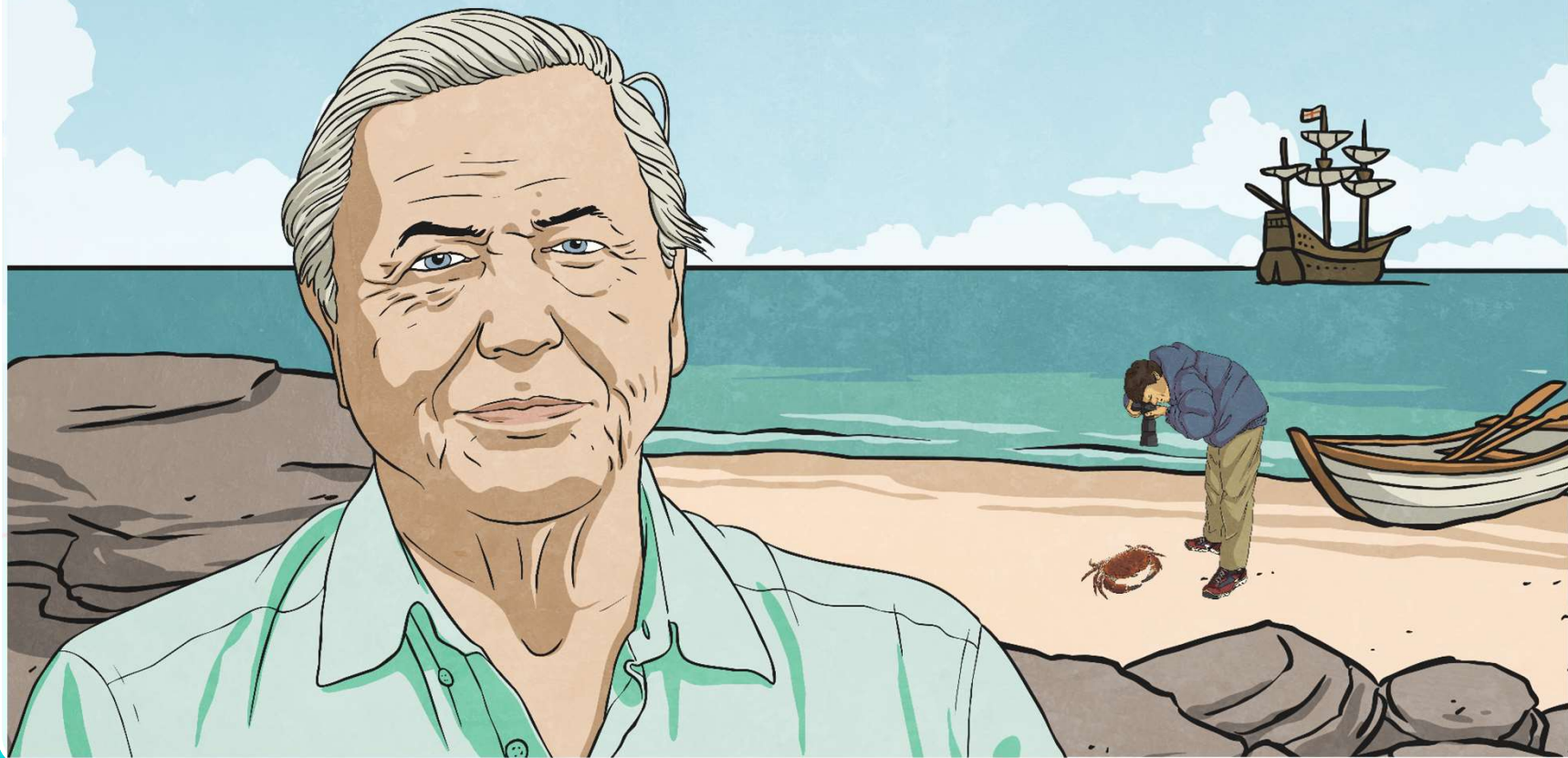


Lesson 5: Stop the Press!

David Attenborough and his Natural World film crew are on their way to your island... a new species of animal has just been found there!

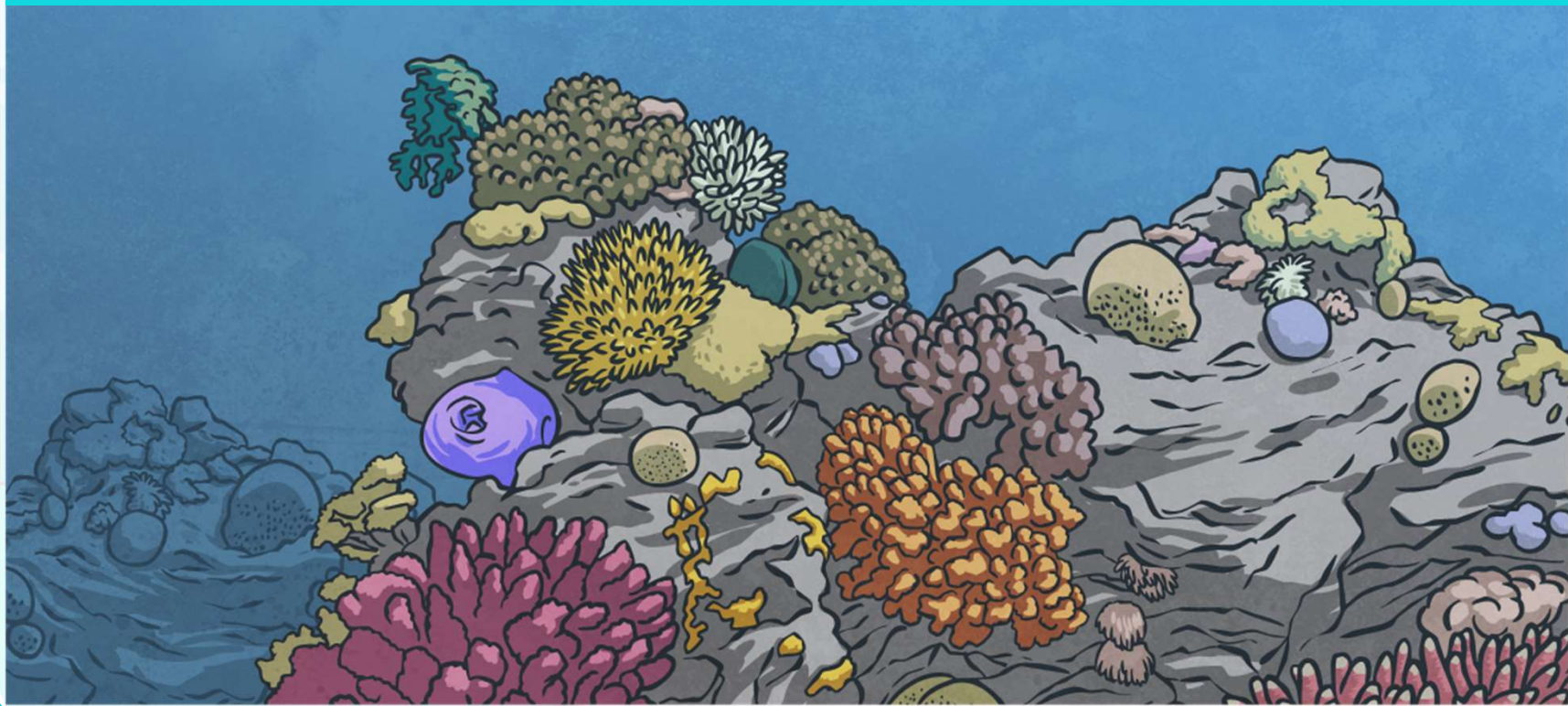


Animal Classification

What is it that has been found?

Is it a vertebrate or invertebrate? Can you remember what these terms mean?

How are vertebrates classified further?



Weird and Wonderful Species

On the next few slides, we'll look at some of the weirdest species of animal that have been found all over the world...

Do any of them have similar characteristics to the discovery on your island?



Weird and Wonderful Species

Pink Fairy Armadillo

The pink fairy armadillo is the smallest species of armadillo – a mammal with a bony shell armour. They are usually found in the sandy plains, dunes and grasslands of Argentina. The species have small eyes, silky yellowish white fur, and a flexible shell that is solely attached to its body by a thin membrane. This unusual creature is nocturnal and has solitary habits, preferring to live alone. Its diet is mainly composed of insects, worms, snails and various plants.

Weird and Wonderful Species

Axolotl

Axolotls are a type of amphibian salamander. They can only be found in Lake Xochimilco, near Mexico City. Unlike other amphibians, axolotls spend their entire life in the water. This unique-looking animal is listed as critically endangered. Their body can be black, mottled brown, albino (without any pigment) or white. Axolotls look like a tadpole with limbs, a dorsal fin and a pair of gills. Unusually, they do not have eyelids! They are carnivores (meat-eaters) and like to eat molluscs, crustaceans and small fish.

Weird and Wonderful Species

Tarsier

Tarsiers are a type of mammal primate. They have enormous eyes and long feet. Their feet have extremely elongated tarsus bones, which is how they got their name. They are insectivores and catch insects by jumping at them. They are mainly found in the forests of the south-east Asian islands of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia.

All tarsier species are nocturnal and they are extremely shy animals.

Weird and Wonderful Species

Kakapo

The kakapo is a nocturnal parrot that has evolved to be flightless due to the absence of predators in its New Zealand habitat. Due mainly to hunting, it is now almost extinct and survives only on three small, intensively managed islands. Dedicated conservation efforts have seen their population increase slowly to just 125 individual birds on the whole planet. The species are the heaviest parrot in the world, and they have a very long life expectancy – living up to 90 years. The kakapo has a herbivorous diet, eating seeds, nuts, fruits, berries and flowers.

Weird and Wonderful Species

Blobfish

Blobfish get their name from their soft fleshly body which lacks muscle or much of a skeleton, making them very floppy when they are taken out of water. They live at such deep depths in the waters off the coasts of Australia and New Zealand (up to 600 and 1200 metres below the water surface) that they don't have the normal air bladder that most fish use to move up and down. If they did, the air bladder would explode because of the extreme water pressure their bodies incur. Blobfish have very large mouths that they use to catch crustaceans as they swim slowly along the floor of the ocean.

Weird and Wonderful Species

Leaf-Nosed Snake

The leaf-nosed snake is native to the island of Madagascar and is found in deciduous dry forests and rainforests. This species has a long tapering snout hence their name. They are unusually rear-fanged and a bite from one would cause severe pain in humans but would not be deadly. They are known to be an ambush predator as their colouration and body shape, which mimic twigs, give it camouflage. They are carnivores and often eat lizards and frogs.

Design Your New Species

Create a fact file for the new species that has been discovered.

New Species Fact File

Draw and label the new species here:	Discuss the main characteristics of the animal (its habitat, diet, predators, animal classification etc).
	

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Questions

- Which animal group does it belong to?
- What does its diet consist of?
- What are its predators?
- What is its natural habitat?
- What makes it unique?
- What does it look like?
- What will you name it?

Reflection

What is your new species called?
What are its main characteristics?

