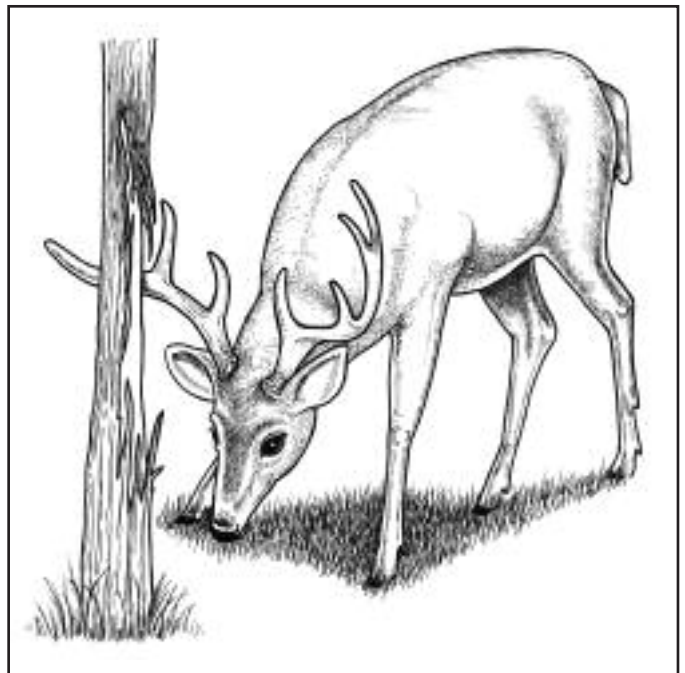
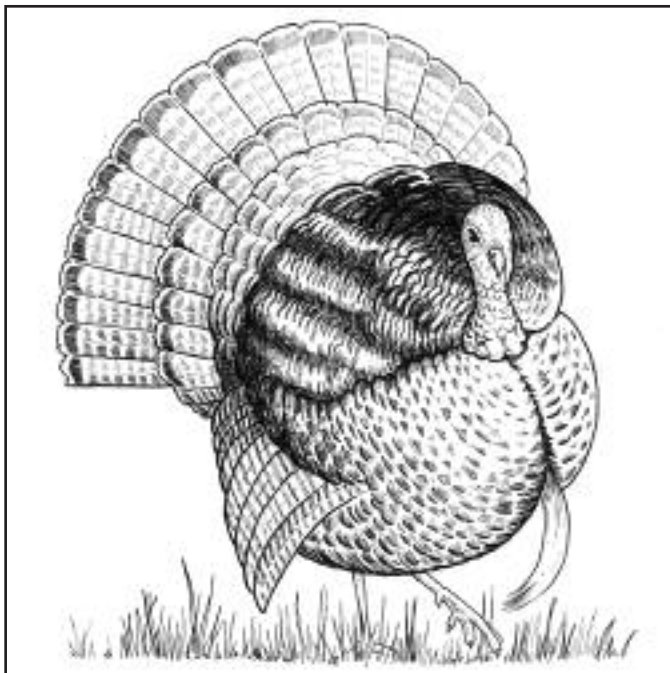




# A Year with Wildlife



# Using this Activity Book - For the Educator

*A Year with Wildlife* from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Division of Education is designed to supplement your curriculum in a variety of ways. The information and activities contained in this publication are targeted to **grades kindergarten through three** and can help you meet the following Illinois Learning Standards: 12.A.1a; 12.A.1b; 12.B.1a; 12.B.1b; 12.E.1b. For more information about other educational materials available, contact the IDNR Division of Education (217-524-4126; [dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov)) or access the Publications page at <http://dnr.state.il.us/teachkids>.

## Scientific Names

You will find scientific names used in this activity book. The scientific name will be in italics and will immediately follow the animal's common name. For example, the woodchuck's scientific name is *Marmota monax*. Your scientific name is *Homo sapiens*. Scientific names are used so that scientists from different parts of the world can communicate with one another and know that they are talking about the same species. These names are based on a Latin system.

## Color Key

Each of the monthly illustrations is provided with a color key. To complete the coloring as shown, you will need a 24-pack of crayons. You may want to use a field guide to help you make the animals look even more realistic.

### Illustrated by T. Riedle

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# Part of Me

Animals have many different parts that help them to live. Write the name of each part in the box next to where it is shown.

**beak**

**claw**

**feather**

**fin**

**hair**

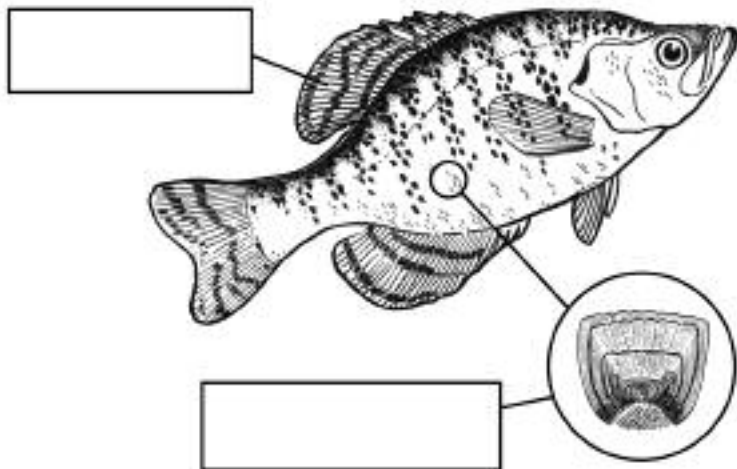
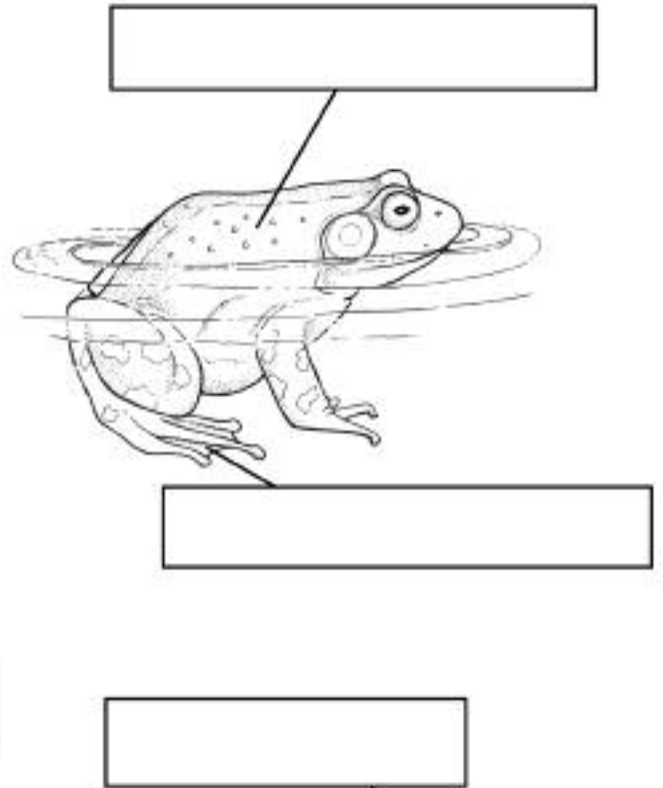
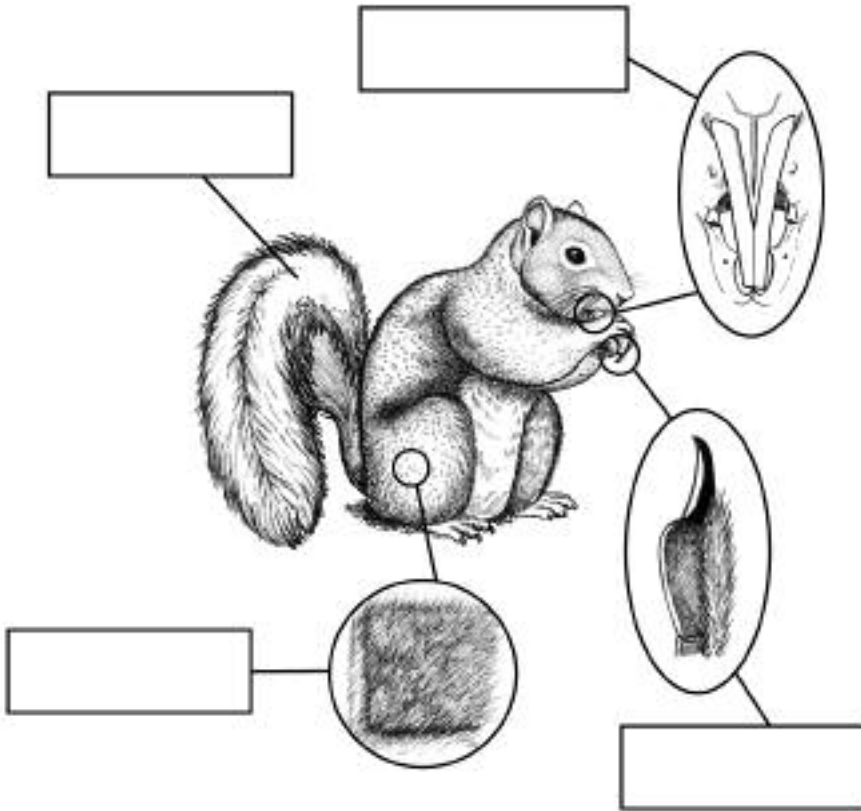
**scale**

**smooth skin**

**tail**

**teeth**

**webbed foot**



# The Right Class

Scientists put animals into groups to make them easier to study and talk about. The animals in this book are from four groups: amphibians; birds; fishes; and mammals. Amphibians do not have hair, scales or feathers. Birds have feathers. Fishes have scales and fins. Mammals have hair.

Write the correct group name on the line next to the animal.

**amphibian**

**bird**

**fish**

**mammal**



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



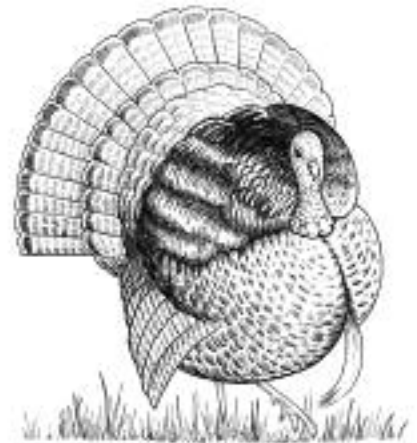
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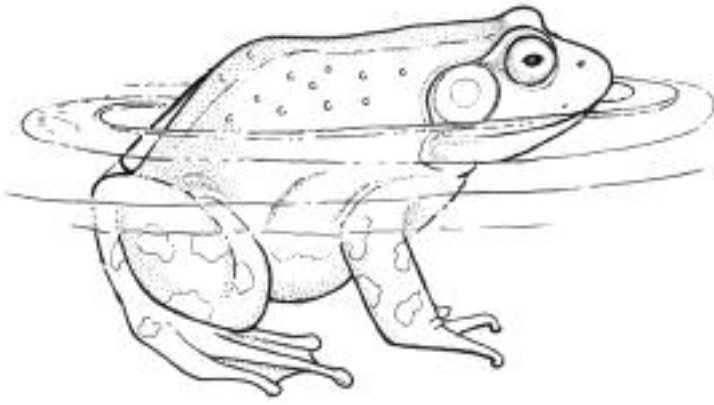
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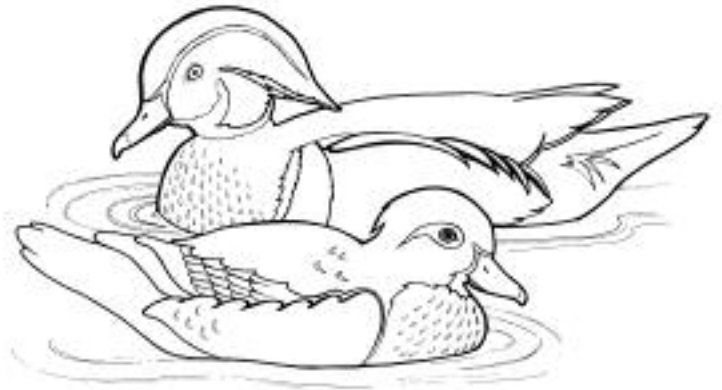
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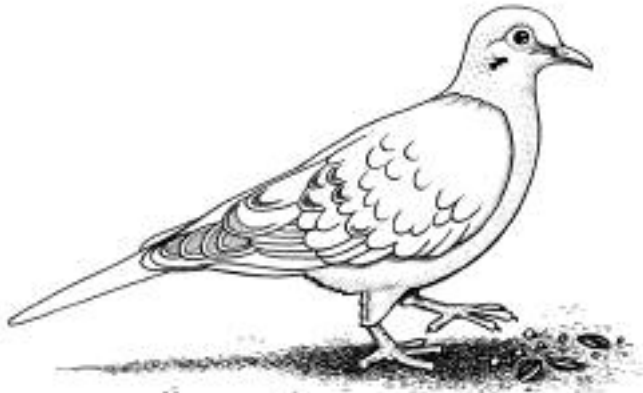
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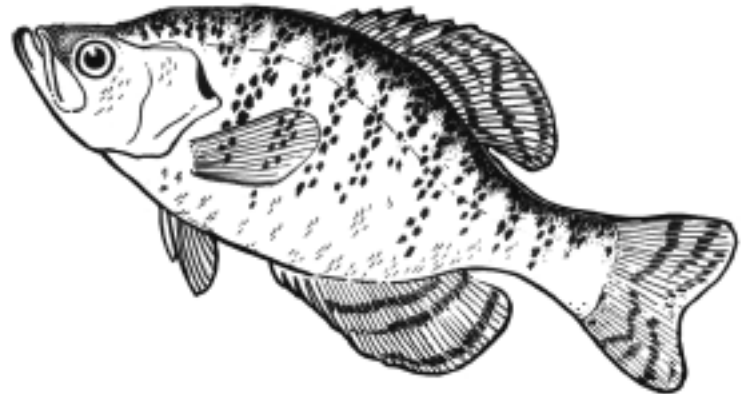
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# A Year with Wildlife

From January through December, many changes happen for wildlife. These animals must find shelter from bad weather. They need to find something to eat when there may not be much food. They breed and raise their young. On the next 12 pages, you'll learn about some of the wildlife events that happen each year. You can look for them in the place where you live. **While each event shown commonly occurs in that month, it may also happen in other months, too.**

There are four seasons in a year: winter; spring; summer; and fall. Draw a line from the season symbol to its description.



**winter**

1. There is a lot of sunshine. It is hot outside. There is plenty of food. Many wildlife young are coming out of their dens.



**spring**

2. This season is the coldest time of the year. Food may be hard to find. Some animals come into our state at this time while others may leave.



**summer**

3. Young animals have grown a lot by this season. There is much food. Most wildlife put on a layer of fat. The air begins to get cold.

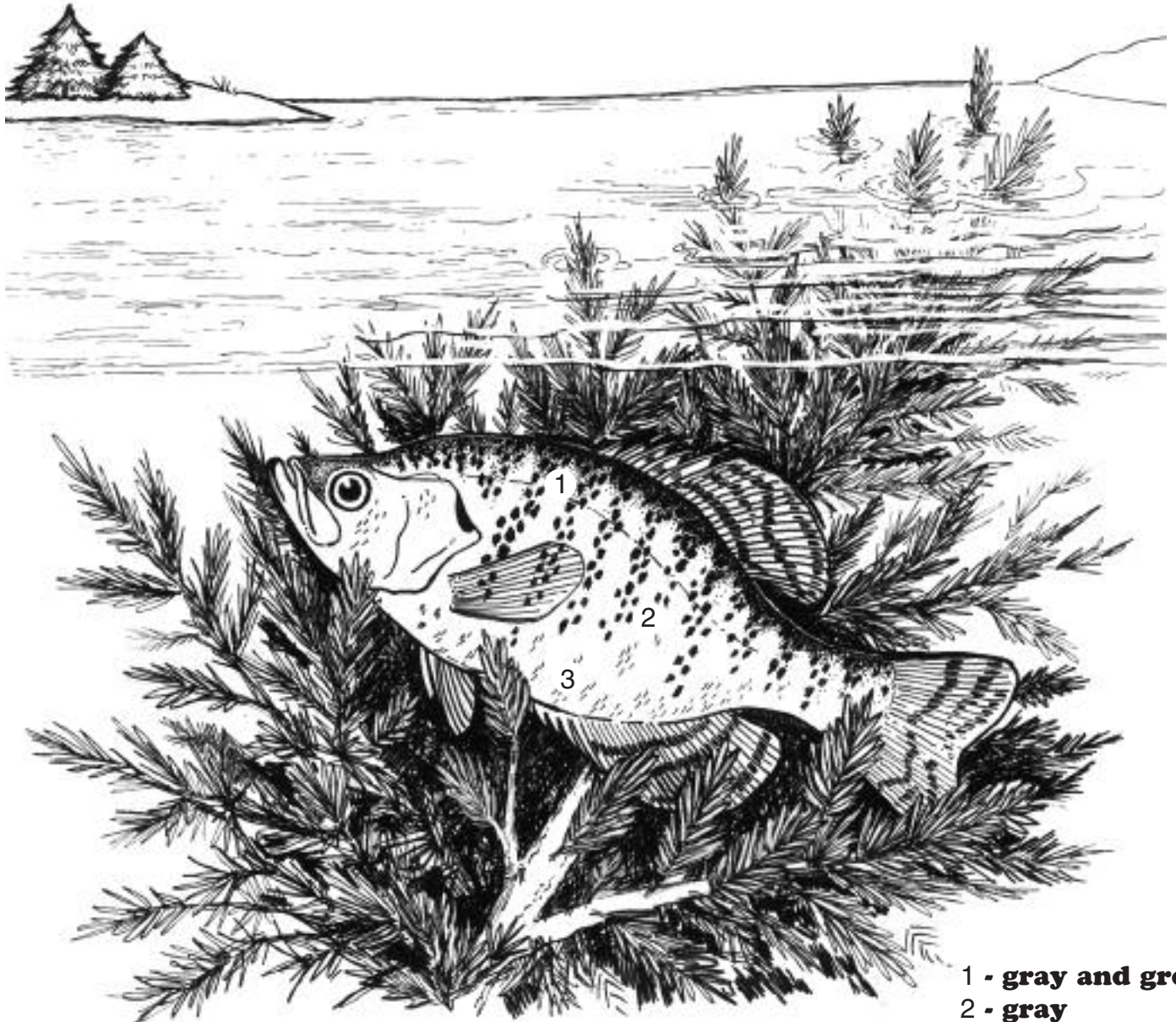


**fall**

4. The trees start to grow leaves. Some birds come back to Illinois. Food is easier to find. Many wildlife young are born.

# January

Evergreen trees that are cut down and used for decorating homes during the holidays in December and January might also become fish homes! In January, many of these trees are placed in lakes to give fishes a place to hide and hunt for food. If the water is frozen in January, weights are tied to the trees, and they are put on the ice. They will sink when the ice melts. The white crappie (*Pomoxis annularis*) is a fish that uses these trees for shelter and to hide in as it hunts its prey.



- 1 - gray and green
- 2 - gray
- 3 - white

## What else happens in January?

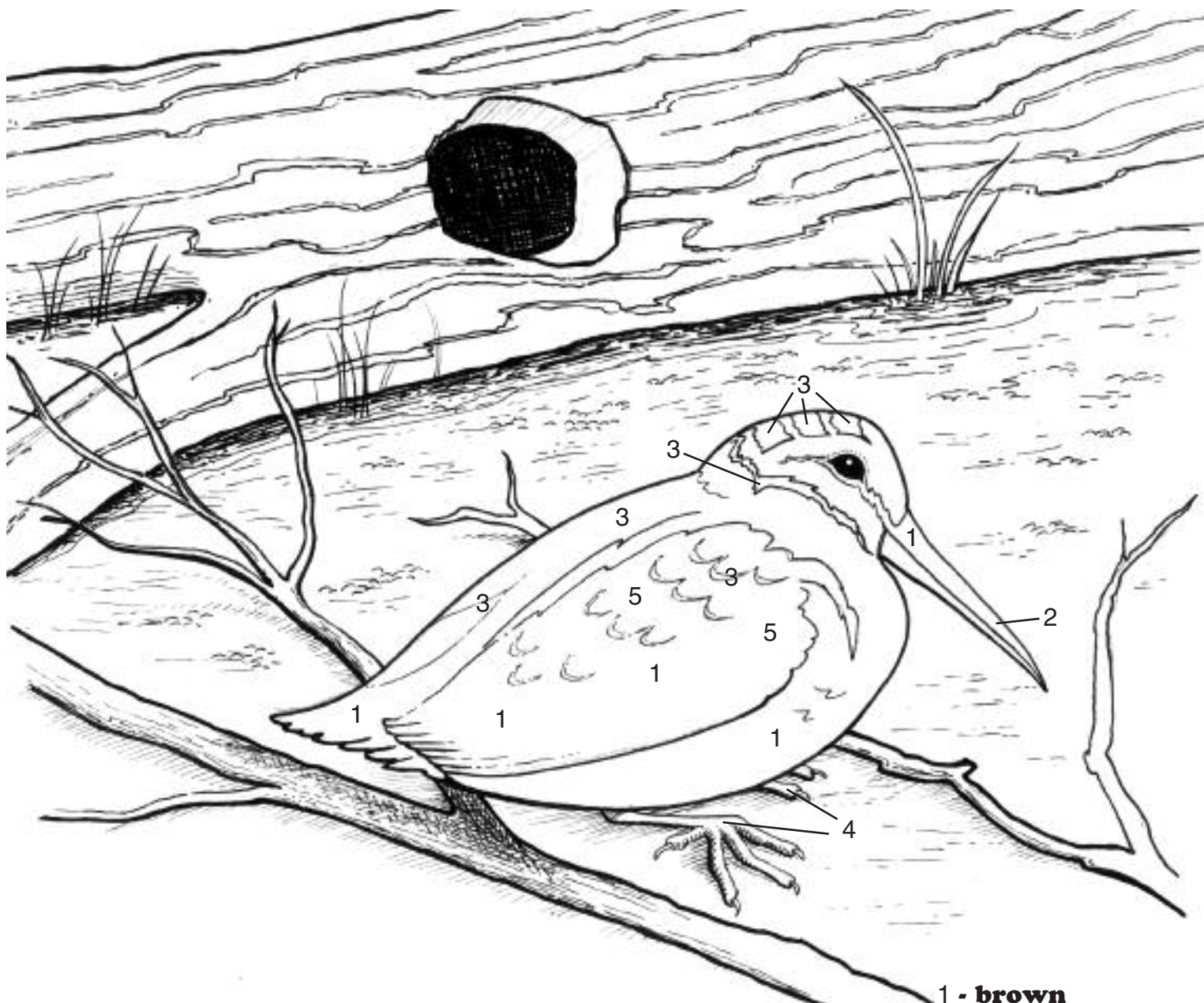
White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) bucks (males) lose their antlers.

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) hunt for food along large rivers and at reservoirs.

Great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*) nest.

# February

The American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) is a short, fat bird with a very long beak. It uses the beak to catch worms in the soil. In February, these birds begin to migrate through Illinois from the southern United States. You might see a flock of woodcocks in a thicket or woods. You must look carefully. The woodcock's colors blend in with dead leaves on the ground.



## What else happens in February?

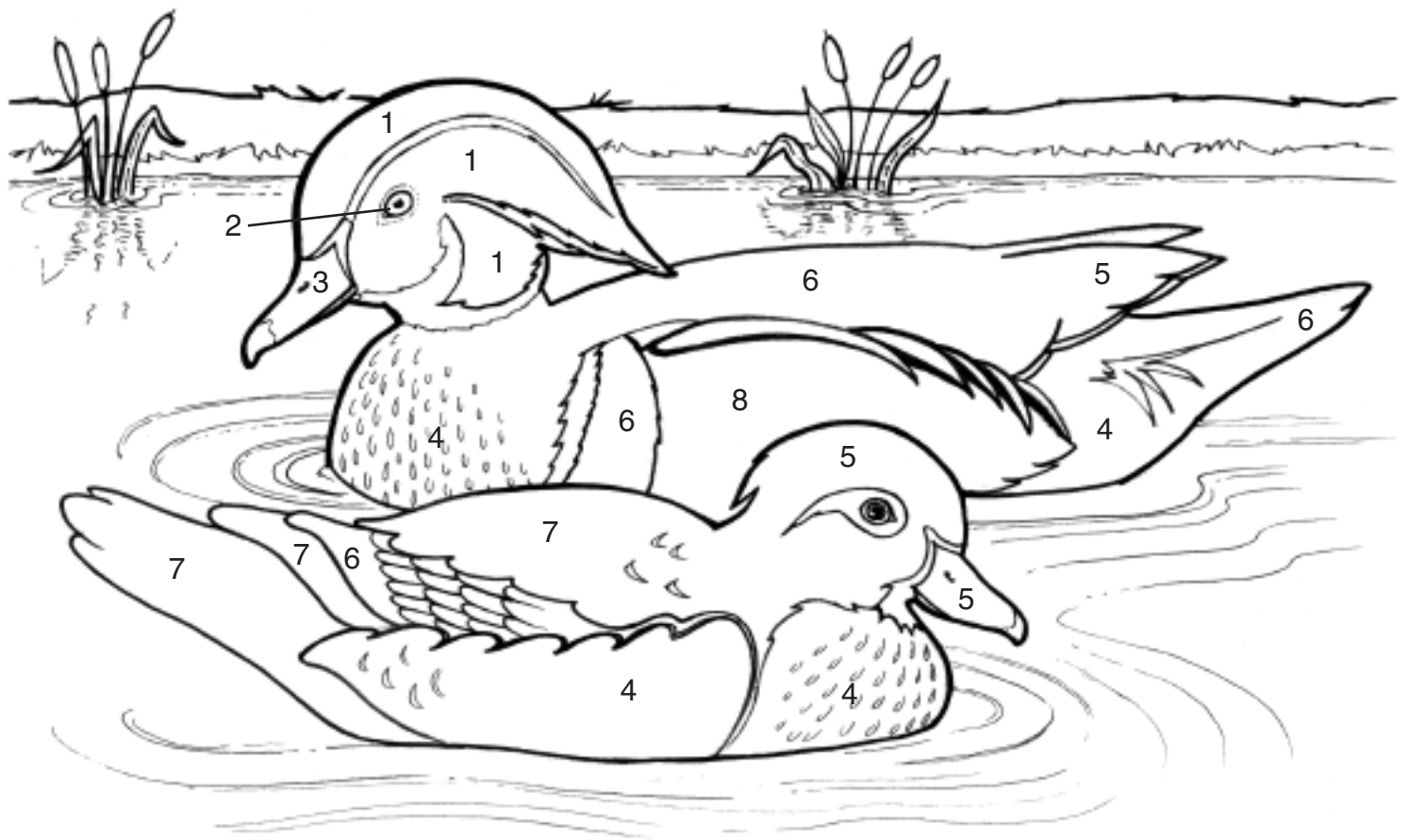
Snow geese (*Chen caerulescens*) arrive in southern Illinois.  
The first squirrels of the year are born.  
Coyotes (*Canis latrans*) begin to mate.

- 1 - brown
- 2 - brown and black
- 3 - black
- 4 - apricot
- 5 - gray



# March

March is the month when many ducks and geese move through Illinois. They spent the winter months in warmer places with more food. They are returning to the northern United States and Canada to nest and raise their young. Some, like these wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*), will nest in Illinois.



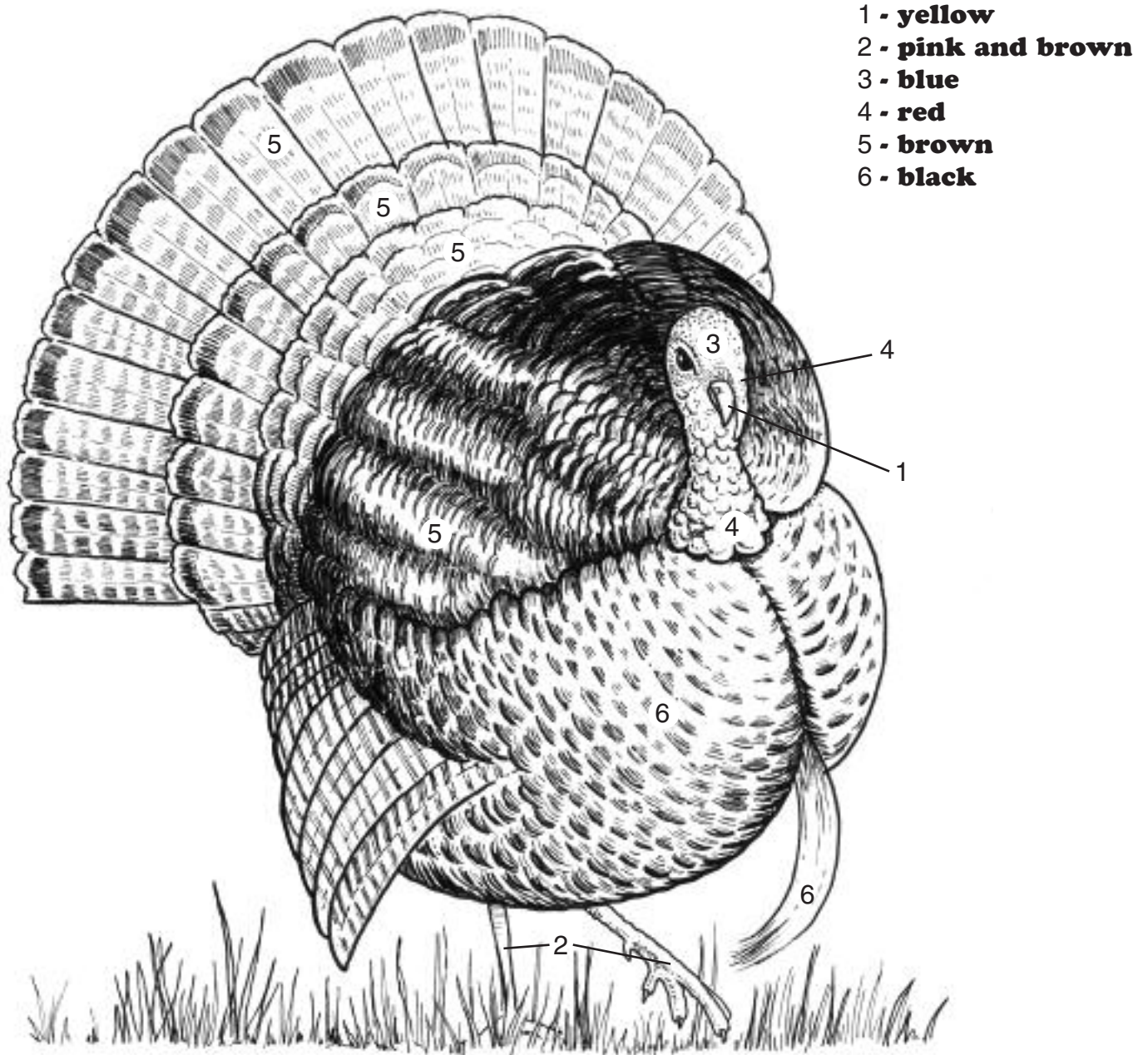
- 1 - green
- 2 - red
- 3 - red orange
- 4 - brown
- 5 - gray
- 6 - blue green and black
- 7 - gray and black
- 8 - yellow and brown

## What else happens in March?

Wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) begin breeding.  
Female cottontails (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) build their nest.  
Mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*) return to our state.

# April

The wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) male, or “gobbler,” spends a lot of time in April trying to find a mate. He makes a sound, called a “gobble,” that tells female turkeys that he is in the area. The female turkeys can answer him with a different sound. The male also spreads out his big tail, drags the tips of his wings and struts.

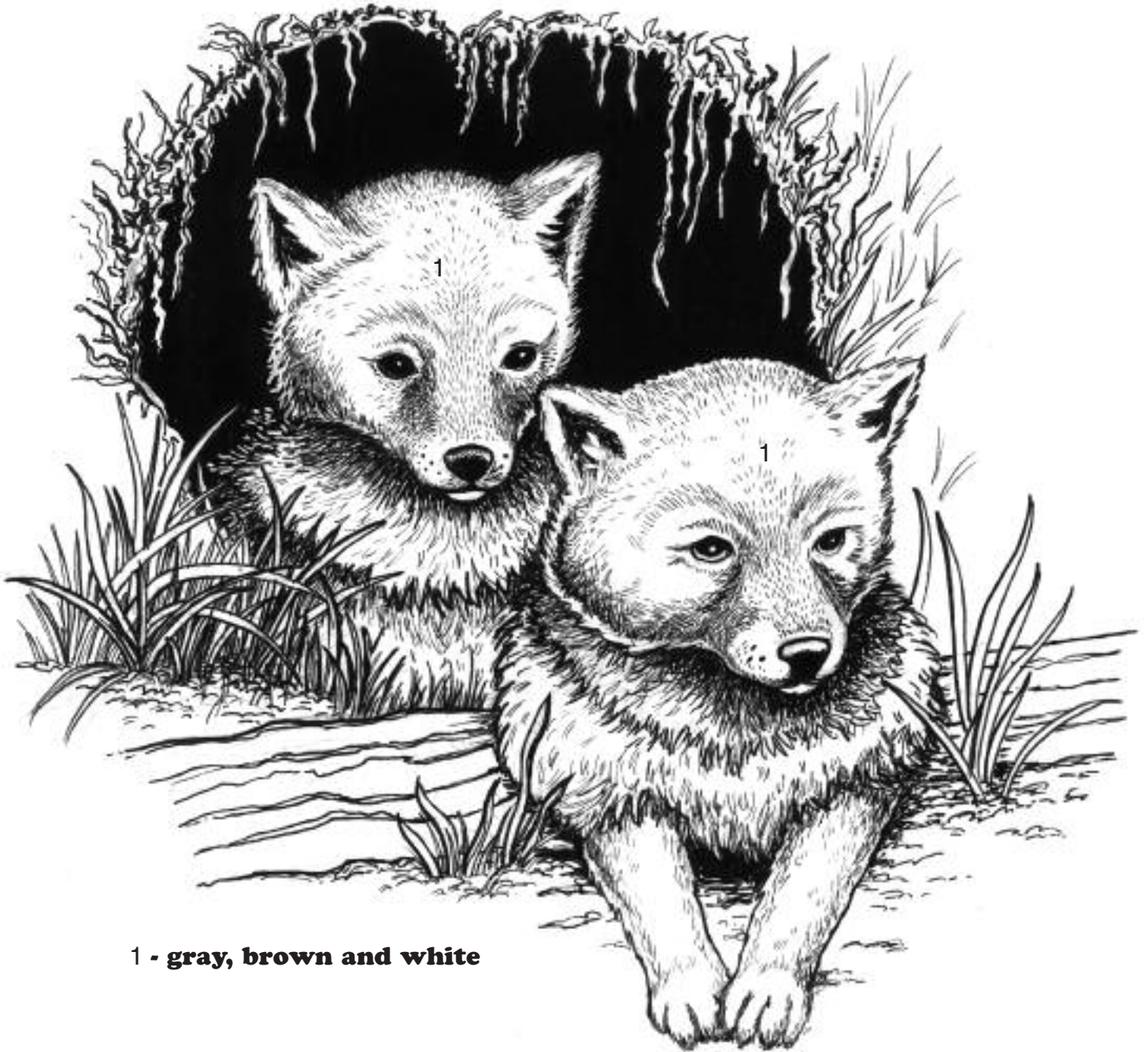


## What else happens in April?

Antlers start to grow on white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) bucks (males). Coyote (*Canis latrans*), fox and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) young are born.

# May

Coyote (*Canis latrans*) pups are born in April. They come out of their den for the first time in May. They soon learn to hunt to catch the mice and other small animals that they eat.



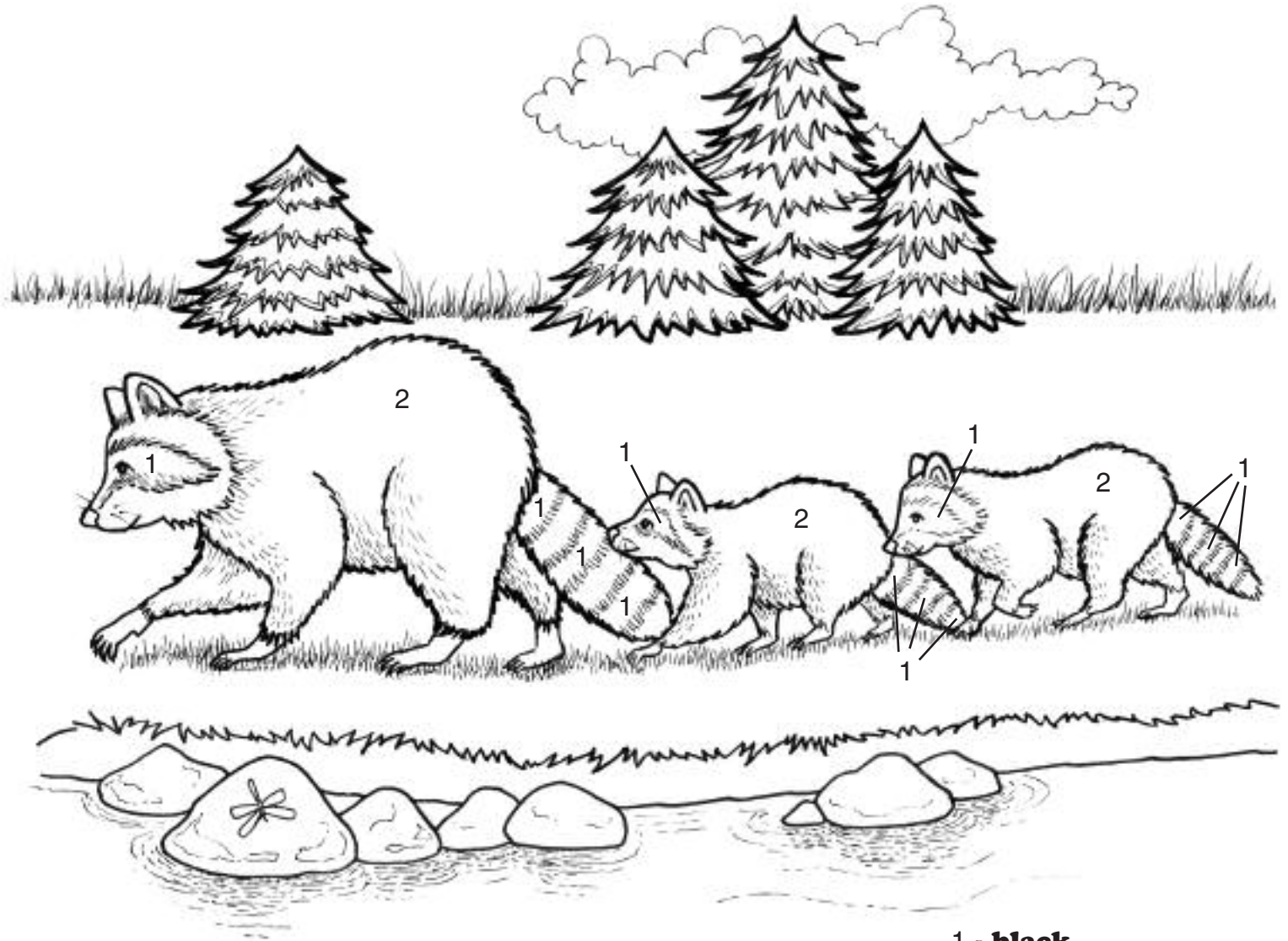
1 - gray, brown and white

## What else happens in May?

Ring-necked pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) and northern bobwhites (*Colinus virginianus*) lay eggs. Many white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) young are born. Wood duck (*Aix sponsa*) and Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) eggs hatch.

# June

On warm evenings in June, you may see young raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) walking with their mother. They are looking for food. Crayfish, fishes and fruits are just a few items that they eat. They often catch food by reaching into water. They do not wash their food before eating it, though.



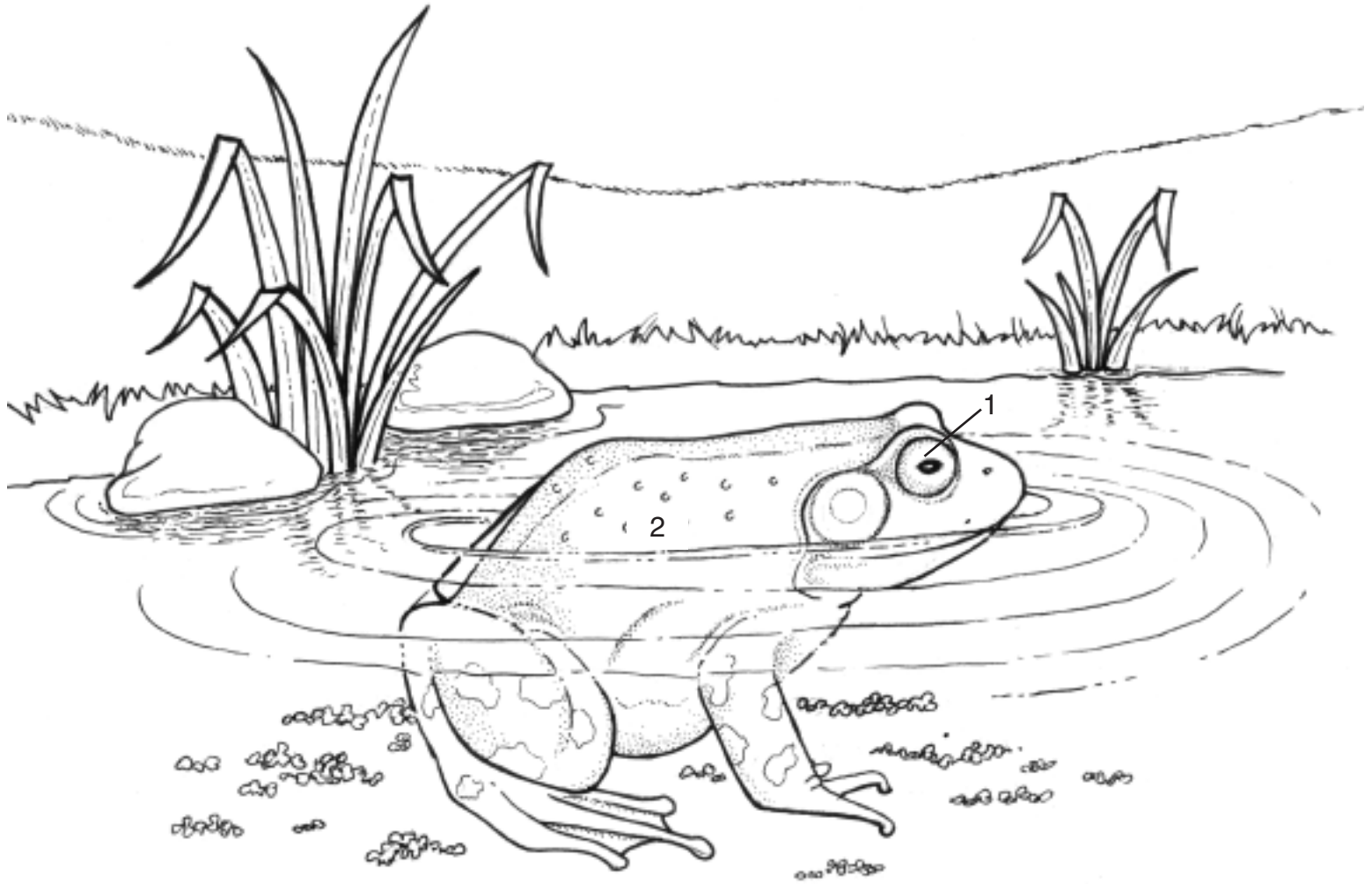
1 - black  
2 - gray and brown

## What else happens in June?

Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) pups start following their parents on hunting trips.  
Most wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) eggs hatch.

# July

You can hear bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*) males making their “jug-o-rum” call through most of the summer months. The call helps them to find a mate.



1 - black

2 - green and brown

## What else happens in July?

Some squirrels give birth to their second litter of the year.  
Young Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) grow their flight feathers.

# August

Fox squirrels (*Sciurus niger*) begin eating hickory nuts this month. They must gnaw through two hard layers before they find the sweet nut meat. You can tell when a squirrel has been gnawing, or “cutting,” hickory nuts. Look under a hickory tree, and you’ll see little pieces of the shell on the ground.



1 - dark yellow and brown  
2 - orange, brown and black

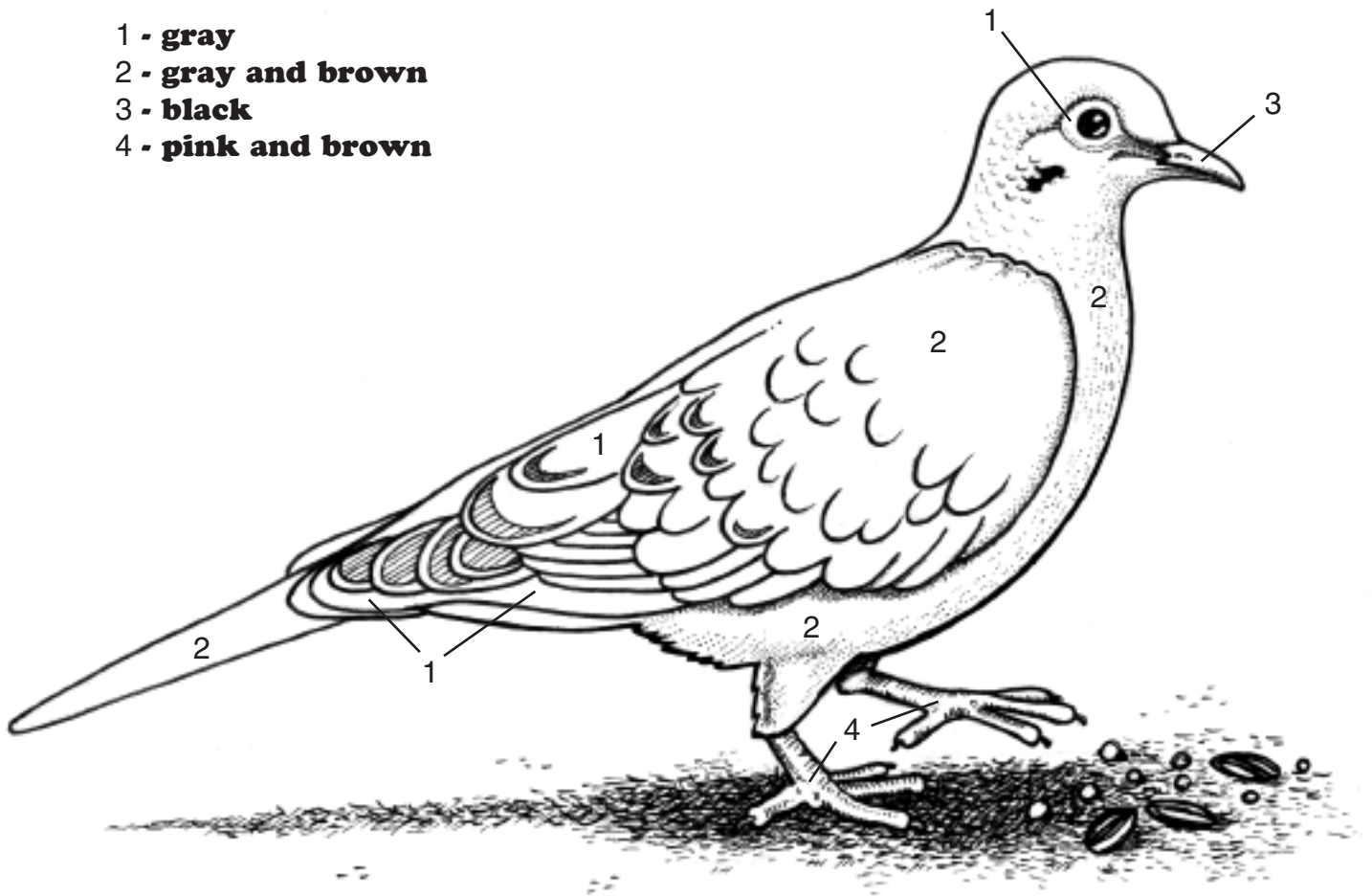
## What else happens in August?

Blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*), pigeon-sized ducks, begin moving south through Illinois. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) bucks begin shedding the “velvet” from their antlers. Wood duck (*Aix sponsa*) young are able to fly.

# September

September is the time that mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*) begin to form flocks. You can see these birds feeding in fields on seeds and waste grain. They will start to fly south soon. Some of them will stay in parts of Illinois in the winter, if they can find food.

- 1 - gray
- 2 - gray and brown
- 3 - black
- 4 - pink and brown



## What else happens in September?

Muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*) begin to build lodges in wetlands.  
More ducks migrate through the state.

# October

The woodchuck (*Marmota monax*), or groundhog, enters hibernation in October. This animal spends almost five months hibernating. During the year, it stays in its underground burrow much more than it moves about outside. The burrow is used for resting, raising young and hibernating.

1 - brown and black



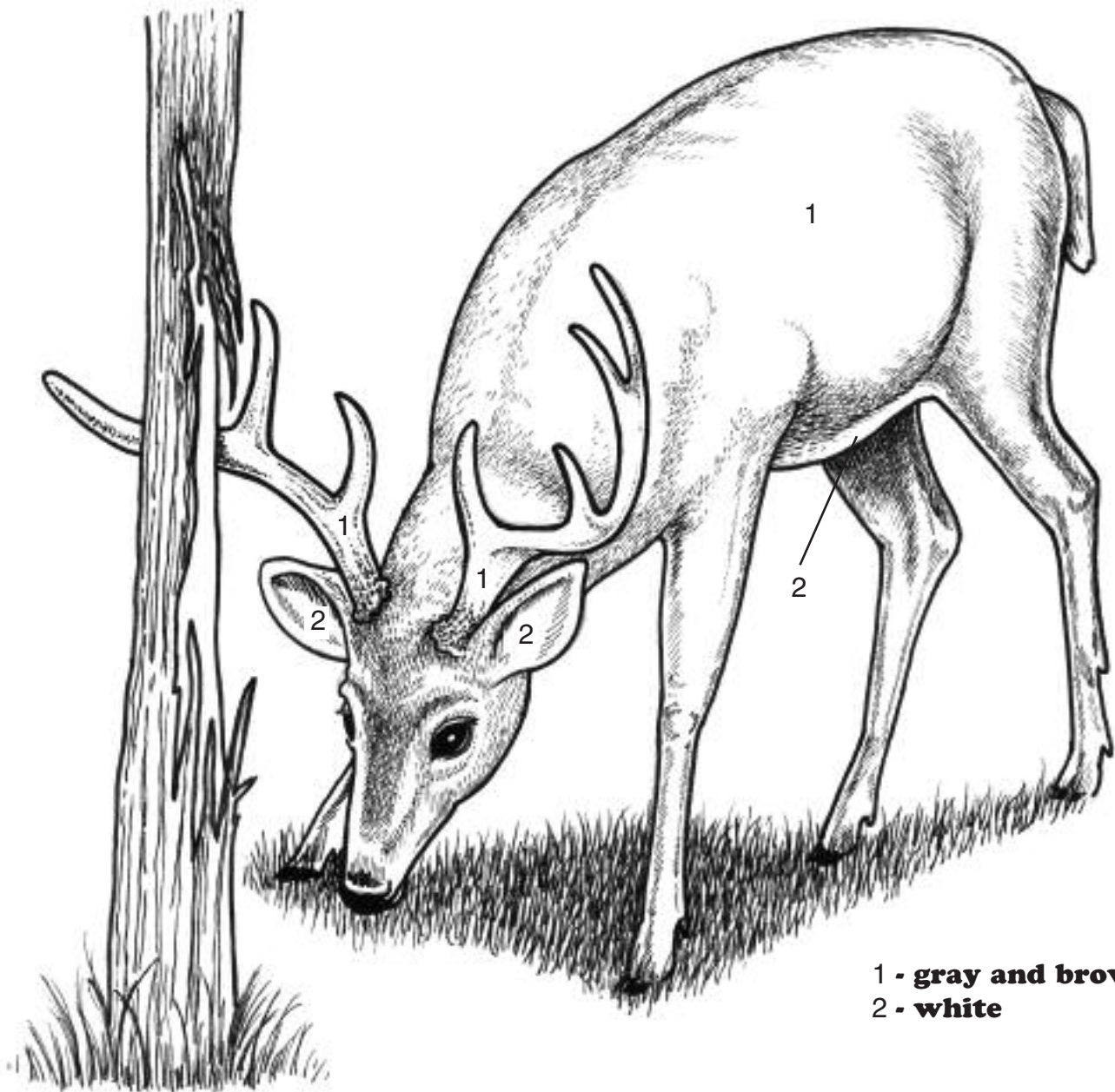
## What else happens in October?

Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) are stocked into some lakes and ponds. The mating season for white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) begins.



# November

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) mate in the fall of the year. Most mating activity happens in November. The male deer, or buck, may rub his antlers on small trees during this time. These “rubs” can be seen as places where bark has been worn away. You can tell when a buck has been in the area by “rubs” that you find on small trees.



1 - gray and brown  
2 - white

## What else happens in November?

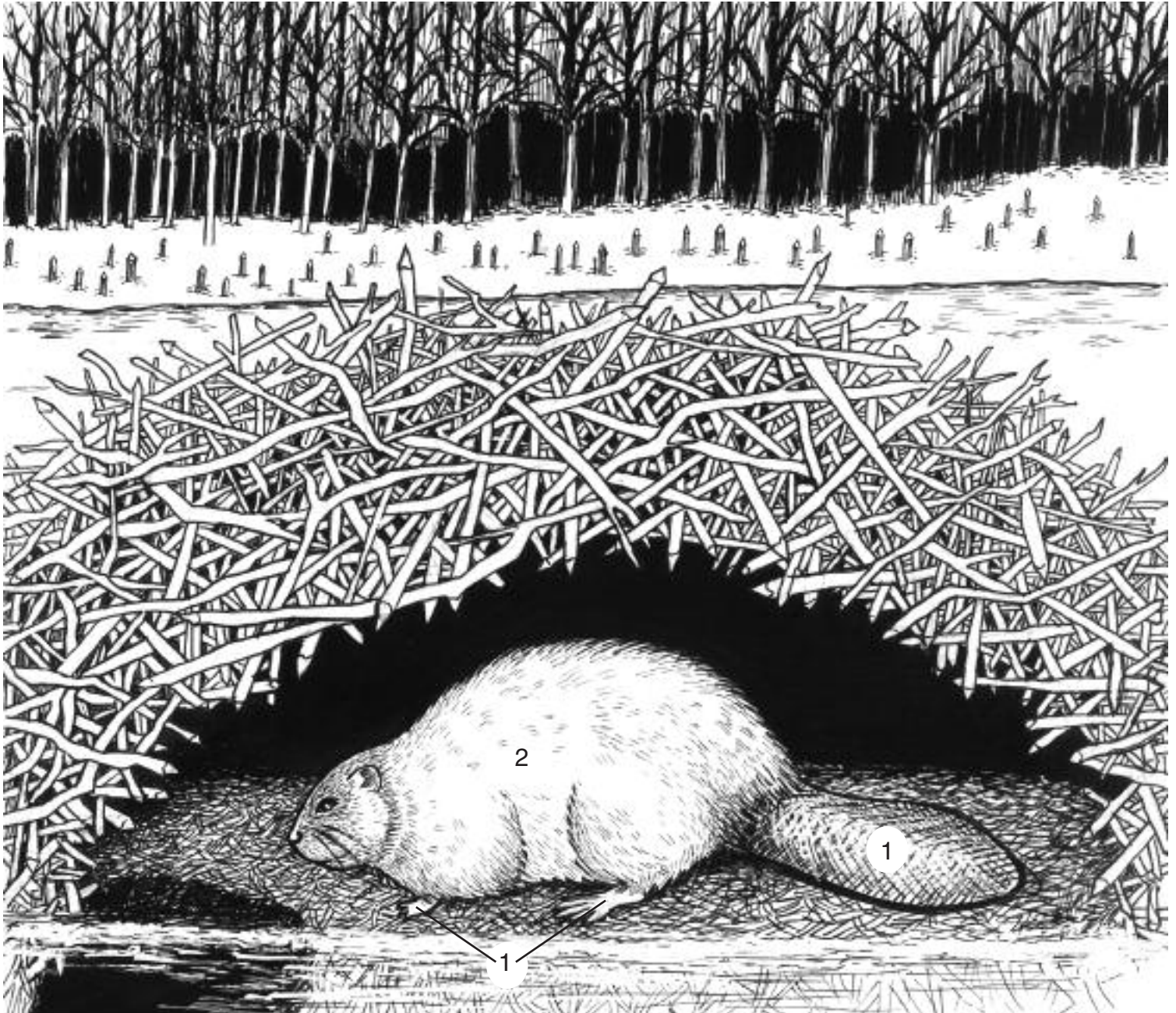
American crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) migrate south.

Most mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*) migrate to the Gulf Coast.

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*) and mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) ducks migrate south.

# December

In December, beavers (*Castor canadensis*) huddle inside their dens and lodges to keep warm. They swim out of their underwater den entrances to cut branches stored nearby during autumn. Pieces are brought back to the den where they eat the bark. Freshly peeled sticks are bright white and easy to see near dens and other places where beavers are active.



## What else happens in December?

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) begin to mate.  
White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) form winter groups.  
Northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) form their winter territory.

1 - black  
2 - brown and black

# Month by Month

Now you have learned about some things that happen each month in the wild. Put the letter from each event next to the month when it occurs.

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>January</b> _____   | <b>A.</b> Beavers eat food stored near their den.                                  |
| <b>February</b> _____  | <b>B.</b> Wood ducks migrate north.  |
| <b>March</b> _____     | <b>C.</b> Mourning doves form flocks.  |
| <b>April</b> _____     | <b>D.</b> Bullfrogs call from wetlands.  |
| <b>May</b> _____       | <b>E.</b> Coyote pups leave the den.   |
| <b>June</b> _____      | <b>F.</b> The woodcock flies north.  |
| <b>July</b> _____      | <b>G.</b> White-tailed deer mate.  |
| <b>August</b> _____    | <b>H.</b> Wild turkey males gobble.  |
| <b>September</b> _____ | <b>I.</b> Young raccoons hunt with their mother.                                   |
| <b>October</b> _____   | <b>J.</b> Woodchucks start to hibernate.   |
| <b>November</b> _____  | <b>K.</b> Fox squirrels gnaw hickory nuts.   |
| <b>December</b> _____  | <b>L.</b> White crappie find shelter in evergreen trees placed in lakes and ponds. |

# We Need Each Other

Living things depend on one another to survive. In this book you can find examples of how some animals need other living things. Draw a line from the picture in column A to the living thing it might eat in column B.

## Column A



**American woodcock**



**coyote**



**raccoon**

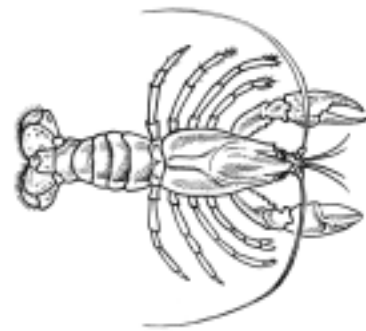


**fox squirrel**

## Column B



**mouse**



**crayfish**



**worm**

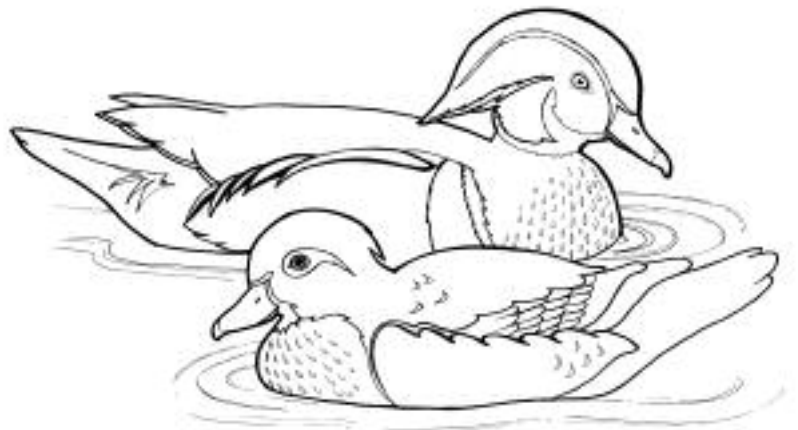


**hickory nut (from a tree)**

# Creature Feature

The animals in this book have certain features that help them to live. Fill in the blanks in each sentence and learn about them.

- 1.** The wood duck has webbed f\_\_ \_t that help it swim in the \_\_ate\_\_.
- 2.** The \_\_u\_\_lfr\_\_g can breathe through its moist skin.
- 3.** The w\_\_ \_d\_\_o\_\_k's long bill helps it to catch w\_\_r\_\_s.
- 4.** A \_\_ \_ \_ s\_\_uir\_\_el's sharp front teeth can \_\_naw through hard hickory nuts.
- 5.** The b\_\_a\_\_er slaps its big, flat \_\_ \_\_il on the water to make sounds to communicate with other beavers.



# A Year for the White-Tailed Deer

Here are some events in the year of the white-tailed deer. Put them in order by writing a number next to each one. Start with number one in January. End with number six for the event in December. Use the information in this activity book to help you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Fawns (young deer) are born.

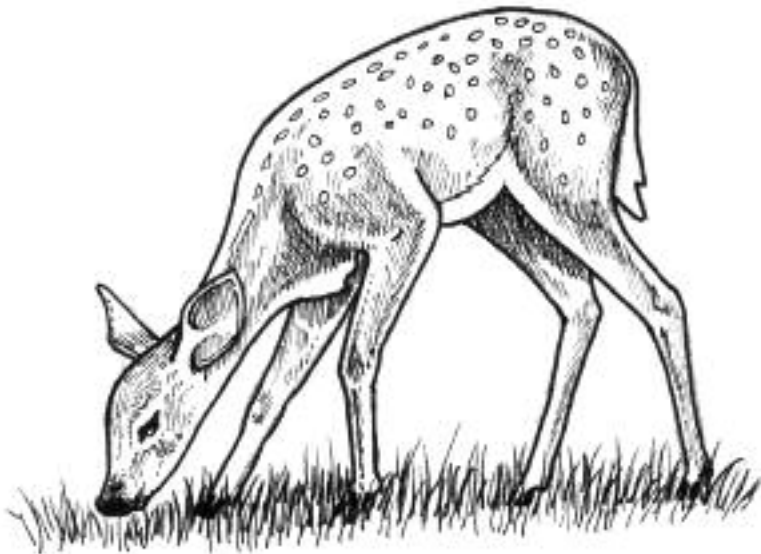
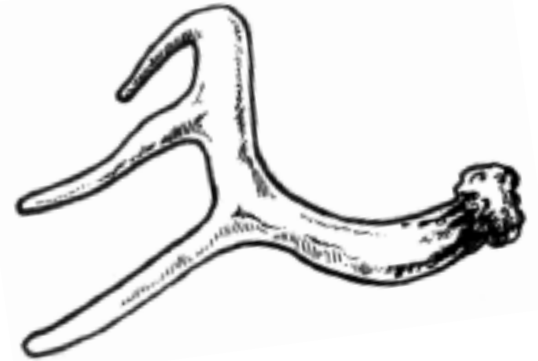
\_\_\_\_\_ Male deer (bucks) begin to grow antlers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Deer mating peaks in November.

\_\_\_\_\_ Male deer lose their antlers.

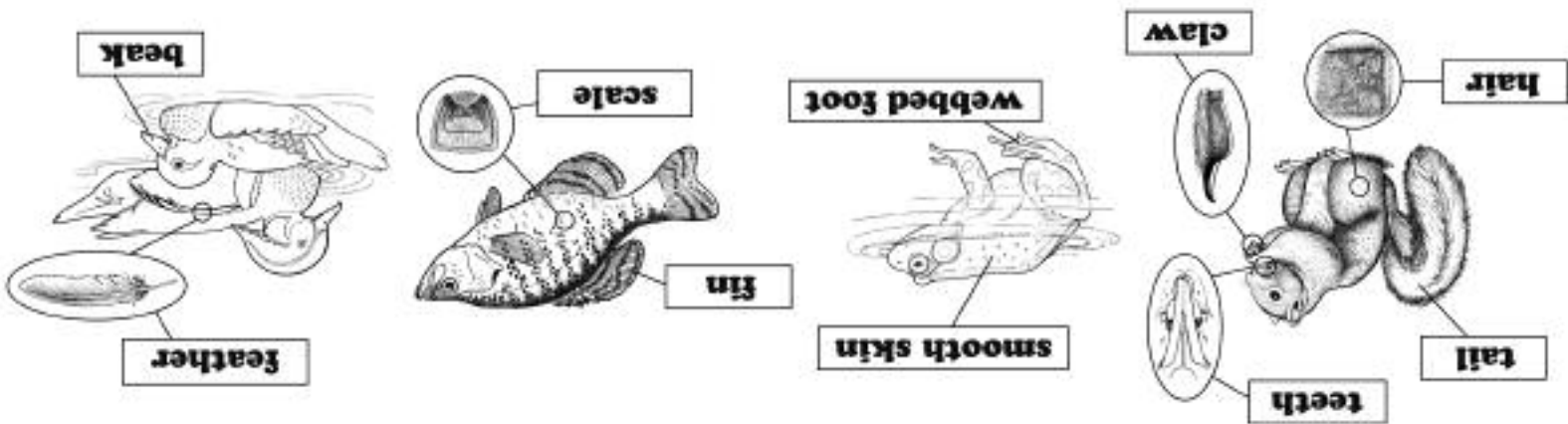
\_\_\_\_\_ White-tailed deer form winter groups.

\_\_\_\_\_ Male deer start to lose the velvet from their antlers.



# Answers

## Part of Me:



## The Right Class:

American woodcock - bird; fox squirrel - mammal; white-tailed deer - mammal; coyote - mammal; woodchuck - mammal; wild turkey - bird; bullfrog - amphibian; wood duck - bird; mourning dove - bird; white crappie - fish; raccoon - mammal; beaver - mammal

## A Year with Wildlife:

snowflake - 2; wildflower - 4; sun - 1; acorn - 3

## Month by Month:

January - L; February - B; March - B; April - H; May - E; June - I; July - D; August - K; September - C; October - J; November - G; December - A

## We Need Each Other:

American woodcock - worm; coyote - mouse; raccoon - crayfish; fox squirrel - hickory nut

## Creature Feature:

1. feet; water; 2. bullfrog; 3. woodcock's; worms; 4. fox squirrel's; gnaw; 5. beaver; tail

## A Year for the White-Tailed Deer:

3; 2; 5; 1; 6; 4



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