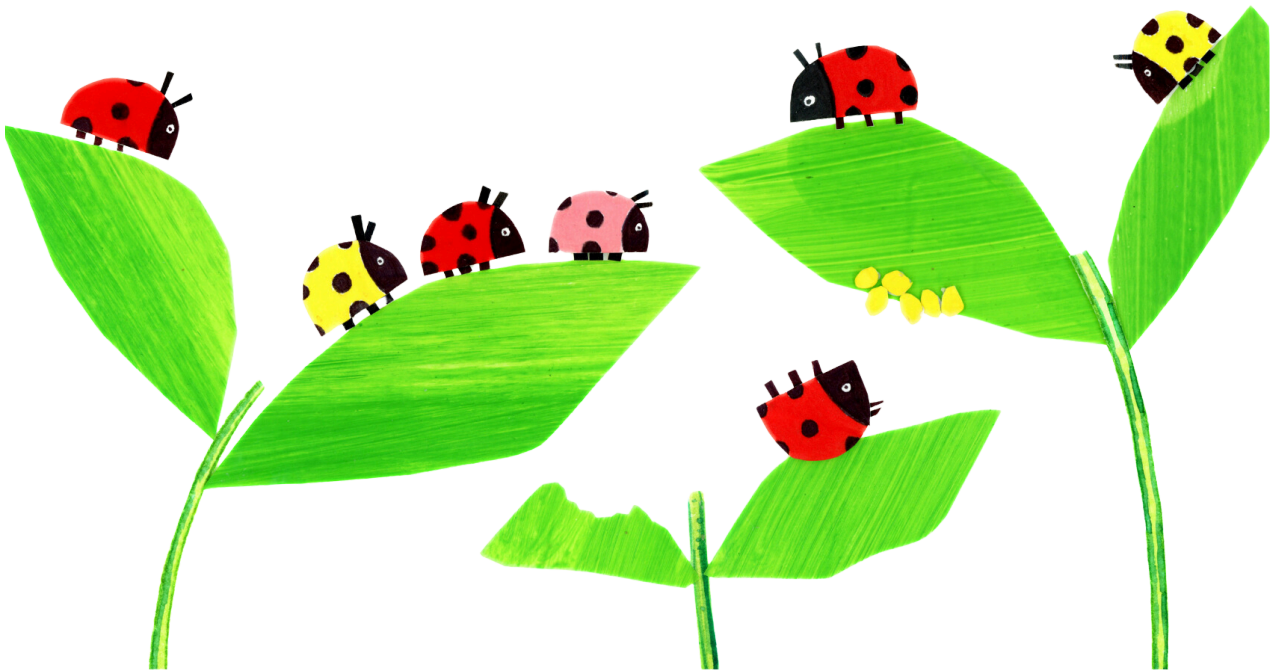


Amazing Creatures

Written and illustrated by Zoe Ko





BEES



Look at us! We are BEES. We are AMAZING CREATURES! We have been on our planet for many years.

We are important pollinators. We help plants by transferring pollen, allowing them to grow seeds and fruit. Have you heard the term busy as a bee? Well, we are all hard-working. We go from flower to flower, collecting nectar, never stopping. In one collection trip, we can visit 100 flowers.

Our favorite food is nectar and pollen. Nectar is a sugary liquid made from flowers. It's yummy and gives us energy to work! We have long tongues to get it. Pollen is a powder from the flowers that we use to feed our babies. They are called larvae.



We also live in a hive together with our Queen. The Queen Bee is the most important bee.

Her job is to lay eggs and make sure everyone in the bee colony is happy. She lays up to 1,000 eggs daily and up to 1.5 million in her lifetime.

If it happens that our Queen dies, we will create a new queen by choosing a young larva and feeding it “royal jelly.”

Some predators, like birds, reptiles, dragonflies, and even bears, hunt us. Bears destroy our hives to get the honey inside. That’s why we protect the hive by building it high in the tree.

We love making honey and storing it in the hive for the winter. One of us can produce no more than a tablespoon of honey in a lifetime. Next time when you taste our honey, think about the incredible teamwork it takes to make it.

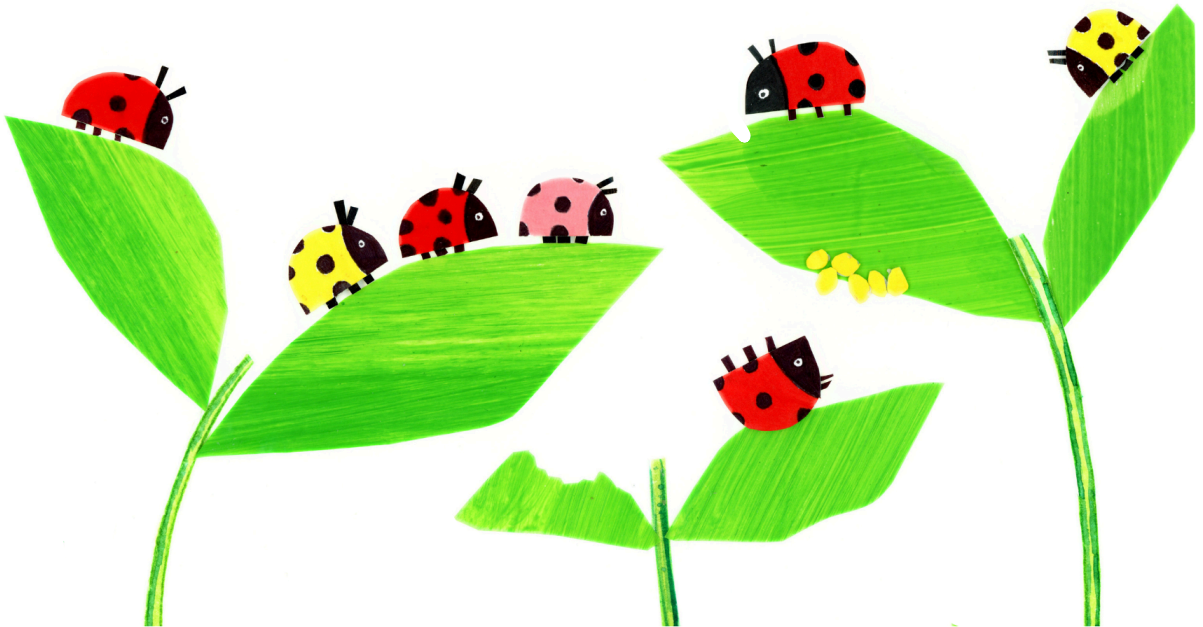


LADYBUGS

Look at us! We are LADYBUGS. We are AMAZING CREATURES! We come in different shapes and colors. We have wings to fly with and black dots on them. They signal to predators. “Go away! DON’T eat me! I taste horrible!”

When we are threatened, we play dead. We pull our legs up “turtle style” and release smelly liquid that keeps the attackers away. We lay our eggs in clusters on the underside of a leaf to hide them.

We are born spotless, and the spots appear later in time. We get the number and color of our spots through genes handed down over thousands of generations. Our spots are unique, just like your human fingerprints are.



We also bring LUCK and HAPPINESS. It's no wonder that we appear in many myths, legends, songs, and children's stories.

People believe that we can grant wishes. Like dandelion fluff, one can blow on our wings and MAKE A WISH.

If we appear in your dreams, it means that GOOD NEWS is on the horizon. Something magical and wonderful will happen. Wait, and you will see.

Next time when you spot a ladybug standing on a leaf, blow a wish on its wings!

It will happen IF you truly WISH it.



Any wishes?

Can you count my dots?



CATERPILLAR

Look at me! I am a CATERPILLAR. I am an AMAZING CREATURE. I am a typical vegetarian biter with strong jaws that can get through thicker leaves. My body is long and soft, and my gut moves on its own. Many predators want to eat me, but I know how to protect myself. I blend into my surroundings. It's hard for them to see me.

Unfortunately, I live only for a month before I turn into a beautiful butterfly. The big change I undergo is called ME-TA-MOR-PHO-SIS.



1

First, I hatch from a little egg laid by a butterfly.



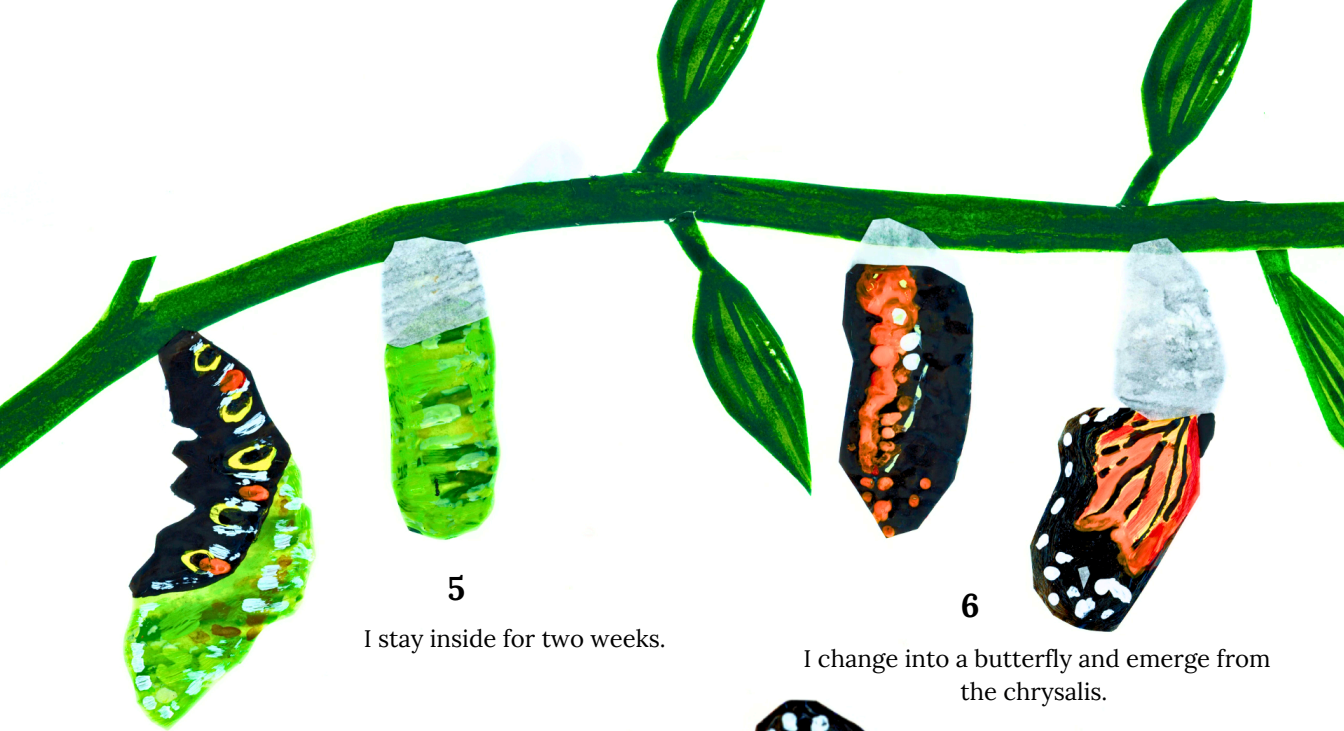
2

Then, I eat many green leaves to get stronger and bigger.



3

After some time, I grow into a giant caterpillar.



5

I stay inside for two weeks.

6

I change into a butterfly and emerge from the chrysalis.

4

I build a cocoon around myself.

I am a strong and beautiful BUTTERFLY.
I want to EXPLORE the world.



The circle repeats itself when I am ready to lay an egg,
and a new larva hatches from it.



FROGS

Look at me! I am a FROG! I am an AMAZING CREATURE! I live in rainforests, swamps, and lakes. I have smooth and moist skin and webbed feet. I can jump twenty times higher than myself.

I am an **AM-PHI-BI-AN**. It means that I can live in water and on land. I rely on my camouflage to blend in, so predators like birds and snakes can't eat me. I also love to croak! My croak is loud and scares them!

1.

My mother lays a clump of eggs in the water.



2.

I swim out of the egg.



3.

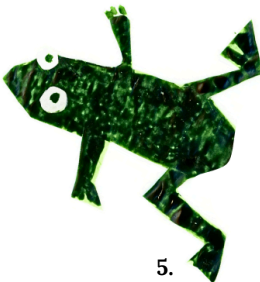
I am a fast tadpole.



FROG Life Cycle

5.

My lungs are fully developed, and my tail disappeared.
I am a FROG. Croak-croak!



4.

I sprout legs and arms but still have a tail.



When we are small tadpoles, we eat mostly algae. But when we grow older, our diet changes, and we begin to eat insects, spiders, worms, and even slugs and snails.

Our long and sticky tongues are excellent for catching flies!

Come here, juicy one!



ANTS

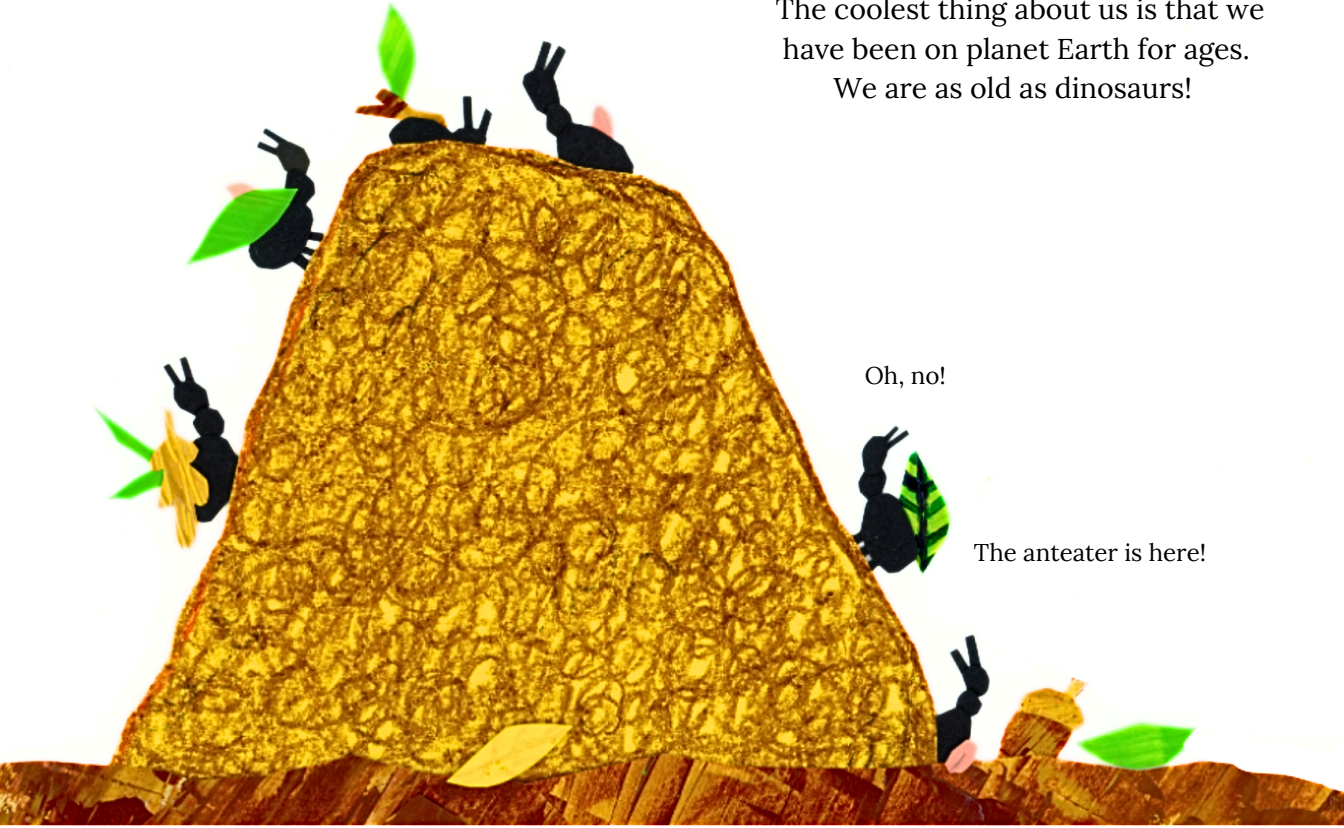
Look at us! We are ANTS. We are AMAZING CREATURES. We can carry 50 times our own body weight.

Our home is usually underground, and we live in an anthill with our Ant Queen. We have a well-organized routine. To make it work, each of us has an important job: The ant queen lays eggs; the worker ants gather food for the winter, and the young ants spend most of their time caring for the queen.

The coolest thing about us is that we
have been on planet Earth for ages.
We are as old as dinosaurs!

Oh, no!

The anteater is here!



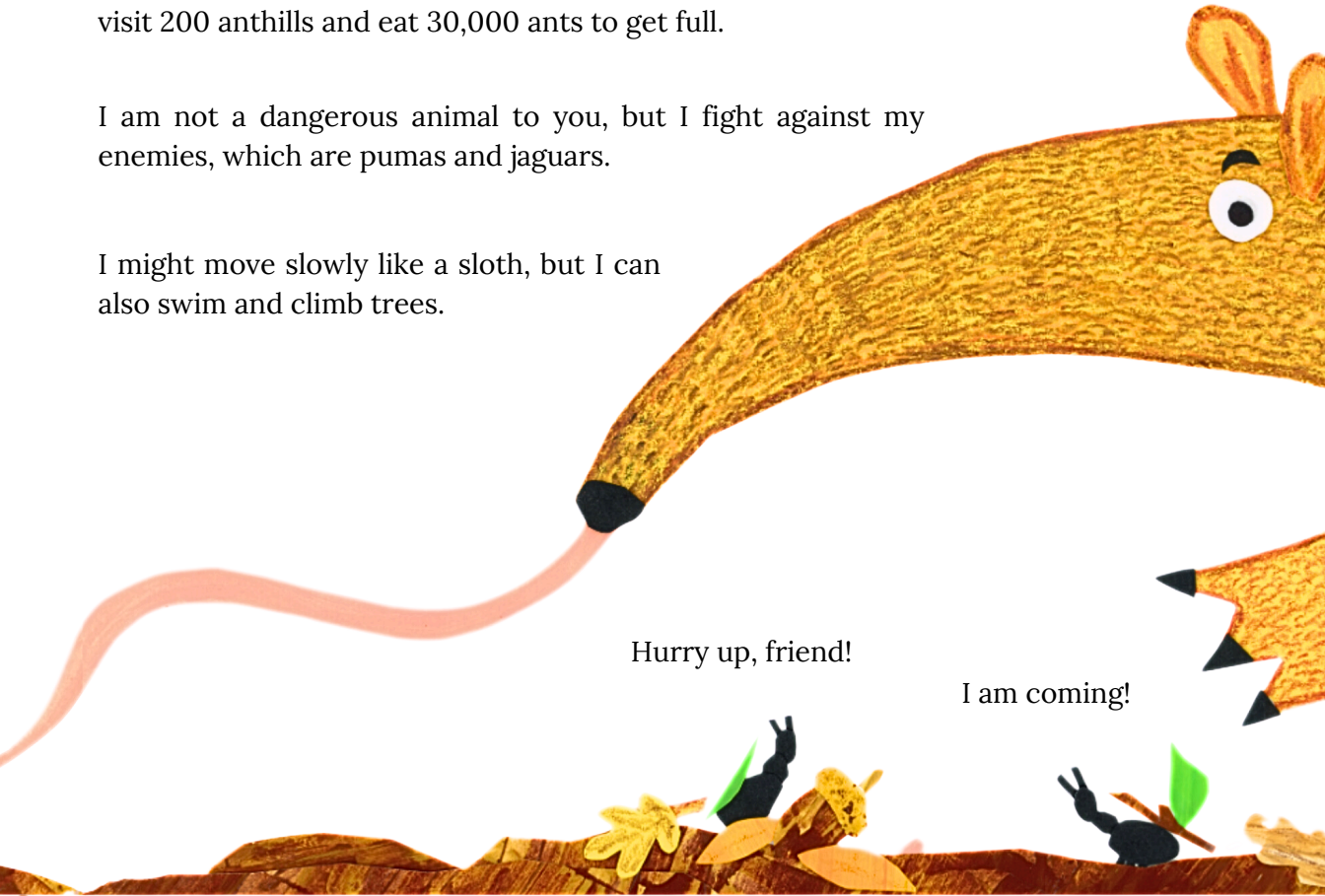
ANTEATER

Look at me! I am an ANTEATER. I am an AMAZING CREATURE. I am an unusual-looking one with a long head and a large snout. Can you guess what's my favorite food? It's ANTS. I carefully remove the top portion of their anthills and stick my snout inside to lap up as many as possible.

My tongue is long and sticky. It's perfect for catching ants. Sometimes I have to visit 200 anthills and eat 30,000 ants to get full.

I am not a dangerous animal to you, but I fight against my enemies, which are pumas and jaguars.

I might move slowly like a sloth, but I can also swim and climb trees.



Hurry up, friend!

I am coming!

HEDGEHOG

Look at me! I am a HEDGEHOG. I am an AMAZING CREATURE. I have prickly spines on my back. When I was a baby, my spines were short and soft, but with the time passing and me growing, they became stiffer, harder, and longer.

I stay in my nest with my mom for three weeks, and then I am on my own looking for food. I am vegetarian and love eating mushrooms, berries, fruit, and insects that live in the forest, like snails, slugs, caterpillars, and beetles. I can even eat mice, frogs, lizards, and snakes.

I am a NOC-TUR-NAL animal. I love to sleep in the day and come out at night. I also HIBER-NATE. This means that I sleep through the winter.

You know me by the name HEDGE-HOG, but a long time ago, people called me URCHIN. It's funny, isn't it? Just like the SEA URCHINS that live in the sea.

I am a good swimmer, but my strength is my sharp spines. I roll up into a ball to protect myself from predators, so they can't eat me. Can you guess how many spines there are on my back? More than 5,000.

I appear in many cultures, myths, and children's books. In Mongolian stories, Mongolian people believe that if I enter their houses, I will bring them bad luck. That's, of course, just a superstition.

I am a charming and adorable creature, and kids love me!



OWL

Look at me! I am an OWL! I am an AMAZING CREATURE! I am a night flyer, and when the sun rises, I settle down for a good sleep in the branches of the trees. But when the night comes, I am ready for hunting.

Since I hunt in the darkness, I have amazing eyesight and well-developed hearing. I can't move my eyes to look around. Instead, I swivel my entire head. I swoop silently on my victim and grab it in my sharp talons.

I feed on other animals, like mice and small birds. I don't chew on my food and gobble it whole. After I digest it, I cough up some bones and fur.

If you come to hear my night-time hooting "Hoot-Hoot," it's a TERRITORIAL one. I tell other owls in the forest that "there are intruders in my territory."

I also signal that we all might be in danger of predators being close by. Have you heard my night-time hooting?

Hoot-Hoot



TOUCAN

Look at me! I am a TOUCAN. I am an AMAZING CREATURE! I live in the tropical forest of Central and South America. I am an exotic bird.

I have short wings and a long tail. The most outstanding thing about me is my GIANT COLORED BEAK. It might look heavy, but it's hollow and very light. It's made of KERATIN—the same thing your fingernails are made from.

Believe it or not, I am a very lazy bird. I don't fly high in the sky to search for food but prefer to stay in the trees and enjoy eating delicious fruits.

I am also a very noisy bird—the noisiest in the forest. I make loud barks and harsh croaks.

I have many friends. We hang out together in flocks of three and more. We also have a very important job to do keeping rainforests alive.

We eat many different fruits and pass the seeds, which helps the plants to keep growing and maintains the diversity of the rainforest.

Take good care of us. Sometimes we are hunted by humans for our meat or our stunning feathers.

We can also get hit by falling trees. It's bad when humans chop down trees, and we get hurt.

Please protect us!



CHAMELEON

Look at me! I am a CHAMELEON. I am an AMAZING CREATURE. I live in Africa, Asia, and southern Europe. My name comes from the Greek words "CHAMAI" and "LEON" and means "Earth Lion."

If you watch me moving, you will see that I go in a swaying manner. This is because I imitate a leaf in the wind and try to camouflage myself from enemies.

Sometimes I pretend to be dead when in danger. I freeze, fall on the ground, and stay like that until I feel safe.

I love to change colors! I take on the color of my environment for camouflage, but my color also depends on my mood.

If I am really ANGRY, I can go black. But if I am in love, I take on the brightest colors to impress the other chameleons around.

I like eating bugs. I shoot my tongue out, and the insects stick to it, being caught like a fish on a fishing line. I call this TONGUE-HUNTING.

I also have a beautiful tail. I wrap it around tree branches and use it when climbing.

Look at the picture on the next page and you will see me hunting for small bugs. They are super tasty.

I am trying to catch a fly.



SEAHORSES

Look at me! I am a SEAHORSE. I am an AMAZING CREATURE. I am a type of fish that can be found in oceans all over the world.

My body, snout, tail, and back spines give me a dragon-like look. I use my gills to breathe underwater.

When I fall in love, I stay together with my partner for years. Sometimes I get too worried about getting lost in the rogue current, and that's why we hold on to each other's tails.

When it's time for us to make babies, my partner lays eggs inside the pouch on my tummy. It's important to keep the baby seahorses inside the pouch after being born until they can take care of themselves.

I keep myself in one position
by wrapping my curly TAIL
around a plant in the sea.



My SNOUT and back spines
give me a dragon-like look.
Don't you think?

I have a POUCH to keep my babies
inside until they are ready to care for
themselves.





AMAZING CREATURES

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