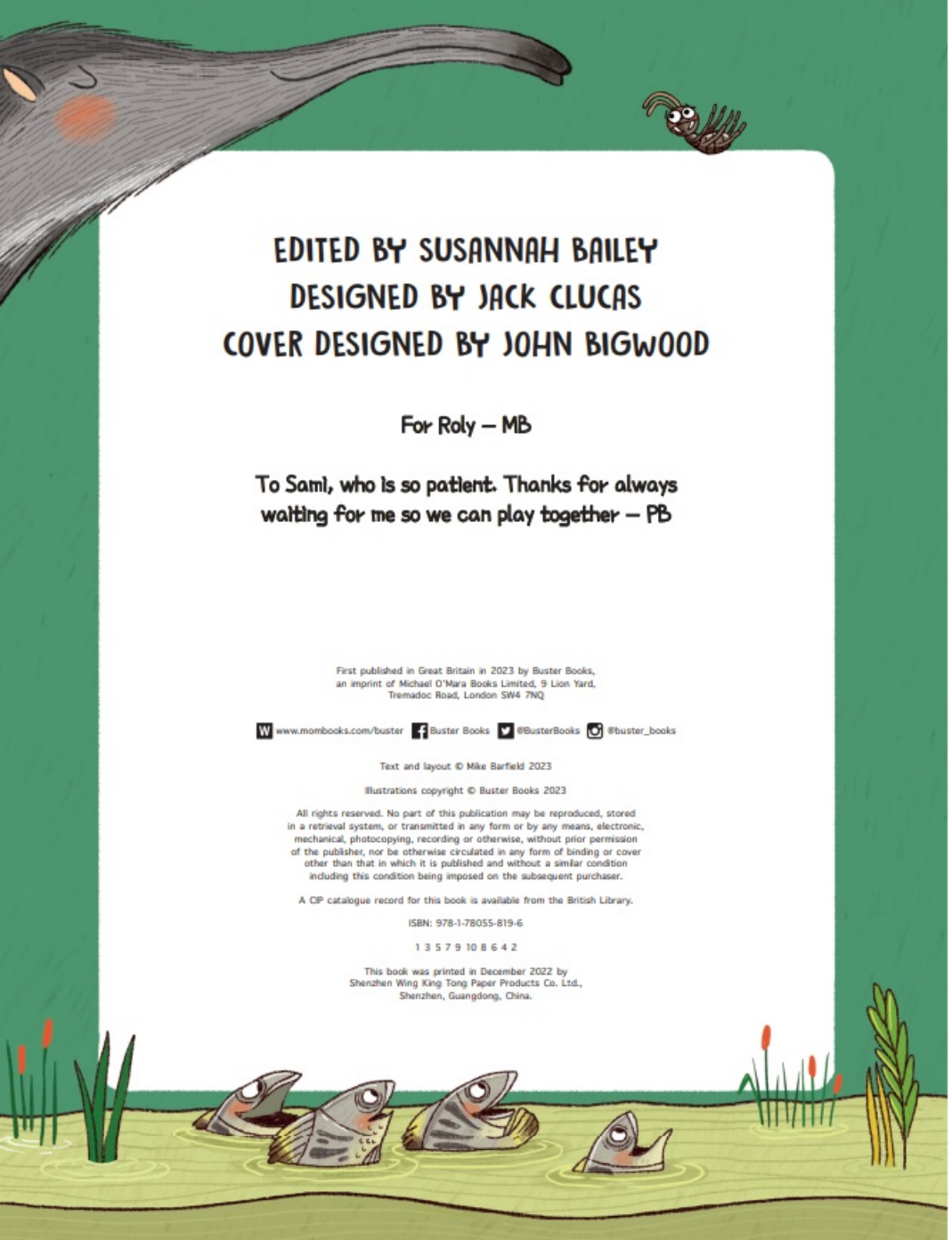


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For Roly – MB

To Sami, who is so patient. Thanks for always waiting for me so we can play together – PB

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THE WILD LIFE OF ANIMALS

WRITTEN BY MIKE BARFIELD
ILLUSTRATED BY PAULA BOSSIO



INTRODUCTION

Can you keep a secret? Get ready for a thrilling ride as we reveal the hidden lives of some weird and wonderful animals.

In these pages, you will meet fish, frogs, monkeys, meerkats, lizards, leopards, bats, birds, bugs, bears and a whole host of other animals from different habitats across the globe.

Some swim, some fly, some glide, some crawl – and they range in size from tiny spiders to the mighty blue whale, the largest animal that has ever lived.

As well as colourful comics in which astounding animals talk us through their secret lives, there are 'Wild Style' guides to some of nature's hottest looks, and young animals share their plans for the future in 'When I Grow Up'.

The book is divided into sections based on habitats and lifestyles, but just like a macaroni penguin setting out to sea near the South Pole, you can dive in anywhere and start laughing and learning.

We guarantee, you'll have a really wild time.

WOODS AND FORESTS: BRANCHES EVERYWHERE

Woods and forests make wonderful homes for animals that love to live undercover. Trees are the key to these habitats, offering shade, food and safe places to live, often above the ground.

Tropical regions have rainforests – lush, leafy places where it stays warm and wet all year round. Other regions have temperate forests that are cooler and drier, where the leaves of trees may change with the seasons.

Over half the world's animal species are said to live in rainforests, with many new ones still to be discovered.

Here are some forest animals whose secrets we can now reveal.

WEAVER ANT

Hello! We're weaver ants, living high up in a mango tree in Thailand.

IIH

This big ball of leaves in the warm sunshine is our home. There's half a million of us in this colony.

THAT'S RIGHT!

THERE ARE!

Some of us are big.

8-MILLIMETRES LONG

Some of us are small.

4-MILLIMETRES LONG

Some of us are only babies (called larvae).

We build our nests by pulling nearby leaves together with our sharp jaws and claws.

PULL!

TUG!

Then we glue their edges together with strands of sticky silk.

In fact, this sticky silk is sprayed from the mouths of our own baby ants after we stroke them. They're like little glue bottles!

STROKE!

SQUIRT!

SPRAY!

STICK!

And when we need to connect leaves that are further apart, 'Team Weaver' has a cunning plan.

THIS WILL NEED TEAMWORK.

We form chains to reach leaves and bring them together. Humans call it 'joined-up thinking' – we call it madness! Luckily, we can lift 100 times our body weight.

STRETCH!

WOBBLE!

By working together, we can build lots of new nests across the canopy – some as big as beach balls.

We're only little, but I'd say we're pretty incredible animals.

YOU'RE RIGHT!

WE ARE!

THAT'S RIGHT!

THEY ARE!