

# Counting Kinds of Camouflage

Animals have adapted many unusual and interesting ways of protecting themselves from predators or concealing themselves from prey.

© iClipart **1** **Concealing** is when animals use the same coloring as their environment. For example, many Arctic animals turn white in the winter to blend in with their snowy surroundings, and brown in summer.

© iClipart **2** **Disguise** is when animals hide in plain sight by looking like an object in nature. The leaf-mimic katydid uses its leaf-like shape to hide from predators.



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© iClipart **3** **Mimicry** is when animals make themselves look more like the habitat in which they live. For example, the leafy sea dragon looks more like a piece of drifting sea kelp than it does its sea-horse cousin. It has even adapted to move slowly in the water so it appears to float rather than swim.



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© iClipart **4** **Disruptive coloration** confuses the eye. It breaks up the solid outline of an animal's body so that it is harder to see against its surroundings. These animals have stripes, spots, or other patterns. A tiger, for example, has stripes that help it hide in tall grasses and trees. It's hard for prey to tell what is grass and what is tiger!



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## Colorful Chameleons— Camouflage, Communication, or Both?

By Shaun Stanberry

JUNE 2008: People have long thought that lizards changed their color to match their environment. But scientists are now learning that that may be a myth.



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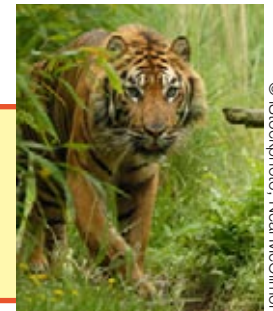
A recent study conducted by researchers in South Africa discovered that chameleons use body color not just as camouflage, but also as a way to send messages to other chameleons. For example, a dominant male might flash

bright colors to attract a mate or show dominance, while a female might use her color-changing abilities to communicate a willingness or unwillingness to mate.

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### Why do animals use camouflage?

Animals use camouflage to hide from their predators in the wild. Predators use camouflage to sneak up on their prey.



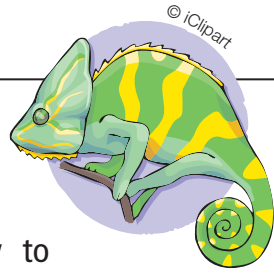
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## Colorful Chameleons

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This new information is changing the way scientists think about chameleons' color-changing characteristics. Many scientists now agree that a chameleon's color-changing abilities may be more closely related to chameleon communication than camouflage. In other words, a chameleon's survival might

depend more on its ability to communicate with other chameleons than its ability to blend in with its environment. Which goes to show, there's always something new and wonderful to learn from Mother Nature.



## What stinks?

Camouflage isn't always visible.

Some animals are able to hide their scent from predators. For example, the queen parrotfish surrounds itself in a jelly-like cocoon, which masks its smell from nighttime hunters who rely on scent rather than sight. Squid, octopus, and cuttlefish can squirt a cloud of ink when they feel threatened. The ink not only makes it hard for their predators to see them, but makes it hard for their predators to smell them.



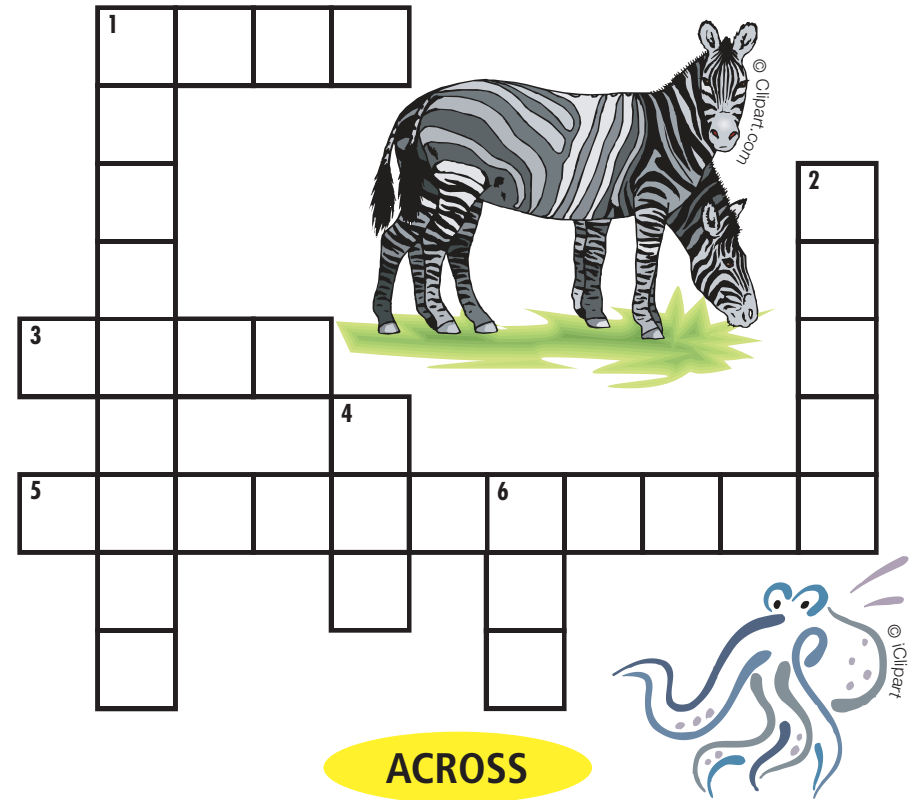
## Writing Prompt:

"What are they saying to each other?"



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## Camo Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

- Some animals use camouflage to sneak up on their \_\_\_\_\_
- To a lion, a herd of zebras looks like a striped \_\_\_\_\_
- Chameleons can change color to \_\_\_\_\_

### DOWN

- Some animals use camouflage to hide from their \_\_\_\_\_
- In the winter, a snowshoe hare is \_\_\_\_\_
- A katydid is the name of a \_\_\_\_\_
- When an octopus feels threatened, he squirts \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS: Across: 1. prey; 3. mass; 5. communicate; Down: 1. predators; 2. white; 4. bug; 6. ink