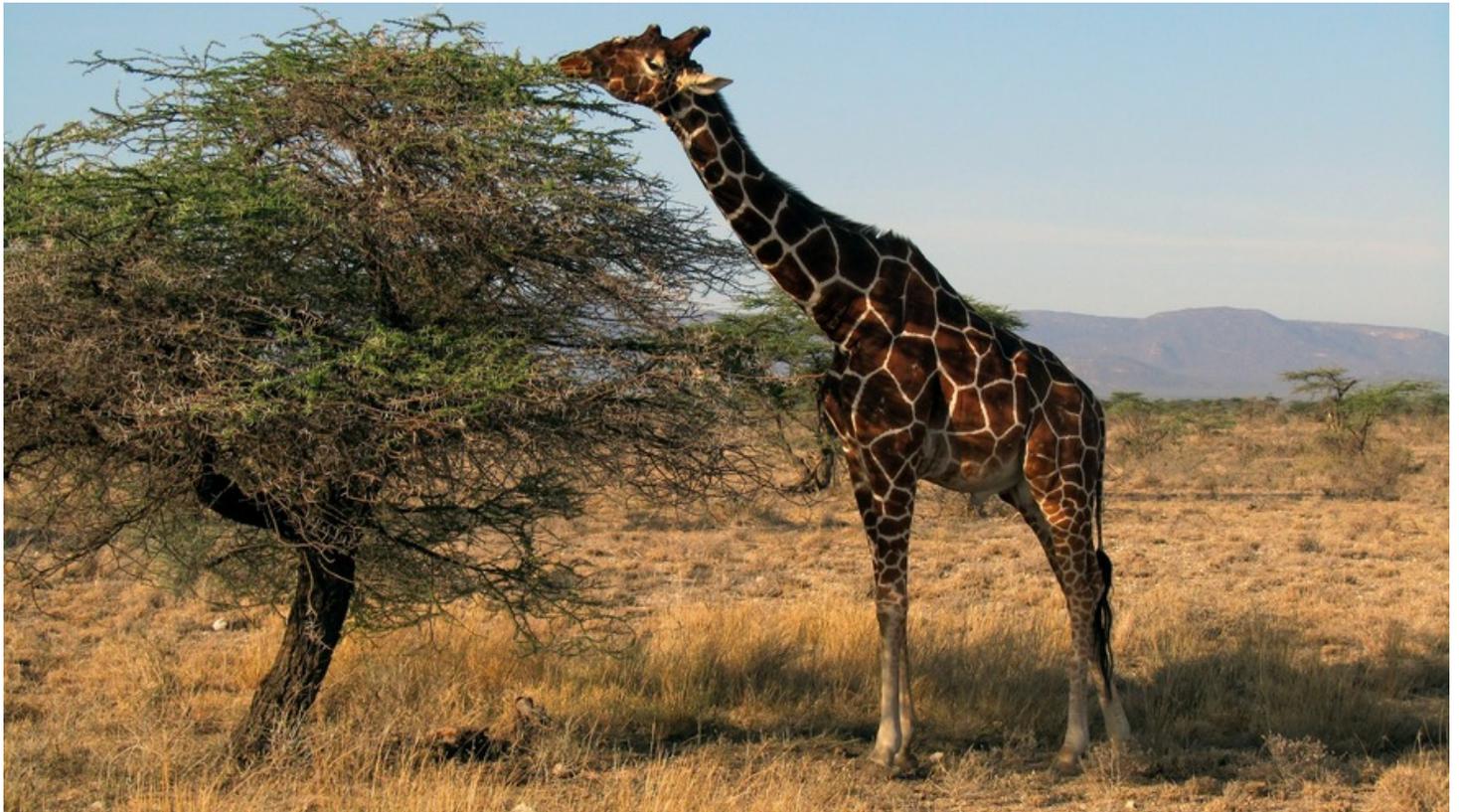


Animal Atlas: Meet the animals of Africa

By Rachel Williams and Emily Hawkins, "Atlas of Animal Adventures," adapted by Newsela staff on 07.31.17

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The giraffe is one of many animals that live in Africa. Photo from: Pixabay. Illustrations: Lucy Letherland, "Atlas of Animal Adventures"/Newsela.

Africa is home to some of the world's most stunning wildlife. Its animals include everything from lions and leopards to elephants and giraffes. The continent's wide savannas, dense jungles and rich oceans are full of creatures. Each has its own secrets to help it stay alive.

Running With The Wildebeest In Kenya

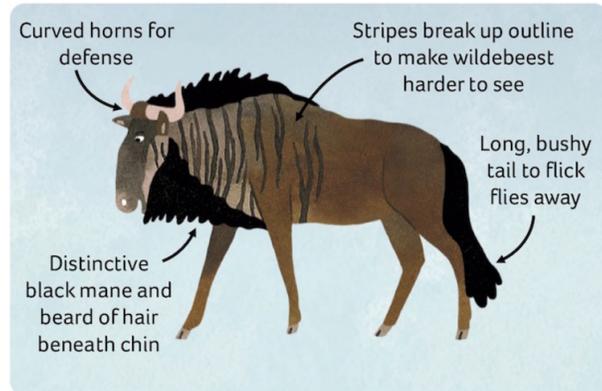
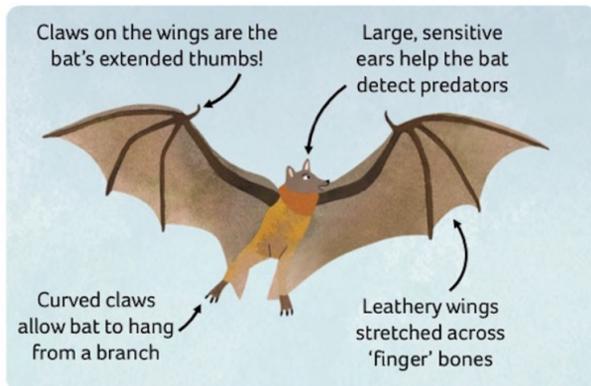
Every year, the Mara River in East Africa becomes the scene of one of nature's most amazing events. Between July and September, thousands of wildebeest, zebras and gazelles are on the move. They leave the dry grasslands of the Serengeti and follow the rains north to the green lands of the Masai Mara. But on their long journey, they face a big problem. The Mara River blocks their way.

The summer rains swell the river until it becomes a strong, fast, foaming current. The rushing water forms a fence between the herds and the rich grazing beyond. But every creature must take the plunge. On the way, the weak or young may be eaten by the enormous crocodiles that lurk in

the waters. Others may be picked off by the hungry lions on the other side of the river. In this fight for life, only the strong or the very lucky will live.

Hanging Out With The Fruit Bats Of Zambia

Each



November and December, a special event takes place in Zambia's Kasanka National Park. About 8 million fruit bats gather in a large clump of trees. At this time of year, the forest is filled with tasty fruits. The bats flock to eat waterberries, mangos and milkwood berries.

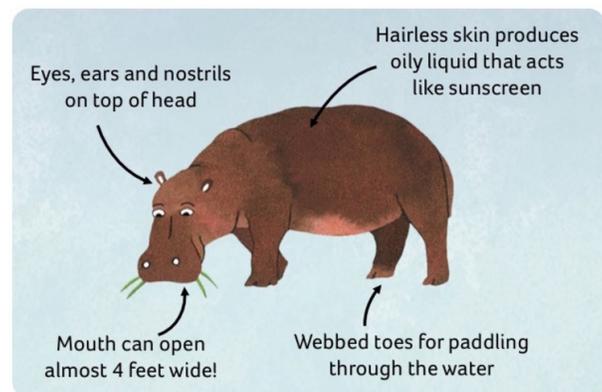
During the day, the bats crowd each other in the trees. They sleep for hours, their wings tucked beside their bellies. But as twilight falls, they head out for the feast. The skies become dark with wings as these furry creatures take off in their millions.

Battling With The Hippos Of Botswana

The Kalahari Desert in Southern Africa gets no rain for months at a time. But the desert is home to one of the world's most famous water animals: the hippo.

Southern Africa's Okavango River does not empty into the sea, like most rivers. Instead, it empties into an open area known as the Okavango Delta. Once a year, this flood turns miles of scorched plains into a watery animal refuge.

Here, a group of female hippos gathers around a male hippo. He is prepared to fight off other males to keep his mates for himself. If another male approaches, the two fight. The hippos wrestle in the water. They push each other back and forth with their strong jaws. Such fights can go on for hours, but there can only be one winner. The loser may be left with serious injuries. Meanwhile, the winner will face many more battles if he wants to hold on to his territory.



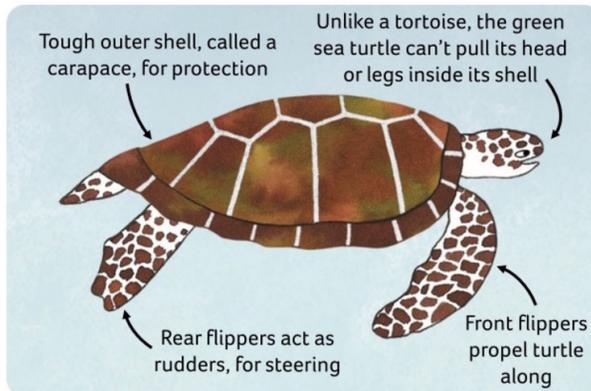
Swimming With The Sardines Of South Africa

One of the world's most amazing ocean events is the Great Sardine Run. It takes place for a few weeks each winter along the east coast of South Africa. Billions of tiny fish called sardines are swept north along the coast. They are kept close to the shore by a band of cold water.

Like many creatures, the sardines group together for safety. Some groups are up to nine miles long and contain millions of fish. These sardines do not travel alone. They are pursued by an army of predators, including dolphins, whales and sharks.

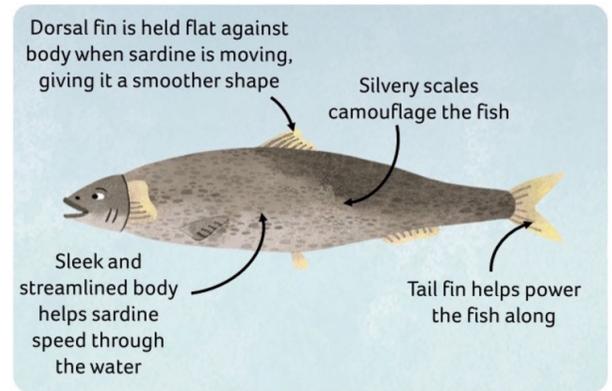
Hatching With The Green Sea Turtles Of West Africa

The moment a baby sea turtle is born, it begins the most



important journey of its life. The baby turtle must sprint from its nest in the sand to the safety of the ocean. Unlike some creatures, sea turtles do not get help from their mothers. They must make their way out of their shells on their own. The youngsters do this using a sharp tooth called a caruncle. Then they emerge from the sands and turn to face the bright horizon of the sea.

On their journey to the water, the hatchlings must be careful. There are all sorts of predators on the beach looking for a meal. In this race, every turtle that makes it to the ocean is a winner.



Quiz

- 1 What are the MAIN ideas of this article?
1. *Some of the most popular wildlife in Africa include bats and hippos.*
 2. *Africa is full of wildlife that have different ways to survive predators.*
 3. *The wildlife in Africa have adapted to the hot weather.*
 4. *African is home to some amazing creatures.*
- (A) 1 and 2
- (B) 1 and 3
- (C) 2 and 3
- (D) 2 and 4
- 2 Which detail from the article BEST reflects the MAIN goal of African wildlife?
- (A) Each has its own secrets to help it stay alive.
- (B) During the day, the bats crowd each other in the trees.
- (C) Like many creatures, the sardines group together for safety.
- (D) On their journey to the water, the hatchlings must be careful.
- 3 What effect does the flooding of the Okavango River have on hippos?
- (A) The river overflows into the ocean where hippos can bathe together.
- (B) The flooding causes male hippos to wrestle over territory and mates.
- (C) The flooding of the Okavango Delta turns into a safe place for hippos.
- (D) The Kalahari Desert becomes a watery path to the ocean for hippos.
- 4 Based on the graphics of the animals in each section, which of the following is TRUE?
- (A) Hippos and wildebeests migrate to water in the summer.
- (B) Sardines and baby sea turtles swim together for safety.
- (C) All of the animals need water to travel safely.
- (D) All of the animals have defenses against predators.