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In This Issue

12 Tricks for Treats
Check out amazing owls that use special skills to become top bird.

8 Halloween Pet Parade
These four-legged party animals show off some crazy costumes.

16 Are We Alone?
A recently spotted star system could be home to aliens.

20 Don't Take This Quiz Before Bed
Follow this frightful flowchart to see where your deepest fears lie.

22 Bat Rescue
Injured flying mammals get a boost from devoted humans.

24 Haunted White House
Do ghosts reside in this historic landmark?

26 Halloween Under the Sea
Discover some fish with freaky names.

COOL POSTER! p. 18

Departments

4 Weird But True!
5 Guinness World Records
6 Bet You Didn't Know
7 Naughty Pets
28 Fun Stuff

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BY MICHELLE HARRIS

weird but true!

Check out these outrageous facts.

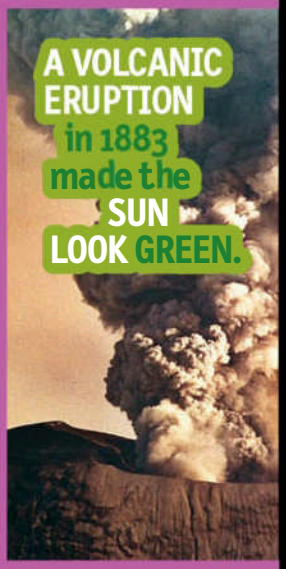
Bat hair has been used as **money.**

Almonds belong to the **rose family.**

It takes **three liters** of freshwater to make **one liter** of bottled water.

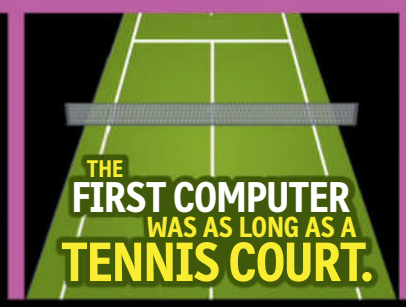
Circus workers call the toilet a **doniker.**

ANTS HAVE LIVED ON EARTH FOR SOME 140 MILLION YEARS.



A VOLCANIC ERUPTION in 1883 made the **SUN LOOK GREEN.**

Baby alligators bark when they're ready to hatch out of their eggs.



THE **FIRST COMPUTER** WAS AS LONG AS A **TENNIS COURT.**

GET MORE!

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ASTONISHING STORIES FROM THE FILES OF

Guinness World Records

BY KAY BOATNER

Nat Geo Kids Sets Record!

HUGE TOILET-PAPER-ROLL ROCKET

Congratulations, readers! You helped us set our 10th Guinness World Records title, for the largest toilet-paper-roll sculpture. In April we asked readers to send us their toilet-paper-roll tubes—and you guys responded big-time. The nearly 24-foot-tall rocket sculpture kept 20,241 tubes out of landfills. Even celebrities got involved. YouTube stars Hank Green and Parry Gripp, LA Galaxy soccer players, and others sent in their rolls. Thanks to you, this record was an absolute blast!

TO SEE A PHOTO GALLERY GO ONLINE: natgeokids.com/launch-party

HEAVIEST SNAKE

The eastern diamondback rattlesnake is the heaviest venomous snake in the world. Found in the United States, these reptiles stretch up to six feet and typically weigh between 12 and 15 pounds. The heaviest one ever recorded weighed a whopping 34 pounds!

SUPERLONG NAILS!

This is one woman who never bites her nails. Ayanna Williams of Houston, Texas, holds the record for the longest fingernails on a woman. If all 10 nails were laid end to end, they'd measure nearly 19 feet long—about the height of five cows stacked on top of each other. Williams coats her nails with an acrylic gloss to keep them from breaking, then sometimes decorates them. The whole process takes nearly 20 hours. She can drive a car and wash dishes but avoids sports. Why risk 24 years of hard work?

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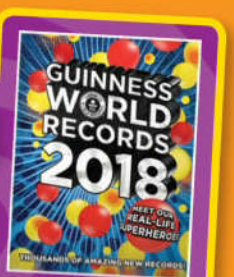
natgeokids.com/october



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Bet you didn't know

BY SARAH YOUNGSON AND ANDREA SILEN

7 surprising facts about spiders

1 Golden silk orb-weaver spiders vibrate their webs to distract predators.

2 Black widow spiders are more venomous than rattlesnakes.

3 After a large meal, a tarantula may not eat for a month.

4 Crab spiders change color to blend in with their surroundings.

5 There are more than 44,000 species of spiders.

6 A spider eats about 2,000 insects a year.

7 The oldest known spider fossils are more than 300 million years old.

VICKI BEAVER / ALAMY (SPIDER)

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

NaugHty PETS

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

FREEDOM!

NAME Otto

FAVORITE ACTIVITY
Planning escape strategies

FAVORITE TOY
Picklock

PET PEEVE Pet detectives

THE DISHWASHER MISSED A SPOT. OR TWELVE.

NAME Ruby

FAVORITE ACTIVITY
Washing dishes with her tongue

FAVORITE TOY
Dial on the dishwasher

PET PEEVE The rinse cycle

I KNEW OUR WET DOG SMELL WOULD GET RID OF THOSE KIDS.

NAME Emma

FAVORITE ACTIVITY
Playing "Marco Polo" with dog pal, LB

FAVORITE TOY
Floating bone

PET PEEVE
The deep end

ONE ROLL DOWN, FIVE TO GO.

NAME Bella

FAVORITE ACTIVITY
Unrolling all of the toilet paper in the house

FAVORITE TOY
Wadded-up toilet paper

PET PEEVE
Flushing

© MANFRED DANEGGER / NHPA (OTTO); JANICE WOLFF (RUBY); KAREN HUFFMAN / NG STAFF (EMMA); MARIE CLYDE / GETTY IMAGES (BELLA)

HALLOWEEN PET PARADE

BY ANDREA SILEN

Some of the sweetest Halloween goodies come wrapped ... in fur! Millions of pets will wear a disguise for the holiday, and *Nat Geo Kids* found some of the craziest critter costumes. Check out these fetching trick-or-treaters.

ELROY THE CAT SHOWS SOME STYLE DRESSED AS THE MAD HATTER FROM *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND.*

ROSIE THE KITTEN HOPS INTO HALLOWEEN WITH HER FROG COSTUME.

These pets like wearing costumes, but yours may not. *Never* force your pet to do something it doesn't want to do.

AHOY, MATEYS! ANYONE SEEN A TREASURE CHEST FULL OF DOG BISCUITS?

MOCHA THE PUG IS SWASHBUCKLING IN HIS PIRATE GETUP.

TIME FOR MY CLOSE-UP.

DUTCHESS THE STANDARD POODLE SPORTS A PINK FROCK AND SHADES.

In 2016, pet owners spent about $350 million on animal costumes.

MOST POPULAR PET COSTUMES

What were the hottest pet costumes last Halloween? Take a look at some of the trendiest disguises.

1. pumpkin
2. hot dog
3. bee
4. lion and *Star Wars* character (tie)
5. devil
6. *Batman* character
7. witch
8. *Superman* character
9. superhero
10. cat

TIMOTHY A. CLARY / AFP / GETTY IMAGES (ELROY); © PIXTAL / SUPERSTOCK (ROSIE); RUSSELL K. SCHEID / GETTY IMAGES (MOCHA); VICKIE BURT / PHOTOGRAPHERS DIRECT (DUTCHESS)

Amazing Animals

Nearly 17 percent of Americans dressed up their pets last year.

WHAT SPELL CAN I CAST TO GET SOME OATS AND HAY?

DISGUISED AS HARRY POTTER, RAMSEY THE HORSE MAKES MAGIC.

I'M READY TO SAY "I DO" TO A CHEW TOY AND A BELLY RUB.

TANK THE ENGLISH BULLDOG ROCKS A BRIDAL COSTUME.

EN GARDE!

SHAY THE POMERANIAN IS DRESSED AS SWORDSMAN ZORRO FROM THE MOVIE *THE MASK OF ZORRO*.

MORE THAN 171 MILLION PEOPLE CELEBRATED HALLOWEEN IN THE UNITED STATES LAST YEAR.

ONE LEGEND SAYS THAT IF YOU'RE BORN ON A SATURDAY, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE VAMPIRES.

IN 2016, THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY HANDED OUT CANDY TO MORE THAN 4,000 TRICK-OR-TREATERS.

THE FIRST U.S. CITY TO HOLD A HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION WAS PROBABLY ANOKA, MINNESOTA, IN 1920.

MANY PEOPLE IN MEXICO CELEBRATE A HOLIDAY ON NOVEMBER 1 AND 2 CALLED DAY OF THE DEAD.

STOP IN THE NAME OF THE PAW, ER, LAW!

COREY THE DACHSHUND IS ARRESTING IN HIS WILD WEST SHERIFF GARB.

If you dress up your pet, make sure the outfit is comfortable and allows the animal to breathe and walk safely.

I'M THE "TACO" THE TOWN.

NALA THE MIXED BREED LOOKS CUTE ENOUGH TO EAT IN HER TACO COSTUME.

BOW DOWN TO THIS BOWWOW.

MADISON THE CHIHUAHUA COMMANDS RESPECT IN HER PHARAOH FASHION.

SAFETY FUR-ST

Even though it's Halloween, you don't want your pet to turn into a scaredy-cat. Follow these tips to make sure pets stay happy and safe this year.

- Eating chocolate and other candy can hurt your pet's tummy, so keep your sugary loot out of reach.
- Does your pet get hyper when the doorbell rings? If so, put a sign on your door asking trick-or-treaters to knock instead.
- Place nervous animals in a closed room so they aren't upset by all the Halloween commotion. Fill the room with your pet's favorite toys to keep it happy.
- Halloween lights can give your home an eerie glow, but they can also be dangerous if your pet turns the light cord into a chew toy. Keep these out of reach.
- Make sure your pet doesn't pull a disappearing act. Watch it carefully when you open the door for trick-or-treaters so it can't dash outside.
- Your animal friend should wear an ID tag showing your address. That way, if it decides to bolt when you open the door, neighbors can bring it home.

ACCORDING TO SUPERSTITION, IF YOU WALK BACKWARD WITH YOUR CLOTHES INSIDE OUT ON HALLOWEEN, YOU'LL MEET A WITCH.

SAMHAINOPHOBIA IS THE FEAR OF HALLOWEEN.

SOME PUMPKINS CAN GROW 40 POUNDS A DAY.

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN SPENDS MORE THAN $82 ON THE HOLIDAY EACH YEAR.

IN PARTS OF CANADA, CHILDREN USED TO SHOUT "HALLOWEEN APPLES" INSTEAD OF "TRICK OR TREAT."

SPLASH NEWS / NEWSCOM (RAMSEY); TIMOTHY A. CLARY / AFP / GETTY IMAGES (TANK); CHERYL RAVELO / REUTERS (SHAY); FUSE / GETTY IMAGES (COREY); MARK RALSTON / AFP / GETTY IMAGES (NALA); JANET MAYER / SPLASH NEWS / NEWSCOM (MADISON); LAURIE AND CHARLES / GETTY IMAGES (COSTUMED KIDS); © JOCHEN TACK / ALAMY (VAMPIRE TEETH); © OCEAN / CORBIS (CANDY); MARK D. CALLANAN / GETTY IMAGES (SKELETONS); MEL YATES / GETTY IMAGES (WITCH); © D. HURST / ALAMY (PUMPKIN); © VEVESORAN / DREAMSTIME (APPLES)

TRICKS FO

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AMAZING ANIMALS
SPOTTED OWL EPISODE
natgeokids.com /october

OR TREATS

THESE AMAZING OWLS USE SPECIAL SKILLS TO BECOME THE TOP BIRD.

BY ALLYSON SHAW

A hungry barn owl swoops through the chilly night sky looking for a snack. Fallen leaves blanket the ground, providing the perfect hiding place for mice and voles, the owl's prey. Luckily the bird has the ultimate feature to help it locate food: superhearing. A barn owl's ears are so sensitive that the animal can hear the quiet rustling of rodents from dozens of feet away—and it can also pinpoint the exact spot where the noise is coming from. Using its extreme hearing, the bird homes in on a mouse and dives for its meal.

All 225 species of owls have impressive skills and traits. "Owls are amazing at what they do," says Kevin McGowan, an ornithologist (or bird expert) at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in New York. But certain owls have extreme qualities, from superhero-like hearing to crazy-long wingspans or extra-fluffy feathers. Meet some of the superb birds that crank it up a notch.

A barn owl eats up to a thousand mice a year.

EXCELLENT EARS

HOO IS IT?	Barn owl
HOME TURF	Every continent besides Antarctica
EXTREME TRAIT	Superhearing

When it comes to hunting, the barn owl is all ears. Scientists believe that this flier might have the best hearing of any bird, and the owl relies on this sense to find prey. Stiff feathers on the bird's face help funnel sound waves created by prey into its ear canals. Based on the angle at which the sound waves hit its ears, the owl figures out a path to its snack. A barn owl's excellent hearing allows it to successfully hunt even in total darkness! This guy's hearing is definitely sound.

PARENT PATROL

HOO IS IT?	Tawny owl
HOME TURF	Europe, North Africa, and parts of Asia
EXTREME TRAIT	Maximum protectiveness

Tawny owls are superior bird bodyguards, becoming extremely aggressive if other animals or humans approach their nesting offspring. Both moms and dads regularly chase away intruders, using their razor-sharp talons as weapons. In fact researchers studying baby tawny owls wear protective clothing, goggles, and even helmets to stay safe from angry parents!

Female tawny owls usually lay two to three eggs a year.

JOHN WATERS / NPL / MINDEN PICTURES (BARN OWL); PHIL MCLEAN / FLPA / MINDEN PICTURES (TAWNY OWLS)

Snowy owls have been recorded flying over 800 miles in 11 days.

A SNOWY OWL FLUFFS ITS FEATHERS.

FEATHERS FOR THE WIN

HOO IS IT?	SNOWY OWL
HOME TURF	Northern regions of North America, Europe, and Asia
EXTREME TRAIT	Mega-dense feathers

Wind pummels an ice field above the Arctic Circle, where a snowy owl perches on a snow drift. Temperatures have dipped to minus 20 degrees—but this bird remains toasty. That's because its feathers are extremely dense. "It's like they're walking around in a down sleeping bag," McGowan says. Too hot? The owls just hold their wings away from their bodies and pant to cool down. The plumage doesn't only keep the owl warm. These thick feathers make the bird one of the world's heaviest owls: They weigh about as much as three basketballs.

Groups of three to six elf owls gang up on predators like gopher snakes.

ITTY-BITTY OWL

HOO IS IT?	ELF OWL
HOME TURF	United States and Mexico
EXTREME TRAIT	Tiny but tough

Hopping across a desert in northern Mexico, an elf owl comes beak-to-stinger with a venomous, hissing scorpion. About as tall as a soda can, this owl is the world's smallest—but it's no pushover. The feisty little bird uses its clawed feet to catch prey. Then it passes the snack back and forth between its feet to prepare the meal for eating. (It's kind of like how you chew up food with your teeth!) And scorpions are one of the dishes on an elf owl's menu. The bird attacks the scorpion, removes its stinger (which holds the venom), and then feasts. It may be small, but this bird is walking tall.

PLAY

POWERFUL PEEPERS

Owls have excellent eyesight, which allows them to find prey at night. Other animals have great vision too. Match the pictures of the eyes here with the sharp-sighted animals they belong to.

Write your answers in the circles.

- GOLDEN EAGLE
- LEOPARD GECKO
- LION
- PHILIPPINE TARSIER
- DUSKY SHARK

ANSWERS: C, E, B, A, D.

A WING THING

HOO IS IT?	BLAKISTON'S FISH-OWL
HOME TURF	Eastern Russia, parts of China, and Japan
EXTREME TRAIT	Extra-long wingspan

These wings will wow you. The wingspan of the Blakiston's fish-owl can stretch six and a half feet long—that's longer than the height of an average adult! With its giant wings, this bird is a pro at zooming toward the surface of a river to scoop up a tasty fish in its talons. But the Blakiston's fish-owl often gives its jumbo-size flappers a rest while hunting. Instead of swooping from the air, the owl stands in shallow water and nabs fish as they swim by.

A Blakiston's fish-owl can weigh about as much as a gallon of milk.

Burrowing owls bob their heads to express excitement.

WEIRD DIGS

HOO IS IT?	BURROWING OWL
HOME TURF	North, Central, and South America
EXTREME TRAIT	Odd nesting sites

An animal pokes its head out of a burrow dug into a grassy plain. It's not a rodent—it's a burrowing owl! They nest in holes abandoned by prairie dogs and ground squirrels. And once they move in, the owls, um, decorate, lining the entrance with mammal droppings. Why? It might be to attract insects.

Some barred owls have pink feathers on their stomachs.

BIG-MOUTHED BIRD

HOO IS IT?	BARRED OWL
HOME TURF	Parts of the United States and Canada
EXTREME TRAIT	Totally talkative

A male and female barred owl call to each other with loud hoots that echo through the woods. These animals are some of the chattiest owls around, and they're more likely to be heard in the daytime than other owls. They trill, whinny, coo, screech, and even hiss when angry. But they might be most famous for their hoots—birders think these calls sound like someone saying, "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?" Don't hoot back to them though. The birds use this call to establish their territory, *not* to invite you to dinner!

ZOOM IN

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

When most birds fly, air rushes over the surface of their wings, creating a gushing noise. But owl feathers have a comb-like edge that breaks down the wind. The broken-up air rolls along the owl's wings, making almost no noise at all. This allows the birds to sneak up on their prey.

GET MORE BIRDS!
natgeokids.com/october

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ARE WE ALON

A RECENTLY DISCOVERED STAR SYSTEM COULD BE HOME TO ALIENS.

BY STEPHANIE WARREN DRIMMER
ART BY MONDOLITHIC STUDIOS

You're standing on a newly discovered planet, staring across its rocky landscape. This weird-looking world is covered in a dim red light. Suddenly you hear something moving nearby. A creature with huge eyes is lumbering toward you. It looks like ... an alien?!

This scenario might seem far-fetched, but earlier this year NASA announced a discovery by astronomers that could mean the search for life beyond Earth has made a major breakthrough. The scientists found a new star system 40 light-years (the distance light travels in a year) from our planet. After 200 years on an ultrafast spacecraft, you'd arrive to see seven Earth-size worlds orbiting a small red star—and some of these worlds could be home to extraterrestrial life.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Extra-solar planets, or planets outside of our solar system, are nothing new. Nearly 3,600 of them have been counted so far. The seven planets in this star's system—named TRAPPIST-1—are some of the latest additions to the group. What makes them so exciting are their Earth-like features.

At first the team of astronomers who discovered the TRAPPIST-1 system suspected that they'd spotted at least one undiscovered planet. It was only after observing the area for over 500 hours that the astronomers realized they were looking at a star system with *seven* planets. And all of them likely have surfaces you could stand on, like Earth's. "This is the only system we've seen in the universe that has this many Earth-like planets," NASA astronomer Susan Lederer says.

Lederer is part of the team that discovered TRAPPIST-1. They're now researching whether any of the planets have liquid water, which would indicate they could support life. But the planets must be *exactly* the right distance from their star. "If they're too close, the water will burn away, like on Mercury," Lederer says. "If they're too far, the water will freeze, like on the Jupiter moon Europa. But if they're in the middle, conditions would be just right." This middle area is often called the Goldilocks Zone. Lederer's team thinks at least three of the TRAPPIST-1 planets are located there.

MEET YOUR NEW NEIGHBORS! Check out the seven planets and the star they orbit in the newly discovered TRAPPIST-1 system.

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NE?

CALLING ALL ALIENS

If living things do inhabit some of the planets, what would they look like? Probably nothing like us. Unlike our sun, this system's star gives off a dim red light. This light would affect extraterrestrials in the TRAPPIST-1 system. For example, aliens there probably wouldn't see like we do. They might have extra-large eyes and infrared vision that would help them find their way by their star's weak light. (Infrared is a kind of light humans can't see—we can only feel it as heat.) Plants that grow there would have red leaves, which would absorb light better. "TRAPPIST-1's trees might have fall colors year-round," Lederer says.

WHAT'S NEXT

Though the planets might host alien life-forms, experts aren't convinced the TRAPPIST-1 planets would be a nice place to live. While Earth rotates often as it orbits around the sun, giving us day and night, some of the TRAPPIST-1 planets might only rotate one day of each of their years. Those planets would always have one burning hot side where it's day. The other side would always be a freezing night.

In 2018, NASA will launch a powerful telescope into space that will give experts a better look at the planets. One thing they'll check out: signs of oxygen. So far, Earth is the only known planet that has an abundance of oxygen in its atmosphere. "If the new telescope spots many of these molecules in TRAPPIST-1's atmosphere," Lederer says, "the best explanation will be that we've finally found alien life."

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS

Black jaguars may look solid black, but their coats have spotted patterns.

Jaguars are bigger and stronger than leopards.

A jaguar may "fish" by waving its tail over the water to attract its meal.

Good climbers, jaguars drag their prey into trees.

DON'T TAKE THIS QUIZ BEFORE BED

BY ANNA CLAYBOURNE

Some people are terrified of creepy-crawlies and bugs; others will happily pick up a spider but won't sleep in the dark in case a monster grabs their foot! Follow our frightful quiz to see where *your* deepest fears lie ...

Don't worry about making a wrong choice—there aren't any. These questions are just for fun!

WOULD YOU RATHER EXPLORE A CAVE OR A CASTLE?

SPOOKY CAVE

CREEPY CASTLE

AFTER EXPLORING, DOES ALL THAT GRIME ON YOUR HANDS REALLY FREAK YOU OUT?

NO

YES

WHAT'S SCARIER, REAL-LIFE STUFF OR SUPERNATURAL STUFF?

REAL LIFE

SUPERNATURAL

CHOOSE YOUR CHEESE!

BLUE CHEESE

SWISS CHEESE

YOU HAVE TRYPOPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of holes

This surprisingly common phobia gives you a fear of holes, especially small holes in groups or clusters, like you get in cheese, sponges, or loofahs.

CLOSE-UP OF A LOTUS SEED POD

YOU HAVE MYSOPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of germs

Some germs can cause illnesses, so it makes sense that you'd avoid them. However, extreme fear can result in avoiding any dirt at all and constantly washing your hands.

FEEL THE PHOBIA

If you're really scared of something, it's called a phobia. Phobias range from things that most people find a bit scary, like being high up, to things that are very unlikely to hurt you, such as baked beans. Phobias often have interesting names, like the ones on these pages.

WIN THE BOOK!
TRY ONLINE OCTOBER 4-11.
natgeokids.com/october

START HERE!

WHICH VACATION WOULD YOU PREFER—CAMPING OR A LUXURY SKYSCRAPER HOTEL?

CAMPING

WILL YOU TAKE THE ELEVATOR OR THE STAIRS TO YOUR ROOM?

STAIRS

YOU HAVE CLAUSTRO-PHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of small enclosed spaces

If you have claustrophobia, you won't like elevators, caves, or other enclosed spaces.

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A GHOST?

NO

YES

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SAW A GHOST?

HIDE

DASH AWAY AS FAST AS YOU CAN

YOU HAVE PHASMOPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of ghosts

Some people who believe in ghosts are also very scared that ghosts will hurt them. The fact is, in all the ghost stories ever reported, most ghosts have been harmless.

WOULD YOU EAT A PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY SANDWICH TO WIN A PRIZE?

NO WAY!

GIMME!

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU SEE A CREEPY-CRAWLY?

SCREAM AND RUN!

CATCH IT AND THROW IT OUT

YOU HAVE ARACHIBUTYROPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth

You know that icky feeling when peanut butter clogs up your mouth? Well, some people are terrified of it!

YOU HAVE ARACHNOPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of spiders

Though many spiders are harmless, some have a deadly bite, so a few people might think this phobia is justified.

YOU HAVE ACROPHOBIA

Also known as: a fear of heights

Being somewhere high up is risky, as falling is dangerous. If you have acrophobia, though, you can't bear it at all, even if you're safely secured to something.

CPM PHOTO / SHUTTERSTOCK (FLASHLIGHT); © CHAIWATPHOTOS / SHUTTERSTOCK (HOLES); SEBASTIAN KAULITZKI / SHUTTERSTOCK (GERMS); HELDER ALMEIDA / DREAMSTIME (HANDS); RANGIZZZ / SHUTTERSTOCK (GHOST); EIVAISLA / SHUTTERSTOCK (PEANUT BUTTER); AETMEISTER / DREAMSTIME (SPIDER); DEYMOSHR / SHUTTERSTOCK (SNEAKERS). MATT GIBSON / SHUTTERSTOCK (JAGUAR, PAGES 18–19)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS
MISSION ANIMAL RESCUE
Save ANIMALS >> Save the WORLD

BATS

MANGO GETS A BATH.

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

THE PUPS ARE BOTTLE-FED MILK WHILE WRAPPED IN BLANKETS FOR COMFORT.

NEWSPIX / REX USA (BIG PICTURE); TRISH WIMBERLEY (TORN WING); STEVE PARISH PUBLISHING (BATH, MEDICINE); SANDRINE MARTINEZ (HEALED WING)

Injured baby bats get a boost from kind humans.

BY SCOTT ELDER

As the wind howls and the rain pounds down in eastern Australia, a two-week-old bat clings tightly to her mother, who is hanging upside down in a tree. The gray-headed flying fox is one of hundreds of newborn bats in this large group, called a camp. And these baby bats are in trouble. The violent storm is intensifying, and the furry creatures have not yet learned to fly. If the wind knocks them from the shelter of their moms' wings, the pups—each weighing less than four ounces—will fall to the ground. Trees depend on flying foxes for pollination, just as many plants depend on bees. The bats' survival is crucial to the forest's survival.

Finally the fierce thunderstorm ends. Roy Webster, a volunteer with Wildcare Australia, worries that a few babies might have fallen and checks on the camp in the forest. The scene is far worse than he expected: Hundreds of baby flying foxes have plummeted as much as 30 feet and now cover the ground, helpless. Some are tangled in bushes.

Trish Wimberley, director of the Australian Bat Clinic and Wildlife Trauma Centre, rushes to the scene with six others. "We have broken legs and broken arms, all sorts of injuries," she says. A tiny baby female they name Mango has torn her wing badly during the tumble. She also has developed pneumonia.

ON THE MEND

"This is a real disaster," Wimberley says. But soon more than a hundred volunteers arrive to help the injured babies. After three long days, over 350 little flying foxes—including Mango—are gently transported to Wimberley's clinic. Bones are set and antibiotics are given. Volunteers bottle-feed milk formula to the newborns every three hours.

Even with all that care, some vets doubt that Mango can survive. But only exhaustion stops Wimberley. And when the rescuer dozes off while tapping little Mango's back to help her breathe, Mango gently wakes up her caregiver by brushing Wimberley's face with her wing. "It's like she's saying, 'Don't give up on me,'" Wimberley says. She nurses Mango through the night, then works on her ripped wing. She soaks it in a special medicine bath and applies antibacterial ointments. Caregivers massage Mango's wing to prevent scarring.

BAT COMEBACK

Soon many young flying foxes move from bottle-feedings to chopped fruit such as apples. They lap up milk formula or nectar, and they also learn to fly. After two and a half months at the clinic, the bats move into a huge aviary—an outside enclosure. They practice flapping their wings while hanging upside down, taking short flights, and crash-landing at first.

Visiting these young bats a few weeks later, Wimberley recognizes Mango in the crowded aviary and sees that her wing has healed. "I'm thrilled," Wimberley says. "When I see Mango fly, I'm so proud of her."

After a month of flying practice, the aviary doors open and the flying foxes begin exploring the wild. Thanks to the hard work of volunteers like Wimberley, these once-injured babies will grow up to help the forest thrive as they carry pollen from tree to tree. And that, Wimberley hopes, just might change how people think of bats. "They're not scary—they're like little puppies with wings," she says. "When people see flying foxes up close, their whole view of bats changes."

MANGO'S HURT WING

A CARETAKER APPLIES MEDICINE TO MANGO'S INJURY.

ALL HEALED!

GET MORE! BAT MYTHS BUSTED natgeokids.com/october

HAUN WHITE

Do ghosts call this histo

BY KRISTIN BAIRD RATTINI

We're sure they're just stories: the mysterious footsteps when no one's around, the shadowy figure of a dead soldier. But even though *you* don't believe in ghosts, it still makes one wonder ... could the White House be haunted?

President Harry Truman heard a few bumps in the night. "The ... place is haunted, sure as shootin', " he wrote. Even today, former White House curator Bill Allman doesn't deny spirits. "Although I personally don't believe in ghosts," he says, "other people have claimed to have felt their presence." After all, with over 200 years of history, it's natural to feel as if you're not alone.

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

If ghosts haunt houses because they're sad, then it's no wonder Abraham Lincoln (above, left) is said to still roam the White House.

Lincoln agonized over the bloody Civil War during his presidency. He also mourned his son Willie, who died at age 11. Lincoln even dreamed about being assassinated, which came true when he was shot by John Wilkes Booth in 1865.

Although Lincoln's ghost has been "seen" lying on his bed, the figure seems to prefer pacing the second floor of the White House in his nightshirt. Footsteps have been heard when the floor is deserted. And several guests have reported late-night appearances of Lincoln's ghost.

In 1941 Great Britain's prime minister supposedly refused to sleep in his room after the ghost surprised him after a bath. And one visitor claimed her dog would stand at the door of the Lincoln Bedroom and bark as if something were in the room.

First daughter Margaret Truman often heard raps on her bedroom door but found no one there. Her father blamed the noise on shifting floors and asked engineers to check it out. Good thing he did—the house was on the verge of collapsing! Was Lincoln's ghost warning the Trumans of danger? We'll never know.

NTED HOUSE

oric landmark home?

HANGING AROUND

In November 1800 the White House was still under construction when its first residents, John and Abigail Adams, moved in. The yard hadn't even been fenced in yet, and it had been a very rainy season. So Abigail (above, right) hung the laundry in the huge East Room, one of the driest rooms in the house. (Plus, who wanted to see the president's freshly washed underpants in the yard?)

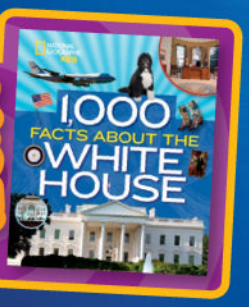
Legend has it that Abigail still hangs laundry in the East Room. Dressed in her cap and shawl, she apparently clutches a load of laundry in her arms as she hurries toward the room. Closed doors don't stop her; she drifts right through. And some say that after her ghost vanishes, the smell of soap and damp clothing lingers in the air.

FIRE CALL

The White House faced its greatest danger in August 1814. The United States was at war once again with Great Britain. As British troops invaded Washington, D.C., President James Madison and his wife, Dolley, fled to safety. Soon the British had torched the White House, destroying everything but its stone walls.

Rumor has it that the ghost of a British soldier still prowls the White House halls and grounds. He holds a torch in his hand, as if he is ready to burn down the house again. In fact during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, a visiting couple claimed the ghost had tried setting fire to their bed all night long. They fled the White House, just as the Madisons had done more than a hundred years before.

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



RICHARD T. NOWITZ / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (WHITE HOUSE); BETTMANN / GETTY IMAGES (LINCOLN); BETTMANN / CORBIS (ADAMS)

HALLOWEEN UNDER THE SEA

BY B. F. SUMMERS

Check out these fish with FREAKY names.

Sure, these creatures have weird names—and even weirder looks. But they're not freaks. Their odd fashion statements are clever adaptations that help them survive in their environments.

Batfish

The batfish doesn't just swim—it walks! Its "legs" are actually four fins that help the fish stalk its dinner.

Viperfish

This deep-sea fish uses glow-in-the-dark lights along its dorsal fin to attract prey. Then it impales the tasty fish on its sharp bottom teeth.

Hatchetfish

Wolf Eel

This so-ugly-it's-cute eel is shy. Wolf eels generally hang out in caves. After the female lays her eggs, both parents guard them.

Goblin Shark

What's up with this fish's nose? Some scientists think sensors in the goblin shark's snout detect tiny electrical signals given off by soon-to-be prey.

Seadragon

The seadragon's leafy appendages camouflage it as seaweed. This helps reduce its chances of being spotted by any would-be predators.

Hatchetfish produce light to avoid becoming prey. In sunlit water, the creatures emit light to hide their shapes from predators lurking below.

GET MORE WACKY SEA CREATURES!
natgeokids.com/october

PAUL A. ZAHL / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (VIPERFISH, HATCHETFISH); © BILL HARRIGAN / SEAPICS.COM (BATFISH); © STUART WESTMORLAND / GETTY IMAGES (WOLF EEL); © DAVID SHEN / SEAPICS.COM (GOBLIN SHARK); © TIM ROCK / SEAPICS.COM (SEADRAGON)

Fun Stuff

games, laughs, and lots to do!

Costume Chaos

A group of friends spent the day at a fall festival (top). Examine each person closely, then draw a line connecting each to the costume they wore to a Halloween party later (bottom).

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

QUICKHONEY

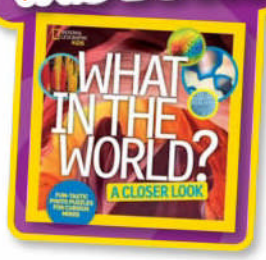
What in the World?

HALLOWEEN HUES

These photos show close-up and faraway views of orange and black objects. Unscramble the letters to identify what's in each picture.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



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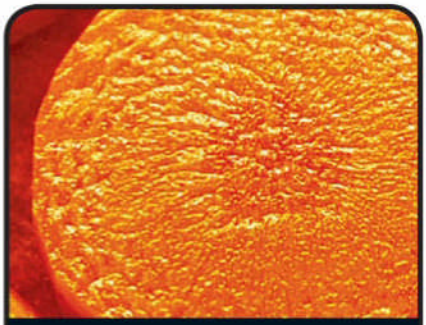

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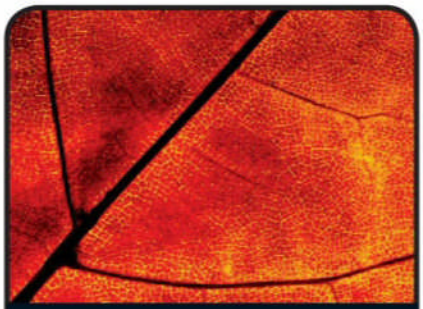
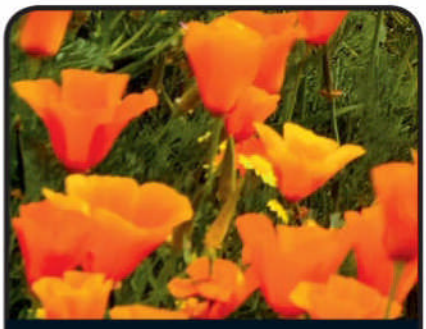


MUTANU FALE

AKBCL TRAPHEN

TROSAICP

NTD'O LWKA NSGI



YOPPP DIFLE

INNPEUG

TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): MICHAEL & PATRICIA FOGDEN / MINDEN PICTURES; THOMAS DEL BRASE / GETTY IMAGES; FRANK CEZUS / GETTY IMAGES. MIDDLE ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): GOODSHOOT / JUPITERIMAGES; KTD / SHUTTERSTOCK; INGA SPENCE / GETTY IMAGES. BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): SANTOKH KOCHAR / PHOTODISC GREEN / GETTY IMAGES; RICHARD FITZER / SHUTTERSTOCK; THEO ALLOFS / GETTY IMAGES.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Seeing isn't always believing. Two of these funny signs are not real. Can you figure out which two are fake?

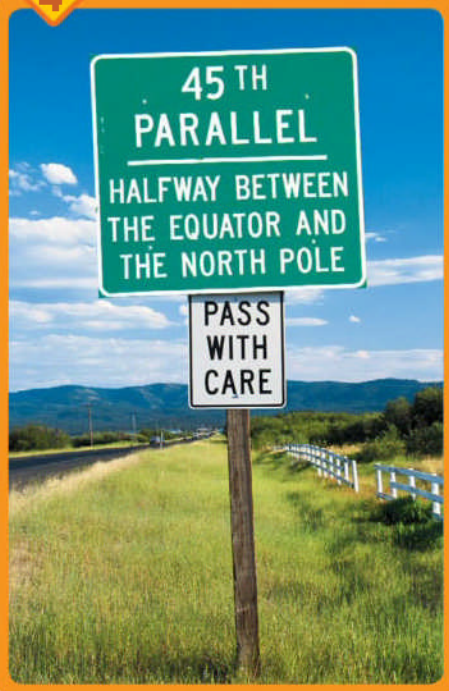
ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

1

2

3

4



5

6

7

8

9

CHARLES GULLUNG / GETTY IMAGES (1); MICHAEL T. SEDAM / CORBIS (2); SLIM AARONS / HULTON ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES (3); JOSEPH SOHM / VISIONS OF AMERICA / CORBIS (4); THINKSTOCK IMAGES / JUPITERIMAGES (WALK SIGN), JONATHAN HALLING / NG STAFF (DOG), IMAGE DIGITALLY COMPOSED (5); OWAKI / KULLA / GETTY IMAGES (6); JACK SULLIVAN / ALAMY (7); © DALE O'DELL 2008, IMAGE DIGITALLY COMPOSED (8); JEFF GREENBERG / UIG / GETTY IMAGES (9)

Funny Fill-In

Tricky Treat

BY SARAH YOUNGSON

Ask a friend to give you words to fill in the blanks in this story without showing it to him or her. Then read out loud for a laugh.

This year I wanted to have a(n) _____ (adjective) Halloween costume. I threw _____ (large number) _____ (noun, plural) on my _____ (body part), put on a(n) _____ (color) wig made of _____ (noun, plural), and slapped on some _____ (something stinky, plural). Then I decided to show my friends. I growled as I _____ (past-tense verb) toward them. But my _____ (noun) backfired. "Monster!" _____ (friend's name) shouted when (s)he saw me. "_____ (verb) him!" I _____ (past-tense verb) as fast as I could, hopped over a(n) _____ (noun), and landed in my neighbor's yard—right in the middle of their Halloween party. Kids dressed as _____ (something spooky, plural) and _____ (animal, plural) _____ (noise ending in -ed) and pointed at me. Panicking, I _____ (past-tense verb) into the nearest hiding place: the _____ (animal) house. Next year I'll be sure to _____ (verb) a less _____ (adjective) costume.

PLAY Funny Fill-In

natgeokids.com/ffi

DAN SIPPLE

Just Joking

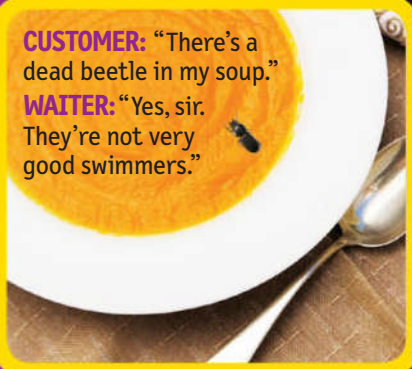
Tokay gecko

KNOCK, KNOCK.

Who's there?
T. rex.
T. rex who?
There's a T. rex at your door and you want to know its name?

Q Why did Dracula become a vegetarian?

A Because his doctor told him "stake" was bad for his heart.

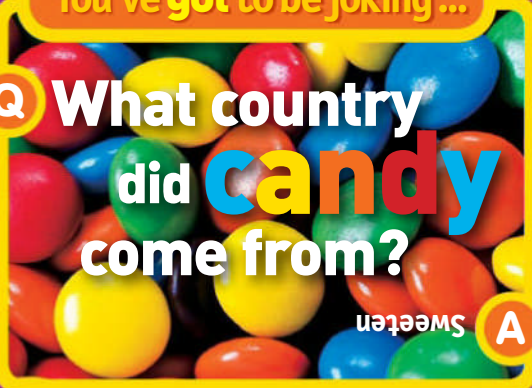


CUSTOMER: "There's a dead beetle in my soup."
WAITER: "Yes, sir. They're not very good swimmers."

TONGUE TWISTER!

Say this fast three times:
Girl gargoyle, guy gargoyle

You've got to be joking ...



Q What country did candy come from?

A Sweeten

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

KITCHIN & HURST / LEESONPHOTO (GECKO); © SUPERSTOCK (DRACULA); SUPERSTOCK RF (SALAD AND UTENSILS); IMAGE DIGITALLY COMPOSED; WILLIAM JOSEPH BOCH PHOTOGRAPHY / STOCKFOOD (SOUP); JOEL SARTORE / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK (BEETLE); IMAGE DIGITALLY COMPOSED; TONY SAVINO / GETTY IMAGES (GARGOYLE); PHOTO OP / STOCKFOOD (CANDY)

From the pages of *QUIZ WHIZ:*

STUMP YOUR PARENTS

If your parents can't answer these questions, maybe *they* should go to school instead of you!

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

1 **Which of these animals is *not* venomous?**

A. scorpion
B. pufferfish
C. blue-ringed octopus
D. vampire finch

2 **What does skeleton racing involve? (Hint: It has nothing to do with bones.)**

A. sledding down a frozen track
B. swimming outdoors in winter
C. running through the desert
D. skiing

3 **Which is the most common type of wolf?**

A. howler wolf
B. gray wolf
C. black wolf
D. werewolf

4 **The detectives of _____ are no match for Sherlock Holmes.**

A. Fiji Intelligence Services
B. Paranormal Investigators
C. Scotland Yard
D. FBI

5 **People report the most UFO sightings when _____ is closest to Earth.**

A. Mars
B. Venus
C. Saturn
D. Neptune

6 **Why is the Canada lynx sometimes called the "gray ghost of the north"?**

A. The lynx's color is ghostlike.
B. It makes spooky noises.
C. This cat is rarely seen.
D. It can walk through walls.

7 **To make a mummy, ancient Egyptians removed all the organs from the body except the _____ .**

A. lungs
B. brain
C. heart
D. liver

8 **A Goliath bird-eating tarantula can grow as large as a _____ .**

A. large pizza
B. dinner plate
C. bicycle wheel
D. trampoline

9 **Pumpkins were once mistakenly recommended for _____ .**

A. curing snakebites
B. treating allergies
C. whitening teeth
D. getting straight A's

10 **In the virtual world of *Animal Jam,* players can adopt a pet bat during Night of the Phantoms. How many species of real-life bats have been identified?**

A. about 10
B. about 300
C. about 1,200
D. about 15,000

Animal Jam
in association with NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
EXPLORE THE VIRTUAL WORLD.
animaljam.com
CODE: BATS

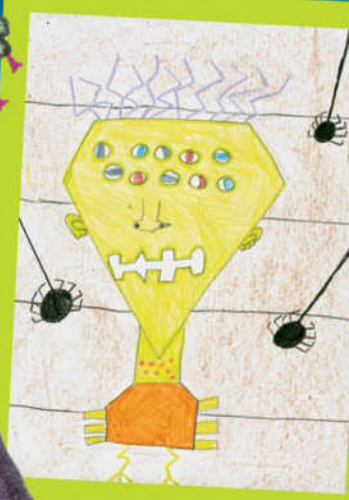
JAMES YAMASAKI (BATS); DAVID FLEETHAM / ALAMY (OCTOPUS); MEDICAL RF / SUPERSTOCK (SKELETON); THINKSTOCK / GETTY IMAGES (UFO); TIM FITZHARRIS / MINDEN PICTURES (CANADA LYNX); ROBERT ENGLISH / SHUTTERSTOCK (MUMMY); AMERICA / ALAMY (PUMPKINS); WILDWORKS, INC. (BAT PET)

Art Zone

SPOOKY CREATURES

Nat Geo Kids readers gave us the creeps with these weird drawings.

The Unfriendly Sea Monster
Payton W., 10
Strabane, Pennsylvania



Mixed-Up Creature
Townsend P., 11
Saratoga Springs, New York

Abyss the Dragon
Rowan F., 11
Dundas, Canada

Intergalactic Medusa Squid
Sophia L., 11
Rowley, Massachusetts

Mouth Madness
Drake P., 12
San Jose, California

The Salagator
Allison S., 12
Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania

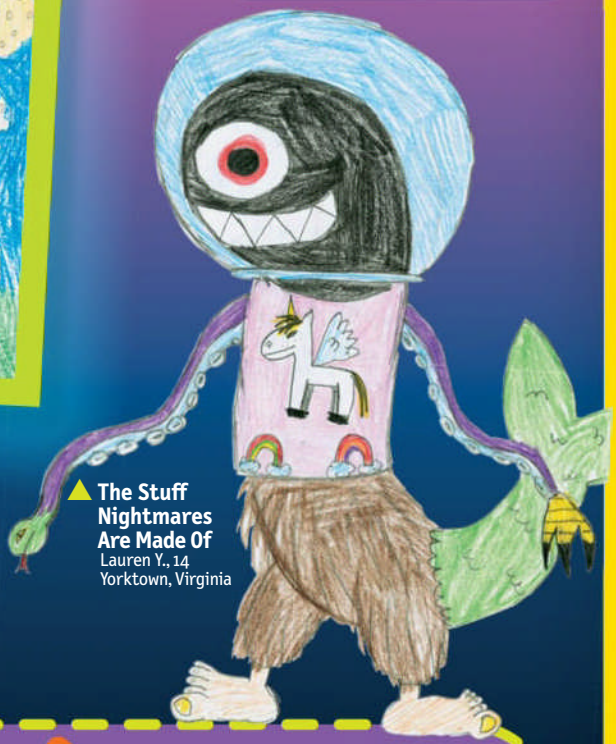
Fire-Breathing Sea Monster
Summer M., 9
Cabins, West Virginia

Alkorikye
Leigha S., 11
Phillips, Wisconsin

Sweet Tooth
Jaxon C., 11
Greensboro, North Carolina

Graveyard Monster
Simone B., 10
Kensington, Maryland

Dracula's Best Friend
Joseph C., 11
Hamilton, Ohio



The Stuff Nightmares Are Made Of
Lauren Y., 14
Yorktown, Virginia

Answers

"Costume Chaos" (page 28):

"What in the World?" (page 29):
Top row: snake, carrot, log fire.
Middle row: autumn leaf, black panther, apricots. **Bottom row:** don't walk sign, poppy field, penguin.

"Signs of the Times" (page 30):
Signs 5 and 8 are fake.

"Stump Your Parents" (page 33): **1.** D, **2.** A, **3.** B, **4.** C, **5.** B, **6.** C, **7.** C, **8.** B, **9.** A, **10.** C.

Draw a haunted house.

Send us your original drawings:

Nat Geo Kids—Haunted House Art Zone
P.O. Box 98002
Washington, DC 20090-8002

Include your name, address, phone number, date of birth, a title for your drawing, a statement that it is your own work, and the name of your parent or guardian. Your parent or guardian must sign a release for publication if your illustration is selected. Submissions become the property of National Geographic Partners, and all rights thereto are transferred to National Geographic Partners. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned. Selection will be at the discretion of *Nat Geo Kids*.

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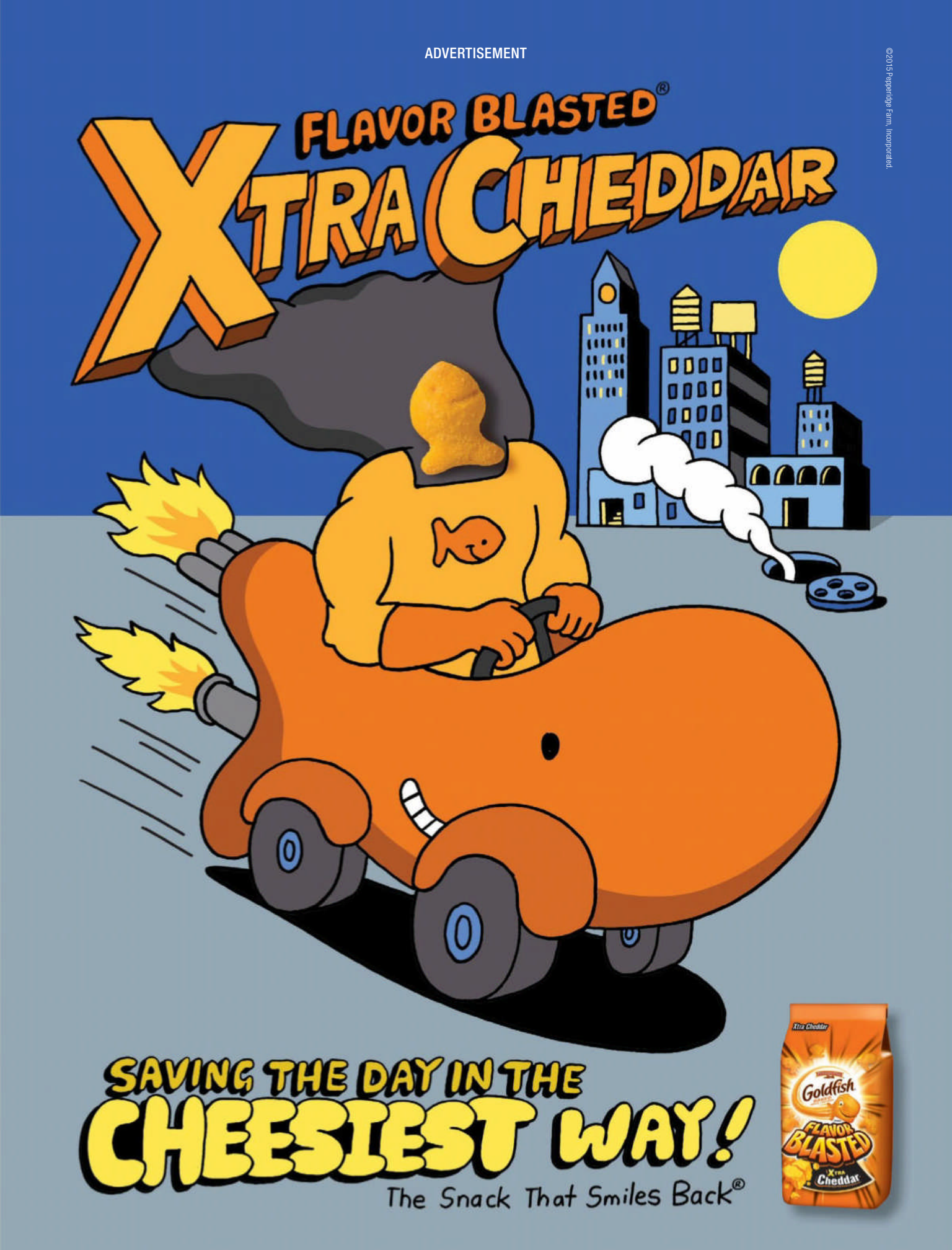
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