

# **How & Why Animals Hatch from Eggs**



A hen has laid her eggs in a nest of straw. The eggs are precious. Inside each one, a baby bird is growing. The hen sits on the nest, covering the eggs with her feathers. She must keep the eggs warm until they are ready to hatch.

Like chickens, all birds hatch from eggs. So do frogs, salamanders, and many fish, snakes, and insects. An egg is a perfect package for a growing baby. Its shell or covering protects the baby, and its yolk provides all the food the baby needs.





Three weeks after the hen lays an egg, the chick inside is ready to come out. It uses its bill to chip a hole in the egg's hard shell. It keeps chipping, all the way around the shell.





Then it pushes the broken shell apart and greets the world. Its downy feathers are wet, but they will soon be dry and fluffy.

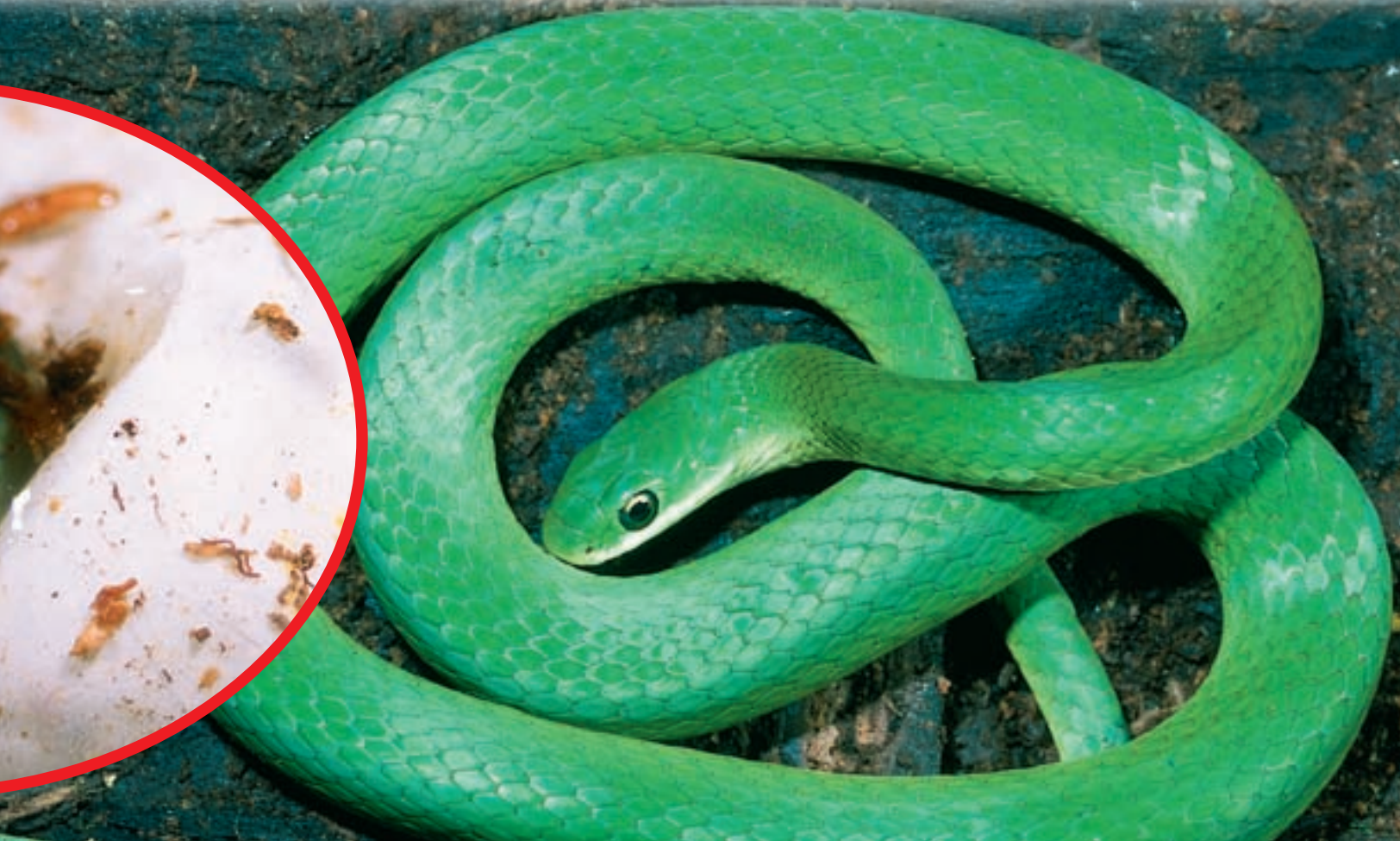


The green snake hides her eggs in a rotting log. Then she slithers away. When the baby snake is ready to hatch, it pushes through the thick, rubbery shell.





The little snake is ready to live on its own. It already knows how to hunt for insects and other small prey.

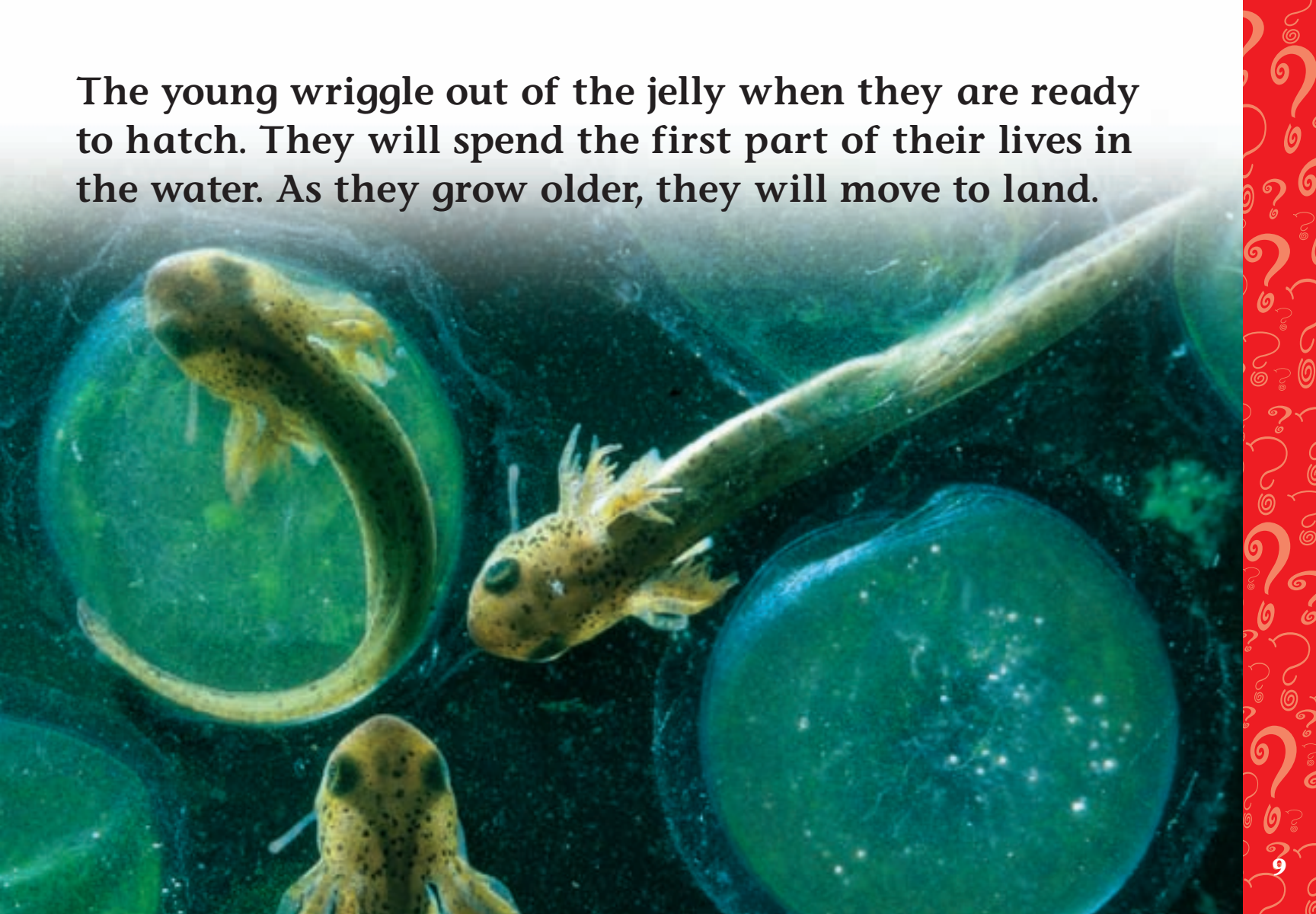


The spotted salamander lays her eggs in water, coating them with jelly. The jelly protects the eggs and holds them to an underwater branch.





The young wriggle out of the jelly when they are ready to hatch. They will spend the first part of their lives in the water. As they grow older, they will move to land.



**A painted turtle lays her eggs in a shallow hole she has made in sandy soil. She covers the eggs with sand to hide them from birds and other animals that might eat them. Then she returns to the pond where she lives.**

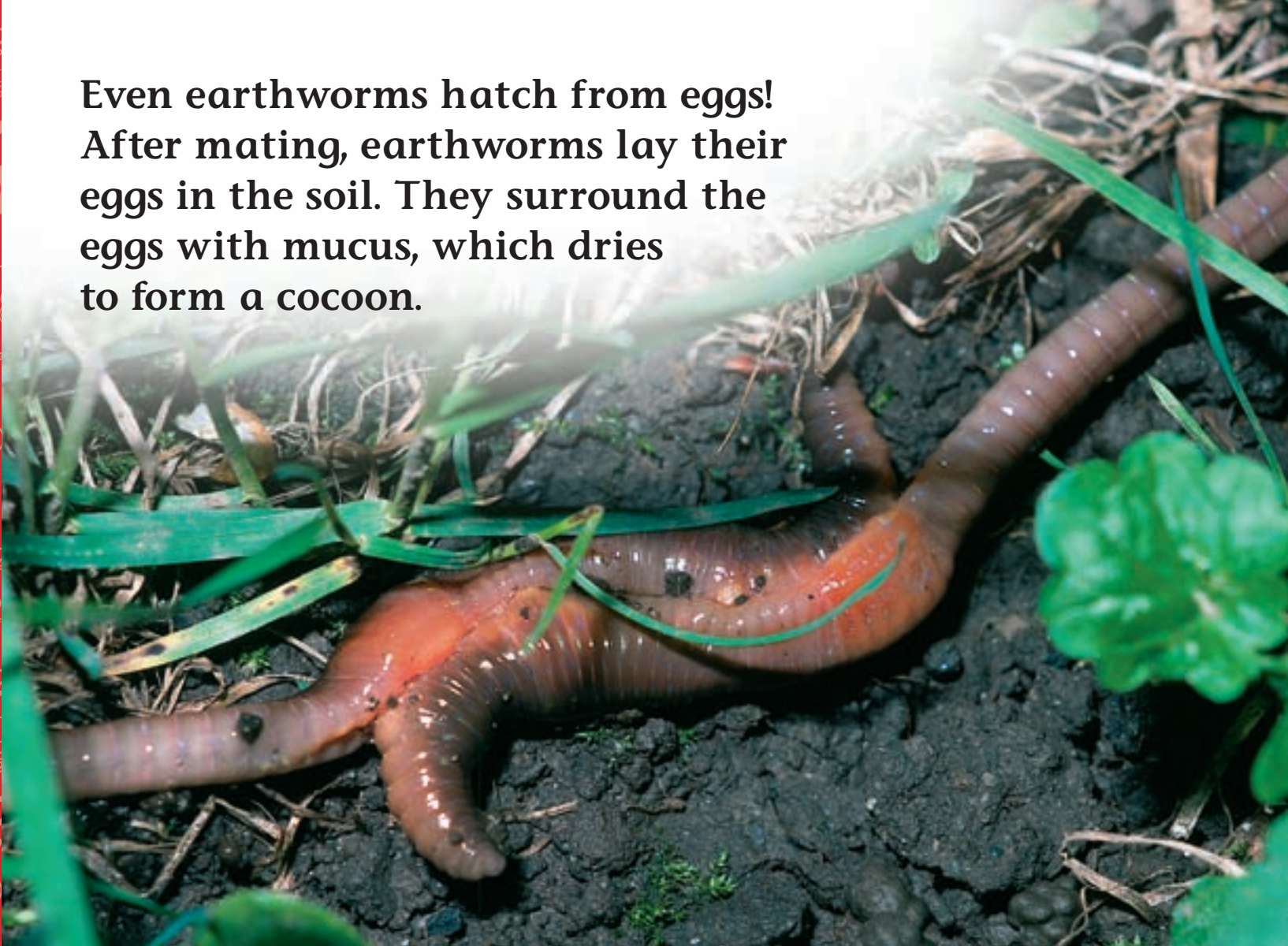


**When the baby turtles hatch, they climb out of their sandy nest and head for the water.**

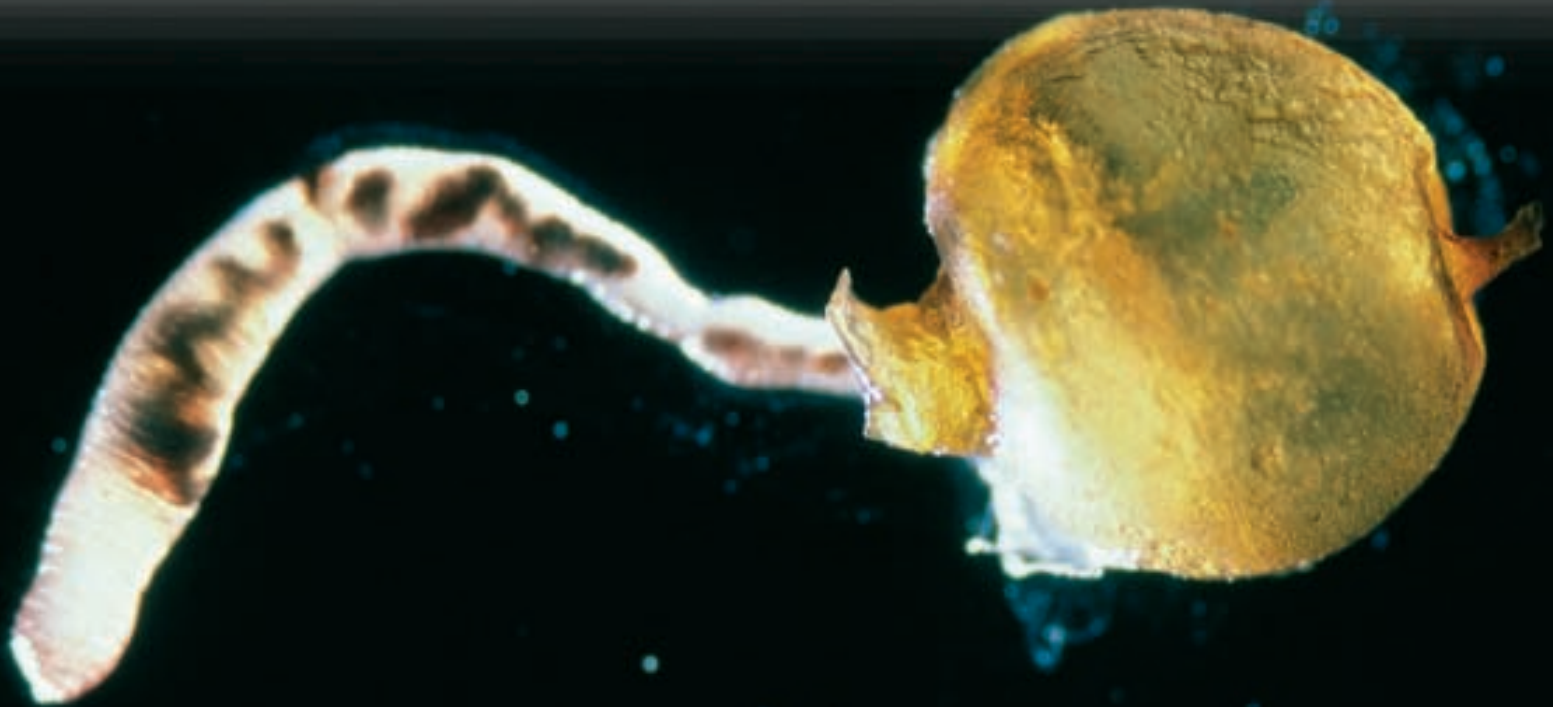




**Even earthworms hatch from eggs!  
After mating, earthworms lay their  
eggs in the soil. They surround the  
eggs with mucus, which dries  
to form a cocoon.**



The cocoon lies in the ground for two to three months. Then tiny new earthworms crawl out of the eggs and wriggle away.



**A ladybug lays her eggs on the underside of a plant leaf. She picks the plant carefully to make sure it is one where aphids are found. Aphids are tiny insects that feed on plant juices. They are the ladybug's favorite prey.**





The young, called larvae, start hunting for aphids as soon as they hatch. The larvae will grow and change into adults. Then they will mate and lay eggs of their own.



**Use the information in this book to answer some “how and why” questions.**

- Why does a hen sit on her eggs?
- How does a chick make a hole in its eggshell?
- Why is a baby snake ready to live on its own?
- How does the spotted salamander protect her eggs?
- Why does the painted turtle cover her eggs with sand?
- Why do ladybugs lay their eggs on plants with aphids?