

MARTIN BROWN'S LESSER SPOTTED ANIMALS

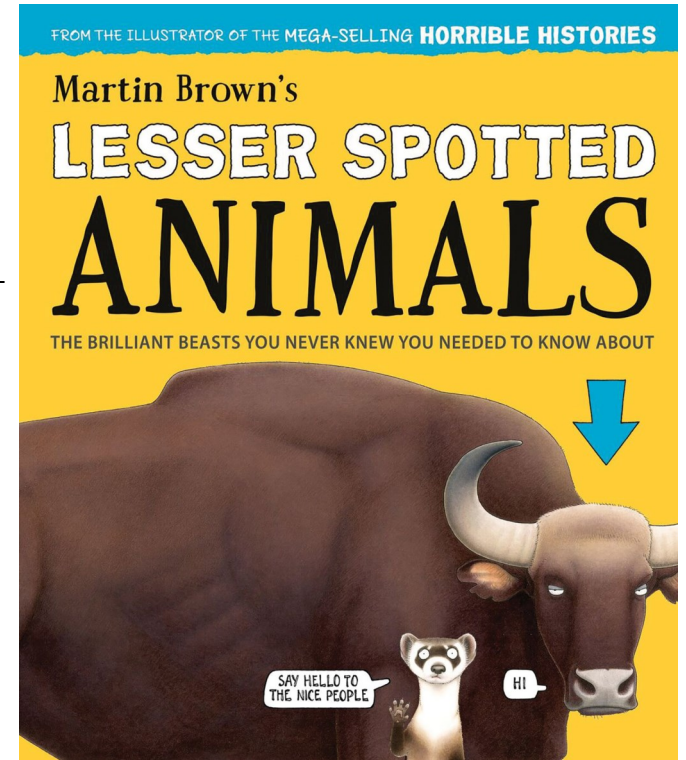
The Brilliant Beasts You Never Knew You Needed to Know About

MARTIN BROWN

Bison are banned and tigers are taboo. Say goodbye to the gnu, cheerio to the cheetah and poo poo to the panda. He world of **Lesser Spotted Animals** starts here! Discover the brilliant beasts you never knew you needed to know about — from the numbat to the zorilla and everything in between.

Martin Brown's wonderfully funny and fact-tastic writing, teamed with his fabulous illustrations and tummy-ticking jokes is a winning combination.

About the author: Martin Brown was born and raised in Melbourne. He started to draw when he was very young, and sought inspiration from on-screen animated characters . After school, Martin studied to be a primary school teacher, but left to work in a television studio for a couple of years. He then travelled around the world, winding up in Britain, where he decided to stay and work . Some of his best-known work includes Terry Deary's **Horrible Histories** series. Martin lives with his wife and two daughters in the countryside in Dorset, England.



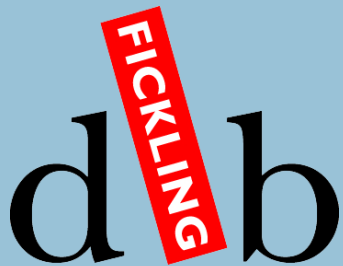
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Study notes written by
Radhiyah Chowdhury

STUDY NOTES

- Why is the title **Lesser Spotted Animals** when not all the animals featured inside are spotted?
- Discuss the tone and layout of **Lesser Spotted Animals**. How might this be different to other, similar kinds of nonfiction books? Compare the book to a standard animal encyclopaedia. Which layout do you prefer and why? Why do you think **Lesser Spotted Animals** is written and designed in this way? Why is the text written using scribbly, hand-written fonts? Why are the animals illustrated rather than photographed?
- Find photographs of the animals featured in **Lesser Spotted Animals**. How do the illustrations compare to the real animal?
- When describing the size of each animal, Martin Brown does not rely on standard measurements. Instead, he compares each animal to something you might be able to picture, such as 'a small skinny cat with a bushy tail' (p 17). Do you find this sort of sizing more or less effective than standard measurements? Pick something in the classroom, such as your desk, a bookshelf or the whiteboard. How can you describe the size of your object in the same way as Martin Brown? For example, your desk might be the length of a child's bicycle.
- How does Martin Brown introduce humour into an informative book? What effect does this have on how you read the information in **Lesser Spotted Animals**?
- Turn to pp 34-35, featuring the gaur. What do you notice about the layout of this page? Why do



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you think the text curves and bumps up against the body of the gaur? How does this illustrate the sheer bulk of the animal in a humorous way?

- Choose one of the animals in the book and examine its physiology. How is it uniquely built for the environment it lives in, its diet and its lifestyle? Draw a diagram of the animal, labelling the different parts of its body and what each part contributes to the animal's lifestyle (eg the desman's long, snorkel-like snout).
- The crabeater seal eats krill, which in turn consume plankton (p 44). This is known as a food chain. Animal life on Earth is sustained by complex food chains, and each link in the chain must be preserved. Research one of the food chains that sustain the animals in **Lesser Spotted Animals** and create an interactive presentation to share with the class.
- Many of the animals featured in this book are endangered, some critically so. Choose one animal and research the challenges it faces further. Compare your findings as a class. What is the most common threat to the animals you have researched? What can be done to protect and boost the species' numbers? What important role do conservationist zoos such as Sydney's Taronga Zoo have when rehabilitating a species' numbers?
- How important it is for animals to have good 'publicity' in order to have their populations and habitats protected? The giant panda, for example, looks cuddly and cute — how do you think this affects conservation and breeding programs dedicated to the panda? How could this impact animals who are also endangered but may not be as camera-friendly as the panda? Create an awareness and publicity campaign for a lesser-known, unattractive animal that is endangered.



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- Human population growth is one of the biggest threats against many animals. Other animals such as the besman, however, are being hunted for human luxury products. Conduct a class debate about the ethics of using animal products. Can we (or should we) completely cut all animal products out of our lifestyles? If not, what restrictions should be placed on which animal products we use? How can these restrictions be policed? Who should be policing them? What penalties could there be for violating the restrictions (consider, for example, if someone has already killed an animal that is listed as endangered, no restriction will bring that animal back to life)? Consider as well that recreational hunting also decimates many native populations of animals. What can be done to bring an end to game hunting in the wild?
- There are many different types of dolphins and porpoises all around the world. Create a class list of as many as you can find, then choose one to create an informative poster about.
- Although there are so many different species of animals that we know about, biologists are still discovering more species every day. Find a recently-discovered animal (www.newsweek.com/21-coolest-new-animal-species-2015-410008 is a good place to start) and present it to the class in a manner similar to the way information is presented in **Lesser Spotted Animals**. Combine the class findings into a new version of the book!