

Animals I

- animal babies puzzles and games
- recordings of mammal sounds
- photos or illustrations of animals that correspond to the recordings

Materials to support an exploration of birds

- assortment of feathers of various sizes, colors, patterns, and functions
- photos of birds that correspond to feathers
- genuine blown or replica eggs of various sizes and colors such as ostrich, emu, goose, chicken, and quail
- photos of birds that correspond to eggs
- pictures of birds with distinctive beaks such as hummingbirds, pelicans, and sandpiper
- tools representing bird beaks such as ladles, tongs, and eyedroppers
- objects representing food that birds eat such as plastic fish or objects that float to represent fish, beads to represent insects, and colored water to represent nectar
- recordings of bird songs
- pictures of birds that correspond to bird recordings

Materials to support an exploration of reptiles

- live reptiles or models and photographs of a variety of reptiles such as: snake, lizard, and turtle
- snake skin shed (available from reptile farms, pet stores, snake owners, and in the wild)
- snake puppets made from socks
- turtle shell
- tortoise puppet

Materials to support an exploration of frogs

- puzzles, posters, charts depicting life cycle of frogs
- recordings of frog songs
- pictures of frogs associated with frog sounds

Materials to support an exploration of fish

- photos and models of a variety of fish
- simple poster or illustration showing the parts of a fish

Books

Arnold, Katya. *Let's Find It!* NY: Holiday House, 2002. An author who loved nature as a child has written a book to inspire other children to look around indoors and out. Each double-page spread includes one page of animals and plants to find in the scene painted on the opposite page. Identification and classification information is on the final page.

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Arnosky, Jim. *Crinkleroot's 25 Mammals Every Child Should Know*. New York: Bradbury Press, 1994. After a brief introduction to mammals, simple, gently-colored illustrations and single words identify 25 mammals, including humans. Domestic and wild mammals are included, and fur or hair is evident on all but the whale.

Ayliffe, Alex. *Slither, Swoop, Swing*. New York: Viking, 1992. Single action words (one per double-page spread) describe the movement of several animals, including some that readers might not think about (e.g., "slither" suggests snakes, but what about slugs and worms?). Colorful, active illustrations invite children to imitate the actions.

Baker, Keith. *Hide and Snake*. New York: Harcourt, 1991. Actually the snake does the hiding and readers do the seeking. Text is sparse and simple, but readers are challenged to find the snake camouflaged among illustrations of familiar objects.

Base, Graeme. *The Water Hole*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001. With richly detailed illustrations, this counting book demonstrates animal diversity and the dependence of living things on water. Shrinking cutouts of a water hole, animals from around the world, detailed borders of animals within a geographical area, and distinct colors invite both close observation and enthusiastic discussion.

Bennett, Kelly. *Not Norman: A Goldfish Story*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005. A boy wants a pet that can run and catch, not a goldfish like Norman. In the end he comes to love and appreciate Norman. The story can be a springboard for conversation about the special attributes of different animals, even those we might not initially like.

Berger, Melvin. *Animals and Their Babies*. New York: Newbridge, 1993. Large photographs and minimal text describe a variety of animal parenting roles: feeding, protecting, transporting, cleaning, and teaching. An index concludes the big book.

Berger, Melvin. *Animals in Hiding*. New York: Newbridge, 1993. This big book introduces the concept of camouflage via photographs and questions that encourage readers to find animals hidden in the pictures.

Berkes, Marianne. *March Music*. Brookfield, CT: Millbrook, 2000. The coming of a summer evening brings on the sounds that resident frogs make at the pond. This "orchestra" is led by the bullfrog but numerous other species are included. Watercolor illustrations in earth-tones create a natural night scene, but the poetic story is fictional and the music is made in some unusual ways. An afterword explains the musical terms and more information on the specific frogs.

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Bishop, Nic. *Frogs*. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2008. Intriguing large, close-up photographs of frogs from around the world fascinate readers of all ages. Text in several type sizes/styles makes editing the quantity/detail for preschoolers easy. Life cycle, sounds, movement, colors and textures, defenses, toad/frog distinctions are mentioned in the book.

Butterfield, Moira. *Quick, Quiet, and Feathered: What Am I?* Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn, 1997. A riddle asking the reader to guess what animal is being described leads to information about different parts of its body, how it behaves, and where it lives. Pictures in context are provided to fit each clue. Each book provides practice for observation, listening, drawing conclusions, and conversation. Also available: *Brown, Fierce, and Furry: What Am I?*; *Fierce, Strong, and Snappy: What Am I?*

Cannon, Janell. *Verdi*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace, 1997. This young green snake moves through life with enthusiasm and wants to stay young—not like the lazy, boring adults around him. Colorful yellow and green illustrations are equally active. While the story is silly fun, some good snake science is there, too. Text is sometimes substantial, but words flow and illustrations fit so tightly that the story moves quickly or could be edited.

Carle, Eric. *Animals Animals/Animals=Animales*. New York: Scholastic, 1999. Exuberant, colorful illustrations of a wide variety of wild and domestic animals are accompanied by poems from well-known poets.

Carle, Eric. *From Head To Toe/De la cabeza a los pies*. New York: Scholastic, 1997. Using a question and answer format, a variety of colorfully illustrated animals ask if you can move like them (gorilla thumps its chest; giraffe stretches its neck, etc.). A child always responds “I can do it!” and copies each body movement. Imitation will be the response from readers as well. While animals are familiar ones and text is simple, the vocabulary will promote review of body parts, animal identification, and descriptive movements (wiggle, clap, thump, etc.).

Carle, Eric. *Mister Seahorse*. New York: Philomel Books, 2004. Young readers are introduced to Mr. Seahorse, a fish father who carries the mother’s eggs around in his pouch until they hatch. As he drifts through the sea, Mr. Seahorse meets other fish fathers who hatch eggs—stickleback, tilapia, Kurtus nurseryfish, pipefish, and bullhead catfish. The fascinating tissue paper and acetate overlay illustrations also provide opportunities to explore camouflage.

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Catala, Ellen. *Snakes and Lizards*. Mankato, MN: Yellow Umbrella Books, 2004. Two of the most familiar groups of reptiles are compared in terms of body heat, smelling, shedding, legs, eyelids, and hearing. The book provides a good example of how to observe closely. Text is appropriate for preschoolers and close-up photographs invite careful study.

Chen, Chih-Yuan. *Guji Guji/Guji Guji*. La Jolla, CA: Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 2004. Raised from an egg by a mother duck, a young crocodile is living a happy life as a duckling...until he runs into a group of nasty crocodiles who convince him that he is, in fact, a crocodile and should bring his family in for “dinner.” While the primary focus of the story is on family, the tale includes accurate information about crocodiles and ducks. 2005 ALA Notable Children’s Book

Clarke, Ginjer L. *Baby Alligator*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 2000. The story begins just as a baby alligator is hatching from its egg. Intended as a beginning reader, the book combines a gentle caution, not fear, message with plentiful information about an alligator’s habitat. Strong earth tone illustrations show the early life and growth of the hatchlings.

Collard, Sneed B., III. *Animal Dads*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. Cut-paper collages and text on two levels (one a simple sentence and the other a detailed paragraph) describe how the males of different species help take care of their young.

Collard, Sneed B., III. *Beaks!* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2002. “Birds have no hands...beaks are enough.” Thus begins a description, with text on two levels, about a variety of bird beaks and how they are used to gather, hunt, and eat. Painted and sculpted paper illustrations stimulate close observation and conversation. The book concludes with a “beakability” quiz—if you had this beak, what would you eat?

Cole, Henry. *I Took a Walk*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1998. This walk in the woods reminds readers how much there is to see if only we “look” closely. The book encourages observation by asking readers to find specific things in the woods, meadow, stream, and pond. Most of the specifics are animals but it is the lush habitat scenes that first catch your eye. A key in the back identifies exact locations in each scene.

Cowley, Joy. *Red-Eyed Tree Frog*. New York: Scholastic, 1999. Sparse text and brilliantly colored photographs heighten the natural drama in the tree frog’s world: will it both find enough food to eat and avoid being eaten? The amount of tension in the story is just right for young children. 2000 Notable Children’s Book, 2000 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Book for Children

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Davies, Nicola. *Bat Loves the Night*. Cambridge MA: Candlewick Press, 2001. Gentle illustrations and quiet drama tell the story of one bat's nightly adventure. Early pages establish that this intriguing animal has wings and fur, flies at night, hears by echolocation, and eventually returns to her roost to care for her babies. Text is written on two levels—one is the story and the second, in smaller print, provides additional facts.

DeGezelle, Terri. *Birds A to Z*. Mankato, MN: A+ Books, 2000. Beautiful close-up bird photographs are accompanied by upper- and lower-case letters plus two-three sentences about each bird. The text and pictures support conversation about bird homes and habitats. Pages at the end contain follow-up activities, a glossary of additional information about the birds pictured, bibliography, and index.

DePaola, Tomi. *Mice Squeak, We Speak*. New York: Putnam Juvenile, 2000. Three young children consider the ways various animals, including themselves, communicate: owls hoot, pigs squeal, and bees buzz. Illustrations are colorful, simple, and detailed enough to encourage observation. Text is sparse but written in “proper” sentences (upper/lower case, punctuation, etc.) and clever rhymes.

Ehlert, Lois. *Feathers for Lunch/Plumas para almorzar*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1990. The cat got outside and is looking for lunch! Fortunately for the birds in the backyard, the cat wears a little bell around its neck so they get ample warning. Life-size, cut-paper illustrations show the cat's travels. At the end, miniature pictures highlight details about the 12 birds the cat encounters. 1991 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children

Ehlert, Lois. *Nuts to You!* Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace, 1993. This is the story of one busy squirrel intent on getting into flower boxes, and it even finds a way inside an apartment. A section at the end called “Squirrel Talk” provides numerous squirrel details—identification as a mammal, body parts, home, and food—that provide ideas for conversation as you look at the colorful illustrations and read the rhyming text.

Falwell, Cathryn. *Scout!* New York: Greenwillow Books, 2008. Movement abounds at the pond “on a sunny summer day”—except for the six silent turtles that “sit still as stones.” Colorful, action-packed paper collage illustrations keep readers busy looking for details. Descriptive movement words—like dash, scurry, hover—support vocabulary development.

Falwell, Cathryn. *Turtle Splash! Countdown at the Pond*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2001. The quiet enjoyed by ten turtles at a pond is disturbed by first one animal and then another, until there are no turtles left on the log. The detailed, colorful collage illustrations and descriptive counting text show where the turtles finally settle for the night. Each of the other animals is described at the end, as is leaf printmaking. 2002 ALA Notable Children's Book

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Fleming, Denise. *Barnyard Banter*. New York: Henry Holt, 1994. Goose seems to have something to do with all the sounds occurring in this farmyard, but why? Because she is minimally seen among the other colorful (and noisy) animal characters, observation skills get lots of practice. Imitation of all the sounds occurs with minimal encouragement.

Fredericks, Anthony D. *Around One Cactus: Owls, Bats, and Leaping Rats*. Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications, 2003.

—*In One Tidepool: Crabs, Snails and Salty Tails*. 2002.

—*Near One Cattail: Turtles, Logs and Leaping Frogs*. 2005.

—*Under One Rock: Bugs, Slugs and Other Ughs*. 2001.

Each of these books details the plants and animals that live in a given habitat. Illustrations are large and richly colored, field notes provide additional information about the featured plants and animals, and references are added for those who want to know more about each ecosystem. For young children, the cumulative, rhyming text can be abbreviated to only the new verse each time.

Freeman, Marcia S. *Is It Alive?* New York: Newbridge, 2002. “How can you tell what is alive?” From this initial inquiry, living things are described as things that grow, reproduce, need food and water, excrete waste, and move. Good examples compare living and nonliving things, and introduce the idea that some things once lived but now are nonliving. Microscopic cells are suggested as the ultimate standard of “living.” Several potential projects complete the big book.

French, Vivian. *Growing Frogs*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2000. Inspired by a book about a frog that grows bigger and bigger, a mother and daughter are determined to see the real thing. They collect frog eggs for a home tank where they can watch them turn into tadpoles that eventually grow into frogs. Steps in the process, including water changes/rocks/food, and metamorphic changes are detailed in two levels of text and brightly colored illustrations.

George, Lindsay Barrett. *Around the Pond: Who’s Been Here?* New York: Greenwillow Books, 1996.

—*In the Garden: Who’s Been Here?* 2006.

—*In the Snow: Who’s Been Here?* 1999.

—*In the Woods: Who’s Been Here?* 1995.

During their explorations, two children and their dog find clues that other animals are, or have been, there also. Nature concepts such as life cycle, predator/prey, and habitat are illustrated. Large, richly colored illustrations invite close observation and conversation. Additional information about each book’s featured animals is provided.

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Gibbons, Gail. *Frogs*. New York: Holiday House, 1993. Plentiful text and carefully labeled illustrations introduce frogs: their tadpole stage, sounds they make, hibernation, body parts, and how toads differ. Text is sometimes too detailed for young children, but provides good support for discussion about the fascinating pictures.

Heller, Ruth. *Chickens Aren't the Only Ones*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 1981. Colorful illustrations accompany the rhyming text that tells readers about many animals that lay eggs including birds, reptiles, insects, spiders, amphibians, fish and even two mammals. Text is sparse, but the illustrations easily generate conversation.

Heller, Ruth. *How to Hide a Meadow Frog and Other Amphibians*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1995.

—*How to Hide an Octopus and Other Sea Creatures*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1992. These are just two of the author's books about camouflage. Each book works on the same premise: not being seen by others has advantages for both predators and prey. Text is brief and rhyming, and accompanied by colorful illustrations showing animals alone and then camouflaged.

Henkes, Kevin. *Birds*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2009. Looking out her window, a young girl notices that birds come in many colors and sizes. The story grows more sophisticated as she combines her imagination with past observations of birds. Brightly colored, bold illustrations add much to this wonderful reflection on birds.

Hess, Nina. *Whose Feet?* New York: Random House Children's Books, 2004. All feet are not the same and thus they can do different things. Feet dig (mole), dash (cheetah), hop (bunny), hang (bat), splash (duck), swing (orangutan), and more (human). Text is limited (the book is intended as an early reader), but repeatedly asks the question "whose feet can . . . ?" Illustrations are sufficiently detailed for good observation practice.

Himmelman, John. *Frog in a Bog*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2004. This story is more about the bog than the frog, although the frog on a fern begins and ends the book. Meticulous watercolor illustrations and brief descriptive text detail the various plants and animals that live there. Predator/prey relationships and food chain concepts are implicit. The final pages identify and group the animals (insects, birds, etc.) illustrated. The naturalist/author provides a note at the end explaining what a bog is and how it is unique.

James, Betsy. *Tadpoles*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1999. Molly spends her summer watching frog eggs in her fishbowl grow into tadpoles while her little brother learns to walk. She ultimately accepts the importance of returning her young frogs to their natural world. The book's last page details the stages of frog growth and provides some rules for growing frogs away from their habitat.

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Jenkins, Steve, and Robin Page. *Move!* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. Follow animals as they swing, float, leap, dance, and slide from page to page. A playful introduction to motion encourages young children to guess some of the ways that animals get around. Simple collage illustrations demonstrate the action, and a key at the end provides additional information about the animals represented.

Jenkins, Steve, and Robin Page. *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Cut-paper illustrations highlight different animal body parts, while the simple text explains what those parts do. Word arrangement highlights whatever body part is under discussion (the use of the monkey's tail is described vertically along the illustration of the monkey hanging by its tail). Additional information on each animal is included in the back of the book.

Lionni, Leo. *Extraordinary Egg*. New York: Knopf, 1994. Jessica the frog lugs home a stone which a frog friend identifies as a chicken egg. The "chicken" that hatches is friendly, enjoys the water, and even rescues Jessica when she gets caught in water weeds. When Jessica helps the chicken find his mother, the frogs chuckle when the mother calls him "my sweet little alligator." Children who know about chickens and alligators will appreciate the humor.

Lionni, Leo. *Fish Is Fish*. New York: Knopf, 1998. Tadpole and minnow friends become separated when the tadpole eventually becomes a frog and moves onto land. Determined to see the "people" that his frog friend tells him about, fish almost dies in the process. Frog pushes fish back into the water and fish reluctantly admits "fish is fish." Fish's imagined "people" are great observation/imagination stimulants. Colored pencil illustrations in watery colors and a limited amount of text make the book fun reading/conversation.

Lionni, Leo. *Swimmy*. New York: Knopf, 1991. The lone survivor of a hungry tuna who swallowed his friends, a little fish devises a plan to camouflage itself and some new, equally little, companions as they swim in their watery world. The fascinating illustrations (children may think fingerpaint but it is more than that) and lyrical text ("lobster, who walked about like a water-moving machine") also tell of the wondrous sights Swimmy sees before he finds new friends. 1964 Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Children's Book

London, Jonathan. *Condor's Egg*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 1994. Beautiful pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations show the panoramic habitat of the California condor, the largest bird in North America. This story tells about a pair awaiting the birth of their chick. Appropriately limited text is lyrical but fairly detailed. Young children are unlikely to understand all the information that is in the text or supplemental pages, but the observation and conversation opportunities in the soaring flight and birth of this threatened scavenger make this title worthwhile regardless.

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Lunde, Darrin. *Hello, Bumblebee Bat*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2007. In larger print, someone interviews an endangered bumblebee bat about its size, diet, etc. In smaller print, it responds in a couple of sentences. On the opposite page, detailed mixed media drawings provide similar information graphically. The text is simple but the illustrations stimulate keen observation and conversation. 2008 ALA Notable Children's Book, 2008 Geisel Honor Book

Luthardt, Kevin. *Peep!* Atlanta: Peachtree, 2003. A young boy observes a baby duck emerging from its egg at the park one day. Thereafter the two are inseparable—until the growing duckling hears the call of his flock. The book is nearly wordless (except for a lot of peeps) while the colorful illustrations tell the tender but humorous story of wild animal/human relationships.

Marino, Gianna. *Zoopa: An Animal Alphabet*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005. Lively, colorful, creative illustrations with no words provide fun opportunities for learning. New letters appear a few at a time; the animals that they represent are somewhere on the page. The book concludes with a key so readers can learn the names of any animals they fail to recognize.

Martin, Bill, Jr. *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?/Oso polar, oso polar, que es ese ruido?* New York: Henry Holt, 1991. Zoo animals make their distinctive sounds for each other, while children imitate the sounds for the zookeeper. Even better than the colorful pictures are the descriptive words associated with each sound—snorting, growling, braying, etc. Sparse text and collage pictures invite reader imitation of the sounds, actions, and repetitive phrases.

Mazer, Anne. *The Salamander Room*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991. A little boy finds a salamander in the woods and tries to convince his mom to let him keep the little orange animal as a pet. She raises concerns about its care, and he supplies imaginative answers that would transform his bedroom into a dark, damp, green forest. Their conversation and the rich paintings provide impetus for further discussion.

McDonald, Megan. *Whoo-oo Is It?* New York: Orchard Books, 1992. An owl's ears are generally sensitive, but this mother owl with eggs listens especially carefully. The pastel drawings on muted color paper give a gentle feeling of night as the mother owl flies around investigating the sounds of other animals in the yard. Eventually, she figures out that the sound she is attuned to is her own baby cracking its egg.

Posada, Mia. *Guess What Is Growing Inside This Egg*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press, 2007. Young children frequently only know that chickens, or perhaps birds generically, come from eggs. This book broadens their understanding as it illustrates alligators, spiders, octopuses, sea turtles, ducks, and penguins caring for their eggs. Each animal egg/nest is briefly described. The two follow-up pages display what the baby animal looks like and provide more information about the hatchling's environment. 2008 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12

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Prosek, James. *Bird, Butterfly, Eel*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2009. For younger children, the most valuable element of this book on migration are the detailed, double-page watercolor paintings depicting the habitats and life cycles of a swallow, monarch butterfly, and eel. In the summer, Bird cares for her young in a barn, Butterfly lays eggs on milkweed plants in a nearby meadow, and Eel swims in a cool, dark pond. Autumn comes, and each begins a journey to far-off places. When spring arrives, Bird, Butterfly, and Eel (or their descendants) return to the farm. The book concludes with additional information about the three species and how the study of migration has changed over time. Readers should edit text that attributes human characteristics to the animals.

Riley, Linda Capus. *Elephants Swim*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1995. Not only elephants, but a number of animals besides the expected swimmers spend time in the water. One informative sentence per double page and a paper collage illustration of an animal—17 including people—tell readers about animal movements. Several pages of notes at the end provide additional details. 1996 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children

Rose, Deborah Lee. *Ocean Babies*. Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2005. “Billions of babies are born to the ocean.” Their similarities and differences are the subjects of the brief text and pastel watercolor illustrations. Specific information about both the marine animals illustrated (occasionally too murky for preschoolers to identify) and how they are representative of the comparison in the text is given on several back pages.

Ryder, Joanne. *Each Living Thing*. New York: Gulliver Books, 2000. Vibrant illustrations show large and small creatures and the natural environments they live in. Abundant details make this a good book for practicing observation skills. Sometimes the brief but highly descriptive text almost implies danger, but is really a gentle message of respectful awareness and conservation that is important before going out to look for animals.

Sams, Carl R. II and Jean Stoick. *Lost in the Woods*. Milford, MI: Carl R. Sams II Photography, 2004. In this beautiful photographic essay, a variety of young woodland animals are concerned that a fawn is lost. Close-up photos show the silky fur of the fawn, the whiskers on the mouse, the hairs on the squirrel’s tail, and the fur standing up on the raccoon’s head. The defensive concept of camouflage is quietly highlighted, and details encourage careful observation.

Sayre, April Pulley. *Crocodile Listens*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2001. A large, powerful crocodile lays in the sand, not attending to her usual pursuits. The suspense of her seeming inattention to the animals around her, all the changing sounds, and the puzzlement of why she is listening keep listeners on the edge of their seats. The birth of and care for her babies is a comforting resolution.

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Sayre, April Pulley. *Turtle, Turtle, Watch Out!* New York: Orchard Books, 2000. Many things can threaten the life of a sea turtle whether in its egg or fully grown, all prompting the refrain “Turtle, turtle, watch out!” Watchfulness, efficient flippers, a little luck, and even human hands may be needed if the turtle is to return to reproduce herself. As the title suggests, drama is on each page. Dark pastel illustrations of the beach and watery world of the sea turtle hold numerous opportunities for observation and conversation.

Sayre, April Pulley. *Vulture View*. New York: Henry Holt, 2007. “Poetic” and “beautiful illustrations” are not the usual words one thinks of to describe turkey vultures, but they apply here. Simple, poetic text, enhanced by boldly colored cut-paper collages, describes the eating patterns of one of nature’s cleanup crew. The book ends with two pages of information about vultures and encouragement for young scientists to learn more. 2008 ALA Notable Children’s Book, 2008 Geisel Honor Book

Schertle, Alice. *Very Hairy Bear*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2007. Appealing earth-tone illustrations and a succinct rhyming text tell about one adventure per season for this hairy (not furry) brown bear—salmon fishing in the spring, blueberry picking in the summer, etc. Vivid descriptors like “honey hunter” and “no-hair nose” add detail to the soft pastel and pencil illustrations.

Schlein, Miriam. *Hello, Hello*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing, 2002. When two lions meet, do they say “hello” or do they have another way of greeting each other? How about two chimpanzees or zebras? This is a fun look at how nine different animals communicate. The illustrations allow observation and conversation practice.

Schubert, Ingrid and Dieter. *Amazing Animals/Sobre moscas y elefantes*. Arden, NC: Front Street, 1995. Detailed, gently colored pencil and watercolor illustrations and rhyming text introduce animals from a wide range of habitats. Topics covered include life cycle, movement, body coverings, diurnal/nocturnal, camouflage, predator/prey, sounds, defense mechanisms, diet, and more.

Sill, Cathryn. *About Birds (also Fish, Mammals, Reptiles): A Guide for Children*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 1991-2002. Physical characteristics, habitat, movement, food, hunting behavior, and life cycle vary in different kinds of animals; each group gets special treatment in this series. Alternating pages include first a sentence of simple text and then its accompanying illustration. More detailed information about the 15 or so specific animals is included in the back of each book.

Sill, Cathryn. *About Habitats: Deserts*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2007. Following the pattern in her About . . . animal series, the author provides single sentences about some habitat feature or how life can survive in that habitat, and follows this simple text with a detailed, full-page, watercolor illustration of that feature. Plates are labeled with a specific location and identification of the living things, with an afterword providing additional details.

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Stockdale, Susan. *Carry Me! Animal Babies on the Move*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2005. The variety of ways animal parents carry their young are detailed in sparse text and colorful illustrations. Text is rhythmic with good descriptive words (“gripped,” “nestled”). Acrylic pictures are relatively simple yet provide sufficient detail for observation practice. A note at the end identifies the specific animals and where they live.

Stockdale, Susan. *Fabulous Fishes*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2008. Bright, textured, acrylic illustrations draw attention to the fascinating world of fishes, salt- and freshwater. Alliterative and rhyming text highlights the special characteristics of different species—large and small, frilly and smooth, hidden and easily seen. Both text and pictures should generate vocabulary and conversation about the similarities and differences in the fish. An identification note and bibliography provide information for those who want more. 2008 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children

Stockdale, Susan. *Nature’s Paintbrush: Patterns and Colors Around You*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1999. Animal colors and patterns are beautiful to see, but they also have particular use to animals. Each short entry begins with a question that calls attention to some textural or pattern feature of a particular animal. Illustrations then demonstrate its effectiveness. 2000 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children

Stockland, Patricia M. *Red Eyes or Blue Feathers: A Book about Animal Colors*. Minneapolis, MN: Picture Window Books, 2005. Text on two levels and bright digital illustrations describe how color adaptations make surviving in the wild much easier, whether you are predator or prey. A review page, fun facts, glossary, index, and bibliography at the end add to the value of the book. 2006 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12

Swinburne, Stephen R. *Safe, Warm, and Snug*. San Diego, CA: Gulliver Books, 1999. The title description applies to the way eleven animal parents keep their young from getting eaten by predators. Some of the animals will be familiar to children, some new. Text is presented in rhyming couplets, while double-page paintings demonstrate the safety systems within the relevant habitat. Additional information is provided in the back of the book.

Swinburne, Stephen R. *Unbeatable Beaks*. New York: Henry Holt, 1999. Lyrical text and eye-catching paper-collage illustrations introduce young children to birds and beaks of a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. A glossary at the end provides additional information about the pictured birds. NCTE Notable Children’s Books in the Language Arts

Vyner, Sue. *Swim for Cover! Adventure on the Coral Reef*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1995. An octopus tries to warn other reef animals of the danger of a moray eel that is following her. Each touts its particular defense mechanism. Colorful, watery illustrations add to the suspense. Both illustrations and animal responses provide good conversation material. End notes include more information about each of the featured animals and the coral reef where they live.

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Wallace, Karen. *Tale of a Tadpole*. New York: DK Publishing, 1998. Through simple text and eye-catching full-color photographs, the author describes the growth and development of a tadpole from egg to adult frog. Small inset boxes add more detail. Intended as a beginning reader, good descriptive words like “webbed” and “dotted” increase young vocabularies. A short picture word glossary at the back adds learner support.

Winer, Yvonne. *Birds Build Nests*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2001. Beautifully detailed illustrations and poetic text explain how, when, where, and why birds build nests. Each five-line poem is accompanied by a full-page watercolor of an appropriate bird. A nest and bird identification guide is included in the back of the book. Poems and pictures encourage both observation and conversation. 2002 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12

Winer, Yvonne. *Frogs Sing Songs*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2003. Short verses, each ending with “that’s . . . frogs sing songs,” describe how, when, where, and why frogs make sounds. Realistic full-page watercolors provide observation practice. The book concludes with a gentle environmental message. Details about the specific frogs are included in an identification guide in the back of the book.

World Wildlife Fund. *Mothers and Babies*. San Rafael, CA: Cedco Publishing, 1997. More than 20 beautiful full-page photographs of an animal mother and baby are accompanied only by words identifying the animal and the common name of its baby: mountain goat and kid, penguin and chick, etc. Color and size comparisons between mother and young, and among the various animals can be seen, although relative size among animals (because all photographs are close-ups) is not obvious.

Wu, Norbert. *Fish Faces*. New York: Henry Holt, 1993. The marine biologist/author uses photographs to introduce readers to some of the more striking characteristics of the creatures encountered on his dives. Shapes, colors, movement, and even body parts build vocabulary.

