



Questioning

Level 2

A Collection of Readings

**Reading
Wings** 4th
Edition

The **Savvy
Reader**

This project was developed at the Success for All Foundation under the direction of Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden to utilize the power of cooperative learning, frequent assessment and feedback, and schoolwide collaboration proven in decades of research to increase student learning.

The Savvy Reader—Questioning, A Collection of Readings

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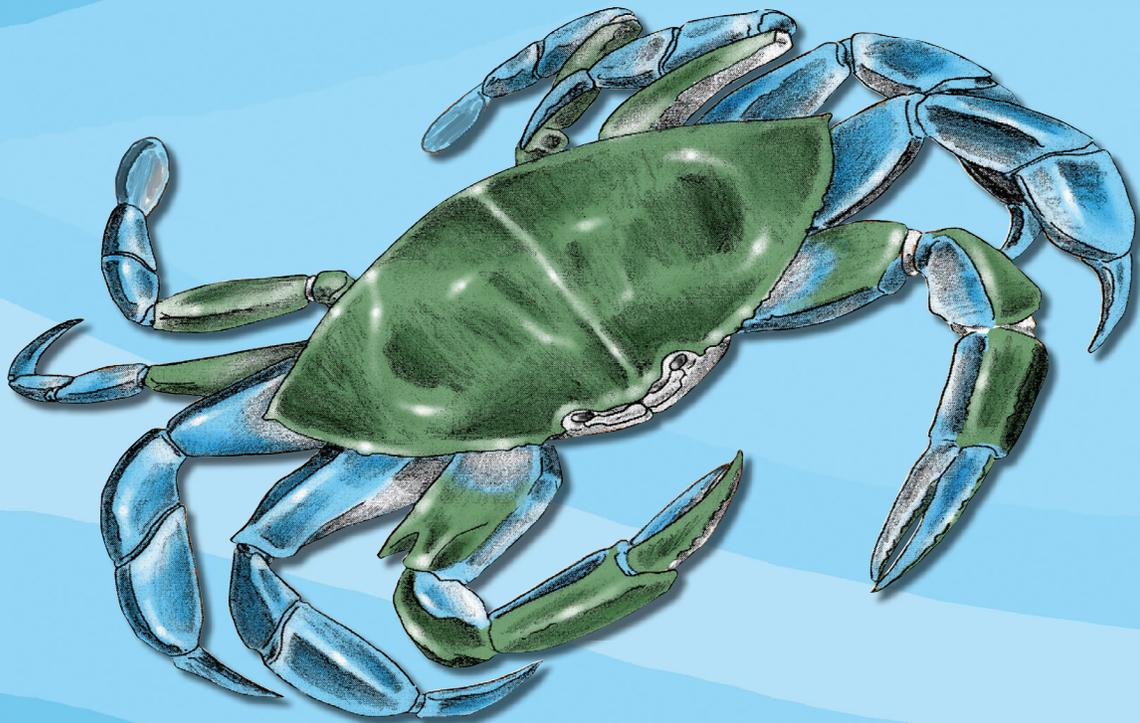


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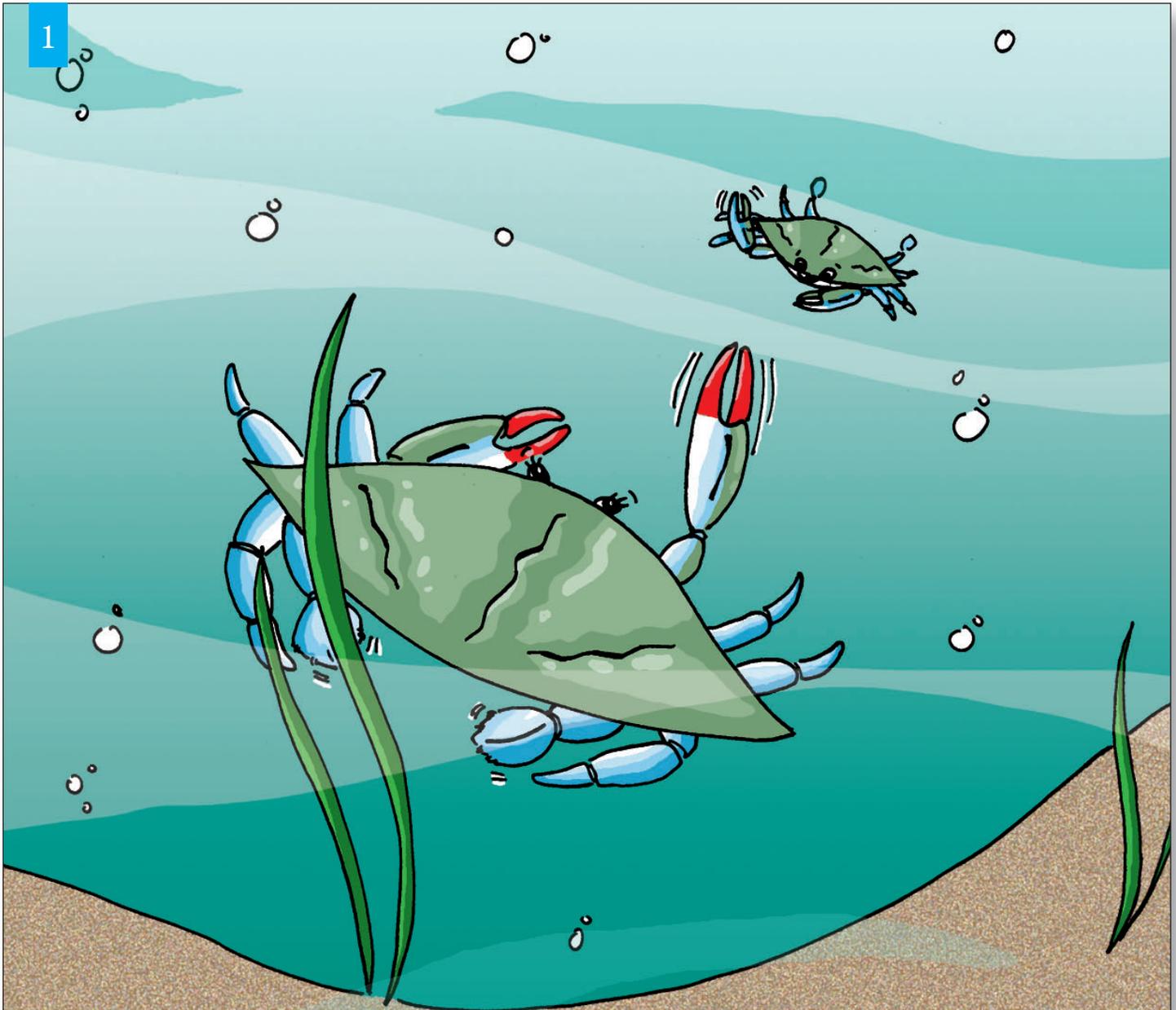
Sky,

The Blue Crab



By J. F. Ryan

1



“Don’t swim too far into the bay grass,” said Rose Crab to her young son, Sky. “You might get lost!”

“Don’t worry, Mom,” said Sky, “I can always find my way home.”

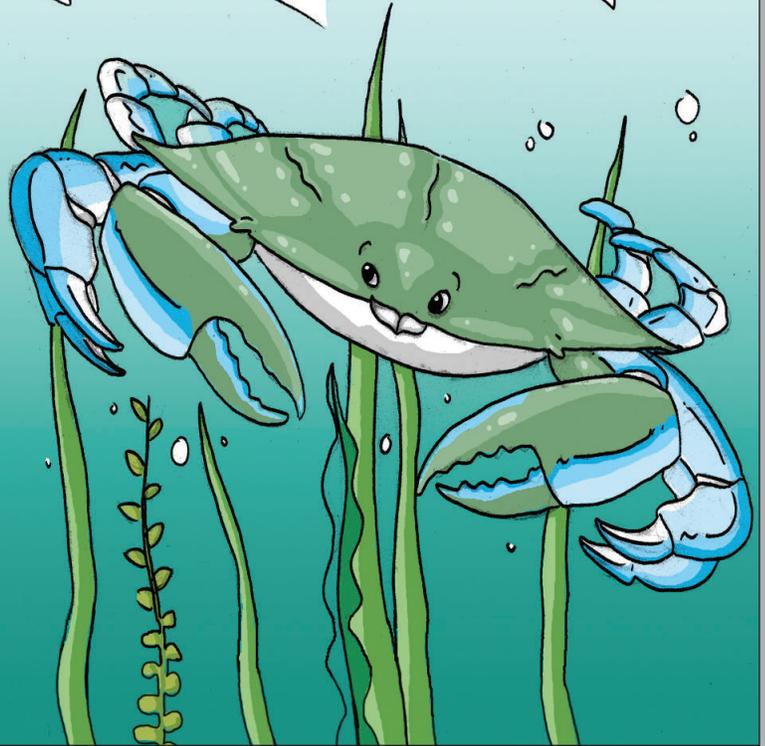
Rose Crab had named her son Sky because his blue claws looked like the blue sky over their Chesapeake Bay home.

Sky liked to swim in the grass that grew under the water near his home. He’d play hide and seek with other young crabs, or search for food like mussels, tiny fish, and even leftovers from a fisherman’s lunch.

2

Sky was a curious young crab. He'd heard about a sandy beach that lay beyond the grass. Children played there, and butterflies filled the air. He wanted to see this beach for himself.

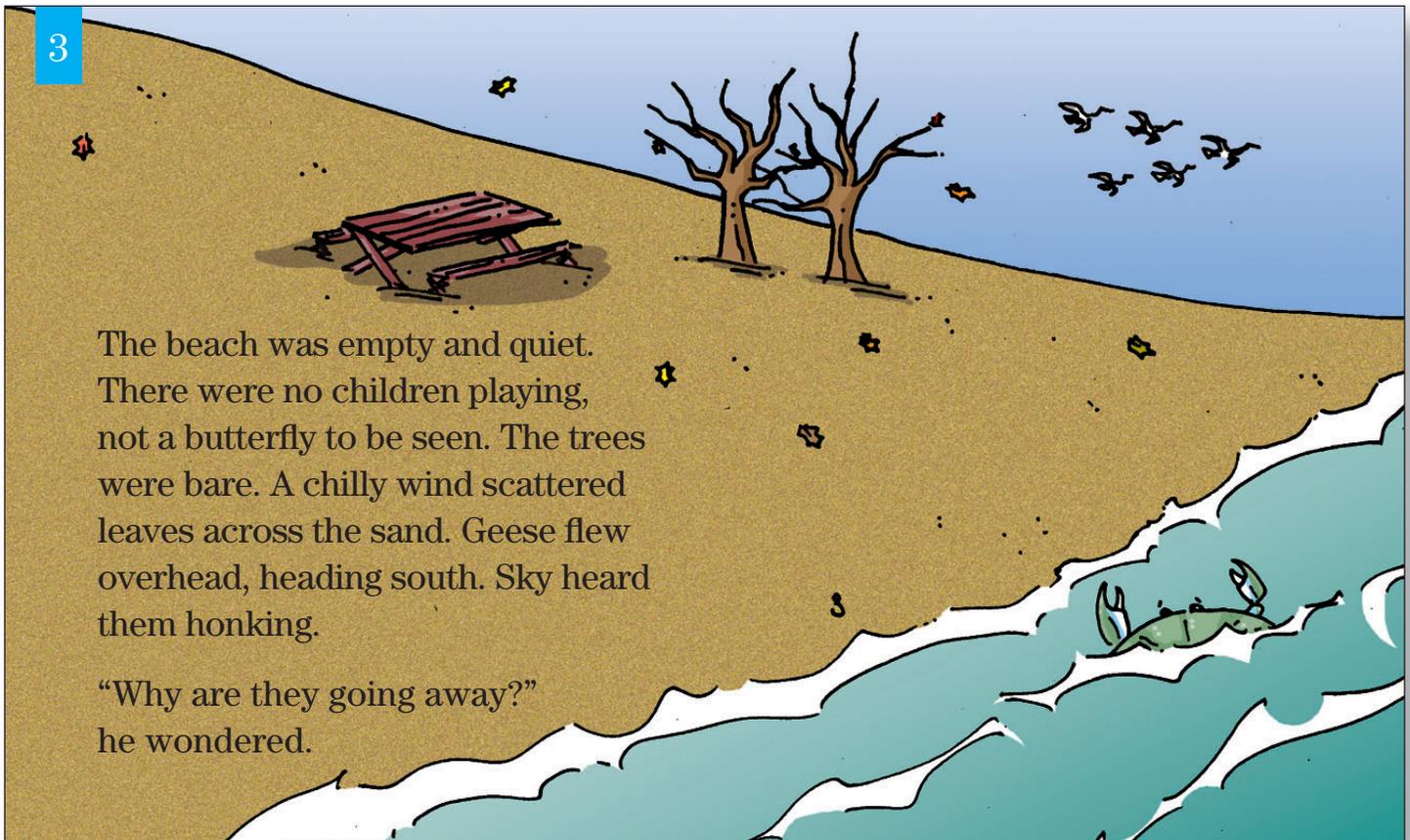
So one day Sky swam far into the bay grass, farther than he had ever gone before. When he reached the shallow water near the beach, he stopped to look around.



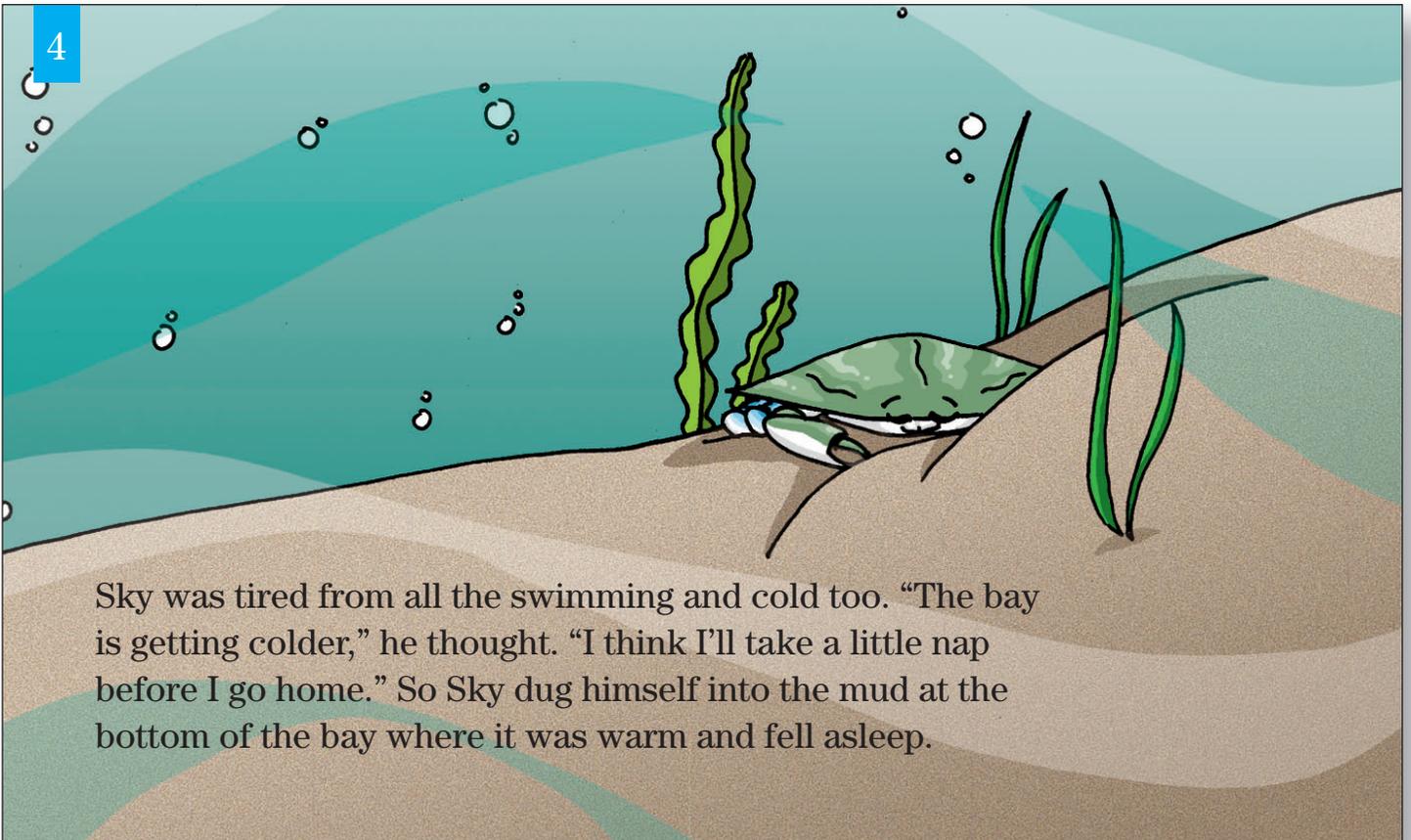
3

The beach was empty and quiet. There were no children playing, not a butterfly to be seen. The trees were bare. A chilly wind scattered leaves across the sand. Geese flew overhead, heading south. Sky heard them honking.

“Why are they going away?” he wondered.

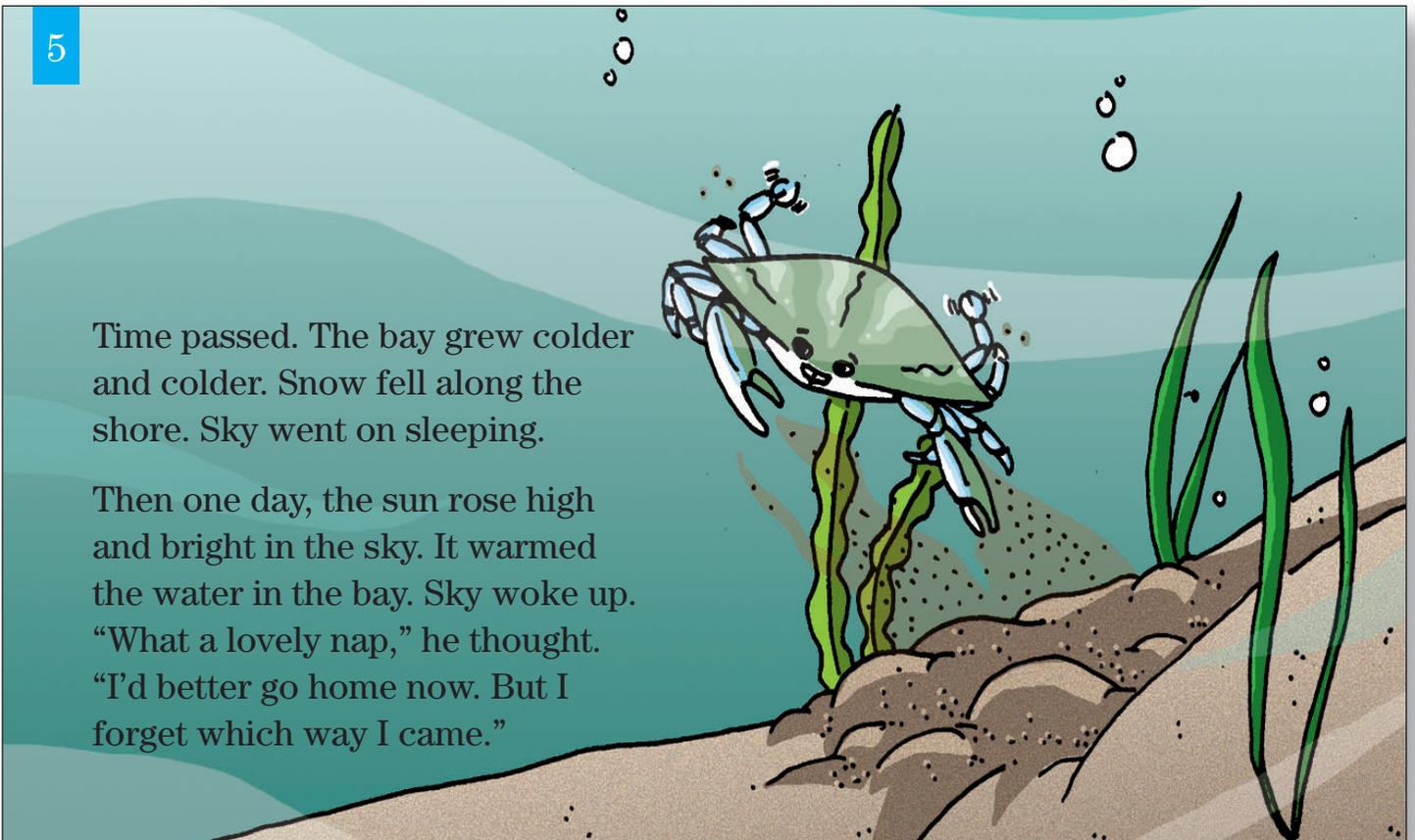


4



Sky was tired from all the swimming and cold too. “The bay is getting colder,” he thought. “I think I’ll take a little nap before I go home.” So Sky dug himself into the mud at the bottom of the bay where it was warm and fell asleep.

5



Time passed. The bay grew colder and colder. Snow fell along the shore. Sky went on sleeping.

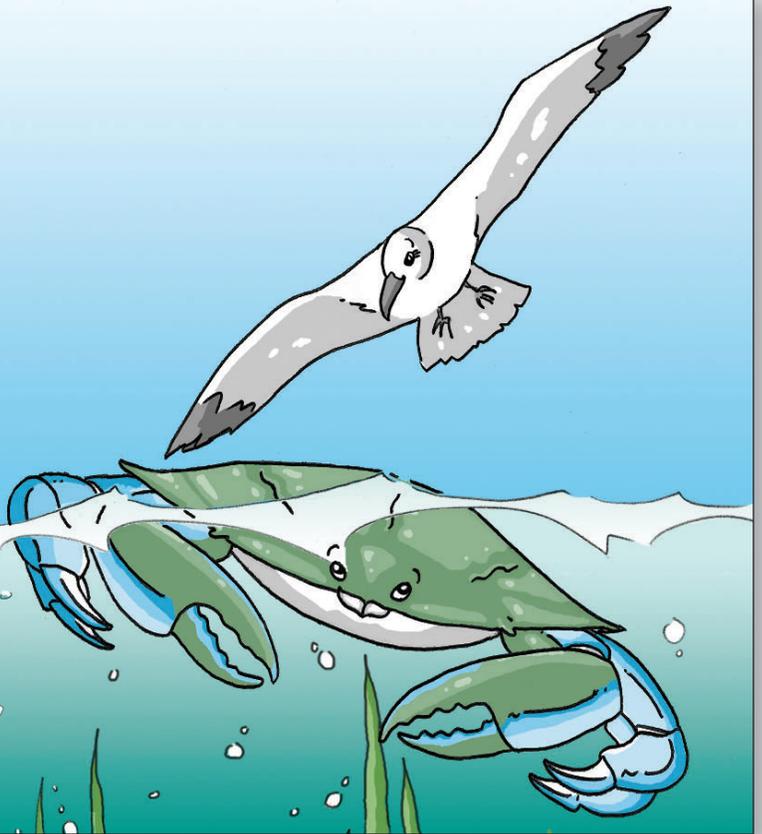
Then one day, the sun rose high and bright in the sky. It warmed the water in the bay. Sky woke up. “What a lovely nap,” he thought. “I’d better go home now. But I forget which way I came.”

6

Sky swam in one direction then another, but neither direction took him home. “Mom was right,” he thought, sadly, “I swam too far, and now I’m lost.” Just then, he heard a voice call his name. He looked up and saw his friend Gertrude Seagull hovering above him.

“It’s about time you woke up!” she said. “You’ve been asleep for months.”

“I have?” asked Sky.



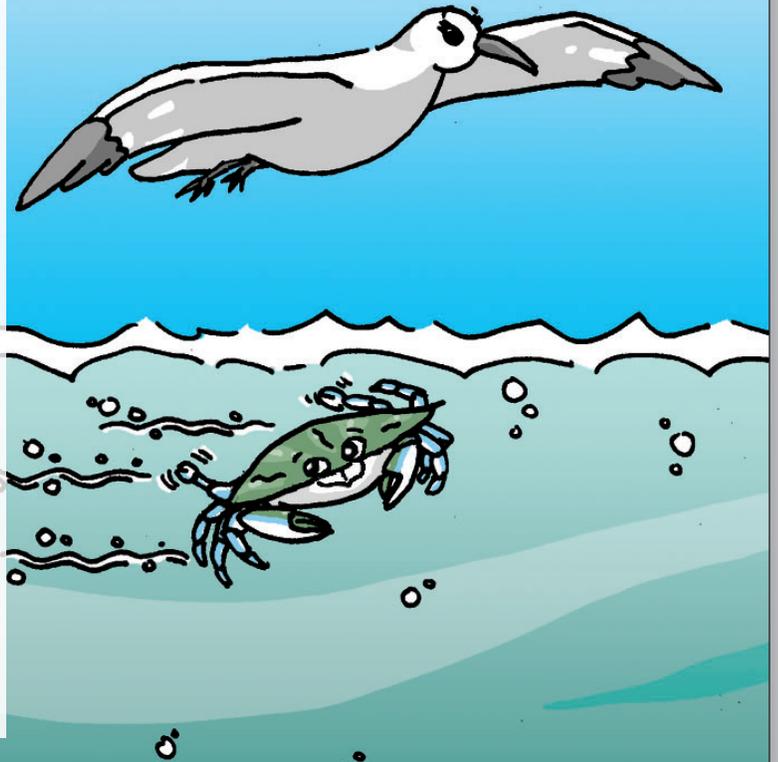
7

“You slept through the winter. All crabs do,” Gertrude said.

“Winter! Of course, that’s why the beach was empty! That’s why the geese were leaving! I’ve been gone a long time. Mom must be worried. But I don’t know how to get home,” Sky said.

“Follow me,” Gertrude said, “I’ll take you there.”

Flying just above the water, with Sky swimming after her, Gertrude led the little crab home.

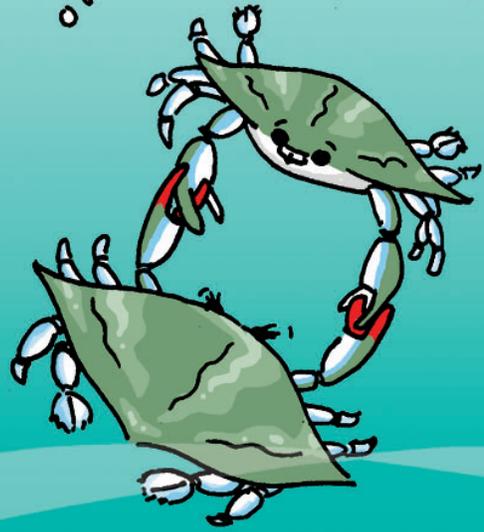


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Seeing her son, Rose Crab cried, “Sky! Where have you been?” They grabbed each other’s claws in a happy crab hug.

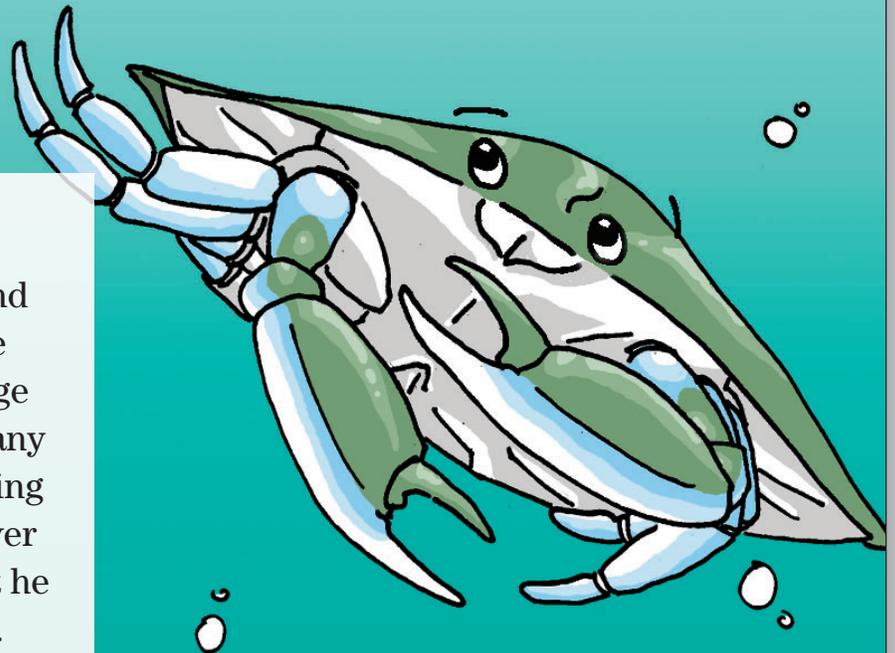
“I wanted to see the beach, so I swam far into the grass, but winter came and I fell asleep,” Sky told her.

“It’s good to be curious, Sky,” Rose said, “But you have to be careful too. You’re lucky you had a friend to bring you home.”



9

“I know, Mom,” Sky said, “I’ll never get lost again.” And he never did. Sky lived to be eight years old, a very old age for a blue crab. He made many friends. He went on swimming in the bay grass, but wherever he swam, he made sure that he always knew the way home.



Tabby the Terrapin

Tabby the terrapin lived in a marsh near the Chesapeake Bay. She was a young turtle with a diamond pattern on her shell. Tabby loved living in the murky, salty water in the marsh. Most days she swam around looking for mussels and snails to eat.

One day while Tabby searched for food, she found a very strange object. “What is this?” Tabby wondered. It was clear and hard. It had writing on it. Inside was a bit of water and a small minnow. The minnow was stuck!

“Please help!” cried the minnow. Tabby started to swim away to find help. Just then, she saw a human walking closer. Tabby hid behind a clump of sea grass. She watched the human. He was a young boy. He had a large black bag. The human lifted the strange object. When he saw the minnow inside, he tipped it into the water. The minnow swam free. The boy put the strange object into the black bag.

As Tabby kept watching, she saw the boy put other strange objects into the bag. After a while, Tabby knew that the boy was a friend of the bay.

How Vance Became a Great Blue Heron

“Mom, how can I become a great blue heron?” asked Vance.

Vance’s mother chuckled. “Don’t be silly, Vance. You’re already a great blue heron. That’s the type of bird you are.”

Vance was not satisfied with his mother’s answer. “No. I want to be really great,” he thought. He flew from the nest and looked for his friend Chaz, who was a great egret.

“How did you become a great egret?” Vance asked Chaz.

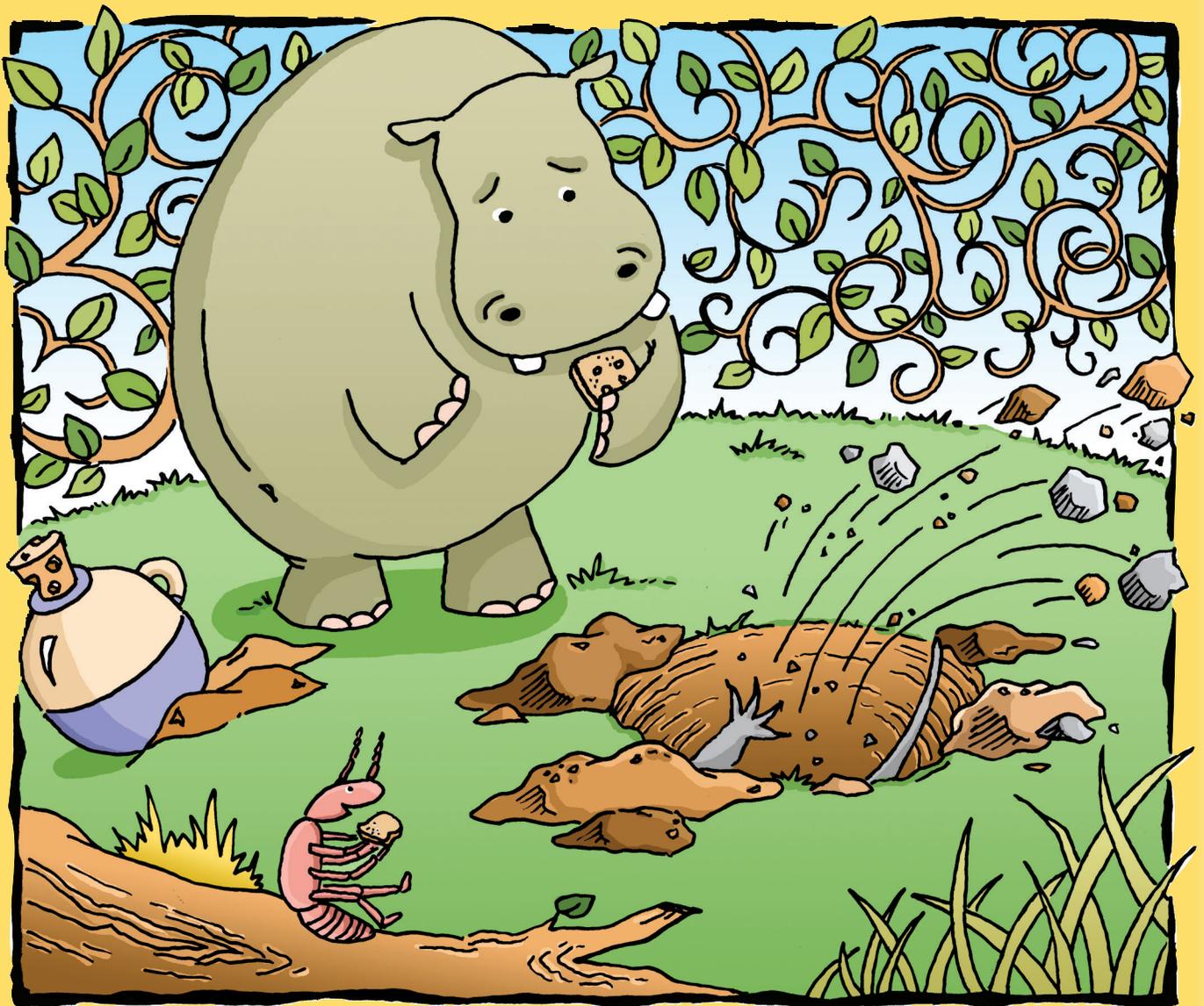
“Well, that’s just the type of bird I am. What a strange question, Vance,” said Chaz as he flew away.

Later that evening Vance flew over the Chesapeake Bay toward his nest. A terrible storm came. Vance saw that the nest was empty! The strong winds had blown the smaller birds out of the nest. Vance scrambled to find all the birds. Using his beak, he carried each one back to the nest. He stayed with the baby birds until the storm passed. When their mother returned and saw that Vance had saved their family, she cried, “Vance, you truly are a great blue heron!” Vance proudly smiled.

Mole's Big Dig

Story by Talia Khalid

Illustration by James Bravo





Dig, dig, dig. Mole dug all day. He dug all night. He dug through hills. He dug under creeks. Dig, dig, dig. Mole was a great digger. He liked to dig.

Mole's mom was a digger. Mole's dad was a digger too. His brother dug. His sister dug. Everybody dug. They dug holes. They dug tunnels. They dug places to sleep. Their whole house was underground.

Sometimes, they dug just for fun. Mole would race his brother and sister across the field. The fastest digger would win. Everyone would clap and cheer. Dig, dig, dig.



Mole was digging one morning. He was digging a hole. He was digging a hole for a well. Dig, dig, dig. He dug fast. The hole grew deep. The hole grew deeper. The dirt piled high. The dirt piled higher.

Mole dug and dug. His claws scraped and scooped the dirt. His friend Ant came to watch. "What are you digging, Mole?"

"I'm digging a well," said Mole. "We'll put water in it."

Ant sat and watched. "Would you like to help?" asked Mole.

"No, I'm too small to help," said Ant.

Mole kept digging. Dig, dig, dig.

The sun climbed high in the sky. The morning grew warm. Mole kept digging. Dig, dig, dig. Ant sat and watched. Then their friend Hippo came over.

“What’s going on?” asked Hippo.

“Mole’s digging a hole,” said Ant.

“What for?” asked Hippo.

“For a well,” said Ant. All the while, Mole kept digging.

“What’s a well for?” asked Hippo.

“It’s for water,” replied Ant.

“Would you like to help?” asked Mole.

“No. I’m too clumsy,” said Hippo. Mole kept digging. Dig, dig, dig.

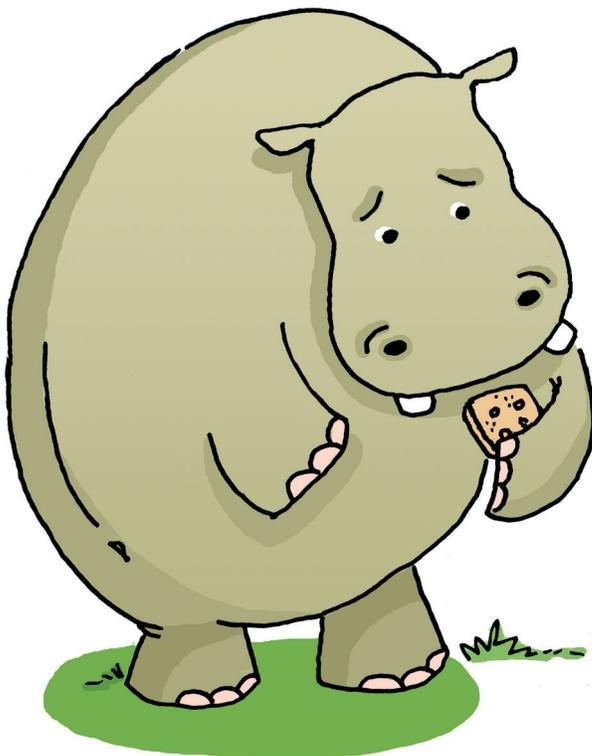
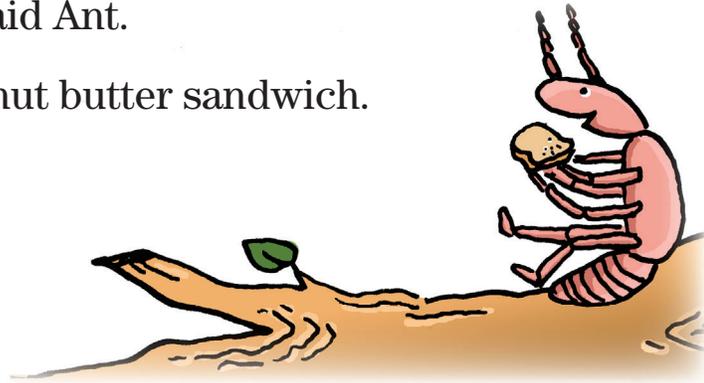
Mole kept digging. It was nearly time to stop for lunch. Mole was hungry. But he wanted to complete the job. He wanted to strike water. Mole sat down for just a minute.

“Would you two please help me finish?” asked Mole.

“I’m too small,” said Ant.

Ant had brought a peanut butter sandwich.

He started to eat it.



“And I’m too clumsy,” said Hippo.

Hippo had brought some salty crackers.

He started to eat them.

Mole sighed. "Okay, I'll do it," he said. He wiped his furry forehead. He started digging again. Dig, dig, dig.

The day was now very hot. The sun beat down. Mole was really sweating. But he could smell the water. Mole knew he was almost done. Dig, dig, dig. He dug faster and faster.

"Boy, it's hot," said Ant. "Also, this sandwich has made me thirsty."

"It really is hot," said Hippo, "My crackers made me thirsty too! I hope Mole reaches water soon."

"Would you like to help me?" asked Mole as he dug. Ant said he was too small. Hippo said he was too clumsy. Mole kept digging.

Dig, dig, dig. Gurgle! Mole struck water!

Water rose from the bottom of the well. It was on Mole's hot toes. The water rose higher and higher. Mole splashed in it. He drank it. The water was cool and nice. The water rose higher.

Mole climbed up. He climbed out of the hole. The water filled the hole. The hole was now a well. Mole was very pleased. He knew he had done a good job.

"I did well. I made a well." Mole laughed at his little joke. Then he sat down for lunch. He opened his lunchbox. He filled his cup with water. Mole took a drink. Then he began to eat. Mole was happy.



Ant and Hippo watched Mole eat and drink. They looked at the water. Ant said, "Mole, I am very thirsty. May I have a drink of water from the well?"

Then Hippo said, "Yes, Mole, it is very hot. May I cool off with a sip of water?"

Mole put down his lunch. He looked at Ant and Hippo. "Ant," he said, "you were too small to help me dig. Hippo, you were too clumsy to help me dig. I had to do it by myself. I'm not sure you should get any water."

Ant and Hippo were very sad. But they understood. They had not helped.

Mole looked at Ant and Hippo. He saw that they were sad. They were his friends. He hoped they had learned a lesson.

“Ant,” he said, “you may have some water. That will make you less thirsty. Hippo, you may have some water. That will cool you off.”

“Hooray!” said Ant and Hippo. “Thank you, Mole!”

“But there is one thing,” warned Mole. “Tomorrow, I must dig a tunnel. It would be nice to have some help. Will you help me?”

Ant and Hippo looked at the water. They thought about the tunnel. They looked at the water. Then they both took a big drink.

The next day came. Mole got ready to work. He made his claws sharp. He filled a jug from the well. He made his lunch. He looked on his map. Mole found the place where he would dig.

Mole walked to the place. He carried his lunch. He carried a jug. He thought about the tunnel. He knew he had a lot of work to do.

When he got there, what did he see? Ant and Hippo were there. They each had a shovel! “We’re ready to work, Mole!” said Ant.

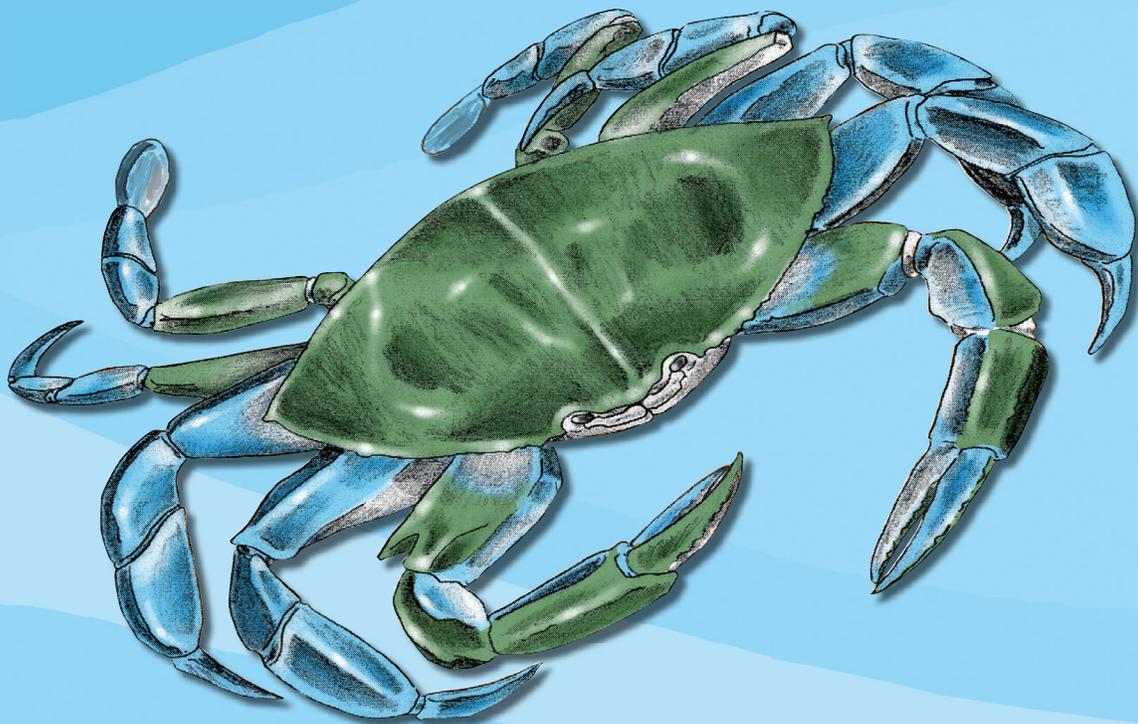
“Yes, sir!” said Hippo.

Mole smiled. “I think I brought enough water for all of us,” he said.



Blue Crabs

of the Chesapeake Bay



By Cris Field

1

The Chesapeake Bay

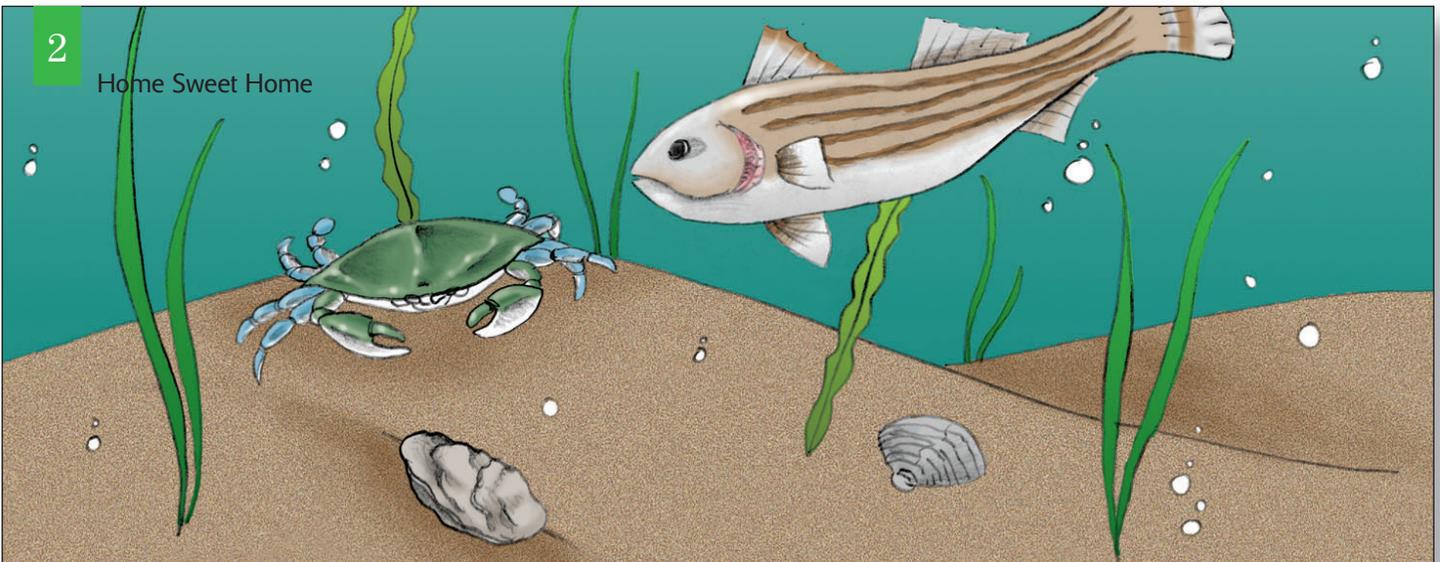


The Chesapeake Bay is a very large body of water. It stretches almost 200 miles along the east coast of the United States. Two states border on the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland and Virginia.

The water in the bay is a mixture of salt water and fresh water. The salt water comes from the Atlantic Ocean. The fresh water comes from the 150 rivers and streams that flow into the Chesapeake Bay.

2

Home Sweet Home



The Chesapeake Bay is home to many plants and animals. Hundreds of different kinds of fish, including trout, sea bass, and catfish, live in the bay. Shellfish, such as oysters and clams, make the bay's sandy bottom their home. A wide variety of birds, including seagulls, pelicans, eagles, ducks, and geese, also live along the shores of the Chesapeake.

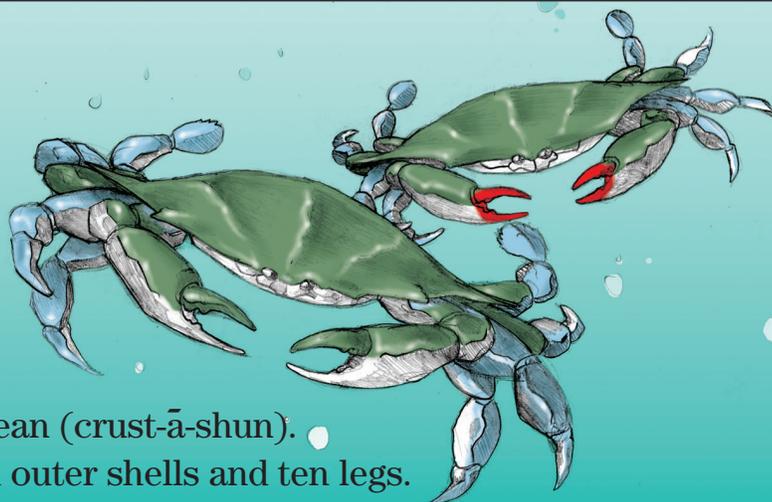
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The Famous Blue Crab

One of the most famous residents of the Chesapeake Bay is the blue crab.

Like its cousins, the shrimp and crayfish, the blue crab is a crustacean (crust-ā-shun). Crustaceans are animals with hard outer shells and ten legs. The blue crab's front legs have claws that it uses to defend itself and catch food. Its three pairs of middle legs are used for walking. The crab uses its two hind legs, shaped like paddles, for swimming.

The blue crab's shell is actually green and white. But its claws are blue, which is how the blue crab got its name. Males have bright blue claws. A female's crab claws have red tips.

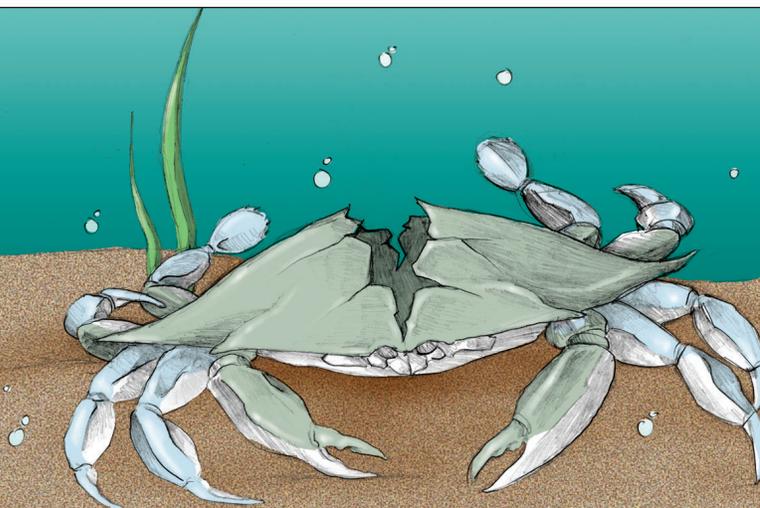


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Too Big for Its Shell

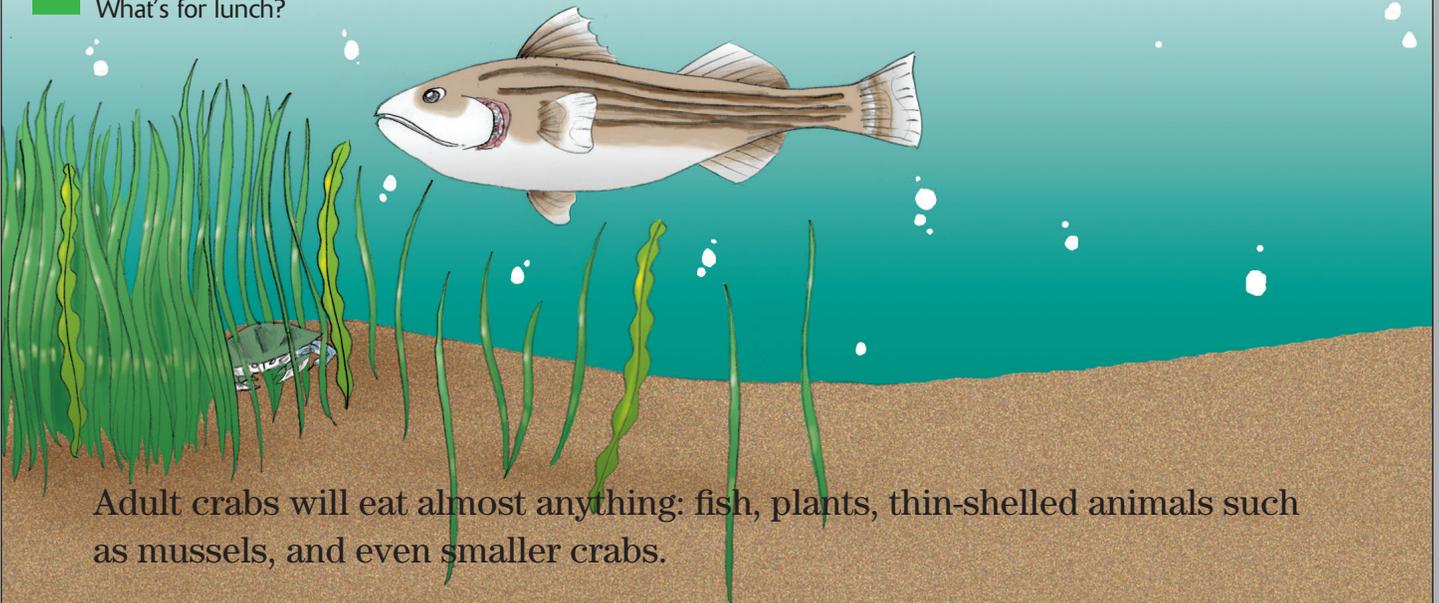
As its body grows, the blue crab becomes too big for its shell. So it sheds the shell and grows a new one. This shedding process, which happens several times during a crab's lifetime, is called molting.

A male crab, sometimes called a jimmy, is larger than a female crab, which is called a sook.



5

What's for lunch?

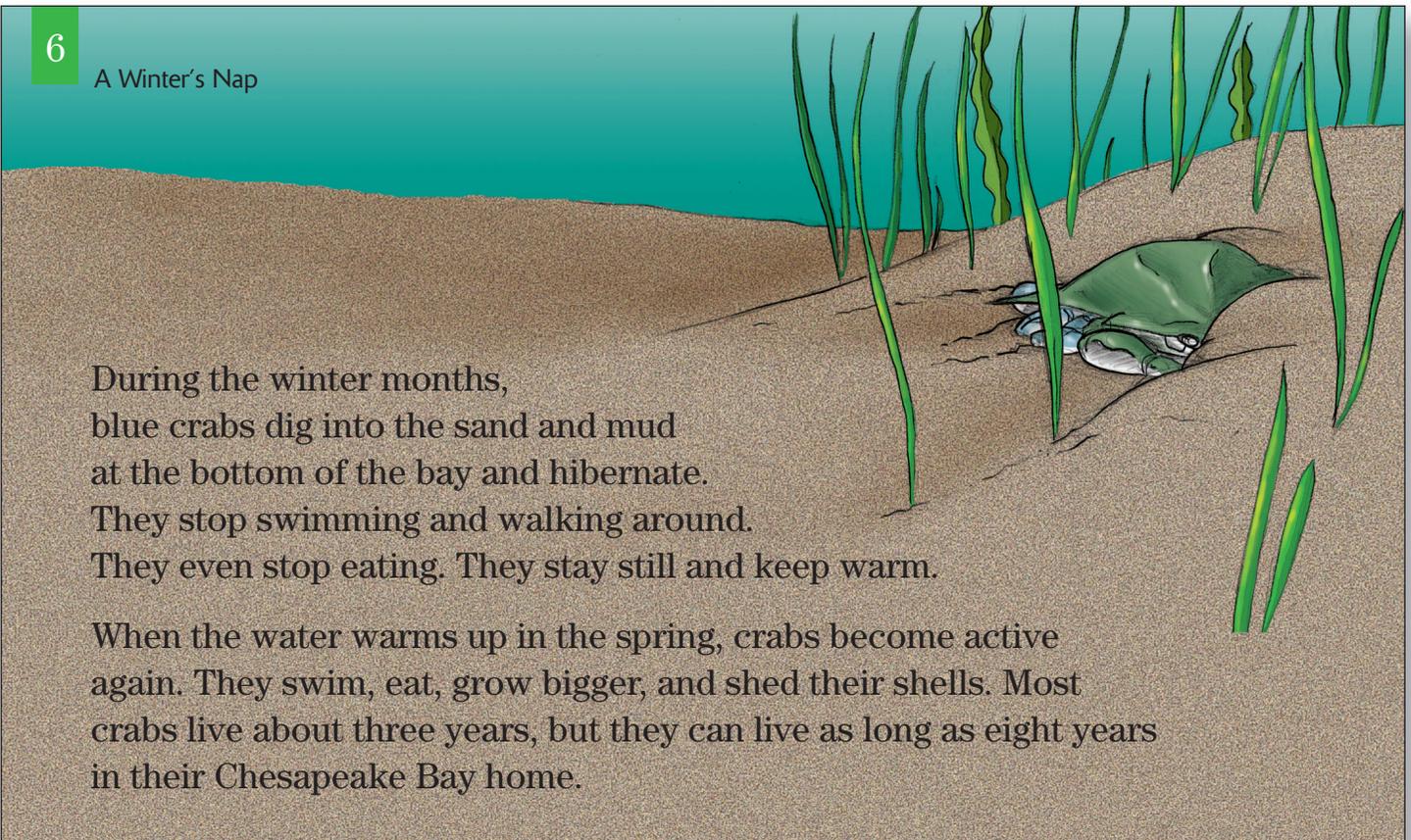


Adult crabs will eat almost anything: fish, plants, thin-shelled animals such as mussels, and even smaller crabs.

But the blue crab itself—especially a young one—makes a tasty meal for fish, sea turtles, eels, and humans. To avoid being caught, crabs hide in the underwater grasses of the bay.

6

A Winter's Nap



During the winter months, blue crabs dig into the sand and mud at the bottom of the bay and hibernate. They stop swimming and walking around. They even stop eating. They stay still and keep warm.

When the water warms up in the spring, crabs become active again. They swim, eat, grow bigger, and shed their shells. Most crabs live about three years, but they can live as long as eight years in their Chesapeake Bay home.

Oysters of the Chesapeake Bay

What is an oyster?

An oyster is a sea animal. A certain type of oyster is native, or local, to the Chesapeake Bay. It has a hard shell that opens and closes. Inside, the oyster is soft and slimy. Oysters live in salty water eight to twenty-five feet below the surface of the bay. Some people may think that oysters aren't very nice looking. But oysters are very important to the bay.

Why are oysters important?

Oysters are important. They keep the bay healthy. Oysters act like a water filter. They suck out harmful algae from the water. Many oysters group together. This forms a habitat, or home, for smaller animals to hide in. Oysters are also food for many shore birds. These reasons show why oysters are very important to the Chesapeake Bay.

Why are oysters endangered?

Oysters are in danger. Humans catch too many of them. This is called over-harvesting. Pollution also harms the oysters. Some people want to make laws to stop people from catching so many oysters. Other people help the oysters by volunteering to clean up the garbage around the bay.

Oystercatchers of the Chesapeake Bay

What are oystercatchers?

Oystercatchers are large, black and white birds. They have bright, sharp orange bills. They have long, pink legs and yellow eyes. Once these unusual looking birds were in danger. They were almost all hunted by humans. But people today see oystercatchers often.

Where do oystercatchers live?

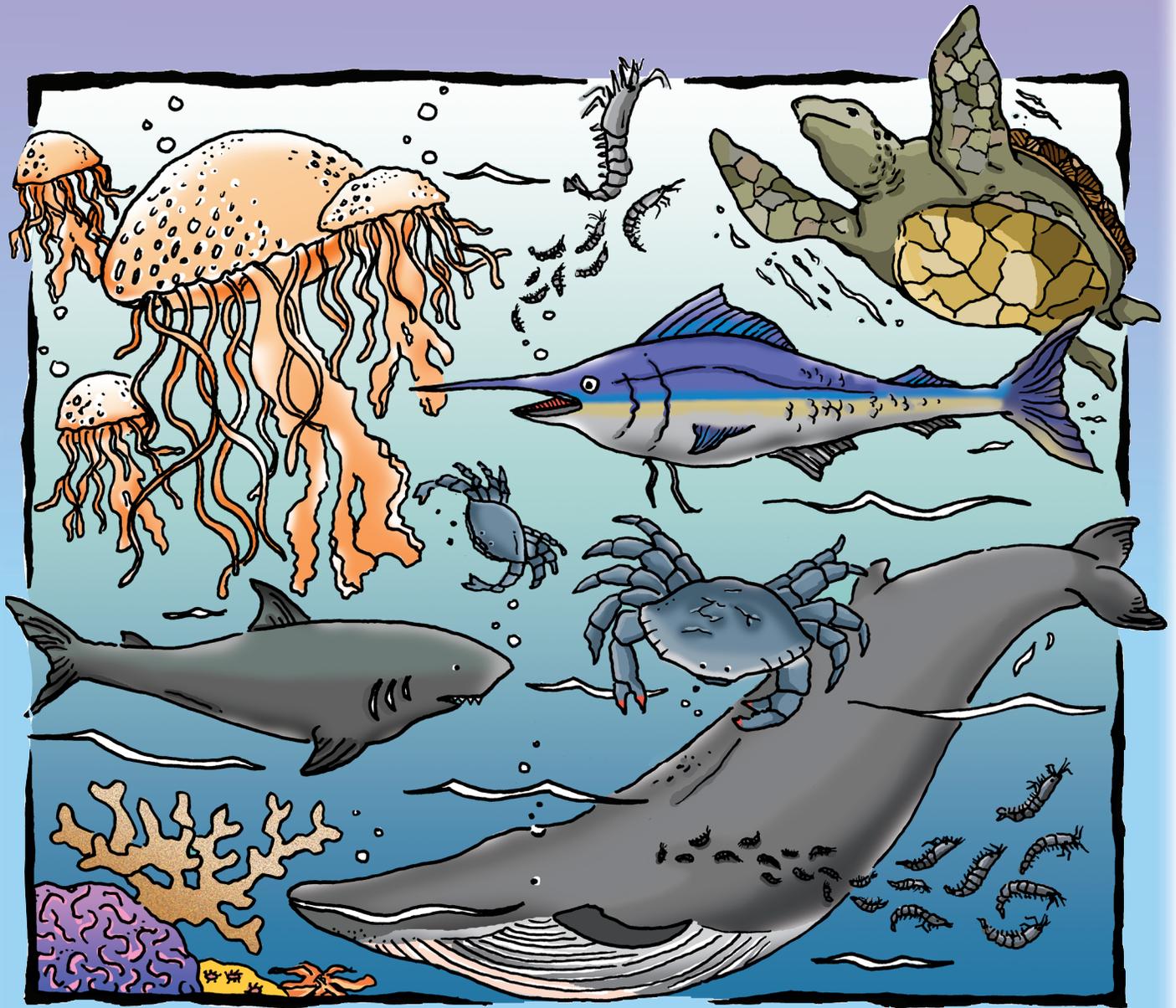
Oystercatchers live on the Eastern Shore. Many large groups live around the Chesapeake Bay. Oystercatchers have been seen as far north as Maine. Some oystercatchers can also be found on the Pacific coast. They build nests along sandy beaches or rocky cliffs.

What do oystercatchers eat?

Can you guess from their name? Oystercatchers eat oysters, of course! They also eat other sea animals such as clams, crabs, and shellfish. They use their sharp bills to cut open shells. They can also hammer shells to crack them open. They are fierce hunters.

Sea Animals

By Terrence Parker
Illustration by James Bravo





Introduction



In the ocean, you'll find many animals—sharks, whales, dolphins, and crabs. All sorts of creatures live there. Even some birds spend a lot of time in the water! Some sea creatures eat plants. Some sea creatures eat other animals. Some sea creatures breathe in the water. Others need air to breathe. Some make homes in the sand. Others hide in reefs and plants. Some spend their whole lives swimming! Some live in the warm waters near lush islands. Others swim in the cold seas underneath icebergs. This book will help you learn about some of the creatures of the sea.



Ghost Crabs

Ghost crabs are neat creatures. These crabs have hard shells, and most are around two inches in size. Young ghost crabs might live near the water's edge, but older ones dig their holes further back from the water. If you ever see a golf ball-sized hole in the sand, you've probably found the home of a ghost crab!

Sand crabs have eight legs. They also have two mighty claws. Sand crabs use these claws to catch and grasp smaller animals. Then they eat these smaller animals. They also eat worms and dead animals.

Sand crabs are the color of sand. This helps them hide from animals that might hurt them.



Ghostly Shells!

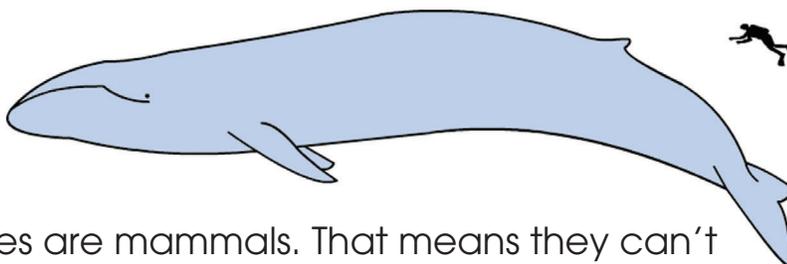
These little crabs have see-through shells! This and their sandy color helps them hide from enemies.

Blue Whales

Blue whales are the biggest creatures on Earth.

Some blue whales grow to be as long as 100 feet!

That's a big creature!



Blue whales are mammals. That means they can't breathe underwater. They need air to breathe. Even though they can swim very deep, whales need to come to the surface to breathe. They have blowholes on top of their heads to help them breathe.

Blue whales can be found off the coast of Alaska. They can also be found in the cold, cold waters near Antarctica. They have really thick layers of fat, called



blubber, that keep them warm. Blue whales migrate, or move, to warmer waters when it is winter in the Arctic and Antarctic.

Green Turtles

Green turtles live near the shore. They are born on the beach. After they hatch, they make their way down to the water. On the way, many other creatures try to nab the young turtles. It is safer for them in the water. Female green turtles return year after year to the beaches where they were born.

Turtles outlive many of the other creatures in the ocean. Some turtles live for many decades. Green turtles feast mostly on plants. They don't eat other sea animals.

Turtles are reptiles. That means they are cold blooded. It also means they lay eggs, and although they breathe air, they can also stay under the water for long periods of time.



Brine Shrimp

Brine shrimp are some of the smallest creatures in the sea. The biggest brine shrimp are smaller than one centimeter long! That's only as wide as one of your fingers! But it's easy to see brine shrimp because they swim together in the thousands.



You might wonder what *brine* means. *Brine* is just another word for saltwater. Since the oceans are saltwater, brine shrimp can live in the oceans.

Brine shrimp are the main diet of many whales in the world's oceans. The whales will swim through a school of brine shrimp and gobble down the shrimp.

Brine shrimp are crustaceans. Another word for crustacean is *shellfish*. Can you name another shellfish you read about in this book?

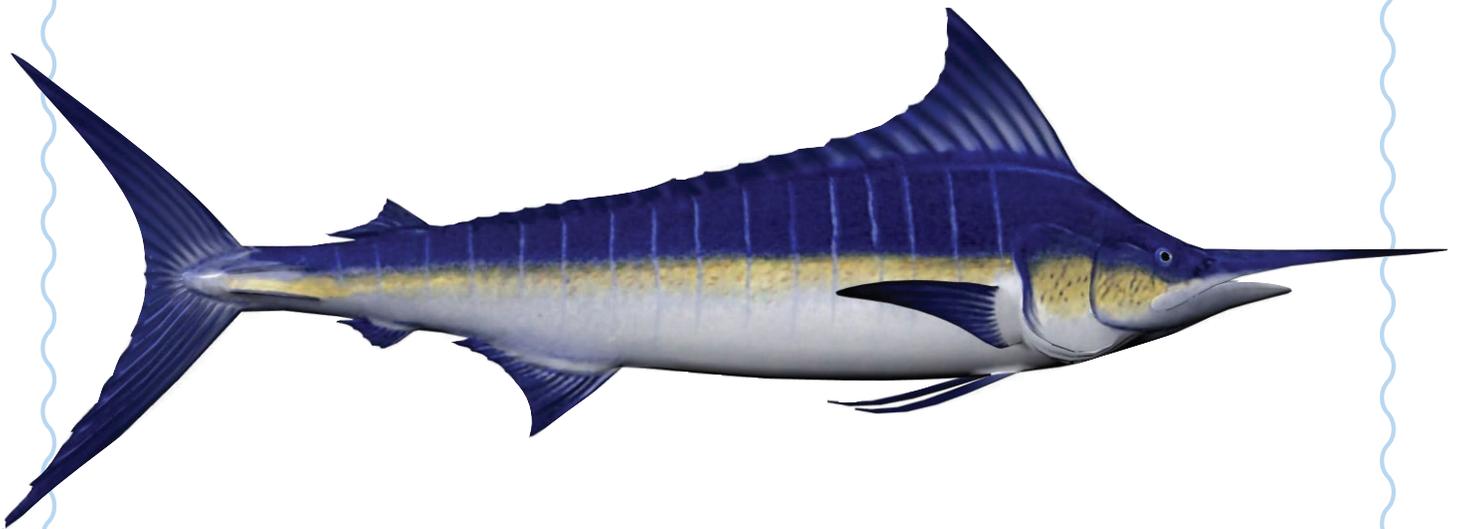
A pet shrimp?

In the 1960s, a man started selling kits to hatch and grow your own brine shrimp in a small aquarium!

Blue Marlins

The blue marlin is a species of fish. Blue marlins are blue and white and have long, pointed jaws that look like spears.

Blue marlins are found off the east coast of the United States among other places. They are some of the largest fish in these waters. Some blue marlins grow to be more than ten feet long. They can weigh more than 2,000 pounds! Even though they can be huge, they are also one of the fastest swimmers in the ocean.

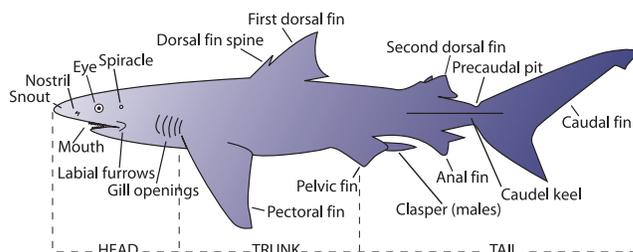


Blue marlins are carnivores. That means they eat other animals. Because of their great size, blue marlins have plenty of choices when dinner time comes.

Great White Sharks

Great white sharks, and all other sharks, aren't like other fish. Other fish have bones, but sharks have cartilage. Cartilage is similar to bone, but a little softer. Feel the tip of your nose. That's cartilage.

Great white sharks are one of the sea's biggest predators. That means they are one of the biggest animals that hunt and prey on other animals. Great white sharks have bad reputations. Some people think they attack people. But this doesn't happen very often. In fact, it's very rare.



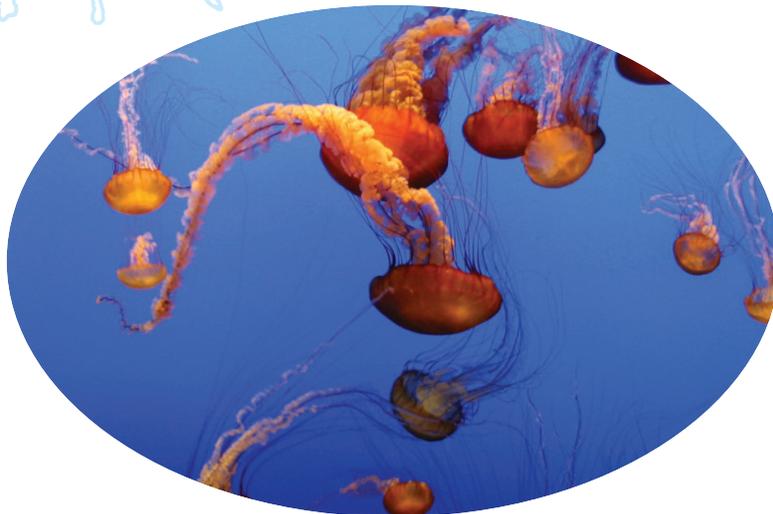
Great white sharks can grow to be more than twenty feet long. They have many rows of razor-sharp teeth that help them eat their prey. Great whites often lose their teeth. When a tooth falls out, another one moves up and replaces it! You can find shark teeth right on the beach. They also have tall fins on their backs, called dorsal fins, which stick up out of the water when the sharks are near the surface. So you can always tell when a shark is coming.

Jellyfish

Jellyfish are some of the most interesting creatures in the ocean. They look like blobs of jelly drifting in the sea, with long stringy arms. They are also many different colors.

Jellyfish have something called stinging cells. If a jellyfish touches other creatures, it stings them. Then the other creatures can't move for a short while. This helps the jellyfish escape and catch food.

Sometimes, a jellyfish will wash up on shore. Be careful not to step on one. If you do, it will sting you. That will hurt, but you'll still be able to move. Most jellyfish stings aren't strong enough to really harm a person.



Emperor Penguins

Emperor penguins are birds.
They're not fish, or sharks, or mammals.
But they spend a lot of time in the sea.
They can swim underwater.

Emperor penguins live near the South Pole. They live on the pack ice there. They live in large groups, and their homes are called rookeries.



Courtesy: National Science Foundation

Emperor penguins are about four feet tall. That might be a little taller than you. They have dark black feathers on their backs and wings. They have white fronts and dark faces.

Emperor penguins feed on smaller fish. They dive into the cold water and grab fish with their beaks. Then they climb out onto the ice and eat. They walk on their two feet. Sometimes they slide around on their bellies. Their thick feathers keep them warm in the cold air.

From birds, to fish, to sharks, there are plenty of interesting creatures in and around the sea. 🐡



