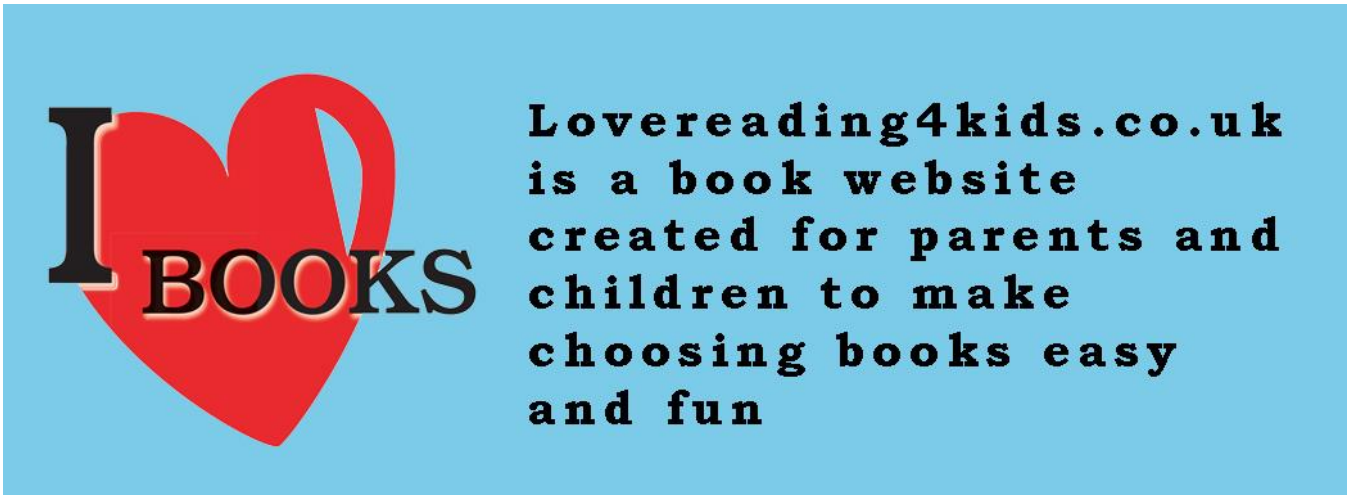


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THE CONGO RAINFOREST

The tropical rainforest covering the Congo Basin in central Africa is teeming with life. At two million square kilometres, it is the world's second-biggest tropical rainforest, and is home to some of our planet's most skilled hunters. In places, only one per cent of sunlight is able to reach the forest floor, making a meal hard to find! From the tiny Charaxes butterfly, which seeks out nectar with the many smelling receptors on its body, to the African leopard, which stalks the forest prey on soft-padded paws, every creature that lives here has evolved to have special adaptations that help it navigate the jungle's shadows.

WELCOME TO THE RAINFOREST

Destination

The Congo Basin

Continent

Africa

Countries

Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic

Habitats

Forest, Freshwaters, Grasslands

Size

2 million square kilometres

Who lives here

400 species of mammals, 1,000 species of birds and 700 species of fish.



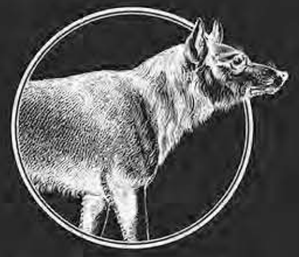
NIGHT-TIME AND TWILIGHT

When the sun drops below the horizon, the forest soon turns velvet black. Flanked by the giant trees of the wood, the northern spotted owl welcomes night by breaking the silence: 'Woot, woo!', it calls. These owls don't appreciate habitat disturbance, and are known to rest in the same redwood or sequoia tree for most of their adult lives. From this vantage point the owl spots its favourite meal – the flying squirrel. Owls are known to sit completely still and then pounce on squirrels who are mid-flight, who are themselves on the hunt for breakfast.

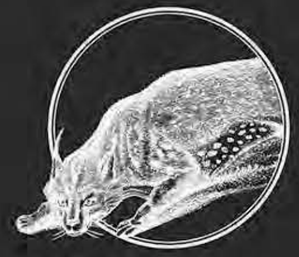
READ about the species below and then turn back to THE OBSERVATION DECK.
Looking through the BLUE lens, what can you see?



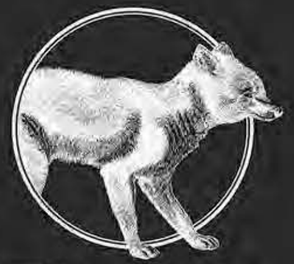
Northern spotted owl With a unique mode of flying, this hunter glides silently through the air to snatch its prey.



Coyote This resourceful creature is capable of running at speeds of up to 65 kilometres per hour.



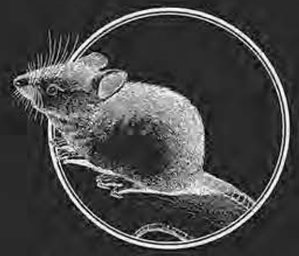
Bobcat The most common wildcat in North America lives alone, hunting prey with stealth and marking territory by scent.



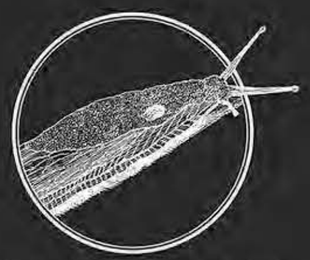
Grey fox A master climber of the forest, this fox can climb tail-first down trees to catch prey of rabbits, mice, and insects.



Raccoon This agile stripy-tailed creature uses its front paws and long fingers to find and feast on prey at night.



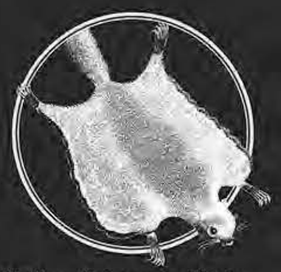
Dusty-footed woodrat Travelling along tree branches, this rodent uses its tail to ward off predators.



Banana slug Mostly nocturnal, the head tentacles of this mollusc are equipped with super-sensory organs to find prey in the dark.



Black-tailed deer Most active at twilight, this species communicates via glands located on its lower legs.

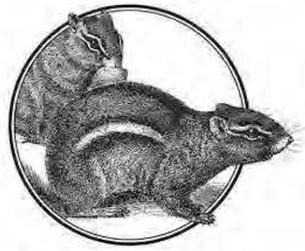


Northern flying squirrel Gliding from tree to tree, this squirrel hunts with large pupils that allow it to see in the dark.

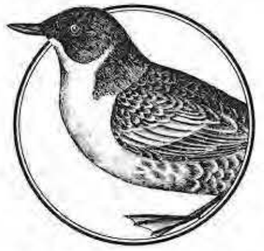
DAYTIME

Daylight in the forest begins slowly, setting light to the giants from canopy to floor. One of the fiercest creatures of the forest is first to stir – the black bear! These powerful creatures have adopted a daytime routine in this forest, and make a symphony of growling and snorting sounds as they set out on the morning hunt. The black bear is an agile athlete: with its short claws and powerful legs it can catch a meal on the ground or above the forest floor. What do you think it's caught on this morning's hunt?

READ about the species below and then turn back to THE OBSERVATION DECK.
Looking through the RED lens, what can you see?



Sonoma chipmunk Mostly active in daylight, the sonoma gathers food in its cheeks and carries it back to its burrow to store.



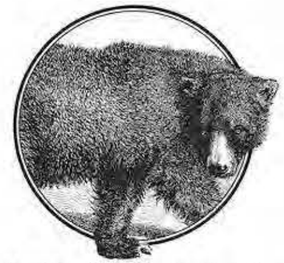
Marbled murrelet Unlike other birds that nest in colonies, this creature takes to the canopy, laying eggs on moss and lichen.



Bald eagle A fierce predator of the forest, this eagle's eye is almost as large as a human's, but four times as sharp!



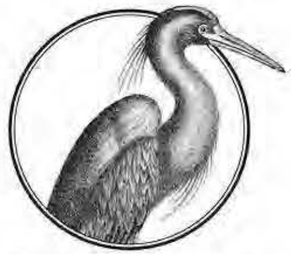
Roosevelt elk When predators are in sight, this deer curls back its upper lip, grinds its teeth and hisses softly to communicate with its family.



American black bear A mother teaches her young to hunt fish and mammals, as well as scavenge for roots, berries, grasses, and insects.



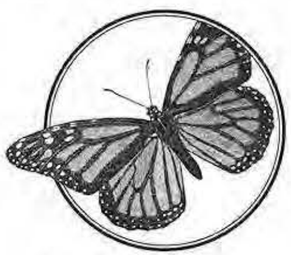
Stellar's jay One of only a few birds in the world to build an intricate nest with mud, this bright blue bird feeds on nuts, seeds, and acorns.



Great blue heron Wading through streams and rivers of the forest, this bird is an expert fisher, snaring food with a nosedive.



Foothill yellow-legged frog Also found in waterways of the forest, this amphibian lays its eggs in masses attached to underwater plants.



Monarch butterfly The world's most famous migrating butterfly uses its eyes to locate flowers and antennae to sniff out nectar.