor, trailing the scent of a cottontail rabbit. Sleek black-tipped paws tread quietly on the freshly fallen snow as she works throughout the night



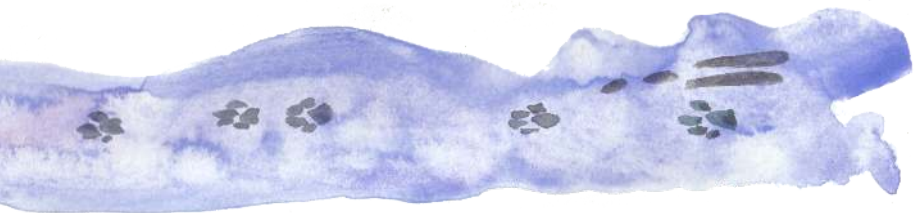
and into the early morning. As a golden sun rises over the mountains, her orange-red fur glimmers as it reflects the rising sun. She knows this mountain well, having lived here since she was a pup. Suddenly, she stops and turns her large ears to and fro. What is that she hears?

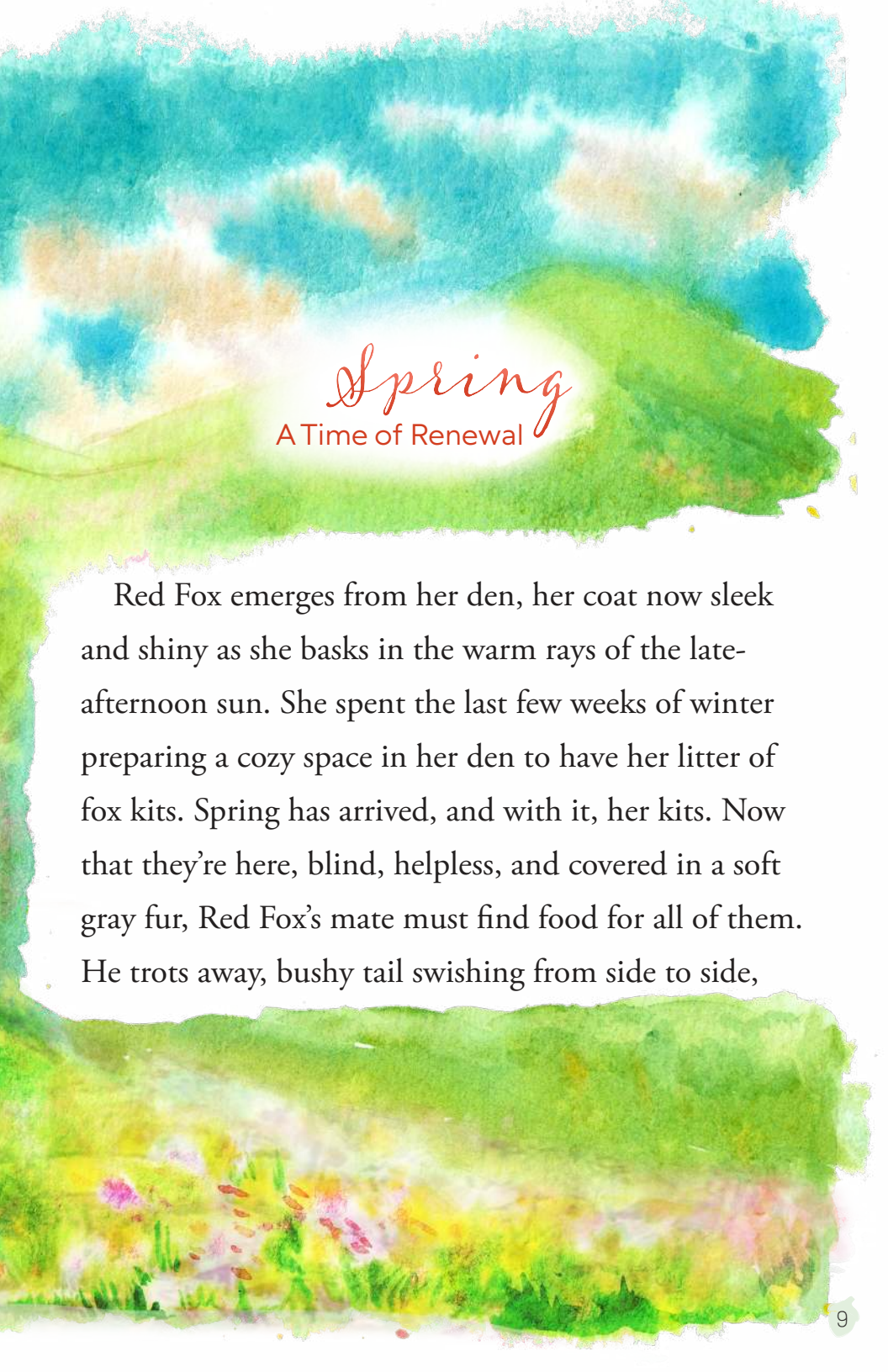
Not far from Red Fox, Wild Boar is foraging for acorns under the oak trees. Anything but quiet, Wild Boar sniffs and snuffles, his snout buried in the snow. Red Fox keeps a keen eye on Wild Boar's methodical





search for food. Intrigued, she follows him, keeping her distance as she watches him uncover hidden treasures on the frozen ground. Intent on his search for breakfast, the large animal presses along, snout to the ground, unaware that he's being watched. Acorns, roots, tubers, and even small mammals become his targets as he roams his territory. Despite his messy appearance, Wild Boar is a creature of routine and habit. He follows well-trodden paths through the woods, his thick hair providing protection from the biting cold.





Spring

A Time of Renewal

Red Fox emerges from her den, her coat now sleek and shiny as she basks in the warm rays of the late-afternoon sun. She spent the last few weeks of winter preparing a cozy space in her den to have her litter of fox kits. Spring has arrived, and with it, her kits. Now that they're here, blind, helpless, and covered in a soft gray fur, Red Fox's mate must find food for all of them. He trots away, bushy tail swishing from side to side,

to forage for mice or grasshoppers in the surrounding woods for his babies. Stretching in the sun one last time, Red Fox heads back into her den for the evening to keep the kits warm.

Sniffing along a fallen tree after sundown, Red Fox's mate has detected, with his keen hearing, the sound of a mouse digging under him. He crouches behind a large root, waiting for the mouse to make its appearance. The unsuspecting mouse pops out of his hole, and the fox pounces in one giant leap. Proud to have caught the next meal for his family, he runs back to the den with the small rodent in his mouth.



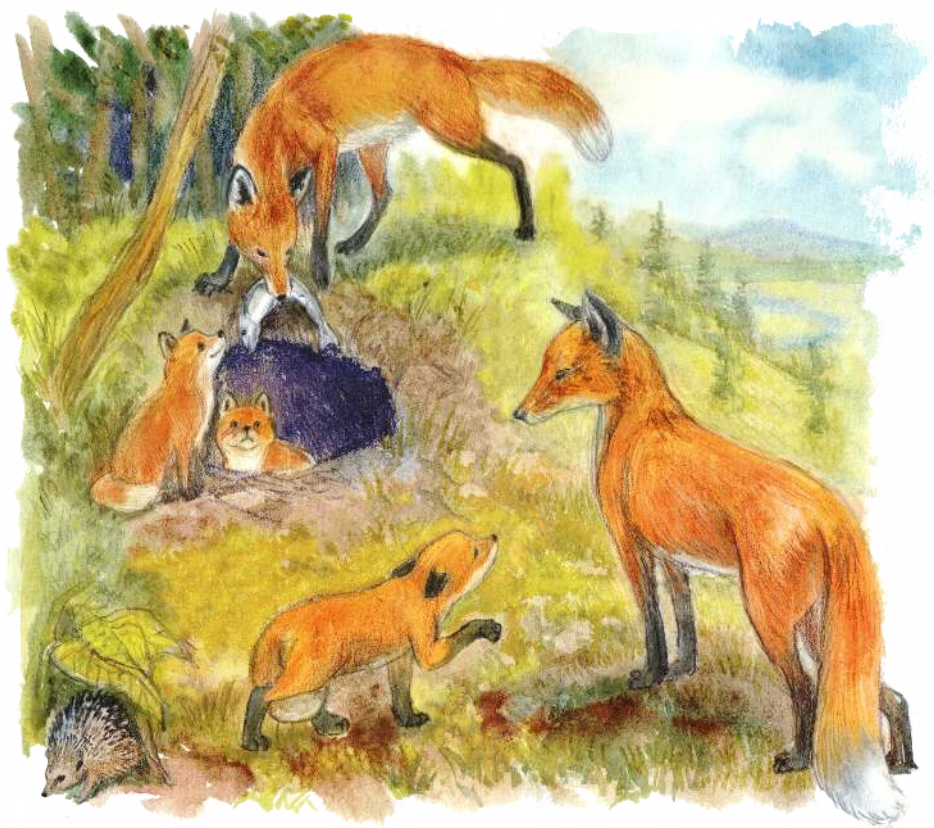


Summer

A Time of Abundance

June brings heat and humidity to the North Georgia mountains as the summer months blossom and bloom. Waiting for the heat of the day to pass, Red Fox and her little pack of kits roam the many tunnels of their shady den. Needing more space for the young ones to run, Red Fox cautiously heads out from the den to make sure the area is safe for her littles. Seeing no danger, Red Fox barks *wow-wow* to her offspring—a signal that it is safe to come out. The kits, who are now much bigger and busier than they were in the spring, spill out of the den entrance, wrestling with each other and playing chase. Every few minutes, a kit stops to drink nourishing milk from Red Fox.





Ears swiveling and nose sniffing, Red Fox picks up her head at the sound of her mate returning with a large fish for the family. Freshly caught in the cold mountain river that flows nearby, it is a tasty meal for the family, and the kits immediately hunker down and ambush the fish. They are practicing for the time when they will have to find their own food. Tearing at the fresh meat, each kit gets enough food to fill its belly for a while.

Red Fox is suddenly on alert. She has spotted a bald

eagle soaring overhead. With a long, shrill bark, she warns her babies to rush back to the safety of their den. The eagle circles and flies back over them, lower this time. One kit



is slower than the others. Determined to protect her young, Red Fox turns back, rears up on her hind feet, and bares her teeth at the eagle, growling and barking. The eagle gives up, and the baby fox safely makes it

into the dusty den to join its siblings.

The heat of the midday sun beats down on Mama Wild Boar and her piglets. They've spent the early morning rooting in a nearby field for juicy strawberries. With their bellies full, it's time to cool off. Unable to





sweat like other animals to cool their bodies down, the boars must head to their wallow—a muddy pit next to a stream. The piglets happily slide into the wallow nose first and roll around, coating their heated skin with cool mud. Mama Wild Boar follows them with a satisfied grunt, as the mud will also help remove the parasites that have made her skin their home. After a while, she calls to her piglets to leave the wallow and find somewhere to rub off the mud, as she is ready to take a nap until the sun sets and the air is cool again. One by one, the little boars trot after their mother.

Along the MOUNTAINSIDE

Seasons transition from one to the next in the beautiful North Georgia mountains. As the weather and foliage change, mammals of the southeastern United

States go about their busy lives.



Wild Boar scrounges for food in the underbrush while Pygmy Shrew seeks shelter in his burrow.

Red Fox is alert for trouble as Woodchuck prepares to hibernate for the winter. Follow these industrious animals as they are born, learn to find food, escape danger, and build cozy homes in *Along the Mountainside*, a story that will leave you feeling like part of this amazing ecosystem.





Marvelous
MAMMALS
from
DOWN UNDER
by
Heather Horn



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY



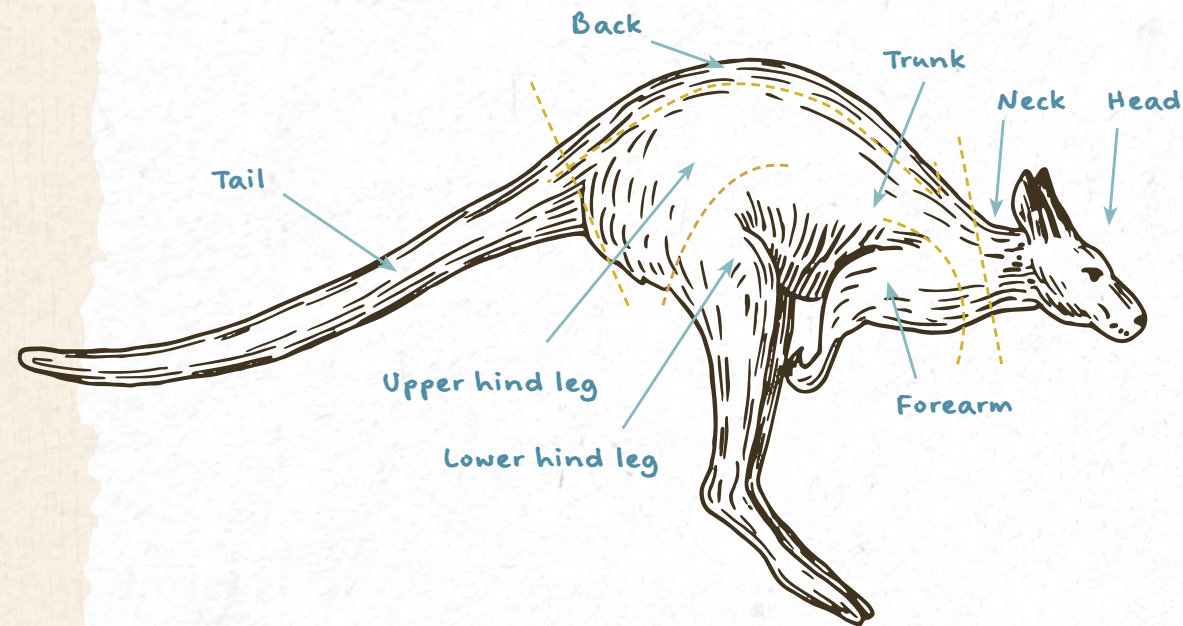


KANGAROOS

First, I'd like to introduce you to the eastern gray kangaroo. Did you know there are more kangaroos than people in Australia? Of the four large species of kangaroos, the eastern gray kangaroos are the most numerous. There are several million eastern grays that call eastern Australia home, so you are highly likely to see one on your journey through the outback.



Anatomy of a Kangaroo



Kangaroos do not walk like other animals. Their hind legs and feet move together when they jump. In fact, they cannot move their legs one at a time on land at all because their feet are so long, which is where their tails can help. Zoologists have studied how kangaroos use their tails, and they have learned that the tail is used to help push the kangaroo forward when jumping. In a way, it is like the kangaroo has a third leg.



At one year old, she will leave her mother, and her mother will have another baby. She will be on her own to find food and protect herself, making her home alone in the trees. Spending many hours sleeping, between 18–20 each day, koalas miss most of the daytime. They need this large amount of rest for their bodies to break down their diet of toxic eucalypt.

Have you ever looked closely at a koala's paws? They are very interesting! The hind paws are five-fingered and shaped similarly to a primate paw, but the second and third digits are stuck together to help with grooming, and the "thumb" lacks a sharp claw.



In what ways are the koala's paws like your hands? What is the most noticeable difference?



hind paw



front paw



The front paws also have sharp claws for climbing trees, but the fingers are split differently. Look at your hand. You have four fingers and one thumb that points away from the rest. Koalas have what looks like three fingers and two thumbs to help them cling to and climb trees—useful tools when you call the trees your home.



Another interesting fact about the opossum is that the mother's pouch opening is not placed upwards like other marsupials. It is more of a vertical opening toward the tail end of the mother, like another mammal, the Australian wombat, whose pouch opening faces her tail.

Mother platypuses hide away in burrows, so it took a long time for scientists to learn that they lay eggs. The mother carries the eggs inside her body for three weeks before laying her eggs. She then incubates them by lying on them to keep them warm for another week before they hatch. Once hatched, the baby platypuses crawl over to their mother to start drinking milk.



GOD'S WONDERFUL DESIGN



1

Echidna



2

Kangaroo



3

Koala



4*

Opossum

*Found in North America



5

Platypus



6

Possum



7

Tasmanian devil



8

Wallaby



9

Wallaroo



10

Wombat

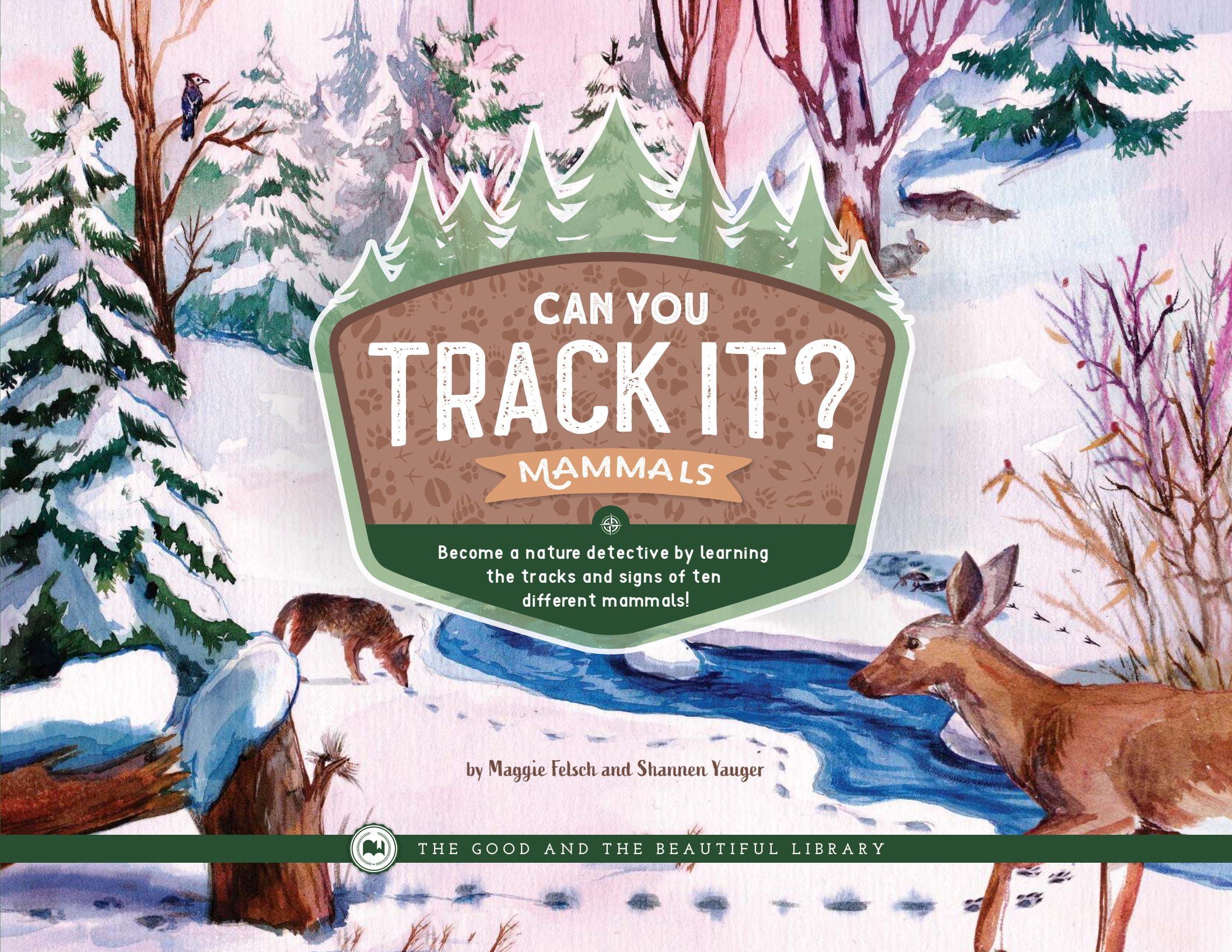
Marvelous
MAMMALS
from
DOWN UNDER

Come on a wild adventure through a continent filled with mammals unlike any other! Experience Australian mammals of the outback and coast, as well as their environments, in an interactive way. Look closely at the photographs and illustrations as you read about each unique species. What can you discover about the unusual mammals of the beautiful continent of Australia?



 ORIGINAL PUBLICATION





CAN YOU TRACK IT?

MAMMALS

Become a nature detective by learning
the tracks and signs of ten
different mammals!

by Maggie Felsch and Shannen Yauger



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY



Have you ever noticed animal tracks in the mud or the snow? Do you know what animal left those tracks? Did you pause to consider where that animal was going, what it was doing, or where it lived? A tree with claw scratches, a tuft of fur, a paw print, or a dropped feather may be all you have to go by.

In this book, become a detective of mammal tracks and signs by searching for clues in the scene. See if you can figure out what animal left the tracks and signs, and then turn the page to see if you are right!

? What mammal makes a home here?



Do you see the circular holes? What do you think those are from?

What kind of mammal digs for its dinner?

Track Facts:

Claw marks are present.



The tracks show five distinct toes.



15"

125"

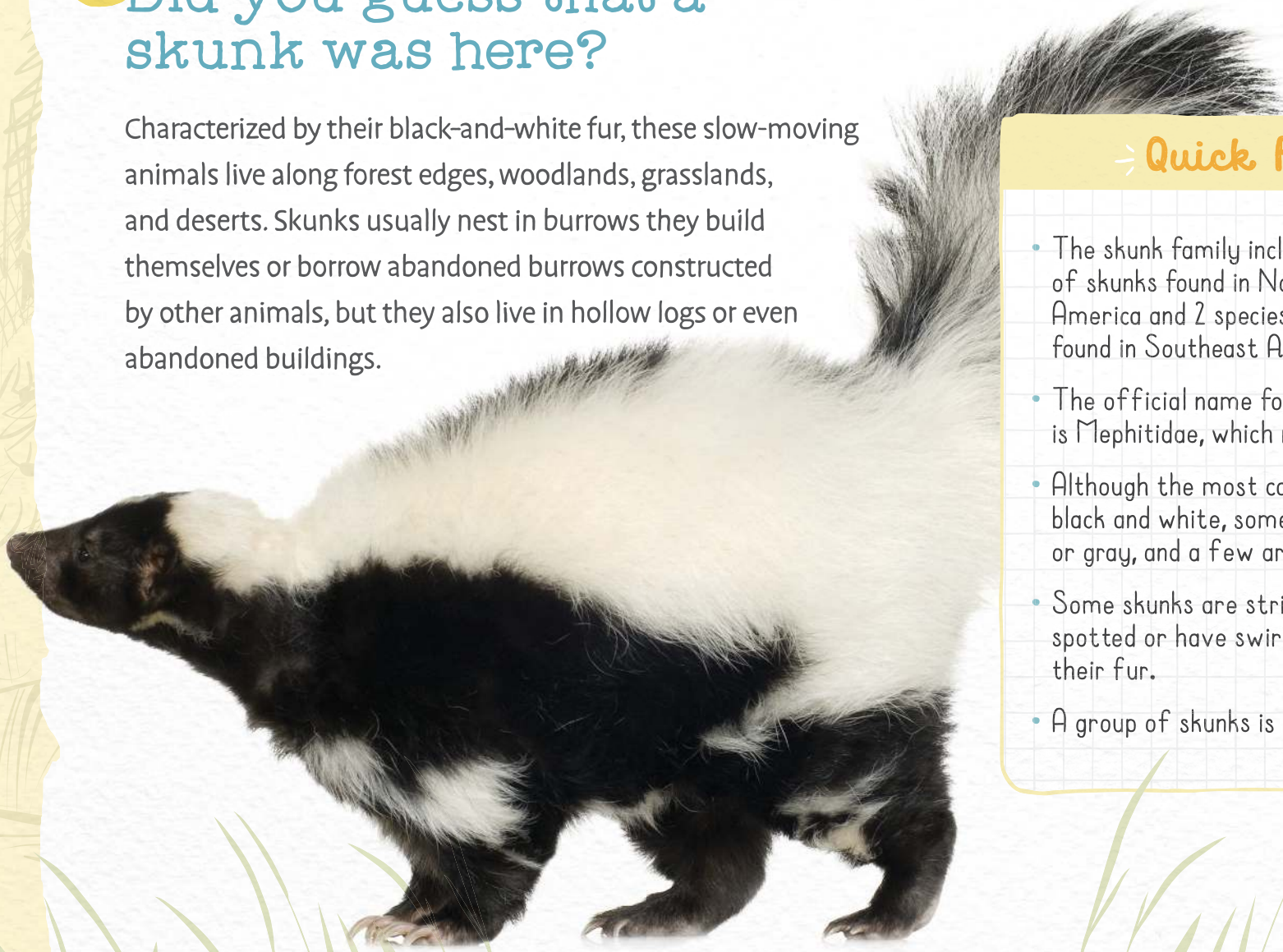
The hollow log looks like a lovely place for this mammal to sleep.

Something ate berries and took bites out of the mushrooms.

This mammal loves to eat nuts, vegetables, and fruits.

? Did you guess that a skunk was here?

Characterized by their black-and-white fur, these slow-moving animals live along forest edges, woodlands, grasslands, and deserts. Skunks usually nest in burrows they build themselves or borrow abandoned burrows constructed by other animals, but they also live in hollow logs or even abandoned buildings.



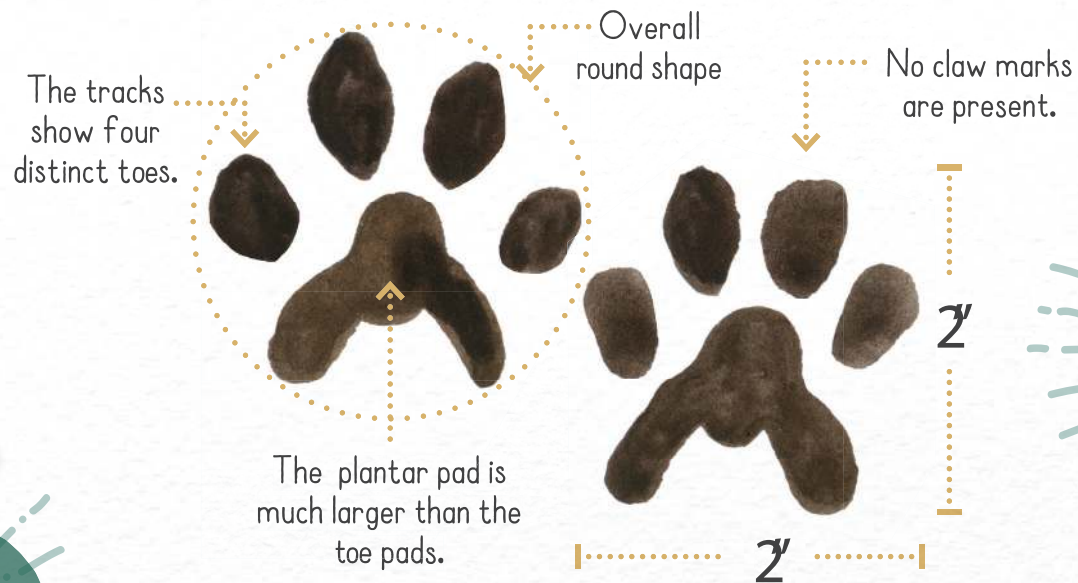
Quick Facts

- The skunk family includes 10 species of skunks found in North and South America and 2 species of stink badgers found in Southeast Asia.
- The official name for the skunk family is Mephitidae, which means "stink."
- Although the most common fur color is black and white, some skunks are brown or gray, and a few are cream-colored.
- Some skunks are striped, and some are spotted or have swirl patterns on their fur.
- A group of skunks is called a [surfeit](#).

Can you see
a tuft of
tan fur on a
branch?

This animal
left scratch
marks on
the tree.

Track Facts:



This animal left
tracks leading
down to the
stream where it
went to get a
drink of water.

Look at the
feathers! It looks
like this mammal
pounced on a bird.

The tracks
eventually
lead to this
mammal's
den.

! Look! It's a weasel!

Found across the world, except for Antarctica, Australia, and most oceanic islands, weasels live in a variety of habitats, from abandoned burrows to rock piles. They can live just about anywhere as long as the location is safe and has lots of options for food. These little mammals eat over 40 percent of their own body weight each day! You can find them in forests, grasslands, sand dunes, and sometimes even in your backyard.

These long, slim-bodied mammals have short legs and five small, clawed toes on each foot. Their necks are long, with small heads and eyes. This weasel has brown fur with paler fur on its belly, though some weasels will shed their brown fur and grow white fur in the winter to blend in with the snow. These weasels will often retain a bit of black, either on their faces or the tip of their tails.



When a weasel has white fur, it is called the “ermine” phase. Do you see how this works to camouflage the weasel in the snow?



? What mammal lives here?



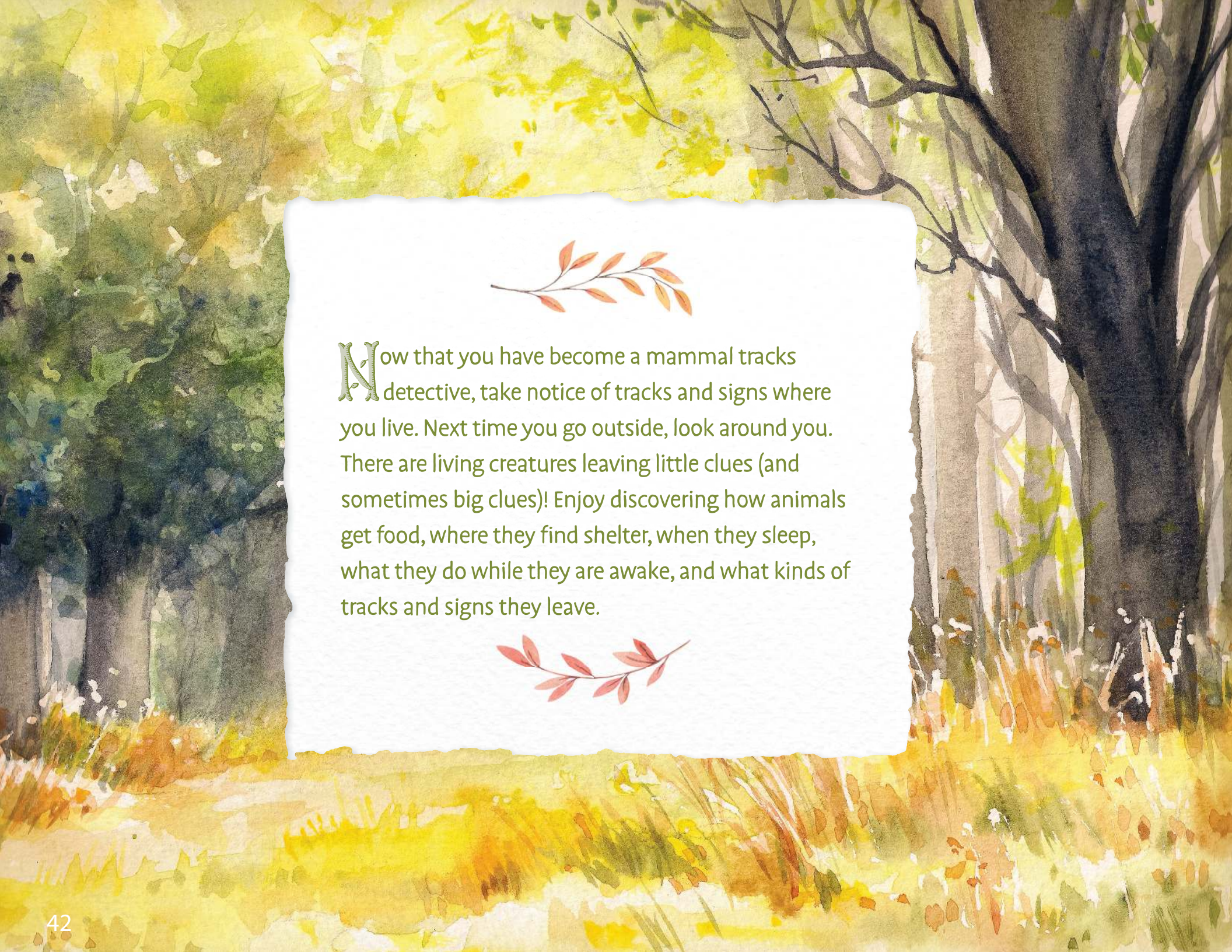
! A beaver built its home in the stream!

Beavers work together to build dams made of wood and mud to stop up water in streams and rivers. These dams provide still, deep water to protect it against predators like wolves, coyotes, and bears. The water also provides a way for the beavers to float big logs and sticks to their homes for use as building material and food. Once the dams are completed and ponds formed, beavers build a **lodge**—their home—in the middle of the pond. Like the dams, the dome-shaped lodges are constructed with wood and mud. The entrance to the lodge is underwater, making it difficult or impossible for most other animals to enter. The den of the lodge, which is above water on dry ground, usually has room to house up to four adults and six to eight young beavers.



Quick Facts

- Beavers are the second largest rodents in the world, after the capybara.
- They are mainly nocturnal, staying busy building dams and lodges throughout the night, though they can be seen out and about during the day.
- Beavers grow to around 3 feet long and can weigh 50 pounds or more.
- The beaver has poor eyesight but a good sense of hearing, smell, and touch.
- If a predator approaches, a beaver will use its broad, scaly tail to slap the water as an alarm signal to other beavers.
- Beavers are excellent swimmers with webbing between the toes of their large hind feet. They can stay underwater for up to 15 minutes.
- Beavers are herbivores, eating mainly the wood of a variety of trees.
- Beavers produce an oily substance in their fur called castoreum, which makes their coats waterproof.



Now that you have become a mammal tracks detective, take notice of tracks and signs where you live. Next time you go outside, look around you. There are living creatures leaving little clues (and sometimes big clues)! Enjoy discovering how animals get food, where they find shelter, when they sleep, what they do while they are awake, and what kinds of tracks and signs they leave.

