

WILD BABIES



by
Lucy Groth-McGuire

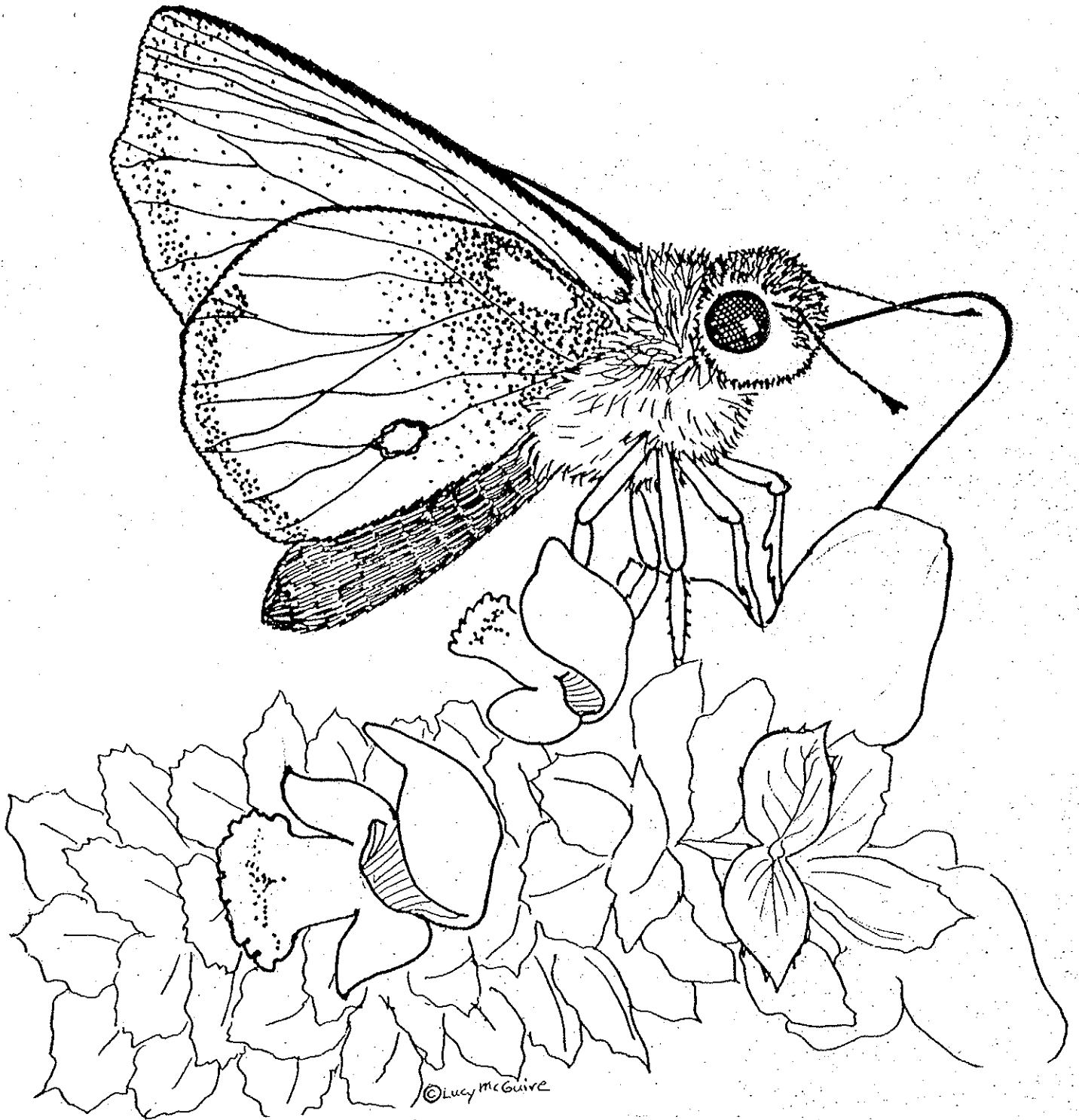
Dear Parents and Teachers,

Share some special moments with your child. Before s/he begins to color in this book, sit down and read it together and keep it as a regular book after your child has colored it.

Children are fascinated by animals and in learning about them can learn a great many other important lessons. Often the behaviors they learn toward animals can be reflected in their behavior toward other people as they grow. An interest in animals can also help them enjoy their lessons in many other areas.

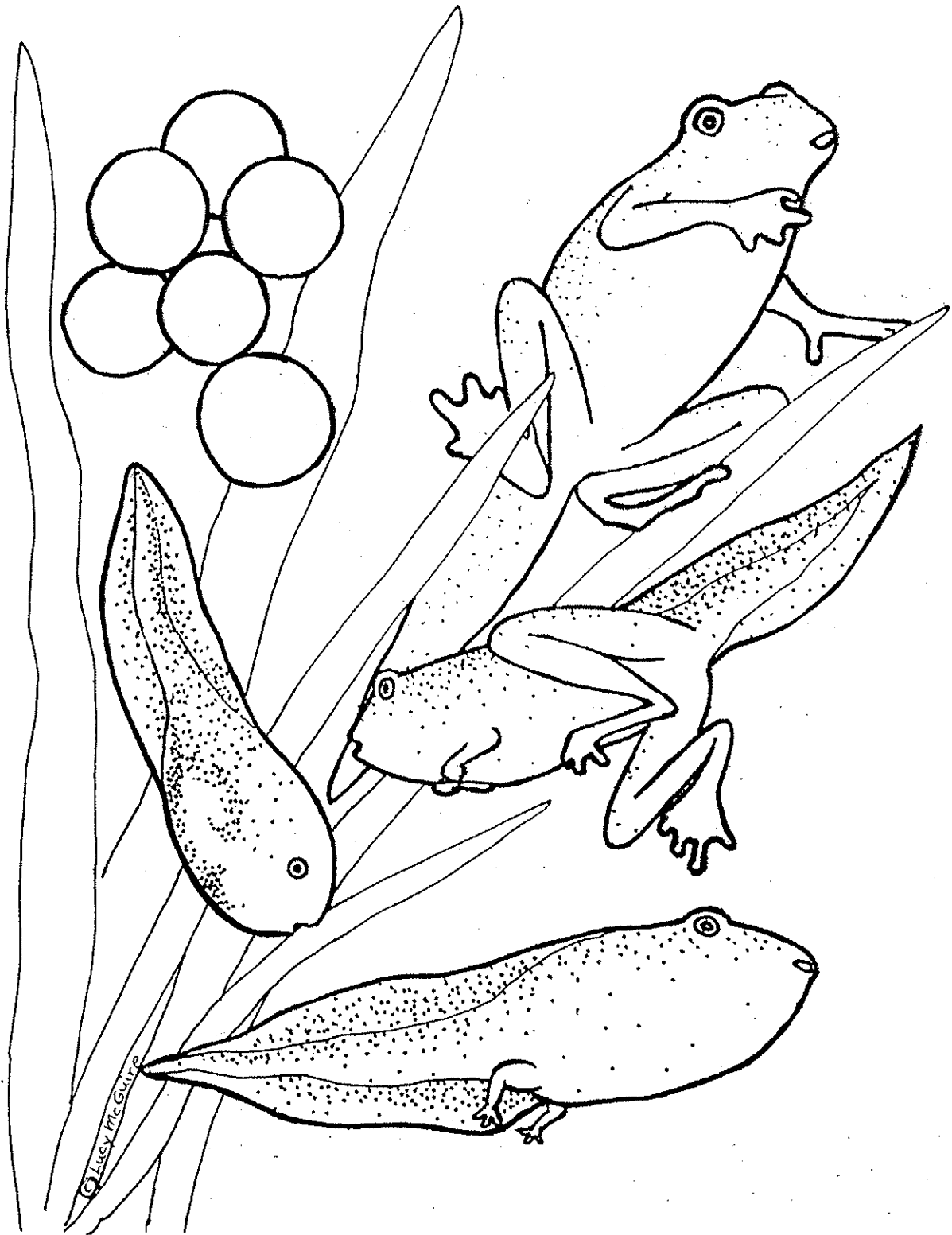
When a pet or farm animal gets hurt we call a veterinarian. When a wild animal needs help, call a wildlife rehabilitator. Wildlife rehabilitators study hard to learn what is best for an animal. They volunteer an incredible amount of time caring for wild animals in need. As soon as an animal is ready they release it back into the wild. Wild animals are never kept as pets. Only in very rare cases when a young animal is too badly injured to survive in the wild is it kept to work educating people. Wild life rehabilitators need special licenses and special permission to take care of wild animals.

Special thanks to Marlene Ehresman and Chris Perrin for their work on the original wildlife rehabilitators coloring book, which was such an inspiration, and to Dr. Linda Nebbe for her support and ideas and for the loan of her photo collection which most of these drawings were based on.



Spring and summer are a special time. Flowers bloom and new plants grow from seeds. Lots of baby animals are born then too.

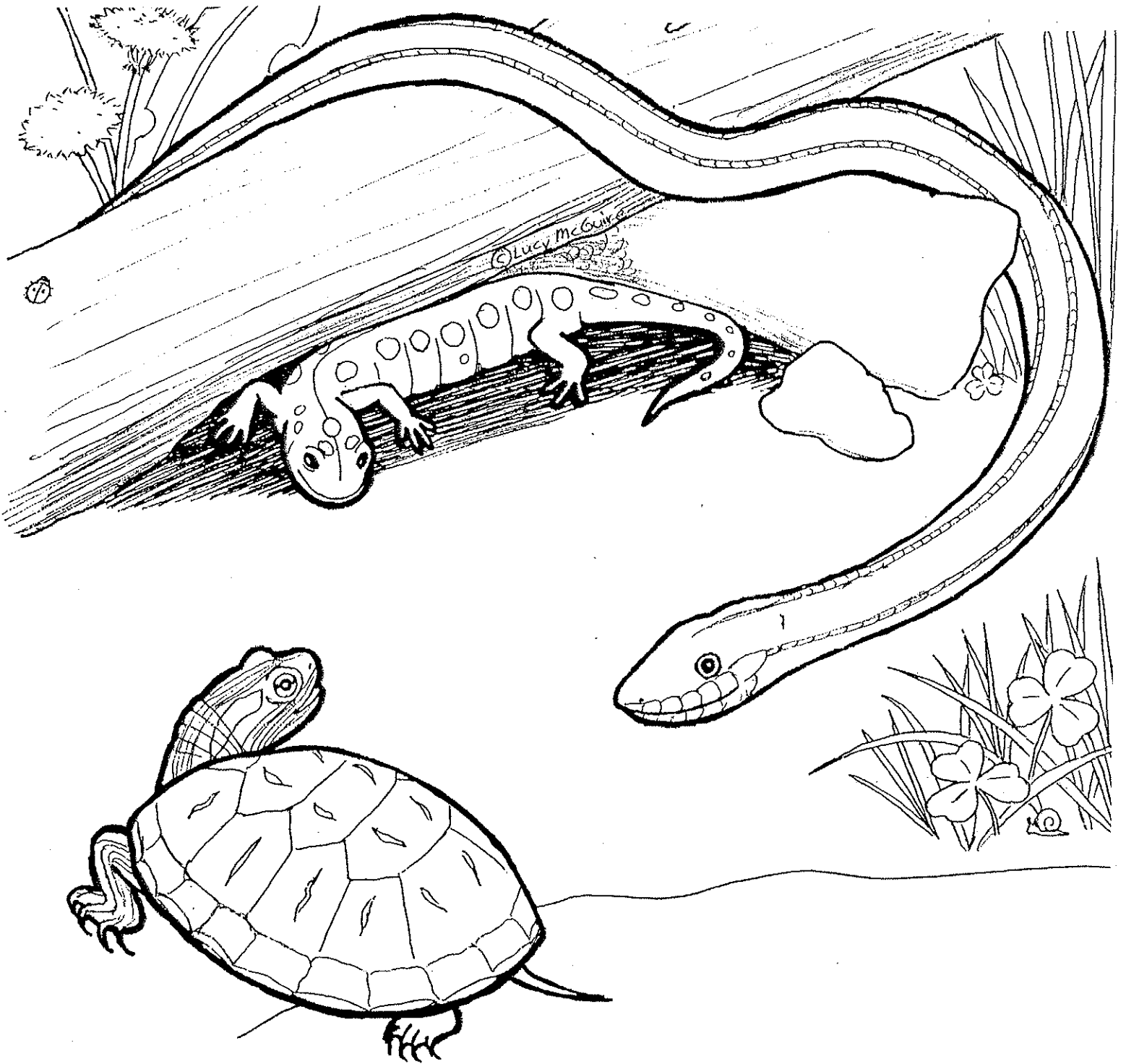
Some animals grow up all by themselves. Butterflies lay their eggs on plants they know their babies will want to eat. Then they fly away and never see them again. The baby butterflies grow up all by themselves.



Frogs and toads don't need help growing up either. A mother frog will lay her eggs in a pond. The eggs hatch into tadpoles which find their own food. They like to eat pond scum or baby mosquitoes. Very slowly their legs grow and their tails disappear until they are adults.

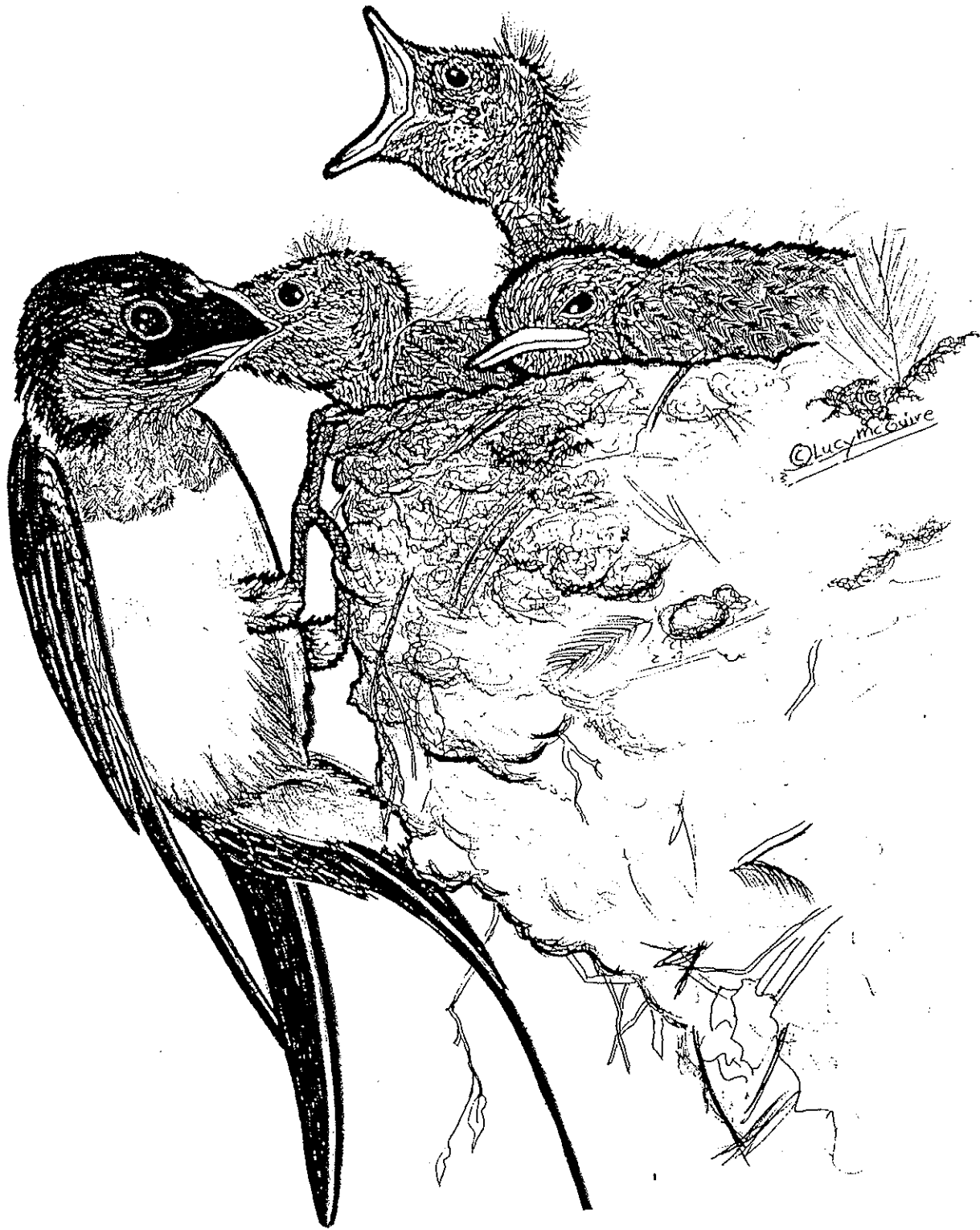


Frogs and toads eat only live bugs. If it doesn't move, they don't know it's lunch. A frog would starve if all he had to eat were dead bugs. Frogs can find all the live bugs they need all by themselves.



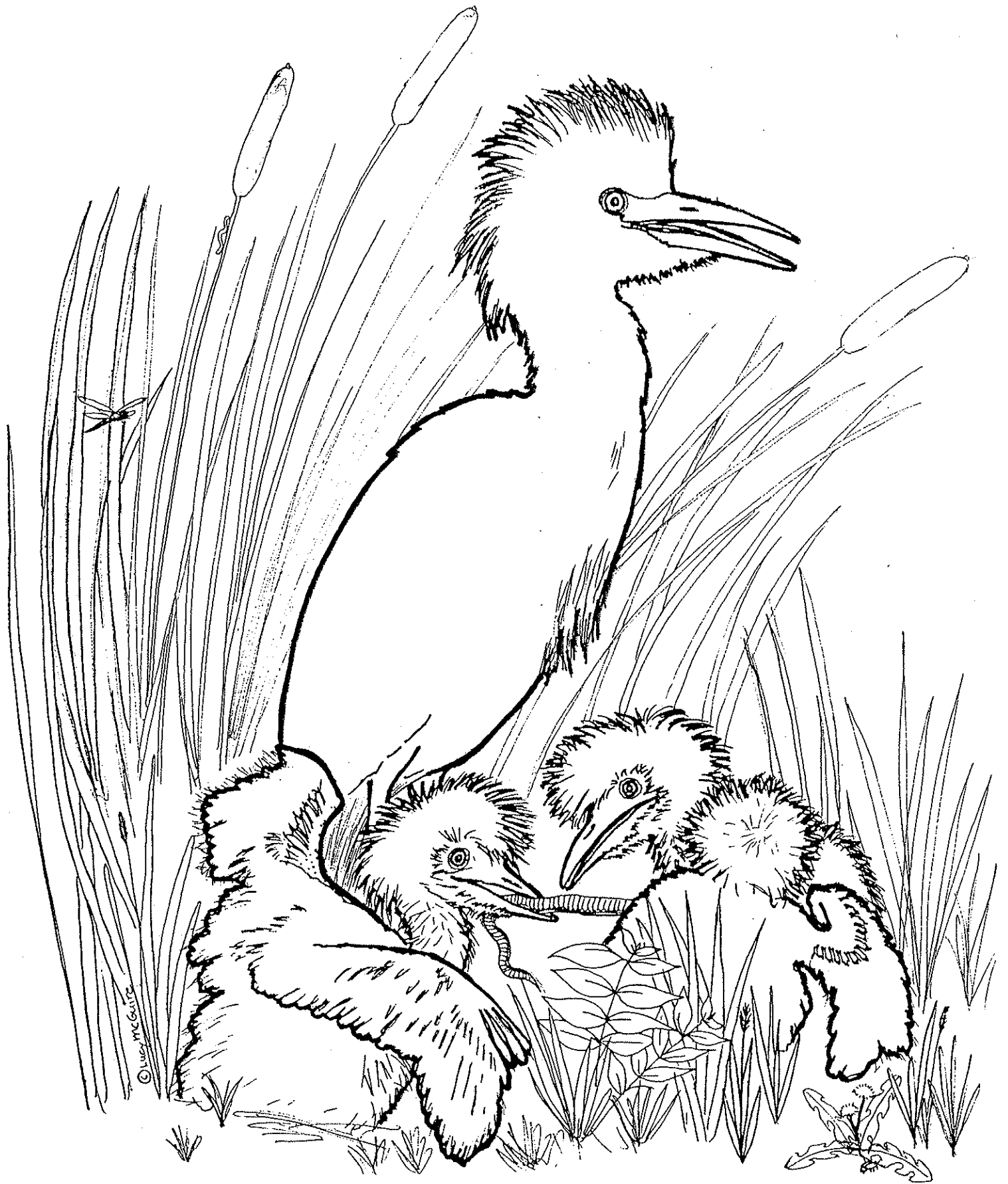
Turtles, snakes and salamanders are other babies that can take care of themselves. They hatch from eggs knowing exactly what to eat and where to find it. They need lots of different foods to stay healthy. The wrong foods can make them sick.

Turtles, snakes and salamanders are fun to watch outside, but when people take them home they don't live very long.



Some animals need their parents to grow up.

Birds feed their babies from sunrise to sunset. Their tummies are too small for big meals. They need lots of little ones. Some baby birds eat bugs.



These baby egrets eat meat from other animals. They are eating a snake. Would you like a snake for supper?



Hummingbirds drink nectar, the juice from inside flowers, and feed it to their babies. All birds find their babies exactly what they need to eat.

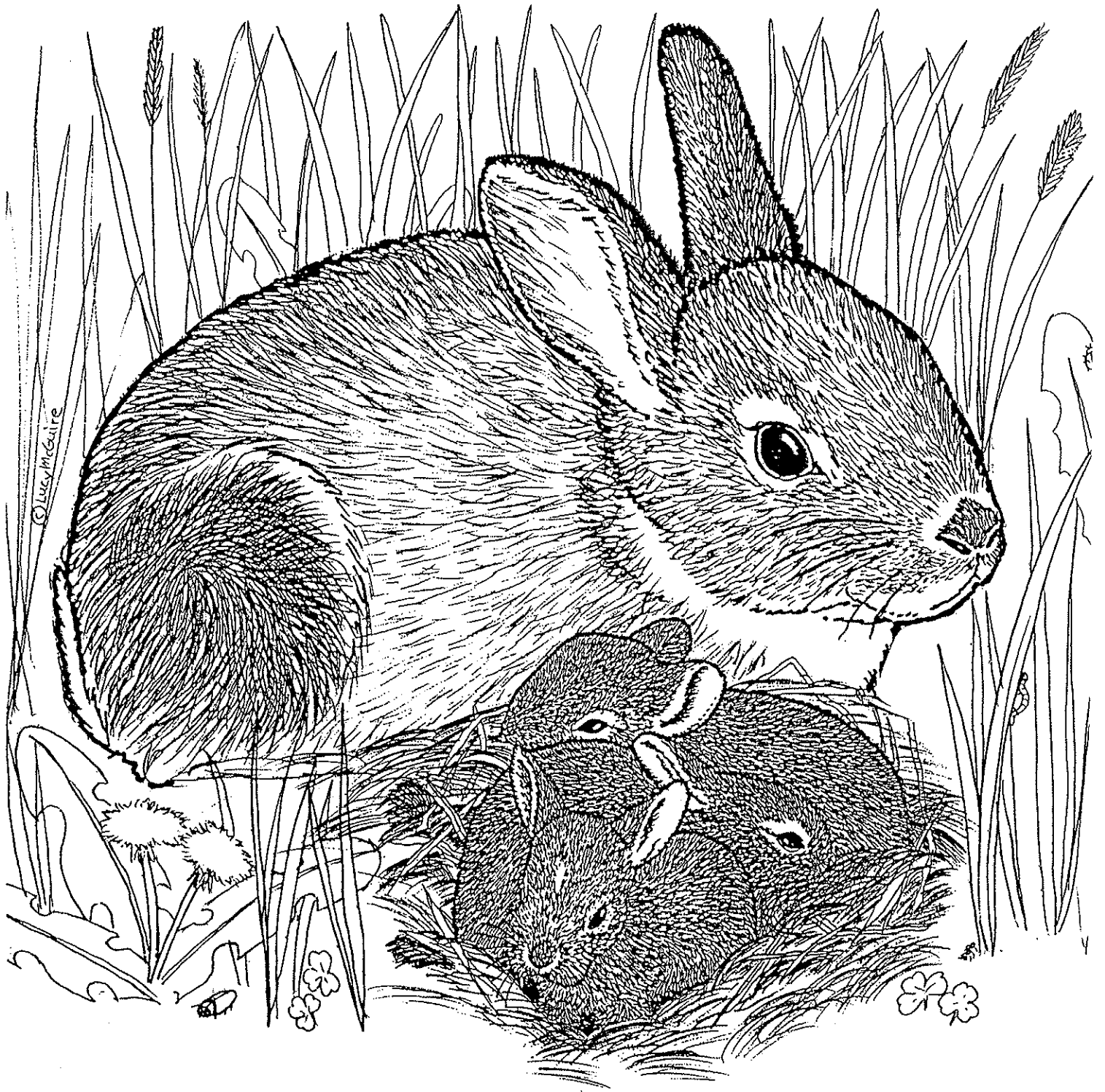


Sometimes a baby bird might fall out of it's nest. If you find one have an adult help you put it back in the nest so it's mother can take care of it.



Sometimes you might see a baby bird on the ground who's learning to fly. It's mother will stay nearby while it practices flying.

If you see one of these babies stay away. It's parents may hide and be afraid to take care of the baby while you're there.



A mother rabbit digs her nest in the ground. She pulls soft fur from her coat to make a bed for her babies. She feeds them milk she makes inside her body. The babies need her milk to grow.



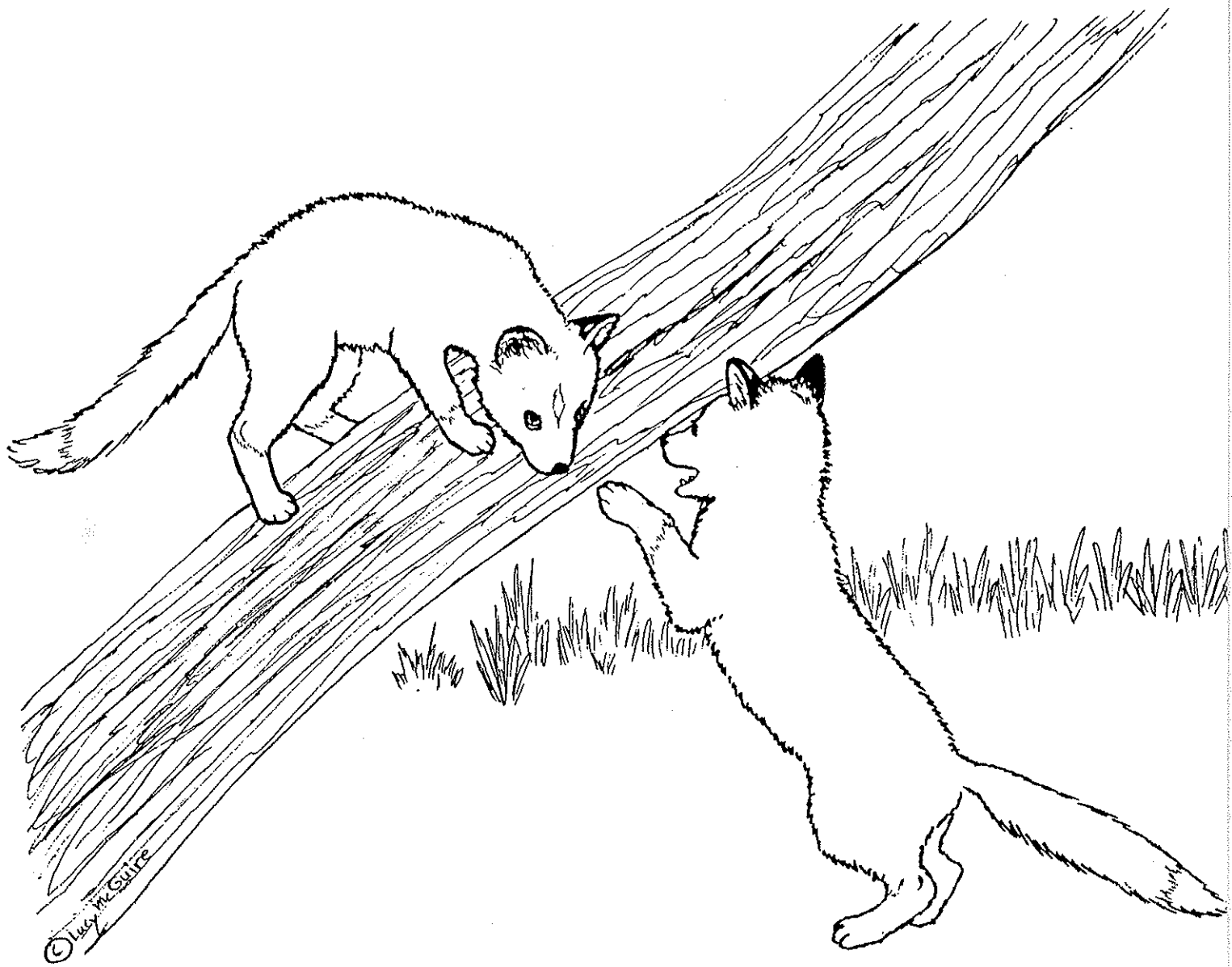
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Squirrels build nests high in the trees. A mother squirrel uses leaves to make her babies nest. She feeds them her milk until they are grown. Sometimes you can see young squirrels playing tag in the trees.

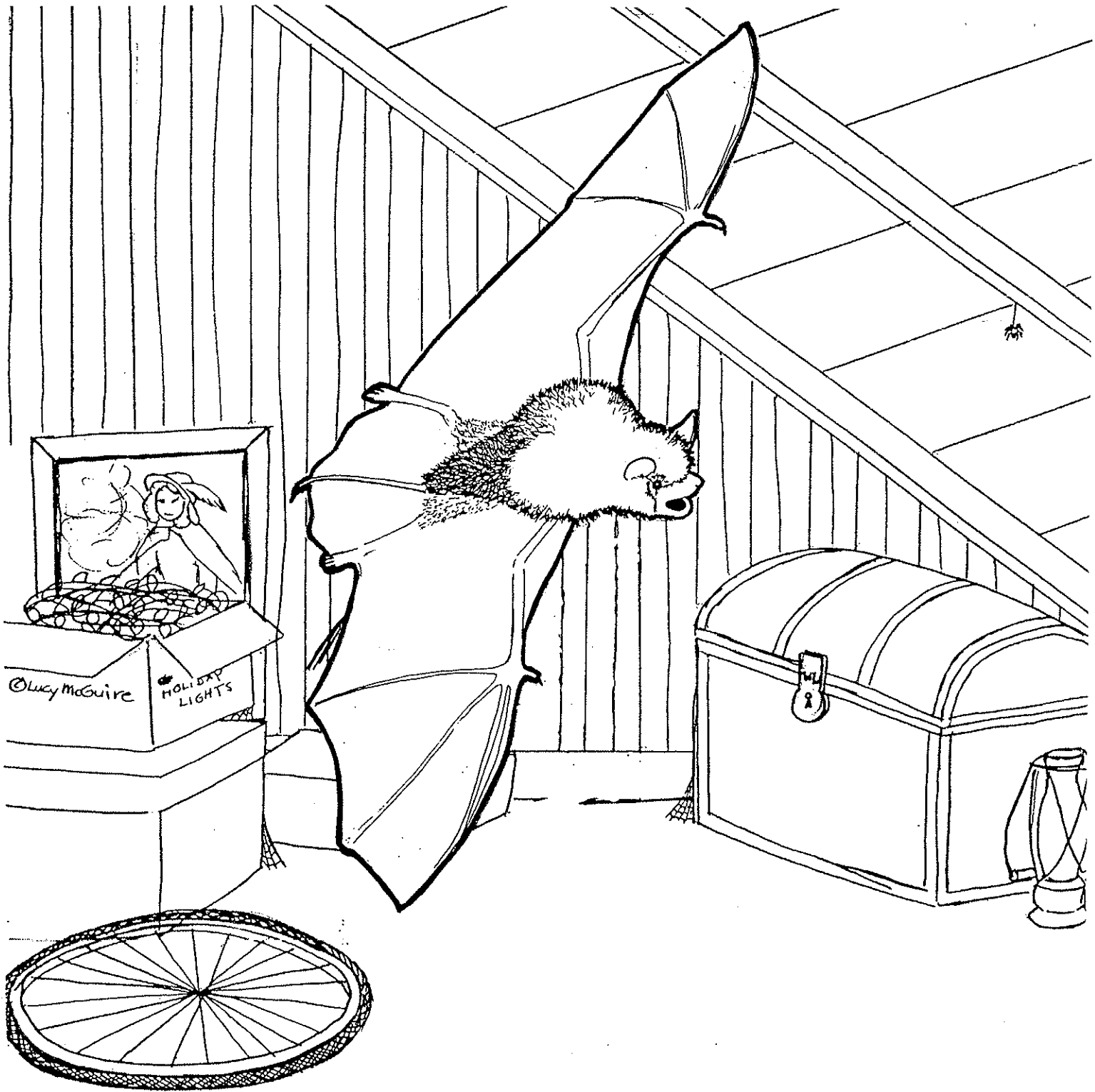


Baby deer are called fawns. They are too big for their mothers to make a nest. Instead she finds a quiet place and has her baby nap while she looks for food. The fawn might be alone all day. It's spots look like sunlight on the forest floor. The spots help the fawn hide.

Sometimes people find a fawn and think it's alone. But it's mother is only waiting for them to go away so she can take care of her baby.



Babies like to play. It's practice for things they need to learn. These foxes like to wrestle and chase each other. What do you suppose that's practice for?



Sometimes young animals make mistakes. A young deer may wander into town and get lost. A raccoon or bat may move into your attic. If that happens there are people ready to help. Their phone numbers are in the back of this book. Have an adult find the closest one and write their phone number here (- -).



In the summer you may see lots of young animals alone for the first time. They may look tiny, but if you leave them alone they're be okay.