



ALL THAT BITES

WITH OR WITHOUT TEETH



TOOTHED-LEAVED PLANTS

ANNUAL NETTLE

"No touching!" my acute, toothed-looking leaves warn you. And if you don't listen, they won't bite you, rather give you a nasty burn. Their stinging hairs are much more efficient as a weapon. Don't be angry with me — I'm just defending myself."

HACQUETIA

Although our name can sew fear in your heart if you use your imagination just a bit, the tiny teeth on our leaves won't bite anybody. They're there just to look pretty. And ha-ha! We are one of the first plants to bloom in the spring!

PERENNIAL HONESTY

"Watch out!" the heart-shaped leaves of the perennial honesty threaten, chattering their teeth relentlessly. This plant isn't one for harming. It just wants to grow and bloom in peace, hidden in the shadow and luring wandering night butterflies with their beautiful purple blossoms.

GLOBEFLOWER

Don't come any closer! Though I won't bite you, I'll definitely poison you. The jagged teeth at the edge of my leaves aren't for biting, but for retaining water and dew. If I fare well, I can grow to be a meter tall, no problem. I don't open my yellow blossoms just for anything; the weather must be really nice for me to do that!

EURASIAN BANEERRY

A tooth here, a tooth there — that's how the teeth on our leaves chatter in an uneven succession. Don't worry, they're not sharp. Why would they? We don't want to scare you. A long time ago, we used to help treat headaches. Or rather, our roots did...

THISTLE

When you come too close, you'll be bitten as if attacked by a vicious dog. After all, this plant's teeth are as sharp as needles! "Watch out for me!" the thistle calls in every direction. On the other hand, the acute teeth of its body can retain drops of dew or rain pretty well. Thanks to this, beetles always have enough to drink.

DEVIL'S SNARE

We, plants from the nightshade family, don't need any teeth. We're highly toxic and defend ourselves with our poison. On the other hand, our toothed, jagged, acute leaves give a fair warning to anyone as to what they're dealing with.

ROSE

This ancient beauty was born in the Tertiary. Its smart head is protected with hooked prickles which are ready to stab anybody who decides to harm the blossom. The tiny teeth along the edge of the leaves are there to look pretty, rather than defend the plant.

WILD STRAWBERRY

Are you peckish for something delicious? Run to the forest to pick some strawberries! Our toothed leaves won't be in the way, and you can brew tea out of them to boot. After all, they're packed with vitamin C. So yeah, we appreciate having teeth but definitely don't bite.

TULIPS

If there's anyone who can boast toothed blossoms, it's us — tulips. Wouldn't you agree that our colourful heads look like royal crowns? Their teeth may seem sharp, but they're also very fragile to the touch. So think twice about touching them.

→ ART SCISSORS

What's this being cut? Could it be a dragon's maw full of tiny teeth? Sure, and it isn't hard to make at all, thanks to the magic of art scissors! The things any artist could tell you.... Oh, lookie! The little dragon is finished and doesn't miss a single tooth.



← SPORK

Ha, I'm a hiker through and through. Do you need to find me? Look for me anywhere in the wild. I camp out all year, from spring to winter. Just like anyone else, I too get hungry and need to eat. What is the thing in my hand, you ask? A spork, of course! You can use it to eat soup and meat! Basically, a spork is a spoon and fork wrapped in one. Ha, ha, ha.



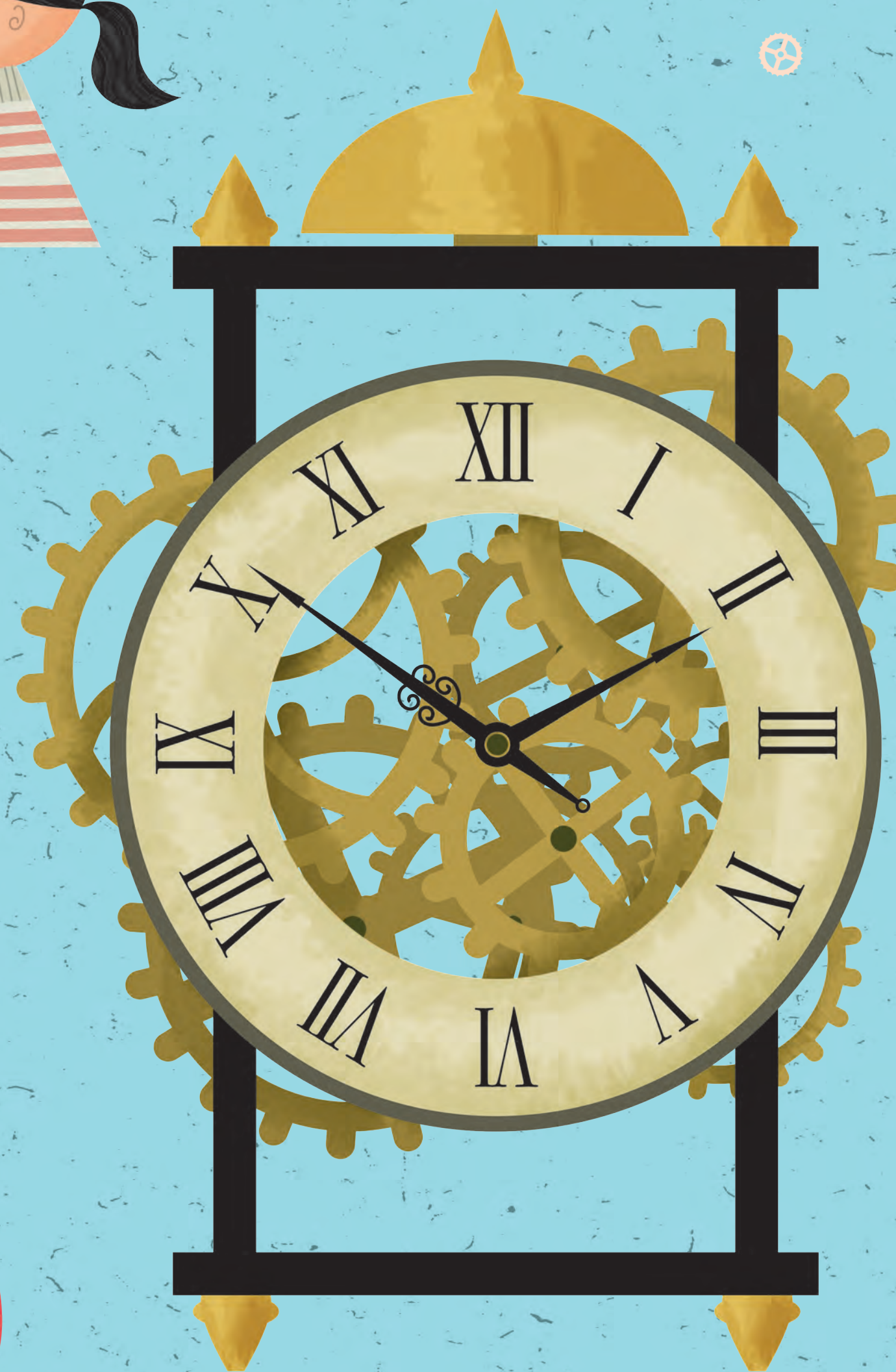
→ PINKING SHEARS

All seamstresses and tailors have us stashed in their kits. We can cut a piece of fabric so that it has nice teeth at the edge and doesn't fray. You don't even have to worry too much about overcasting or pinking if you use us — that's why we're called pinking shears.



← COGWHEELS

Without us, mechanical clocks would never get up and running. We're well-arranged to form a train of gears, waiting for a bob or spring to put us in motion and allow us to move our hands. Tick-tock. Leave us alone, already — we're working, turning, chasing time.



→ TOOTHBRUSH

What should you use to clean your teeth like a champ? A toothbrush, duh! Its bristles are spaced in zig-zag lines and can reach places you'd never expect them to, deep in the tiniest gaps between your teeth. There, they clean, brush, and thwart the plans of tooth decay.

TOOTHED ANIMALS

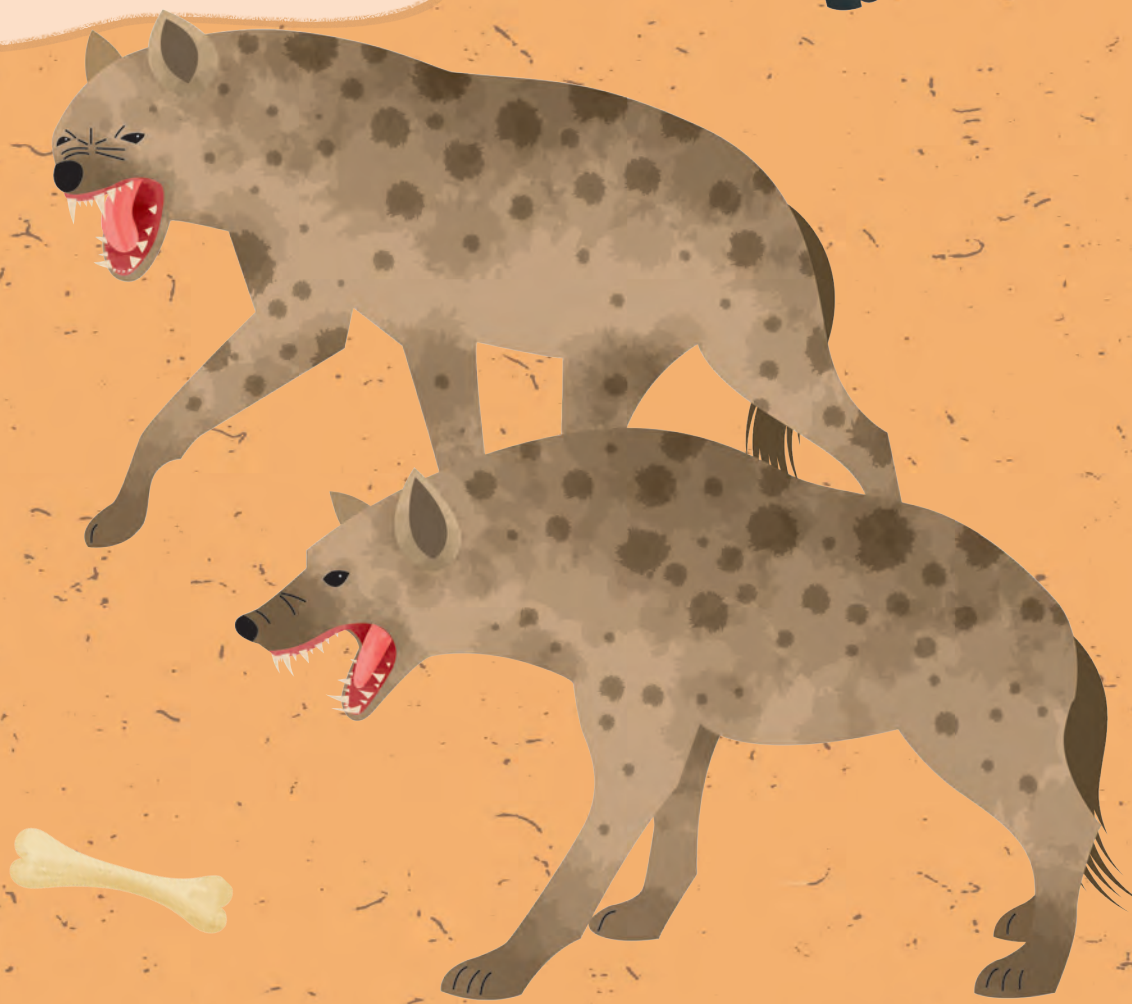


← **CLOUDED LEOPARD**

Thanks to its overgrown canines, the clouded leopard has the biggest teeth of all cats. They're almost as large as those of a certain prehistoric monster, a sabre-toothed tiger. Sadly, people managed to bring the leopard, the only cat that can climb down a tree upside down, to the edge of extinction.

↘ **SPOTTED HYENA**

Hyenas may seem inconspicuous to you but looks can be deceiving. In fact, they're the best hunters around! Make sure never to cross their path when they're enraged and hungry. With their large teeth, they can exert the greatest pressure of all the predators that are running around the world. Thick giraffe bones? No biggie! The hyena grabs it with its teeth and starts grinding it like a machine.



→ **SABRE-TOOTHED DEER**

Oh no, don't try finding horns on our heads. We, the musk deer, fight with something else — our long sharp teeth. We may seem strange, perhaps even ominous, but there's no reason for you to fear us. We're smallish, fragile, and very shy. As soon as we hear a strange sound, we make a dash for safety, teeth or no teeth.



↙ **HORSE**

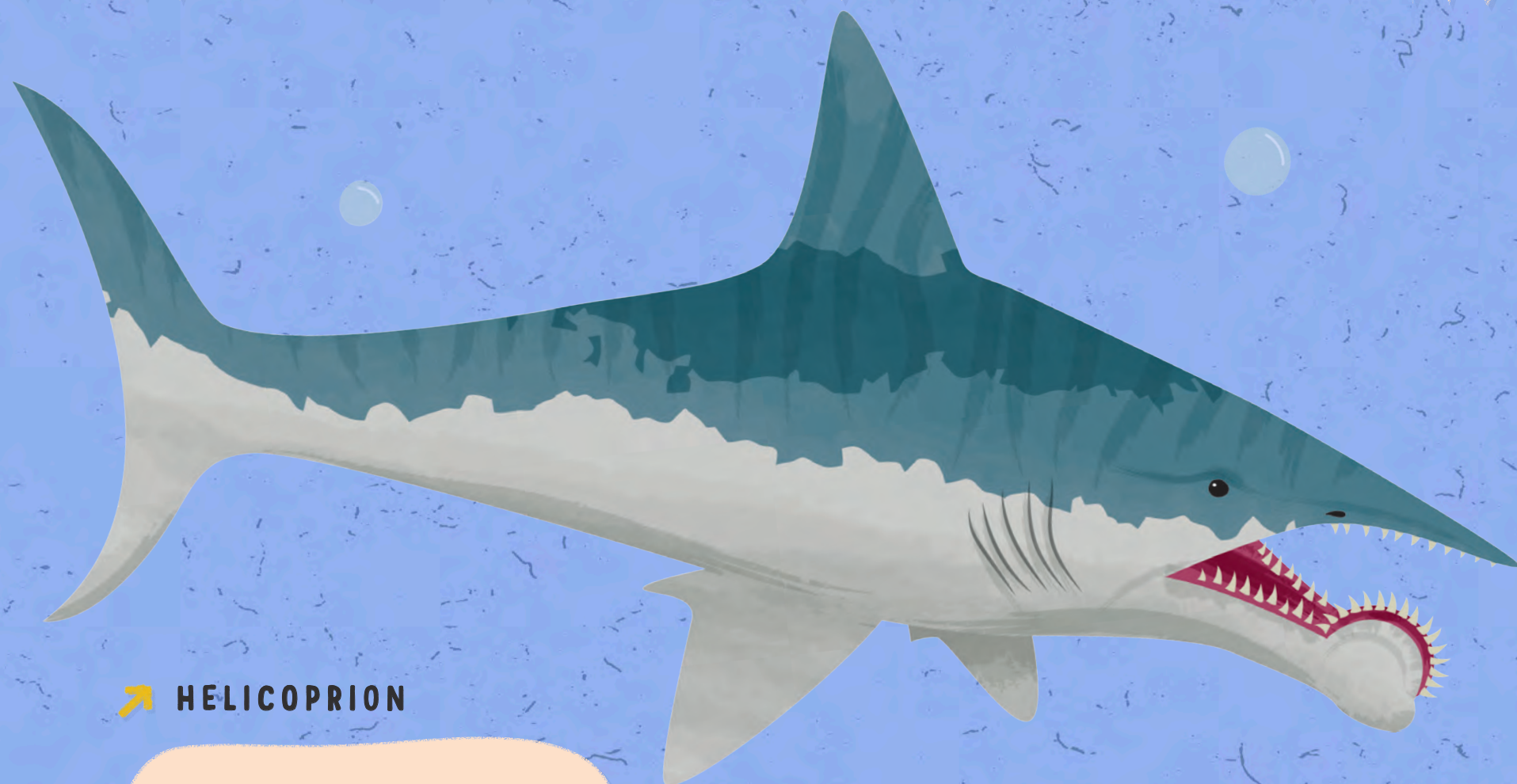
People say that a good horse trader can tell the age of a horse just by looking at its teeth. This is easy to do up until a horse turns eight and the individual teeth stop growing, reaching the appropriate evolutionary stage. After that, they become more and more worn out. Why aren't a horse's teeth pearlwhite? After all, their surface isn't made from enamel, but from cementum.



↗ **BABIRUSA**

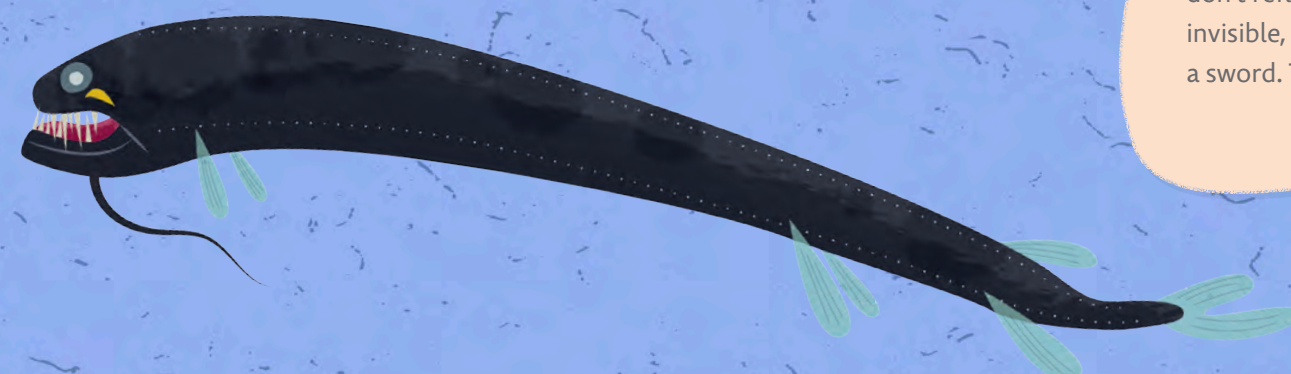
Who would have thought that teeth can grow on your nose? And yet, the tropical babirusas have several — dangerous weapons they love to use when fighting. If they forget to sharpen this ornament of theirs, it will grow through their skull until it becomes curved, sticking out of their head all funny. So, dear gentlemen from the swine family — sharpen and whet and hone!





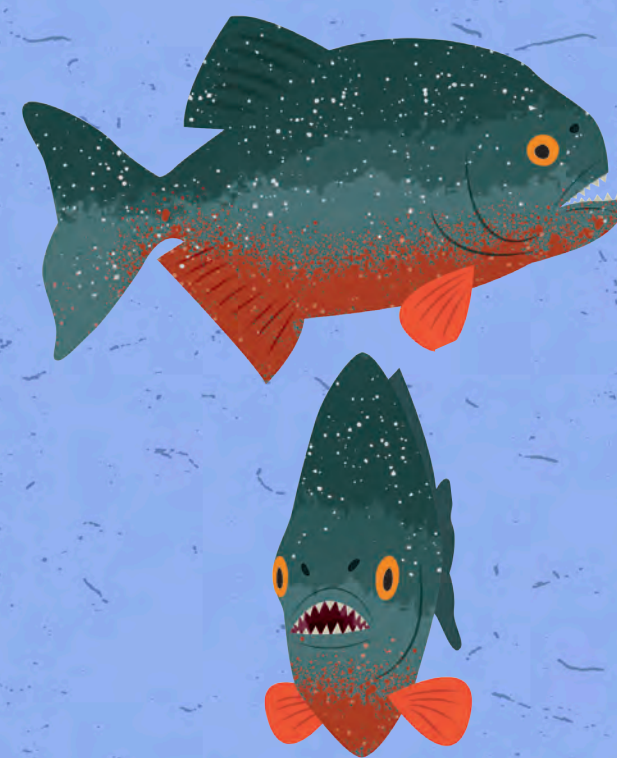
➤ HELICOPRION

Help, a swimming circular saw, heeelp! No, you don't actually have to fear this fish, a relative of the chimaeras. Why? Because you'll never meet it! It used to live in prehistoric times and is no longer around. It wouldn't have you in its sights, anyway, as it mostly hunted cephalopods. Maybe that's why its lower jaw had a cartilaginous spiral with many sharp teeth — to help the animal better shift slick food deeper into its neck.



➤ LEOPARD SAILFIN PLECO

Don't worry, the teeth of this aquarium fish from the Ancistrus genus won't harm anybody. They may be long, thin, and sharp but also incredibly flexible. As soon as the fish puts even a little bit of pressure on them, they bend. That's because they're not there in order to tear things apart. Instead, they work sort of like potato peelers, scraping any food that becomes stuck on rocks, for example.



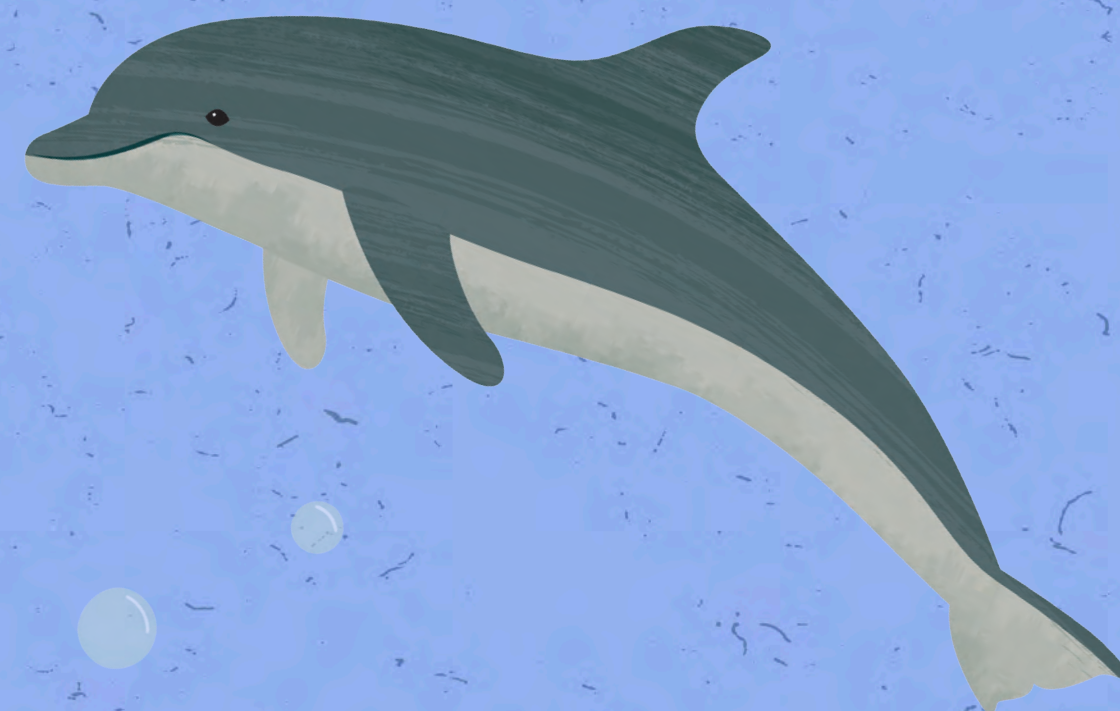
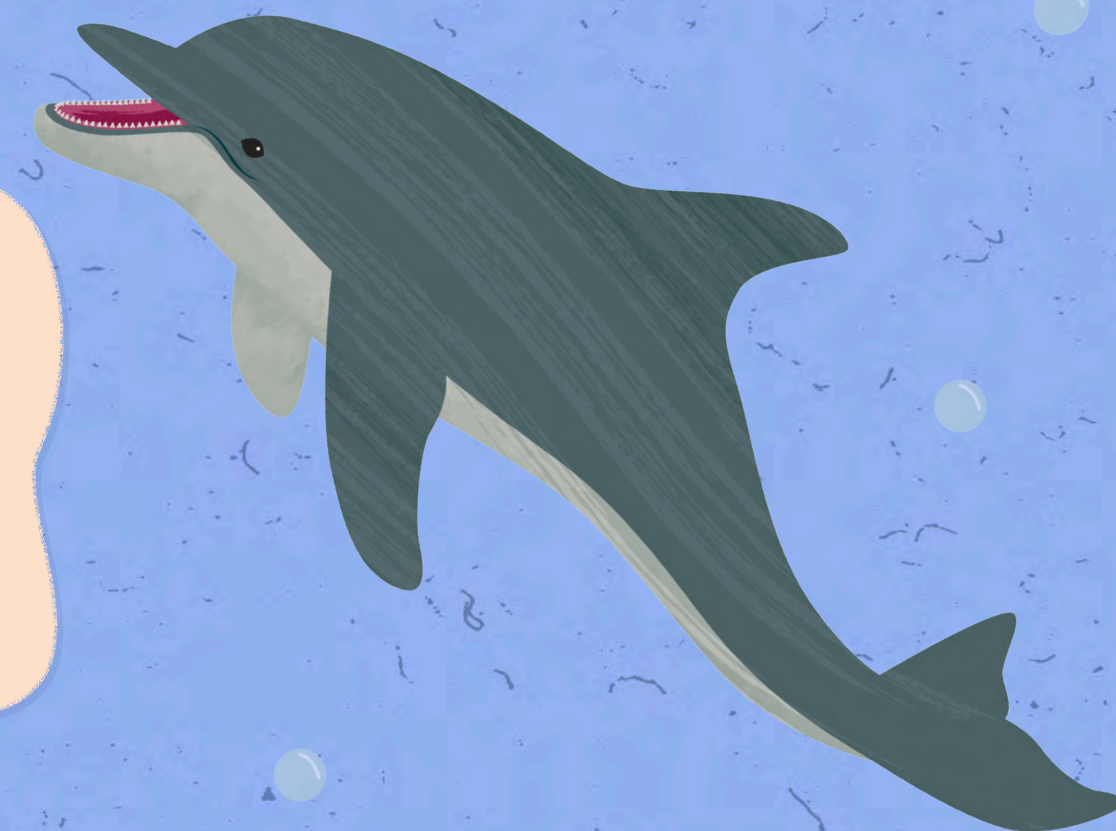
➤ PIRANHA

Click, clack, clickety-clack... The sharp triangular teeth, with serrate edges that make one think of a saw, interlock like the long blades of scissors. This allows piranhas to easily bite out pieces of meat from their prey. If a tooth falls out from time to time, another one replaces it, no problem.



➤ ARISTOSTOMIAS

No, no, no. My teeth aren't made from glass even though it may seem so. And when I open my toothed jaw under water, you won't notice them at all. Ha, that's the advantage of having invisible teeth. Simply put, my teeth let sun rays through and don't reflect light. Not only are they invisible, they're also as sharp as a sword. The mind boggles, right?



➤ DOLPHIN

Say cheese, little dolphin, and show off your teeth. It's not like you have nothing to be proud of. Usually, a dolphin has anywhere between 100–200 teeth. One like the other, all have an identical tip which is curved back. This is called homodont teeth, a type of teeth which are indistinguishable from one another.

PREHISTORIC ANIMALS

← OSTEODONTORNIS

When it spread its wings, it was almost six meters large. The second largest prehistoric bird which lived 20 million years ago, this sea creature had a sharp beak, lined on both sides by equally sharp bony teeth which made sure that captured prey couldn't easily slip away. Apart from flying, it was also an excellent swimmer.

→ DASORNIS EMUNTIUS

They used to spend all day gliding across the oceans, 50 000 000 years ago. When they spread their wings, they had astonishing five meters in size — that's how large this prehistoric relative of our geese and ducks was. Unlike them, it used to have bony teeth on both sides of its beak. Few prehistoric animals could boast such a toothed ornament.

↓ HESPERORNIS

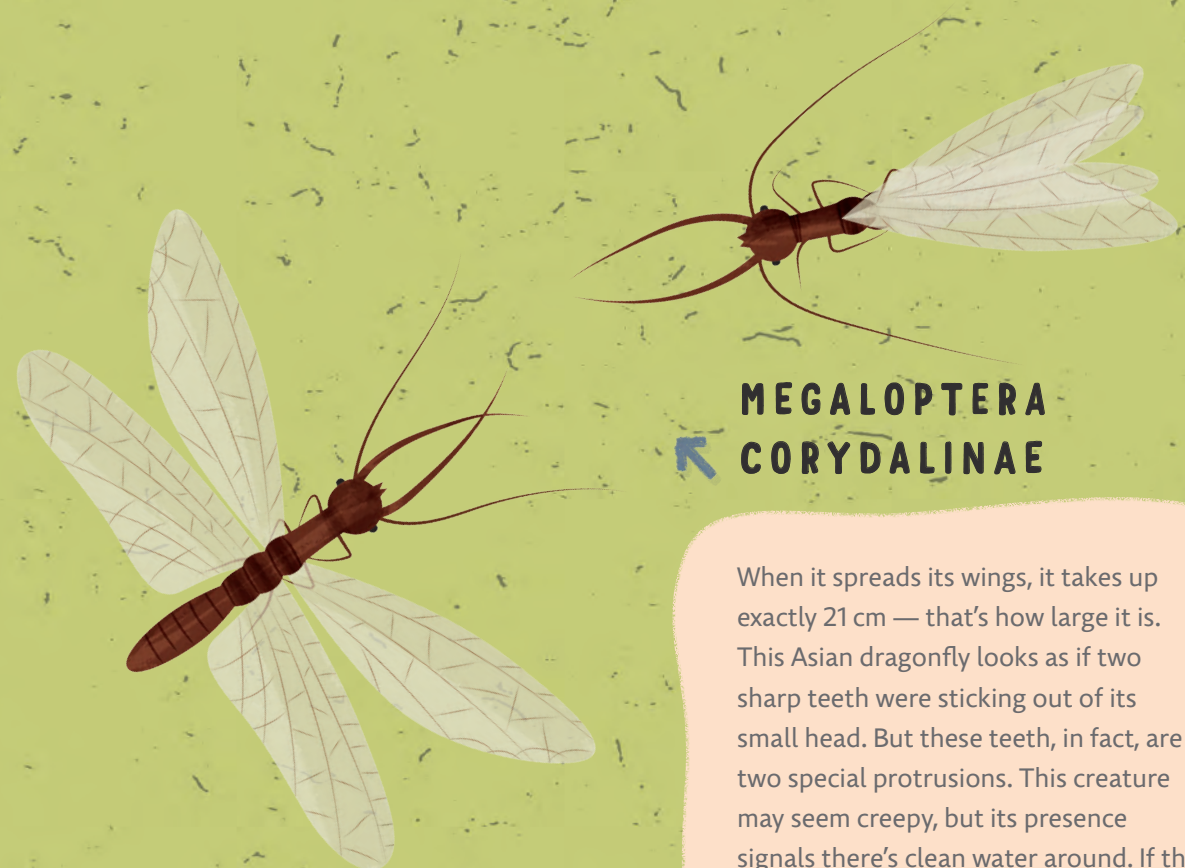
It couldn't fly but was an excellent diver — approximately 80 million years ago, in an epoch called the Late Cretaceous. And when this water bird, one of the oldest of its kind in terms of evolution, dived under water, it had a fish thrashing about in its mouth before you knew it. No matter how hard the fish writhed, the hesperornis' teeth didn't allow it to escape.

↘ TRICERATOPS

"Nyah-nyah, I have 800 teeth! No one can best me!" the prehistoric triceratops brags, plucking one cycad after another. While it bites, it also sharpens its teeth which are softer on one side. In order to meet this toothed herbivorous giant, you'd have to go back in time — full 69 million years.



TOOTHED INSECT



MEGALOPTERA
CORYDALINAE

When it spreads its wings, it takes up exactly 21 cm — that's how large it is. This Asian dragonfly looks as if two sharp teeth were sticking out of its small head. But these teeth, in fact, are two special protrusions. This creature may seem creepy, but its presence signals there's clean water around. If the water becomes polluted even a little bit, the dragonfly moves away.

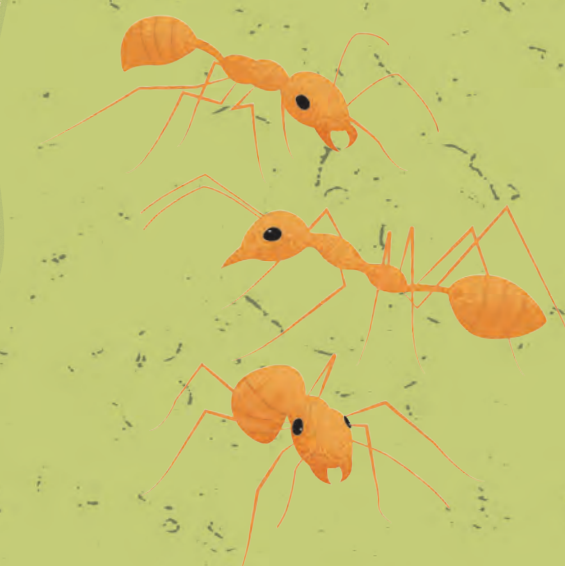
ANTLION
LARVAE

"Ha, an ant is on its way!" an antlion larva laughs, throwing grains of sand while hiding in a pile of it. Oh, great! The ant was actually hit! The larva rejoices and grabs the unfortunate creature with its huge toothed mandibles. It holds on, not letting go, munching on the prey till there's nothing left of it.



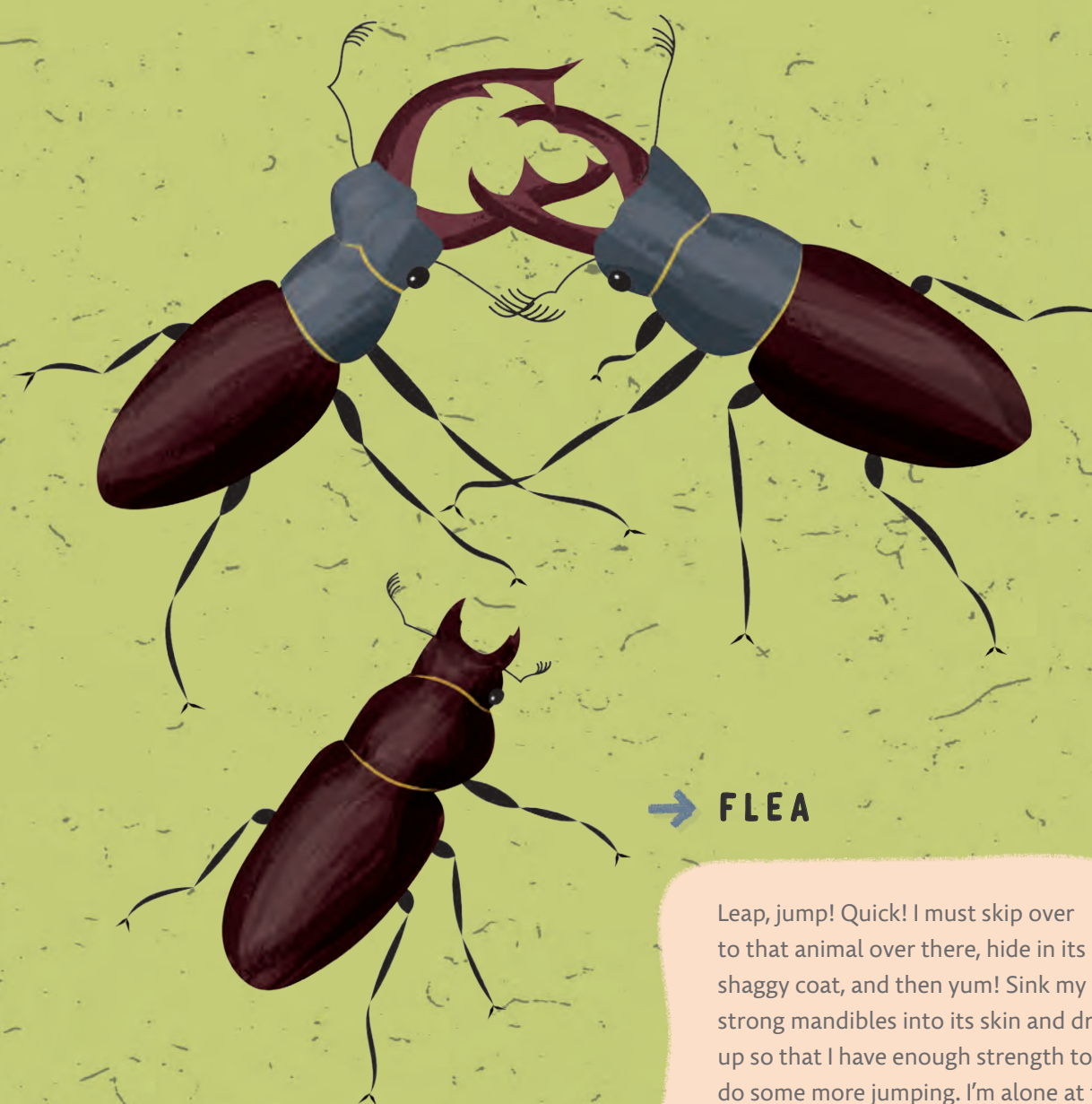
TIGER BEETLE

This tiny green bug with large eyes may seem inconspicuous, but take a look at its mandibles — click, snap! They're awfully toothed, making the tiger beetle an excellent hunter. It uses its strong toothed mandibles to easily beat and overcome its prey, mostly spiders or ants.



FIRE ANTS

Forward march! Left, right, let's all march as one. Whoever stands in our way has no chance against us! And we don't care whether you're small or big! Nothing can escape our toothed mandibles. We bite bite some more, and then we go have some snack.

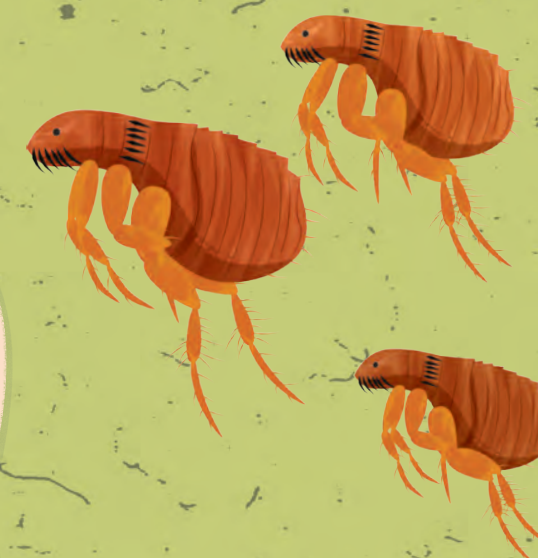


ENOPLOGNATHA
BRYJAI

We are the most unique of all spiders. Are you jel? You should be — we have mandibles, and toothed ones too! Yes, there are special toothy protrusions on our mandibles. Well, you know, we want our females to like us, and so we use these toothed mandibles to woo our beloved.

FLEA

Leap, jump! Quick! I must skip over to that animal over there, hide in its shaggy coat, and then yum! Sink my strong mandibles into its skin and drink up so that I have enough strength to do some more jumping. I'm alone at the moment but before the animal realizes what's going on, there'll be a million of us. That's how fast fleas multiply. Bite, bite, bite!



ODONTOMACHUS
BAURI

Click! That's how fast our mandibles can snap shut. Not for nothing are they the quickest ones in the world. Cheetahs themselves have nothing on us with our 60 m/s! The strong muscles on our little head allow us to stretch the mandibles out, close them shut, and wait for prey to arrive. All that's left to do is release them and click them shut. Here's to a good lunch!



INCHMEN

Ha, ha, ha! Tremble before us for we are warriors through and through! Armed with terrible mandibles, we throw ourselves into battle without a second thought. Not buying it, you say? Take a look for yourself — if the fancy strikes, we can bite right through your skin. That's how strong our mandibles are.






I bite, you bite, everyone bites! Who?

The people, animals, plants, and many other things introduced in this book—a guide to biting and teeth.

No one's surprised to learn that biting is a specialty of sharks or baboons. But would you believe that even fragile flowers or robust trees can have some real gnashers? And what about... You know what? Learn for yourself who bites like mad and who just bares their teeth for show. This entertaining book is ready to devour you, full of teeth and anything toothy that it is. Pluck up your courage and venture into this sharp world. You'll see many beautiful pictures along the way and may even learn how important teeth are in your life... At least your mum won't have to chase you around just to make sure you brush them.



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