

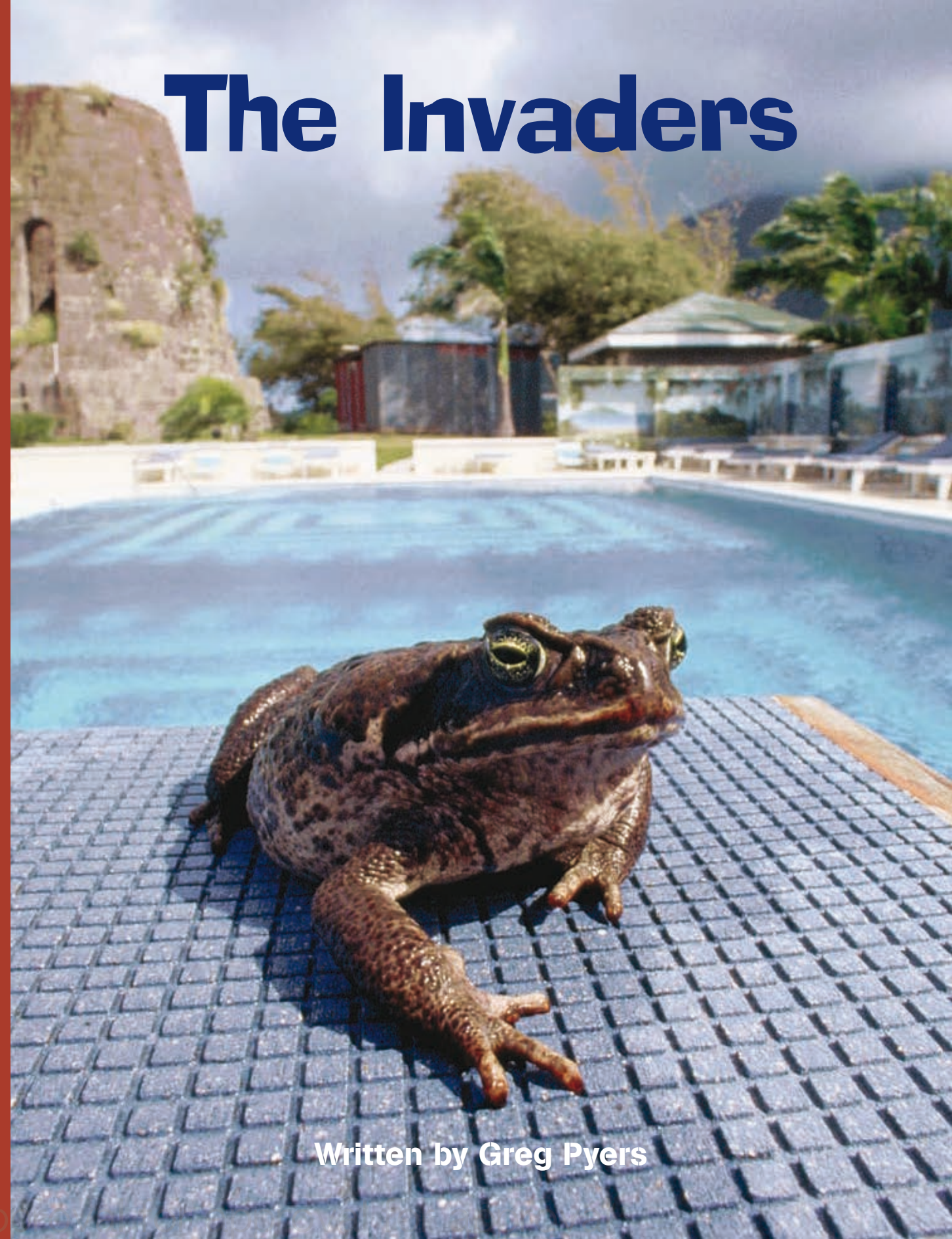
Springboard^{into} Comprehension 4

Main Idea	Fossil Fuels A Place in Space
Sequencing	Black Rock The Best Holiday Ever
Compare and Contrast	From Me to You Your Choice!
Fact and Opinion	Community Views The Daily News
Cause and Effect	The Invaders Natural Disasters
Bias and Prejudice	Have Your Say! Save Our Skate Park

RA 8.5–9.5



The Invaders



Written by Greg Pyers

The Invaders

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Introduction

Sometimes, people bring animals from one part of the world to another. A species then begins to live in a place where it is not native. Animals such as these are called **introduced animals**.

People bring some animals to new homes on purpose. People may do this for many reasons. Often, they have a plan to use the new animals to help them. People bring other animals to new homes by accident. These animals stow away on ships or planes. A new species can cause problems in its new home. A species like this is called an **invasive species**.

People introduced peacocks to the United Kingdom on purpose.

People brought rainbow trout to Australia for fishing.

People brought hedgehogs to New Zealand on purpose.

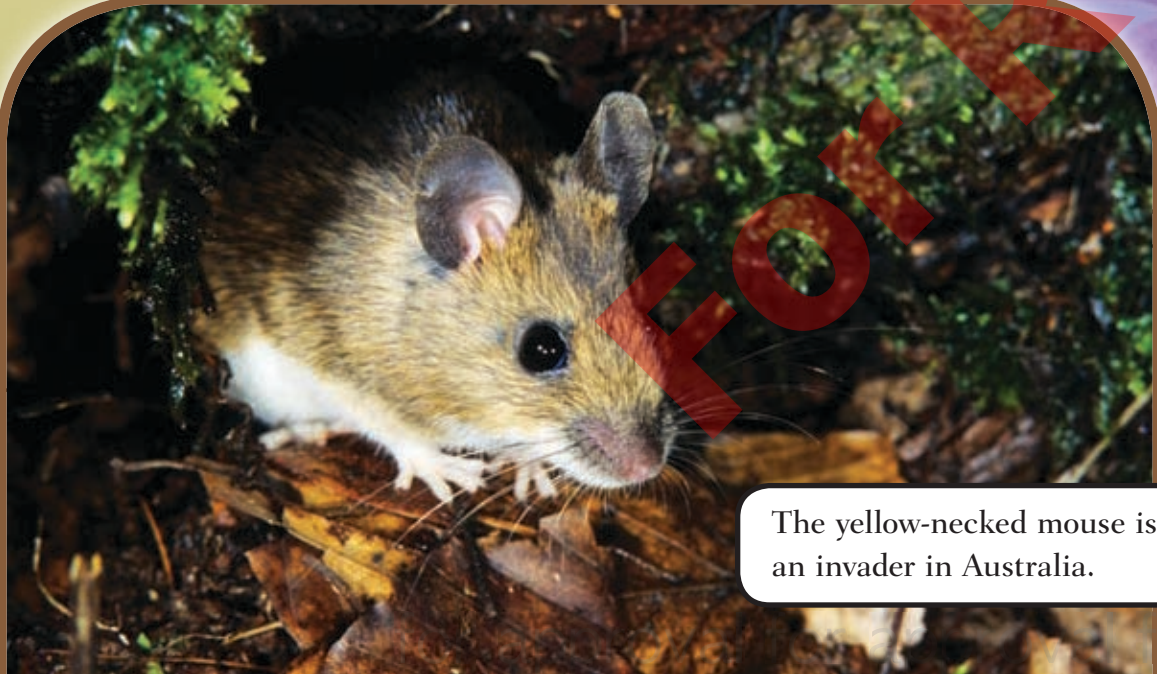
New Species

A species that lives in a place where it is not native is called a **non-indigenous species**. Animals like this often become pests. This is because their new homes do not have the same predators and diseases as their old homes. Therefore, the numbers of the non-indigenous species increase. Then, they may ruin farms by eating crops. They may spread disease.

A species that is native to the place where it lives is called an **indigenous species**. Animals like this often have no defence against new predators from a non-indigenous species. The new predators may wipe them out.



The wasp is now a pest in some areas.



The yellow-necked mouse is an invader in Australia.

Examples of Animals Introduced on Purpose

Animal	Place of Origin	Place It Was Introduced	Reasons It Was Introduced
Goat	Europe	Many islands	For food
Hedgehog	United Kingdom	New Zealand	To remind settlers of England and to keep gardens free of pests, such as snails.
Peafowl	Asia	United Kingdom	To adorn gardens
Rainbow trout	North America	Australia	For fishing

Examples of Animals Introduced by Accident

Animal	Place of Origin	Place It Was Introduced	How It Was Introduced
European wasp	Europe	New Zealand	Shipping containers
Flowerpot snake	India	Many countries	Flowerpot soil
House mouse	Asia	Worldwide	Ships
Northern Pacific seastar	Japan	Australia	Ships' ballast tanks



Brush-Tailed Possums in New Zealand

Scientific name: *Trichosurus vulpecula*
Native to: Australia and Tasmania
Introduced to: New Zealand in 1837

Introduced on Purpose

People introduced brush-tailed possums into New Zealand so they could begin a fur industry. By 1858, the possums had begun to spread through the forest. The indigenous species of New Zealand are mostly birds. There are no predators to kill possums. There are no mammals to compete with them for their diet of leaves. As a result, they have bred very well. Today, there may be 70 million of them in New Zealand.

Because of their huge numbers, possums are the worst invasive species in New Zealand. They have badly affected the existing plants in the area, or **flora**. They kill native trees by eating young shoots and leaves. Possums have also affected animals, or **fauna**, existing there. They eat birds' eggs and nestlings, and the rare giant land snail.

Location of the Invader



Controlling Possums

People use poison baits to control possums. They drop the baits into forests from planes. People also trap and shoot possums. People try to make use of the dead possums. They sell possum fur. They sell possum meat to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia. In these countries, it is a delicacy known as *kiwi bear*.

Possums breed well when they do not have to compete for food.



People will sell these possums for their meat and fur.