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National Geographic Readers: Snakes!

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You'll find snakes to be private, quiet types who just want a shady place to call home.

6-8	15-30 mins	-	-
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It's a Snake!

公众号: Wechat

What is long and round,
and slides on the ground?

What can be fat or thin,
and has dry, scaly skin?

What has a tongue that flicks,
and eyes that can't blink?

For goodness sake . . .

. . . it's a snake!

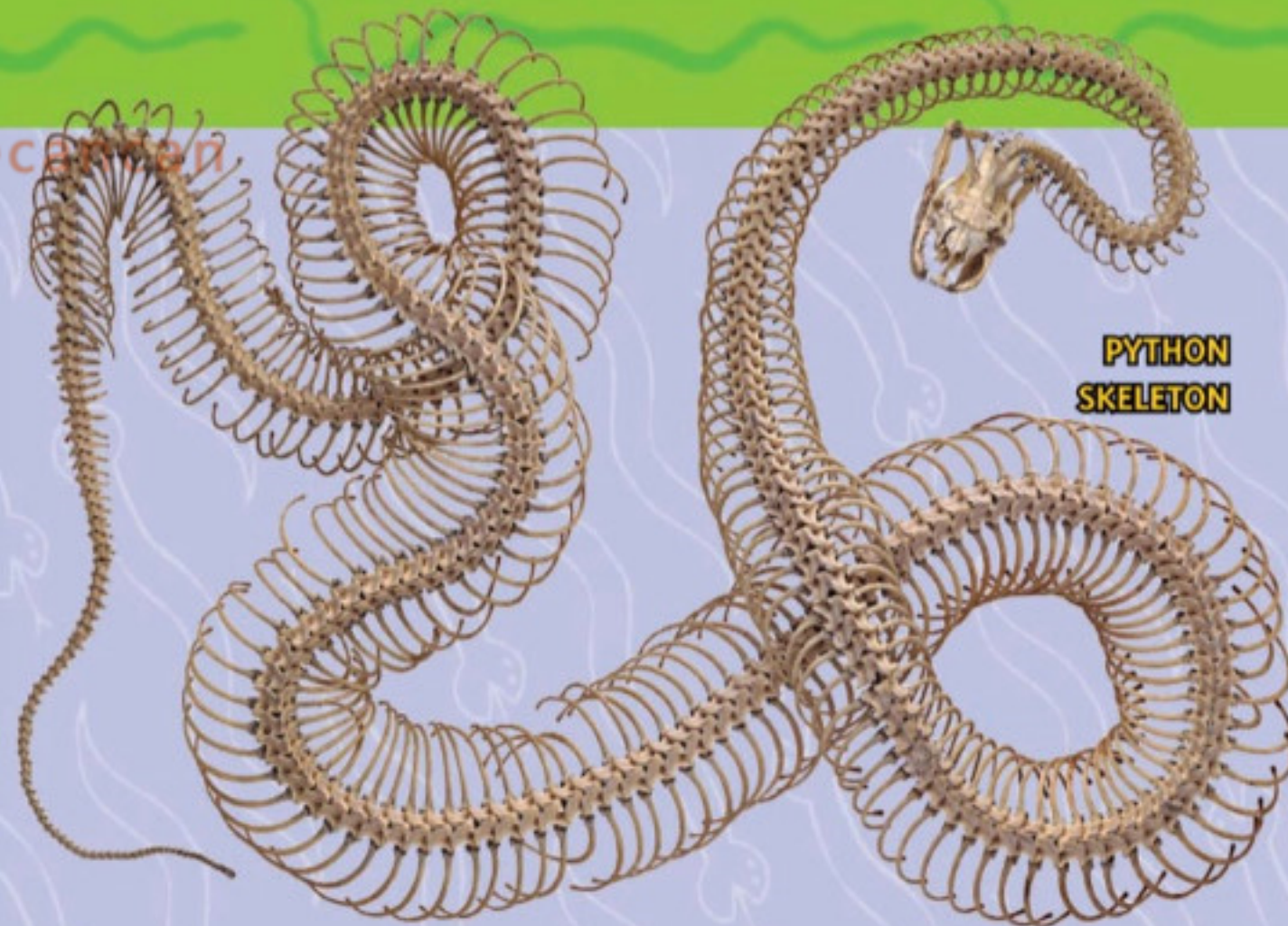
AMAZON TREE BOA

A snake is a reptile. Lizards, turtles,
and crocodiles are reptiles, too.

All reptiles have tough scales.
A snake has stretchy skin between
its scales.

A reptile's body is always the same
temperature as the air around it.
To warm up, a snake lies in the sun.
To cool down, a snake moves
into the shade.

公众号: Wechat



**PYTHON
SKELETON**

All reptiles have bones inside
their bodies. Some snakes have
more than 1,000 bones.

This snake has eaten a
whole egg. It will crush the
egg and spit out the shell.

Scales

Skin



EGG SNAKE

Snakes All Around

We can

Snakes live in fields and forests. They live in deserts and oceans too. They even live in city parks. Snakes can live almost anywhere.

Most snakes live in warm places. They stay active all year long.

Some snakes live in cool places. In the winter, they hibernate. Most snakes hibernate alone. Some snakes hibernate in large groups.

Words-s-s

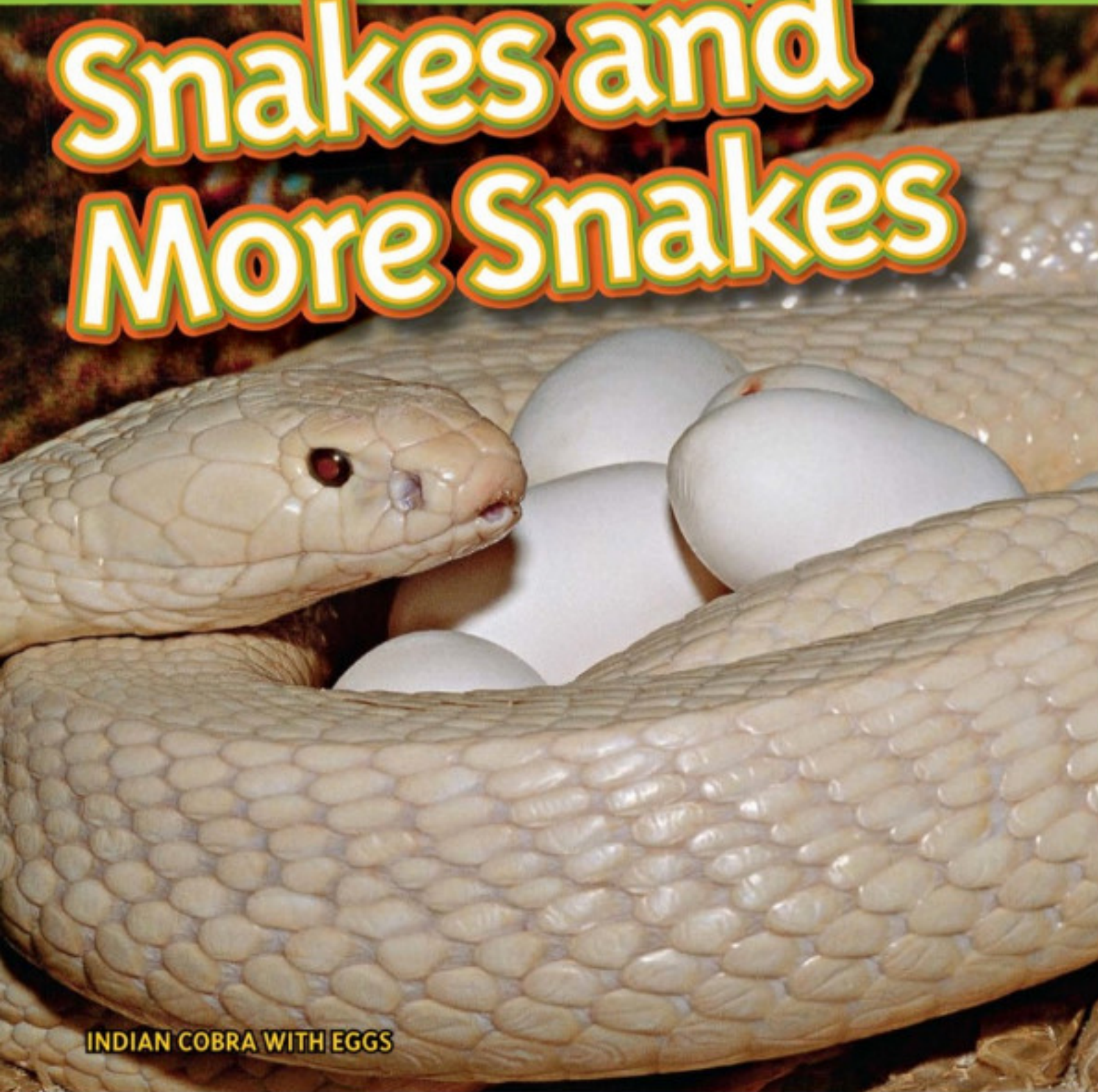
HIBERNATE: In winter, some animals have trouble finding food. To save energy, their bodies slow down. The animals rest in a safe place.

Each winter, thousands of garter snakes hibernate together in southern Canada.

In the spring the garters slither out of their warm dens.



Snakes and More Snakes



INDIAN COBRA WITH EGGS

In warm places, mother snakes usually lay eggs. Then they slither away. They do not take care of the eggs.

We can can

Most snakes lay 20 or 30 eggs.
Large pythons may lay up to 100 eggs.

After a few weeks, the eggs hatch.
The young snakes look just like their parents.



BURMESE PYTHONS HATCHING

GREEN MAMBA HATCHING

CORAL SNAKE HATCHING

Q

What do you get when you cross a young bird with a puff adder?

A

A chick who is good at math.

公众号：Wecan



YOUNG DIAMONDBACK RATTLER

In cool places, snakes usually grow inside their mother's body. A mother snake lies in the sun to keep the little snakes warm.



PUFF ADDER WITH SOME OF HER YOUNG

Most mother snakes give birth to between 5 and 20 little snakes. A puff adder can give birth to more than 150 snakes at once. Imagine what it would feel like to have all those tiny wigglers inside your body!



EYELASH VIPER WITH JUST-BORN YOUNG

A snake's body never stops growing.
Sometimes its skin gets too tight.
Then the snake needs to molt.



TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

The snake rubs its head
against a rock. Its skin splits open.
Then the snake crawls forward.
Its skin can peel off in one long piece.
It's like taking off a sock.

Most snakes molt
3 or 4 times a year.

EGYPTIAN BANDED COBRA

Words-s-s

MOLT: When animals molt, they lose their old skin, fur, or feathers. New skin is underneath.

On the Move

众号: Wecan

Most animals have legs and feet. But not a snake. Scutes help a snake move forward.

Scute

Words-S-S

SCUTES: The wide scales on the belly of a snake.

PIT VIPER

Q

What did the pit viper say as it slithered around the rat snake?

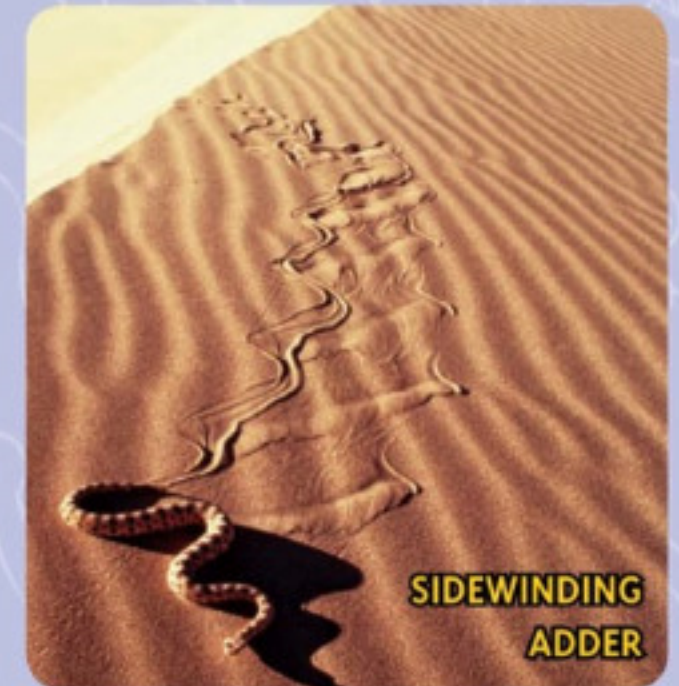
A

Ex-scutes-me.

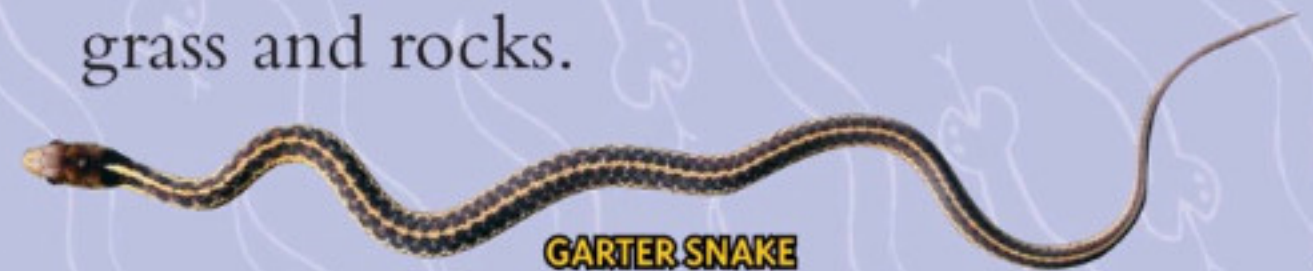
A python crawls forward in a straight line. Its belly muscles push its scutes against the ground.

Scutes can't grip desert sand.

A sidewinding adder has to throw its body sideways to move forward.



A garter snake curves its body back and forth. Its scutes push against grass and rocks.



Super Snakes

公众号：Wecanacan



Heaviest

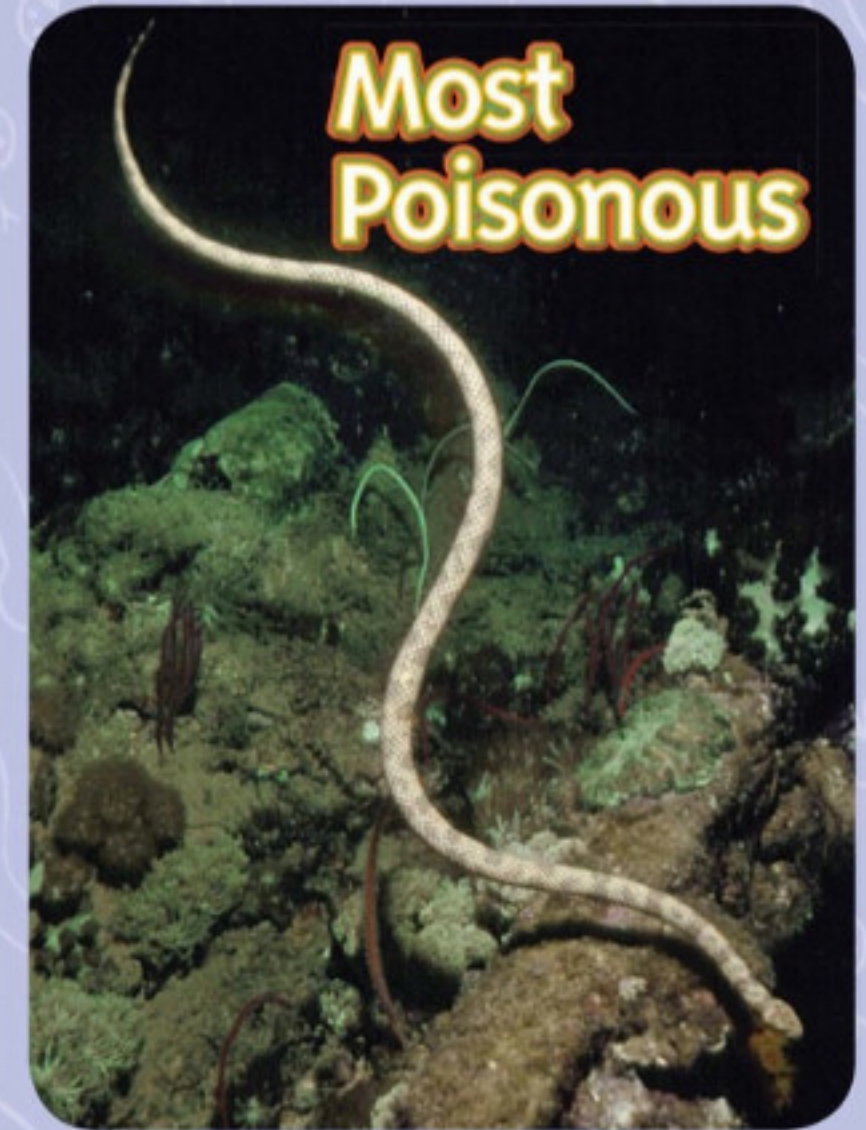
GREEN ANACONDA

A green anaconda can weigh up to 550 pounds. That's as much as a lion!

There are about 2,700 different kinds of snakes.

BEAKED SEA SNAKE

This deadly snake lives in shallow areas of the Indian Ocean. It can stay underwater for up to 5 hours.



Most Poisonous

Fastest

BLACK MAMBA

A black mamba can travel up to 12 miles per hour. That's twice as fast as most people can run.

Smallest



LESSER ANTILLEAN THREAD SNAKE

The lesser Antillean thread snake was discovered in 2001.

Snake Senses

公众号: Wecanacan

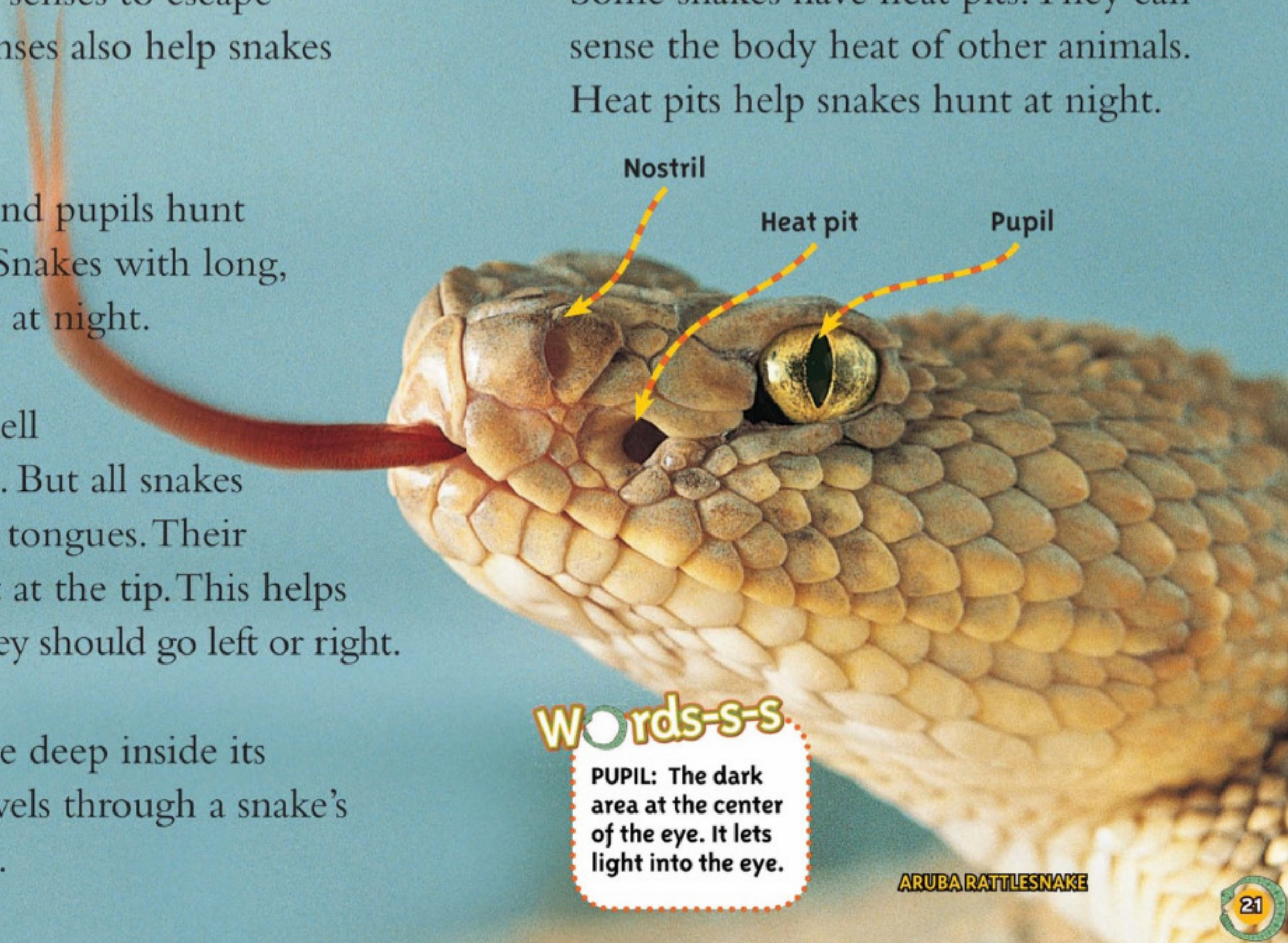
Snakes use their senses to escape from danger. Senses also help snakes hunt for food.

Snakes with round pupils hunt during the day. Snakes with long, thin pupils hunt at night.

Some snakes smell with their noses. But all snakes smell with their tongues. Their tongues are split at the tip. This helps them know if they should go left or right.

A snake's ears are deep inside its head. Sound travels through a snake's bones to its ears.

Some snakes have heat pits. They can sense the body heat of other animals. Heat pits help snakes hunt at night.



Words-s-s

PUPIL: The dark area at the center of the eye. It lets light into the eye.

ARUBA RATTLESNAKE

Where's the Snake?

公众号: Wecancan

Most snakes are hard to see.
They blend in with their surroundings.

Can you spot the snakes in these pictures?



Hiding helps snakes stay safe from predators.
Hiding also helps snakes catch prey.

Words-s-s

PREDATORS:
Animals that eat other animals.

PREY:
Animals that are eaten by other animals.

GARTER SNAKE IN WATER

There's the Snake!

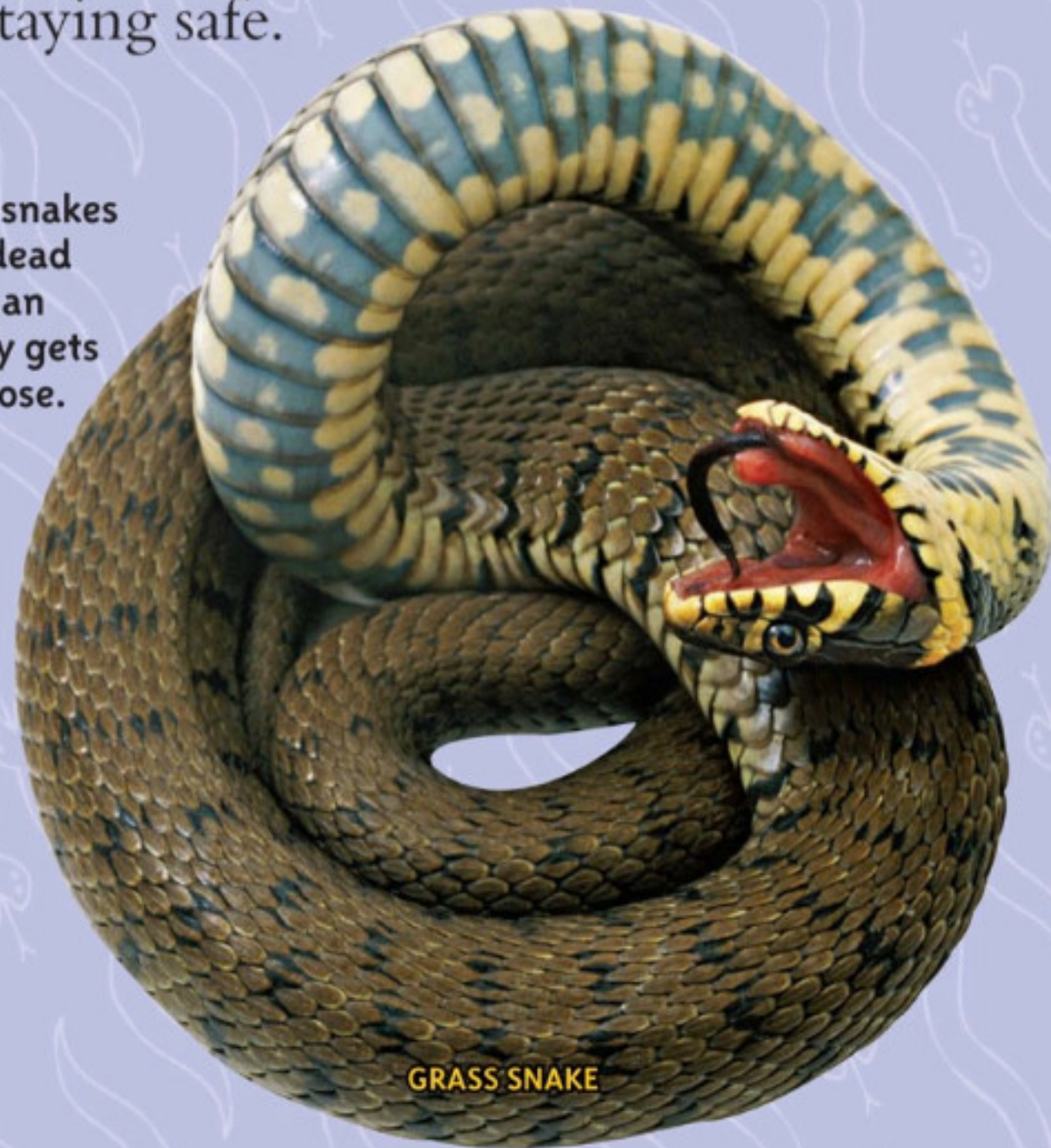
公众号: Wecan

Q If a snake went to school, what would its favorite class be?

Hiss-tory A

Some snakes do not hide from predators. They have other ways of staying safe.

Some snakes play dead when an enemy gets too close.



GRASS SNAKE



A spitting cobra sprays its predators' eyes with poisonous spit.



A coral snake is full of poison. Its bright colors warn predators to stay away.



Some snakes hiss at predators. Others rattle their tails. A western hooked-nose snake pushes air out of its back end. The farting sound travels up to six feet.

Snake Snacks

Most snakes eat about 30 meals a year. Snakes catch prey with their sharp teeth.



PUFF ADDER VIPER

Many snakes have more than 200 teeth. If a snake loses a tooth, a new one quickly grows in.

Cobras, vipers, and pit vipers have large teeth. They are called fangs.



TAIWAN HABU VIPER

Poison flows through holes in a snake's fangs. Some poisons stop prey from moving. Other poisons kill the prey.

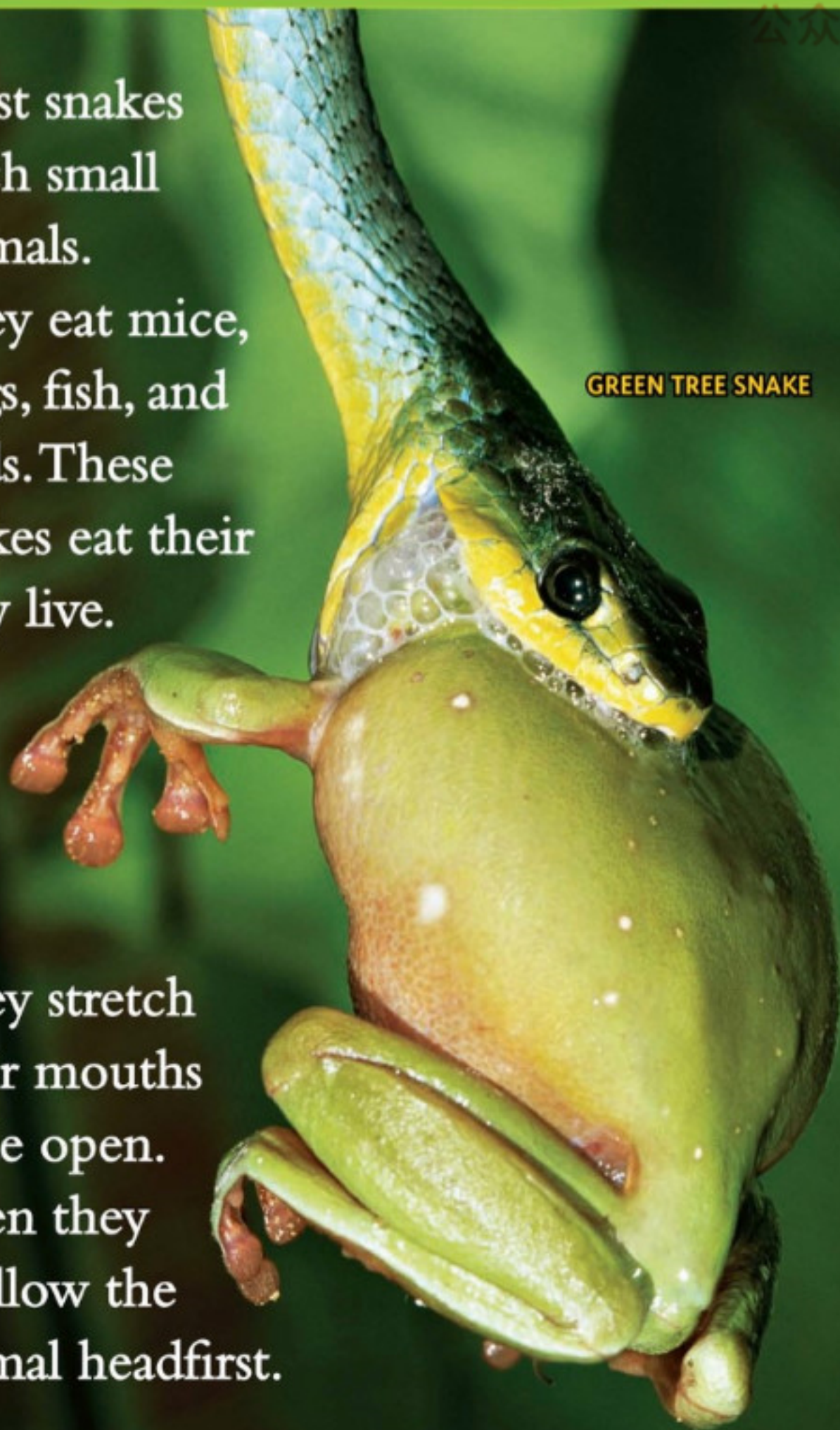


EYELASH VIPER STRIKING AT HUMMINGBIRD

Most snakes catch small animals.

They eat mice, frogs, fish, and birds. These snakes eat their prey live.

They stretch their mouths wide open. Then they swallow the animal headfirst.



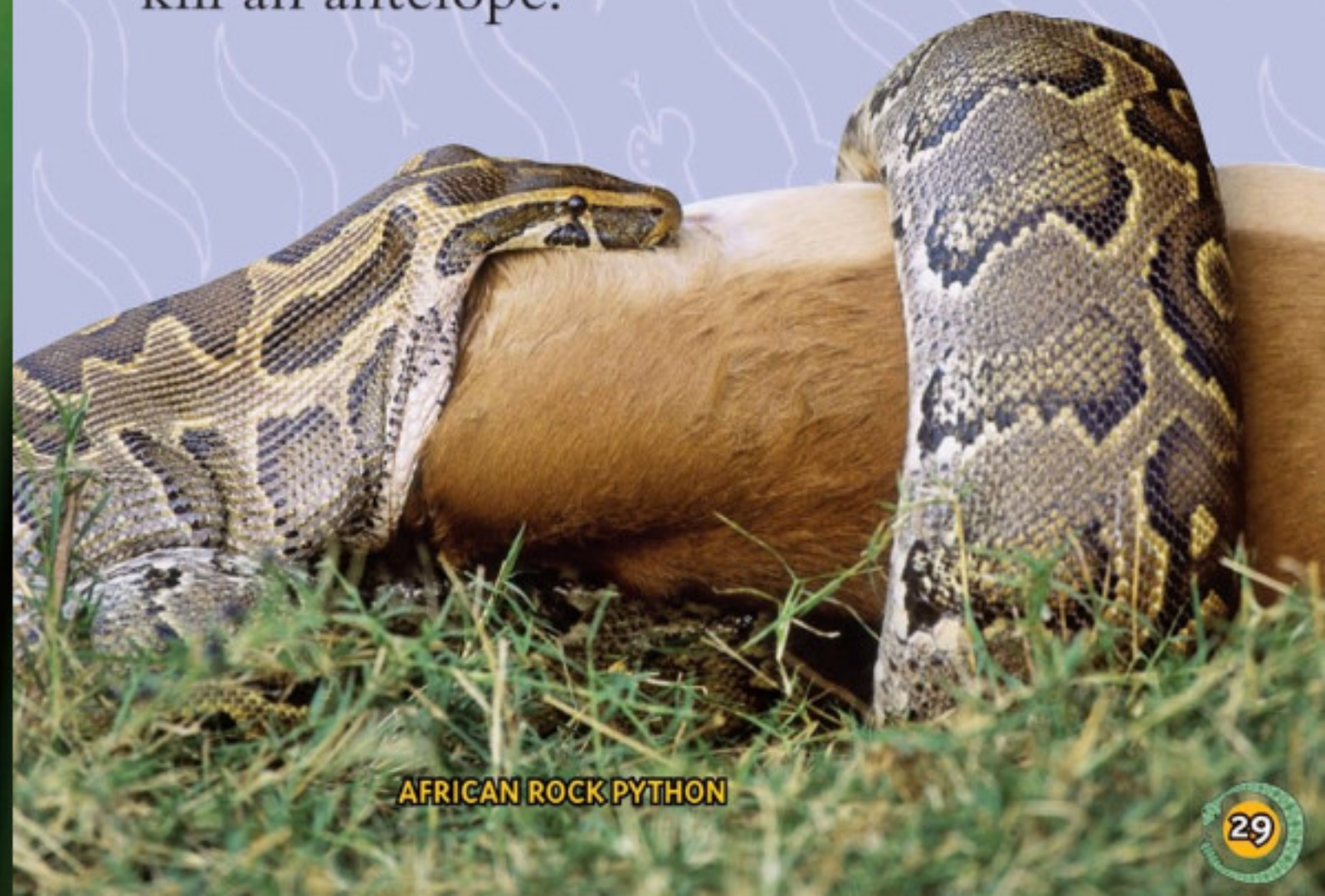
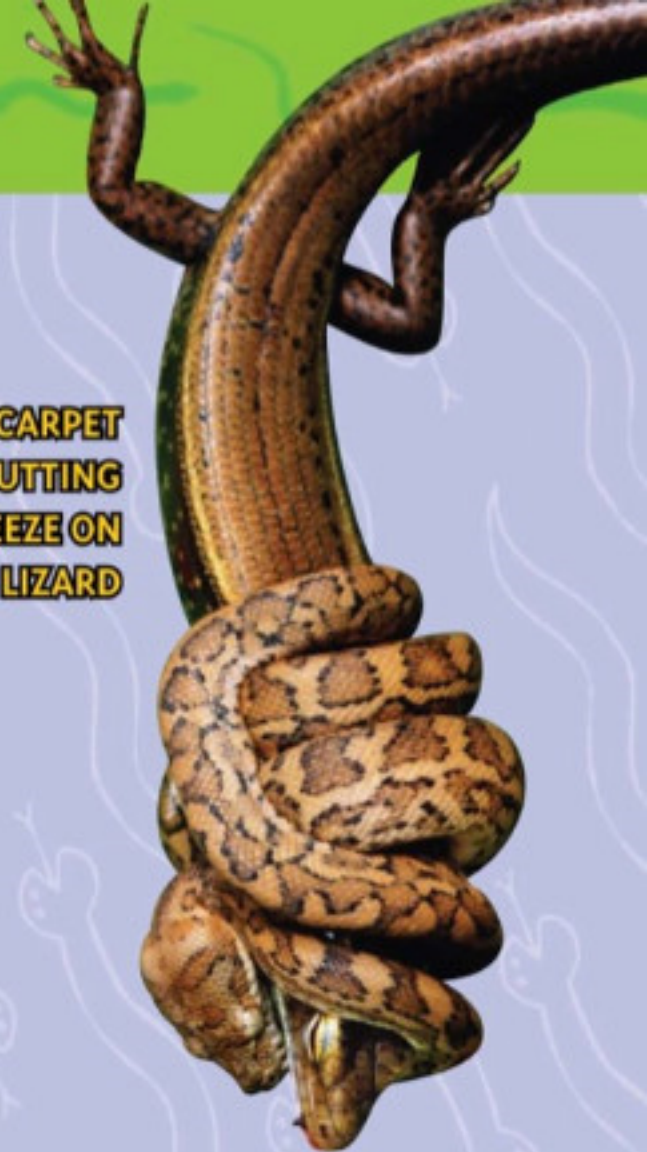
GREEN TREE SNAKE

公众号: Wecancan

Pythons, boas, and rat snakes can eat large animals.

They coil their thick bodies around their prey. Then they squeeze it to death. A large python can easily kill an antelope.

A CARPET SNAKE PUTTING THE SQUEEZE ON A LIZARD



AFRICAN ROCK PYTHON

Snake Pets

公众号：Wecancan

Most snakes are not dangerous to humans. Snakes eat mice, rats, and insects that we do not want in our homes or eating our crops. Snakes are an important part of our world.

Some people like snakes so much that they keep them as pets. Did you know snakes are ticklish? And they are cool and dry and soft. There is nothing else quite like a snake!



BOA CONSTRICTOR

BOA CONSTRICTOR



RETICULATED PYTHON



MOLT

When animals molt, they lose their old skin, fur, or feathers. New skin is underneath.

HIBERNATE

Some animals rest during the winter. They slow their bodies down to save energy.



PREDATORS

Animals that eat other animals.

PREY

Animals that are eaten by other animals.



PUPIL

The dark area at the center of the eye. It lets light into the eye.

SCUTES

Scutes are the wide scales on the belly of a snake.