



Animal Sidekicks

The Tarantula and the Frog



Babysitter

While the tarantula guards the door, the frog keeps an eye on the eggs. Ants sneak by, intending to eat the tarantula's offspring, but the frog eats the ants before they get a chance.





Unusual eggs, right?
They look odd because
tarantulas keep them
in a silken egg sac.



Oops

These two aren't home 24/7, and sometimes they bump into each other when out running errands. Unfortunately, this tarantula hunts other frogs and can mistake its friend for food.



In the jungles of South America, a tiny frog has a slightly unusual roommate – a massive tarantula! The spider, a Colombian lesserblack tarantula, lets the dotted humming frog live in its den and guards it against predators. In return, the frog makes sure ants don't eat the tarantula's eggs.





Predators like snakes would love to eat the frog – if only they could get in ...



I Almost Didn't Recognise You!

Luckily, the spider recognizes its frog friend by its taste and sets it down – no harm done. That could have been awkward.



The Cayote and the Badger



Playmates

This form of teamwork was thought to be purely business, but in 2020 a video of a coyote and a badger playing together went viral.



Better Together

Studies have shown that coyotes that team up with badgers catch more ground squirrels than coyotes that hunt alone. On average, the coyote badger dream team catches a third more! on the prairies of North America, coyotes and badgers often team up to form impressive hunting duos.



While the coyote patrols above ground, the badger scurries after prairie dogs underground. Whoever catches something first gets the spoil.



On the Menu

Coyotes and badgers aren't especially fussy, but their dinner of choice is usually made up of prairie dogs or ground squirrels – two den-dwelling species of the plains.



The Bats and the Figs



Lots of things in the natural world try to avoid being eaten, but these figs are hoping to become bat food! When bats eat figs, they unintentionally act as fig farmers, planting seeds across the forest.



Bat Airlines

When the bat eat a fig, it carries its seeds in its poo. The bat gets a meal, the fig seeds get a ride!



Designed to be Delicious

Because fig trees benefit from bats eating their fruit, the figs have changed over time, or evolved, to make sure they're super tasty.



Echo Detectors

In the dark of night, bats can't see with their eyes very well, so they use a special system called echolocation. They make high-pitched squeaks, which bounce back to them off different objects. That way they know what's there.



Different Figs, Different Species

Some fig tree species are so reliant on bats for reproduction that they've evolved to attract specific bat species. Notice how different types of bat are eating different types of fig?



Great Fruit
Eating bat



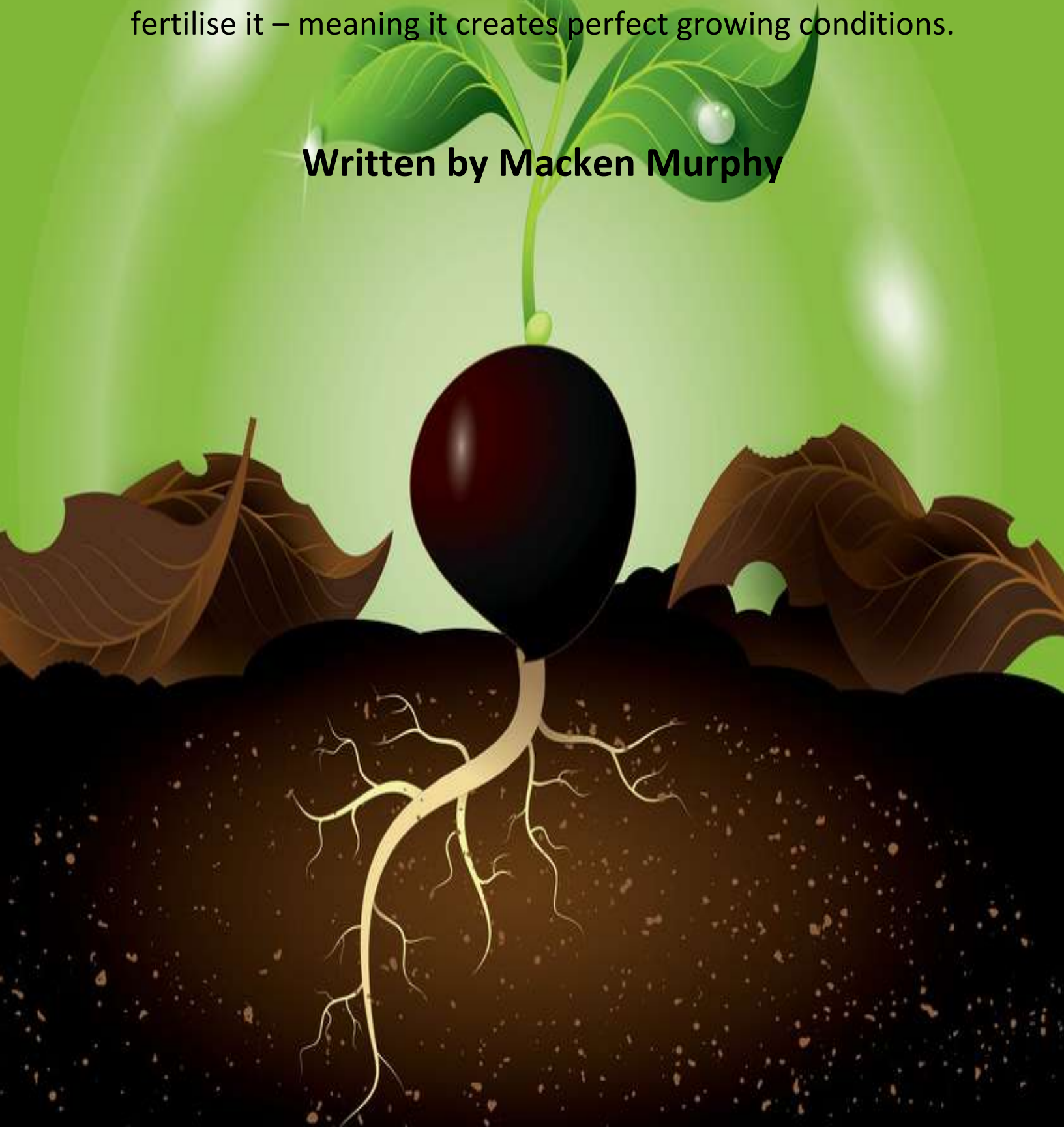
Leaf Nosed
Bat



Planting With Poo

When bats go to the toilet, the seed goes through them unharmed. They've brought the seed to a new location and their poo helps fertilise it – meaning it creates perfect growing conditions.

Written by Macken Murphy





THINK

DIGITAL ACADEMY