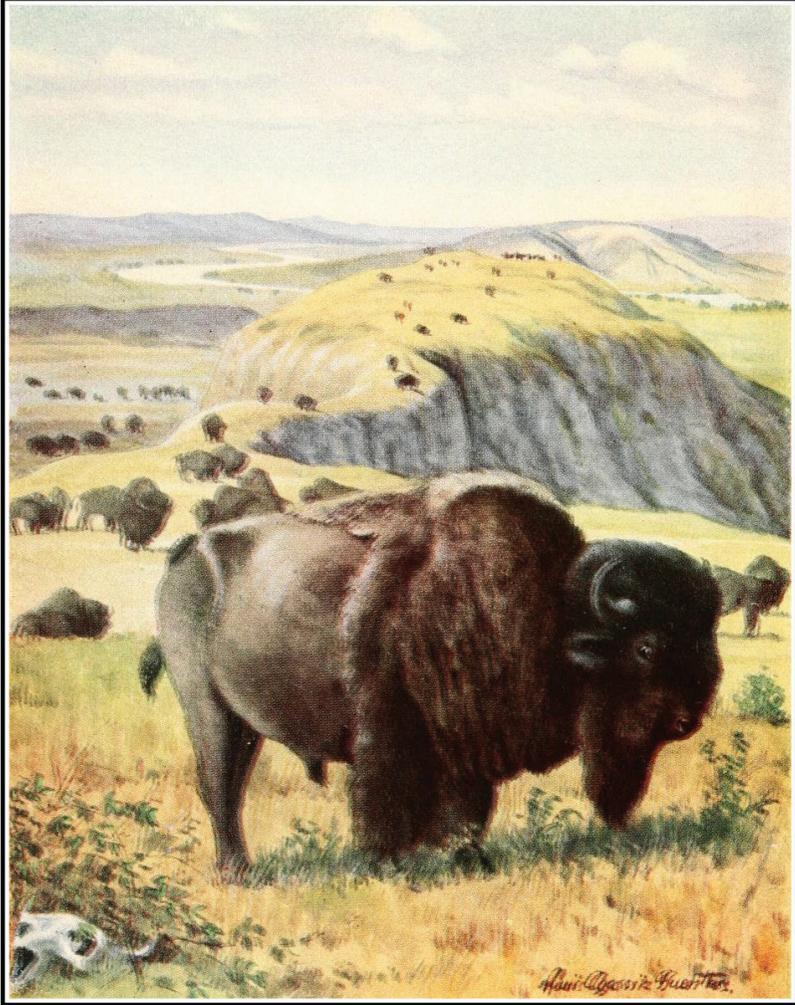


**THE
BURGESS ANIMAL BOOK
FOR CHILDREN**



THUNDERFOOT THE BISON

He is commonly called Buffalo. His race has been reduced from millions to a few hundreds.

THE
BURGESS ANIMAL BOOK
FOR CHILDREN

BY

Thornton W. Burgess

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

Louis Agassiz Fuertes

YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

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**TO THE CAUSE OF WILD LIFE IN AMERICA,
ESPECIALLY THE MAMMALS
MANY OF WHICH ARE SERIOUSLY
THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.**

PREFACE

THE cordial reception given the Burgess Bird Book for Children, together with numerous letters to the author asking for information on the habits and characteristics of many of the mammals of America, led to the preparation of this volume. It is offered merely as an introduction to the four-footed friends, little and big, which form so important a part of the wild life of the United States and Canada.

There has been no attempt to describe or classify sub-species. That is for the scientist and student with specific interests. The purpose of this book is to acquaint the reader with the larger groups—orders, families, and divisions of the latter, so that typical representatives may be recognized and their habits understood.

Instead of the word mammal, the word animal has been used throughout as having a better defined meaning to the average child. A conscientious effort to avoid technical terms and descriptions has been made that there may be nothing to confuse the young mind. Clarity and simplicity have been the objects kept constantly in view.

PREFACE

At the same time the utmost care to be accurate in the smallest details has been exercised. To this end the works of leading authorities on American mammals have been carefully consulted and compared. No statements which are not confirmed by two or more naturalists of recognized standing have been made.

In this research work the writings of Audubon and Bachman, Dr. E.W. Neson, Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Dr. W.T. Hornaday, Ernest Thompson Seton and others, together with the bulletins of the Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture at Washington, have been of the greatest value. I herewith acknowledge my debt to these.

Whatever the text may lack in clearness of description will be amply compensated for by the wonderful drawings in color and black-and-white by Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes, the artist-naturalist, whose hearty cooperation has been a source of great help to me. These drawings were made especially for this book and add in no small degree to such value as it may possess.

If the reading of these pages shall lead even a few to an active interest in our wild animals, stimulating a desire to preserve and protect a priceless heritage from the past which a heedless present threatens through wanton and reckless waste to deny the future, the labor will have been well worth while.

PREFACE

Only through intimate acquaintance may understanding of the animals in their relations to each other and to man be attained. To serve as a medium for this purpose this book has been written. As such I offer it to the children of America, conscious of its shortcomings yet hopeful that it will prove of some value in acquainting them with their friends and mine—the animals of field and wood, of mountain and desert, in the truest sense the first citizens of America.

THORNTON W. BURGESS

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CHAPTER I

JENNY WREN GIVES PETER RABBIT AN IDEA

“As sure as you’re alive now, Peter Rabbit, some day I will catch you,” snarled Reddy Fox, as he poked his black nose in the hole between the roots of the Big Hickory-tree which grows close to the Smiling Pool. “It is lucky for you that you were not one jump farther away from this hole.”

Peter, safe inside that hole, didn’t have a word to say, or, if he did, he didn’t have breath enough to say it. It was quite true that if he had been one jump farther from that hole, Reddy Fox would have caught him. As it was, the hairs on Peter’s funny white tail actually had tickled Reddy’s back as Peter plunged frantically through the root-bound entrance to that hole. It had been the narrowest escape Peter had had for a long, long time. You see, Reddy Fox had surprised Peter nibbling sweet clover on the bank of the Smiling Pond, and it had been a lucky thing for Peter that that hole, dug long ago by Johnny Chuck’s grandfather, had been right where it was. Also, it was a lucky thing that old Mr. Chuck had been wise enough to make the entrance between

the roots of that tree in such a way that it could not be dug any larger.

Reddy Fox was too shrewd to waste any time trying to dig it larger. He knew there wasn't room enough for him to get between those roots. So, after trying to make Peter as uncomfortable as possible by telling him what he, Reddy, would do to him when he did catch him, Reddy trotted off across the Green Meadows. Peter remained where he was for a long time. When he was quite sure that it was safe to do so, he crept out and hurried, lipperty-lipperty-lip, up to the Old Orchard. He felt that that would be the safest place for him, because there were ever so many hiding places in the old stone wall along the edge of it.

When Peter reached the Old Orchard, who should he see but Jenny Wren. Jenny had arrived that very morning from the Sunny South where she had spent the winter. "Tut, tut, tut, tut, tut!" exclaimed Jenny as soon as she saw Peter. "If here isn't Peter Rabbit himself! How did you manage to keep out of the clutches of Reddy Fox all the long winter?"

Peter chuckled. "I didn't have much trouble with Reddy during the winter," said he, "but this very morning he so nearly caught me that it is a wonder that my hair is not snow white from fright." Then he told Jenny all about his narrow escape. "Had it not been for that handy hole of Grandfather Chuck, I couldn't possibly have escaped," concluded Peter.

Jenny Wren cocked her pert little head on one side, and her sharp little eyes snapped. "Why don't you learn

JENNY WREN GIVES PETER RABBIT AN IDEA

to swim, Peter, like your cousin down in the Sunny South?” she demanded. “If he had been in your place, he would simply have plunged into the Smiling Pool and laughed at Reddy Fox.”

Peter sat bolt upright with his eyes very wide open. In them was a funny look of surprise as he stared up at Jenny Wren. “What are you talking about, Jenny Wren?” he demanded. “Don’t you know that none of the Rabbit family swim unless it is to cross the Laughing Brook when there is no other way of getting to the other side, or when actually driven into the water by an enemy from whom there is no other escape? I can swim a little if I have to, but you don’t catch me in the water when I can stay on land. What is more, you won’t find any other members of my family doing such a thing.”

“Tut, tut, tut, tut, Peter!” exclaimed Jenny Wren in her sharp, scolding voice. “Tut, tut, tut, tut! For a fellow who has been so curious about the ways of his feathered neighbors, you know very little about your own family. If I were in your place I would learn about my own relatives before I became curious about my neighbors. How many relatives have you, Peter?”

“One,” replied Peter promptly, “my big cousin, Jumper the Hare.”

Jenny Wren threw back her head and laughed and laughed and laughed. It was a most irritating and provoking laugh. Finally Peter began to lose patience. “What are you laughing at?” he demanded crossly. “You know very well that Jumper the Hare is the only cousin I have.”

Jenny Wren laughed harder than ever.

“Peter!” she gasped. “Peter, you will be the death of me. Why, down in the Sunny South, where I spent the winter, you have a cousin who is more closely related to you than Jumper the Hare. And what is more, he is almost as fond of the water as Jerry Muskrat. He is called the Marsh Rabbit or Marsh Hare, and many a time I have watched him swimming about by the hour.”

“I don’t believe it!” declared Peter angrily. “I don’t believe a word of it. You are simply trying to fool me, Jenny Wren. There never was a Rabbit and there never will be a Rabbit who would go swimming for the fun of it. I belong to the Cottontail branch of the Hare family, and it is a fine family if I do say so. My cousin Jumper is a true Hare, and the only difference between us is that he is bigger, has longer legs and ears, changes the color of his coat in winter, and seldom, if ever, goes into holes in the ground. The idea of trying to tell me I don’t know about my own relatives.”

Jenny Wren suddenly became sober. “Peter,” said she very earnestly, “take my advice and go to school to Old Mother Nature for awhile. What I have told you is true, every word of it. You have a cousin down in the Sunny South who spends half his time in the water. What is more, I suspect that you and Jumper have other relatives of whom you’ve never heard. Such ignorance would be laughable if it were not to be pitied. This is what comes of never having traveled. Go to school to Old Mother Nature for a while, Peter. It will pay you.” With this, Jenny Wren flew away to hunt for Mr. Wren

JENNY WREN GIVES PETER RABBIT AN IDEA

that they might decide where to make their home for the summer.

Peter tried to believe that what Jenny Wren had told him was nothing but a story, but do what he would, he couldn't rid himself of a little doubt. He tried to interest himself in the affairs of the other little people of Old Orchard, but it was useless. That little doubt kept growing and growing. Could it be possible that Jenny Wren had spoken the truth? Could it be that he really didn't know what relatives he had or anything about them? Of course Old Mother Nature could tell him all he wanted to know. And he knew that whatever she might tell him would be true.

Finally that growing doubt, together with the curiosity which has led poor Peter to do so many queer things, proved too much for him and he started for the Green Forest to look for Old Mother Nature. It didn't take long to find her. She was very busy, for there is no time in all the year when Old Mother Nature has quite so much to do as in the spring.

"If you please, Old Mother Nature," said Peter timidly but very politely, "I've some questions I want to ask you."

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled in a kindly way. "All right, Peter," she replied. "I guess I can talk and work at the same time. What is it you want to know?"

"I want to know if it is true that there are any other members of the Rabbit and the Hare family besides my big cousin, Jumper, who lives here in the Green Forest, and myself."

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled more than ever. "Why, of course, Peter," she replied. "There are several other members. You ought to know that. But then, I suppose you don't because you never have traveled. It is surprising how little some folks know about the very things they ought to know most about."

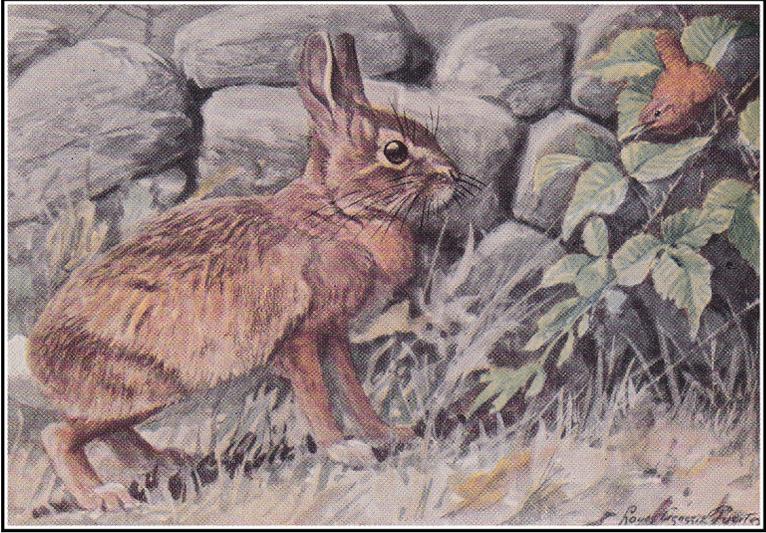
Peter looked very humble and as if he felt a little bit foolish. "Is—is—is it true that way down in the Sunny South I have a cousin who loves to spend his time in the water?" stammered Peter.

"It certainly is, Peter," replied Old Mother Nature. "He is called the Marsh Rabbit, and he is more nearly your size, and looks more like you, than any of your other cousins."

Peter gulped as if he were swallowing something that went down hard. "That is what Jenny Wren said, but I didn't believe her," replied Peter meekly. "She said she had often watched him swimming about like Jerry Muskrat."

Old Mother Nature nodded. "Quite true. Quite true," said she. "He is quite as much at home in the water as on land, if anything a little more so. He is one member of the family who takes to the water, and he certainly does love it. Is there anything else you want to know, Peter?"

Peter shifted about uneasily and hesitated. "What is it, Peter?" asked Old Mother Nature kindly. "There is nothing in the Great World equal to knowledge, and if I can add to your store of it I will be very glad to."



PETER RABBIT

The familiar Cottontail Rabbit whom everybody knows and loves.



JUMPER THE HARE

The Northern or Varying Hare in summer and winter coat.

THE BURGESS ANIMAL BOOK FOR CHILDREN

Peter took heart. "If—if you please, Mother Nature, I would like to learn all about my family. May I come to school to you every day?"

Old Mother Nature laughed right out. "Certainly you may go to school to me, old Mr. Curiosity," said she. "It is a good idea; a very good idea. I'm very busy, as you can see, but I'm never too busy to teach those who really want to learn. We'll have a lesson here every morning just at sun-up. I can't be bothered any more to-day, because it is late. Run along home to the dear Old Briar-patch and think up some questions to ask me to-morrow morning. And, by the way, Peter, I will ask *you* some questions. For one thing I shall ask you to tell me all you know about your own family. Now scamper along and be here to-morrow morning at sun-up."

"May I bring my cousin, Jumper the Hare, if he wants to come?" asked Peter, as he prepared to obey Old Mother Nature.

"Bring him along and any one else who wants to learn," replied Old Mother Nature kindly.

Peter bade her good-by in his most polite manner and then scampered as fast as he could go, lipperty-lipperty-lip, to the dear Old Briar-patch. There he spent the remainder of the day thinking up questions and also trying to find out how much he really did know about his own family.

CHAPTER II

PETER AND JUMPER GO TO SCHOOL

HARDLY had jolly, round, red Mr. Sun thrown off his rosy blankets and begun his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky when Peter Rabbit and his cousin, Jumper the Hare, arrived at the place in the Green Forest where Peter had found Old Mother Nature the day before. She was waiting for them, ready to begin the first lesson.

“I am glad you are so prompt,” said she. “Promptness is one of the most important things in life. Now I am very, very busy these days, as you know, so we will begin school at once. Before either of you ask any questions, I am going to ask some myself. Peter, what do you look like? Where do you live? What do you eat? I want to find out just how much you really know about yourself.”

Peter scratched one ear with a long hind foot and hesitated as if he didn't know just how to begin. Old Mother Nature waited patiently. Finally Peter began rather timidly.

“Of course,” said he, “the only way I know how I look is by the way the other members of my family look, for

I've never seen myself. I suppose in a way I look like all the rest of the Rabbit family. I have long hind legs and short front ones. I suppose this is so I can make long jumps when I am in a hurry."

Old Mother Nature nodded, and Peter, taking courage, continued. "My hind legs are stout and strong, but my front ones are rather weak. I guess this is because I do not have a great deal of use for them, except for running. My coat is a sort of mixture of brown and gray, more brown in summer and more gray in winter. My ears are longer for my size than are those of most animals, but really not very long after all, not nearly as long for my size as my cousin Jumper's are for his size. My tail doesn't amount to much because it is so short that it is hardly worth calling a tail. It is so short I carry it straight up. It is white like a little bunch of cotton, and I suppose that that is why I am called a Cottontail Rabbit, though I have heard that some folks call me a Gray Rabbit and others a Bush Rabbit. I guess I'm called Bush Rabbit because I like bushy country in which to live.

"I live in the dear Old Briar-patch and just love it. It is a mass of bushes and bramble-tangles and is the safest place I know of. I have cut little paths all through it just big enough for Mrs. Peter and myself. None of our enemies can get at us there, excepting Shadow the Weasel or Billy Mink. I have a sort of nest there where I spend my time when I am not running about. It is called a form and I sit in it a great deal.

"In summer I eat clover, grass and other green things, and I just love to get over into Farmer Brown's

PETER AND JUMPER GO TO SCHOOL

garden. In winter I have to take what I can get, and this is mostly bark from young trees, buds and tender twigs of bushes, and any green plants I can find under the snow. I can run fast for a short distance, but only for a short distance. That is why I like thick brush and bramble-tangles. There I can dodge. I don't know any one who can beat me at dodging. If Reddy Fox or Bowser the Hound surprises me away from the dear Old Briar-patch I run for the nearest hollow log or hole in the ground. Sometimes in summer I dig a hole for myself, but not often. It is much easier to use a hole somebody else has dug. When I want to signal my friends I thump the ground with my hind feet. Jumper does the same thing. I forgot to say I don't like water."

Old Mother Nature smiled. "You are thinking of that cousin of yours, the Marsh Rabbit who lives way down in the Sunny South," said she.

Peter looked a wee bit foolish and admitted that he was. Jumper the Hare was all interest at once. You see, he had never heard of this cousin.

"That was a very good account of yourself, Peter," said Old Mother Nature. "Now take a look at your cousin, Jumper the Hare, and tell me how he differs from you."

Peter took a long look at Jumper, and then, as before, scratched one ear with a long hind foot. "In the first place," said he, "Jumper is considerably bigger than I. He has very long hind legs and his ears are very long. In summer he wears a brown coat, but in winter he is all white but the tips of those long ears, and those are black.

Because his coat changes so, he is called the Varying Hare. He likes the Green Forest where the trees grow close together, especially those places where there are a great many young trees. He's the biggest member of our family. I guess that's all I know about Cousin Jumper."

"That is very good, Peter, as far as it goes," said Old Mother Nature. "You have made only one mistake. Jumper is not the biggest of his family."

Both Peter and Jumper opened their eyes very wide with surprise. "Also," continued Old Mother Nature, "you forgot to mention the fact that Jumper never hides in hollow logs and holes in the ground as you do. Why don't you, Jumper?"

"I wouldn't feel safe there," replied Jumper rather timidly. "I depend on my long legs for safety, and the way I can dodge around trees and bushes. I suppose Reddy Fox may be fast enough to catch me in the open, but he can't do it where I can dodge around trees and bushes. That is why I stick to the Green Forest. If you please, Mother Nature, what is this about a cousin who likes to swim?"

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled. "We'll get to that later on," said she. "Now, each of you hold up a hind foot and tell me what difference you see."

Peter and Jumper each held up a hind foot and each looked first at his own and then at the other's. "They look to me very much alike, only Jumper's is a lot longer and bigger than mine," said Peter. Jumper nodded as if he agreed.

PETER AND JUMPER GO TO SCHOOL

“What’s the matter with your eyes?” demanded Old Mother Nature. “Don’t you see that Jumper’s foot is a great deal broader than yours, Peter, and that his toes are spread apart, while yours are close together?”

Peter and Jumper looked sheepish, for it was just as Old Mother Nature had said. Jumper’s foot really was quite different from that of Peter. Peter’s was narrow and slim.

“That is a very important difference,” declared Old Mother Nature. “Can you guess why I gave you those big feet, Jumper?”

Jumper slowly shook his head. “Not unless it was to make me different,” said he.

“I’m surprised,” said Old Mother Nature. “Yes, indeed, I’m surprised. You ought to know by this time that I never give anybody anything without a purpose. What happens to those big feet of yours in the winter, Jumper?”

“Nothing that I know of, excepting that the hair grows out long between my toes,” Jumper replied.

“Exactly,” snapped Old Mother Nature. “And when the hair does this you can travel over light snow without sinking in. It is just as if you had snowshoes. That is why you are often called a Snowshoe Rabbit. I gave you those big feet and make the hair grow out every winter because I know that you depend on your legs to get away from your enemies. You can run over the deep snow where your enemies break through. Peter, though he is smaller and lighter than you are, cannot go where

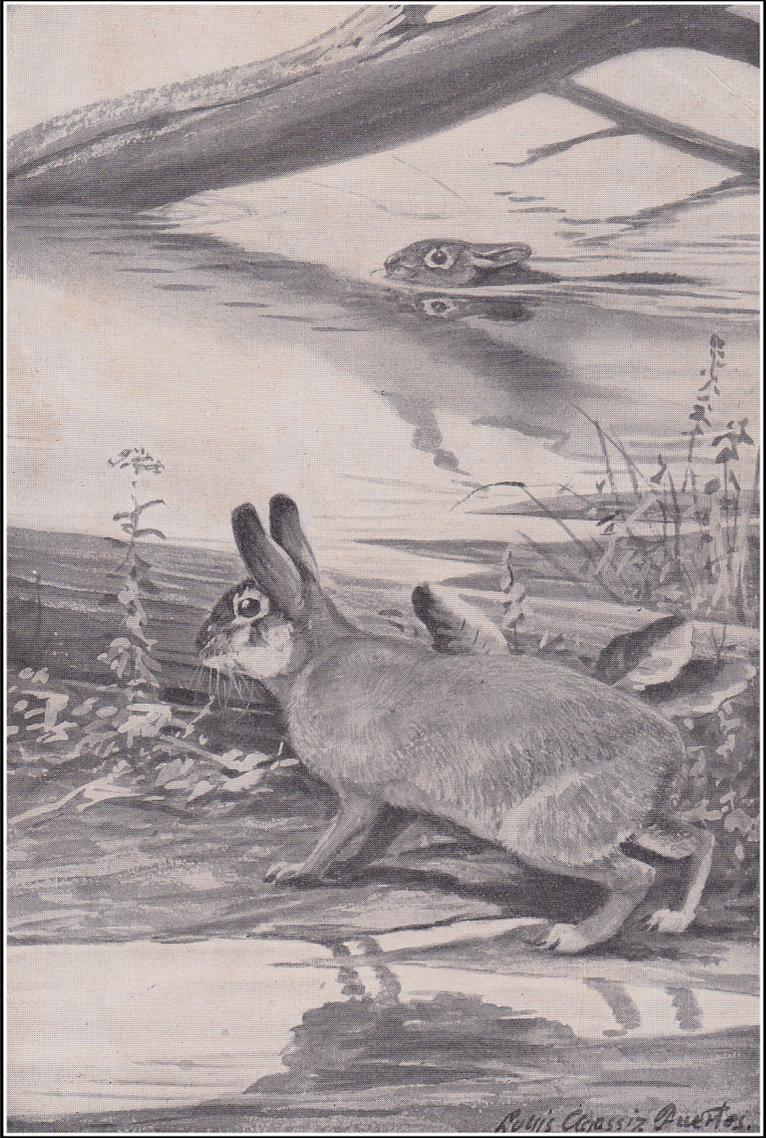
you can. But Peter doesn't need to depend always on his legs to save his life. There is one thing more that I want you both to notice, and that is that you both have quite a lot of short hairs on the soles of your feet. That is where you differ from that cousin of yours down in the Sunny South. He has only a very few hairs on his feet. That is so he can swim better."

"If you please, Mother Nature, why is that cousin of ours so fond of the water?" piped up Peter.

"Because," replied Old Mother Nature, "he lives in marshy country where there is a great deal of water. He is very nearly the same size as you, Peter, and looks very much like you. But his legs are not quite so long, his ears are a little smaller, and his tail is brownish instead of white. He is a poor runner and so in time of danger he takes to the water. For that matter, he goes swimming for pleasure. The water is warm down there, and he dearly loves to paddle about in it. If a Fox chases him he simply plunges into the water and hides among the water plants with only his eyes and his nose out of water."

"Does he make his home in the water like Jerry Muskrat?" asked Peter innocently.

Mother Nature smiled and shook her head. "Certainly not," she replied. "His home is on the ground. His babies are born in a nest made just as Mrs. Peter makes her nest for your babies, and Mrs. Jumper makes a nest for Jumper's babies. It is made of grass and lined with soft fur which Mrs. Rabbit pulls from her own breast, and it is very carefully hidden. By the



THE MARSH RABBIT

This cousin of Peter Rabbit is a famous swimmer.

way, Peter how do your babies differ from the babies of your Cousin Jumper?”

Peter shook his head. “I don’t know,” said he. “My babies don’t have their eyes open when they are born, and they haven’t any hair.”

Jumper pricked up his long ears. “What’s that?” said he. “Why, my babies have their eyes open and have the dearest little fur coats!”

Old Mother Nature chuckled. “That is the difference,” said she. “I guess both of you have learned something.”

“You said a little while ago that Jumper isn’t the biggest of our family,” said Peter. “If you please, who is?”

“There are several bigger than Jumper,” replied Old Mother Nature, and smiled as she saw the funny look of surprise on the faces of Peter and Jumper. “There is one way up in the Frozen North and there are two cousins way out in the Great West. They are as much bigger than Jumper as Jumper is bigger than you, Peter. But I haven’t time to tell you about them now. If you really want to learn about them, be here promptly at sun-up to-morrow morning. Hello! Here comes Reddy Fox, and he looks to me as if a good breakfast would not come amiss. Let me see what you have learned about taking care of yourselves.”

Peter and Jumper gave one startled look in the direction Mother Nature was pointing. Sure enough, there was Reddy Fox. Not far away was a hollow log. Peter wasted no time in getting to it. In fact, he left in such a hurry that he forgot to say good-by to Old

PETER AND JUMPER GO TO SCHOOL

Mother Nature. But she didn't mind, for she quite understood Peter's feelings, and she laughed when she saw his funny little white tail disappear inside the hollow log. As for Jumper, he promptly took to his long legs and disappeared with great bounds, Reddy Fox racing after him.

CHAPTER III

MORE OF PETER'S LONG-LEGGED COUSINS

AT sun-up the next morning Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare were on hand promptly for their next lesson. Old Mother Nature smiled as she saw the eager curiosity shining in their eyes. She didn't wait for them to ask questions. "Yesterday," said she, "I told you about your water-loving cousin, the Marsh Rabbit. You have another relative down there in the Sunny South who is almost as fond of the water. Some folks call him the Swamp Rabbit. Others call him the Swamp Hare. The latter is really the best name for him, because he is a true Hare. He lives in swamps instead of marshes, but he is a splendid swimmer and fond of the water. When he is chased by an enemy he makes for the nearest pond or stream."

"How big is he?" asked Jumper.

"Just about your size, Jumper," replied Old Mother Nature. "If anything, he is a little bit heavier. But because his hair lies much smoother than yours, you probably would look a little bit bigger if you were sitting beside

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him. As with his cousin, the Marsh Rabbit, the hair on his feet is thin. His toes are rather long and he can spread them widely, which is a great help in swimming. He doesn't have to take to the water as his little cousin does, for he is a very good runner. But he does take to it as the easiest way of getting rid of those who are chasing him. The Marsh Rabbit and the Swamp Hare are the only members of your family in all the Great World who are fond of the water and who are at home in it. Now, who shall I tell you about?"

"Our biggest cousins," cried Peter and Jumper together. "The ones you told us yesterday are bigger than Jumper," added Peter. "It is hard to believe that there can be any much bigger than he."

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled. "It is often hard to believe things you know nothing about," said she. "Compared with these other relatives, Jumper really isn't big at all. He seems big to you, Peter, but if he should meet his cousin, Snow White the Arctic Hare, who lives way up in the Frozen North, I am quite sure Jumper would feel small. Snow White looks very much like Jumper in his winter coat, for he is all white save the tips of his ears, which are black."

"Does he wear a white coat all year round?" asked Peter eagerly.

"When he lives so far north that there is snow and ice for most of the year, he does," replied Old Mother Nature. "But when he lives far enough south for the snow to disappear for a little while in the summer, he changes his white coat for one of gray."

“But how can he live so far north that the snow and ice seldom melt?” asked Peter, looking very much puzzled. “What can he find to eat?”

“Even way up there there is moss growing under the snow. And in the short summer other plants grow. During the long winter Snow White digs down through the snow to get these. He also eats the bark and twigs of little stunted trees. But big as he is, you have a cousin who is still bigger, the biggest of all the family.”

“Who is he?” Jumper and Peter cried together.

“He is called White-tailed Jack,” replied Old Mother Nature. “And he lives chiefly on the great plains of the Northwest, though sometimes he is found in the mountains and forests. He is sometimes called the Prairie Hare. In winter his coat is white, but in summer it is a light brown. Summer or winter his tail is white, wherein he is much like you, Peter. It is because of this that he is called White-tailed Jack.”

“Is his tail as short as mine?” asked Peter eagerly.

Old Mother Nature laughed right out. “No, Peter,” she replied. “It wouldn’t be called a long tail by any other animal, but for a member of your family it really is long, and when White-tailed Jack is running he switches it from side to side. His hind legs are very long and powerful, and he can make a single jump of twenty feet without half trying. Not even Old Man Coyote can catch him in a straightaway race. You think Jumper’s ears are long, Peter, but they are short compared to the ears of White-tailed Jack. Not only are his ears long, but they are very big. When he squats in his form and lays his

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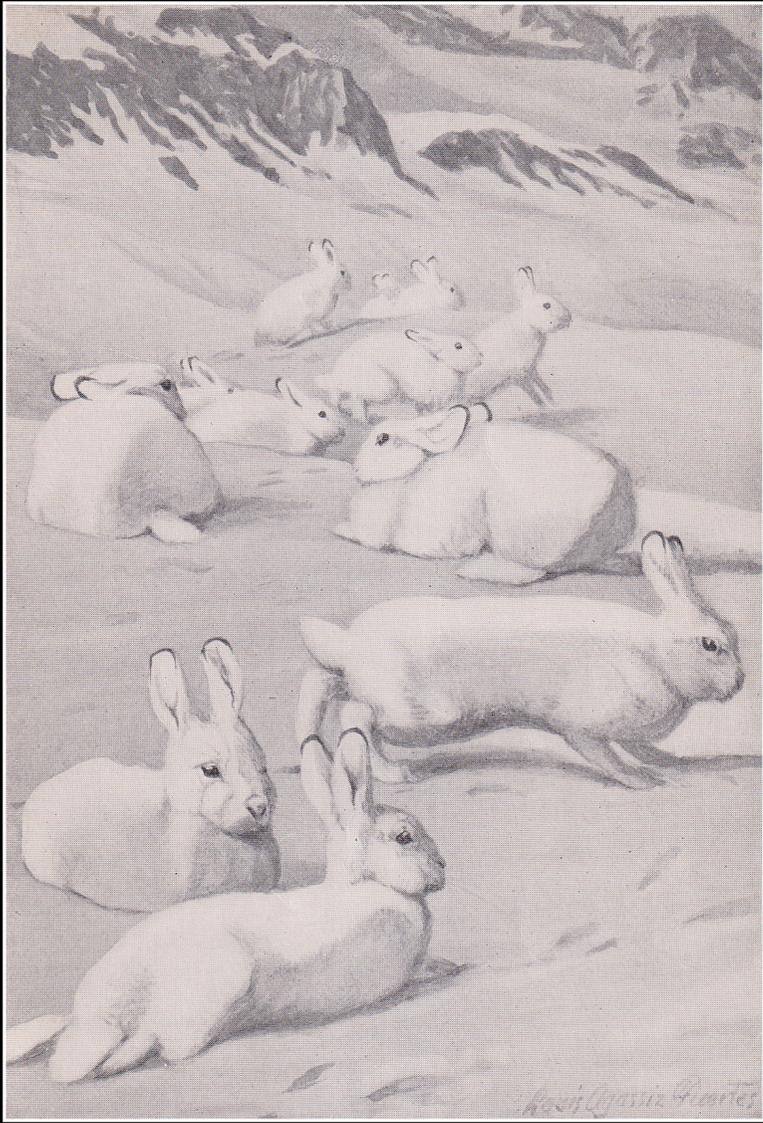
ears back they reach way over his shoulders. Like the other members of the Hare family he doesn't use holes in the ground or hollow logs. He trusts to his long legs and to his wonderful speed to escape from his enemies. Among the latter are Howler the Wolf, Old Man Coyote, Eagles, Hawks and Owls. He is so big that he would make five or six of you, Peter."

Peter drew a long breath. "It is dreadfully hard to believe that I can have a cousin as big as that," he exclaimed. "But of course if you say it is so, it is so," he hastened to add. "Have I any other cousins anywhere near as big?"

Old Mother Nature nodded. "There are some others very like White-tailed Jack, only not quite as big," said she. "They have just such long hind legs, and just such great ears, but their coats are different, and they live on the great plains farther south. Some of them live so far south that it is warm all the year round. One of these latter is Antelope Jack, whose home is in the Southwest."

"Tell us about him," begged Peter.

"To begin with," replied Old Mother Nature, "he is a member of the big Jack Rabbit or Jack Hare branch of your family. None of this branch should be called a Rabbit. All the members are first cousins to Jumper and are true Hares. All have big ears, long, rather thin necks, and long legs. Even their front legs are comparatively long. Antelope Jack is probably next in size to White-tailed Jack. Strange to say, although he lives where it is warm for most of the year, his coat is very largely white. His back is a yellowish-brown and so is his throat. But



SNOW WHITE THE ARCTIC HARE

Here he is at home with his friends in the far North.

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his sides are white. The surprising thing about him is that he has the power of making himself seem almost wholly white. He can make the white hair spread out at will by means of some special little muscles which I have given him, so that the white of his sides at times almost seems to meet on his back. When he does this in the sun it makes flashes of white which can be seen a long way. By means of this Antelope Jack and his friends can keep track of each other when they are a long distance apart. There is only one other animal who can flash signals in this way, and that is the Antelope of whom I will tell you some other time. It is because Jack flashes signals in this way that he is called Antelope Jack. In his habits he is otherwise much like the other members of his family. He trusts to his long legs and his wonderful powers of jumping to keep him out of danger. He is not as well known as his commoner cousin, plain Jack Rabbit. Everybody knows Jack Rabbit.”

Peter shook his head. “I don’t,” said he very meekly.

“Then it is time you did,” replied Old Mother Nature. “If you had ever been in the Far West you would know him. Everybody out there knows him. He isn’t quite as big as Antelope Jack but still he is a big fellow. He wears a brownish coat much like Jumper’s, and the tips of his long ears are black. His tail is longer than Jumper’s, and when he runs he carries it down.”

“I don’t carry mine down,” Peter piped up.

Old Mother Nature laughed right out. “True enough, Peter, true enough,” said she. “You couldn’t if you wanted to. It isn’t long enough to carry any way

but up. Jack has more of a tail than you have, just as he has longer legs. My, how he can run! He goes with great bounds and about every tenth bound he jumps very high. This is so that he can get a good look around to watch out for enemies.”

“Who are his enemies?” asked Peter.

“Foxes, Coyotes, Hawks, Eagles, Owls, Weasels, and men,” replied Old Mother Nature. “In fact, he has about as many enemies as you have.”

“I suppose when you say men, you mean hunters,” said Peter.

Old Mother Nature nodded. “Yes,” said she, “I mean those who hunt him for fun and those who hunt him to get rid of him.”

Peter pricked up his ears. “What do they want to get rid of him for? What harm does he do?” he asked.

“When he lives far away from the homes of men he does no harm,” replied Old Mother Nature. “But when he lives near the homes of men he gets into mischief, just as you do when you visit Farmer Brown’s garden.” Old Mother Nature looked very severe when she said this and Peter hung his head.

“I know I ought to keep away from that garden,” said Peter very meekly, “but you have no idea what a temptation it is. The things in that garden do taste so good.”

Old Mother Nature turned her head to hide the twinkle in her eyes. When she turned toward Peter again her face was severe as before. “That is no excuse,

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Peter Rabbit,” said she. “You should be sufficiently strong-minded not to yield to temptation. Yielding to temptation is the cause of most of the trouble in this world. It has made man an enemy to Jack Rabbit. Jack just cannot keep away from the crops planted by men. His family is very large, and when a lot of them get together in a field of clover or young wheat, or in a young orchard where the bark on the trees is tender and sweet, they do so much damage that the owner is hardly to be blamed for becoming angry and seeking to kill them. Yes, I am sorry to say, Jack Rabbit becomes a terrible nuisance when he goes where he has no business. Now I guess you have learned sufficient about your long-legged cousins. I’ve a great deal to do, so skip along home, both of you.”

“If you please, Mother Nature, may we come again to-morrow?” asked Peter.

“What for?” demanded Old Mother Nature. “Haven’t you learned enough about your family?”

“Yes,” replied Peter, “but there are lots and lots of things I would like to know about other people. If you please, I would like to come to school to you every day. You see, the more I learn about my neighbors, the better able I will be to take care of myself.”

“All right, Mr. Curiosity,” replied Old Mother Nature good-naturedly, “come again to-morrow morning. I wouldn’t for the world deny any one who is really seeking for knowledge.”

So Peter and Jumper politely bade her good-by and started for their homes.

CHAPTER IV

CHATTERER AND HAPPY JACK JOIN

PETER RABBIT, on his way to school to Old Mother Nature, was trying to make up his mind about which of his neighbors he would ask. He had learned so many surprising things about his own family that he shrewdly suspected many equally surprising things were to be learned about his neighbors. But there were so many neighbors he couldn't decide which one to ask about first.

But that matter was settled for him, and in a funny way. Hardly had he reached the edge of the Green Forest when he was hailed by a sharp voice. "Hello, Peter Rabbit!" said this sharp voice. "Where are you bound at this hour of the morning? You ought to be heading for home in the dear Old Briar-patch."

Peter knew that voice the instant he heard it. It was the voice of Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel. Happy Jack was seated on the top of an old stump, eating a nut. "I'm going to school," replied Peter with a great deal of dignity.

"Going to school! Ho, ho, ho! Going to school!"



HAPPY JACK THE GRAY SQUIRREL

No one knows better than he the value of thrift.

exclaimed Happy Jack. “Pray tell me to whom you are going to school, and what for?”

“I’m going to school to Old Mother Nature,” retorted Peter. “I’ve been going for several days, and so has my cousin, Jumper the Hare. We’ve learned a lot about our own family and now we are going to learn about the other little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows.”

“Pooh!” exclaimed Happy Jack. “Pooh! I know all about my own family, and I guess there isn’t much worth knowing about my neighbors that I don’t know.”

“Is that so, Mr. Know-it-all,” retorted Peter. “I don’t believe you even know all your own cousins. I thought I knew all mine, but I found I didn’t.”

“What are you fellows talking about?” asked another voice, a sharp scolding voice, and Chatterer the Red Squirrel jumped from one tree to another just above Peter’s head.

“Peter is trying to make me believe that I don’t know as much as I might about our own family,” snapped Happy Jack indignantly. “He is on his way to school to Old Mother Nature and has advised me to join him. Isn’t that a joke?”

“Maybe it is, and maybe it isn’t,” retorted Chatterer, who isn’t the best of friends with his cousin, Happy Jack. “If I don’t know as much about the Squirrel family as you do, may I never find another nut as long as I live. But at that, I’m not sure I know all there is to know. I think it would be fun to go to school for a while. What do you say, Peter, if I go along with you?”

Peter said that he thought it would be a very fine thing and that Chatterer never would regret it. Chatterer winked at his cousin, Happy Jack, and followed Peter, only of course, Chatterer kept in the trees while Peter was on the ground. Happy Jack hesitated a minute and then, curiosity becoming too much for him, he hastened after the others.

“Hello!” exclaimed Old Mother Nature, as Happy Jack and Chatterer appeared with Peter Rabbit. “What are you frisky folks doing over here?”

Happy Jack and Chatterer appeared to have lost their tongues, something very unusual for them, especially for Chatterer. The fact is, in the presence of Old Mother Nature they felt bashful. Peter replied for

CHATTERER AND HAPPY JACK JOIN

them. “They’ve decided to come to school, too,” said he. “Happy Jack says he knows all about his own family, but he has come along to find out if he really does.”

“It won’t take us long to find out,” said Old Mother Nature softly and her eyes twinkled with amusement. “How many cousins have you, Happy Jack?”

Happy Jack thought for a moment. “Three,” he replied, but he didn’t say it in a very positive way. Peter chuckled to himself, for he knew that already doubt was beginning to grow in Happy Jack’s mind.

“Name them,” commanded Old Mother Nature promptly.

“Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Timmy the Flying Squirrel, and Striped Chipmunk,” replied Happy Jack.

“He’s forgotten Rusty the Fox Squirrel,” shouted Chatterer, dancing about gleefully.

Happy Jack looked crestfallen and gave Chatterer an angry look.

“That’s right, Chatterer,” said Old Mother Nature. “Rusty is a very important member of the Squirrel family. Now suppose you name the others.”

“Wha—wha—what others?” stammered Chatterer. “I don’t know of any others.”

Peter Rabbit hugged himself with glee as he watched the faces of Happy Jack and Chatterer. “They don’t know any more about their family than we did about ours,” he whispered in one of the long ears of Jumper the Hare.

As for Old Mother Nature, she smiled indulgently.



RUSTY THE FOX SQUIRREL

His coat varies from red to gray.

“Put on your thinking-caps, you two,” said she. “You haven’t named half of them. You are not wholly to blame for that, for some of them you never have seen, but there is one member of the Squirrel family whom both of you know very well, yet whom neither of you named. Put on your thinking-caps.”

Chatterer looked at Happy Jack, and Happy Jack looked at Chatterer, and each scratched his head. Each wanted to be the first to think of that other cousin, for each was jealous of the other. But though they scratched and scratched their heads, they couldn’t think who that other cousin could be. Old Mother Nature waited a few minutes before she told them. Then, seeing that either they couldn’t remember or didn’t know, she said, “You didn’t mention Johnny Chuck.”

CHATTERER AND HAPPY JACK JOIN

“Johnny Chuck!” exclaimed Chatterer and Happy Jack together, and the look of surprise on their faces was funny to see. For that matter, the looks on the faces of Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare were equally funny.

Old Mother Nature nodded. “Johnny Chuck,” she repeated. “He is a member of the Squirrel family. He belongs to the Marmot branch, but he is a Squirrel just the same. He is one of your cousins.”

“He’s a mighty funny looking Squirrel,” said Chatterer, jerking his tail as only he can.

“That just shows your ignorance, Chatterer,” replied Old Mother Nature rather sharply. “I’m surprised at the ignorance of you two.” She looked first at Chatterer, than at Happy Jack. “It is high time you came to school to me for a while. You’ve got a lot to learn. For that matter, so have Peter and Jumper. Now which of you can tell me what order you all belong to?”

Happy Jack looked at Chatterer, Chatterer looked at Peter Rabbit, and Peter looked at Jumper the Hare. On the face of each was such a funny, puzzled expression that Old Mother Nature almost laughed right out. Finally Peter Rabbit found his tongue. “If you please,” said he, “I guess we don’t know what you mean by an order.”

“I thought as much,” said Old Mother Nature. “I thought as much. In the first place, the animals of the Great World are divided into big groups or divisions, and then these groups are divided into smaller groups, and these in turn into still smaller groups. Happy Jack and Chatterer belong to a group called the Squirrel

family, and Peter and Jumper to a group called the Hare family. Both of these families and several other families belong to a bigger group called an order, and this order is the order of Gnawers, or Rodents.”

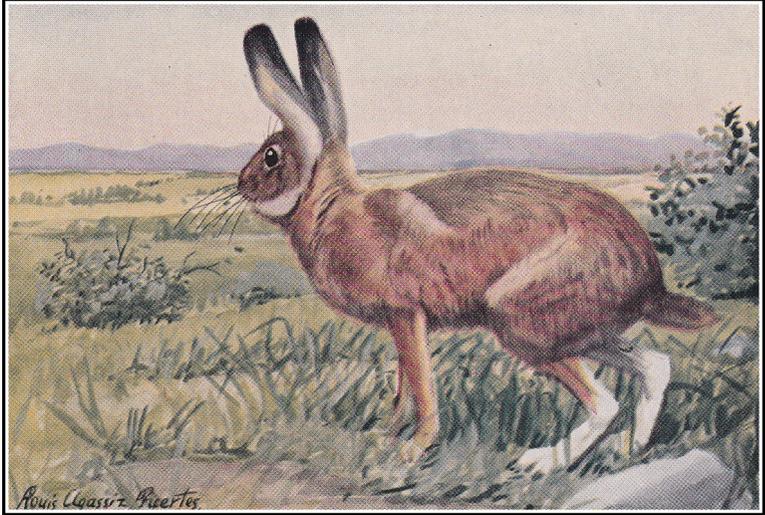
Peter Rabbit fairly jumped up in the air, he was so excited. “Then Jumper and I must be related to Happy Jack and Chatterer,” he cried.

“In a way you are,” replied Old Mother Nature. “It isn’t a very close relationship, still you are related. All of you are Rodents. So are all the members of the Rat and Mouse family, the Beaver family, the Porcupine family, the Pocket Gopher family, the Pika family, and the Sewellel family.”

By this time Peter’s eyes looked as if they would pop right out of his head. “This is the first time I’ve ever heard of some of those families,” said he. “My, what a lot we have to learn! Is it because all the members of all those families have teeth for gnawing that they are all sort of related?”

Old Mother Nature looked pleased. “Peter,” said she, “I think you ought to go to the head of the class. That is just why. All the members of all the families I have named belong to the same order, the order of Rodents. All the members have big, cutting, front teeth. Animals without such teeth cannot gnaw. Now, as you and Jumper have learned about your family, it is the turn of Happy Jack and Chatterer to learn about their family. Theirs is rather a large family, and it is divided into three groups, the first of which consists of the true Squirrels, to which group both Happy Jack and

CHATTERER AND HAPPY JACK JOIN



JACK RABBIT

*His long legs and long ears show
him to be a Hare, not a Rabbit.*

Chatterer belong. The second group consists of the Marmots, and Johnny Chuck belongs to this. The third group Timmy the Flying Squirrel has all to himself.”

“Where does Striped Chipmunk come in?” asked Chatterer.

“I’m coming to that,” replied Old Mother Nature. “The true Squirrels are divided into the Tree Squirrels, Rock Squirrels, and Ground Squirrels. Of course Chatterer and Happy Jack are Tree Squirrels.”

“And Striped Chipmunk is a Ground Squirrel,” interrupted Peter, looking as if he felt very much pleased with his own smartness.

Old Mother Nature shook her head. “You are wrong this time, Peter,” said she, and Peter looked as foolish

as he felt. "Striped Chipmunk is a Rock Squirrel. Seek Seek the Spermophile who lives on the plains of the West and is often called Gopher Squirrel, is the true Ground Squirrel. Now I can't spend any more time with you little folks this morning, because I've too much to do. To-morrow morning I shall expect Chatterer to tell me all about Happy Jack, and Happy Jack to tell me all about Chatterer. Now scamper along, all of you, and think over what you have learned this morning."

So Peter and Jumper and Chatterer and Happy Jack thanked Old Mother Nature for what she had told them and scampered away. Peter headed straight for the far corner of the Old Orchard where he was sure he would find Johnny Chuck. He couldn't get there fast enough, for he wanted to be the first to tell Johnny Chuck that he was a Squirrel. You see he didn't believe that Johnny knew it.

CHAPTER V

THE SQUIRRELS OF THE TREES

PETER RABBIT found Johnny Chuck sitting on his doorstep, sunning himself. Peter was quite out of breath because he had hurried so. "Do you know that you are a Squirrel, Johnny Chuck?" he panted.

Johnny slowly turned his head and looked at Peter as if he thought Peter had suddenly gone crazy. "What are you talking about, Peter Rabbit? I'm not a Squirrel; I'm a Woodchuck," he replied.

"Just the same, you are a Squirrel," retorted Peter. "The Woodchucks belong to the Squirrel family. Old Mother Nature says so, and if she says so, it is so. You'd better join our school, Johnny Chuck, and learn a little about your own relatives."

Johnny Chuck blinked his eyes and for a minute or two couldn't find a word to say. He knew that if Peter were telling the truth as to what Old Mother Nature had said, it must be true that he was a member of the Squirrel family. But it was hard to believe. "What is this school?" he finally asked.

Peter hastened to tell him. He told Johnny all about what he and Jumper the Hare had learned about their family, and all the surprising things Old Mother Nature had told them about the Squirrel family, and he ended by again urging Johnny Chuck to join the school and promised to call for Johnny the next morning.

But Johnny Chuck is lazy and does not like to go far from his own doorstep, so when Peter called the next morning Johnny refused to go, despite all Peter could say. Peter didn't waste much time arguing for he was afraid he would be late and miss something. When he reached the Green Forest he found his cousin, Jumper the Hare, and Chatterer the Red Squirrel, and Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, already there. As soon as Peter arrived Old Mother Nature began the morning lesson.



CHATTERER THE RED SQUIRREL

The little rollicking mischief-maker of the Green Forest.

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“Happy Jack,” said she, “you may tell us all you know about your cousin, Chatterer.”

“To begin with, he is the smallest of the Tree Squirrels,” said Happy Jack. “He isn’t so very much bigger than Striped Chipmunk, and that means that he is less than half as big as myself. His coat is red and his waistcoat white; his tail is about two-thirds as long as his body and flat but not very broad. Personally, I don’t think it is much of a tail.”

At once Chatterer’s quick temper flared up and he began to scold. But Old Mother Nature silenced him and told Happy Jack to go on. “He spends more of his time in the trees than I do,” continued Happy Jack, “and is especially fond of pine trees and other cone-bearing trees. He likes the deeper parts of the Green Forest better than I do, though he seems to feel just as much at home on the edge of the Green Forest, especially if it is near a farm where he can steal corn.”

Chatterer started to scold again but was silenced once more by Old Mother Nature. “I have to admit that Chatterer is thrifty,” continued Happy Jack, quite as if he hadn’t been interrupted. “He is very fond of the seeds of cone-bearing trees. He cuts the cones from the trees just before they are ripe. Then they ripen and open on the ground, where he can get at the seeds easily. He often has a number of store-houses and stores up cone seeds, acorns, nuts, and corn when he can get it. He builds a nest of leaves and strips of bark, sometimes in a hollow tree and sometimes high up in the branches of an evergreen tree. He is a good jumper and jumps from

tree to tree. He is a busybody and always poking his nose in where he has no business. He steals my stores whenever he can find them.”

“You do the same thing to me when you have the chance, which isn’t often,” sputtered Chatterer.

Happy Jack turned his back to Chatterer and continued, “He doesn’t seem to mind cold weather at all, as long as the sun shines. His noisy tongue is to be heard on the coldest days of winter. He is the sauciest, most impudent fellow of the Green Forest, and never so happy as when he is making trouble for others. He sauces and scolds everybody he meets, and every time he opens his mouth he jerks his tail. He’s quarrelsome. Worse than that, in the spring when the birds are nesting, he turns robber. He goes hunting for nests and steals the eggs, and what is even more dreadful, he kills and eats the baby birds. All the birds hate him, and I don’t blame them.”

Chatterer could contain himself no longer. His tongue fairly flew and he jerked his tail so hard and so fast that Peter Rabbit almost expected to see him break it right off. He called Happy Jack names, all the bad names he could think of, and worked himself up into such a rage that it was some time before Old Mother Nature could quiet him.

When at last he stopped from sheer lack of breath, Old Mother Nature spoke, and her voice was very severe. “I’m ashamed of you, Chatterer,” said she. “Unfortunately, what Happy Jack has said about you is true. In many ways you are a disgrace to the Green

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Forest. Still I don't know how the Green Forest could get along without you. Happy Jack forgot to mention that you eat some insects at times. He also forgot to mention that sometimes you have a storehouse down in the ground. Now tell us what you know about your cousin, Happy Jack."

For a few minutes Chatterer sulked, but he did not dare disobey Old Mother Nature. "I don't know much good about him," he mumbled.

"And you don't know much bad about me either," retorted Happy Jack sharply.

Old Mother Nature held up a warning hand. "That will do," said she. "Now, Chatterer, go on."

"Happy Jack is more than twice as big as I, but at that, I'm not afraid of him," said Chatterer and glared at Happy Jack. "He is gray all over, except underneath, where he is white. He has a tremendously big tail and is so proud of it he shows it off whenever he has a chance. When he sits up he has a way of folding his hands on his breast. I don't know what he does it for unless it is to keep them warm in cold weather. He builds a nest very much like mine. Sometimes it is in a hollow tree, but quite as often it is in the branches of a tree. He is a good traveler in the tree-tops, but he spends a good deal of his time on the ground. He likes open woodland best, especially where there are many nut trees. He has a storehouse where he stores up nuts for winter, but he buries in the ground and under the leaves more than he puts in his storehouse. In winter, when he is hungry, he hunts for those buried nuts, and somehow he manages

to find them even when they are covered with snow. When he comes to stealing he is not better than I am. I have seen him steal birds' eggs, and I wouldn't trust him unwatched around one of my storehouses."

It was Happy Jack's turn to become indignant. "I may have taken a few eggs when I accidentally ran across them," said he, "but I never go looking for them, and I don't take them unless I am very hungry and can't find anything else. I don't make a business of robbing birds the way you do, and you know it. If I find one of your storehouses and help myself, I am only getting back what you have stolen from me. Everybody loves me and that is more than you can say."

"That's enough," declared Old Mother Nature, and her voice was very sharp. "You two cousins never have agreed and I am afraid never will. As long as you are neighbors, I suspect you will quarrel. Have you told us all you know about Happy Jack, Chatterer?"

Chatterer nodded. He was still mumbling to himself angrily and wasn't polite enough to make a reply. Old Mother Nature took no notice of this. "What you have told us is good as far as it goes," said she. "You said that Happy Jack is all gray excepting underneath. Usually the Gray Squirrel is just as Chatterer has described him, but sometimes a Gray Squirrel isn't gray at all, but all black."

Peter Rabbit's ears stood straight up with astonishment. "How can a Gray Squirrel be black?" he demanded.

Old Mother Nature smiled. "That is a fair question, Peter," said she. "Gray Squirrel is simply the name of

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Happy Jack's family. Sometimes some of the babies are born with black coats instead of gray coats. Of course they are just the same kind of Squirrel, only they look different. In some parts of the country there are numbers of these black-coated Squirrels and many think they are a different kind of Squirrel. They are not. They are simply black-coated members of Happy Jack's family. Just remember this. It is the same way in the family of Rusty the Fox Squirrel. Some members are rusty red, some are a mixture of red and gray, and some are as gray as Happy Jack himself. Way down in the Sunny South Fox Squirrels always have white noses and ears. In the North they never have white noses and ears. Rusty the Fox Squirrel is just a little bigger than Happy Jack and has just such a handsome tail. He is the strongest and heaviest of the Tree Squirrels and not nearly as quick and graceful as Happy Jack. Sometimes Rusty has two nests in the same tree, one in a hollow in a tree for bad weather and the other made of sticks and leaves outside in the branches for use in good weather. Rusty's habits are very much the same as those of Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, and therefore he likes the same kind of surroundings. Like his cousin, Happy Jack, Rusty is a great help to me."

Seeing how surprised everybody looked, Mother Nature explained. "Both Happy Jack and Rusty bury a great many more nuts than they ever need," said she, "and those they do not dig up sprout in the spring and grow. In that way they plant ever so many trees without knowing it. Just remember that, Chatterer, the next time you are tempted to quarrel with your cousin, Happy

Jack. Very likely Happy Jack's great-great-ever-so-great grandfather planted the very tree you get your fattest and best hickory nuts from. Way out in the mountains of the Far West you have a cousin called the Douglas Squirrel, who is really a true Red Squirrel and whose habits are very much like your own. Some folks call him the Pine Squirrel. By the way, Chatterer, Happy Jack forgot to say that you are a good swimmer. Perhaps he didn't know it."

By the expression of Happy Jack's face it was quite clear that he didn't know it. "Certainly I can swim," said Chatterer. I don't mind the water at all. I can swim a long distance if I have to."

This was quite as much news to Peter Rabbit as had been the fact that a cousin of his own was a good swimmer, and he began to feel something very like respect for Chatterer.

"Are there any other Tree Squirrels?" asked Jumper the Hare.

"Yes," replied Old Mother Nature, "there are two—the handsomest of all the family. They live out in the Southwest, in one of the most wonderful places in all this great land, a place called the Grand Canyon. One is called the Abert Squirrel and the other the Kaibab Squirrel. They are about the size of Happy Jack and Rusty but have broader, handsomer tails and their ears have long tufts of hair. The Abert Squirrel has black ears, a brown back, gray sides and white underneath. The Kaibab has brown ears with black tips, and his tail

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is mostly white. Both are very lovely, but their families are small and so they are little known.”

With this, Old Mother Nature dismissed school for the day.