

# WILDLIFE OF PENNSYLVANIA



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY BOB SOPCHICK  
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

Dear Teachers and Parents,

In our continuing efforts to bring the wonders of our natural world to the classroom, we are pleased to present this book about Pennsylvania wildlife. It is essential that children have an awareness of Pennsylvania's diverse wildlife species and related habitats. With that in mind, we selected species from wetlands, forests and farmlands, as well as wildlife from cities and suburban neighborhoods. The last section of this book shows ways that children and their families can practice conservation and enjoy the outdoors.

Each section has an introductory habitat page. Most elements depicted in each habitat are not generic, but specific to that habitat. An identifying habitat symbol appears with each animal. Species descriptions provide a platform for further discussion and study.

The illustrations are specially designed. With the several different line weights, students are able to discern shape, spatial relationships and groupings of related elements. They can approximate size and scale of wildlife. The textures of fur, feathers and other tactile elements of the environment are suggested in each image. Most of the illustrations portray wildlife in some form of natural activity as opposed to static portraits. Reflections and shadows describe surface movement and form.

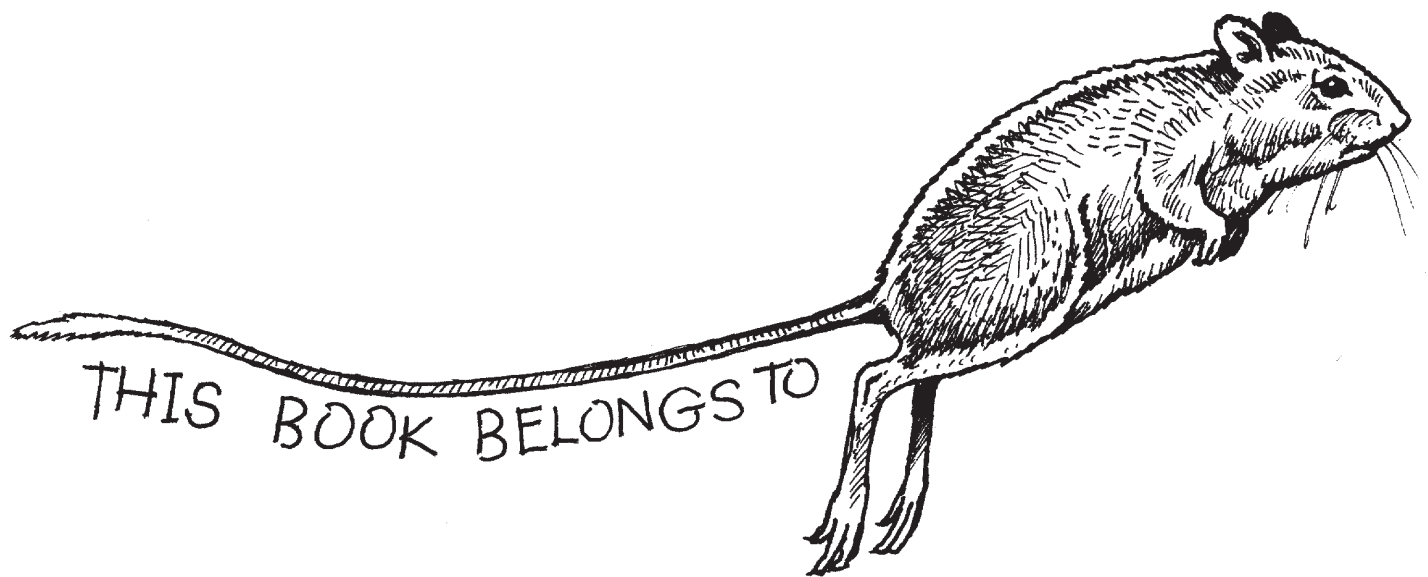
At the end of each section is an activity page. On that same page and below the activity box is a question, with answers on the back cover. Another feature of this book is the poster inserted into the middle. This detachable wildlife index and coloring guide shows all the wildlife in the book illustrated in full color. We hope this book helps and encourages teachers to create additional links of inter-disciplinary activities.

The natural world is alive with motion and vibrancy, as are the fertile imaginations of our children. It is our goal that this publication fosters a desire to learn more about the natural world, and stimulates a respect for our rich natural resources and legacy of wonder in Penn's Woods.

Bob Sopchick  
Author/Illustrator







# WILDLIFE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Written and Illustrated  
by  
**Bob Sopchick**

© 1999 PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION  
2001 ELMERTON AVENUE  
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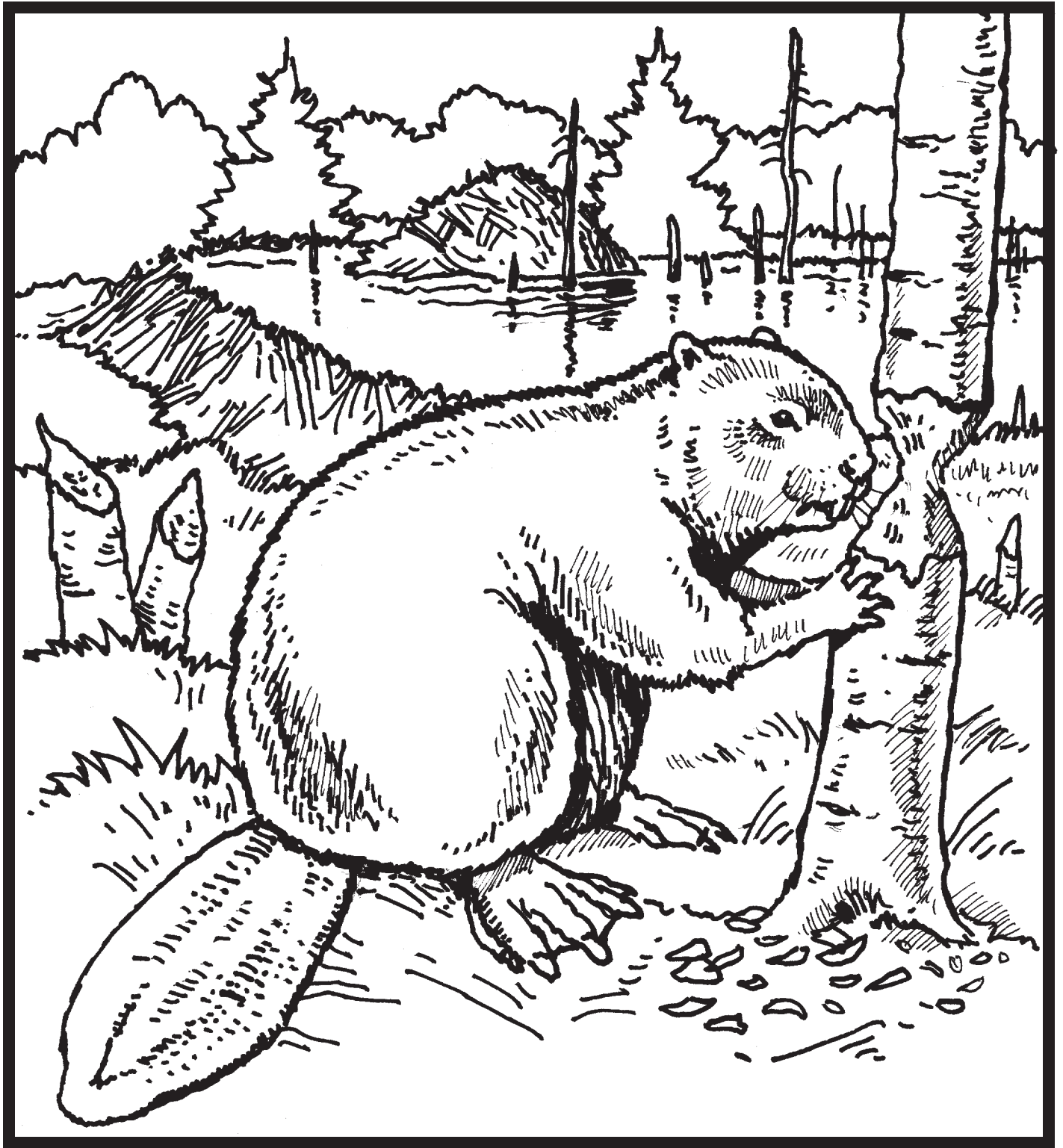


# WETLANDS

All living things need water. Wetland habitats contain water all or part of the year. Wetlands are places where many animals find food and water. Some animals need wetlands to raise their families. Some types of wetlands are marshes, swamps, bogs and beaver ponds.

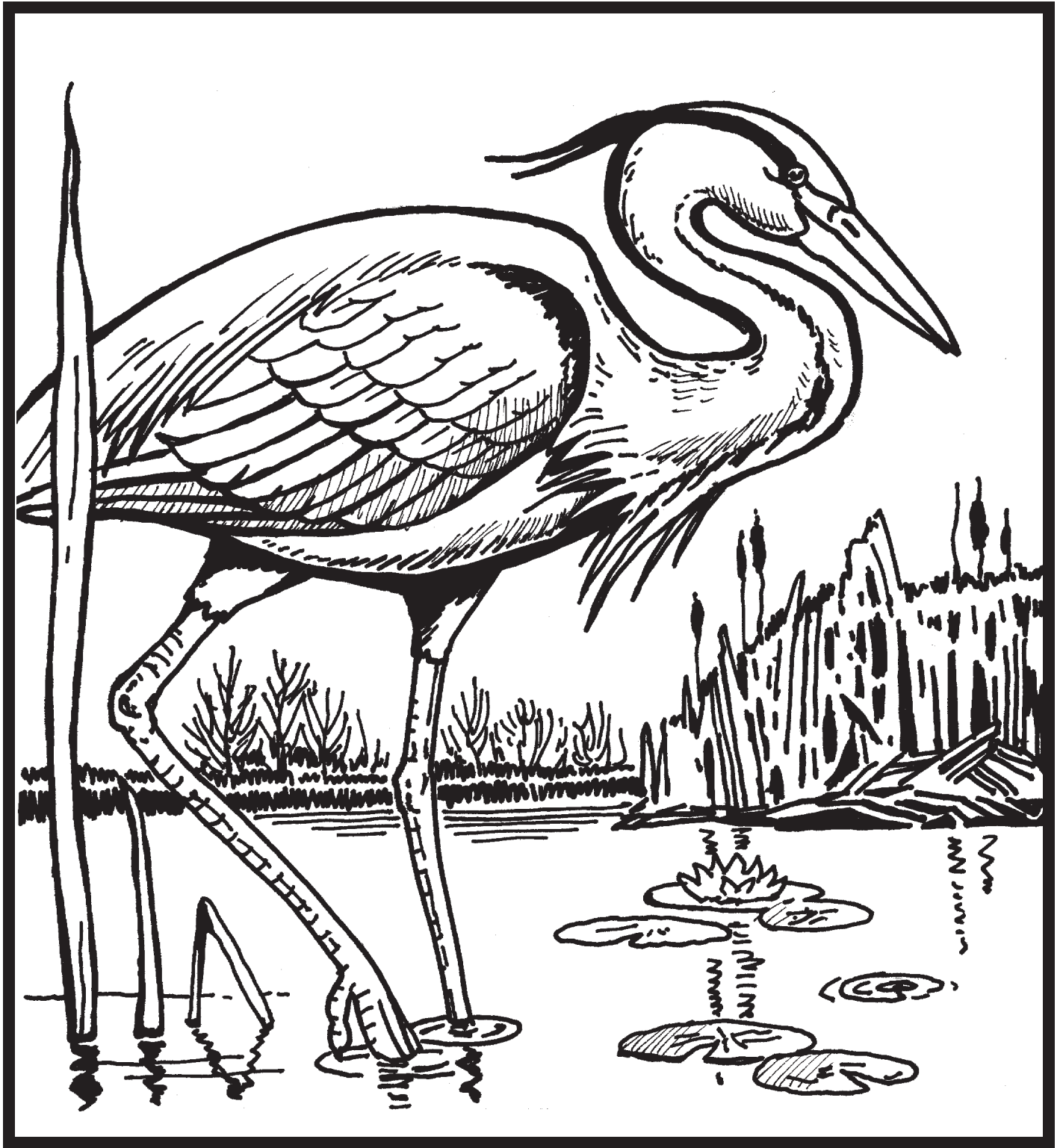


The lily pad symbol appears with wildlife that live in wetlands.



## Beaver

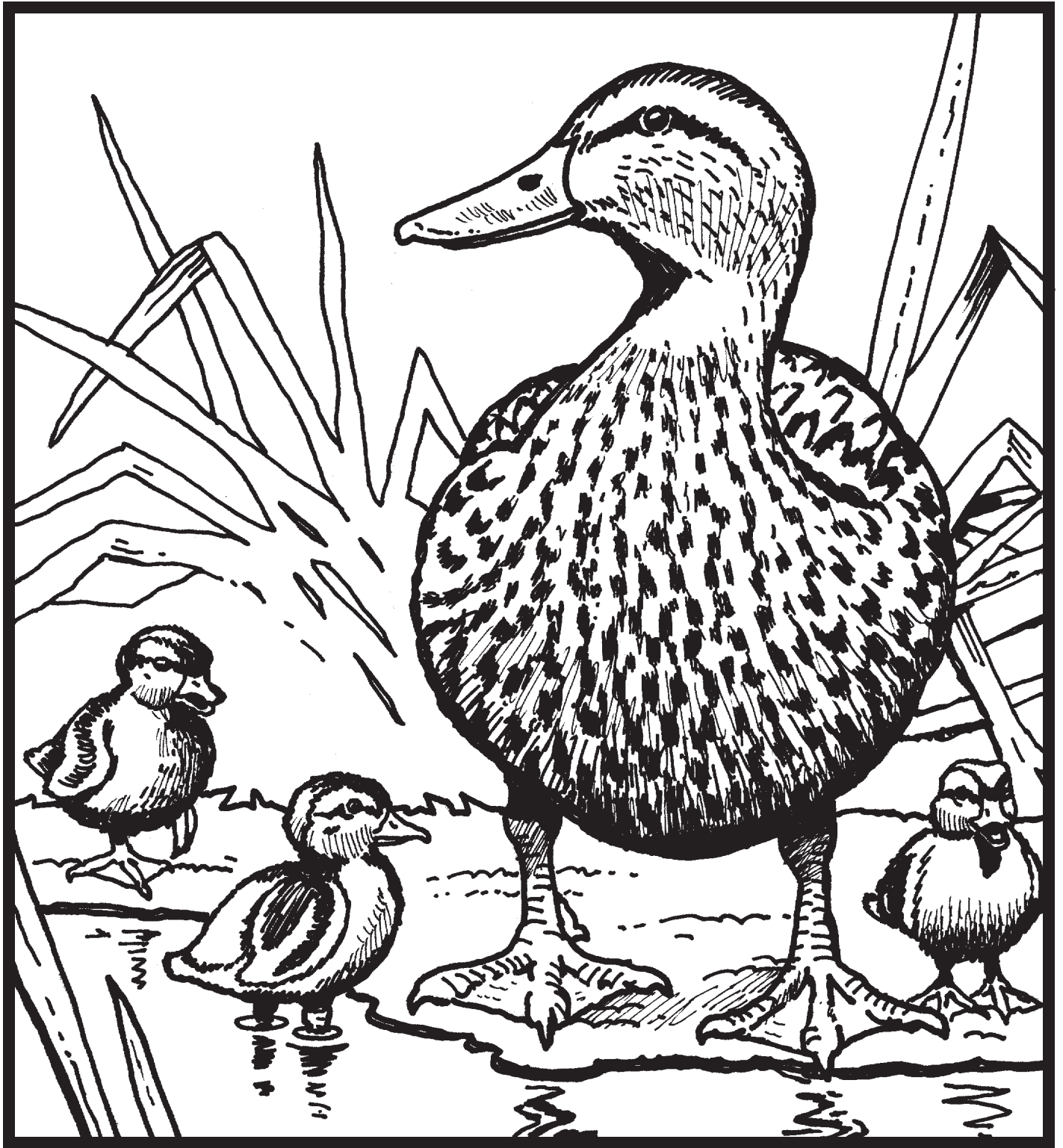
Beavers cut down trees with their large front teeth. They use the trees to make dams and a house called a lodge. The beaver eats the bark and branches from trees. This busy rodent creates a wetland where many other animals can live.



## Great Blue Heron

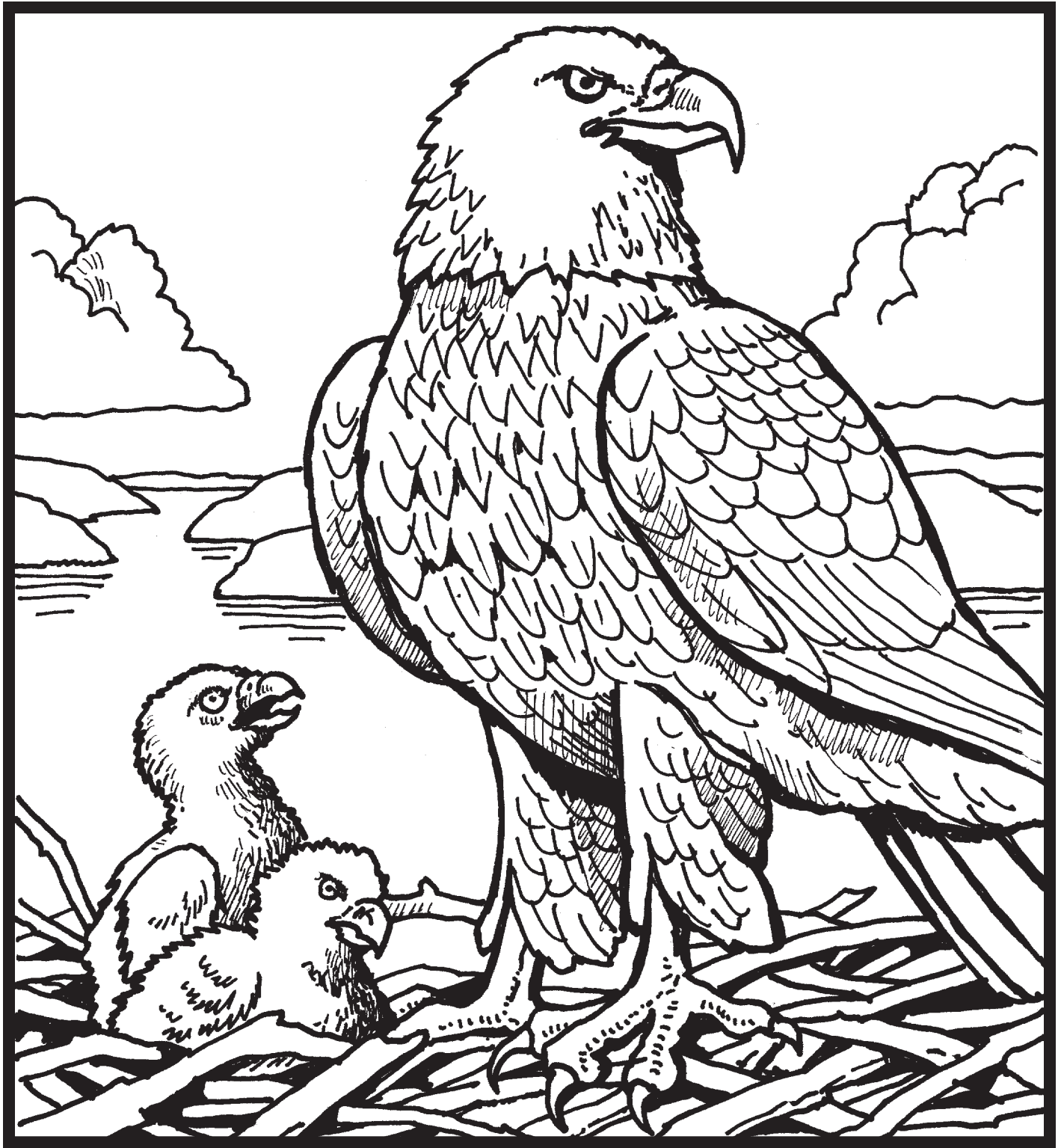
This is the tallest bird in Pennsylvania. It is about four feet tall and has long legs like stilts. The heron wades slowly or stands very still in shallow water. The heron waits for a fish or frog to swim near, then catches it with its long bill.





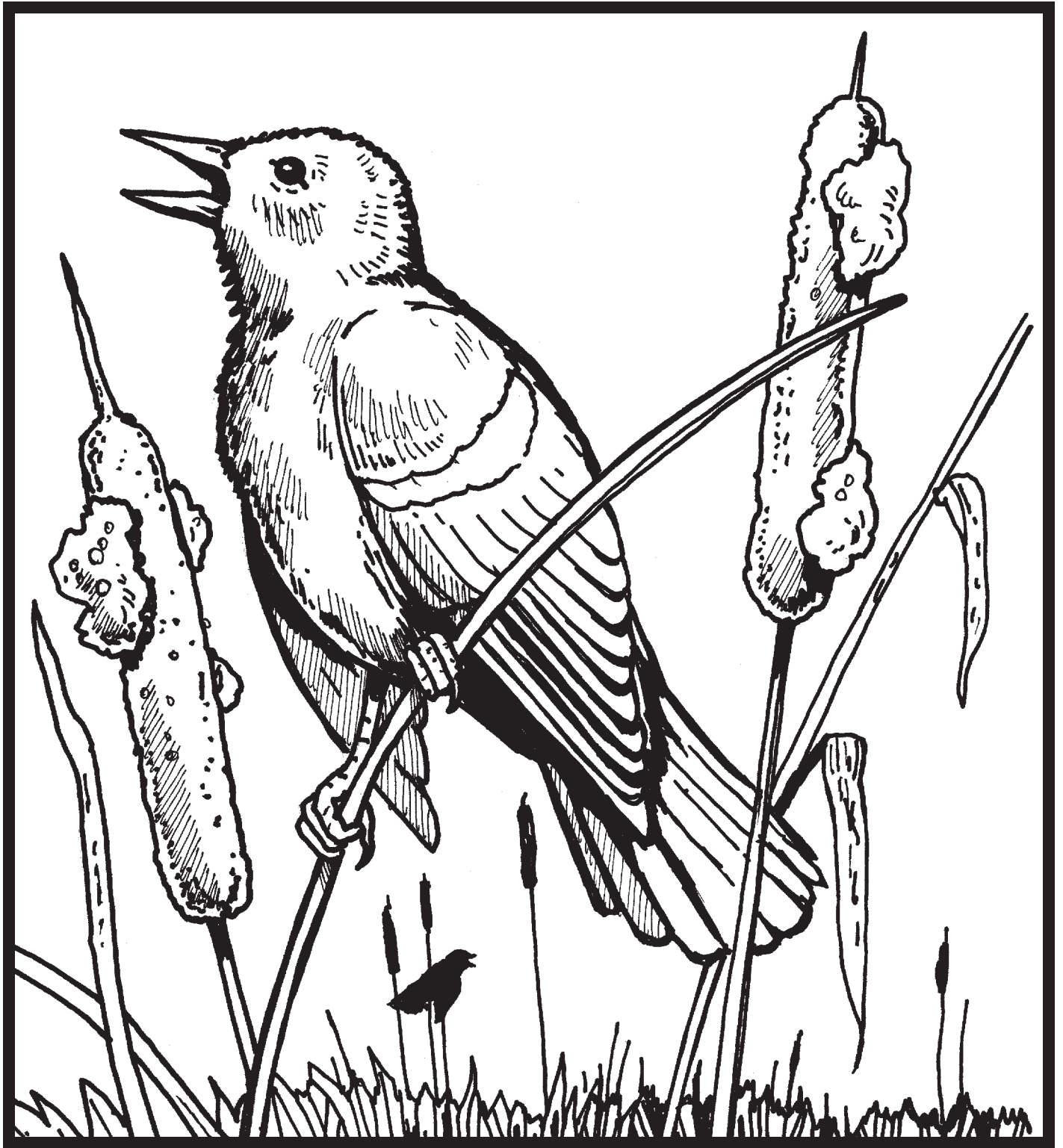
## Mallard Duck

The hen mallard makes her nest in tall grass. She is the color of dried grass and is hard to see while she sits on her eggs. This is called camouflage. After her eggs hatch she leads her ducklings to water where they can swim and find food.



## Bald Eagle

This large bird of prey builds a huge nest in a tree near water. Eagle parents feed their young fish and meat. The bald eagle is not really bald, but has white feathers on its head and tail. The bald eagle was made the national symbol of America in 1782. Why do eagles have talons and a hooked beak?



## Red-winged Blackbird

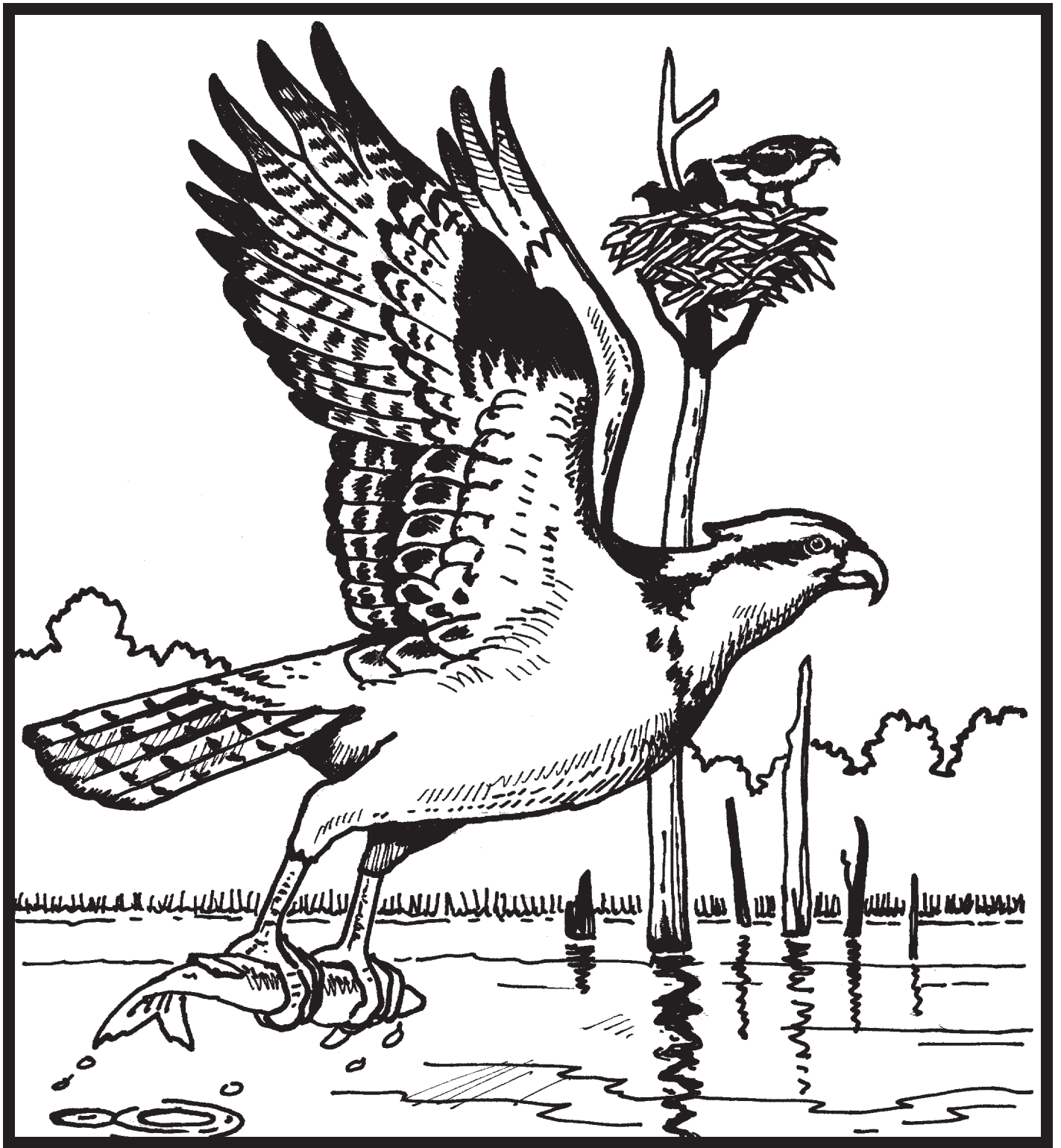
In spring, male red-winged blackbirds flash their red wing patches to attract females. Redwings nest and raise their young in wetlands. Later in the year, red-winged blackbirds may be seen with other blackbirds in large groups called flocks.





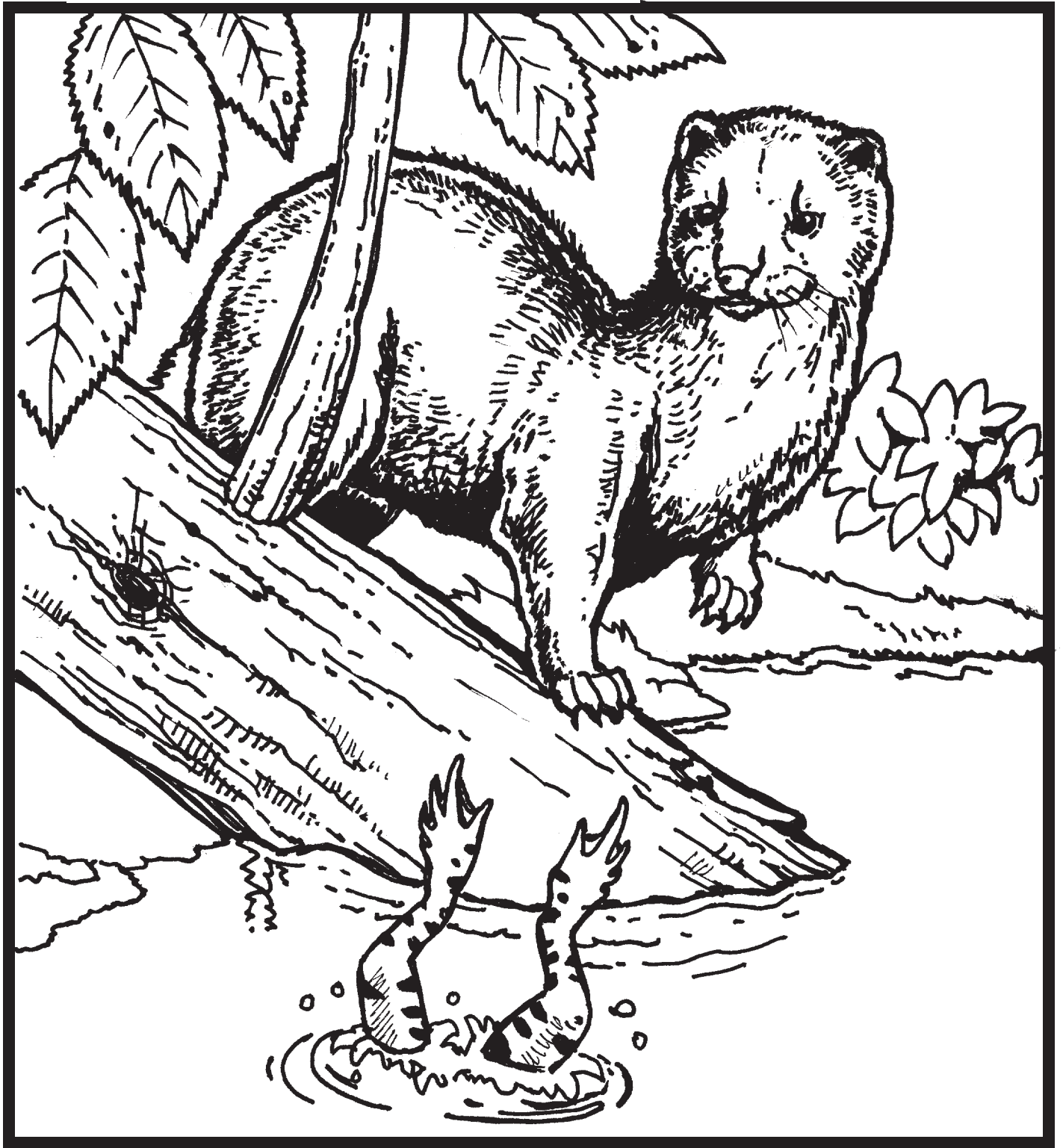
## Otter

The playful otter likes to slide into the water. At one time the otter was almost gone from our state. The Game Commission brought some otters from other states to live here. Once again, otters play and swim in our wild rivers.



## Osprey

The osprey is often called a fish hawk. It flies over the water until it sees a fish, then drops down onto it with a big splash. It catches the fish with its feet. The osprey has tiny bumps on its feet and long claws, called talons, to help it hold the slippery fish.

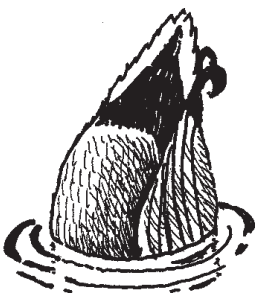
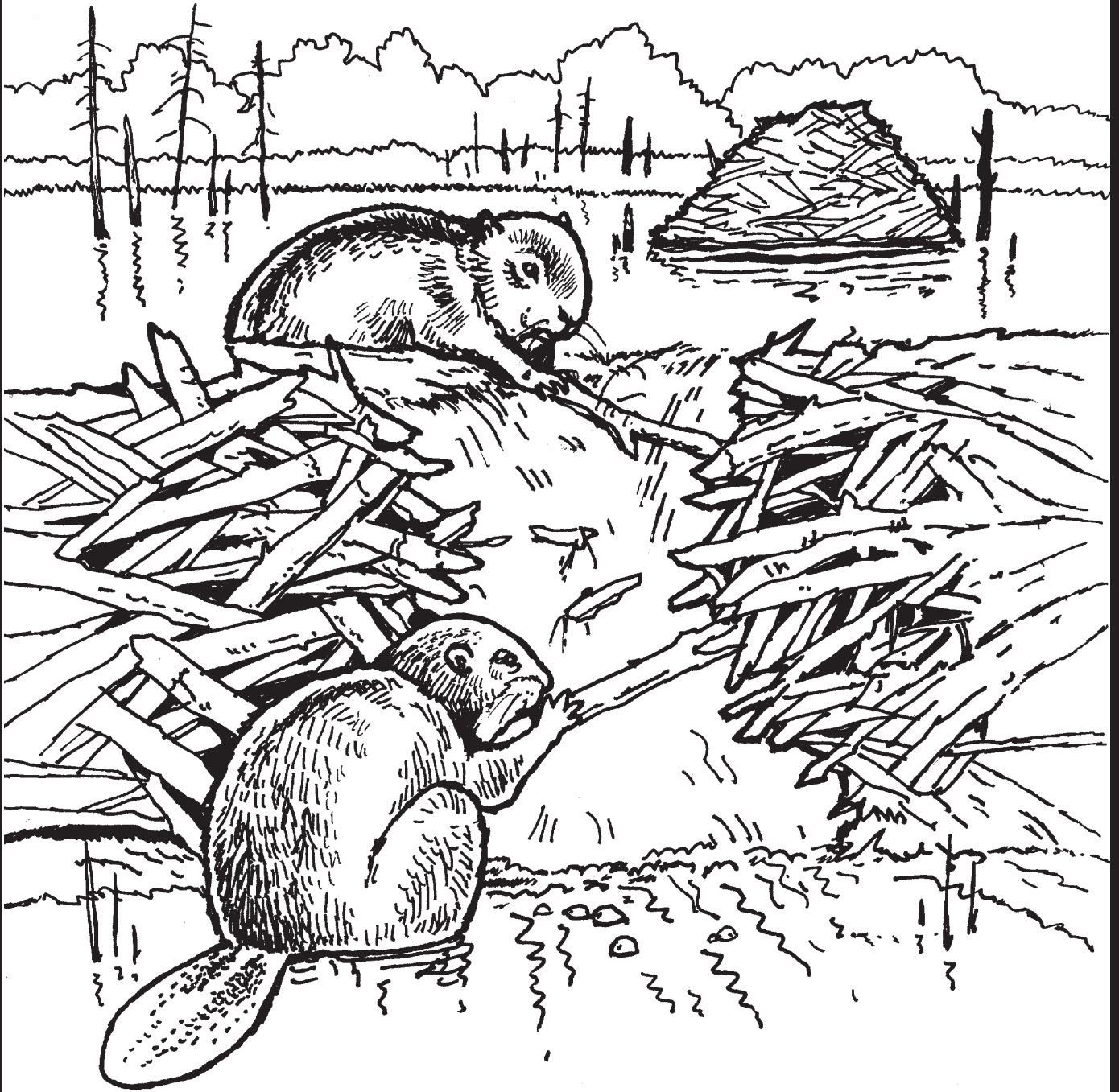


## Mink

The small, quick mink hunts along the edges of wetlands. Mink are good swimmers. Their soft fur is thick and keeps them warm and dry. Mink are members of the weasel family. This mink almost caught a frog.



These beavers are repairing a break in their dam with branches and mud. Can you help them fix it? Draw some branches across the place where the water is flowing out.



Whose tail is sticking out of the water? Do you know what this wetland animal is doing? Answer on back cover.

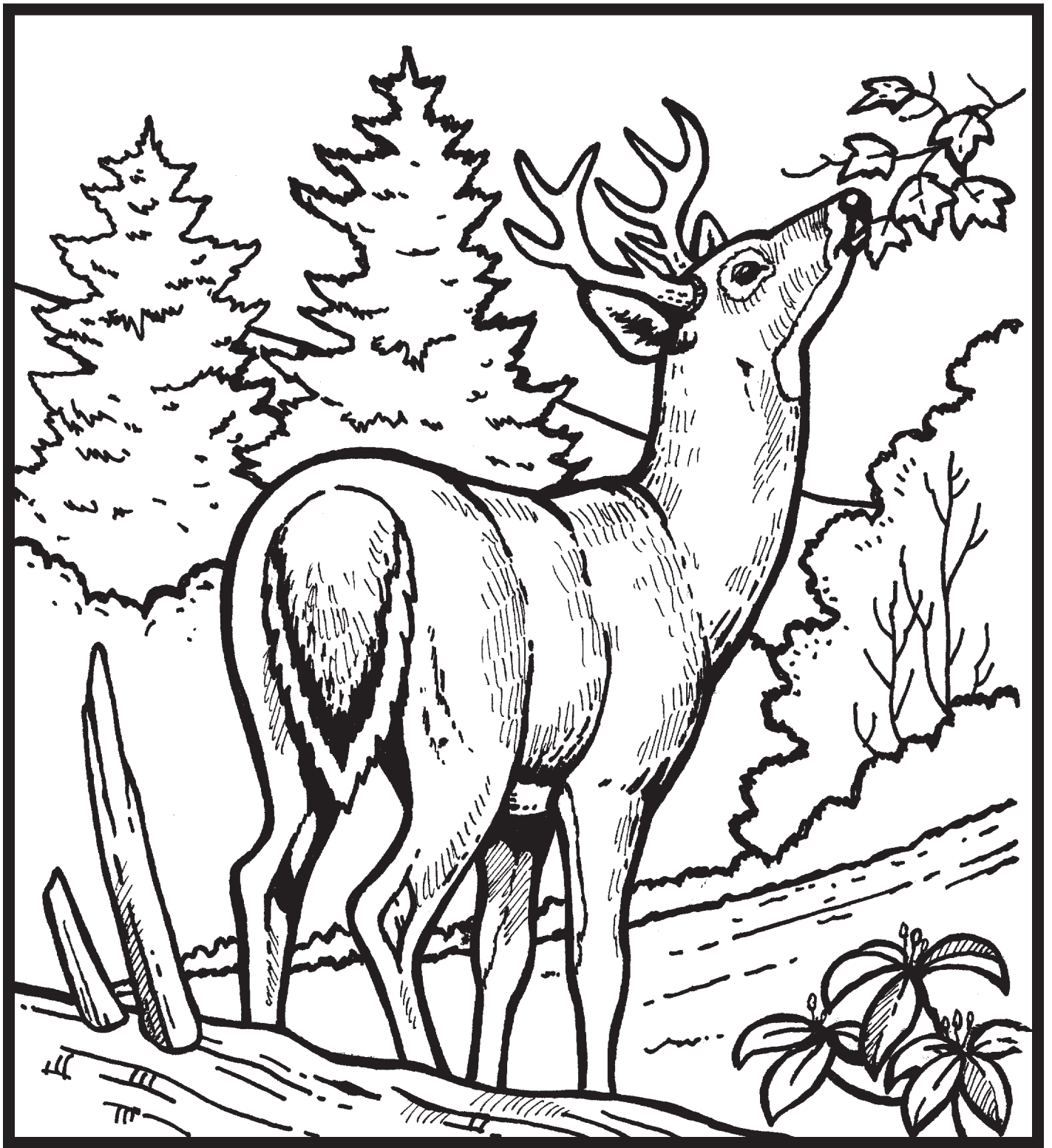


# FORESTS

A forest habitat is made up of tall trees and is home to many wild animals. Shrubs, ferns and wildflowers grow under the trees. Forests are important to people, too. People visit forests to hike, hunt and watch wildlife. The pages of this book are made from trees harvested from the forest.



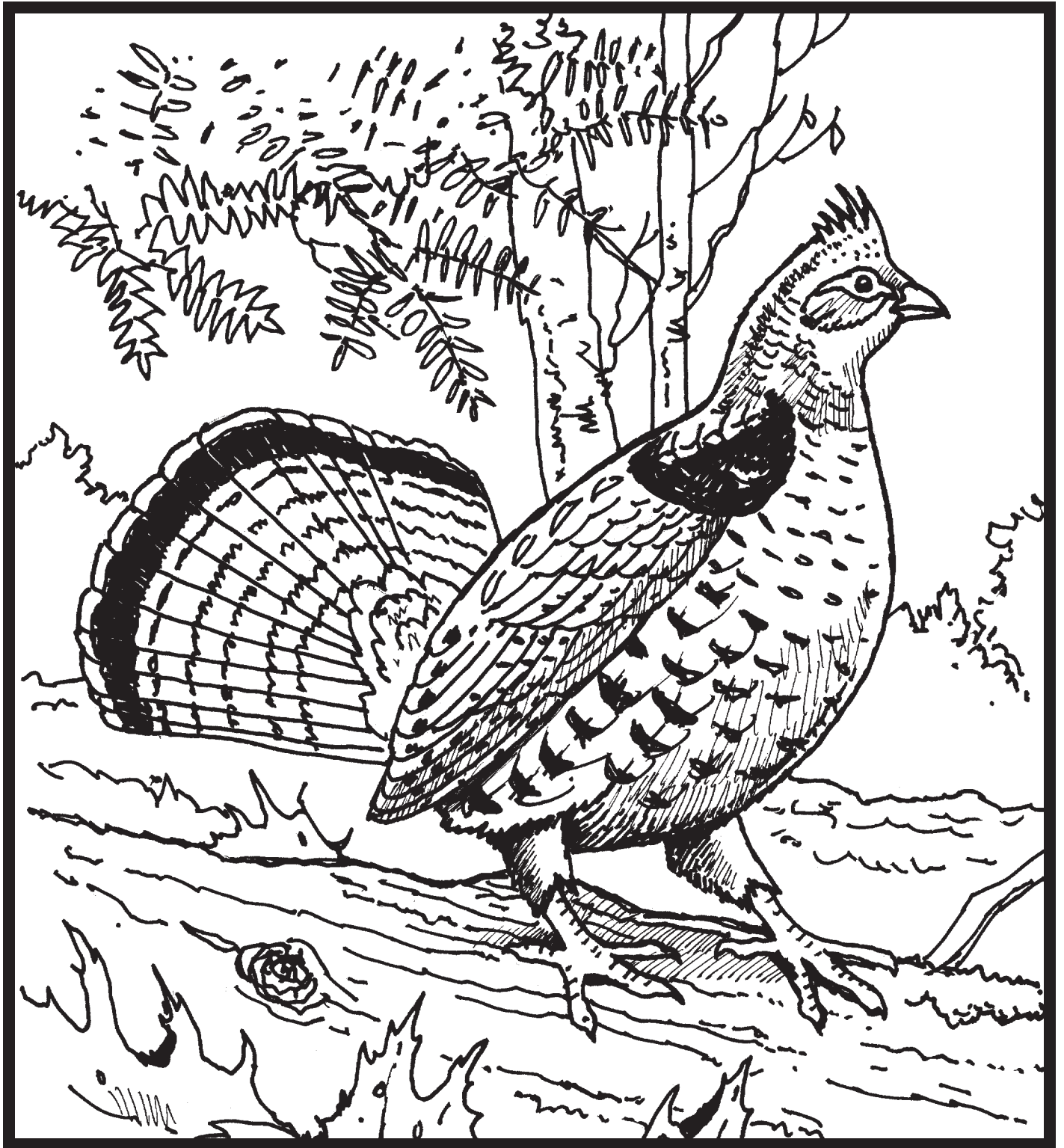
The acorn symbol appears with wildlife that live in our beautiful forests.



## White-tailed Deer

The white-tailed deer is the state mammal of Pennsylvania. Female deer are called *does*. Male deer, or *bucks*, have antlers. Young deer are called *fawns* and are covered with white spots that look like spots of sunlight. Deer eat small twigs, acorns and many kinds of plants.





## Ruffed Grouse

This is our state bird. The grouse has special dark feathers around its neck called a ruff, which is where it got its name. Grouse blend in with the brown leaves of the forest floor where it lives. Grouse can fly very fast to escape danger.



## Black Bear

The black bear is the only kind of bear that lives in Pennsylvania. Bears eat plants, animals, insects, garbage, berries, nuts, fruit, honey and corn. In winter, bears hibernate in dens or nests. Bear cubs are born in dens in January.



## Great Horned Owl

Owls hunt for food at night. You may not see an owl but you can hear it hoot—*Hoo hoohoo, hoo-hoo*. Its large eyes let them see well in the dark. Owls also have great hearing. The “horns” standing up on the owl’s head are not horns or ears, but only feathers.



## Pileated Woodpecker (pie-lee-ate-ed)

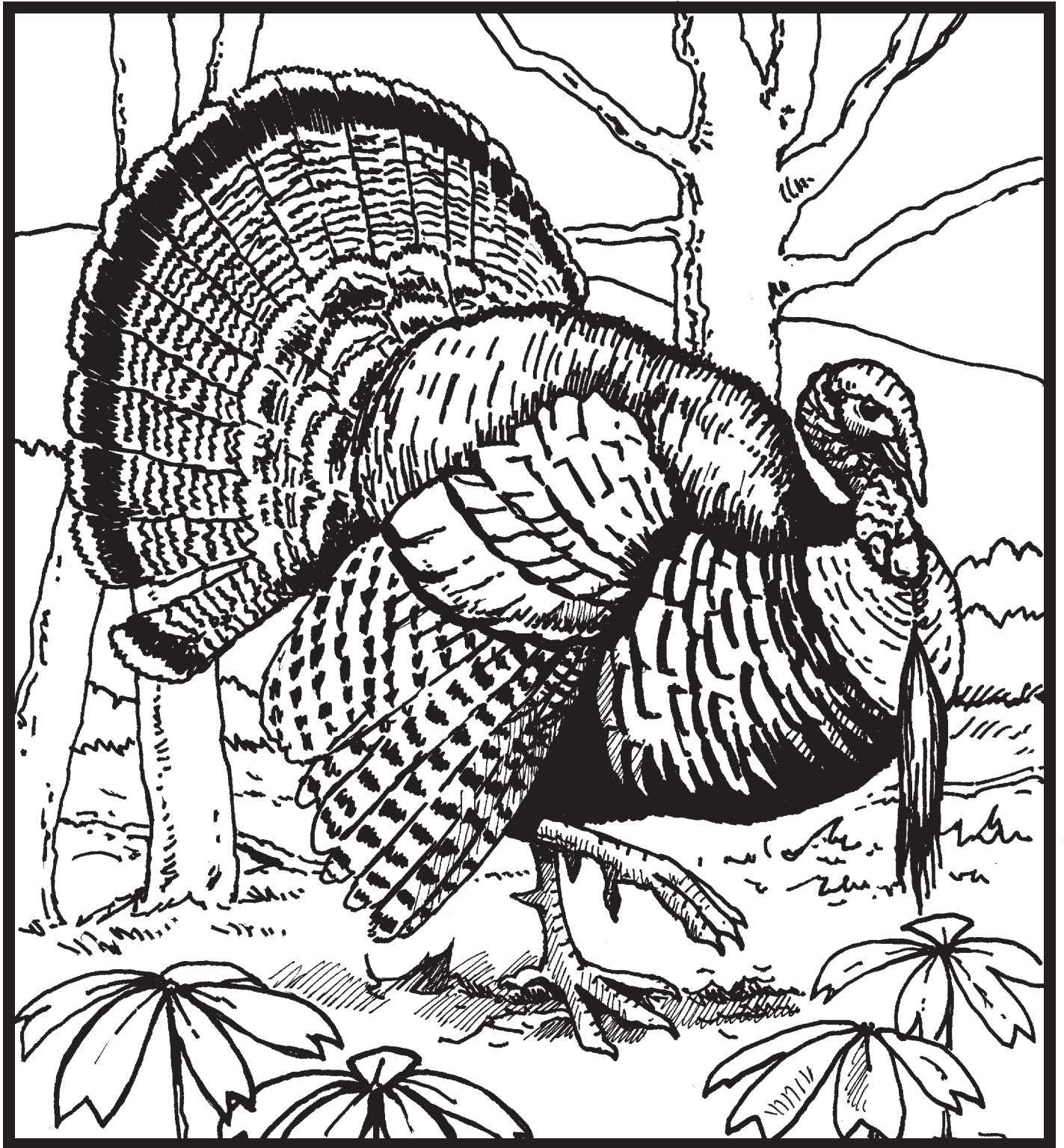
This large woodpecker has a strong, sharp beak to chip away the bark of trees to look for insects. They carve deep, rectangular holes in trees with their powerful beaks when they are ready to nest. The pileated woodpecker makes a loud, laughing call as it flies through the forest.





## Coyote

The coyote looks like a large, brown dog. It hunts other animals for food, but will eat almost anything. It is a fast, smart animal. Coyotes are very wary. Sometimes at night coyotes will howl. Coyotes also live near farms and cities.



## Wild Turkey

Wild turkeys are like farm turkeys, but are smaller and sleeker. Male turkeys are called gobblers. They gobble loudly, fan their tails, and strut to attract hen turkeys. On the gobbler's chest is a group of special feathers called a beard. Turkeys can run and fly fast.



## Fisher

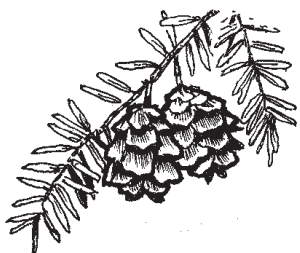
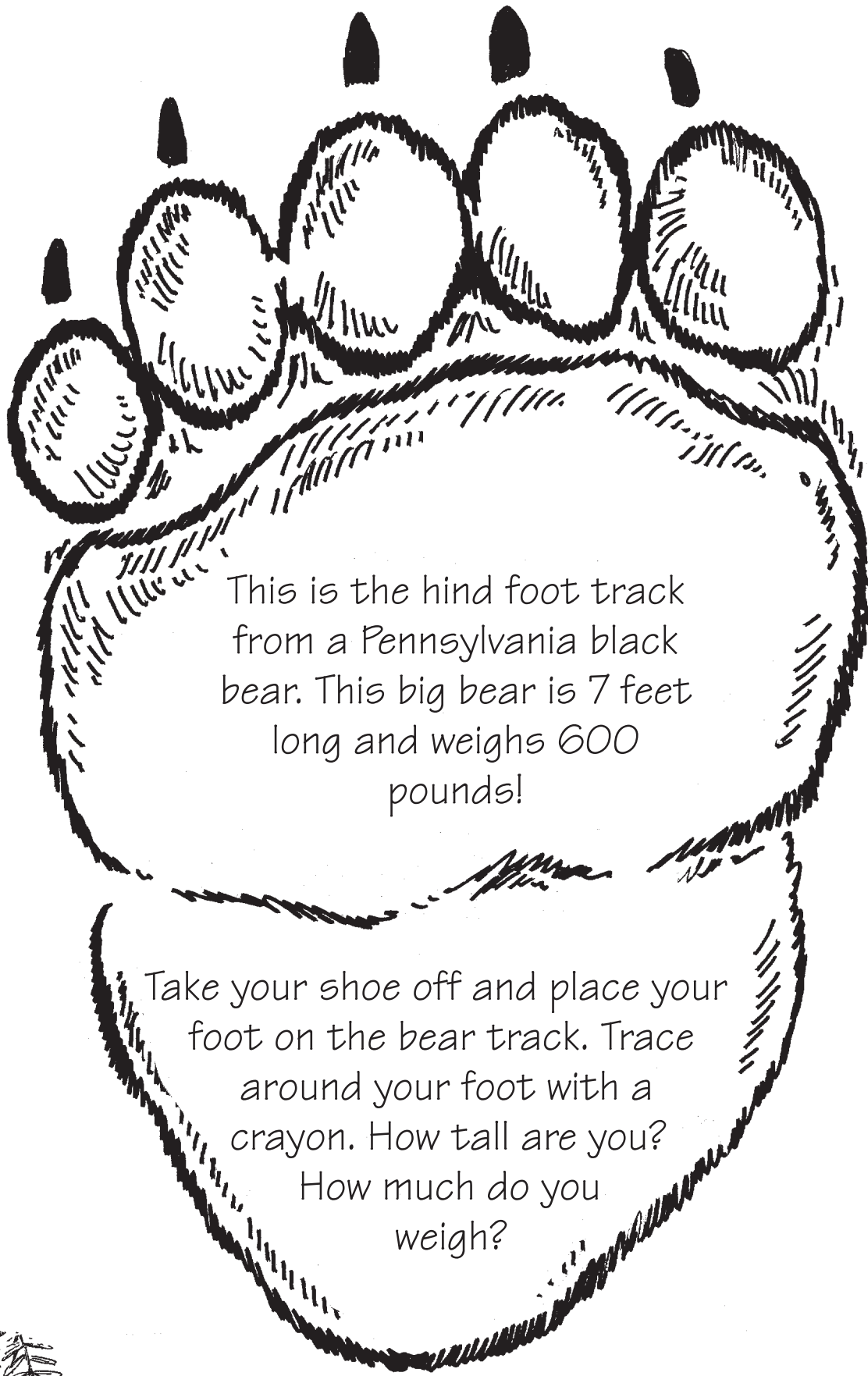
Long ago, the fisher disappeared from Pennsylvania. Like the otter, fishers were brought from other states by the Game Commission and live here once more. The fisher is a predator. It hunts animals like squirrels and even porcupines, but does not fish. It is an expert tree climber.



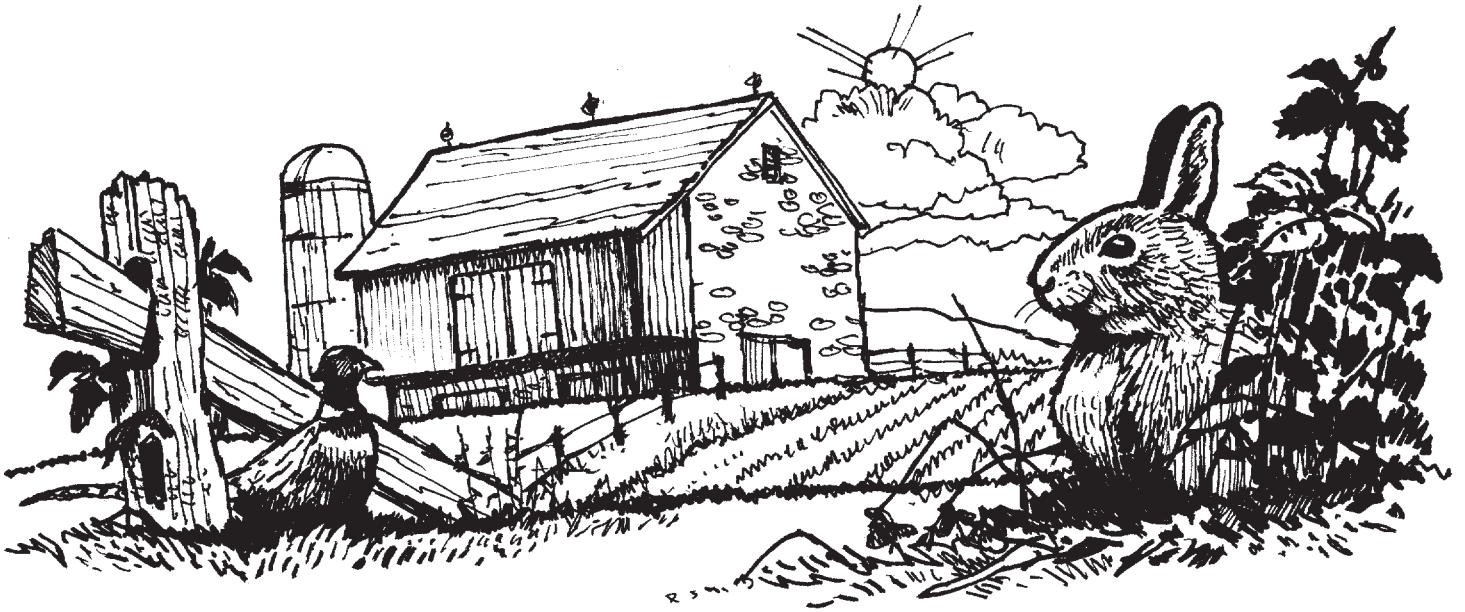
## Elk

Elk look like white-tailed deer but are much larger. Male elk, called bulls, grow large antlers every year. Antlers are bones and are sometimes used to fight other bulls. In March, when the antlers drop off, squirrels, mice and porcupines gnaw and chew on the shed antlers.



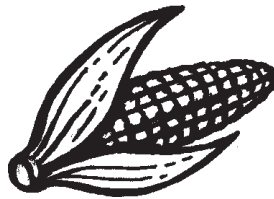


These tiny cones are from the state tree of Pennsylvania.  
Do you know what it is? Answer on back cover.



# FARMS

Farmers grow crops and raise animals on their farms. Farms are also places where wild animals live. Some wildlife need open spaces to live, like farm fields. Other animals live in the brushy areas between fields called fencerows or along the edges of fields. Some animals help the farmer by eating insects or mice that damage crops.



The ear of corn symbol appears with wildlife that live on farms.



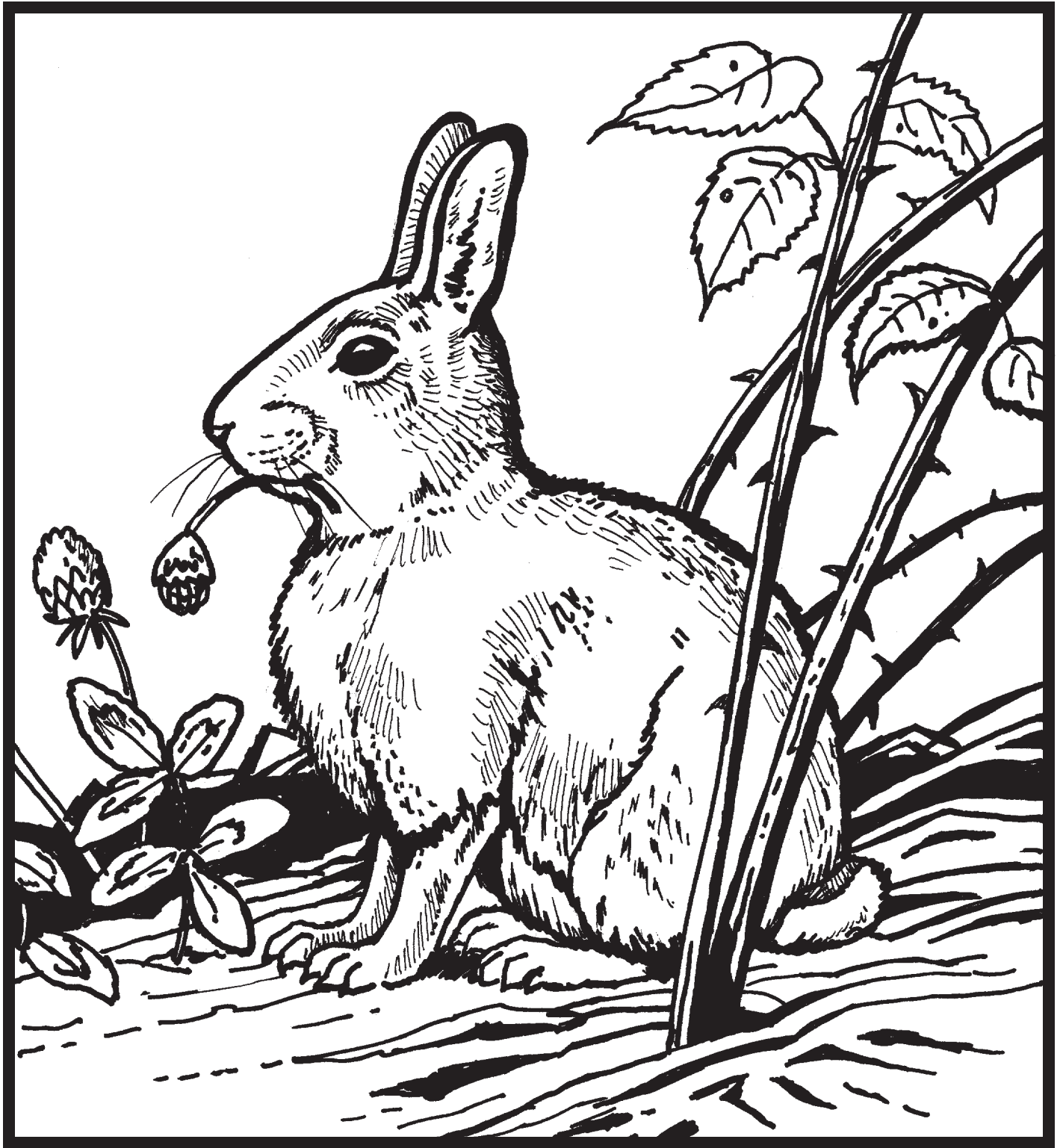
## Ring-necked Pheasant

Pheasants were brought here from China long ago. Pheasants are about the size of chickens. They live in fields where they eat weed seeds, corn and insects. The male is very colorful and has long tail feathers. The tan colored female is called a hen.



## Woodchuck

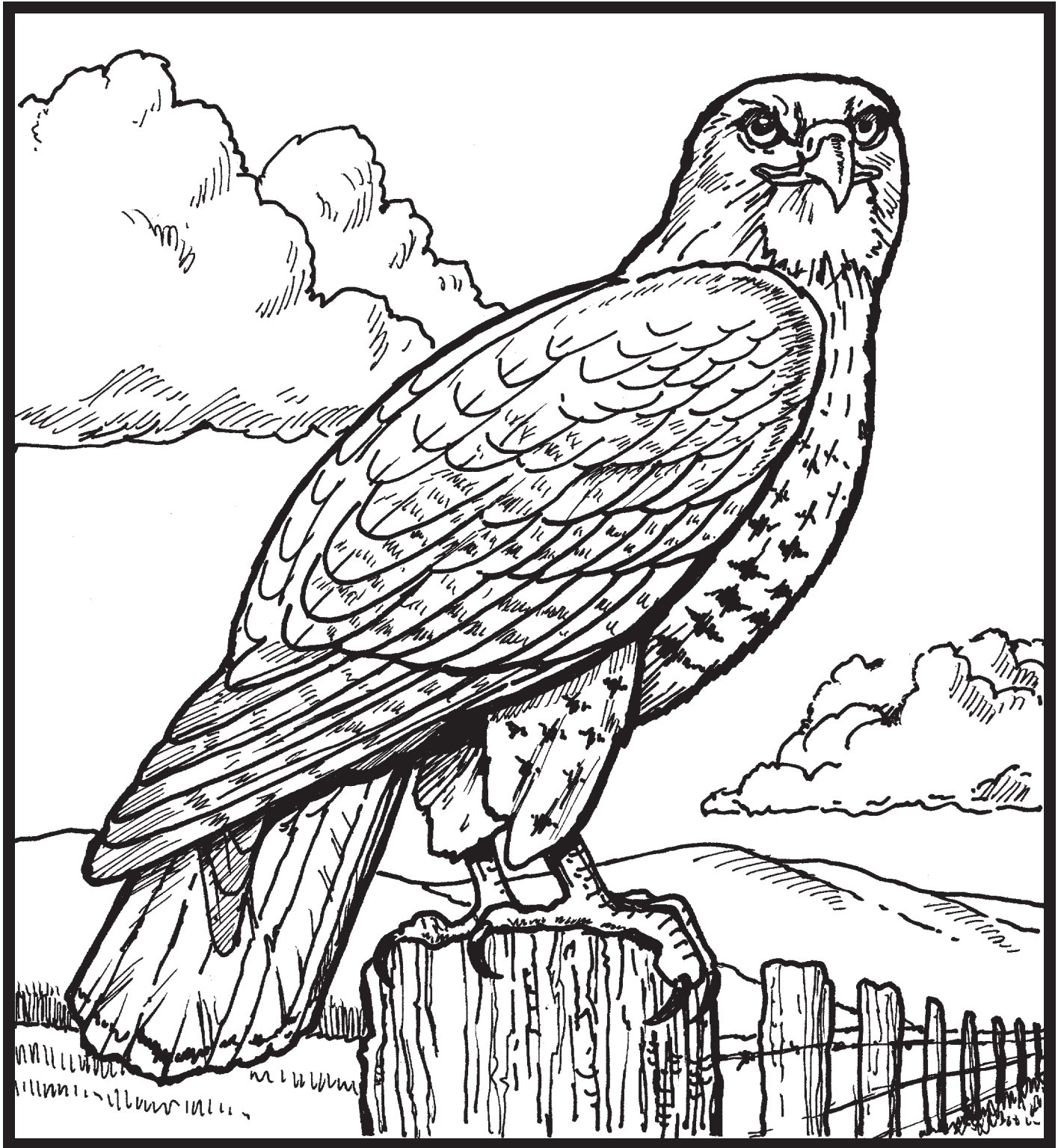
Woodchucks are sometimes called groundhogs. Woodchucks live in holes they dig in the ground called burrows. They can be seen along roads or standing in farm fields. These large rodents eat grass, clover, leaves and fruit.



## Cottontail Rabbit

These rabbits live in brushy places where thorny briars protect them from danger. They also hide in woodchuck holes. Rabbits can jump far and run fast, too. The cottontail eats the same foods as woodchucks. Do you know how this rabbit got its name?





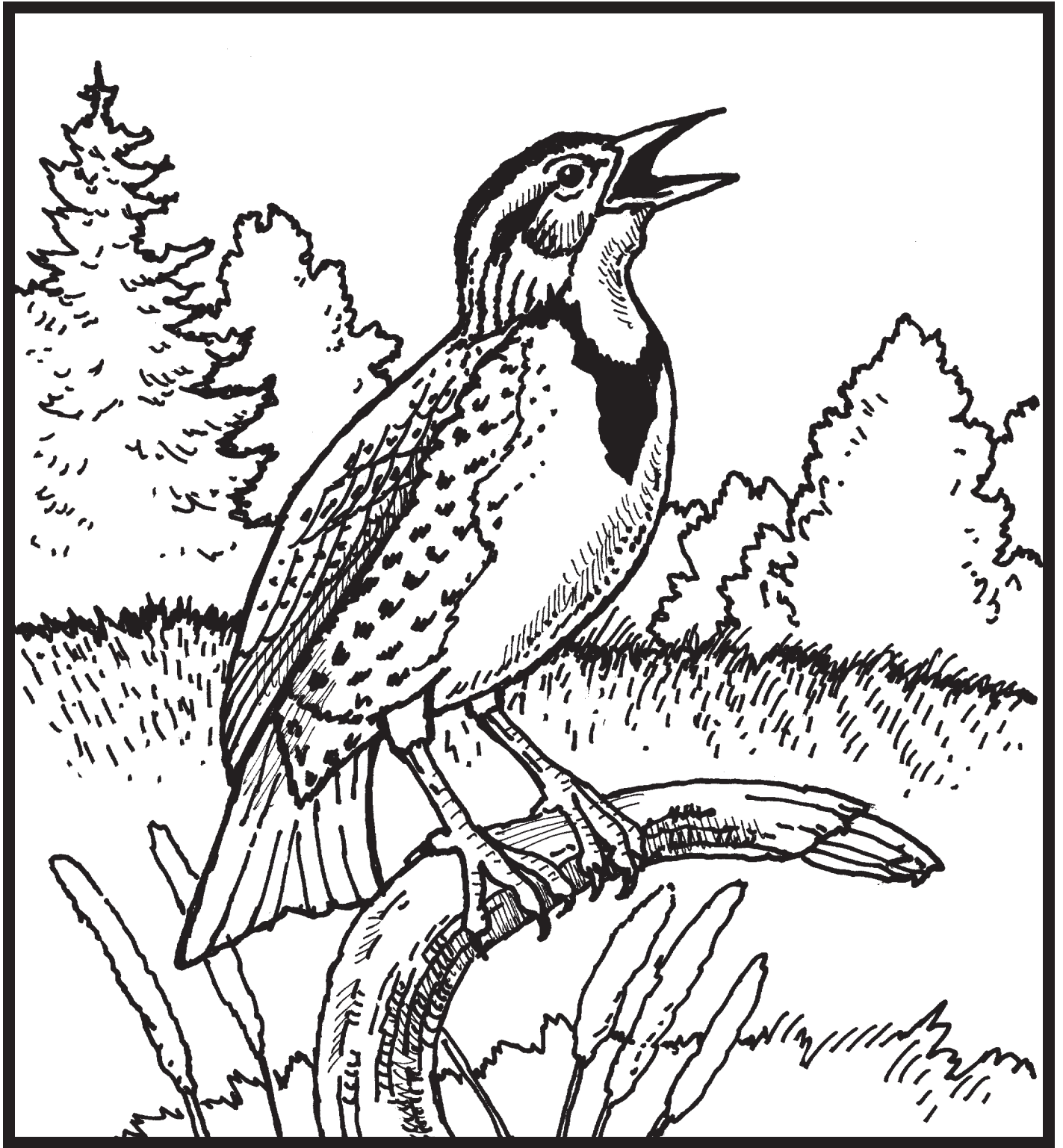
## Red-tailed Hawk

This hawk with a red tail has amazing eyesight. The redtail can spot a mouse or rabbit from great distances. Redtails also eat snakes. This large bird of prey can be seen perching on fence posts, telephone poles and in trees. They soar over fields looking for prey.



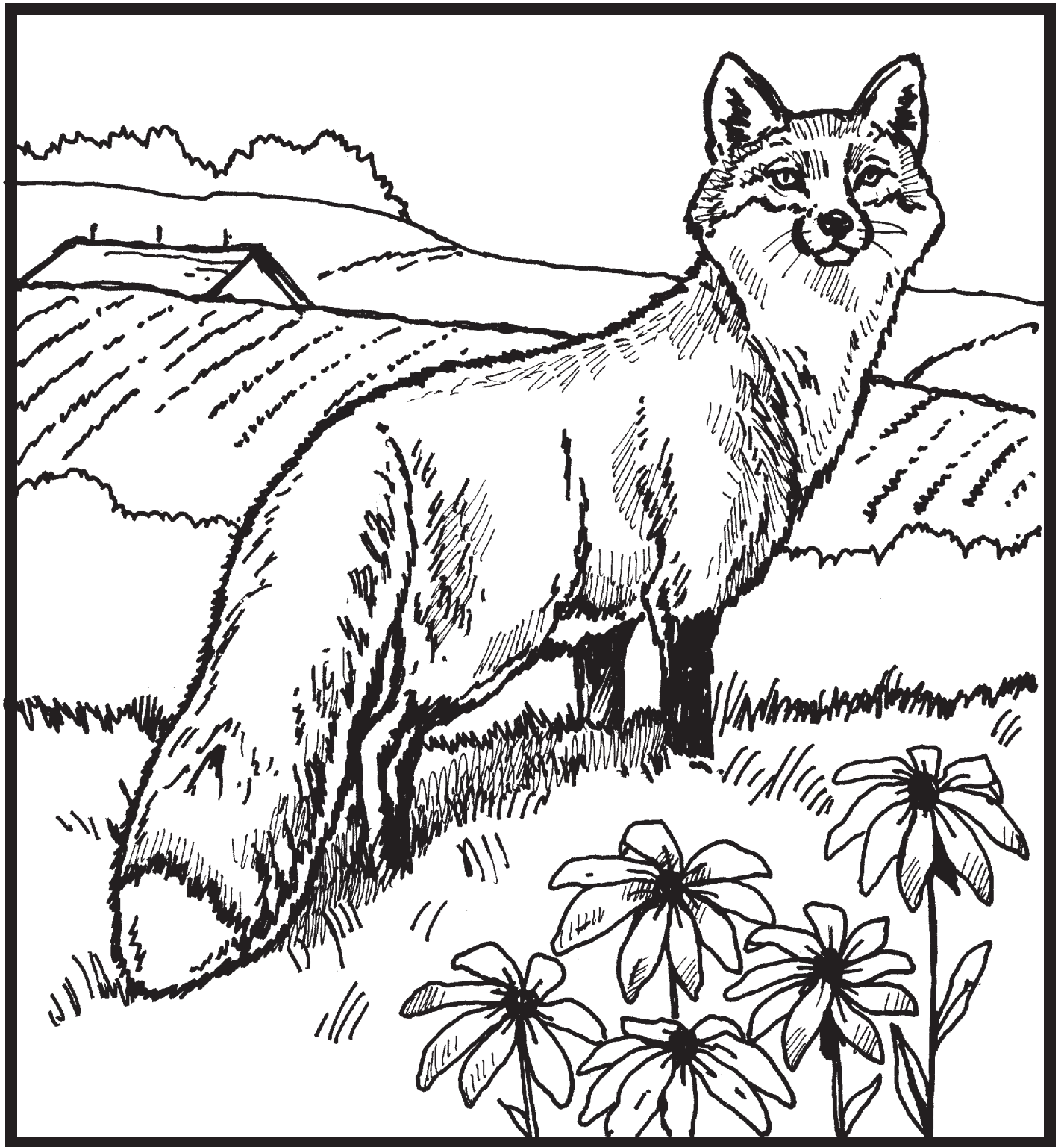
## Bluebird

Bluebirds help the farmer by eating harmful insects that eat crops. Bluebirds nest in holes in trees called cavities. They also nest in hollow fence posts. People can help bluebirds by building and erecting bluebird nesting boxes.



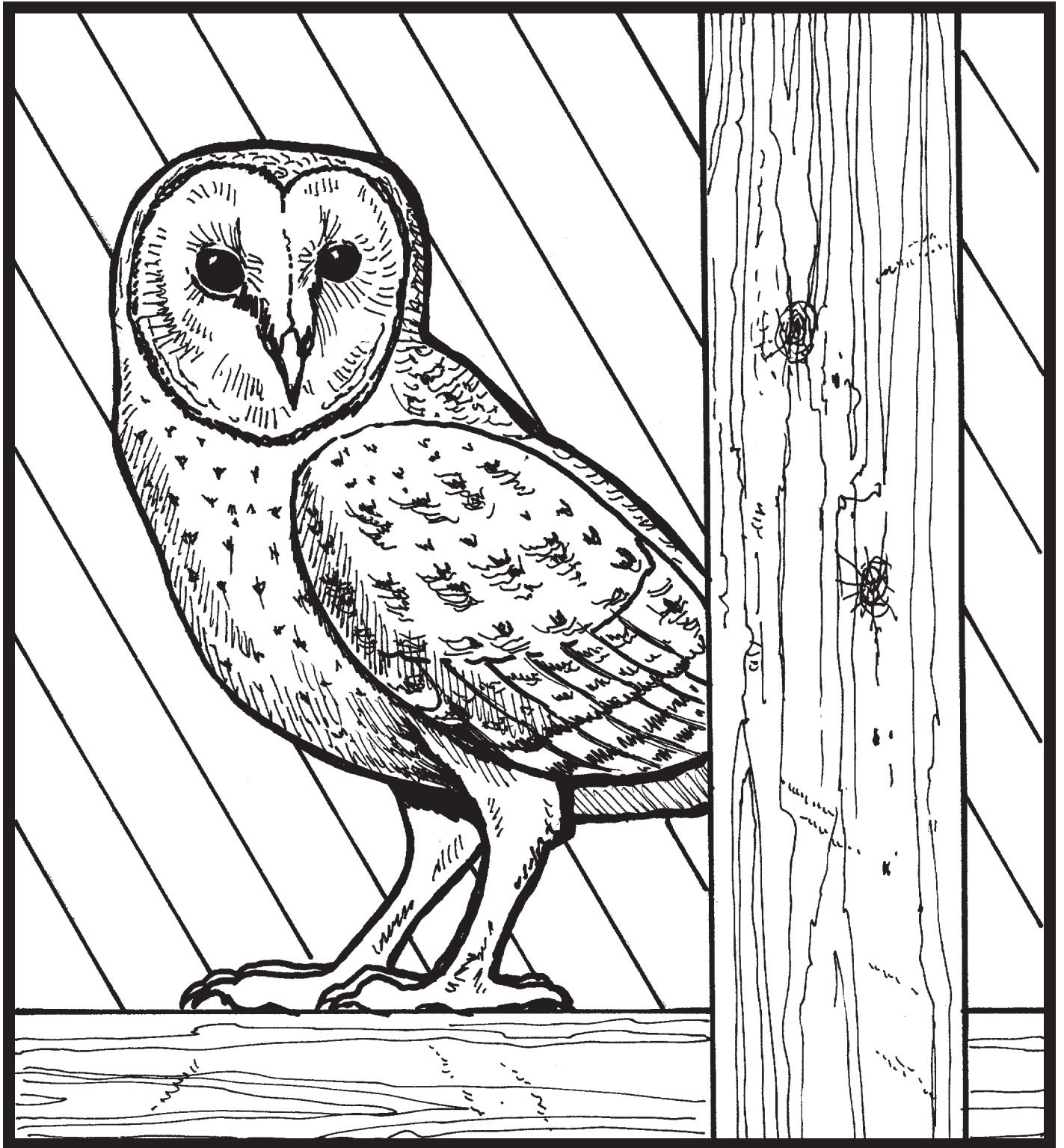
## Meadowlark

The beautiful meadowlark sings from a perch at the edge of a farm field. Meadowlarks nest on the ground. Their nests are hidden in tall grasses or alfalfa fields. This songbird eats many kinds of insects and weed seeds.



## Red Fox

The red fox hunts farm fields for mice, birds and other small animals. Foxes also eat insects, berries and some kinds of fruit. The red fox is really more orange than red. It has a long, bushy tail with a white tip.



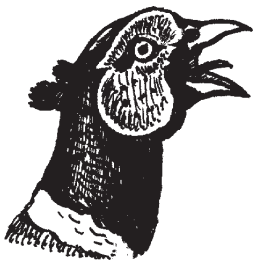
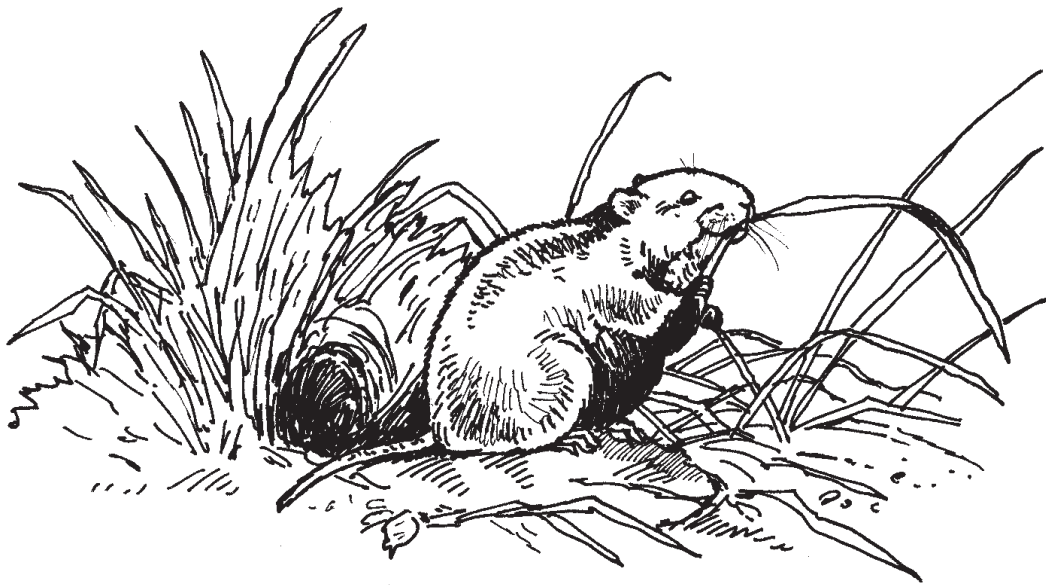
## Barn Owl

The barn owl sometimes lives in barns. This owl does not have the feathery ear-tufts like the great-horned owl and has dark eyes. Barn owls hiss and whistle, but don't hoot. The barn owl helps farmers by eating rats and mice that live in barns.

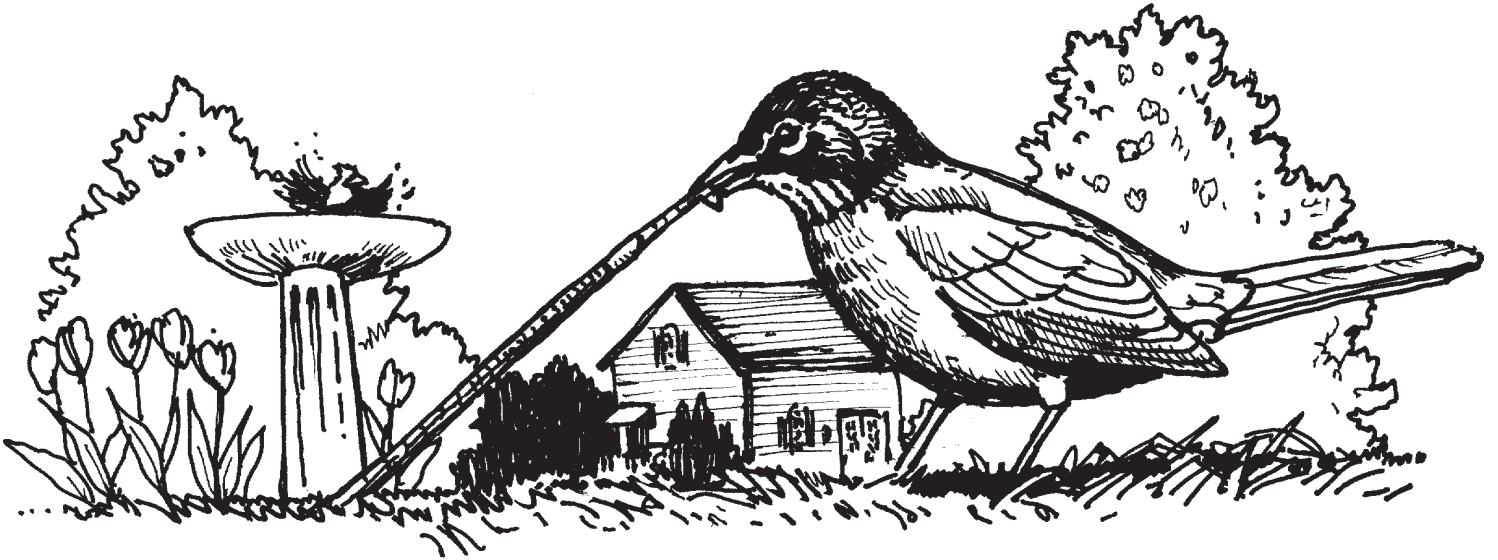


# The Meadow Vole

The meadow vole is also called a field mouse. Thousands of voles may live in farm fields. They eat grass and can damage crops. Predators help the farmer by eating voles. Draw a farmland predator hunting the vole in this picture.



What wild bird that lives on a farm is called a rooster?  
Answer on back cover.



# NEIGHBORHOODS

Some wild animals live in cities, towns and neighborhoods. Wildlife from nearby forests and farms may visit neighborhoods. Birds stop here to feed and rest, or even build a nest. People and animals can live together. It is important to have trees and shrubs and water in neighborhoods for wild animals.

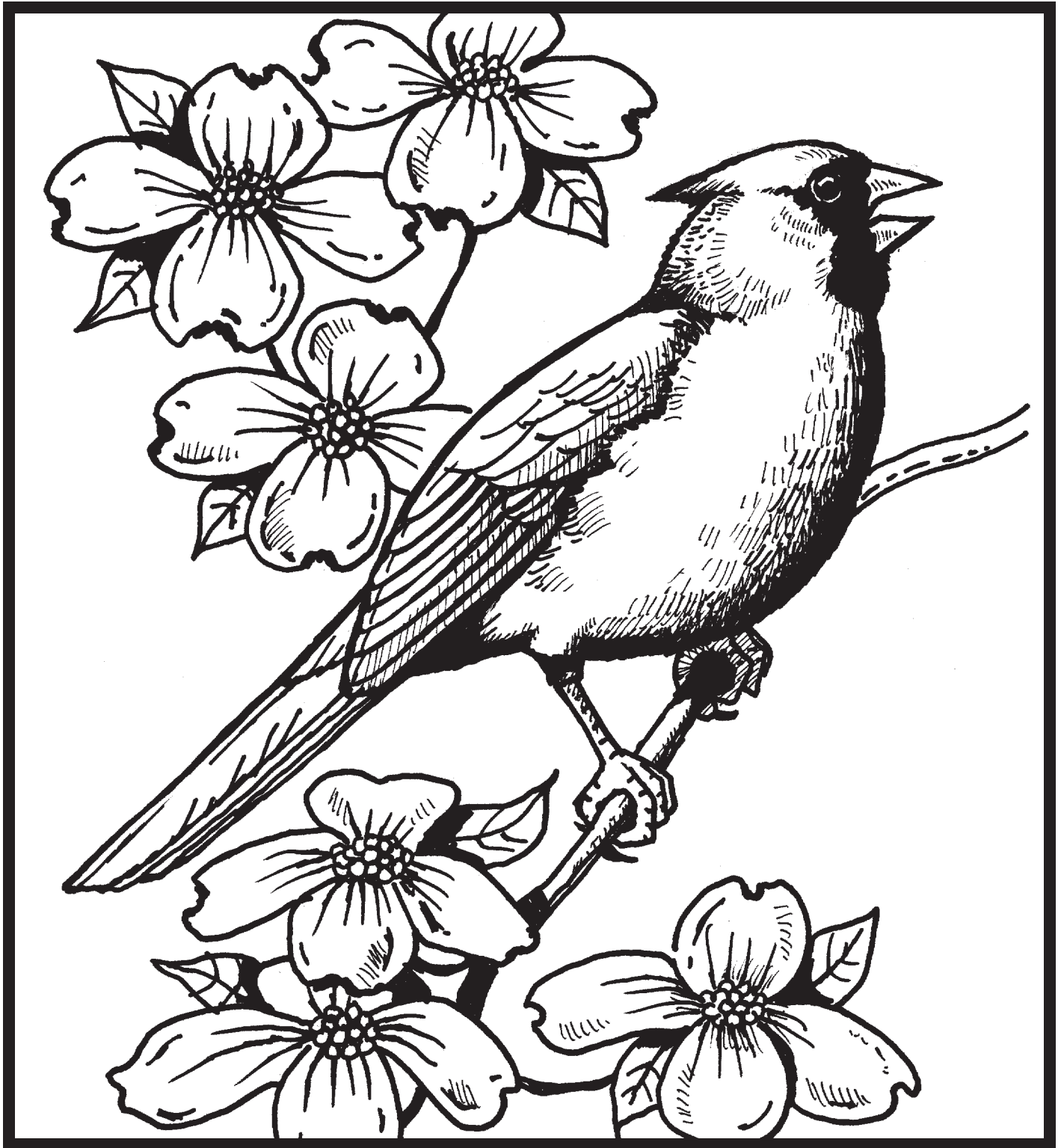


The house symbol appears with wildlife that live in neighborhoods.



## Little Brown Bat

The little brown bat is the only mammal that can fly. Bats can be seen at dusk and after dark under street lamps. They sleep during the day by hanging upside down in attics, old buildings or on trees. Bats help people by eating insects. Bats use echolocation to find their way in the dark.



## Cardinal

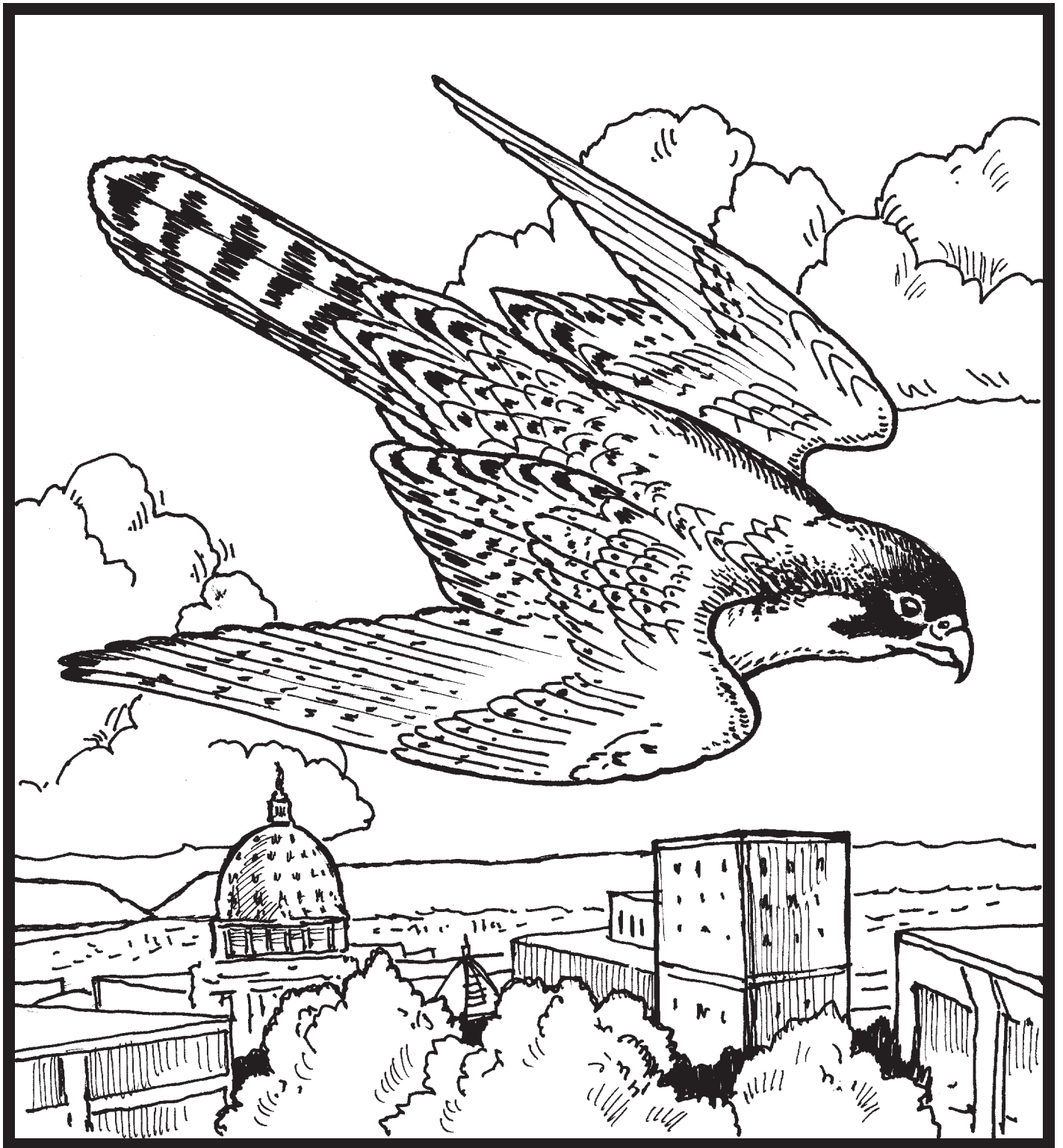
The bright red male cardinal sings *cheer, cheer, cheer*. Cardinals have strong, heavy bills to break seeds. The pointed feathers that stand up on top of their heads is called a crest. The female cardinal is reddish-brown. This cardinal is perched on a dogwood branch.



## Raccoon

Raccoons look for food along streams and rivers. At night, they sometimes visit towns to look for food. Raccoons like to raid garbage cans. They like to sleep in hollow trees, or chimneys, during the day. The raccoon looks like it is wearing a black mask.





## Peregrine Falcon

The peregrine falcon is a raptor. Some peregrines live in big cities. They nest on tall buildings. They swoop down and capture birds like pigeons and starlings. The peregrine falcon is one of the fastest birds in the world. Diving after prey they may reach 200 miles per hour!



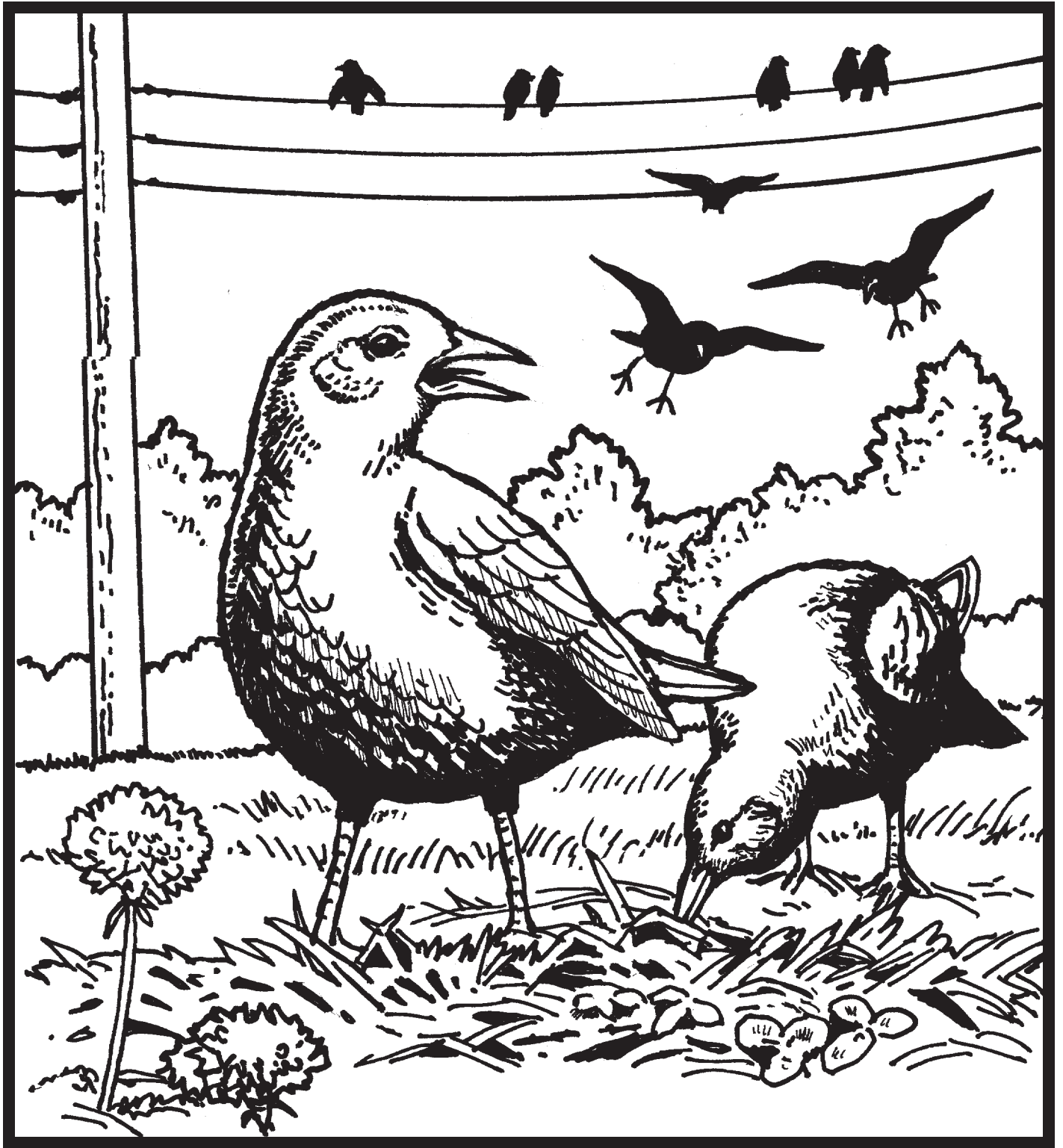
## Robin

This robin nest has four light blue eggs in it. Robins are seen on lawns looking for worms. In late summer robins travel, or migrate south to warmer places where it is easier to find food in winter. Robins return each spring to their same nesting sites.



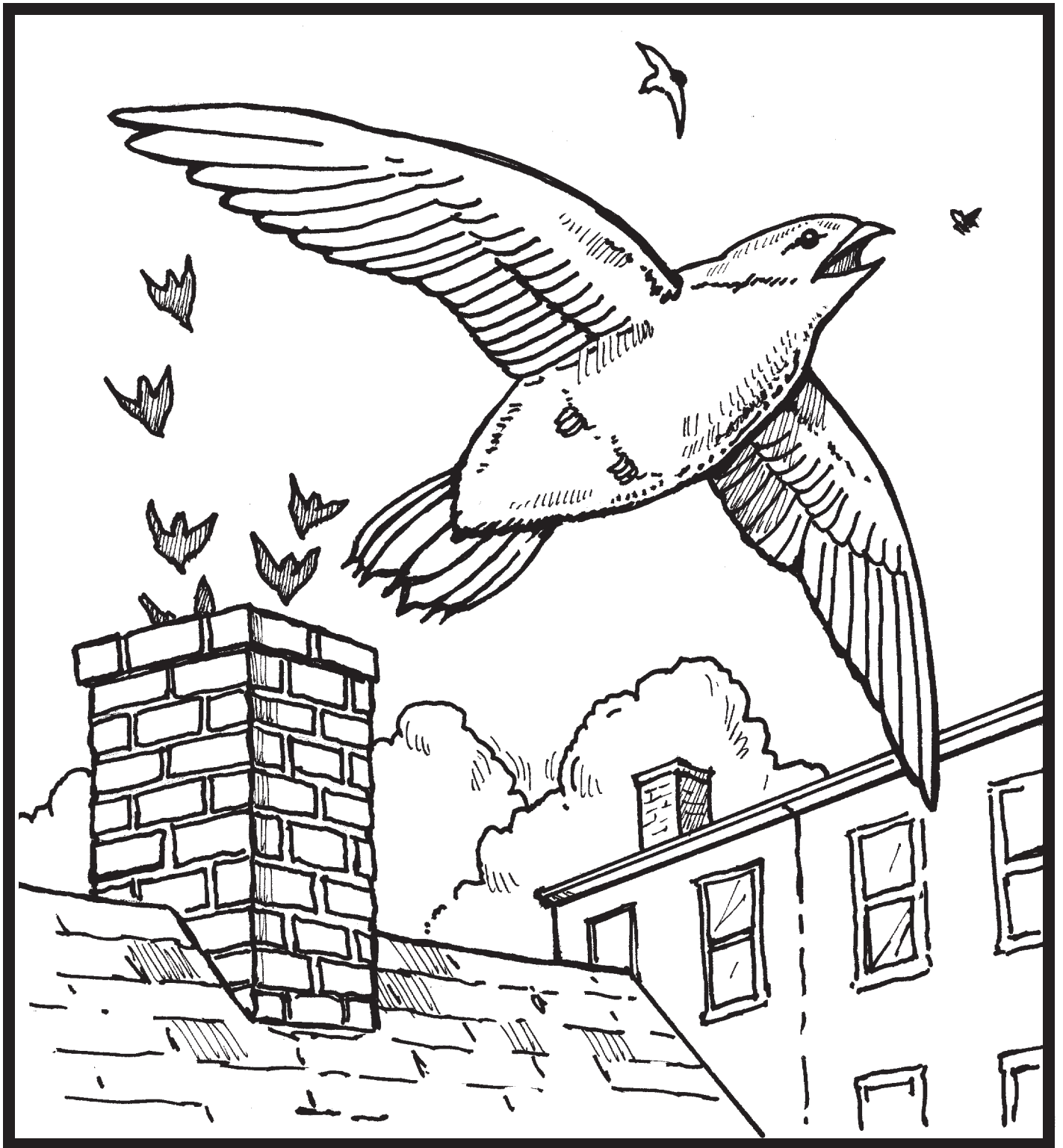
## Gray Squirrel

Squirrels live in hollow trees and in round nests made of leaves. Squirrels eat acorns. They bury them in the ground to eat in winter. If they forget to dig up an acorn, it might grow into a big oak tree. Some gray squirrels are all black.



## Starling

Starlings may be seen walking in backyards or along roads. They eat seeds and insects. These black birds nest in holes in trees and buildings. Starlings were brought to America from England long ago. In winter, big flocks of starlings roost in trees.



## Chimney Swift

These birds fly and twitter all day long over the city. They stop flying at night when they rest inside buildings or chimneys. As chimney swifts fly, they capture insects from the air.





## Chipmunk

Chipmunks carry acorns and seeds in their cheek pouches. They store the food in underground burrows. Chipmunks are forest animals that also live in neighborhoods. This quick little rodent makes loud squeaking noises when alarmed.



DATE: October 7, 2010

TIME: 11:00 a.m.

WEATHER: Sunny and warm

LOCATION: My backyard

NOTES: Saw a chickadee pecking at a branch. It was looking for insects. The chickadees song sounds like its name — *chick-a-dee-dee*

## START A NATURE JOURNAL

In the space below draw a wild animal that lives in your neighborhood.

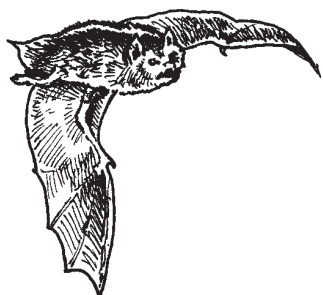
DATE:

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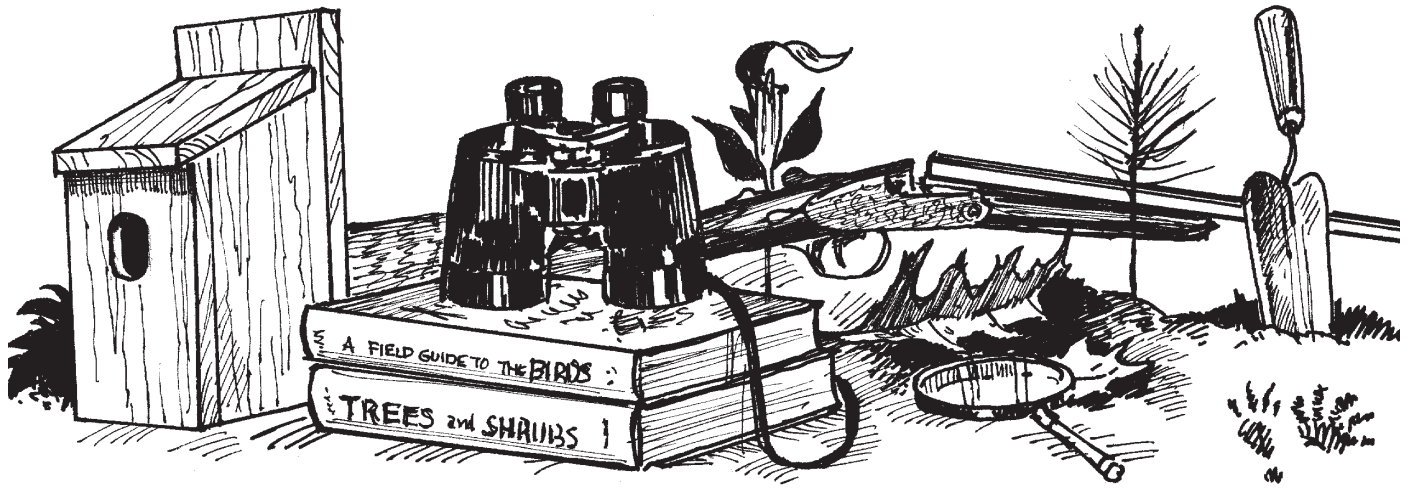
WEATHER:

LOCATION:

NOTES:



What neighborhood animal has wings but is not a bird? Answer on back cover.



# CONSERVATION

Wild animals are fun to watch and study. People can help animals by learning about them and creating habitats for them. School groups can help wildlife by working on habitat and conservation projects. Sometimes these projects can be done on school grounds, parks or backyards.



The tree seedling appears with activities that help wildlife.



## Building Nest Boxes

A Wildlife Conservation Officer is helping these children make bluebird nesting boxes. They will put the boxes on posts near fields. They will check to see if the bluebirds are using them.

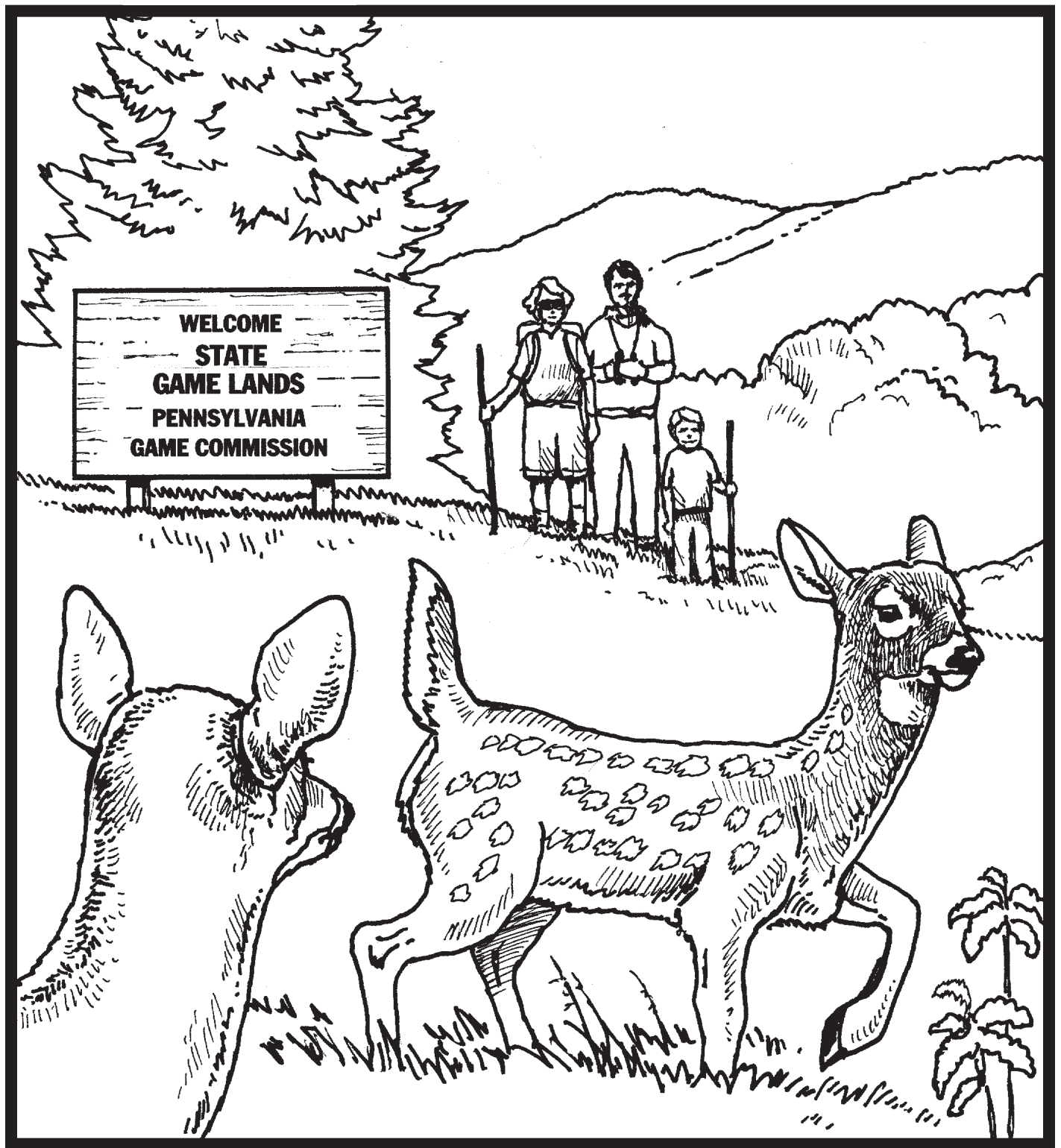
My Wildlife Conservation Officer's name is \_\_\_\_\_ .



## Planting Trees

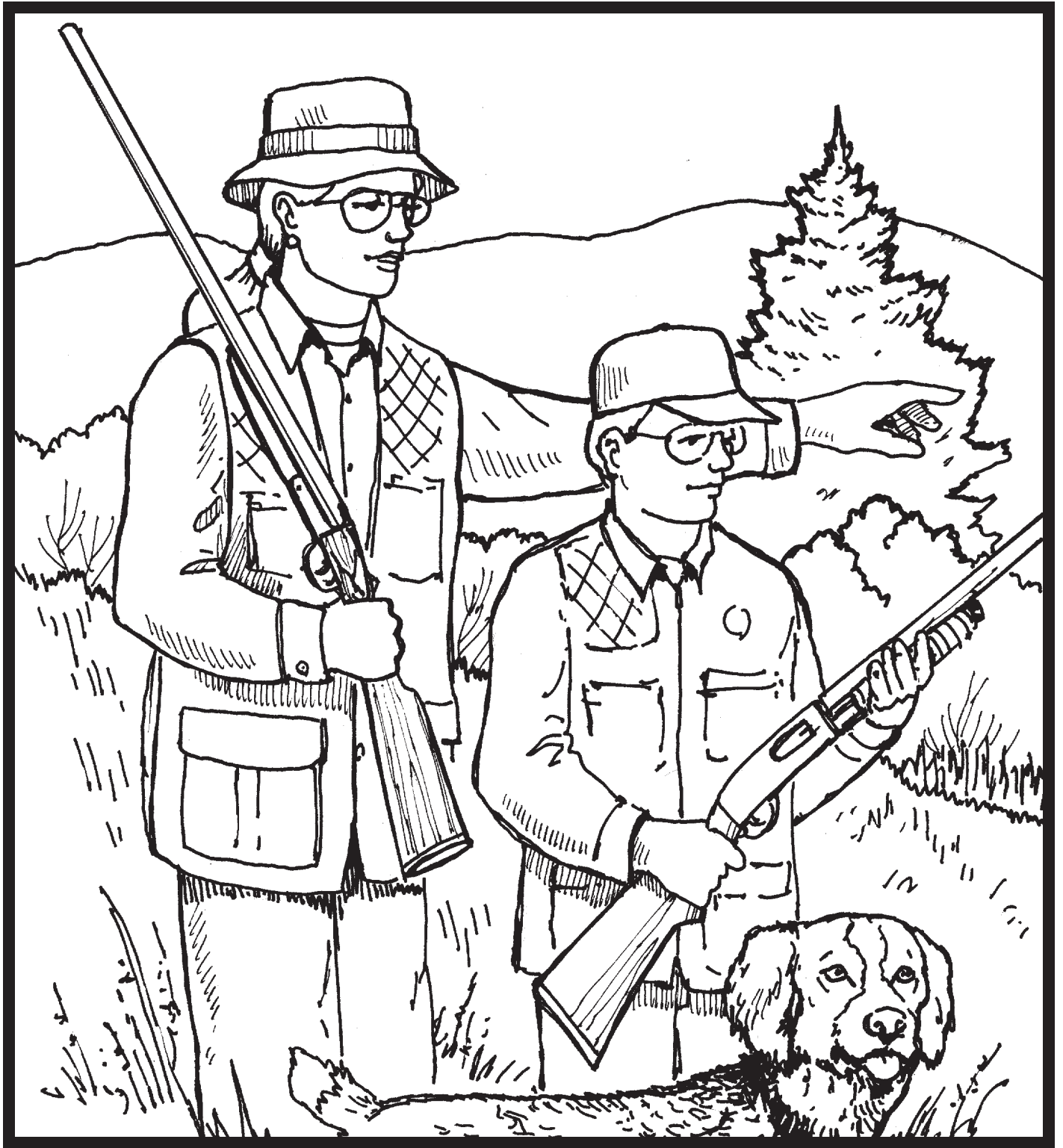
These children are planting pine seedlings on a hillside. Pine trees grow quickly and provide a place for wildlife to live. In winter, many animals find shelter in the pines where they are protected from cold winds and snow storms.





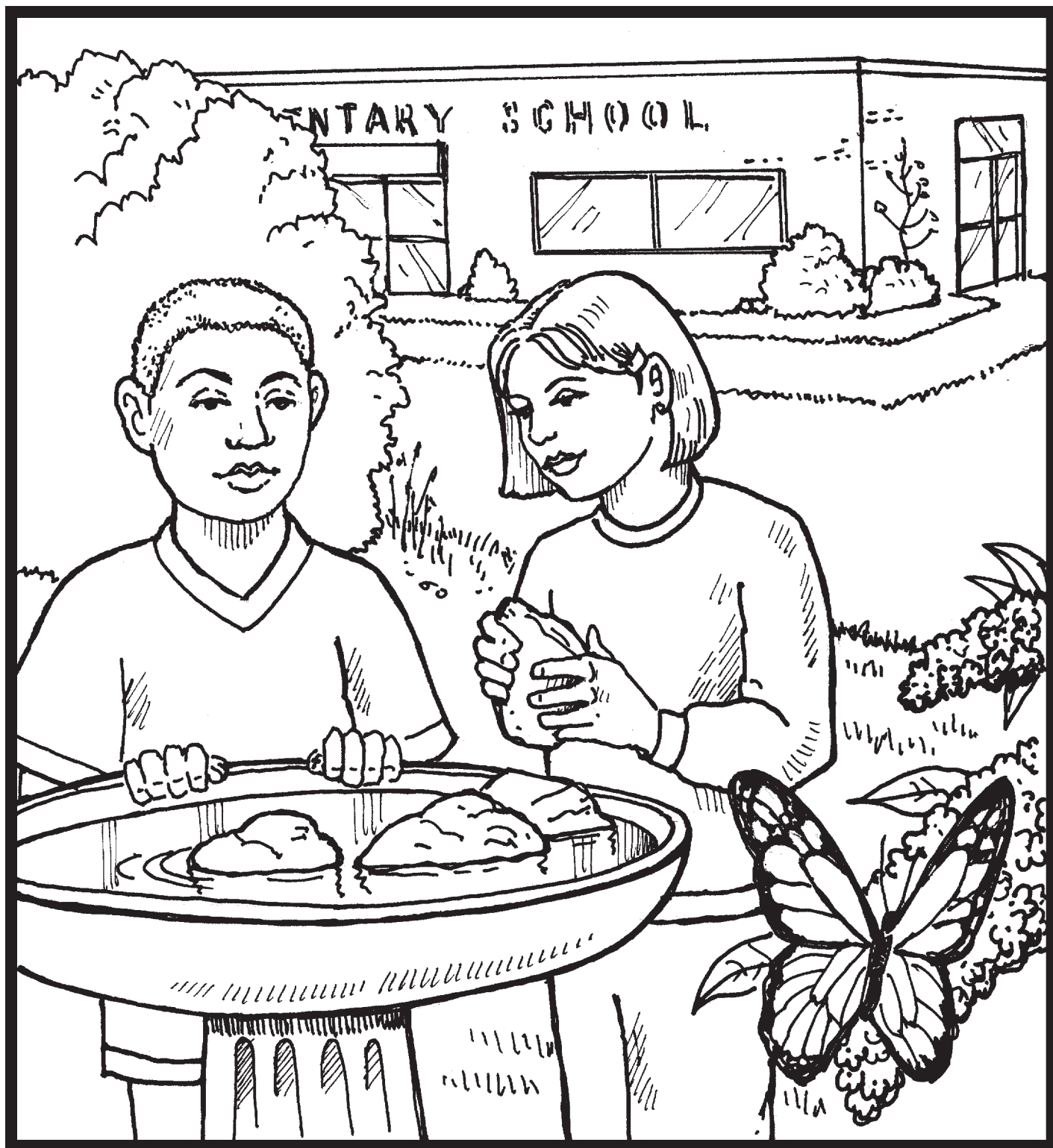
## Watching Wildlife

We can help animals by learning about them. This family is watching wildlife on a State Game Land. Game lands are wild areas bought by hunters and trappers for all people to use. There is probably a game land near your home.



## Hunting

Many animals in this book are hunters. People are hunters, too. This mother and son are enjoying the outdoors by hunting together. Hunting is fun and a good way to learn about nature.



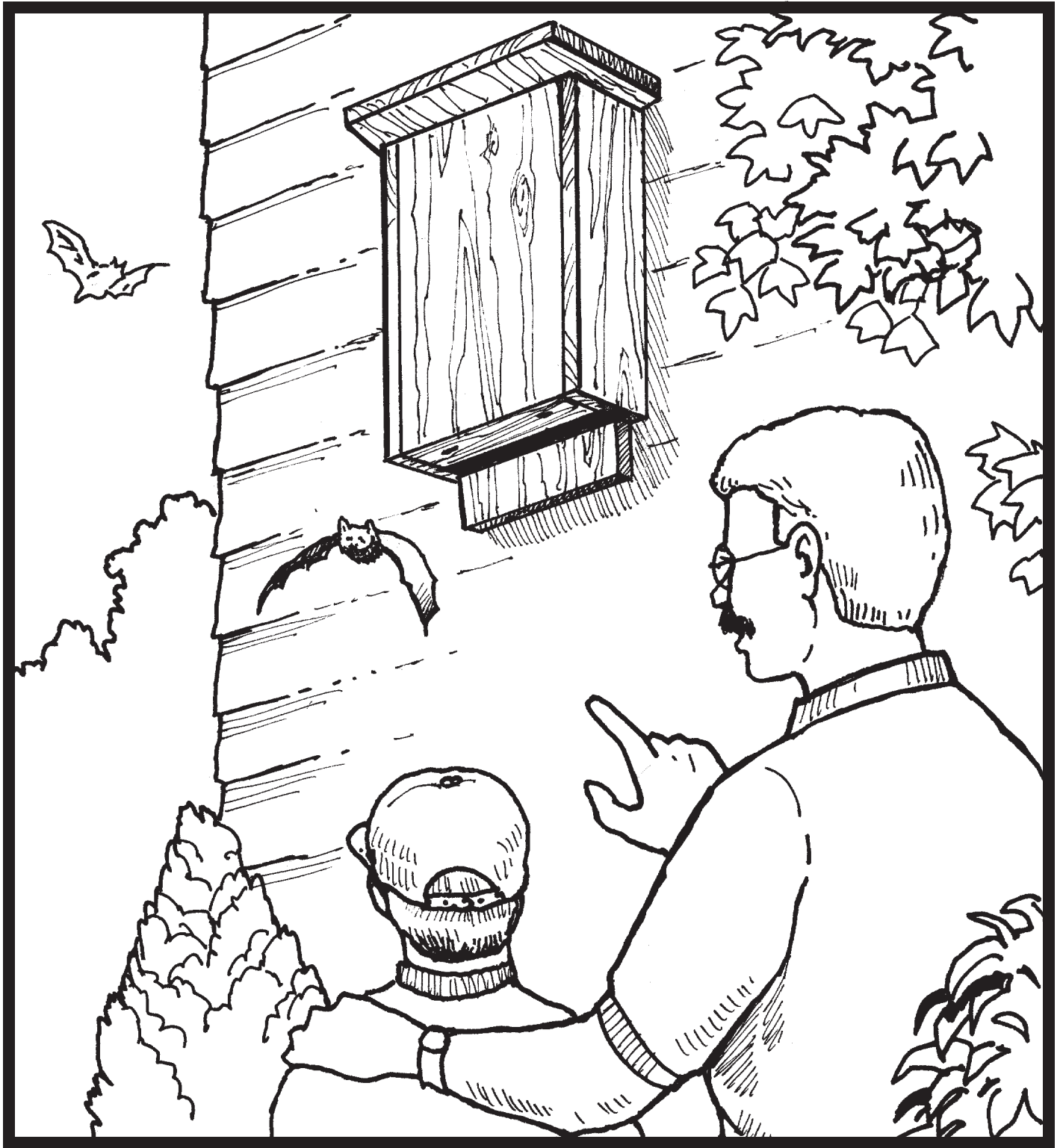
## Creating Habitat

A good place to build a wildlife habitat is at school. This boy and girl are helping to build a small wildlife habitat at their school. Does your school have a wildlife habitat project?



## Trapping

This father and daughter are making a trapline. They are going to trap furbearing animals like mink, beavers and foxes. Native Americans used the fur and hides of animals to make clothes, shoes, blankets and many other things.



## Wildlife Neighbors

This family has built a bat box and hung it on the side of their house. Bats will sleep in the box during the day. At night the bats will fly out and eat mosquitoes and other insects in the neighborhood. Bats are good neighbors!





# WAYS TO HELP AND BE SAFE AROUND WILDLIFE

1. Do not disturb wild animals. Wildlife is fun to watch but should be left alone.
2. Never touch wild animals. Remember, they are *wild* and can bite or scratch.
3. Do not try to help wildlife that is injured. Tell an adult.
4. Do not touch or pick up wild animals that have died.
5. Do not touch or pick up young animals; their parents are watching nearby.
6. If a wild animal appears sick, or hurts you, tell an adult.
7. Never feed wild animals, except for songbirds at birdfeeders, and only during fall and winter.
8. Provide water for wildlife by putting up a birdbath. Keep it full of fresh, clean water.
9. Watch wildlife that lives near your home. Learn the names of birds and animals. Make a list or draw pictures of animals you see.
10. Ask an adult to help make a wildlife nesting box or create wildlife habitat.

For more information on classroom publications, including posters, Wildlife Notes, videos and books or programs on wildlife, contact your Pennsylvania Game Commission region office. For more on Pennsylvania wildlife and the Pennsylvania Game Commission, visit [www.pgc.state.pa.us](http://www.pgc.state.pa.us).

#### **Northwest Region**

Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest,  
Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango &  
Warren counties

**Post Office Box 31  
Franklin 16323  
814-432-3187, 814-432-3188,  
814-432-3189**

#### **Northcentral Region**

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton,  
Elk, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga &  
Union counties

**1566 S RT 44 Hwy.,  
Post Office Box 5038  
Jersey Shore 17740-5038  
570-398-4744, 570-398-4745,  
570-398-3423**

#### **Northeast Region**

Bradford, Carbon, Columbia,  
Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour,  
Northumberland, Pike, Sullivan,  
Susquehanna, Wayne & Wyoming  
counties

**Post Office Box 220  
Dallas 18612-0220  
570-675-1143, 570-675-1144**

#### **Southwest Region**

Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria,  
Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset,  
Washington & Westmoreland counties

**4820 Route 711  
Bolivar 15923-2420  
724-238-9523, 724-238-9524,  
724-238-5639**

#### **Southcentral Region**

Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland,  
Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata,  
Mifflin, Perry & Snyder counties

**8627 William Penn Hwy.  
Huntingdon 16652  
814-643-1831, 814-643-9635**

#### **Southeast Region**

Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin,  
Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh,  
Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia,  
Schuylkill & York counties

**448 Snyder Rd.  
Reading 19605-9254  
610-926-3136, 610-926-3137,  
610-926-1966**

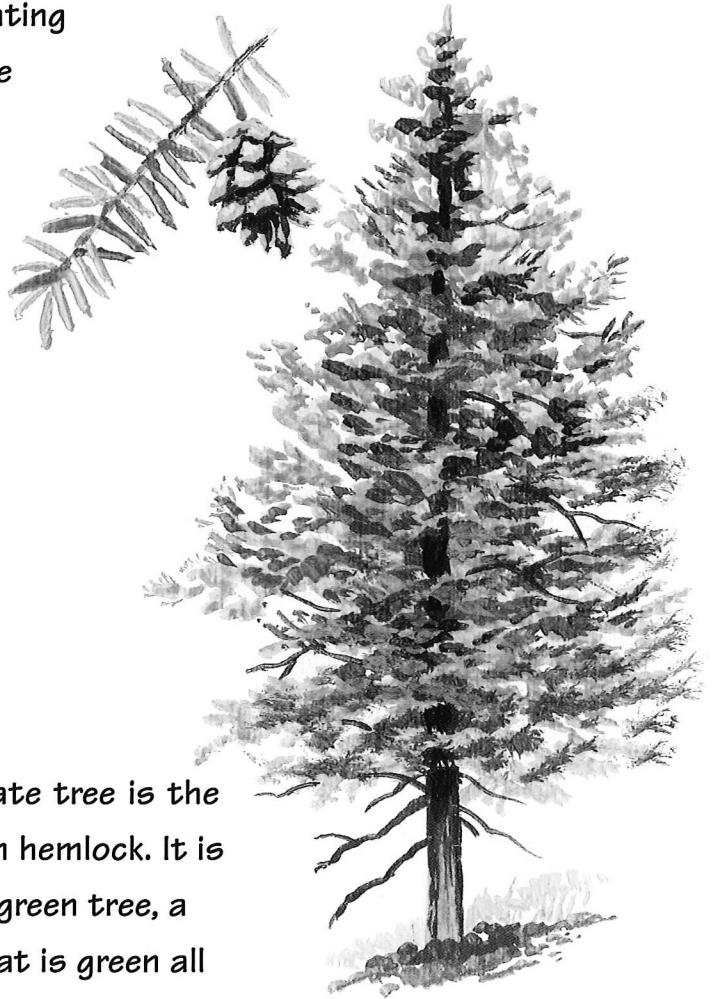
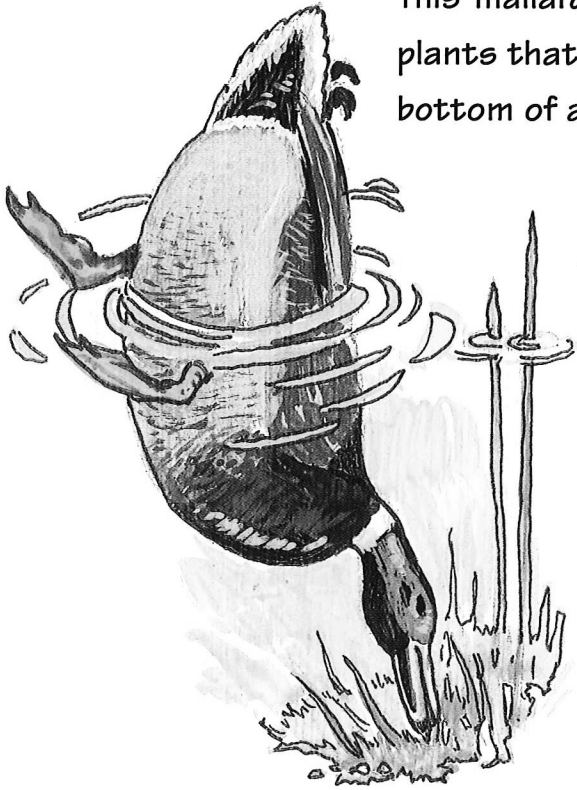
**State Headquarters  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
717-787-4250**

**[www.pgc.state.pa.us](http://www.pgc.state.pa.us)**

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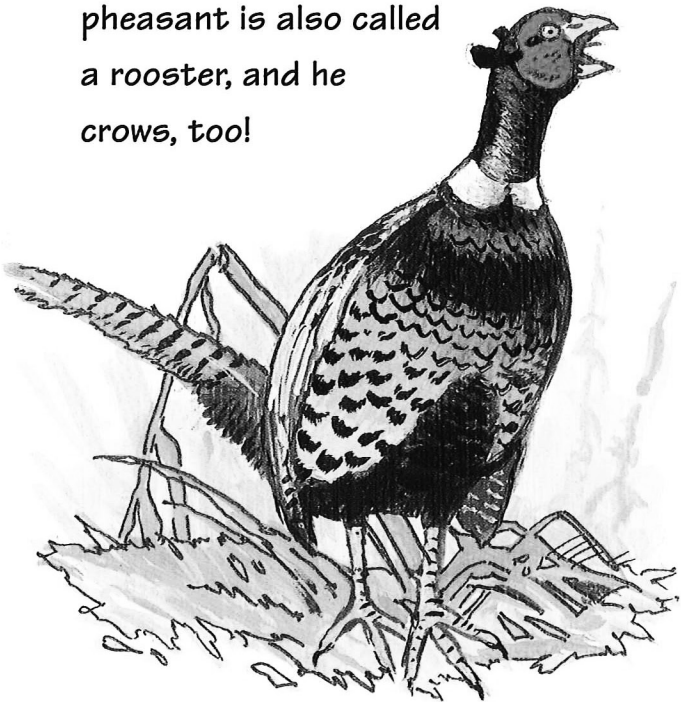
Bob Sopchick is an award-winning illustrator and writer whose work appeared in the Pennsylvania Game Commission's *Pennsylvania Game News* for many years. His paintings have served as the designs for many of the agency's prints and stamps as well.

This mallard duck is eating plants that grow on the bottom of a pond.



The state tree is the eastern hemlock. It is an evergreen tree, a tree that is green all year round.

The male ring-necked pheasant is also called a rooster, and he crows, too!



It is the bat. Bats have fur, not feathers. The mother bat feeds her pup milk.

# WILDLIFE

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COLORING



# E OF PENNSYLVANIA



## GUIDE

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# Vocabulary Words



Parents and Teachers:

This vocabulary list can be used as a basis for further study and related projects. Definitions can be written in the space provided.

Animal

Cavity

Antler

Conservation

Beak

Cub

Beard

Dam

Bog

Feather

Bird

Flock

Bill

Forest

Bird of prey

Fur

Burrow

Game Commission

Camouflage

Habitat

Hen

Prey

Hibernate

Raptor

Hide

Rodent

Hunting

Ruff

Mammal

Seedling

Marsh

State Game Lands

Migrate

Swamp

Nest

Talon

Nest box

Trapper

Pennsylvania

Wetland

Predator

Wildlife

State Representative

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