



LOOKING FOR CLUES



by Judith Brand
illustrated by Kevin Rechin

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▶ Nolan opens his eyes. It's a beautiful day. He pulls back the sheet and jumps onto the floor.



“Hello, Roxann! Get up!” Nolan scolds. “Let’s ask Dad to go to the park. I want to be a nature detective and find animal clues.”



“Look over here,” says Nolan.
“Something walked here not long ago. These are big footprints!
“They show only two toes.”





“These animals have webbed feet,” says Roxann. “Mom told me that webbed feet help water birds swim. Which bird made these?”



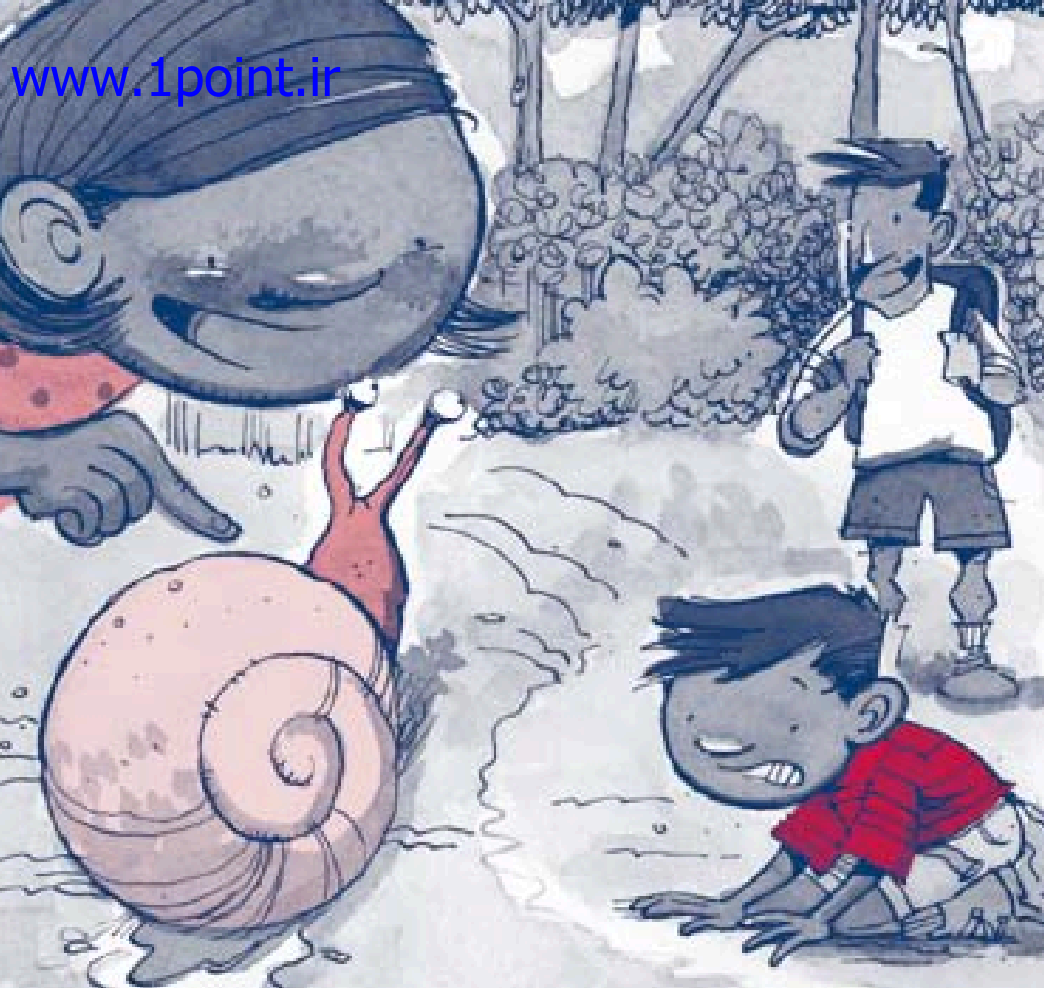


“Look over at these tracks,” says Roxann. “They look like little hands and feet. What animal has paws like that? I’ll make a sketch.”



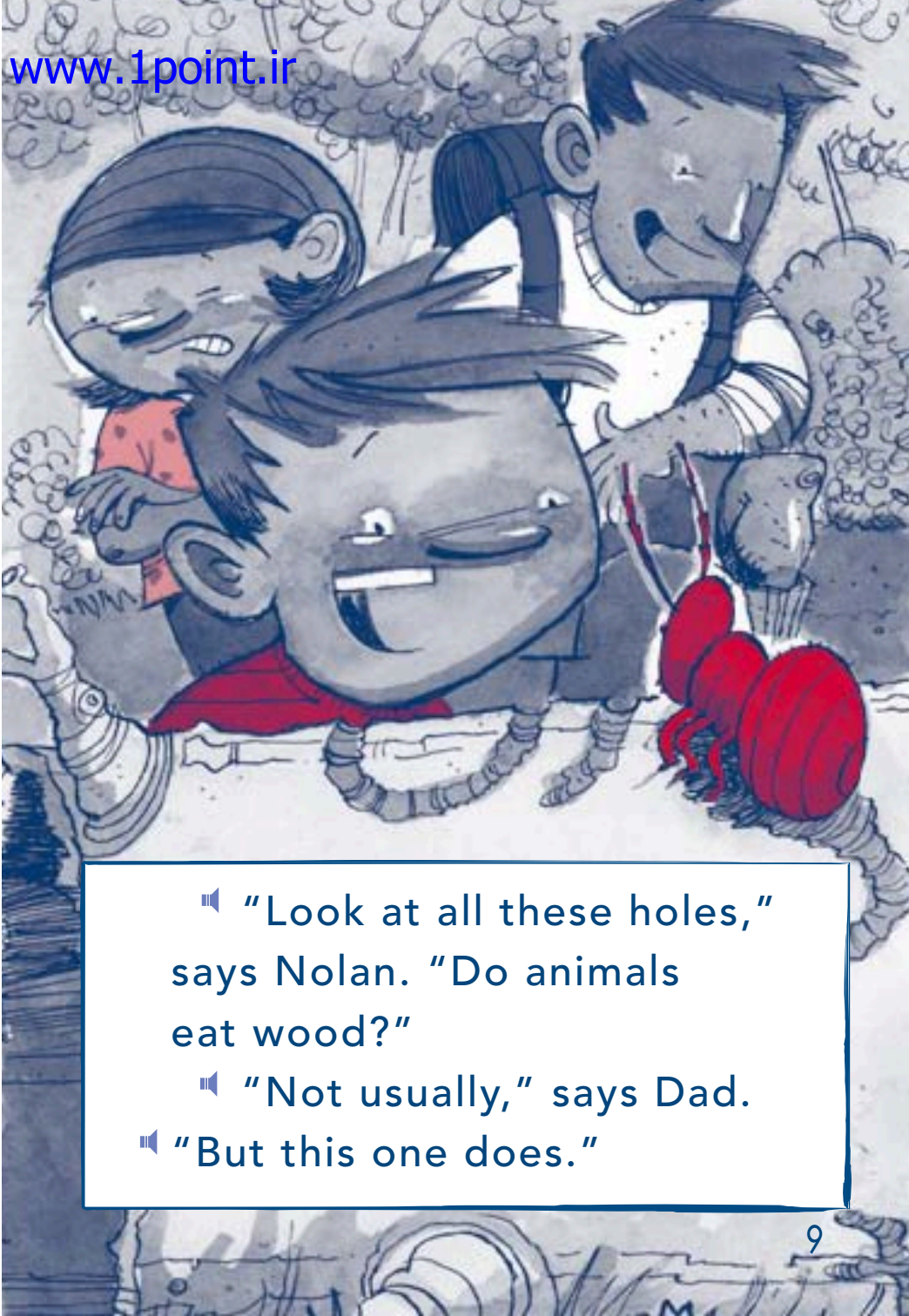
“I know it has paws that can hold things,” says Nolan.

“This animal is usually busy at night,” adds Dad.



“Something crawled over this old road,” says Nolan. “But it left no footprints. It left a sticky trail.”

“I know who!” yells Roxann.



“Look at all these holes,” says Nolan. “Do animals eat wood?”

“Not usually,” says Dad.
“But this one does.”



“Let’s both look at these seeds,” Roxann says to Nolan.

- “They also have holes.
- Many animals eat seeds.
- Which animal opened these?”



- ▶ "That cold soda was good!" says Roxann.
- ▶ "Let's clean up," says Dad.
- ▶ "Pick up every piece."



- ▶ “Both nests and eggs are clues about birds,” Dad says.
- ▶ “Look at the shape of the nest and the speckled eggs.”



“A feather is also a clue,” says Nolan. “What bird has blue feathers? What bird has speckled eggs?”

“We’ll find out,” says Roxann.

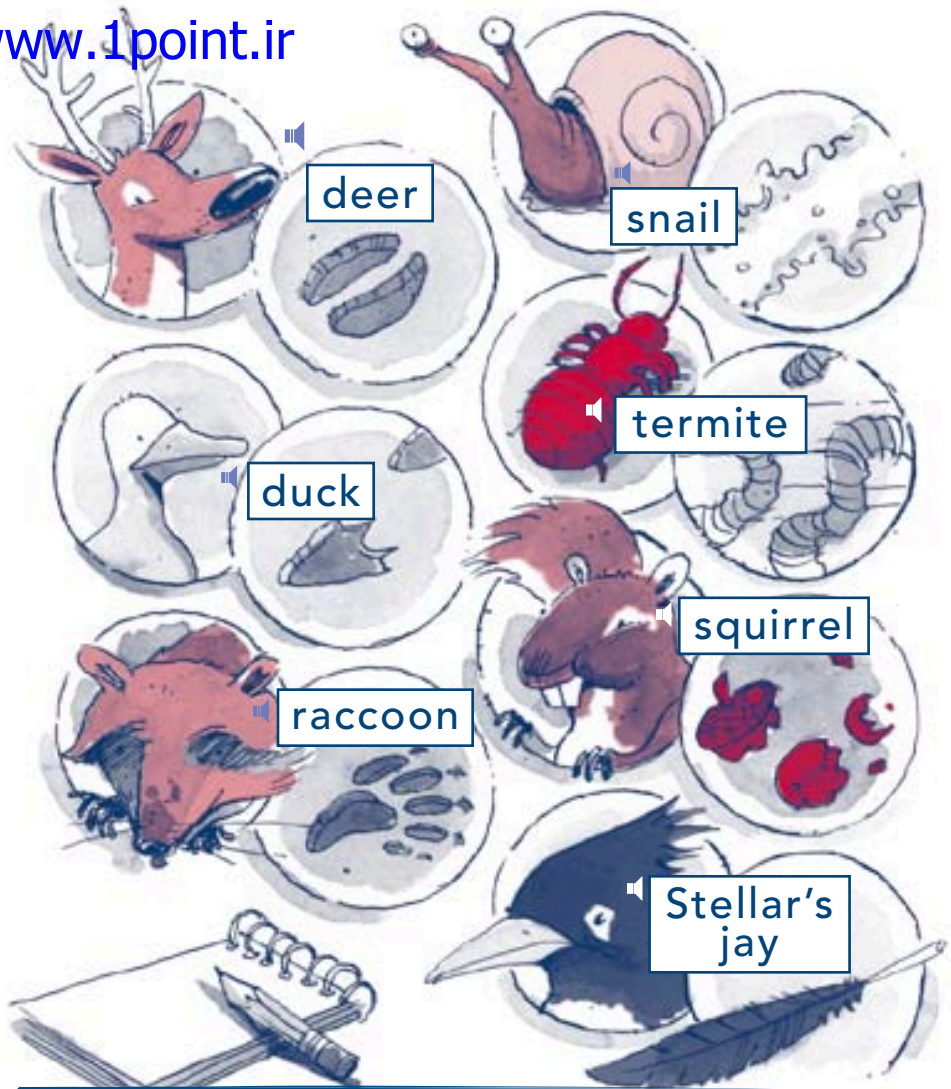


“Let’s go home and say hello to Mom,” says Nolan. “We can also show her the clues.”



“I told you we could find out who ate this,” says Roxann.
“A squirrel did!”





▶ Roxann and Nolan found the animals that left each clue. Did you?

Think and Respond

- 1 Which animal has paws that look like little hands and feet?
- 2 Which animal left a sticky trail?
- 3 Which clue was blue?
- 4 What is the main idea of the story?
- 5 If you found a leaf that had been partially eaten, how could you try to find out what animal ate it?



Footprint Fun Make a little puddle of water. Step in it. Then walk away from it. Try it again; This time, run away from it. Measure the distance between your footprints. Discuss differences in the distance between prints.



School-Home Connection With a family member, look for animal clues in your backyard or a nearby park. Look for traces of people, too. Talk about what you find.