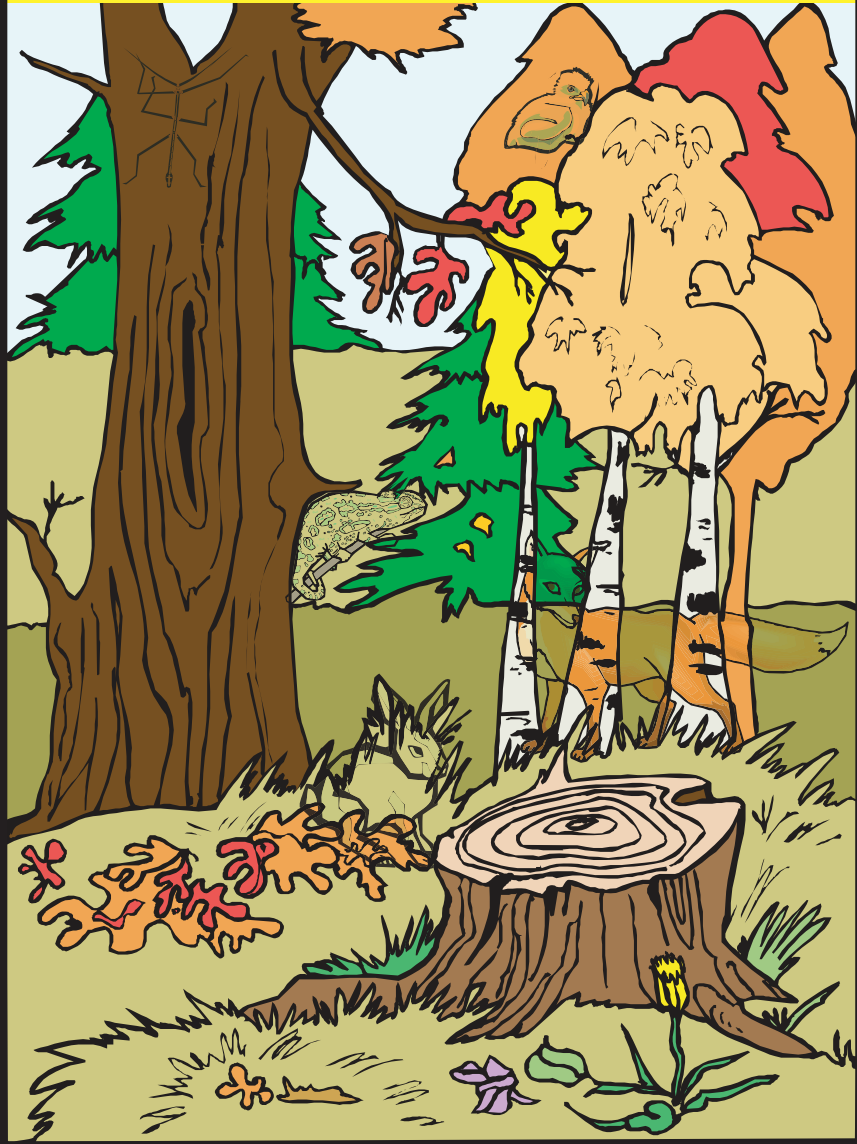


The animals are hiding.

Find and circle the animals hiding in the picture.

rabbit fox walking stick
chameleon chick



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Colorful Chameleons— Camouflage, Communication, or Both?

By Shaun Stanberry

JUNE 2008: Why do lizards change their color? Many people thought they did it to blend in with their surroundings. This may be true. But scientists have learned that there may be other reasons, too.



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Chameleons change their body color as camouflage, or to blend in, but also to send messages to other chameleons. For example, a male might flash bright colors to attract a mate or show strength. A female might change color to show she is ready to mate.

See *Colorful Chameleons* on page 2

Writing Prompt:

“What are they saying to each other?”



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Colorful Chameleons

Continued from page 1

This new information is changing the way scientists think about chameleons and camouflage. Many scientists now agree that a chameleon’s survival might depend on its ability to communicate with other chameleons. Which goes to show, there’s always something new and wonderful to learn from Mother Nature.

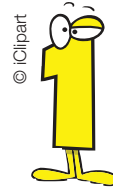
Why so ugly, duckling?

Why are many chicks born brown? Brown matches the colors of the twigs and dried leaves in their nest. When birds hatch, they can’t see or fly. By blending in to their nest, they are safe from predators.



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Hide and seek



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Concealing is when animals have the same color as their environment. Many Arctic animals turn white in the winter to blend in with the snow.



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Disguise is when animals hide by looking like an object found in nature. An insect might look like a branch or leaf.



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Mimicry is when animals look like the habitat in which they live. A sea dragon looks more like a piece of sea kelp than it does its sea-horse cousin.



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Disruptive coloration breaks up the solid outline of an animal’s body so that it is harder to see. These animals have stripes, spots, or other patterns.



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