

Weird animals



58

Animals

>

wild

weird

wonderful

A _____ They think that at least 80% of animal and plant life on Earth could still be unknown. And of the known animals, there are some **pretty** unbelievable species.

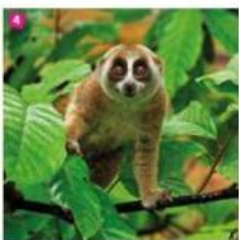
B _____ The **blobfish** could be the world's ugliest animal. Out of the water, it has a face like an old man because its body is soft and full of fat. It looks more like a 'normal' fish 1,000m underwater because the water pressure pushes its body into **shape**. The **lamprey** looks like it might be something out of a horror film! Actually, it's a fish, and in this picture its mouth is open. To eat, the lamprey bites another fish and drinks the blood – like a vampire. As its name suggests, the **star-nosed mole** looks like it has a star on its face! In fact, those are tentacles around its nose. It lives under **the ground** and is almost **blind**. It moves slowly and uses its tentacles to feel for worms in the dark. Once its tentacles find a worm, it can eat it in 0.25 seconds!

C _____ Sometimes **harmless**-looking animals can be extremely dangerous as well. The **slow loris** has a sweet face and huge eyes, but be careful – it might bite you, and there's **poison** in its mouth. The **golden poison dart frog** looks beautiful, but you mustn't touch it. There's enough poison on the back of this frog to kill 10 people! The **pufferfish** can kill people even when it's dead. In Japan, pufferfish (or *fugu*) is a rare and expensive dish. It must be absolutely delicious because people who eat it are taking a big risk. Parts of its body contain poison. Eating the wrong part can cause death, and only special chefs are allowed to prepare it. Still, around 100 people die every year from eating *fugu*.

READING

1 In pairs, discuss the animals in the photos.

- 1 What kinds of animal are they?
- 2 Where do they live?
- 3 What is interesting about them?



- 2** Read the paragraphs quickly and check your answers to Exercise 1. Then match the bold animal names with the photos.



- 3** Match the sentences to spaces A–C.

- 1 What animals do you think are the most dangerous – a snake, a spider, perhaps a shark?
- 2 There are some very funny-looking animals out there.
- 3 Scientists discover hundreds of new and unusual animals every year.

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4 Match the **highlighted** words in the article to the meanings.

- 1 not dangerous
- 2 a substance that can kill you if you eat it
- 3 unable to see
- 4 quite, but not completely or extremely
- 5 the surface of the earth
- 6 the physical form of something

5 Discuss the questions in pairs. Read the article again and check.

- 1 Why does the blobfish look less ugly 1,000 m underwater?
- 2 Why is the lamprey similar to a vampire?
- 3 Why does the star-nosed mole need tentacles?
- 4 How can the slow loris hurt people?
- 5 How can the golden poison dart frog kill people?
- 6 Why do people eat pufferfish?



TALKING POINTS

Why have we discovered only 20% of the world's animals and plants?

What other weird-looking or dangerous animals can you think of?

READING

- 1 What do you think 'native animal' means?
Read the article quickly to find out.
 - 1 an animal that is from a certain part of the world
 - 2 an animal that lives in many different places
 - 3 an animal that stays in the same place all its life
- 2 Read the article and choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.
 - 1 What is the writer doing in this article?
 - A complaining about a wildlife organisation
 - B describing what a wildlife organisation does
 - C reporting an interview with an animal expert
 - D giving advice about how to look after pets
 - 2 What does the writer say about WIRES?
 - A The courses they provide are rather disappointing.
 - B The visits they make to farms in the area are helpful.
 - C They should explain how they look after the animals.
 - D They are doing a very important job in Australia.
 - 3 What does Guy's dad do for the organisation?
 - A He tries to save animals that are hurt.
 - B He answers the phone at the WIRES office.
 - C He chooses someone to go and see the animal.
 - D He prepares the special clothes for WIRES helpers.
 - 4 What happened to the baby bat?
 - A It was injured by other bats.
 - B It is now looked after by Guy at home.
 - C It lived and was put back into the wild.
 - D It is still living at the animal centre.

This month Angelina
Horsefield writes
about an animal
rescue organisation
in Australia:

WIRES

WIRES (Wildlife Information and Rescue Service) began in 1985 when someone found an injured bird in a park in Sydney, Australia. At the time, no one knew how to help this 'native' animal. WIRES helps animals like snakes, kangaroos and, of course, birds. However, they can only help native Australian wildlife – animals that originally come from Australia. That means they can't help other animals like cats or rabbits that were brought to Australia from other parts of the world.

Like other animal rescue groups, WIRES needs more people. I believe they are definitely helping the local animals, but they can only continue if others **join in**. They **hold** excellent courses, where people can learn what to do when they find an injured animal. They also explain what happens to the animals in their care. Many of the people who help also **take care of** the animals themselves in their own gardens or on their farms.

I spoke to 15-year-old Guy McKenzie, whose dad helps WIRES in his free time. Guy told me about the work they do. 'Dad usually gets a phone call at home and drives immediately to where the animal is, to **rescue** it. He has special equipment and always wears gloves. The animals are wild, after all!'

Guy also talked about a woman who found a bat in her garden. She thought it might be dead, but then she noticed that there was a baby bat too. Guy's dad brought it back to the centre, where it grew into a healthy adult. Then, WIRES was able to return it to nature. Guy showed me a baby kangaroo that his dad was looking after and told me that one day he'll be doing the same thing. Yes, he will, for sure.

READ MORE

5 What would someone working for WIRES say?

- A We can send someone out quickly to help your pet in your home or farm.
- B If you see a snake, a bat or another wild animal in danger, call us immediately.
- C We are a new organisation in Australia that looks after all kinds of animals.
- D If you want to have a career with us, you must attend at least one of our courses.

3 Match the **highlighted** words in the article to their meanings.

- 1 look after someone or something
- 2 become involved in doing an activity with a group of people
- 3 save someone or something from a dangerous situation
- 4 arrange and run an event