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Science

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Life Science

# Animal Helpers

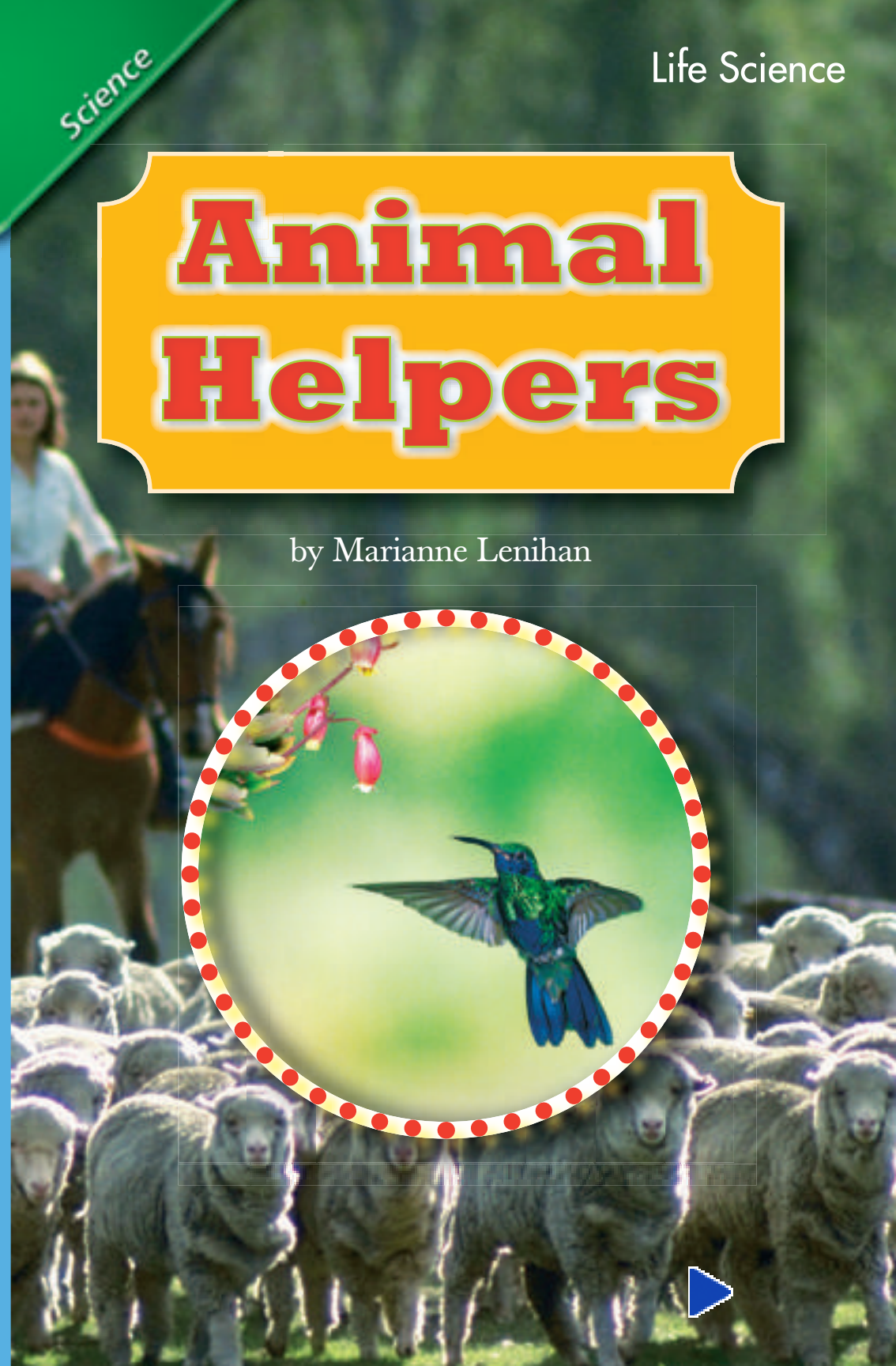
by Marianne Lenihan

Genre	Comprehension Skills and Strategy	Text Features
Narrative nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cause and Effect</li><li>• Fact and Opinion</li><li>• Monitor and Fix Up</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Captions</li><li>• Headings</li><li>• Labels</li><li>• Glossary</li></ul>

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# Animal Helpers

by Marianne Lenihan



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Animals and people have shared Earth for thousands of years. Some animals are wild. You have probably seen wild animals, such as birds, in your backyard. Other animals, such as cows, are **domesticated**. Domesticated animals were once wild too. People slowly trained wild animals to live with them. The animals became domesticated. These animals are raised by people for food or other materials.

Wild animals and domesticated animals can help people. Some animals supply people with food, such as milk or honey, while other animals supply useful materials, such as wool.



**What animals did these items come from?**

**Milk**



**Honey**

**Yarn**



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## Cows

If you drank a glass of milk today, it probably came from a cow. Female cattle, or cows, can produce milk. The milk from the cows is then bottled and sent to the grocery store for you to buy. People **consume**, or eat, milk and milk products every day.



Some milk is not bottled right away. It is used to make other products that have milk in them. The products that people make from milk are called **dairy** foods. Some dairy foods that you may consume include butter, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream.



Which dairy food is your favorite?

**Yogurt**

**Cheese**



**Milk**





## Sheep

Sheep are domesticated animals that can help people by supplying wool. Sheep grow a thick coat that keeps them warm in the winter. When spring comes, their wool coats become too warm for them and they need a summer haircut!

Sheep owners shear their sheep. This means that they clip off all the sheep's thick winter wool. Shearing does not harm the sheep—it helps them stay cool. Then the sheep owners gather the wool into bags.



This farmer is shearing a sheep.

The sheep's wool will be made into yarn.



The yarn will be made into clothing and blankets.







## Bats

Have you ever seen a bat? If you have, you probably saw it flying in the late evening. That's the time when bats wake up and start looking for food.

Bats cannot see very well, so they use a special sense to figure out what's ahead of them as they fly. This sense, called **echolocation**, helps bats find their food. How does it work? As a bat flies, it makes high-pitched sounds. These sounds bounce off objects and come back to the bat. That is how the bat is able to tell exactly where it is and where its next tasty **prey** can be found!



Bats help people because of their great hunting skills. In a single night, a very **shrewd** bat can catch thousands of insects! Bats help people by eating insects, such as mosquitoes, that may carry diseases.



Some types of bats live in large cave colonies.







## Honeybees

Many people are afraid of bees because they are insects that can sting, but bees can help people in many ways.

If you have ever tasted honey, you already know about one way in which bees help people. Sweet syrupy honey is made by honeybees. Honeybees also make beeswax.

Beekeepers raise honeybees and sell honey and beeswax. Beekeepers have to be very careful when they are working with the bees. They wear special clothing and a wire net over their faces to protect them from stings.



Honeybees live on frames in specially built hives. They make honeycombs on the frames.



A beekeeper removes some frames from the hive. The beekeeper does not hurt the honeybees.



A machine separates the beeswax from the honey. The beekeeper can sell the honey. Candlemakers can make candles from the beeswax.

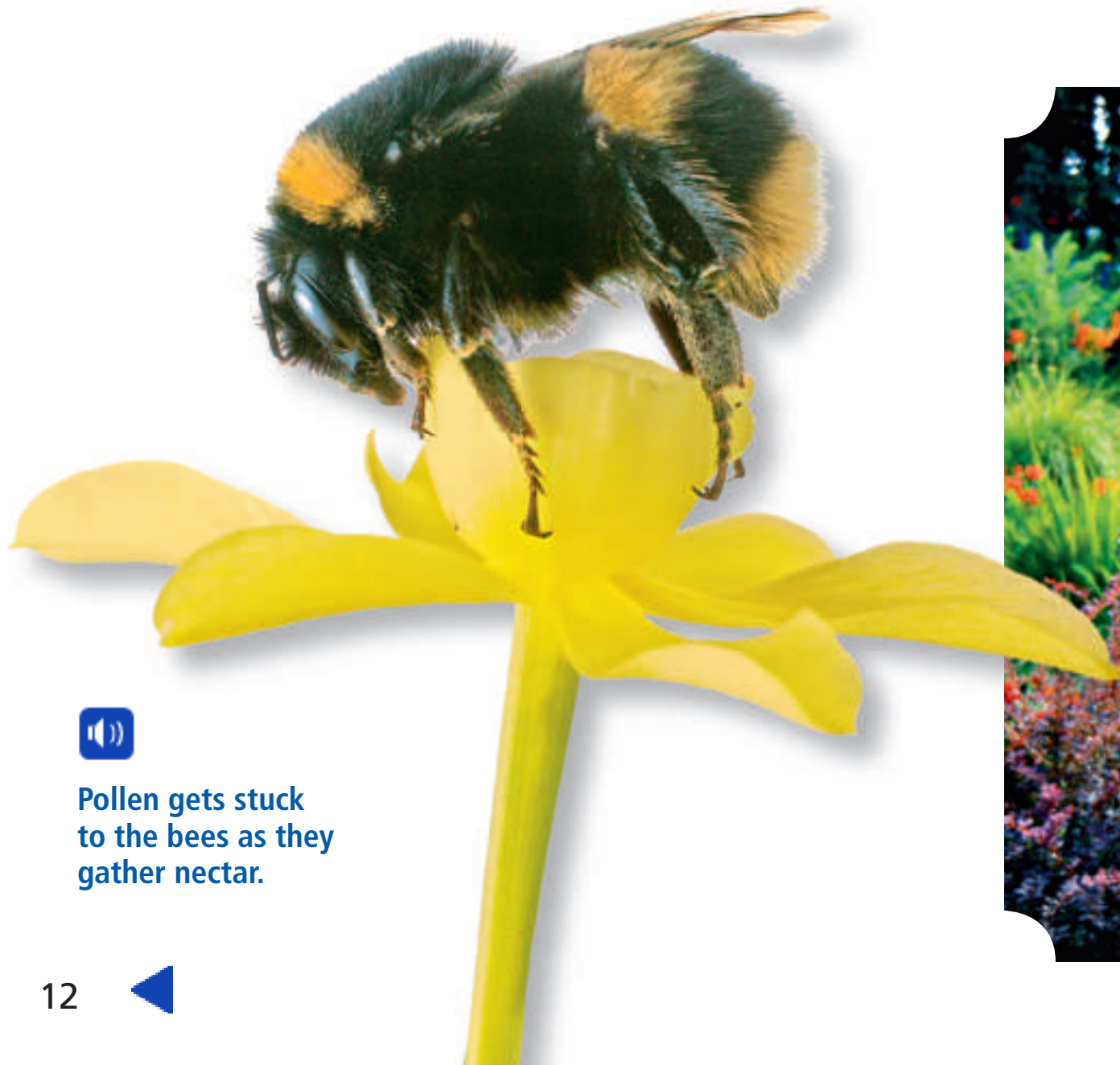




Honeybees and other insects also help by spreading pollen. Bees fly from flower to flower, gathering nectar. Nectar is the sweet liquid that is found in many flowers, and bees use it to make honey.



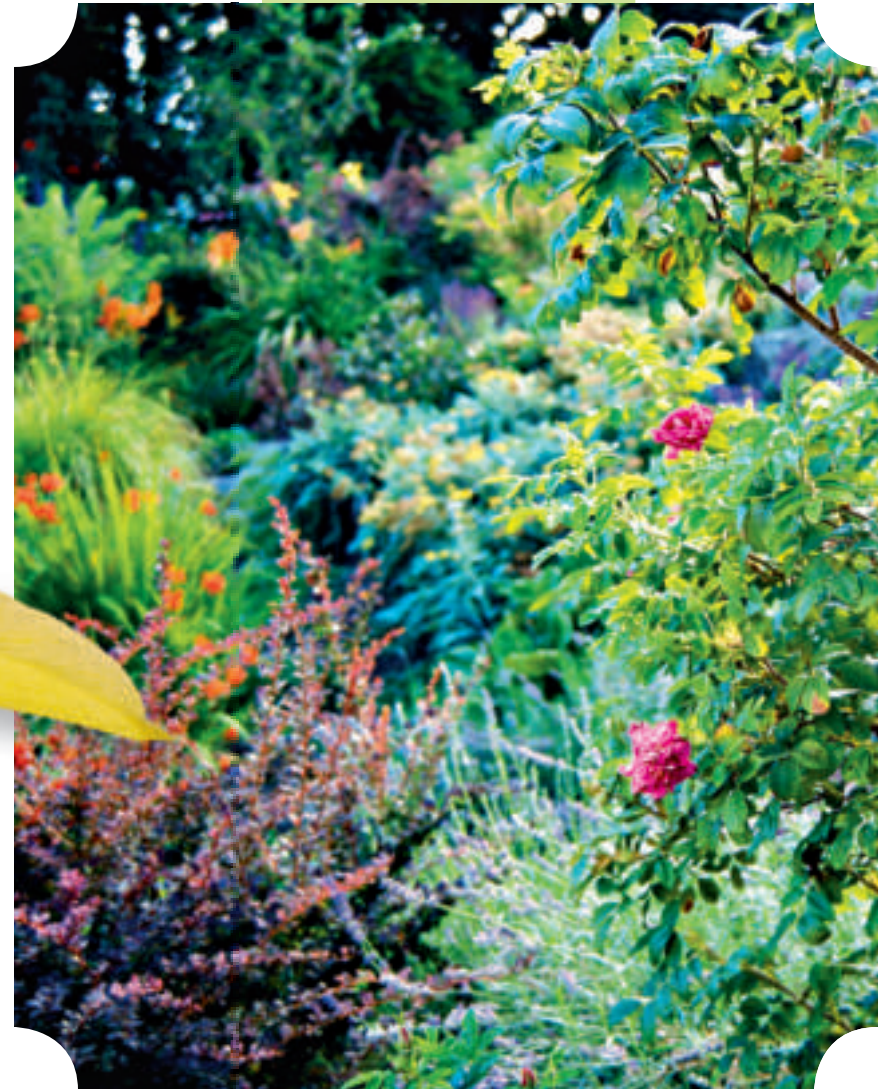
Pollen looks like yellow chalk dust. It sticks to the bees' bodies. When a bee lands on a new flower, some of the pollen falls off. Spreading pollen helps make new plants. Without bees, we would have fewer flowers!



Pollen gets stuck to the bees as they gather nectar.



### Wildflowers







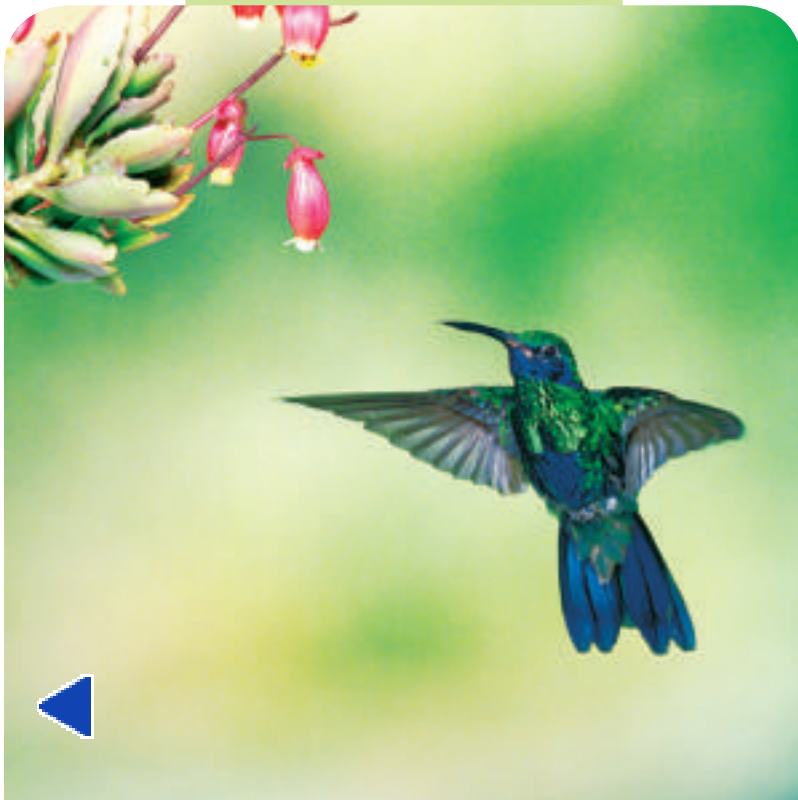
## Birds

Many people like to have birds nearby. Some people feed birds, or they have birdbaths in their yards so that the birds can have water to drink. Other people work very hard to keep birds that are becoming extinct alive and safe.

One reason for this is that, just like bees, birds can carry pollen from one flower to another. Other birds spread seeds from berries or fruit that they eat. New trees and flowers can grow because birds spread pollen and seeds.



### Hummingbird



Birds can help people in other ways too. Like bats, owls help people by hunting. They catch **rodents**, such as mice and rats. Rodents can carry diseases, and owls help to keep these diseases from becoming a danger.



### Owl



**Barn cat**



## **Barn Cats**

Do you have a pet cat at home? Barn cats are different from house cats because they live outdoors on farms. Barn cats are not usually as tame as house cats. Barn cats are kept by farmers because they are excellent hunters.

Barn cats help farmers by eating rodents. That way, rodents do not eat the farmer's stored crops. Barn cats also keep diseases carried by rodents away from the other farm animals.



Animals can help people in many different ways. Some animals help by producing food or other useful materials. Some animals keep pests away or help new plants to grow. Without these animals, people's lives would be very different. Next time you are outside, keep your eyes open and look for animal helpers!







## Now Try This

### Animals That Help in My Neighborhood

You have read about many different animal helpers in this book. Now you'll have a chance to research the animals that help in your environment. Follow these steps.



### Here's How to Do It!

1. Spend some time outdoors in your neighborhood.
2. Look for different animals. Take a notebook with you to make notes about the animals you see.
3. Learn more about these animals from books or by using the Internet. Which of these animals are animal helpers?
4. Make a poster to show what you have discovered. Use words and pictures to explain your ideas.
5. Display your poster in a place where others can learn from it.

### How Can Horses Help?





# Glossary

**consume** *v.* to eat or drink.

**dairy** *adj.* made with milk.

**domesticated** *adj.* changed from wild to tame by people.

**echolocation** *n.* the use of sound to sense location.

**prey** *n.* an animal that is hunted or eaten by another animal.

**rodents** *n.* small mammals with large front teeth for gnawing, or chewing.

**shrewd** *adj.* smart, clever.



## Think and Share

Read Together

1. What animals can cause disease? What effect can bats, owls, and cats have on these animals?
2. Was there anything in this book that you found hard to understand? Tell about it. What did you do to help yourself figure it out?
3. Make a chart like the one below. In one column, list all the domesticated animals that you can think of. In the other, list wild animals.

Domesticated	Wild

4. Of all the animal helpers named in this book, which do you think is the most important? Why?

