

## Emboldened wild animals venture into locked-down cities worldwide

### Level 3 • Advanced

#### 1 Warmer

Match the animals with their descriptions.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 1. raccoon | a. a large bird similar to a chicken that has no feathers on its head |
| 2. turkey  | b. a small wild dog that lives in North America                       |
| 3. boar    | c. a small animal with a black and white face and a long tail         |
| 4. coyote  | d. a wild pig   |

#### 2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

frolic  
brawl

periphery  
pasture

quarantine  
amble

subtle  
rebound

lurk  
roam

- \_\_\_\_\_ is a situation in which a person or animal that might have a disease is kept separate from other people or animals so that they do not catch the disease.
- If animals \_\_\_\_\_, they play in a happy way with a lot of energy and movement.
- If you \_\_\_\_\_, you walk in a slow, relaxed way.
- If you \_\_\_\_\_, you wait, sometimes hiding, in order to frighten or attack someone.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is the outer place of an area, very far from the centre.
- If people or animals \_\_\_\_\_, they fight in a noisy way.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ change is one that is not obvious and therefore difficult to notice.
- If you \_\_\_\_\_, you move or travel with no particular purpose.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ is land covered with grass where animals and birds find food.
- When things \_\_\_\_\_, they recover and return to a better level or position.

#### 3 Find the information

The text describes how the following creatures have been seen in different parts of the world during the coronavirus lockdown. Find the locations for the sightings of these creatures as quickly as possible.

- wild turkeys
- raccoons
- sika deer
- monkeys
- boar

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*Deer, raccoons, turkeys and other creatures have made their way into urban settings they might normally avoid*

**Maanvi Singh**

**22 March, 2020**

- 1 As cities around the world mandate lockdowns, quarantines and social distancing, social-media posts about animals frolicking through deserted cities have enchanted people anxiously looking for silver linings. We must sadly report that many of these optimistic posts have turned out to be fake – there were no dolphins in Venice’s celebrated canals or drunken elephants ambling through China’s Yunnan province.
- 2 But as the coronavirus crisis changes the rhythms of urban life, there are some early signs that animals – especially the creatures that lurk on the periphery of big cities and suburbs – are feeling emboldened to explore. In Nara, Japan, sika deer wandered through the streets and underground stations. Raccoons were spotted on the beach in an emptied San Felipe, Panama. And turkeys have made a strong showing in Oakland, California.
- 3 “Normally, animals live in the parts of our cities that we don’t use,” said Seth Magle, who directs the Urban Wildlife Institute at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. “It makes them an unseen presence, kind of like ghosts.” Gangs of wild turkeys aren’t an uncommon sight in parts of the Bay Area, but it seems they’ve got a bit more room to wander through neighbourhoods they might not normally visit. Boar have been known to descend upon European cities – but Barcelonans on lockdown have marvelled at how the wild animals romp through quiet, deserted streets. In American cities under lockdown, walks and jogs are one of the few excuses for people to go outside. “It’s going to be a really cool time to spot wildlife,” Magle said.
- 4 In San Felipe, where restaurants and bars have closed and tourist traffic is almost non-existent, Matt Larsen has noticed some new visitors on the beach near his home. “There were three raccoons, just frolicking along right at the edge of the surf,” said Larsen, the director of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. “I’ve lived here for six years, and it was something I had never seen before.”
- 5 The beach, which is right by the presidential palace, is usually kept clear by security guards, said Larsen. “But normally, there are people all around; the streets are almost always crowded with foreign visitors and Panamanian tourists,” he said. Larsen, who has been teleworking from home with his wife, was happy to see “nature maintaining itself”, he said. “It was nice to see something a little out of the ordinary.”
- 6 Quarantines could continue to affect wildlife in unexpected ways, said Paige Warren, an ecologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. “I’ll be interested in whether creatures like coyotes and foxes start acting more boldly in American cities,” she said. At the same time, fewer people in the streets could drive some species away, she said, especially those who subsist on whatever humans feed them – or leave behind in the rubbish.
- 7 That is the case in Nara Park, where the sika deer – which look like Bambi – have grown accustomed to tourists lining up year-round to feed them rice crackers. Now that the park is devoid of human visitors, the deer have begun wandering into the city looking for food. They’ve been spotted crossing city streets and walking through underground stations, snacking on potted plants. In Lopburi, Thailand, the absence of tourists and their tasty snacks left local monkeys brawling over what appeared to be a cup of yogurt. But just as many urban animals have adapted to humans, they’ll find ways to adjust during the quarantine, said Warren.
- 8 Magle agreed: “As they said in *Jurassic Park*, life tends to find a way.” Though his team in Chicago has been working from home and practising social distancing, Magle said they were trying to find a way to set up equipment around Chicago for their annual study of urban wildlife and track how the coronavirus crisis may shift animal behaviour.
- 9 The changes will probably be subtle, the researchers said. Urban foxes and coyotes might venture out of their hiding spots a bit more. Birds might roam, graze and hunt new pastures. The narrative that wildlife populations will dramatically rebound and recapture cities is fantasy – albeit one that might comfort those

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looking for meaning amidst the crisis. "If anything, these times may serve as a reminder that animals have always lived in our area," Magle said. "We may not think of our cities as a part of nature, but they are."

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#### 4 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer according to the text.

- Why did some people believe that dolphins had been seen in the canals of Venice?
  - because the absence of tourists had made the canals clean
  - because people had posted fake stories on social media
  - because dolphins are traditionally shy creatures and the quiet atmosphere of the city had encouraged them to return to the canals
- Why did deer start entering the city of Nara?
  - because there are no tourists to feed them in the park
  - because they have eaten all the potted plants in the park
  - because there is now no traffic on the streets of Nara
- What reason can people under lockdown in American cities use to go outside?
  - to spot wildlife
  - to walk or jog
  - to visit restaurants and bars
- Why might the absence of people on the streets drive some animals away?
  - because they are used to seeing people and may feel afraid
  - because this might encourage larger animals to roam the streets
  - because they normally exist on rubbish and food that humans give them

#### 5 Find the word

Find the following words and phrases in the text.

- a verb meaning *give an order or make a law stating that something must be done* (para 1)
- a two-word noun phrase meaning *a good aspect of a bad situation* (para 1)
- an adjective meaning *more confident to do something* (para 2)
- a verb meaning *show or feel surprise or admiration* (para 3)
- a verb meaning *play or move around in a lively and often noisy way* (para 3)
- a two-word adjective meaning *lacking something, especially a good quality* (para 7)
- a two-word phrasal verb meaning *leave home to go somewhere dangerous or exciting* (para 9)
- a verb meaning *eat grass growing in a field* (para 9)

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#### 6 Verb + noun collocations

Match the verbs in the left-hand column with the nouns and noun phrases in the right-hand column to make phrases from the text.

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. set up         | a. a neighbourhood   |
| 2. practise       | b. a way             |
| 3. look for       | c. social distancing |
| 4. find           | d. a strong showing  |
| 5. make           | e. equipment         |
| 6. wander through | f. silver linings    |

#### 7 Word-building

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets at the end of each sentence.

1. Tourist traffic is almost \_\_\_\_\_ at the moment. [EXIST]
2. Lockdowns could affect wildlife in a number of \_\_\_\_\_ ways. [EXPECT]
3. The coronavirus crisis may act as a \_\_\_\_\_ that animals have always lived in our cities. [REMINDE]
4. The beach in San Felipe is next to the \_\_\_\_\_ palace. [PRESIDENT]
5. Some animals are feeling \_\_\_\_\_ to venture out and explore. [BOLD]
6. It is extremely unlikely that wildlife populations will \_\_\_\_\_ rebound and recapture cities. [DRAMA]

#### 8 Discussion

Discuss the statements.

- In many ways, the lockdown could be good for wildlife and good for the environment.
- We should do more to promote wild areas in our cities to allow wildlife to flourish.
- Nature will always rebound.