

Štěpánka Sekaninová



Zuzana Dreadka Kruťá

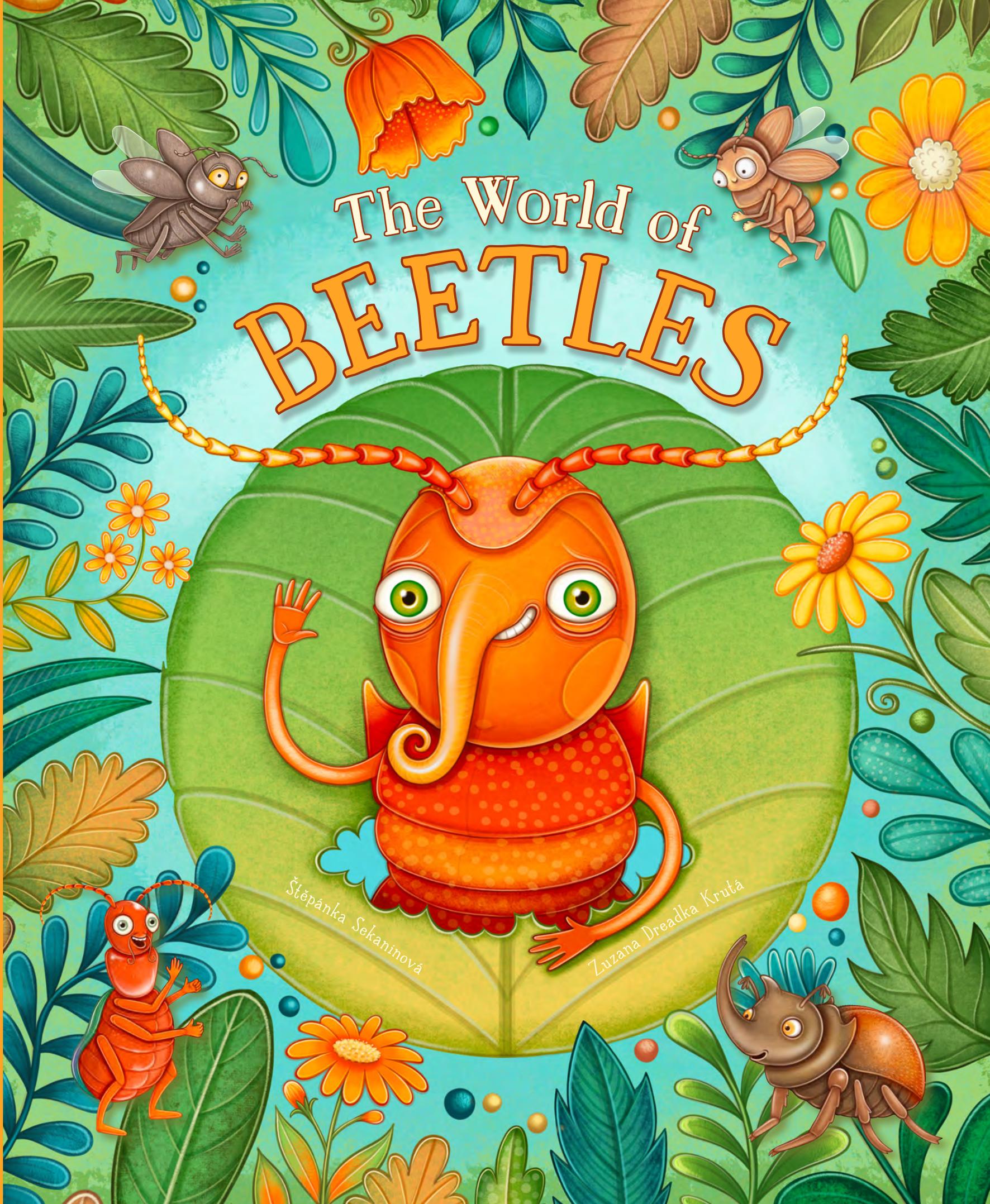
The World of Beetles



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Sacred Dung Beetle

“Come on, dear, push harder!” Mr. and Mrs. Dung Beetle roll their perfectly shaped ball across the sand. Step by step, they move their precious treasure along, never giving up. But wait ... what is in that ball anyway? Try not to wrinkle your nose. Yes, it is poop! Dung beetles love it. They roll it away, bury it underground, and hide it from others. Then the female lays her eggs nearby so her little ones will have plenty to eat when they hatch.

Come look for us! We live in North Africa, Southern Europe, and Western Asia.



I'm the best dancer of all!



The Beetle's Dance

Sometimes dung beetles climb up on top of their ball and spin in circles. Why? As the ball cools in the evening air, the beetle twirls to get its bearings. The spinning helps it figure out which way to roll, a clever little compass dance beneath the stars.

Just a little further and we are there!



One last polish and it is perfect!

Phew, what a smell!

Elephant Beetle

Through the rainforest grass strides an elephant, steady and grand, and three proud horns rise from its head. A creature to fear ... or so it seems. But wait, this "elephant" is a beetle! It may be as long as a third of a human palm, a true giant in the beetle kingdom, yet in our world it is still only a tiny creature. Those huge horns might look scary, but don't worry, this gentle giant is a vegetarian! When it comes to food, these beetles have a bit of a sweet tooth. Delicious sap is their favorite. And that thick coat of black hair? It's there for a reason: to keep them warm when the temperature drops. Even though they live in the tropics, they can handle a little chill with no trouble at all.

Oh no, why didn't my horns grow this big? I'll never find a mate like this!

Ha! My horns are bigger. This log is mine!

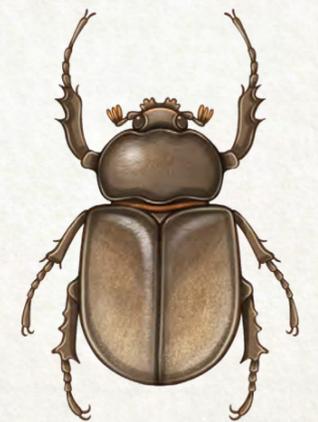
Growing Up Takes Time

Female beetles lay their eggs inside fallen trees. After two or three weeks, larvae hatch and start eating wood, leaves, and plant matter. They spend three years like this, until they form a cocoon and finally emerge as adult beetles.

male



female



We love the rainforests of southern Mexico, Central America, and South America!

Poisonous Oil Beetle

Phew, that's heavy! The shiny purple oil beetle trudges along, searching for a place to lay her eggs. She is carrying thousands of them. She lays them in the soil and soon tiny larvae hatch, each equipped with little claws. The moment they crawl out, they climb up flower stems and wait. When a solitary bee lands nearby, the larvae grab on and let her carry them straight to her nest. Once inside, they feed on the bee's eggs and eat through all her stored food. They stay there warm, safe, and hidden for the entire winter. The poor bee never wanted guests like these. When spring sunlight returns, the larvae finish growing, transform into adults, and finally leave their host's home behind.

I'm holding on tight and not letting go!

Defending Themselves

When oil beetles feel threatened, they release a drop of poisonous yellow liquid as protection. Because of this, most hungry animals, even those that normally eat insects, stay far away.



Here's a tip: better find a bee soon, okay?

Bzzzz!

I'm looking for my bee.

Just a few more eggs, and I'm done!

adult

larva

We live across Europe and in central and eastern Asia.



Burying Beetle

On the ground lies a dead mouse. Flies gather first, but burying beetles hurry in and quickly wrestle the prize away. The winning pair wastes no time. They dig until the mouse is hidden underground, strip off its fur, and shape the body into a neat food ball. Beside it, they prepare a small chamber where the female lays her eggs. Soon, the larvae hatch, grow stronger, and move into the ball to feed until they are ready to pupate.

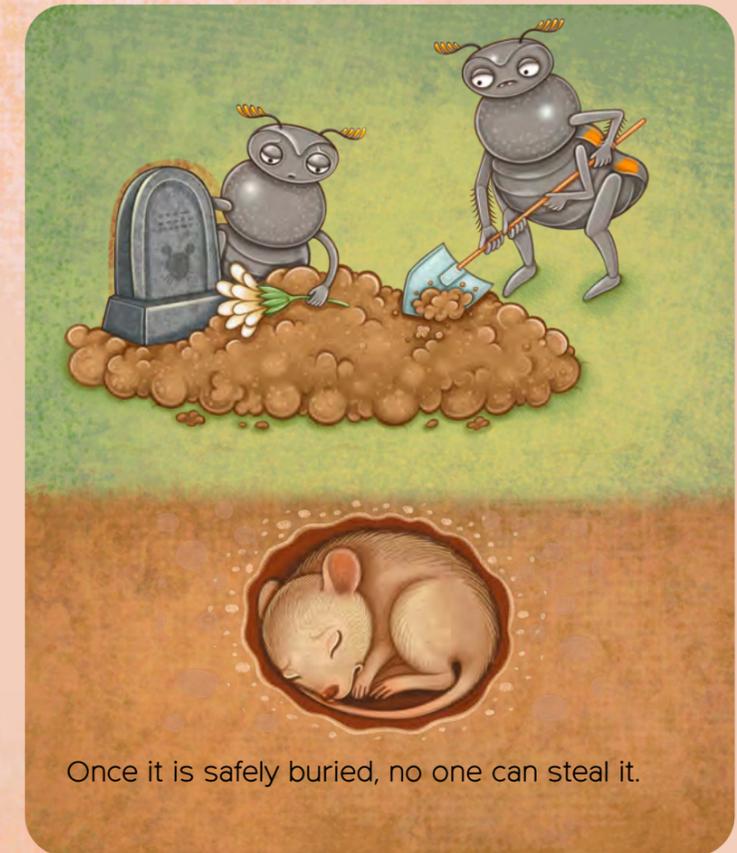
Uh-oh, a goner ...
time for a burial!



Burying beetles can smell a dead animal from miles away, guided by their sensitive antennae.

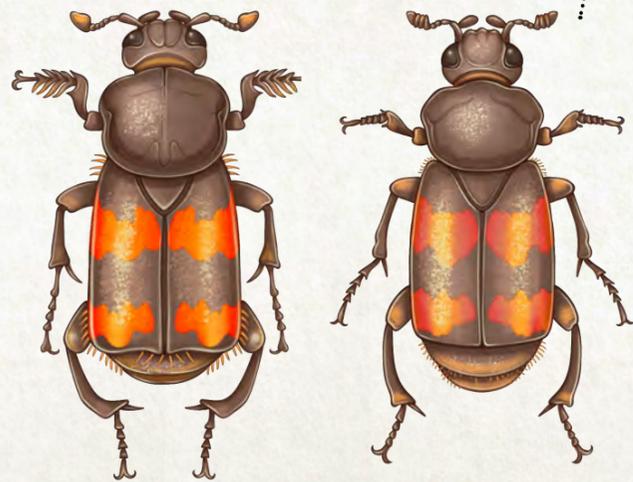


At first, they must fight for their meal.



Once it is safely buried, no one can steal it.

We live in Asia, Europe, and
all across the Americas.



male

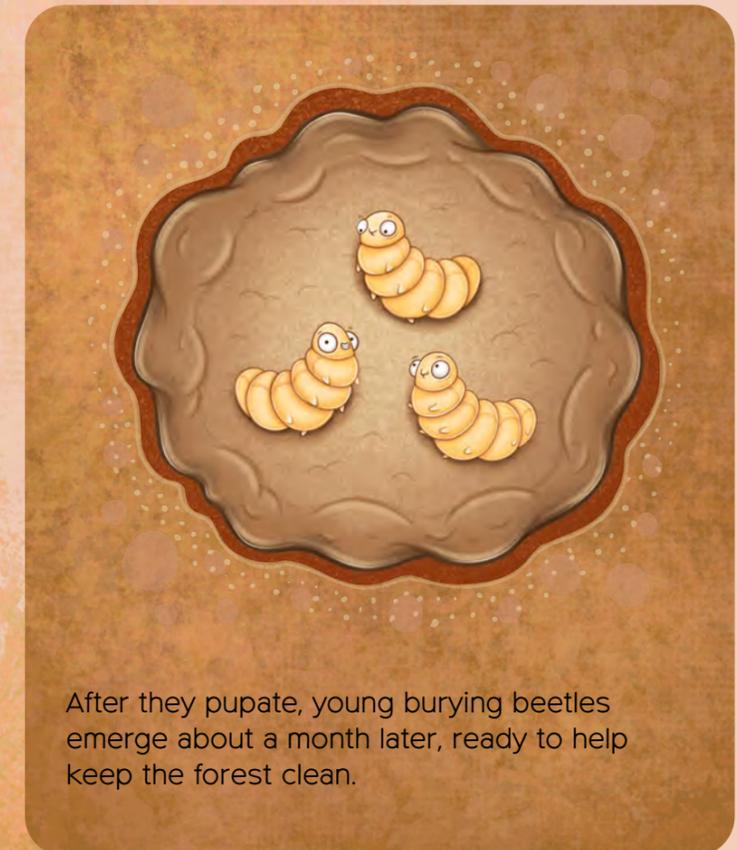
female



Below the soil lies the food ball and the nesting chamber, with the beetle parents and their eggs.



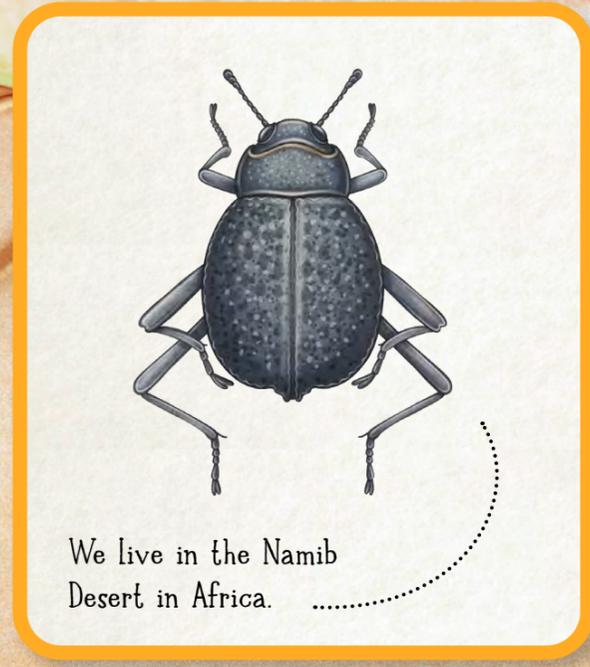
"Hello, hello!" calls the mother, summoning her freshly hatched larvae to the nutrient-rich mouse ball.



After they pupate, young burying beetles emerge about a month later, ready to help keep the forest clean.

Fog-basking Beetle

Dawn breaks. The first sunlight rises above the sandy dune. From the Atlantic Ocean comes a cool, moist breeze that fills the world with fog, and that is the beetles' cue. They hurry to the top of the dune, lower their heads, and lift their backs toward the sky. No, they are not doing morning yoga. They are catching water from the fog. Tiny bumps on their wing covers help droplets form on the cool surface. One drop, then another, then a bigger one, until the water gathers and begins to slide down. When the droplet is heavy enough, it rolls along the beetle's back and straight into its mouth. If an intruder appears, the beetle reacts instantly and scurries away. Then it waits for another misty morning and the ocean wind that cools the burning sands of the Namib Desert.



Ommm...

Headstand?
Best pose!

Hey, stop! I really don't like this!

Ouch, a rock was pressing on my head today!

Sprint for Life
The fog beetle's long legs help it run incredibly fast across the dunes.



No one messes with a bombardier.



This beetle can even face down an army of hungry ants.

An army of ants?
No problem!



With its backside, it shoots both forward and backward.

Bombardier Beetle

Ready, aim, fire! The world can be dangerous, so a beetle must stay prepared. And the bombardier beetle sure is! When a hungry bird dives in, this tiny hero does not panic. It lifts its back end, opens two small valves, and BOOM! A burst of hot, stinging chemicals shoots out with a loud pop! How hot? About 212°F, that's boiling! No bird wants to get caught in that, so it darts away, leaving our beetle safe and sound. Standing tall on its back legs, the beetle aims again and pop, another blast.



What's it like... to fly?

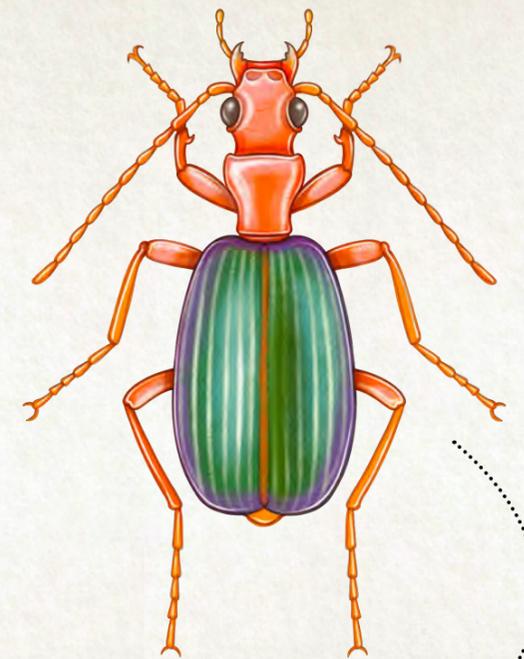
The bombardier beetle can't fly, but it's a champion crawler and runner.



If a predator ever manages to gulp them down, the beetles release their boiling spray inside its stomach. The enemy instantly spits them out, and our brave beetles hop away completely unharmed.



I survived a frog!
I've earned myself a proper snack.



Where to find us? Almost everywhere except Antarctica.

We Also Fly
 Besides being great swimmers, diving beetles are also excellent fliers. They cheerfully take off from one pond to another, searching for the next watery home, as long as it's full of tasty food.

Diving Beetle

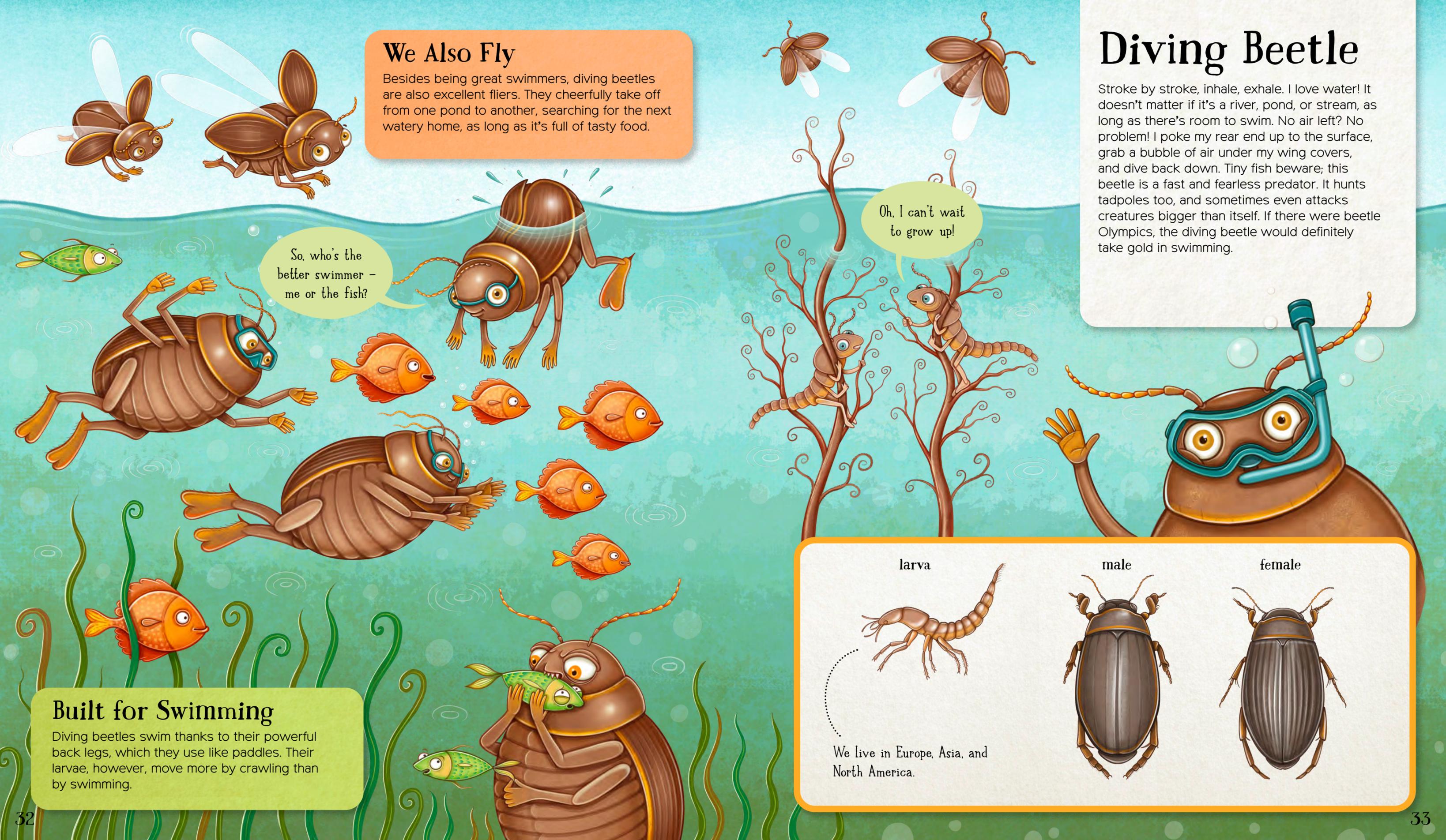
Stroke by stroke, inhale, exhale. I love water! It doesn't matter if it's a river, pond, or stream, as long as there's room to swim. No air left? No problem! I poke my rear end up to the surface, grab a bubble of air under my wing covers, and dive back down. Tiny fish beware; this beetle is a fast and fearless predator. It hunts tadpoles too, and sometimes even attacks creatures bigger than itself. If there were beetle Olympics, the diving beetle would definitely take gold in swimming.

So, who's the better swimmer - me or the fish?

Oh, I can't wait to grow up!

Built for Swimming
 Diving beetles swim thanks to their powerful back legs, which they use like paddles. Their larvae, however, move more by crawling than by swimming.

<p>larva</p>  <p>We live in Europe, Asia, and North America.</p>	<p>male</p> 	<p>female</p> 
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What could be interesting about beetles? A beetle is a beetle, you might be thinking. Some people like them, some don't. But believe me, no two beetles are the same. All beetles have hard shells in common, but that's about it. Beetles also differ in how they live. Some glow at night. Some roll balls of dung, whose smell they like. Just imagine! The legs of others are a bit like frogs' legs. Then there are beetles that adore smoke and fire. Seriously, the world of beetles is more than colorful. If you don't believe this, read this book, which is filled with bigger beetles, little beetles, and tiny beetles. When you reach the end, you'll agree with us, you'll see.

Welcome to the world of beetles!



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