

# PROBE

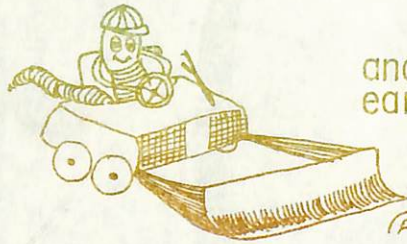
PROBE - A RINGWOOD INSPIRATORY PUBLICATION





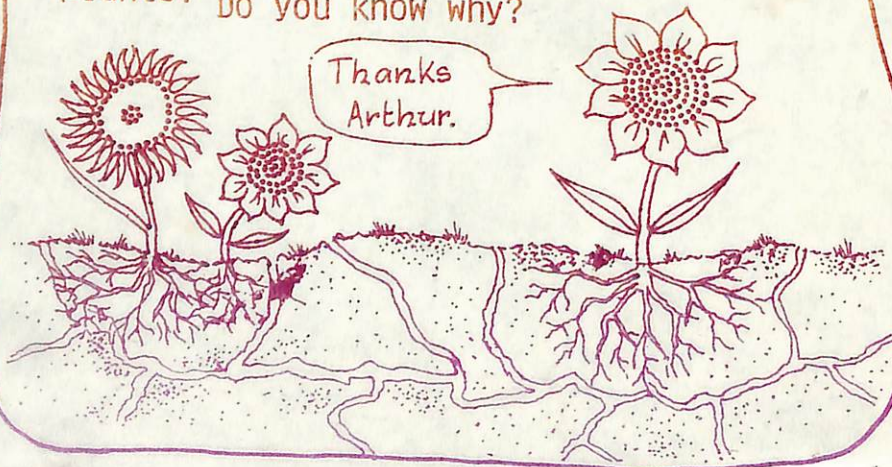
# WONDER WORMS!

During this time of the year, worms are up and active in our back yards. Have you seen any about? Do you know why they are important to us? Let's take a look at Arthur Earthworm, and find out a few things about him and the way he lives.



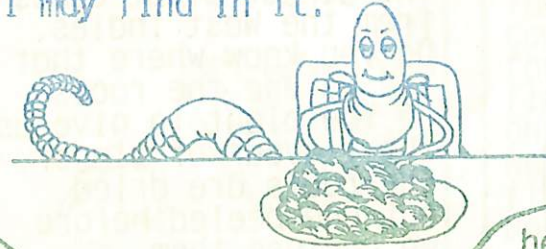
Hi! I'm Arthur,  
and I'm an earth moving  
earthworm.

By digging through the earth,  
I let air in, which is good for the  
plants. Do you know why?



Thanks  
Arthur.

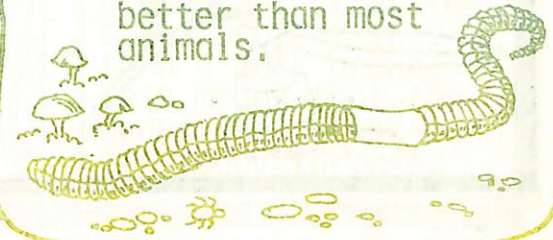
I also eat the earth as I  
dig, so I can taste any food  
I may find in it.



Put some worms  
in a jar with  
soil. Put some  
dead leaves on  
top. See what  
happens.

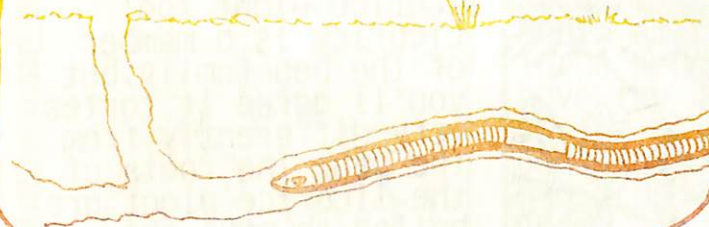


I can't see or  
hear, but I can smell,  
touch and taste far  
better than most  
animals.



\* how many worms  
have you seen in  
your garden?

I breathe through my skin, which  
is always moist. This also helps  
me move easily under the ground.



\* what are some  
other types of  
worms that you  
know of?

My body is SEGMENTED, which  
means it is in parts. These  
parts are the rings you see  
around my body. I have about  
150 rings!



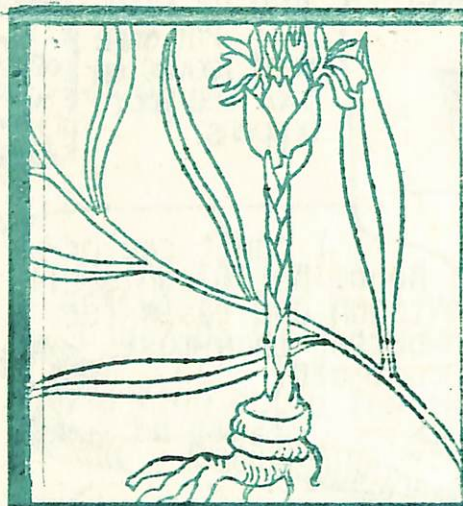
\* what can you  
find out about  
the giant  
Gippsland Earth-  
worm?





# A TASTY STORY

...or pass me a plant  
flavoured one please!



The ginger plant comes from the West Indies. Do you know where that is? We use the roots of the plant to give us the flavour of ginger. The roots are dried out and peeled before we can use them.



The flavour vanilla comes from a flower found in Mexico. This flower has long pods on it which are where we get the vanilla flavouring from. The pods are a yellowish-green when they are picked, but after they are dried out they turn a dark brown. This means that the beans inside the pod are ready for use.



We use the roots of the licorice plant too! Licorice is a member of the pea family, but you'll agree it tastes very differently from the pea. The roots of the licorice plant are boiled to make the flavour that we know.



Cocoa comes from the Cacao tree, found in South America. The large pods on the tree have the cocoa beans inside of them. The beans are dried out and crushed to make cocoa. To make chocolate, we add milk and sugar to the cocoa, because it is very bitter by itself.

\*Can you find all the countries that these flavours come from on a map of the world?

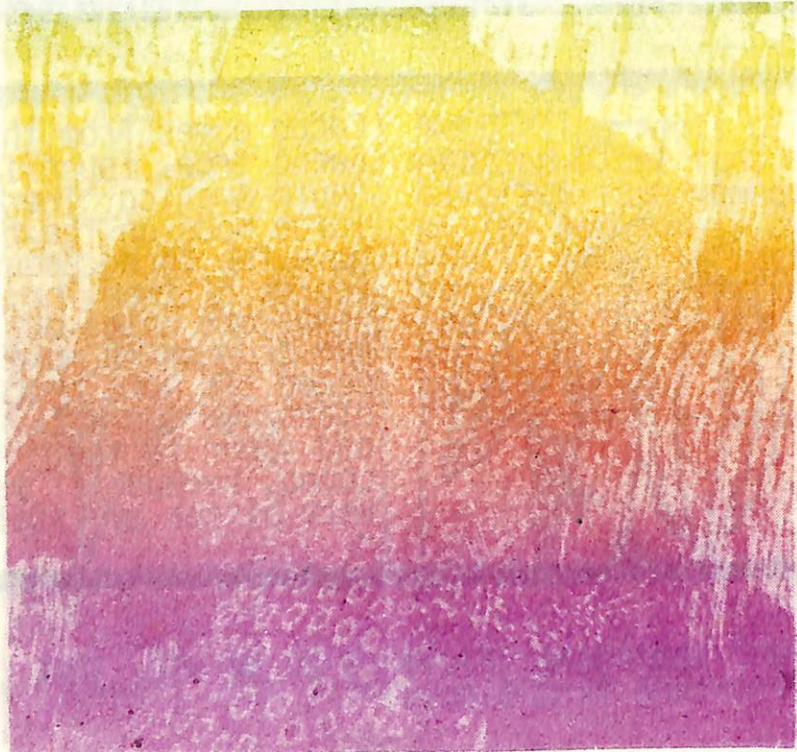
\* What other flavours do we use, that come from plants?



# Crafty Colors

Animals use camouflage, or their coloring to protect themselves from other animals. The color of some animals stays the same all their life. Other animals have colors that change as they grow older. Some other animals, especially insects, have two sets of colors which they can use in a very special way.

The tree goanna is one animal who blends in with the bark of the tree which he lives on. Can you spot him in the picture below? He is born with this coloring, as he lives on the same type of trees all his life.



What can you find out about goannas?

HEY GUYS! WHAT ABOUT MY ECHIDNA CAMOUFLAGE KIT?



The baby quail is a striped brown color when it is born, and blends in easily with the leaves and grass on the ground of the forest where he lives. As it grows older, and can look after itself, it loses the striped colors, and gains the spotted coloring of an adult.

Some animals use color in a very different way. The mountain grasshopper looks very much like a leaf when it is still, but if it is spotted by a hungry bird, it flashes the bright colors on its back to scare the bird for a moment and give itself enough time to hop away. Can you think of any moths or butterflies that use their colors this way?



Some animals are very clever and have the same colors as dangerous animals even though they are not. The robber fly is colored the same as a bee, but it doesn't sting. Still, frogs and toads won't eat the robber fly, because they can't tell the difference between the two.

Insects, especially moths and butterflies are very crafty, the way they can copy other more dangerous insects to protect themselves. Next time you go out into the garden, sit quietly and look. Make a list of insects that look alike or that can hide themselves easily in the garden. See what you can learn about our crafty colored friends!





# Cat Capers

Have you got a cat or kitten as a pet? -Or has he got you? Have you ever thought that your cat owns you, not the other way around? Cats have a special set of glands ( find out what these are) on their bodies which mark you with their smell. This tells all the other cats who you belong to. Your cat does this marking by rubbing his ears, mouth or tail on you. We usually think our cat is being friendly when this happens, but he's really 'labelling us'. The cat may also label its food, bed or furniture to show other cats who's boss! The glands are near the mouth, ears and tail and make a special cat oil, which we can't smell, but other cats can. The oil is rubbed on us to show who we belong to - so, who owns who?

