

ACTIVITY PACKET

Created in Partnership with Disney's Animals, Science and Environment



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Acknowledgment

Disney's Animals, Science and Environment would like to take this opportunity to thank the amazing teams that came together to develop the National Geographic "LION" Activity Packet. It was created with great care, collaboration and the talent and hard work of many incredible individuals. A special thank you to Dr. Mark Penning for his ongoing support in developing engaging educational materials that connect families with nature. These materials would not have happened without the diligence and dedication of Kyle Huetter who worked side by side with National Geographic to help create these compelling activities and authored the unique writing found throughout each page. Special thanks to Emma Leslie whose creative thinking and artistry developed the activities that blends the world of lions with fun and outdoor exploration. Lastly, thank you to our collaborators at National Geographic for their help and unwavering support of this project.

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Disney's Animals, Science and Environment



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

LION

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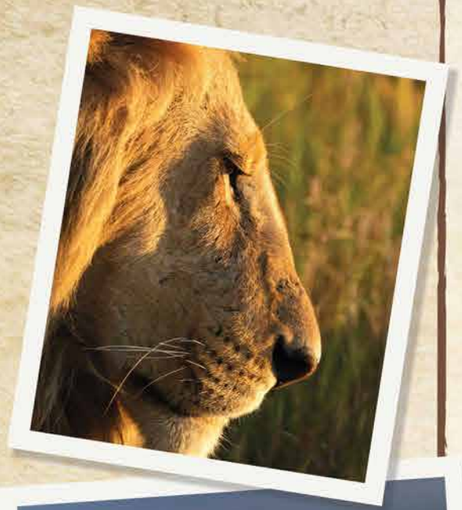
From "The Lion King" director Jon Favreau and BBC Studios executive producer Mike Gunton comes the extraordinary true story of a lion cub named Kio on his epic journey to become a king. Filmed over four years, this sweeping saga of family, hope and courage follows Kio as he grows from a vulnerable cub into a powerful leader. Along the way, he faces loss, exile and fierce rivals in a fight to survive. Combining cinematic storytelling with groundbreaking natural history filmmaking, this series captures the complete coming-of-age story of a lion — and the remarkable making of a king.

Now streaming on Disney+ and Hulu.

"LION" is produced by BBC Studios Natural History Unit for National Geographic. Jon Favreau and Mike Gunton executive produce the series. Jane Atkins is series producer, and Simon Blakeney is co-executive producer. For National Geographic, Janet Han Vissering and Tom McDonald executive produce.

Photos for National Geographic by Claire Arthur, Eric Averdung, Simon Blakeney, Sophie Darlington, Hannah Gormley, Laura McCamley, Domenico Pontillo, Claire Spelling, Rolf Steinmann, Joe Treddenick

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Protect the Pride

In celebration of National Geographic's "LION," Disney is continuing the "Protect the Pride" campaign, supporting the Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) and its partners working across Africa with the vision to help double the number of lions in the wild by 2050. Since the campaign launched in 2019, Disney has invested more than $5M in LRF, whose network has helped support more than 400 conservation projects across 26 countries focused on stabilizing and recovering lion populations through locally led solutions.



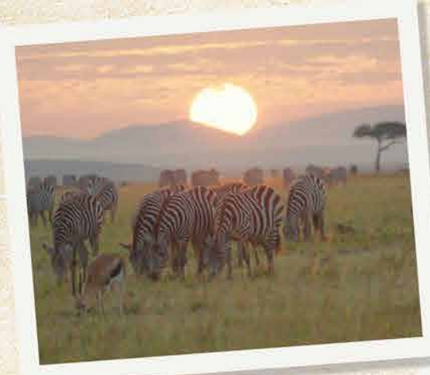
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The African savanna conjures up images of one of the most wild and beautiful places on Earth. Vast herds of antelope feeding on endless grasslands, rivers filled with hippos and crocodiles, and rows of wildebeest, silently walking head to tail along their traditional migration routes. This is the habitat of lions.

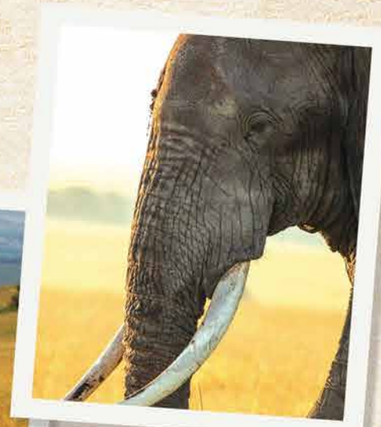
Welcome to the African Savanna, HOME OF LIONS

Often called the "King of the Jungle," lions are one of the world's most recognizable species and as the top predator of their ecosystem, they are a powerful symbol of nature. They once roamed from Europe to the southern tip of Africa, and from West Africa all the way to India. Unfortunately, their historic range has been dramatically reduced with lions now only found in small numbers in pockets across sub-Saharan Africa. A century ago, the world counted over 200,000 lions roaming the Earth, today that number is likely just 23,000. Though these numbers seem daunting, we are all citizens and caretakers of the planet, and together, through creative problem-solving and awareness, we can help protect these magnificent animals and the places they call home. The positive actions you take, both big and small, can help make a difference for lions and communities across Africa.

You can make the first step by turning to the pages ahead and learning about lions, the role they play in the environment and how these unique animals live in one of the most dynamic ecosystems on Earth.

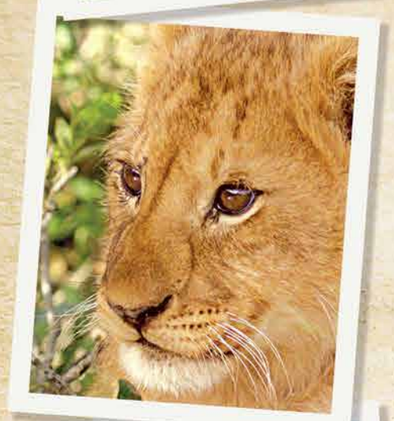






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SURVIVING On The SAVANNA

Africa's wildlife is legendary; perhaps none so much as one of its most well-known predators, lions. Since the beginning of recorded history, these cats have fascinated and inspired us with their power, fierceness and beauty. Unfortunately, today these amazing animals face an uncertain future. Within Africa, lions have suffered a steep decline in both range and numbers. A century ago, there were perhaps 200,000 lions, today there are likely 23,000 with lion numbers declining by nearly half in the last 25 years alone.

Lions have a declining population trend due to reduced habitat and prey, and increased competition within parks and reserves. Lions are forced to move between these protected areas and farmlands resulting in farmers killing lions out of fear that they will take their livestock or in retaliation for livestock losses. Lions are also poached for meat and for the money that can be made from illegal trophy hunting. In wildlife conservation, challenges that impact many stakeholders, or interested individuals, are common and often require thinking outside the box. Conservation is not an easy task when social, political and environmental challenges are in the mix. For example, in Africa, human-wildlife conflict often occurs when a farmer's livestock is preyed upon by lions. This can be a challenging problem to solve when communities are losing resources that provide food and an income to their families.

Head to the next page to discover how lions navigate their habitat and how you can help them stay clear of threats to survive on the savanna.



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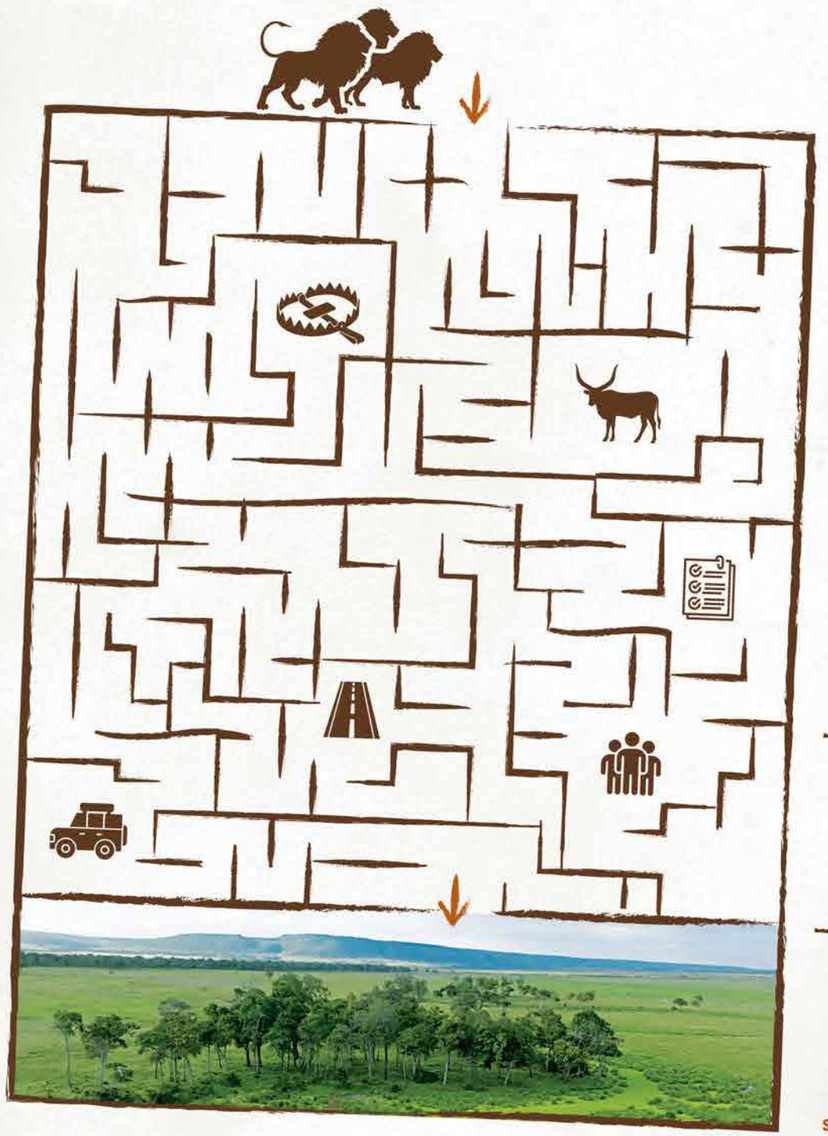
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THE BAND OF BROTHERS

At around two years of age, male cubs are forced out of their family pride. While female cubs are allowed to stay and eventually have cubs of their own, the males must find new prides to take over. Oftentimes, the banished males form small groups, called coalitions and roam long distances searching for a dominant male they can overthrow.

Help Kio and his band of brothers find their new pride in the Musiara Marsh in the Maasai Mara by completing the maze below. Along the way, the lions will come across icons that represent human-made conditions that may slow down their travels. Discover which scenarios to avoid and which they can safely pass through to become kings.



Mark your findings:

(An area is safe to roam if you can pass through one icon to the next without getting stuck.)

A farmer and their livestock is up ahead.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

A poacher's camp and their snares are nearby.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Rules are enforced in this area on mining practices.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

This local town fundraises each year to support park rangers.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

A busy highway separates these two lion habitats.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

A safari truck from a reputable, eco-tourism company can be heard in the distance.

IS THIS AREA SAFE TO ROAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO

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Kopje Photo: stock.adobe.com

A LION SAFARI

From deserts and grasslands to snow-capped peaks, Africa is filled with a diversity of habitats. One of the most recognizable ecosystems when we think of this massive continent is the African savanna, an amazing and complex grassland characterized by year-round warm temperatures and seasonal rains that produce from 20-50 inches (51-127cm) of rain each year. Rising from the vast grasslands, outcroppings of rocks known as kopjes (pronounced "ko-pees") stand out like rocky islands in a sea of grass. These outcroppings provide shade and protection from fire, rain and sun, and are used by a variety of African animals, including lions.

As the top predator within their ecosystem, lions play an important role as keystone species of the African savanna. Keystone species are animals within an ecosystem that if they were to be removed, the ecosystem would change drastically. As a keystone species, lions ensure populations of prey species don't grow too large and exceed their available food supply. By removing sick and weak animals from herds, lions help prevent overgrazing, starvation and disease that would eventually impact all species on the savanna. Without lions, the entire African savanna would be dramatically different, and the circle of life would become unbalanced.

Lions are unique and complex animals and scientists who study their behaviors are constantly learning more about their role as a keystone species.

Head to the next page to further your own lion knowledge by completing a unique word puzzle.



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FIND THE FEATURES

Complete the definitions below with the correct term by shading in the letters to spell each word, skipping over letters as needed.

The first one has been completed as an example.



A GROUP OF LIONS	P	C	R	O	L	I	L	A	B	D	E
A YOUNG LION UNDER THE AGE OF ONE	O	C	R	A	U	T	I	V	E	B	R
THICK HAIR AROUND THE NECK OF A MALE LION	E	S	I	M	L	A	N	I	E	E	N
A FEMALE LION	L	I	T	O	N	P	N	E	S	A	S
THE ICONIC VOCALIZATION OF LIONS	R	T	I	O	A	E	N	T	R	R	E
THE CLAWED, PADDED FEET OF A LION	S	O	P	U	R	A	C	W	E	F	S
A LION'S ROLE IN THE FOOD CHAIN	P	U	R	E	L	D	A	T	P	O	R
A GROUP OF MALE LIONS	C	O	A	R	L	I	O	T	I	O	N
THE FUR THAT COVERS A LION'S BODY	T	E	C	C	T	O	I	A	V	E	T
A HIGH ROCKY POINT LIONS LIKE TO SIT ON	K	F	O	I	E	P	R	J	C	E	E

Lions are strong apex predators and an important keystone species in their ecosystem. Many of the amazing attributes that help them turn challenging times into triumphant transformations are found in people too! The remaining letters not shaded in above highlight some of their most powerful strengths:

_ _ _ _





Apex ADAPTATIONS

Drought, heat, rain, sun, predators, rocks and harsh terrain: life on the savanna isn't easy! Fortunately, lions have unique characteristics, or adaptations, that allow them to survive in this beautiful, yet harsh environment.

Strength, power and an iconic mane – these physical traits that make lions so memorable provide them with the tools to hunt and survive life on the savanna.

Lions usually hunt at night, when they use their exceptional hearing, tan camouflaged coloration, stealth and strength to locate, stalk and ambush their prey. To better navigate these low light times, lion eyes have a tapetum lucidum. This highly reflective layer of the eye gives lions excellent night vision allowing them to move easily in the dark and judge distance when hunting. In addition to their eyes, lions rely heavily on their ears when hunting. They have an acute sense of hearing and constantly move and rotate their ears for better sound location of prey. Using their powerful, heavily muscled front legs and shoulders, a lion can knock down a full-grown zebra or stun a large antelope simply with a blow to the head or hindquarters with their massive forepaws. A lion's claws are retractable, which allow them to stay sharp for hunting and their large, sharp canine teeth are used for biting, holding onto prey and tearing large chunks of meat. Much like the tongue of house cats, lions have rough tongues covered with tiny hooks called papillae which help to scrape flesh off bones when eating. Even a lion's tail has purpose, aiding in balance when running and in communicating with other members of the pride.

All these physical characteristics help lions stay at the top of the food chain as the apex predator of the savanna. Head to the next page to use your new lion knowledge to put together a hidden picture of these fierce cats.



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ASSEMBLE THE ADAPTATIONS

Lions have some amazing adaptations that help them remain the kings and queens of the savanna. Learn all about them by completing the puzzle below! First, cut out the answer squares along the dotted lines. Then, read each adaptation description and choose the best answer square to match. On the puzzle board, place the answer square on the corresponding number. When you've finished, the answer board should reveal an image! If any squares look out of place, check your answers and try again.

11	12	8
10	5	2
4	7	6
1	3	9

1. Males use this special hair to attract mates and warn potential threats.
2. Sharp canine _____ are designed to help catch prey.
3. This is covered in tiny hooks called papillae to help with grooming and eating.
4. Retractable _____ are long and curved, like fishhooks, to help grab prey when hunting.
5. These allow for a sharp sense of hearing to locate prey.
6. A reflective layer in their _____ gives lions excellent night vision.
7. This helps a lion balance when running. Lions are the only cats to have a tuft at the end!
8. Padded _____ increase traction when running and allow for a silent approach when stalking prey.
9. These long, special hairs detect air currents and prey movement.
10. This helps cubs and adults camouflage into their environment.
11. Powerful jaw muscles attach to their massive _____.
12. Loose skin on the stomach that gives protection and flexibility.

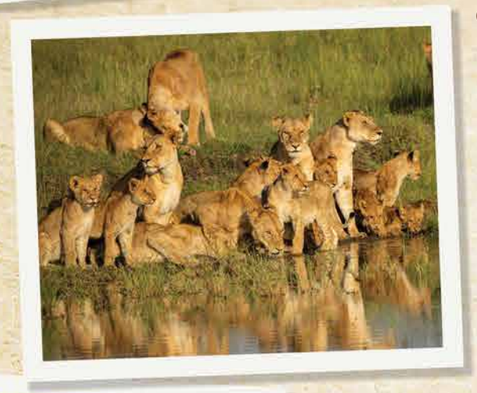


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GROUP LIVING

Unlike most members of the cat family, lions are very social animals living in family groups called prides. Lion prides usually consist of one resident male (or even two to three brothers), along with a core of related females (mothers, sisters, cousins and aunts) and their cubs. The males help the females by protecting the pride while the females do most of the hunting. Unlike other big cats who hunt alone, lions find strength in numbers, and they are the only species of cat that lives and hunts in groups. Hunting as a group increases their opportunity to stalk and ambush prey and to hunt much larger animals than a single lion on their own. When lions are not hunting, they're typically resting, often sleeping up to 20 hours a day.



Prides raise their young communally, with all females sharing the responsibility of caring for cubs, even if they are not their own. The dominant male of the pride does not directly care for cubs but does protect the cubs and females from harm and other male lions interested in taking over their pride. Lions groom the fur of others in their group with their hard, rough tongues. Grooming maintains social bonds and promotes group cohesion.



Just like lions, all of us have social bonds with groups of people that help us in the roles they play. It may be your family, classmates, a sports team or a club you are a part of. Within these groups, individuals may have specific responsibilities that ensure we are thriving each day and are set up for success. Head to the next page for a fun game that challenges you to think of who these individuals are.



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RELIABLE ROLES

Lion prides prove that there is strength in numbers! Successful hunting, cub survival and territory protection is all increased when each lion plays their part in the collective group. Play the game below by rolling through the roles of a pride and thinking about the people around you that make a positive mark on your life.

First, construct your paper dice:

1. Cut out the pattern along the border.
2. Add GLUE to the marked flaps.
3. Turn the pattern into a cube by folding along the dotted lines.

Then, play the game solo or with a friend:

1. Roll the dice.
2. Read the side that lands face up to learn more about lion pride dynamics.
3. Answer the prompt by thinking about the people in your pride—like friends, classmates, family members, teammates or other community members.

Adult female lions do most of the hunting.

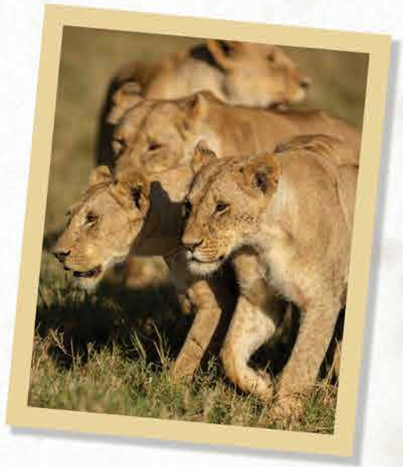
Who do you know that enjoys grocery shopping or cooking meals?



Cubs play with each other to learn important skills.

Who do you enjoy learning and playing with?





GLUE

Adult female lions work together to raise all the cubs.

Who do you know that is a natural caretaker or good with kids?



GLUE

Young male lions leave their family pride to strike out on their own.

Who do you know that likes to travel or do their own thing?



GLUE

The job of adult male lions is to protect the pride.

Who do you know that always looks out for others?



GLUE

GLUE

Young males will try to take over new prides from dominant males.

Who do you know that challenges others to be strong?



GLUE

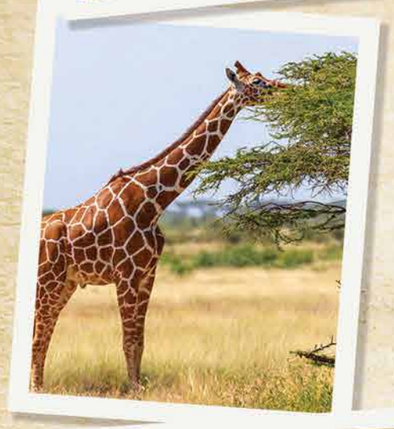
More food for thought:

Lion prides are dynamic and hierarchies shift over time, especially when a new male is in charge.

Think about your pride five years ago, how was it different? What do you think your pride will look like five years from now?

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Giraffe Photo: stock.adobe.com

We Are ALL CONNECTED

All living things, from the smallest ant to the mightiest lion, interact with each other in a variety of ways. Herbivores like elephants, zebras and wildebeest eat plants, which provides room for more plants to grow. Carnivores, like lions, cheetahs and painted dogs eat other animals which prevents them from overpopulating. Plants provide food for some animals. In turn, those animals help the plants to reproduce by pollinating and dispersing seeds. Even after plants and animals die, they provide food for decomposers, such as millipedes, fungi and bacteria. These recycle nutrients back into the environment, continuing the circle of life.

From dry deserts and tropical rainforests to the deepest parts of the ocean and even your own backyard, this circle can be found in ecosystems all over the world. Have you ever stepped outside to observe nature, discovering the types of birds flying near your home or which flowers bloom during spring? All around you the circle of life is in motion, even if you can't see it. Scientists and conservationists from around the world are investigating the circle of life every day with the goal of protecting nature. By identifying and understanding how animals interact with each other and their ecosystems, scientists can determine their habitat needs, identify reasons for their decline and address human-wildlife conflicts. Whether observing from near or far, you can practice your own observation skills by stepping outside to explore the natural world.

Head to the next page to start your own journey of documenting the natural connections in your ecosystem. You might just be surprised at the tiny worlds thriving near you!



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NATURE'S COLLABORATORS

Lions are excellent team players both within their prides and out on the savanna! Along with all the other plants and animals in their habitat, they work together to keep their ecosystem healthy and balanced. Learn how plants and animals on the African savanna are all connected in the circle of life below. Then head outdoors with an adult to a favorite nature spot, like a nearby park or your own backyard, to see if you can find living things in your area that fit the same roles.



1. **Grass is the foundation of the food chain on the African savanna.** Draw a plant from your area that is a primary food source for herbivores.
2. **Zebras eat the tall, tough grass so other herbivores can access the easier to digest, shorter grasses.** Draw an animal from your area that shares a food source with another animal.
3. **Buffalo are a vital food source for top predators.** Draw an animal from your area that helps keep predator populations healthy and strong.
4. **Lions are apex predators that help control herbivore populations.** Draw a carnivore from your area that helps keep populations of smaller animals in check.
5. **In addition to hunting, hyenas also act as nature's clean up crew, scavenging food that is left over from carnivores.** Draw a scavenger from your area that keeps the ecosystem healthy and prevents the spread of diseases.
6. **Dung beetles clear and bury animal waste which recycles nutrients back into the soil.** Draw a decomposer from your area that creates healthy soil for plants to grow.

Photos 2, 5 and 6: stock.adobe.com

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Now streaming Disney+ hulu

DisneyPlus.com/Whats-On

Parents, You Can Listen to the "LION" Soundtrack Available 8/21

Music by: Hans Zimmer, Niccolò Pacella and George Hutson Warren

Disclaimer: Users must have access to a major music screaming service to access the Soundtrack. Data rates may apply.