

Friday 28th March

8:30 a.m.

See? I knew that Mrs Curtis would help us to figure out what to do. I remembered reading on that conservation charity's website that they work to stop illegal logging, so Mrs Curtis helped me to send them an email with a copy of our webcam video.

Well, guess what? It turns out that the conservation charity is really pleased with me and Millie. The lady who answered my email said that we should both get jobs as sleuths! I thought she meant sloths at first, but sleuth is actually another word for a detective – like Sherlock Holmes!

Anyway, it turns out that those horrible men who were chopping down those trees were illegal loggers. The lady explained that the Brazilian government awards something called a quota. These quotas give the good loggers permission to clear small parts of the forest but it also controls how much work they're allowed to do each year. This is how the rainforest is supposed to be protected.

Those naughty illegal loggers ignore this. They chop down as many trees as they like, in areas that the

Brazilian government wants to protect and preserve and make off-limits. What nasty tree-stealers!

When the lady read my email and saw the video that I had sent (she said that it was really clever thinking), she called the authorities in Brazil and they rushed into the rainforest and stopped them. It's lucky, because the time in Brazil is three hours behind us in the UK and they were just waking up when we sent the email.

I haven't been back to the forest floor webcam yet to see if the men have gone. I hope that the little potoo is OK. I wish that there was a way to see it and tell it that we'd helped.

11:07 a.m.

How embarrassing! Ms Smeaton called me and Millie up to the front in our school assembly this morning and told everyone that we were heroes.

Millie loved it, of course. She even offered to sign autographs for the little children in the foundation classes. I think that my face has just about stopped glowing red. Mr Paterson said that if my cheeks kept shining so brightly, he'd be able to rent me out to the coastguard as a replacement for the bulbs in one of

their lighthouses. I don't think that Mr Paterson is half as funny as he thinks he is.

Ms Smeaton said that she was really proud of us and that we had done such a good thing, stopping those illegal loggers. She said that we might have saved a part of the rainforest where a new species of animal could be found, or even important medicines which might make it possible for doctors to save millions of people's lives in the future. Millie asked her if we could get something called the 'No Bell Peas Prize' but I told them not to bother because I don't like peas – they make me come out in a nasty rash.

As a reward for being a rainforest hero, Ms Smeaton said that I could take one last look at the webcams in the lesson before lunch. She also said that I can miss the whole lesson so that I can explore properly. Jack Walters isn't talking to me now. Maybe he wanted to be a hero, too, or maybe he just wanted to miss our handwriting lesson.

That didn't matter to me. I didn't care about skipping lessons – I just wanted to get logged on and find my potoo. The last time I had seen it, big, dirty boots and axes had been aimed at it. I needed to know that it was safe.

I checked the forest floor first. It was even darker than before and it must have been raining above the canopy because water was dripping everywhere. I read that the canopy is so thick with leaves and branches that it takes the raindrops as long as ten minutes to reach the floor. For all I knew, it might have already stopped raining higher up.

The forest floor is my least favourite part of the rainforest. It's so gloomy and damp and brown! It's no wonder that so few animals live down here. I couldn't see the potoo anywhere. I did see its little friend, though – the one that looked like a cross between a guinea pig and a rat. It was chomping its way through one of the huge nuts that littered the floor.

The **agouti** (genus *Dasyprocta*) is a tropical American **rodent** with a large head and body but slender legs, small ears and a tiny, bald tail. Agoutis are quite wary animals and are difficult to see. They can move very quickly when threatened and are able to jump up to two metres off the ground. They eat mainly fruits, nuts and seeds.

Habitat





Nearby, I also saw a long line of ants walking along one of the rotting tree trunks. We sometimes get ants in our kitchen during the summer but these ants were nothing like ours – they were massive. I definitely wouldn't want to find those on Mum's worktops!



I quickly did an Internet search.

I'm so glad that those ants were thousands of miles away!

ABOUT

Bullet ants get their name from the shot of intense pain given by their **venomous** sting. Victims may suffer for up to 24 hours after being stung.



As well as hunting for my potoo friend, I was also desperate to see the area that Millie and I had saved. Maybe there was already a family of snakes moving back into their homes. Perhaps the agoutis had already begun to settle back in. Using the arrow keys, I twisted the camera round before zooming in. I wanted to see if what the lady from the charity had said was true – that the loggers were really gone – but I wasn't ready for what I saw.

Nothing.

No trees. No shrubs. No animals. No noise. Nothing. There was only the blurry raindrops falling onto the wet soil, making wide, muddy puddles. The loggers had left boot prints in the dirt and a few of the trees were scars from their axes near the bottom of their trunks.

My heart sank. We may have stopped the logging from continuing, but we weren't quick enough to save this part of the forest. I just hope that we were quick enough to save the tiny potoo.

When I checked the webcam in the emergent layer, it had stopped raining. In fact, the breeze that always seems to be blowing up there had chased all the

clouds away and there was a beautiful, blue sky. I think that the brightly coloured macaws and lovely, blue cotingas were happy that the sun was shining because they were giddily soaring and rolling above the treetops like coloured tissues fluttering about in a breeze.

My potoo wasn't anywhere to be seen. I'd like to see it again, just to make sure that it's OK.

Where are you, potoo?

Daisy's Forest Floor Checklist

- Anacondas
- Jaguars
- Insects
- New type of orchid
- ✓ Potoo
- ✓ Agooty





CANOPY_CAM_02
FRI_28/3_11:46AM

Rainforest Calling

Hey, one-eye, can you hear that wonderful, delightful noise?

Listen!

Surely you can hear it now, right? I'm talking about the blissful sound of...

...absolutely *no chopping!*

Isn't it *amazing*? I can hardly keep still, I'm so excited!

Ah, I see your little red light is glowing brightly again, so I know that you're watching me. It's good to see you again – I've missed you!

I know what you're thinking: maybe your friend Pedro has been eating too many Brazil nuts, right? No, no, no, don't worry – Pedro hasn't gone nutty. Pedro is just a really happy potoo! No chop-chopping is good news for the rainforest. It means that the trees are staying right here, where they belong. It also means that Pedro's friends will all keep their homes, too. How great is that? That's what I call success.

I don't know what you did, one-eye, but it worked! I'm telling myself that you saw those nasty tree-stealers

Rainforest Calling

with your shiny, red one eye and you sent your friends to stop them. Hey, whether that's true or not, it makes Pedro feel good to think that we did this together. I just knew that you would C.A.R.E.! I can tell that you know how important it is to save the forest; you must love this special place as much as we do.

So Pedro wants to do something to thank you. Alice the agouti says 'thank you', too, and Winfrey the boa and Tolle the sloth. Even Rodrigo the show-off macaw sends his thanks, and I've already told you that Rodrigo is usually too in love with himself to think of anything but his pretty feathers, right?

Of course, they also say that Pedro did all the work. They say that without your favourite forest potoo, those chop-choppers would be free to destroy all our precious trees. Between me and you, one-eye, I quite like all the attention – and the free grubs that they keep bringing me, of course. Pedro the potoo is now a forest hero, but we both know that one-eye is a hero as well.

That's why I've decided that you deserve a little reward, too. At first, I thought that you might enjoy some big, plump, wriggly maggots, topped off with a juicy acai berry from one of my favourite trees. Those little gems taste like a rainbow exploding in your beak! Yum, yum!

Rainforest Calling

But then, I remembered that my good friend one-eye hasn't got a mouth or any claws – just that one big eye, huh?

I was discussing this with Tolle the sloth, who remembered that you like looking at pretty things like butterflies and macaw feathers and shiny leaves. So we put our heads together and thought that you might like to be the first to look at some nice colourful flowers, huh?



Rainforest Calling

Haha! Sorry, your partner Pedro couldn't resist getting you a special something. Isn't this flower *amazing*?

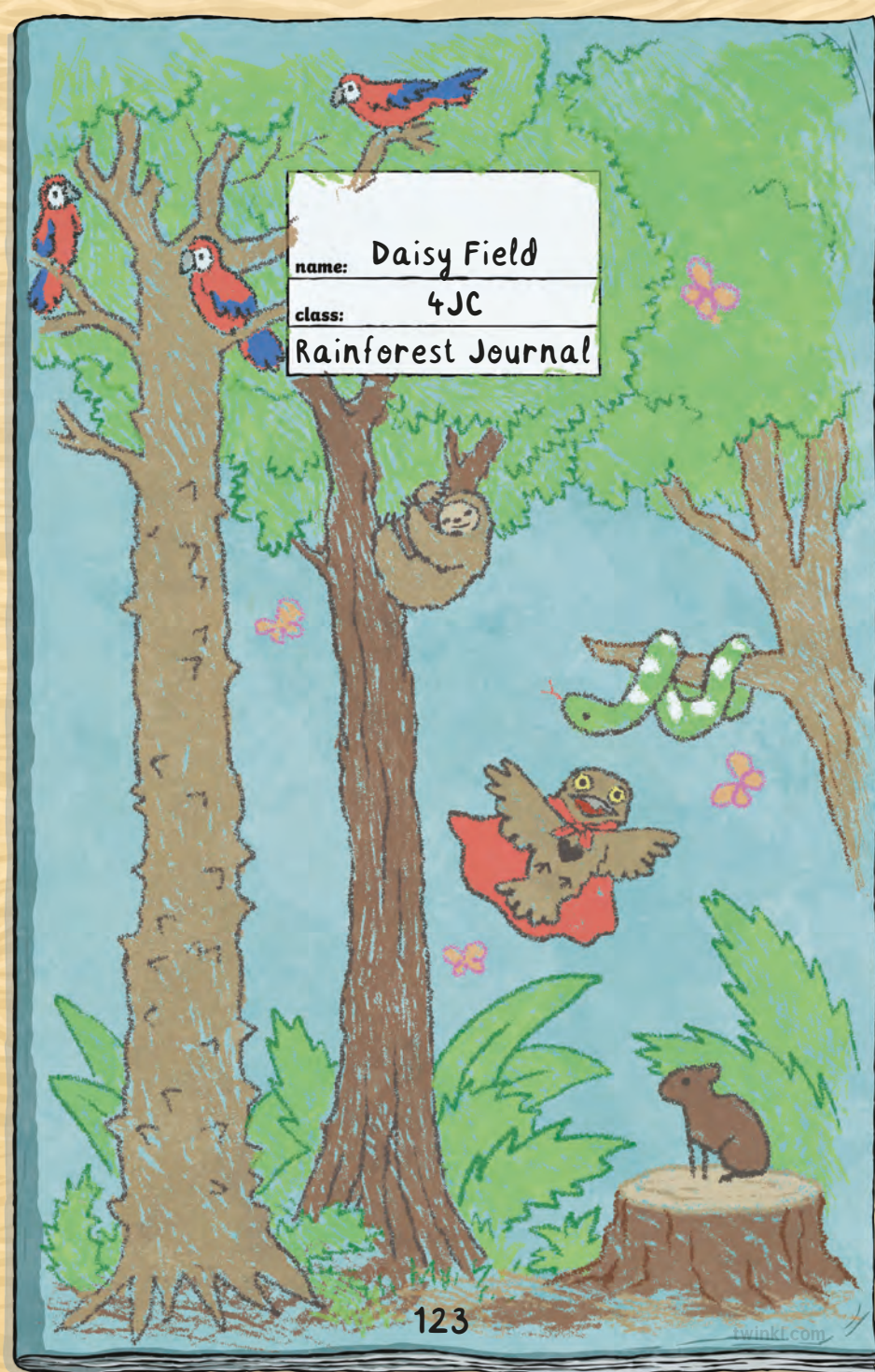
Between me and you, I haven't seen one quite as pretty or patterned as this one anywhere in the forest before – and trust me, one-eye, Pedro has seen a lot of flowers. Maybe our three eyes are the first to ever see this, huh?

This is why I love living in this forest so much – you never know what amazing things you might find. Today, I found this pretty new flower – tomorrow, maybe a new bird or monkey or even a lizard! Next week, Tolle could find a tasty new fruit! Anything is possible in this magical place.

That's why it's so important that we all look after the forest and that we love and enjoy it together. I know that you agree, one-eye. All my friends have decided to stay, too, now that they know that the tree-stealers are gone. I'm so glad that we are all here together – it's our job to C.A.R.E. about the forest, because we all have to share the forest. Comprende?

Rainforest Calling





name:	Daisy Field
class:	4JC
Rainforest Journal	

11:51 a.m. (still Friday)

Just before the lunchtime bell rang, Millie came to see what I was doing. I'm glad, too, because she sat down just before I logged on to the webcams for the final time, in the canopy.

I'd already taken a final look at the camera in the understorey. In fact, I probably stayed too long down there but I really love watching all those amazing butterflies.

Grandma Wilkins is always saying how beautiful flowers are, with so many colourful petals and shades (Mum says that her garden looks like a painter has emptied all his paint pots across her grass). I think that if she saw the rainforest butterflies, even Grandma Wilkins would admit that they're the most beautiful things on earth. Watching them, it's as if someone has chipped little flecks of colour from a rainbow. Next time we do painting or drawing with Mrs Curtis, I'm going to paint my favourite butterfly: the black and red one that looks like it's carrying an old man's moustache on its back.



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Millie says that she prefers bumblebees. Apparently, they help the planet more than butterflies, but butterflies make people happy so I told her that I'm not sure any job is more important than that.

We logged on to the canopy webcam so that Millie could see one of those sleepy sloths and I could keep on looking for my feathered friend. It took us a few minutes to spot the sloth but I didn't really care about it because, right there, sitting on one of the bigger branches, was my potoo. It's really well camouflaged in the trees but I'm getting pretty good at spotting it now. It was sitting quite patiently on a branch and looked healthy and happy. I breathed a huge sigh of relief and couldn't stop myself from grinning.

Millie laughed at me and said that we should probably have given it a name. She thinks that it looks like a Chuckie or an Eggbert, mainly because its eyes look like two egg yolks. My little potoo might seem a bit funny with its bulging eyes and squashed beak but it's really smart and, in its own quirky little way, it's quite cute, too.

Mrs Curtis told me that this is the last time I'll be able to look at the webcams. Our password runs

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out today and it's another school's turn to use the webcams next week. Knowing that this would probably be the last time I'd ever see my potoo friend made me feel quite sad, but I told Millie that I had a cold when she asked me why I was sniffing. I'm sure that she was too interested in watching that sloth hang from its branch to notice me wiping tears from my cheek.

I wondered why the potoo was still hanging around the webcam, even after the loggers had left the forest. It didn't seem agitated or worried any more but it was still staring directly into the lens and chirping away. I even thought that I saw it wink at me, but I didn't tell Millie because she would have said he just had some dust in its eye or that I was imagining things again.

As I watched, searching the screen for anything new to write about before I had to log off for good, my potoo began to bounce around on its branch. It still seemed to be gabbling away and, as it hopped to the side and lifted one wing, I saw what it had been hiding.

I gasped.

Millie jumped. "What?!"

The most wonderful orchid – even more beautiful than any in Grandma Wilkins' collection or in any picture – was growing on the branch beside my potoo. Five petals, each the shape of a teardrop, stretched outwards from the centre. Every one was splashed with an identical pattern of purples, blues, yellows and oranges, and it was truly the most stunning flower that I have ever seen.

We checked the Internet for pictures of other orchids and we couldn't find one that looked as colourful or as beautiful as the potoo's. Millie said that we should send a screenshot to the conservation charity to see if it's a brand new flower. We might even get to name it for Grandma Wilkins!

Even though I was excited by the orchid and seeing my potoo, I had discovered something even more important than either of them. There are probably hundreds or thousands of brand new orchids and insects and animals hidden away in the middle of the rainforest – including Dad's Bigfoot – and I think that's what matters most.

When Mrs Curtis asks me what I've learned from my observations, I'm going to tell her that we've got to look after the rainforest more, so that we can

protect all the amazing things that grow and live there. After all, the rainforests have been around for over fifty million years now, and our job should be to make sure that they're here for another fifty million years, too.

I wonder if that's what the potoo has been trying to tell me all along...



Daisy's Tips for Helping the Rainforest

Every single person can help the rainforest in lots of ways just by making some small changes. Here are the things that I am going to do to help:

1. I'm going to look out for symbols on foods like coffee, chocolate and tea that show which products are certified by charities like the Rainforest Alliance. This means that the products are definitely grown in a sustainable way.

2. Some companies make paper that is environmentally friendly. I'm going to ask my headteacher, Ms Smeaton, if our school can buy our copy paper from one of those.

3. I want to raise funds to donate to an organisation that works to conserve rainforests. I could hold a bake sale, sell some of my old toys or even hold a school fundraiser!

4. Palm oil is a type of vegetable oil that comes from oil palm trees. You can find palm oil in some brands of chocolate, shampoo, lipstick, margarine and soap, just to name a few products! Sometimes, to make way for oil palm plantations, huge areas of rainforests are cut or burned down. When this happens, local people lose their homes and amazing species are put in danger. I'm going to ask Mum if we can stop buying so many products which use palm oil, to help to stop this from happening. When we go out shopping, I'll look for the RSPO or Green Palm label.



5. I want to learn even more about what parts of my daily life rely on tropical forests so that I can appreciate them even more.