

LITTLE EXPLORERS

IN THE RAINFOREST

LIFT THE FLAPS
TO EXPLORE THE
RAINFOREST INSIDE
AND OUT!

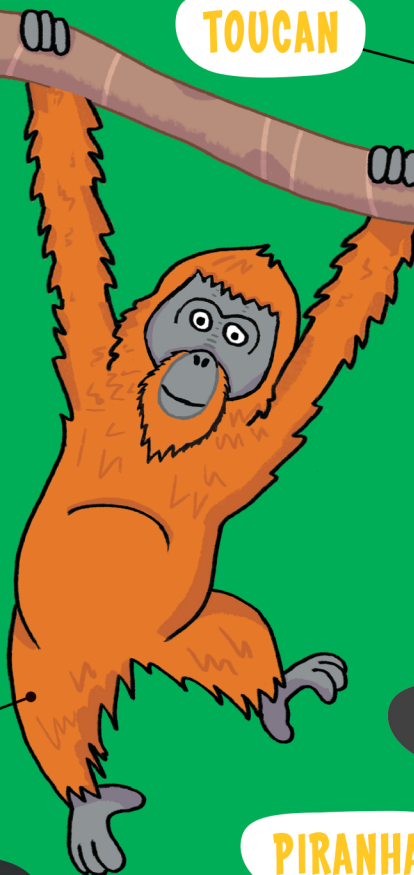
TOUCAN



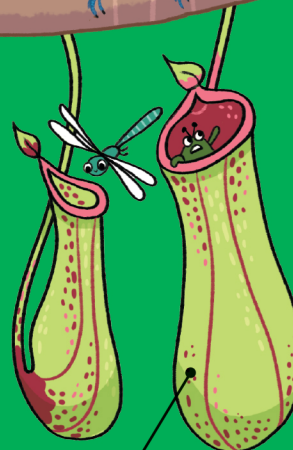
LEMURS



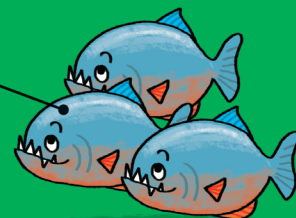
ORANGUTAN



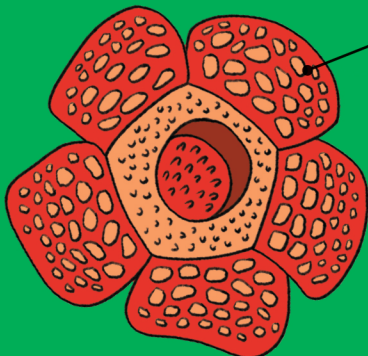
PITCHER PLANTS



PIRANHAS



RAFFLESIA



TAPIRS



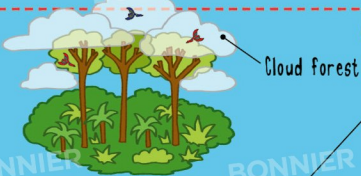
MORE THAN
30 FLAPS!

AMAZING RAINFORESTS

Rainforests can be found all around the world in places where there's lots of rain. They are home to millions of different plants and animals. Let's explore some of the world's rainforests and their fascinating features...

Central America

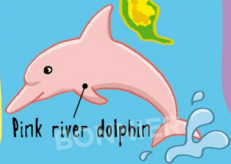
Some of the rainforests in Central America are known as cloud forests, because the tops of the trees are usually covered in a thick blanket of mist and cloud.



Cloud forest

The Amazon

The Amazon is the biggest rainforest in the world. It is home to over 400 types of mammals, and thousands of different types of birds, fish and bugs. The pink river dolphin is one amazing Amazon animal that can't be found anywhere else on Earth!



Pink river dolphin

Types of rainforest

There are two types of rainforest: tropical and temperate. Tropical rainforests are rainy and very warm all year round. Temperate rainforests have seasons – they are cool in the winter and warm in the summer.

North America
Temperate rainforest

Tropical rainforest

Equator

The equator is an imaginary line around the middle of the Earth that separates it into two halves. Tropical rainforests grow close to the equator, while temperate rainforests grow further north or south.

Europe

Africa

South America

The Congo

The Congo Basin (the area around the Congo River) crosses six African countries! It contains lots of different habitats, including swamps, savannahs and huge areas of rainforest.



Swamp

Orchid

Madagascar

Tropical rainforests can be found in the eastern areas of Madagascar. Orchids are the most common flower in this rainforest, with over 1,000 different types found here!

Ancient forests

The rainforests of Asia started growing over 70 million years ago! There are areas of bamboo forest here, which are home to a very unique type of bear...



Idiot fruit flower

Unique flowers

Many of Australia's rainforest flowers, such as the idiot fruit flower, can only be found in this part of the world!



RAINFOREST LAYERS

A rainforest can be divided into four layers. Some layers get more sunlight and rain than others, which means different types of plants grow at each level. Let's investigate layer by layer to find out more about them!

Emergent layer

The emergent layer gets the most sunlight. Here, tall trees poke out above the rest and grow to more than 60 metres – that's the same height as 10 giraffes!

Life at the top

Bats, butterflies, eagles and monkeys can be found gliding or swinging through the emergent layer.

Hairy eagle

Blue morpho butterflies

Canopy layer

Below the tallest trees, branches and leaves overlap to create a thick layer called the canopy. There are more types of plants and animals in the canopy than in any other layer.

Lush leaves

Many rainforest trees have leaves with pointed tips, so raindrops run straight off them.

Understorey layer

Beneath the canopy, young trees, shrubs and palms grow. Large leaves help these plants catch as much sunlight as possible.

On the way up!

Vines called lianas start life on the forest floor or in the canopy. They wind themselves around other plants as they grow up towards the light.

Elephant ear plant

Staghorn fern

Giant anteater

Forest floor

Very little sunlight reaches the forest floor. It's dark down here and the ground is damp, so fallen leaves rot quickly.

A huge drop

As there are so many leaves to fall through, it can take 10 minutes for a raindrop to reach the ground! But the forest floor still floods when there's heavy rain.

PLENTY OF PLANTS

From gigantic trees to meat-eating plants and stinky flowers, tropical rainforests are home to some of the weirdest and most unique plants on the planet. In fact, most types of plant that exist on Earth can be found in the rainforest.

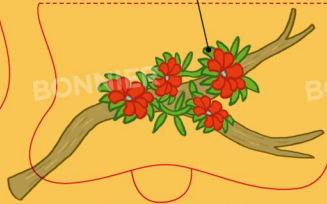
Tropical pitcher plant

The bug-eating pitcher plant is a sweet, slippery trap. It attracts insects with its pleasant smell. When a bug lands, it slips on the plant's smooth surface and drops into the liquid inside.



Bromeliads

A bromeliad's long, curved leaves form a bowl that catches rainwater. One bromeliad can provide a cosy home for more than 250 different types of living creatures.



Ferns

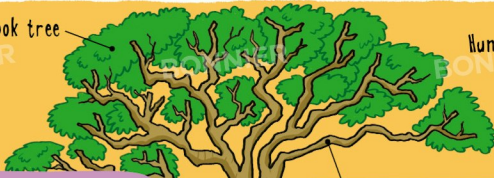
The fronds (leaves) of some ferns can grow up to 5 metres long – that's longer than most sports cars! Fronds begin as small, curled balls and slowly straighten as they grow.

Frond

Buttress roots

When trees grow very tall, they need extra support to stand upright. Most tropical trees grow long, wide, wavy roots called buttress roots, which stop them falling over.

Kapok tree



Kapok tree

The towering kapok tree can be found throughout the world. Its huge buttress roots help it grow to 50 metres in height, and live to an age of 300 years or more!

Rafflesia

The rafflesia (say: raf-lee-see-a), also known as the corpse lily, is the world's largest flower. It can grow to more than 1 metre wide!



Hummingbird

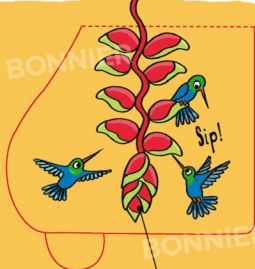


Titan arum



Hidden treats

A heliconia hides its flowers inside brightly coloured leaves called bracts. Only certain types of hummingbird can get to a heliconia's sweet nectar and pollen.



Titan arum

The stinky titan arum grows a large spike through its middle. This can grow up to 3 metres tall – the same height as an Asian elephant!

These two supersized plants are famous for being very smelly! Their scents attract insects that carry the plants' pollen to other flowers. This helps even more pongy plants to grow!

BY THE RIVER

Tropical rainforests contain some of the world's largest rivers. The rivers and nearby land provide food and shelter for many animals. Let's take a trip down the Congo River in Africa to learn more about life by the water...

Hinge-back tortoise



Cameroon otter

Above the surface

Insects such as damselflies hover just above the water in search of other insects to eat. Tasty!



Deep waters

Certain parts of the Congo River are more than 200 metres deep. Some skyscrapers would disappear below the surface!

Who's under the water?



Lungfish

The prehistoric lungfish has been around for nearly 400 million years! Unlike most fish, it can breathe air just like we do, using its specially adapted lungs.



Red river hog

Red river hogs like to hang out near swamps and rivers, where they sniff around for roots to eat. These small wild pigs are also excellent swimmers!



Little bittern



Nile crocodile

Crocodiles lie on riverbanks waiting for prey. They open their mouth to keep cool, just like a panting dog!



Manatee

Manatees glide through the water without even making a ripple. This is a useful skill to have when trying to avoid crocodiles!



Grey parrot



TYPES OF RIVER

Clearwater river

Clearwater rivers are clear in colour and flow speedily through very old rocky areas. Lots of plants grow around this type of river.



Blackwater river

Blackwater rivers are dark brown or black. They may look murky, but these rivers contain some of the cleanest natural waters in the world!



Whitewater river

Whitewater rivers aren't white at all, but light brown - like chocolate milk! This colour comes from soil that has washed into the water.



LIVING ON LAND

From tiny insects to huge elephants, the forest floor is busy with a variety of wildlife. These creatures all have clever ways of surviving, whether they're predators hunting for dinner, or prey scaring off their attackers!



Croak!

Glass frog

Glass frogs have see-through skin. This helps them blend into the forest and escape hungry hunters.

Peanut-head bug

A peanut-head bug's large head makes it look bigger than it is to warn off attackers. If that doesn't work, it can shoot out a stinky spray too!



Leaf litter



What's beneath the leaves?

Tapir

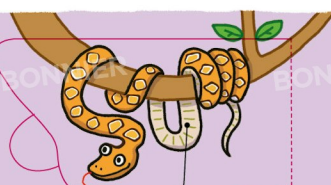
Adult tapirs and baby tapirs look very different! Babies are born with spots to help them blend in to the leafy rainforest. As they grow, their spots become stripes.



Tapir

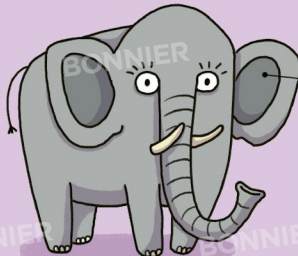
Python

A python's colour is usually similar to its habitat. This helps it to hide before pouncing on its prey. The snake then uses its strong body to squeeze its victims to death. Eek!



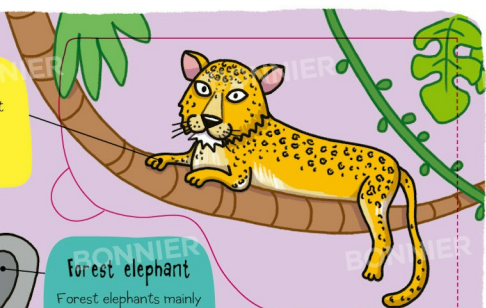
Leopard

The understory layer is the perfect hunting ground for leopards. Their sharp eyes can catch the smallest movements, even in low light.



Forest elephant

Forest elephants mainly eat tree bark, leaves and fruit. These big animals need to eat more than 130 kilograms of food a day – that's the same weight as 1,000 bananas!



Giant anteater

By flicking its long tongue up to 160 times a minute, a giant anteater is able to catch and eat thousands of ants and termites each day. Yummy!

Chimpanzee



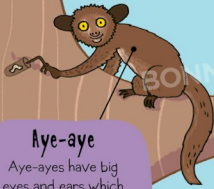
Who lives here?



Run!

LIFE UP HIGH

Animals in the canopy layer have special features that help them live high up in the rainforest trees. Let's see who's hanging around in the treetops and learn more about these fascinating animals...



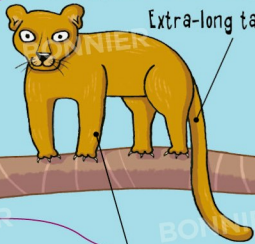
Aye-aye

Aye-ayes have big eyes and ears which help them find their way through the dark rainforest at night. When they're hungry, aye-ayes use their extra-long middle finger to pull tasty insect grubs (maggots) from holes in the trees.



Flying fox

Flying foxes are actually bats. These busy animals can fly more than 30 kilometres in one night in search of fruit to eat!



Extra-long tail

Fossa

A fossa uses its long tail to balance on high branches. This catlike animal has sharp claws and terrifying teeth which it uses to catch prey.

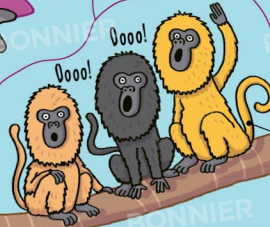
Meary wings

A hummingbird's wings beat so fast when it flies that it needs to rest for a long time in-between flights.



Orangutan

The name 'orangutan' means 'person of the forest'. These apes spend nearly all their time in the trees. They even sleep in leafy nests high up in the branches.



Howler monkey

The roaring cries of howler monkeys can be heard up to 5 kilometres away. Their loud call is a message to other monkeys to say 'this spot is taken!'

Whoosh!



Flying snake

Flying snakes take a clever shortcut to get from tree to tree. Instead of slithering up from the floor, they propel themselves off branches and glide through the air!

Who's hiding?



Clever Crawler!

Joseph's coat caterpillars chew tree bark for hours and hours. They use it to cover their cocoon (hard outer cases), to protect them as they change into a moth.

THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

The Amazon is the biggest rainforest on Earth, stretching across nine South American countries. It is a very important habitat because more than half of all types of plants and wildlife can be found here.

Super swimmer

In April 2007, Martin Strel swam the entire length of the Amazon River in 66 days!

Winding water

The Amazon River is around 6,400 kilometres long. It empties millions of litres of water into the ocean every second!

Marvellous medicine

Thousands of plants from the Amazon, including the cinchona tree, have been used in medicines to treat lots of different illnesses.

Cinchona tree

Piranha

Piranhas are one of the many dangerous animals found in the Amazon River. These meat-eating fish have very sharp teeth. They hunt in large groups called shoals!

Massive menu

Lots of the fruit, vegetables, nuts and spices that we eat were first found in the Amazon.



Banana



Avocado



Mango



Pineapple

Anaconda

One of the world's largest snakes, the anaconda, can be found lurking in the Amazon River.



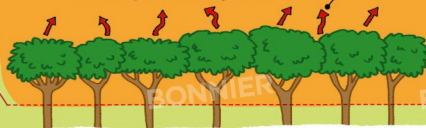
Shabono



Earth's lungs

The Amazon is sometimes called the 'Earth's lungs' because the plants here produce 20 per cent of all the fresh air that we breathe.

Oxygen



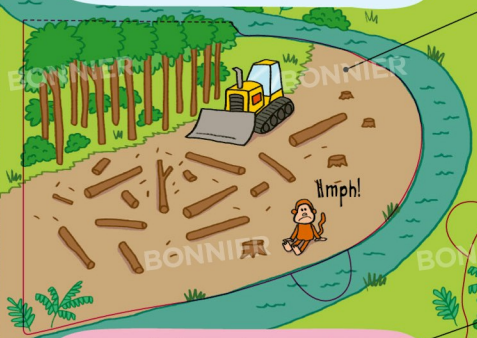
I live here!

There are around 400 different groups of people that live in the Amazon rainforest. The largest group are the Yanomami people who live in big, round huts called shabonos.

CARE AND BE FAIR

Sometimes we take too much from the rainforest. We end up damaging these special places and disturbing the amazing wildlife that live there. We must look after these forests to make sure we don't lose them forever.

So what can we do to keep them safe?



Timber!

Many rainforest trees are cut down every day. This is called deforestation. Huge areas of rainforest have disappeared because of deforestation and this is a big problem for the wildlife who lose their homes.



Look, but don't touch!

Millions of tourists visit rainforests every year. Cars and litter can harm the land, and if people get too close to the wildlife, this can disturb the animals.

Forest to farm

Areas of rainforest have been cleared to make room for farms. This affects the forest animals and it also means fewer different types of plants can grow.



Cattle farm

SAVE THE EARTH

There is a lot that we can do to help look after the world around us, even from our own homes.



Reduce

Turn off taps and switch off lights. Do you carry your lunch to school in a plastic bag? You could use a reusable lunchbox instead!



Reuse

Think before you throw things away. Can you use them again in a different and creative way?



Recycle

Put your rubbish in the right bin. You can recycle paper, cans, glass, cardboard and lots more!

Your own mini rainforest

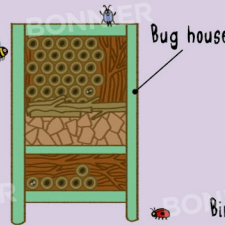
If you want to help the animals where you live, why not create your own wildlife garden? You could plant wild flower seeds, make a bug house from twigs and leaves, and build a bird feeder from an old bottle!



Planting wild flowers



Nesting box for birds



Bug house



Bird feeder