

The world's rainforests are perfectly-balanced ecosystems, home to half of all the world's species. They provide everything that the plants, animals and indigenous people living in them need to thrive. Many species rely on each other for survival, so if some plants are destroyed, or an animal becomes extinct, it can have a devastating effect on the rest of the forest. Take a trek deep into this African rainforest for a closer look...

# Watering the WORLD

Rainforest trees act like giant water pumps.
The tiny threads of fungi on their roots draw up
water – and the trees' leaves release it back into
the air as vapour, forming clouds. This falls
as rain or snow in places as far away as
the British Islas. Thanks for the shower!

## **Busy BEES**

Bees are one of the most important insects in the rainforest. As they buzz about collecting nectar, they pass pollen (a fine powder which allows plants to reproduce) from flower to flower, enabling more to grow. Bees also make honey – a tasty treat for people living in the rainforest. Yum!

# TRUNKS in the trees

Elephants only digest about 45% of what they eat, so many plant and tree seeds pass straight through, emerging in the elephants' dung. As the dung turns to compost, these seeds take root and grow. Amazingly, some species actually need to pass through an elephant's gut to sprout!

# Tropical TREASURES For some tribes, the rainforest provides

For some tribes, the rainforest provides everything - from shelter and medicine, to food and clothes. They can't survive without it. Kids living in the forest learn how to build houses, furniture, baskets, arrows and even jewellery from the leaves and branches.

#### Gardeners of the FOREST Gorillas spend their days eating

Gorillas spend their days eating leaves, fruits, stalks and shoots – and that's good news for the rainforest. As they pull at trees to feed, or break off branches to build nests, they create sunlight gaps in the forest canopy, helping smaller plants to grow. Clever!

# Hidden FRUITS

There are lots of amazing foods in the rainforest – if you know where to look! Along with hunting and fishing, the indigenous forest people depend on the trees for fruit and seeds. 5o, if the trees are cut down, their food disappears – along with the animals that also call the forest their home.

### Tiny TROOPERS

Ants, spiders, worms and beetles may be some of the smaller creatures in the rainforest, but they have a very BiG job – keeping the soil healthy. By eating the forests' dead plants and animals, they release nutrients back into the earth, helping plants and trees grow big and strong. Top work!



Forest

FRIENDS
Rainforest birds, like this
African grey parrot, feed
on fruit, nuts and small
insects. As they munch.

some seeds fall to the

ground and – in time – grow into new plants and trees! But without the trees, these beautiful

birds have no food or

protection – and they're left fighting for survival.