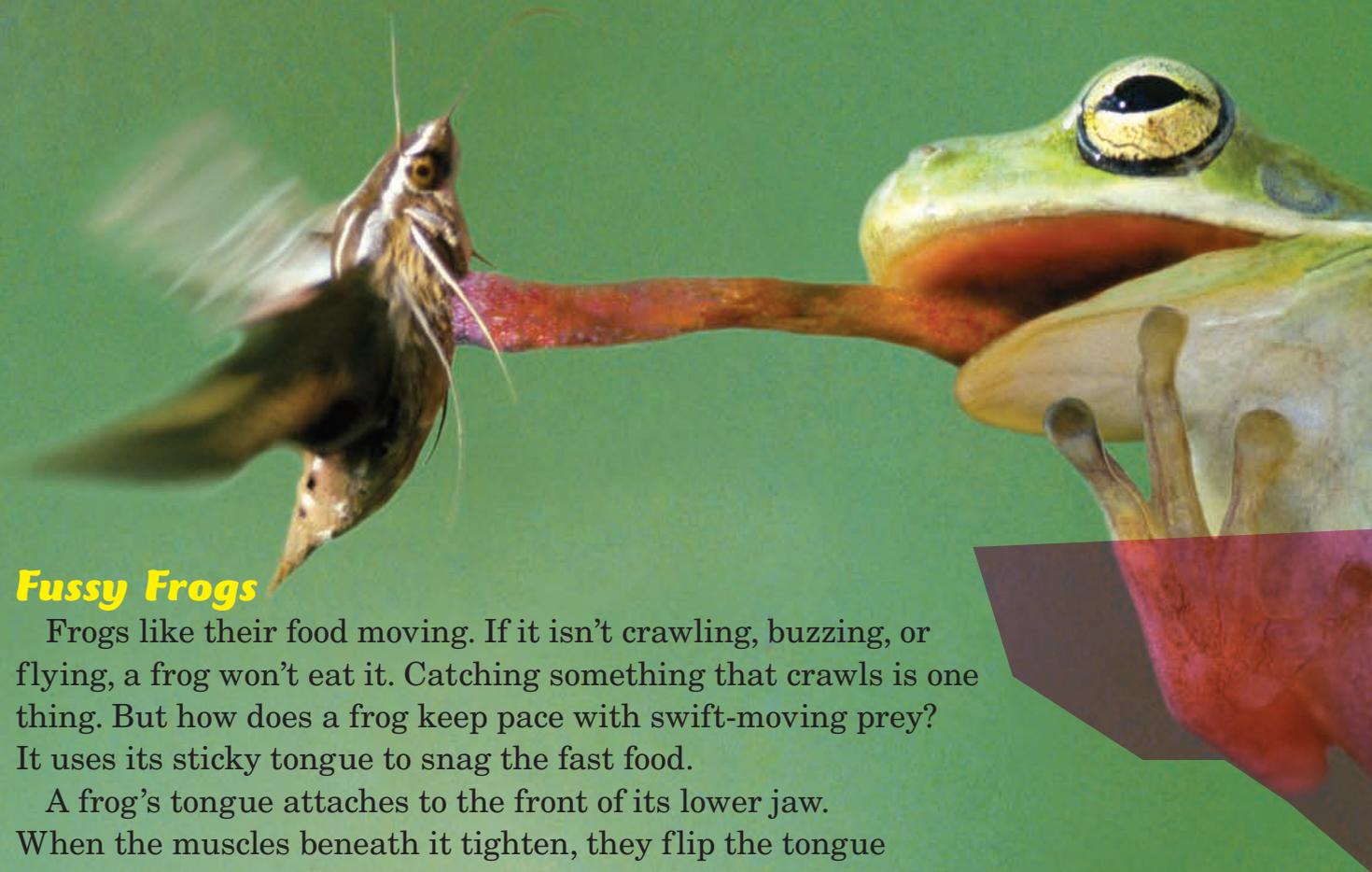


Really Fast Food

It takes only a second for some animals to catch a bite to eat.

By Sue Smith-Heavenrich



Fussy Frogs

Frogs like their food moving. If it isn't crawling, buzzing, or flying, a frog won't eat it. Catching something that crawls is one thing. But how does a frog keep pace with swift-moving prey? It uses its sticky tongue to snag the fast food.

A frog's tongue attaches to the front of its lower jaw. When the muscles beneath it tighten, they flip the tongue forward like a catapult. *Snap!* The end of the tongue flips out. *Slap!* The food is trapped. It's dinnertime!

Busy Bladderwort

Animals aren't the only ones looking for a quick bite. The bladderwort is a meat-eating plant that floats in wet places. It gets its food by setting traps underwater. Small insects trigger the trapdoor and—*snap!*—the door shuts.



Snake Attack!

How fast can a rattlesnake strike? Really fast! To find out just how fast, scientists used a camera that shoots 300 pictures in the time it takes you to blink. That's all the time a snake needs to strike a mouse and return to its starting position.



Flying Falcon

Peregrine falcons are experts at catching food on the fly. When a sparrow is in the air, the falcon will dive. Its streamlined body allows the peregrine to reach diving speeds of close to 200 miles an hour. That's the speed a racecar driver goes around the racetrack.

Hungry Heron

It takes only one tick of the clock for a heron to spear its supper. The heron stands very still in the water, beak pointing down. It waits for an unlucky fish or frog to swim by. *Splash!* If you glance away even for a second, you could miss all the action. **W**

