

# WHO LIVES WHERE?

In the rainforest, you can watch some of the most colorful, interesting, and unusual animals on this planet. From little insects to large mammals, all types of animals live in the rainforest. In fact, more than half of all the animals and bugs in the world are in rainforests.



**MIKEAL**

I would like to feed the animals



**SYDNEY**

I would pet the animals and play with them. I would have a cheetah for a pet. Then I'd be somewhere in no time!



by Carollyne Hutter  
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**MICHAEL**  
I would swing from vine to vine with the monkeys.



## LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST

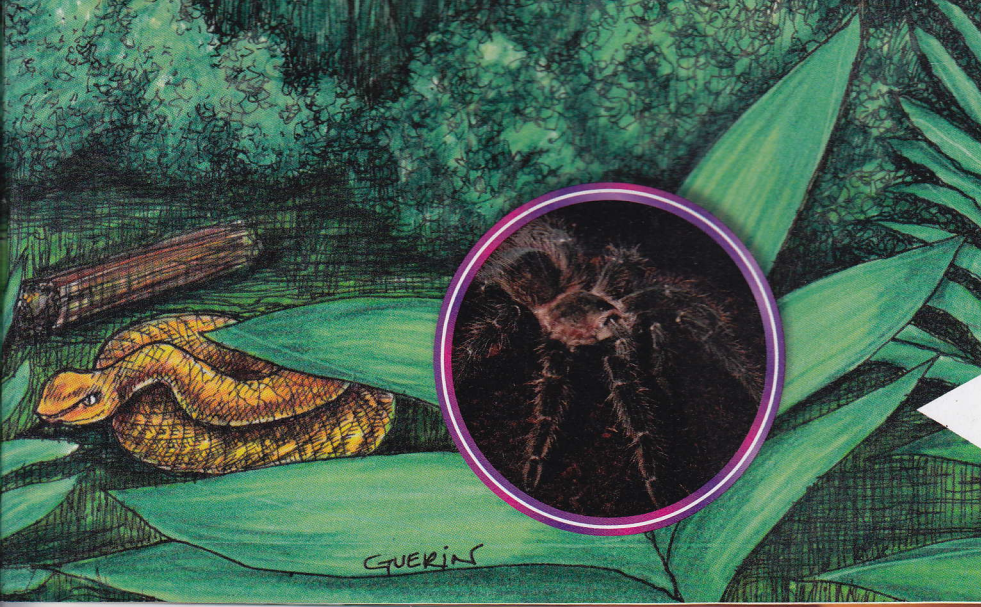
Scientists divide the rainforest into four main layers. The layers are like neighborhoods in a city. A unique set of animals and plants lives in each one.

**EMERGENT**—the upper story of the whole rainforest where only the tallest trees reach. Many birds, insects, and more live here.

**CANOPY**—the upper parts of the trees. This leafy area is a popular place to live. The trees provide shelter from the rain, but sunlight comes through the branches. This is the place to view insects, spiders, many birds, mammals, reptiles, and others.

**UNDERSTORY**—the cool and dark layer under the leaves but over the ground. Most of the understory has little light. Animals in the understory include insects, spiders, snakes, lizards, and small mammals that live on and in tree bark. Some birds live and nest within tree recesses. Some larger animals spend a lot of time on branches in the understory, looking for prey.

**FOREST FLOOR**—the ground that you walk on. Be careful where you step. Many insects and spiders like to live at the dark forest floor. It is also home to some of the largest animals. And, it is where people live.







## NIGHTTIME IN THE FOREST

When the sun goes down, a whole different set of animals and plants come to life in the rainforest. Rainforest scientist Dr. Nalini Nadkarni has spent the night in the canopy of the rainforest. She hangs a cot from the trees.

"I climbed up just at the setting of the sun," Dr. Nadkarni says. "It is wondrous to hear the daytime sounds of birds and insects turn into the nighttime sounds of insects and frogs as darkness gathers. Once, an anteater visited me, nudging me awake with his long nose. I think he was after those leaf-cutter ants, but he found me instead! We both just watched each other for a long time, and then he lumbered away to another part of the tree." She awakes with the rising of the sun and the sound of the dawn chorus of birds.

### GAGE

I would learn about the lizard that has a poisonous tongue. I would learn about its survival, its life, and what it eats.

Rivers flow through many rainforests. Many fish, reptiles, snakes, turtles, and mammals live in or near the rainforest rivers. The Amazon River, the largest rainforest river, has 2,000 different species of fish.





All apes live in or near tropical rainforests. Gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos live in central Africa. Orangutans are found only on Borneo and Sumatra, two large islands off the coast of southern Asia. Gibbons can be found swinging through the treetops of Southeast Asian rainforests.

## PEOPLE OF THE RAINFOREST

People have lived in tropical rainforests around the world for thousands of years without harming the land. They depend on the forest for food, shelter, and medicines. The Amazon supports the largest populations of forest people. While these people use the forest for traditional hunting and gathering, they also grow crops.

Forest people can teach us a lot about the rainforest. From them, we are learning about rainforest plants for treating illnesses. They are also teaching us how the complex nature of the rainforest all works together.

### DAMIAN

I would live with the frogs and eat coconuts. Maybe I would turn into a frog!

