

Ranger Rick's ADVENTURES

STORY BY KATHY KRANKING; ART BY THE CHARACTERSHOP

LAST MONTH, RANGER RICK RACCOON, SCARLETT FOX, AND BOOMER BADGER WERE IN TENNESSEE WHEN BOOMER SAW A WHITE CRAYFISH. HE FOLLOWED THE CRAYFISH, FELL INTO A HOLE, AND LANDED IN A CAVE. THERE HE FOUND A BASKET OF COOKIES THAT THE CRAYFISH HAD LEFT BEHIND. WHEN BOOMER ATE ONE OF THE COOKIES, HE SHRANK! HE THEN FOUND HIMSELF IN AN UNDERGROUND RIVER, BEING CHASED BY A HUNGRY FISH. HE STRUGGLED TO SAVE HIMSELF—AND THE MAGIC COOKIES.



Gasp! I can't swim fast enough!



It's still gaining on me! Wait—I have an idea!



Here, buddy—hope you have a sweet tooth!



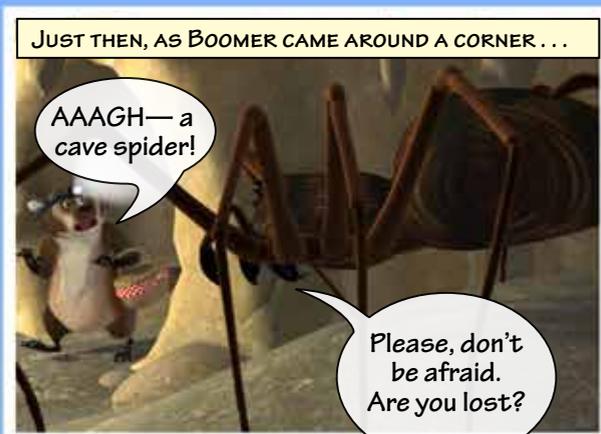
Gulp!



Yay, he's shrinking! See ya later, guppy!



Now to find that crayfish.



JUST THEN, AS BOOMER CAME AROUND A CORNER...

AAAGH—a cave spider!

Please, don't be afraid. Are you lost?



Well, I guess I am. I was following a crayfish and—

Oh, the crayfish. You just missed him. He went that way.



I sure hope I find that crayfish soon. Maybe he can tell me how to get home.

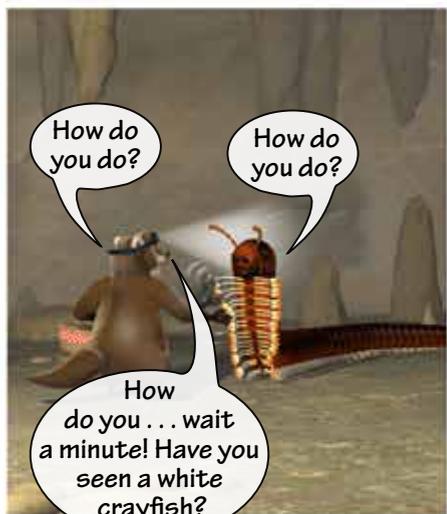


Whoa! I figured I'd run into bats in a cave.

Welcome! This place is home to ALL kinds of creatures—some that live nowhere else on Earth.



Wow! I guess caves really ARE special. And now what do we have HERE? Looks like a millipede.



How do you do?

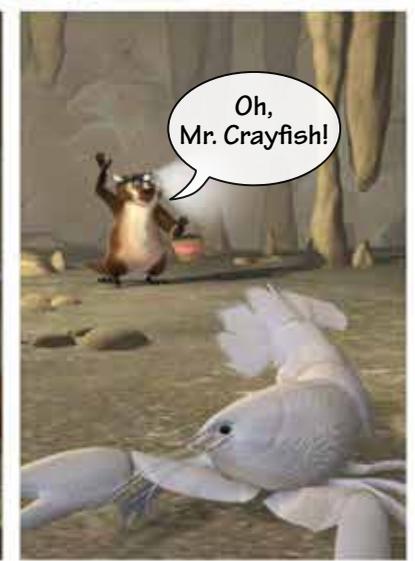
How do you do?

How do you... wait a minute! Have you seen a white crayfish?



He's down there.

Thanks!



Oh, Mr. Crayfish!



I've been trying to find you to return this.

My cookies! How nice of you.



MORE FACTS

- Caves are wonderlands filled with many species of animals. In Tennessee, there are more caves than in any other state. More than 9,600 have already been discovered.
- In the lower 48 states, about 1,000 species of animals live only in caves. Many more species spend part of their lives there. Some cave species are so rare that they could easily become extinct.
- People can harm caves with what they do on the surface above them. For example, polluted water can flow down into caves.
- People can harm some caves just by entering them. They can disturb the bats living there. And they can carry in germs and other harmful material.
- The good news is that many groups are trying to protect caves and the amazing and rare creatures that live there.

Ranger Rick

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