

# NOCTURNAL ANIMALS

## ZooWorks®



Lucía S., age 8



Ethan H., age 8



Cadence C., age 11



Mike W., age 9



Lilah W., age 13

Bats and owls flying through the night sky  
 Raccoons and possums creeping on the ground.  
 They're not loud  
 You won't hear a sound.  
 While we lay down,  
 Nocturnal animals are out sneaking around.

Kyla G., age 6



Asher L., age 5



Sam K., age 7



Addie H., age 7



Julia W., age 10



Visit us at  
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for  
 even more  
 fun!

## Look for Activity Pages Online!

Visit [rangerrick.org/ZBactivities](http://rangerrick.org/ZBactivities) to find fun nocturnal animal activities to print or download.

Plus at [rangerrick.org](http://rangerrick.org) you'll find:

- Interactive games
- 50 pictures, poems and stories from kids like you
- Animal videos

Would you like to see your work published in **Ranger Rick Zoobooks**?

Here's what to do: Go to [www.rangerrick.org/zooworks](http://www.rangerrick.org/zooworks) for rules and deadlines.



We want to see your original poem, story, or drawing by January 31, 2023 for "Gorillas."

# Night Animals

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a bear?

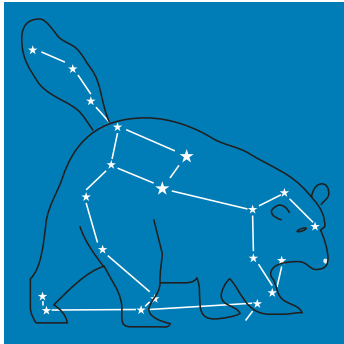
Have you ever looked at a cloud and said, "Wow! That looks like a rabbit"? Long ago, people used to look at the stars and do that exact thing. Each group of stars that forms one of these pictures is called a **constellation**. You probably already know some constellations. For example, the Big Dipper, which is part of the constellation called *Ursa Major*, means "Great Bear."

The people from long ago started making up stories about what they saw in the sky. Some of these stories became popular. Eventually, the tales became **myths**, stories that explain the wonders of the world.

Each of the constellations shown on this page represents a mythical animal. Read the brief outline about each of these myths. Then, try these activities:

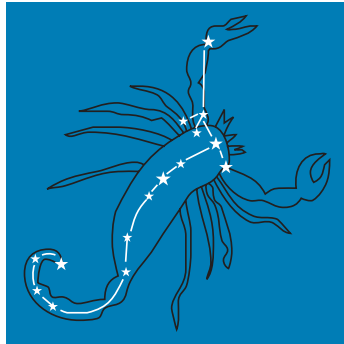
★ Go on a hunt for night animals. See if you can find any of these constellations in the nighttime sky. Scorpius is visible at night in late spring and early summer. The Great Bear (Big Dipper) is always visible in the northern sky. If you go out in the fall, you may be able to see Aries and Taurus. Although Scorpius also passes by each fall, it is overhead during the day so you can't see it.

★ Make up your own constellation and myth. Look at the stars until you begin to see animals and mythical beings. Draw a map of your constellation. Then, write a story about how it came to be and some of the wonderful things it has done to help people.



Ursa Major,  
the Great Bear

According to Greek mythology, Zeus, the King of the Gods, fell in love with a beautiful hunter named Callisto. When Zeus's wife Hera heard about it, she turned Callisto into a bear. Later, Zeus lifted Callisto into the sky by her tail, which is why her tail is longer than that of a real bear.



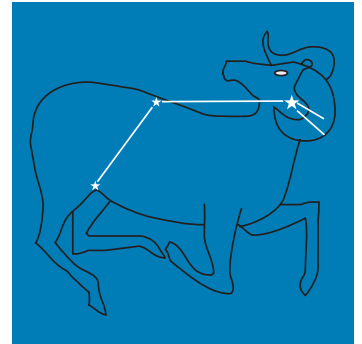
Scorpius,  
the Scorpion

A Greek myth tells us that Orion and Artemis were hunting together. Orion, the giant hunter, bragged to the Goddess of the Wild Animals that he was such a good hunter that he could kill all the animals on Earth. Artemis and Gaea, Goddess of Earth, were upset by what Orion said. They loved the animals and thought the Earth would be a sad place without them. So Gaea sent Scorpius, a giant scorpion, to sting Orion. Both Orion and Scorpius were given places of honor in the sky.



Taurus,  
the Bull

There are many Greek myths about the Bull. In two of these ancient stories, Zeus, the King of the Gods, turned himself into a bull as a way to disguise himself. Zeus honored the form of the bull by giving it a place of importance among the stars as Taurus.



Aries,  
the Ram

Aries was sent to Earth to save Phrixus and Helle from their jealous step-mother. The brother and sister were carried into the sky on the ram's back. Sadly, Helle fell off; but Phrixus was carried to safety. Later, the ram was honored by being placed in the sky.

## KEEPING TRACK

Unscramble the letters to discover which nocturnal animal made each set of tracks. The first word in each example tells how the animal moves. The second word names the animal.

Answers are on page d.



PINPOGH BATRIB \_\_\_\_\_



GUNNIRN REDE \_\_\_\_\_



WINKGAL ANCOCOR \_\_\_\_\_



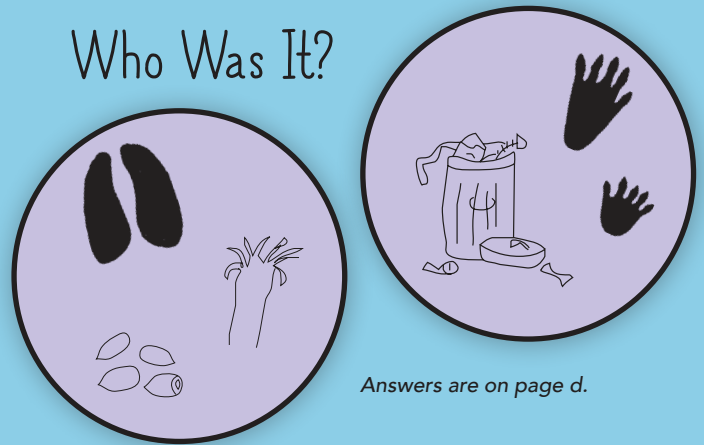
MAPCRNGISE USOME \_\_\_\_\_

# Strangers in the Night

Night animals often leave behind clues of their after-dark visits. When you put these clues together like the parts of a puzzle, you can usually tell what animal has been nearby. As the puzzle parts at right show, you can look at tracks, chewed plants, animal droppings, and other clues left by crepuscular and nocturnal animals.

Use the clues to solve the two puzzles in the circles. Each circle represents clues for a different animal. Can you figure out which animal visited during the night? Later, use what you have learned to find clues about nighttime visits by wildlife in your community. You might also want to make your own puzzles to challenge your friends.

## Who Was It?



Answers are on page d.

**Look for tracks.**

- raccoon
- rabbit
- mouse
- squirrel
- skunk, weasel
- dog, fox, coyote

**Look for chewed plants.**

- rabbit
- beaver
- deer
- deer

**Look for droppings.**

- mouse
- rabbit
- raccoon
- deer

**Look for other clues.**

- Shallow holes in ground. skunk, mouse, squirrel, deer
- Chewed bark. porcupine, deer, rabbit, beaver
- Dumped trash. raccoon, dog, coyote
- Claw marks on trees. opossum, bear, raccoon, squirrel, porcupine













# Bingo in the Night!

Cut out or  
photo copy the  
cards to play  
with a friend.

These cards name or picture nocturnal animals that can be found in this book. Your challenge is to look through this issue of *Ranger Rick Zoobooks*® to find each night animal on your Bingo card. When you find the animal in the book, cross it out on the card. The first person to cover all the squares on his or her card wins. Play with a friend or on your own.

If playing on your own,  
time yourself and score as  
follows for each card:

20 minutes = **good**  
15 minutes = **excellent**  
10 minutes = **expert**

	douroucoul monkey		slow loris	
ermine	 raccoon	oilbird	 hyena	flying gecko
 fox	margay	<b>FREE</b>	slender loris	 badger
night heron	 weasel	genet	 flying squirrel	woodcock
	jackal		hedgehog	

jackal	 hyena	margay	 badger	slender loris
	ermine		flying gecko	
slow loris	 fox	<b>FREE</b>	 weasel	douroucoul monkey
	oilbird		night heron	
woodcock	 raccoon	genet	 flying squirrel	hedgehog

**Answers**  
Strangers in the Night:  
Left: deer; right: raccoon.  
Keeping Track:  
1. hopping rabbit; 2. running deer;  
3. walking raccoon; 4. scampering mouse.