



# Ranger Rick

## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE OCTOBER 2013 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

### "SCARY" COSTUMES

The bright orange wings of the moth on **pages 2-3** flash out a message: *Don't eat me—I'm poisonous!* The animals in **"Warning: Do Not Touch!" (pages 24-29)** have spines that serve to deter predators. Many other animals also have physical features to scare away predators. In the spirit of Halloween, explore some of these "costumes" with students. Then invite students to use the animal inspiration to design their own "scary" outfits. Whether they simply draw their designs or actually create them, stage a fashion show in which they explain their idea and the animal defenses that inspired it.

### BE BIRD WATCHERS

Follow the instructions in **"Pumpkin Feeder" (page 36)** to recycle some jack-o'-lanterns into birdfeeders. Then have students keep bird journals in which they record their observations about the timing and types of birds that discover the feeders.

### WHEN THE MOON IS FULL

**"The Buzz" (pages 12-13)** reports the finding that sharks swim deeper on the full moon. A bright moon affects other animals, too—full moon nights can be especially active ones. Discuss this phenomenon with students. Then invite them to write a story, based on science or their own imaginations, that starts with the line, "On the night the moon was full..."

### LIFE IN A CAVE

After students read **"Ranger Rick's Adventures" (pages 20-22)**, ask them to consider the unique environment that caves provide. What features of a cave make it different from other habitats? (Darkness, moisture, more stable temperatures, lack of sunlight for plants to grow, etc.) En-

gage students in an investigation of cave life using books, videos, or the Internet. Even better, visit a real cave near you. Ask students to identify common characteristics of cave dwellers. Then discuss together how these adaptations help animals survive in a cave habitat.

### POKE AROUND FOR POKE-Y PLANTS

**"Warning: Do Not Touch!" (pages 24-29)** features animals with spines, quills, and other prickly parts for protection from predators. Some plants, too, have prickles. Thorns, spines, sharp edges, and irritating hairs can all keep harm at bay. These plant defenses may be easier to spot on a nature walk than their animal counterparts. Take students outside, urge them to be cautious about touching things that look sharp, and see what plant defenses you can discover!

### OWL ADAPTATIONS

After reading **"Backyard Wildlife: Great Horned Owls" (pages 30-31)**, set out art materials and have students create owl masks. (Paper plates make a good base.) Discuss the many adaptations that make owls successful nighttime hunters. Then have students put on their masks and act out some hunting behaviors. How would it feel to have powerful night vision, extremely keen hearing, near-silent flight, and sharp talons for grasping prey from mid-air?

### HAWAII'S NORTHWESTERN ISLANDS

The monk seals in **"Hawaii's Special Seals" (pages 32-35)** make their home in the Northwestern Islands of Hawaii. The remote islands are protected as a Marine National Monument and support many endemic species. Have students identify the Northwestern Islands on a map or globe and measure how far they are from other land.





# FOUR-SEASON FOX

In "Fox for All Seasons" (pages 6-11), you learn that red foxes are at home in all kinds of places and all kinds of weather. Read the article carefully to find out what happens in a red fox's life during each season of the year. Then use the boxes below to draw a red fox in each season. Write a sentence that describes what the fox is doing.

**FALL**

**WINTER**

**SUMMER**

**SPRING**





# BONING UP ON SKELETONS

Look closely at the skeletons shown on pages 16-17 in "Welcome to the Bone Zone." Each skeleton's shape helps the animal move in the right ways to live its life. Fill in the chart below with information about each of the skeletons.

ANIMAL	How is this skeleton different from the other skeletons shown?	How does this animal move? How does its skeleton help it move this way?
TURTLE		
FROG		
WHALE		
PARROT		
SNAKE		

What about you? How do you need your body to move to do all the things you do? How does your skeleton help you move in these ways? (Look at the picture on page 15.)

---



---



---



---

