

Next Time You See a

SLATER

BY EMILY MORGAN



A NOTE TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The books in this series are intended to be read with a child *after* they have had some experience with the featured objects or phenomena. For example, turn over some stones or logs in your yard or nearby park and collect a few slaters. Watch them roll up in a ball when touched. Let them open up and crawl around in your hands; they won't bite! Place a few in a jar or bug box and try to count their wiggling legs. Discuss what you observe and what you wonder about these little animals. What do they eat? Why do they live under rocks and logs? Do they lay eggs?

Then, after placing the slaters gently back where you got them or in a container nearby, read this book together. Take time to pause and share your learnings and curiosities with each other. You will find that new learnings often lead to more questions.

These books are not meant to present facts to be memorised. They are meant to inspire a sense of wonder about ordinary objects or phenomena and foster a desire to learn more about the natural world. Slaters are fairly common animals, but when you stop to think about the fact that they are crustaceans and not bugs at all, and that they are closely related to prawns and crabs that live in the sea, they become so much more remarkable. My wish is that after reading this book, you and your child feel a sense of wonder the next time you see a slater.

– Emily Morgan



Some people call these animals “rolly-pollies” because they roll up into balls when they are touched. Others call them pill bugs because their bodies are shaped like pills. But these creatures are not really bugs at all. They are not even insects.

A good way to find out if an animal is an insect is to count its legs. Adult insects have six legs, but slaters have 14 legs. If they are not insects, what are they?

