

# ***Florida's Animated Alphabet***

## **DEAR PARENTS AND TEACHERS,**

A child is never too young to learn about and experience the magnificent beauty and diversity of our state's wildlife and habitats. After all, our children are our future.

*Florida's Animated Alphabet* is designed to introduce young children to Florida's wide variety of native wildlife and the interesting natural history and behavior of its wild creatures.

Learning can be creative and fun and *Florida's Animated Alphabet* is one way to have fun with young children while teaching the building blocks of our language and the fundamentals of wildlife appreciation.

Positive attitudes toward conservation and constructive conservation actions begin with creating awareness and fostering deep-rooted values and attitudes toward all our natural resources. Please use this coloring book as an instrument to foster this fundamental awareness and appreciation that is crucial for all wildlife conservation.

Pick the letter of the page in the coloring book you want to view/download. You can print or save the page from your browser; consult your browser's documentation.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Florida's Animated Alphabet* coloring book was produced through the creative hard work of many FWC employees. I would like to thank all those who helped bring this publication to fruition.

First, I'd like to thank Dennis Hammond, Woody Darden, Roy King and Susan Cerulean, whose support enabled this concept to become reality.

I'd like to pay special tribute to Swannee Nardandrea for accepting the challenge and completing this outstanding collection of children's wildlife drawings that has become *Florida's Animated Alphabet*.

Swannee, along with Henry Cabbage, David Cook, Mark Duda, and Patricia Millsap, unselfishly devoted their time to collect species information, write copy and help iron out the rough spots. I am grateful for their help and creativity.

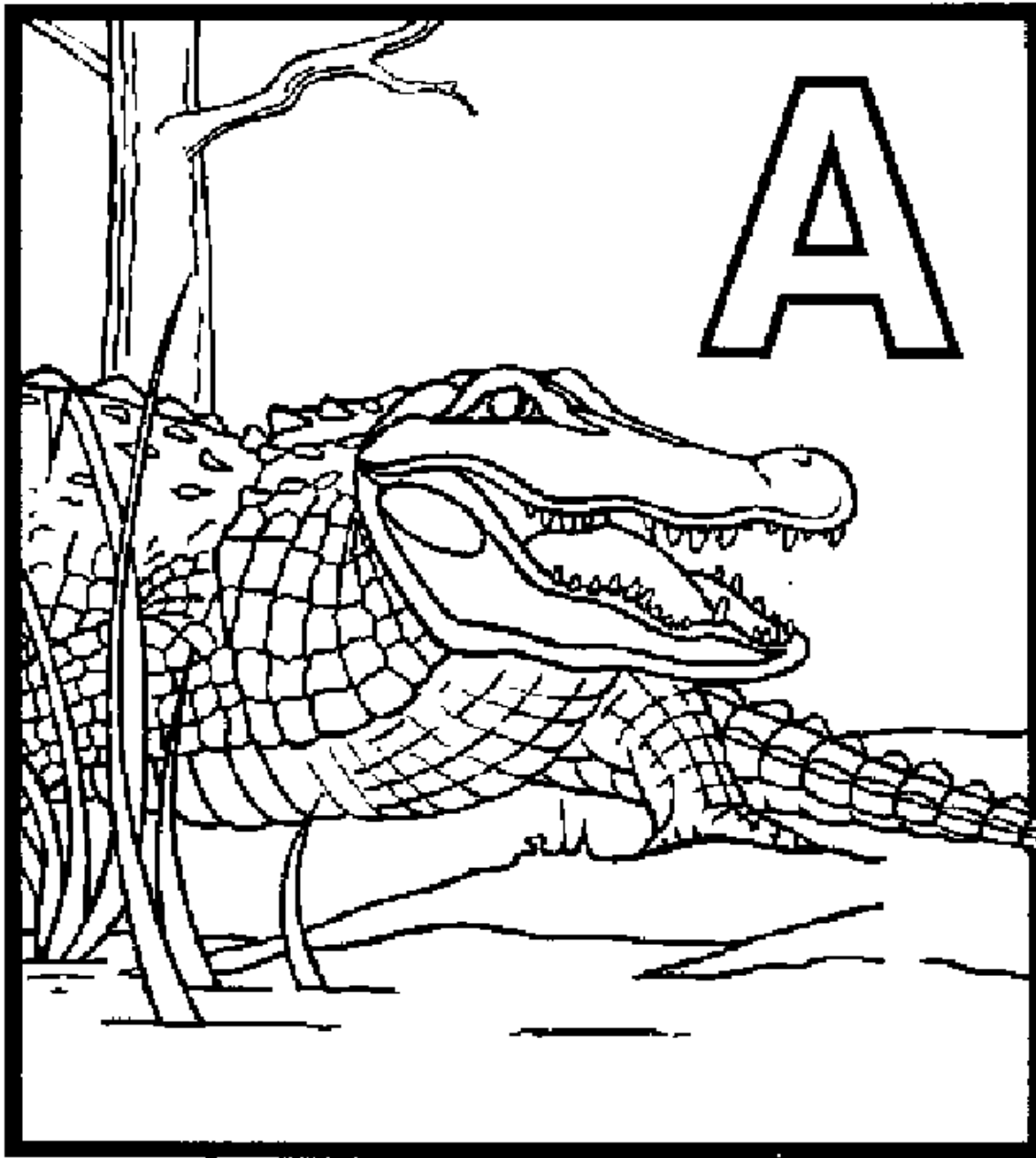
Finally, I'd like to thank all those, particularly Susan Wilkes and Sandy Robertson, who typed, translated and proofed this information into readable typeset copy.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Gillan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

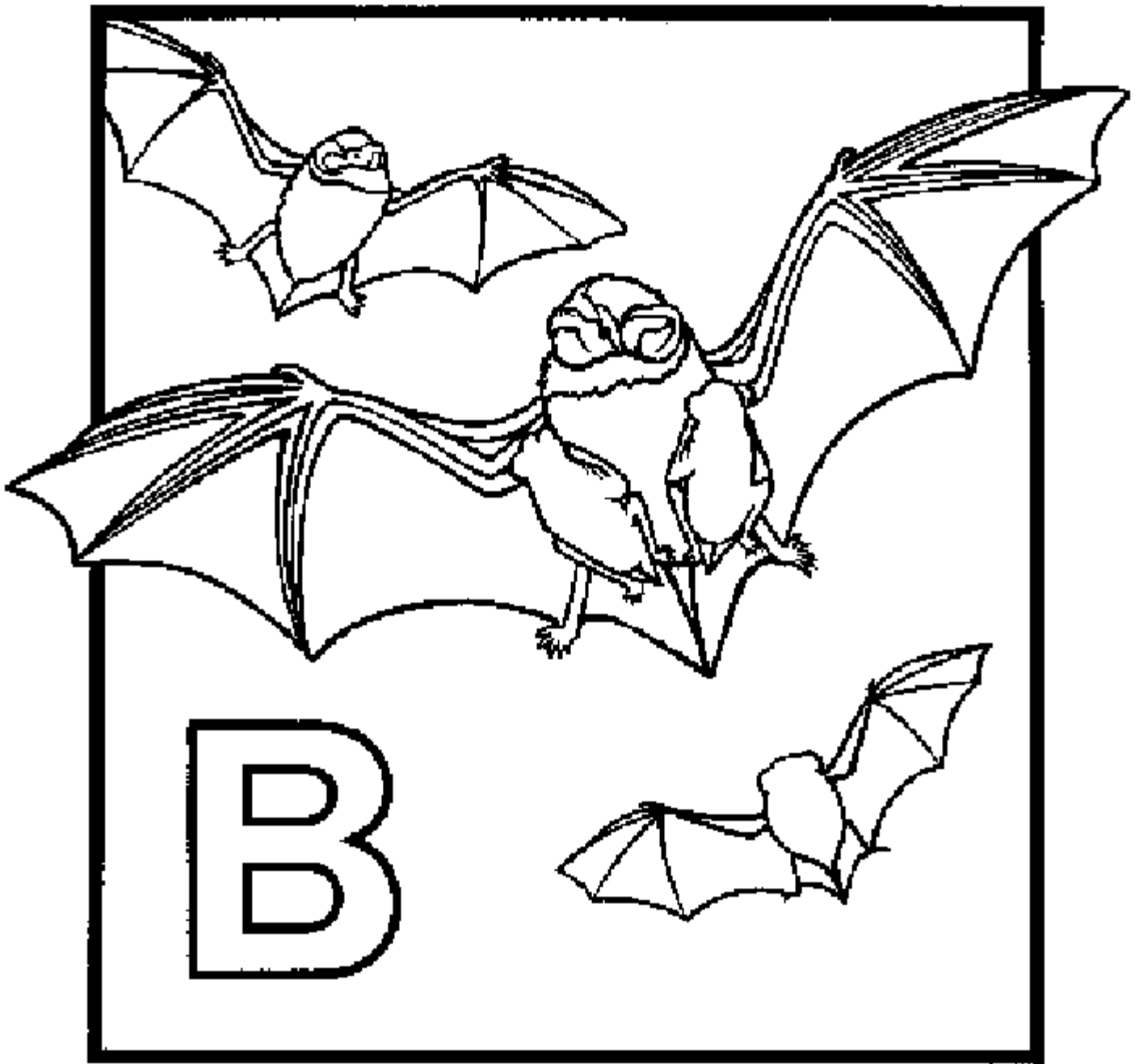
Judy Gillan

Conservation Stewardship Coordinator  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
<http://myfwc.com>



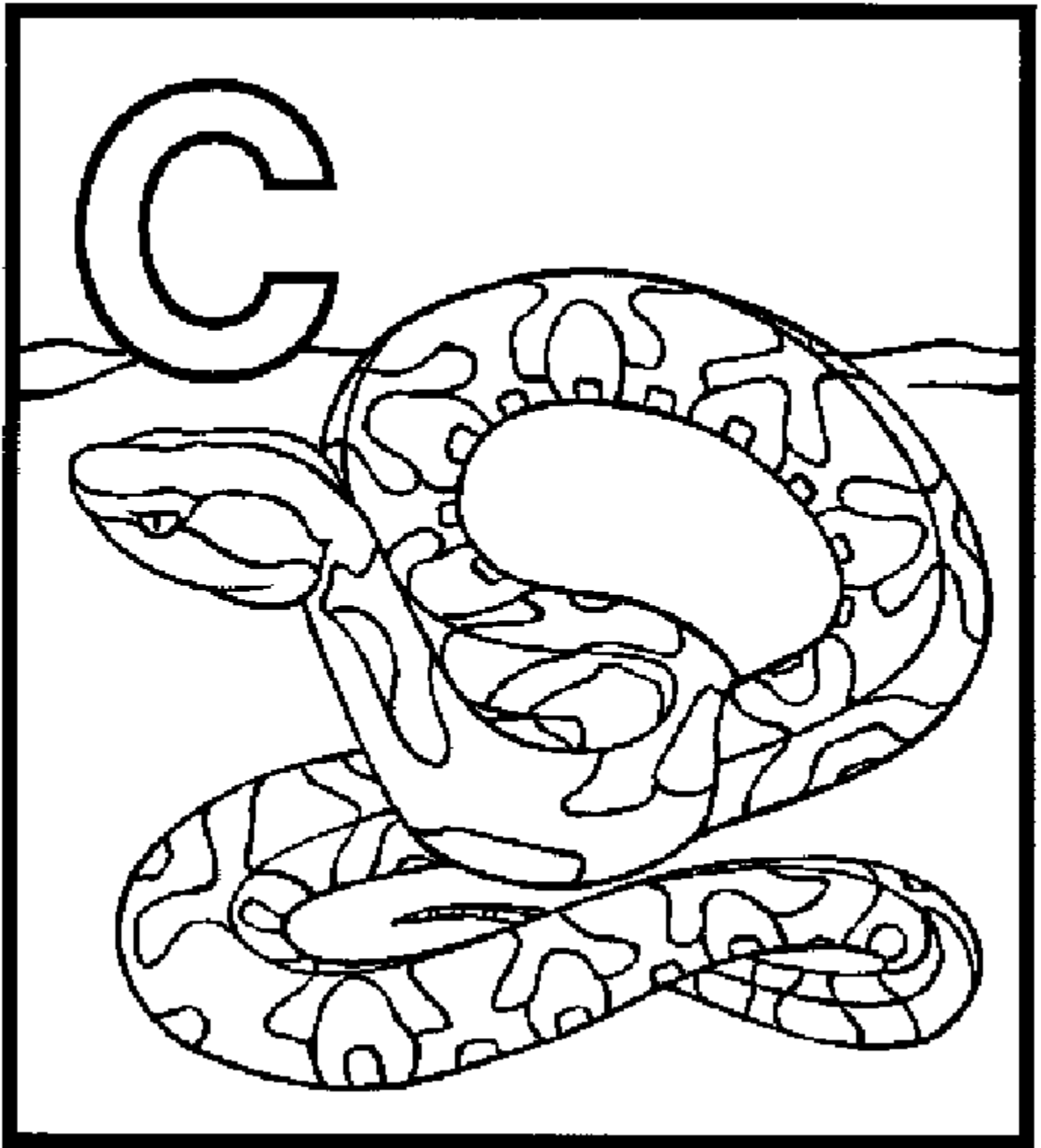
### **American Alligator**

Alligators spend most of their time in the water and swim by moving their large, flat tails back and forth like fish. They can also be seen lying on land in the warm sun. Alligators have powerful jaws to help them eat almost anything, including turtles! Mother alligators lay their eggs in large leaf and stick nests and help the babies dig out upon hatching.



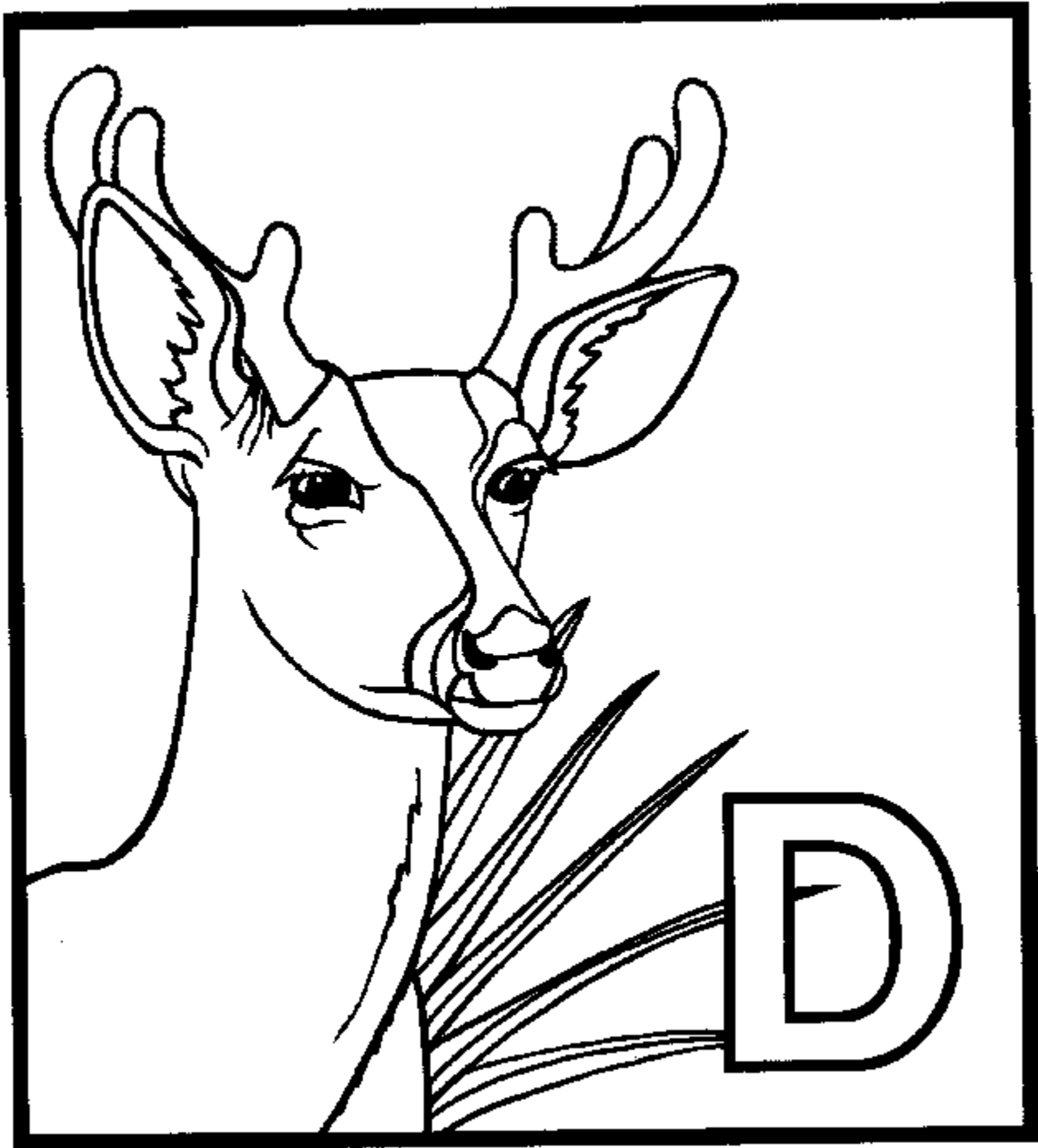
### Hoary Bat

Hoary bats rest hanging upside down in trees during the day. When the sun goes down they leave the trees to look for food. Their favorite foods are moths and beetles. Hoary bat mothers usually have two babies and carry them in flight until the young bats are old enough to fly on their own.



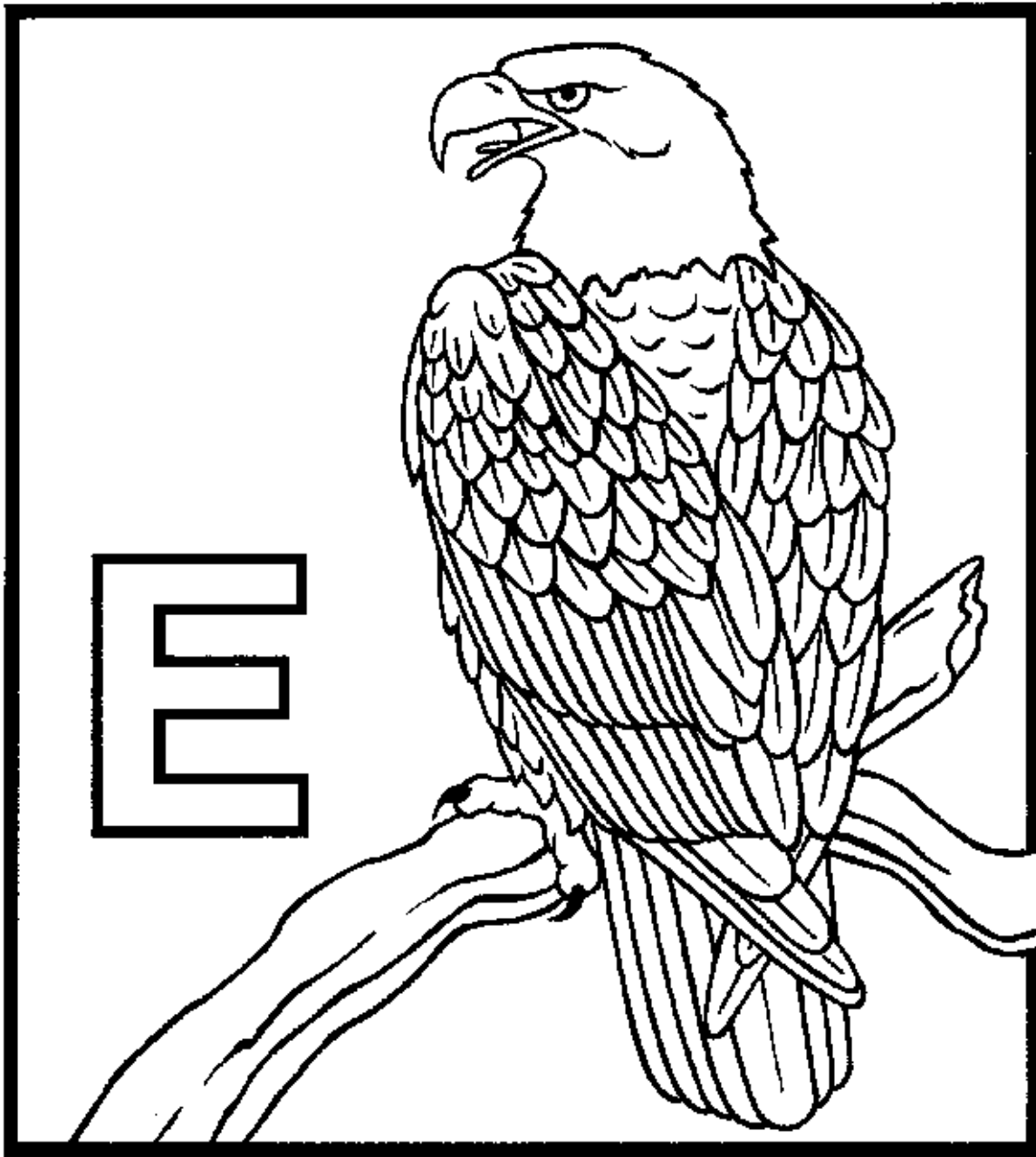
### **Southern Copperhead**

Copperheads use their poisonous bite mainly for catching food. Instead of spending a lot of time and energy searching for a meal, copperheads usually pick a good place to hide and wait. If a mouse comes along, the copperhead suddenly bites. Then the mouse runs off and quickly dies. The copperhead follows the animal's scent and then swallows it whole!



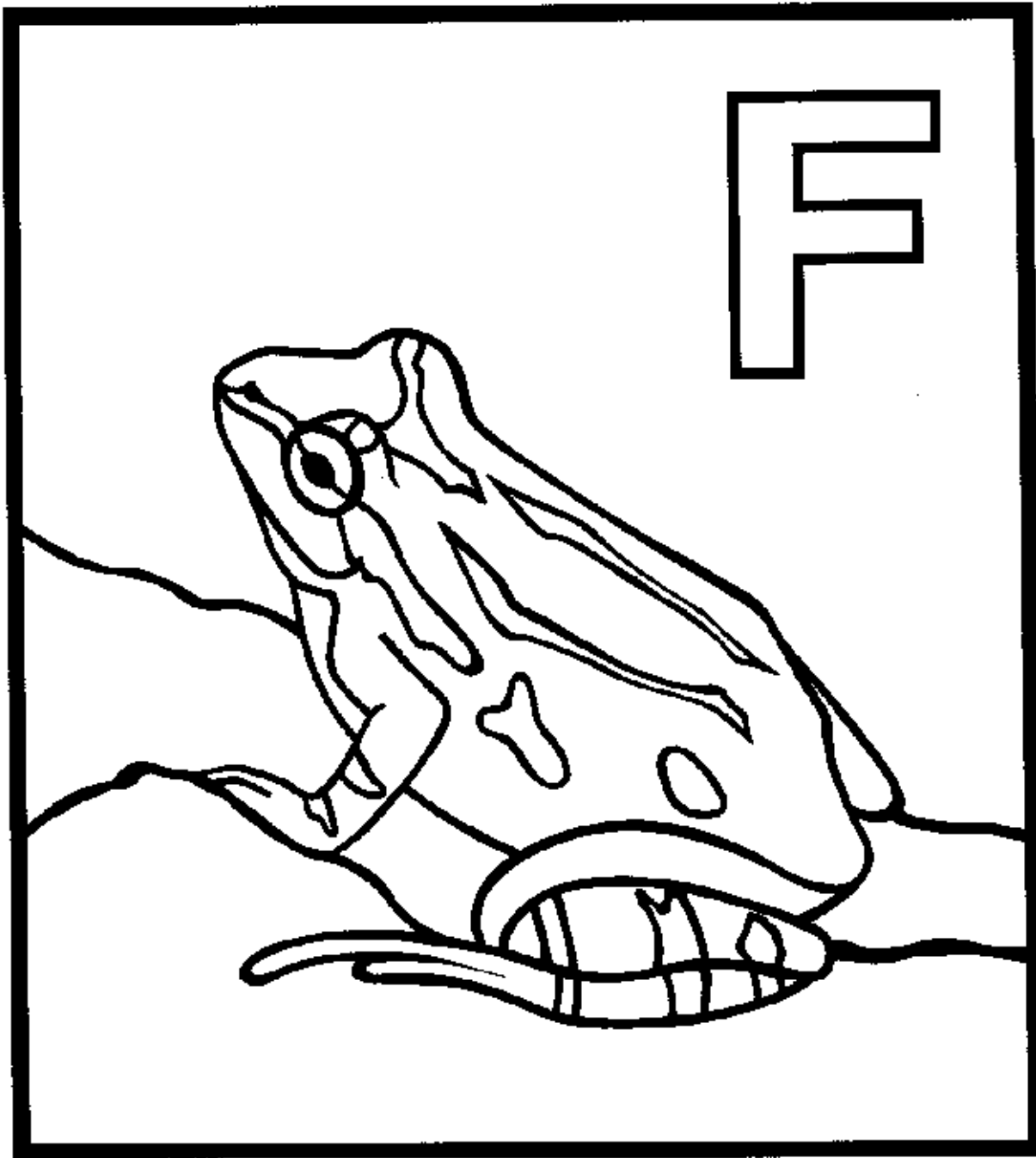
### Florida Key Deer

Key deer are rare cousins to the more common white-tailed deer and live only on small islands in south Florida called the Florida Keys. Some people call them "toy deer" because they are only about the size of a large dog. That's small for a deer! Usually, only the male deer have antlers, and they grow a new pair every year.



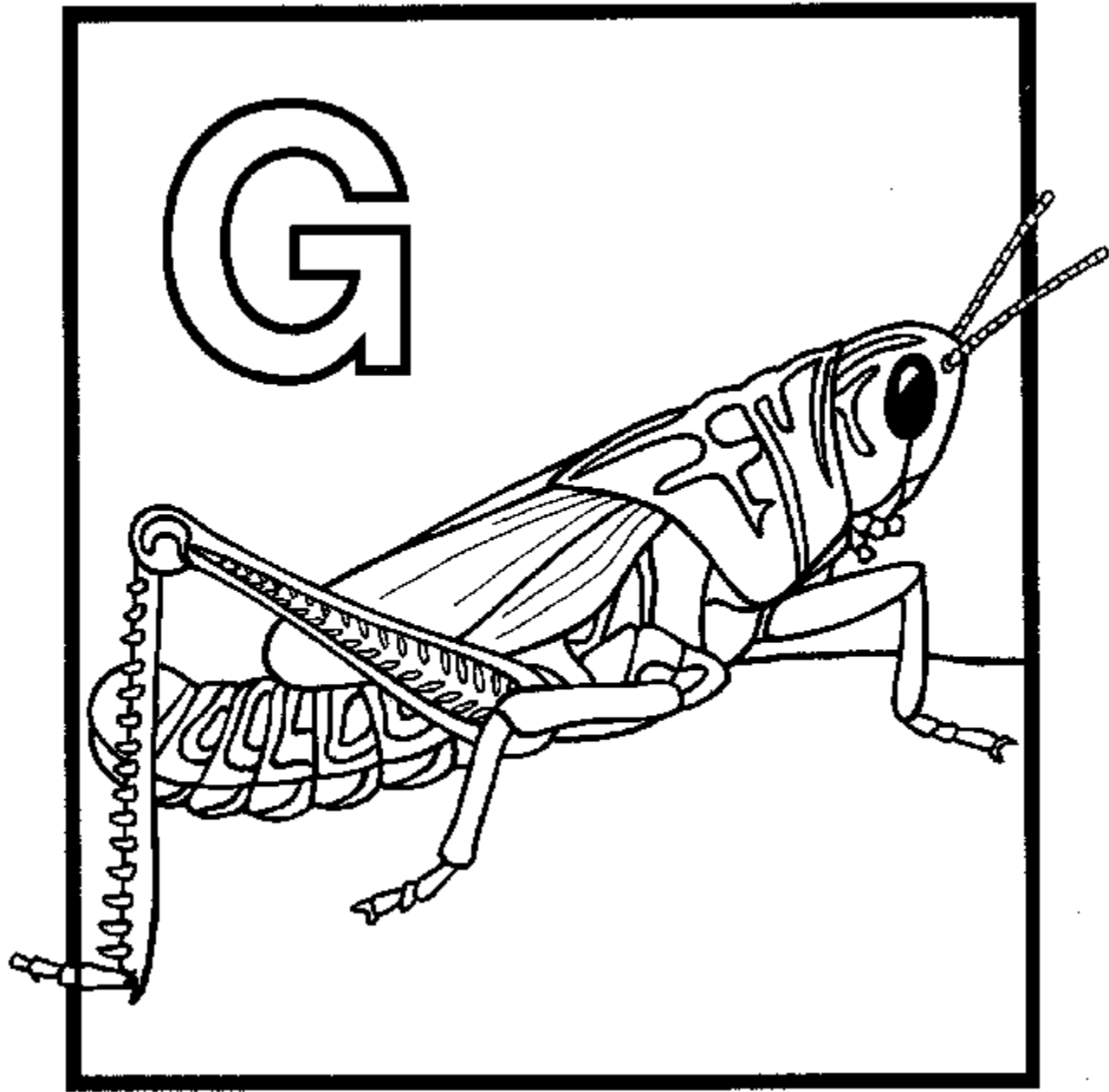
### **Southern Bald Eagle**

Southern bald eagles live throughout Florida near the coasts, rivers, lakes and marshes. Bald eagles usually catch fish to eat but they also like wild ducks and other small animals. Young bald eagles are chocolate brown all over until they are four years old. Then they begin to grow white feathers on their heads and tails like their parents.



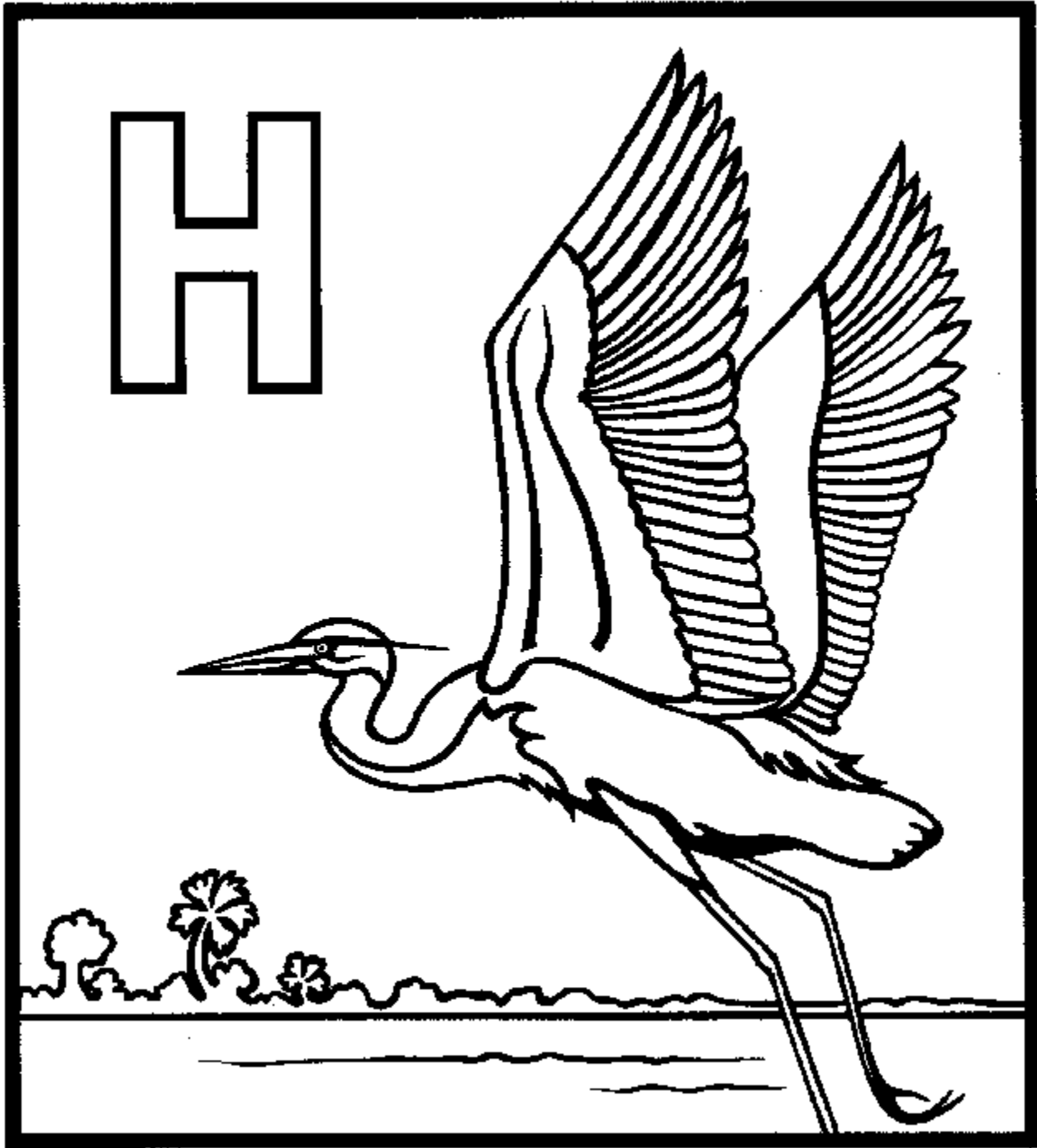
### **Ornate Chorus Frog**

Ornate chorus frogs are found in the northern half of Florida where they live near shallow ponds. It's not easy to find these frogs because they hide in small underground holes by day, and come out mainly at night to eat insects. During the winter mating season, their high-pitched song can be heard far away.



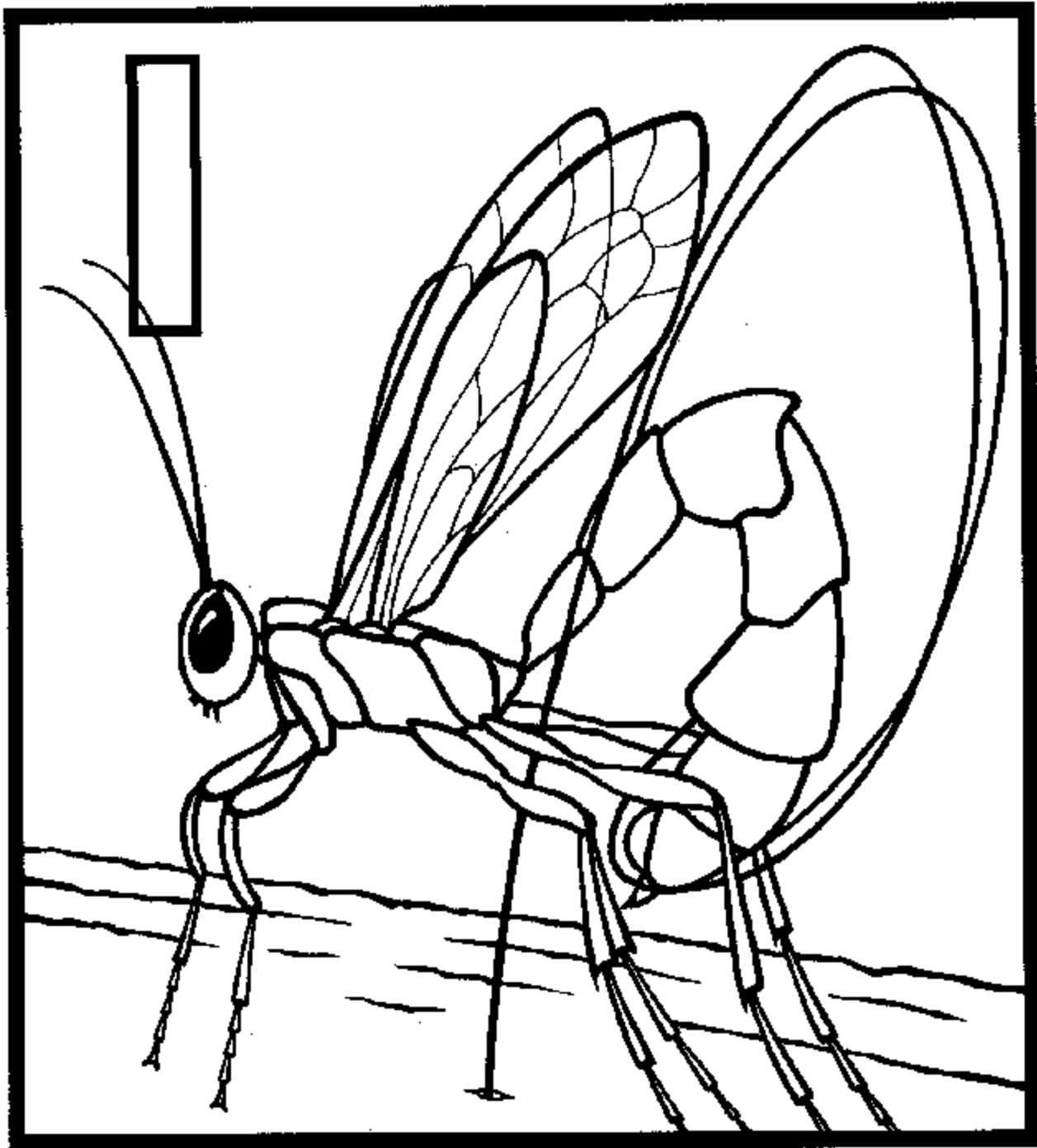
### **Lubber Grasshopper**

These giant grasshoppers are called "lubbers" because they walk so slowly. Lubbers eat leaves, grasses and sometimes dead insects. This grasshopper's bold black and yellow colors warn birds not to eat them because they taste bad and could make the birds sick. Baby lubbers are called "nymphs" and look just like tiny adults.



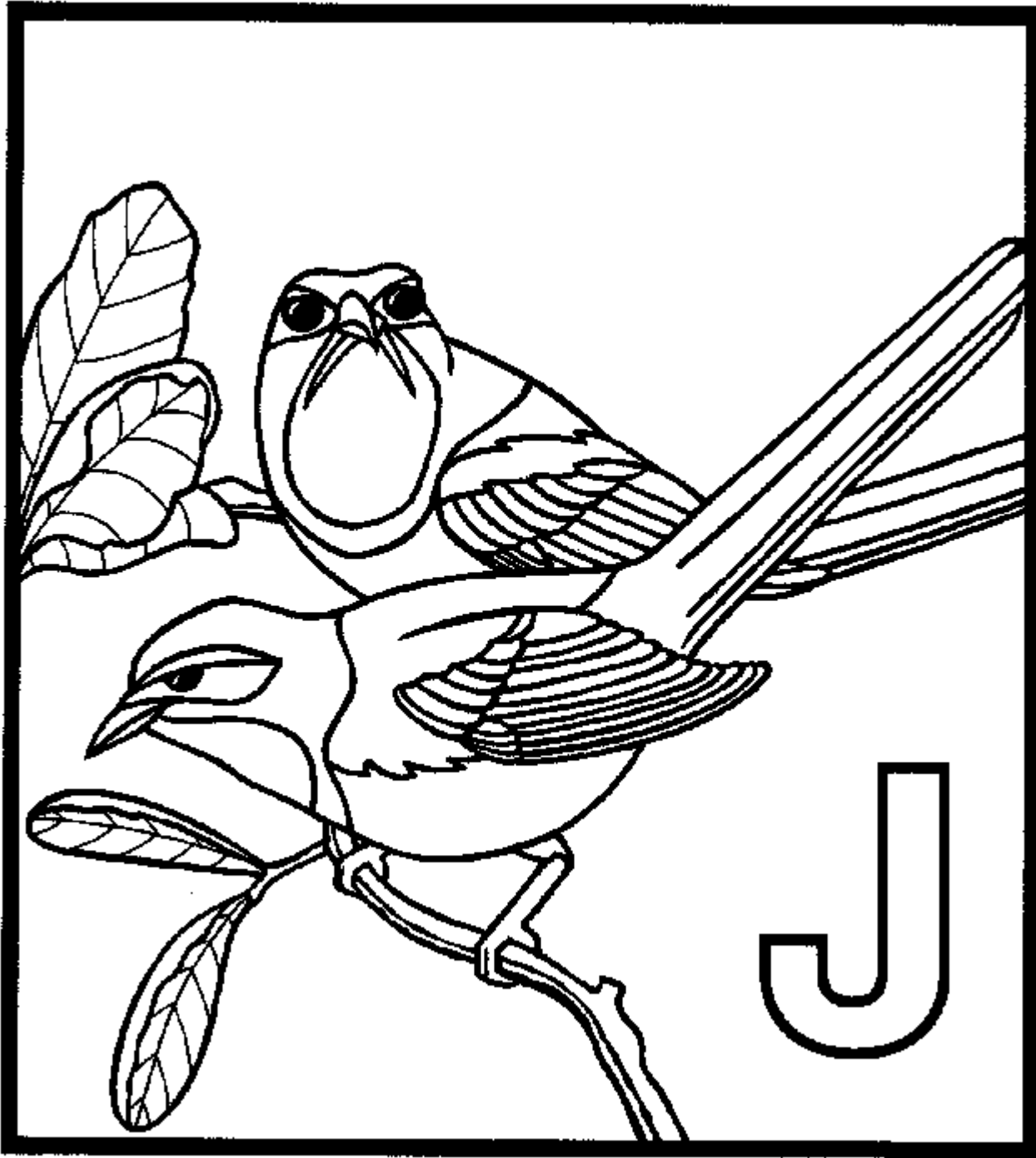
### Great Blue Heron

Great blue herons are tall, long-legged birds often seen wading in shallow water. Herons eat fish and other small animals. To catch their food, great blue herons stand very still, like feathered statues. When an animal that is good to eat wanders nearby, the heron spears it with its sharp bill.



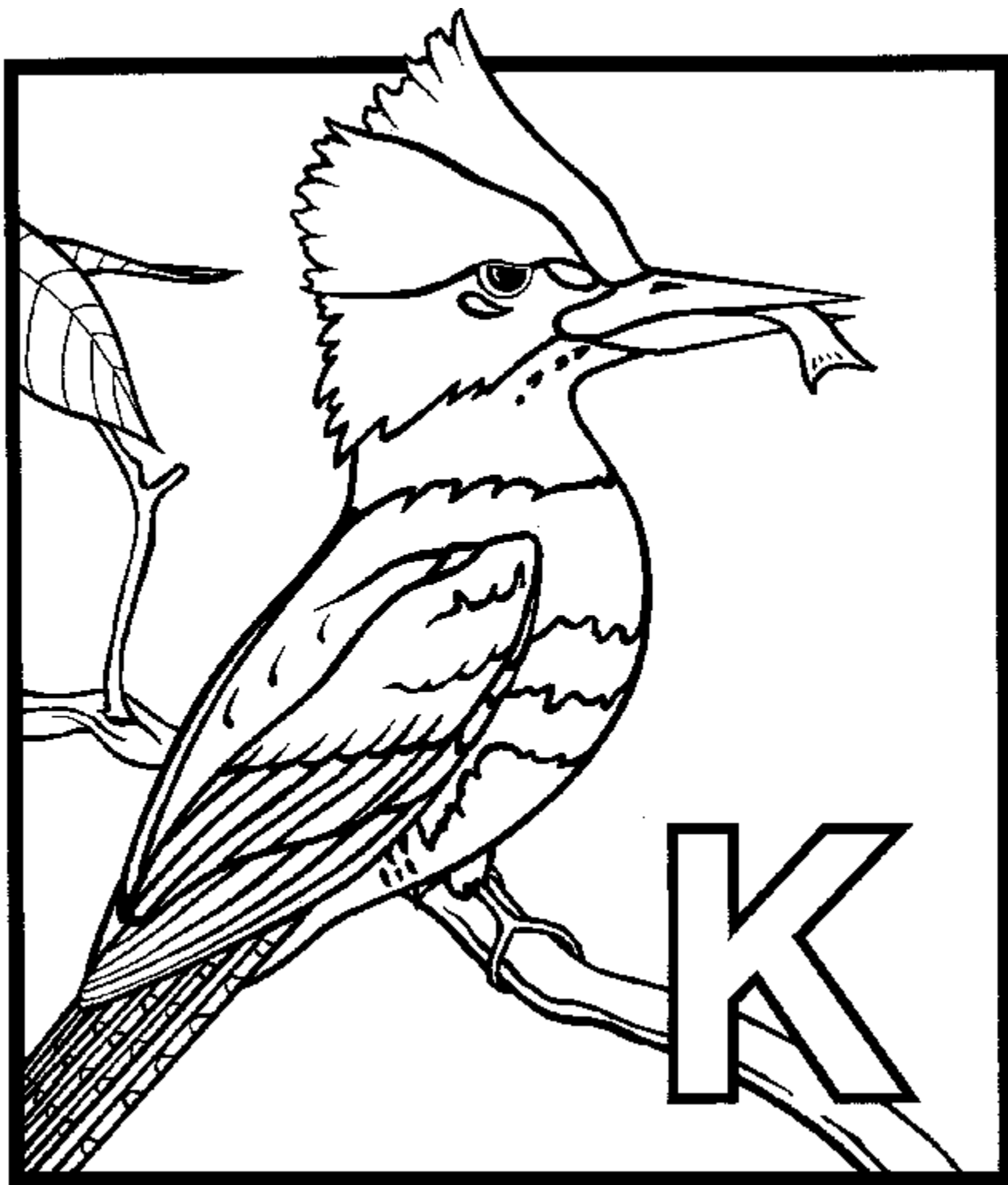
### **Giant Ichneumon**

The ichneumon wasp (pronounced: ick-new-men) has a special kind of "tail" that is used like a drill, not a stinger. The wasp drills a hole deep into the wood close to where a wood-eating insect is tunneling. Then, the wasp lays an egg in the hole. When the egg hatches, the young wasp will eat the wood-eating insect.



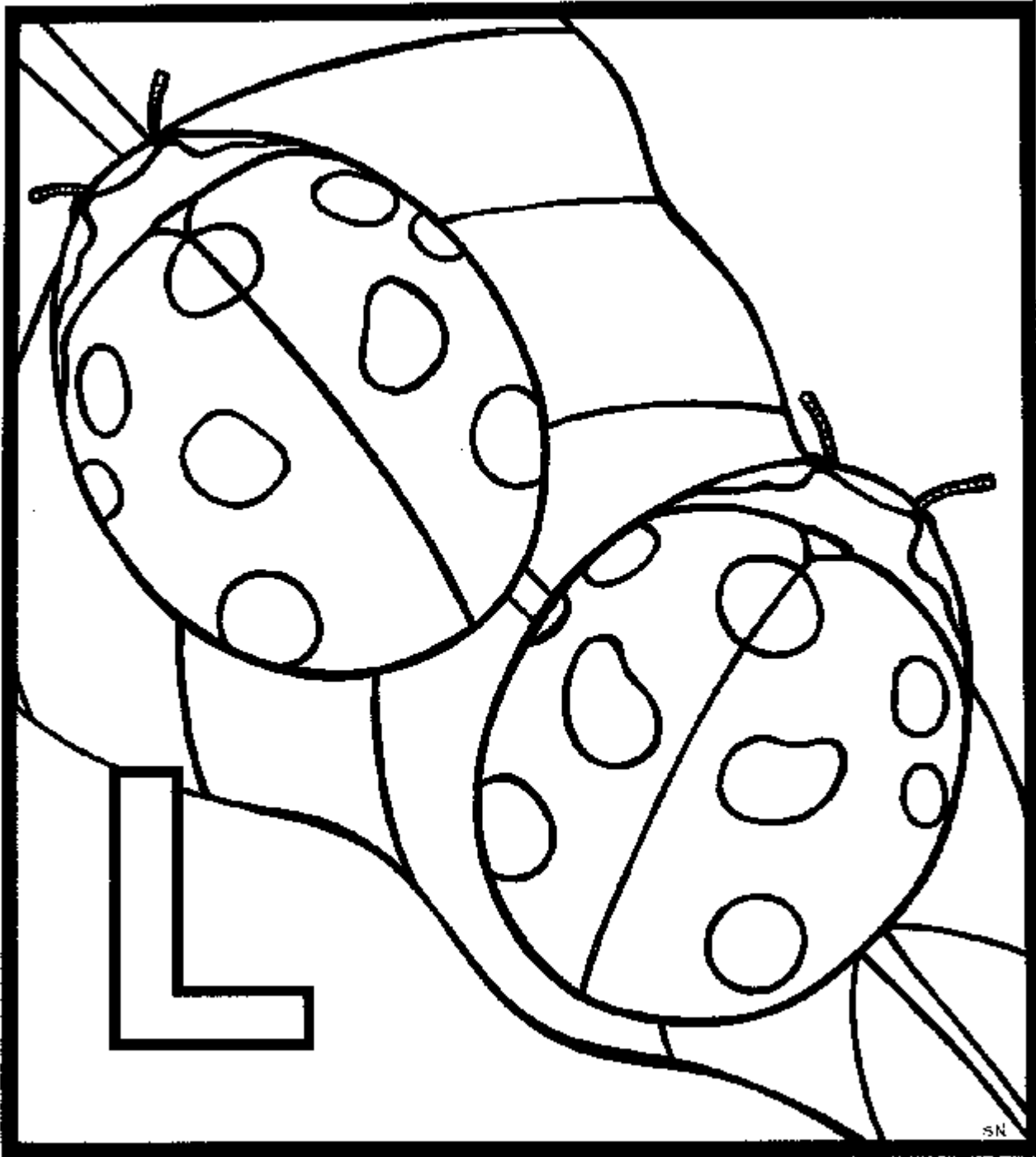
### Florida Scrub Jay

Florida scrub jays are rare and live in dry, sandy areas with lots of shrubs and small trees. They eat many different foods like acorns, insects and small lizards. Young jays live with their parents until they are at least two years old. These young birds help their parents feed and care for the newly hatched jays.



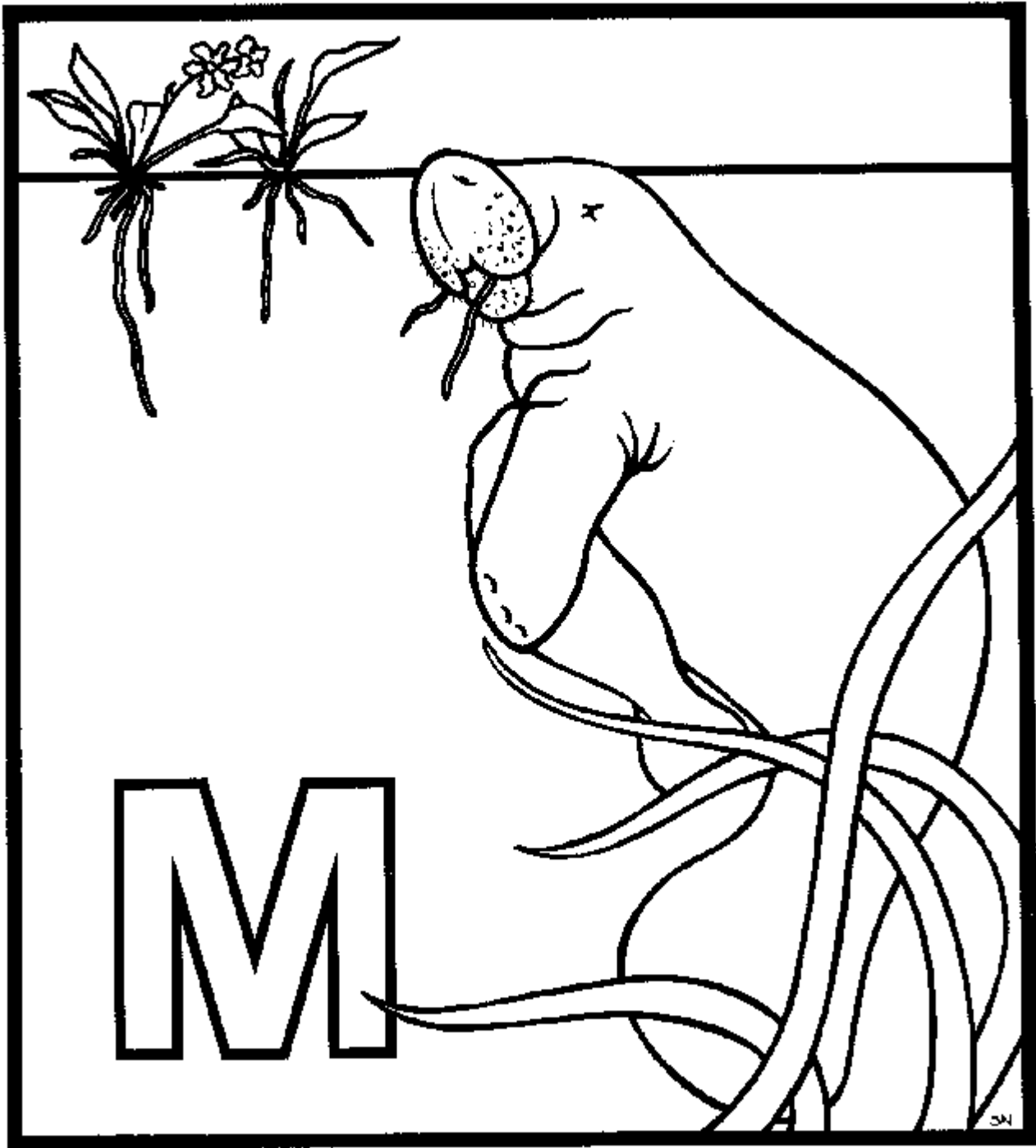
### **Belted Kingfisher**

Belted kingfishers have large heads and bills compared to their small bodies. This helps them to be expert fishermen. Belted kingfishers are often seen sitting high in the trees or hovering high above the water, before diving headfirst to catch small fish. Kingfishers do not chew their food like we do, but swallow the fish whole.



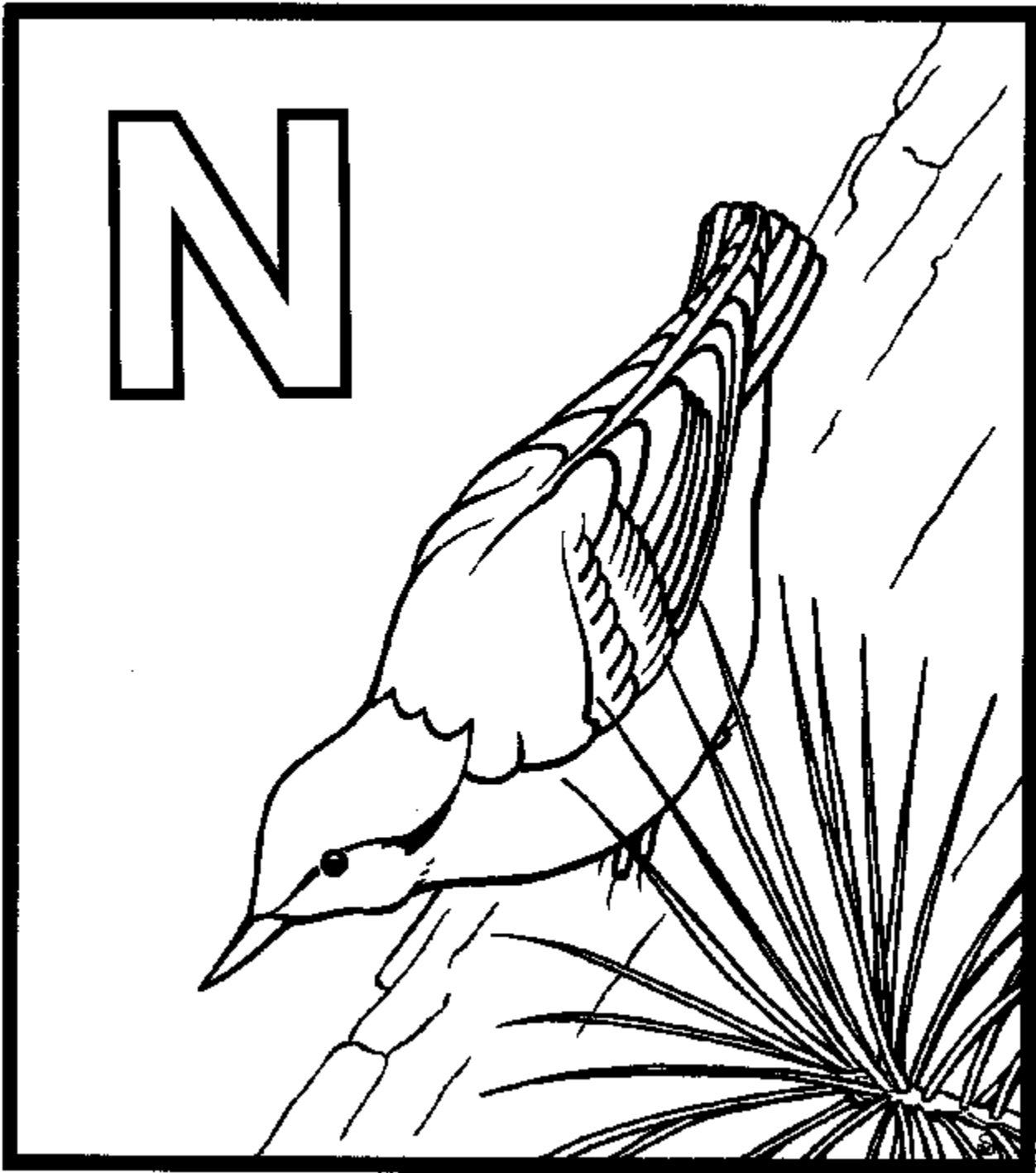
### **Nine-spotted Ladybug**

"Ladybugs" are the gardener's best friend! These polka-dotted beetles eat many pesky garden insects that eat plants. Their bold red and black colors warn birds that they taste bad. During the winter, ladybugs gather in large groups under fallen leaves or bark.



### **West Indian Manatee**

Manatees are large, slow-moving animals sometimes called "sea cows." They live in springs, rivers, bays and along the coast. Manatees eat many different kinds of water plants. Because manatees breathe air like we do they are often found near the surface. Swimming near the surface can be dangerous for manatees because they are often injured or even killed by fast-moving boats.



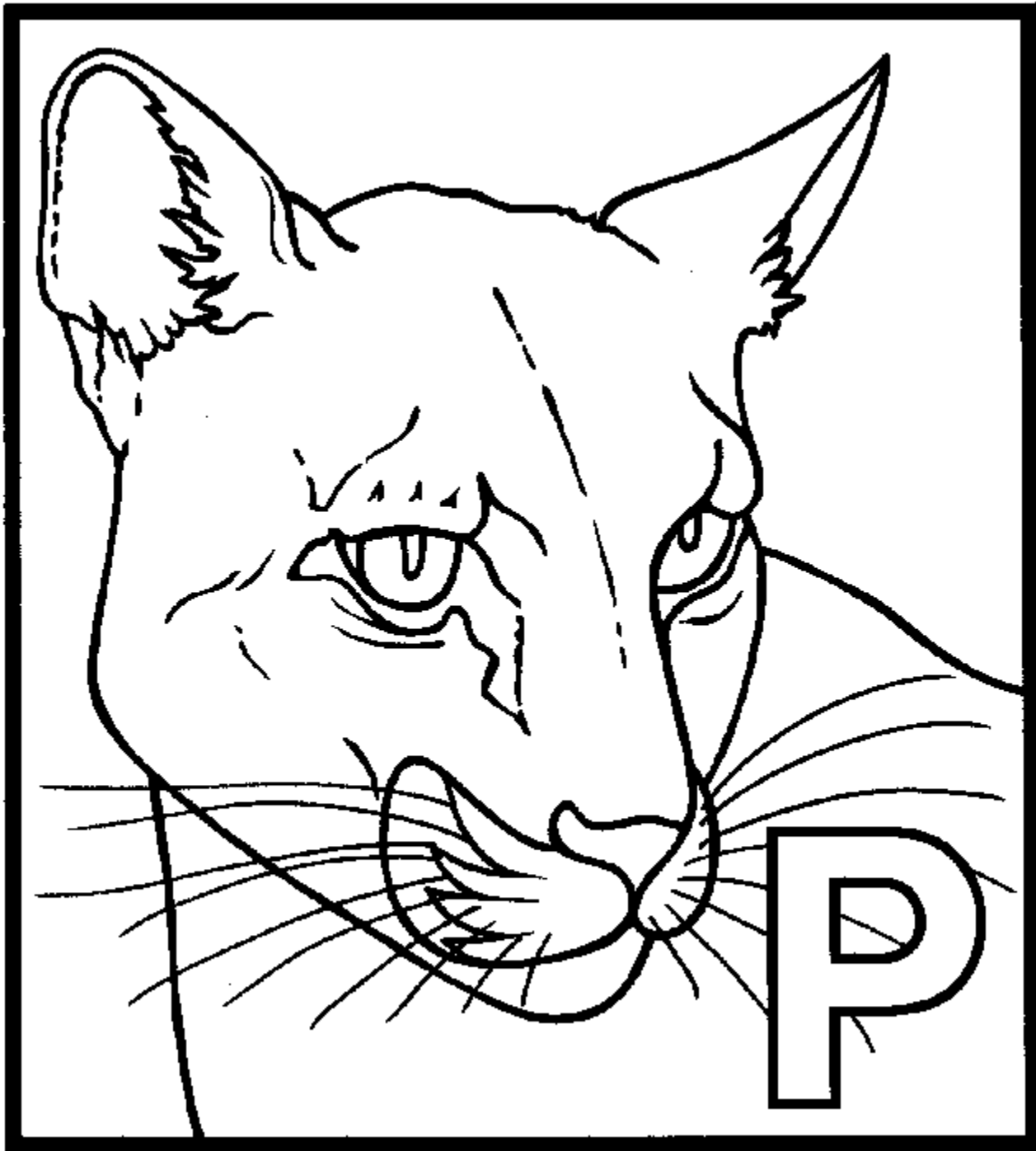
### **Brown-headed Nuthatch**

Brown-headed nuthatches use their sharp, pointed bills to hunt for insects living in the bark of pine trees. They also will eat some seeds and nuts. Nuthatches have strong feet to help them climb up tree trunks, then turn around and move downward, headfirst!



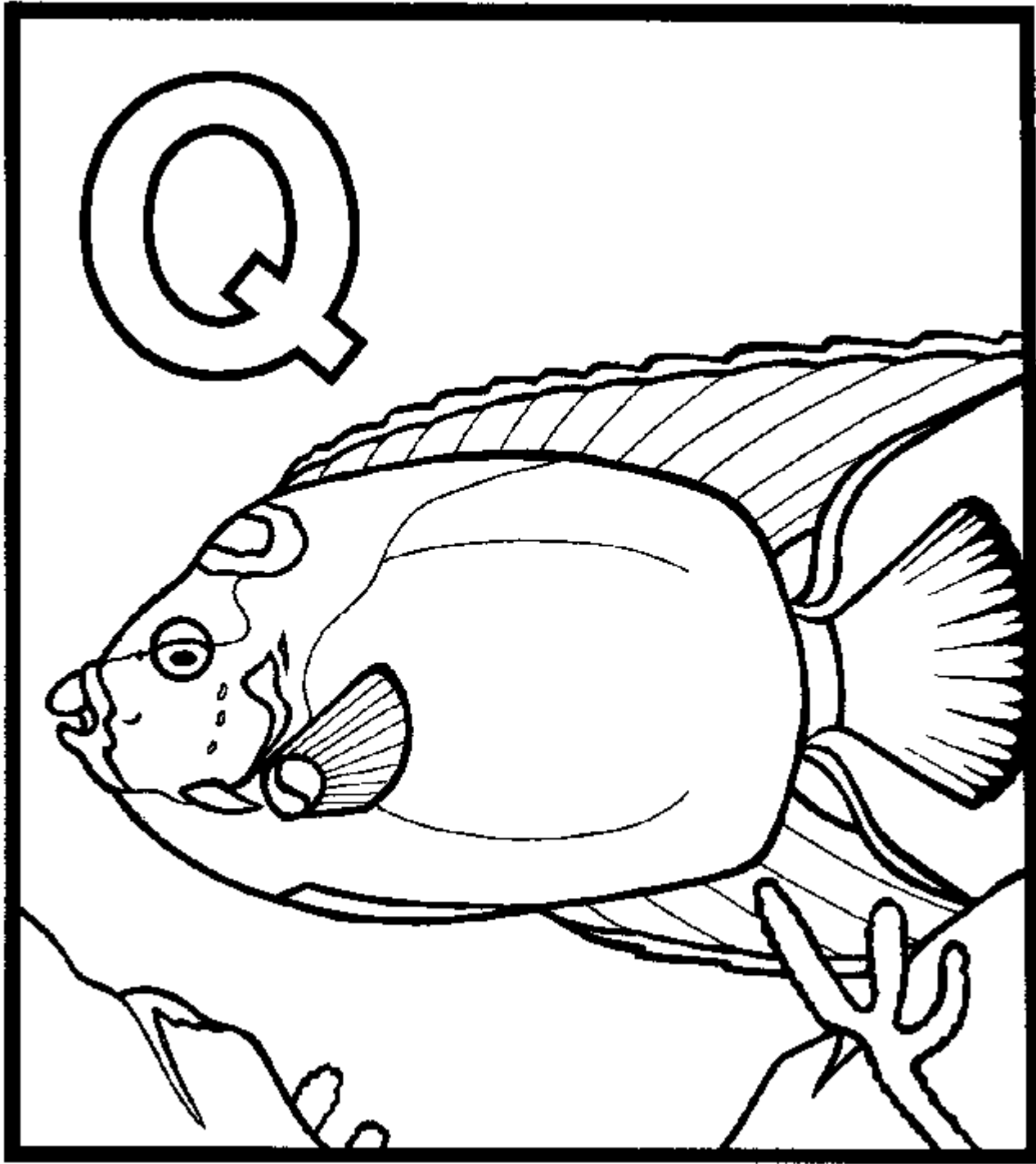
### Eastern Screech-Owl

Screech-owls' "ear tufts" are really just special feathers which help them blend into the trees where they hide during the day. The owl's round, disc-shaped face helps it to gather sound for better hearing. Good hearing and eyesight help them catch mice and other small animals to eat at night.



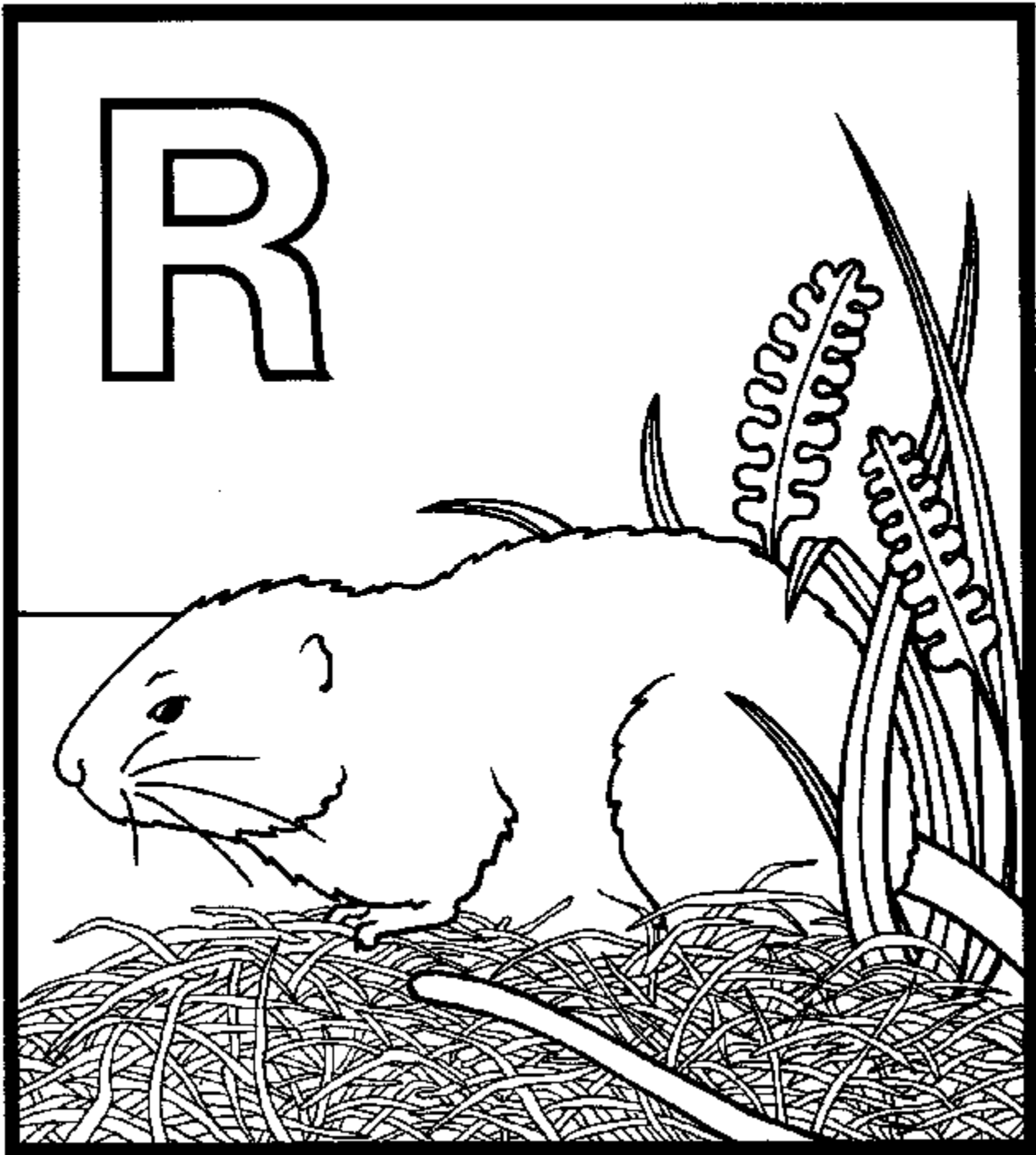
## Florida Panther

Florida panthers are tawny brown, and the tips of their long tails are crooked. Panthers are hunters and mainly eat deer. They are very rare and live mostly in south Florida. Panthers need large areas of woods and swamps to hunt and raise their young. Panther kittens stay with their mother for nearly 18 months, until they are able to hunt on their own. Florida panthers are very shy and seldom are seen by humans.



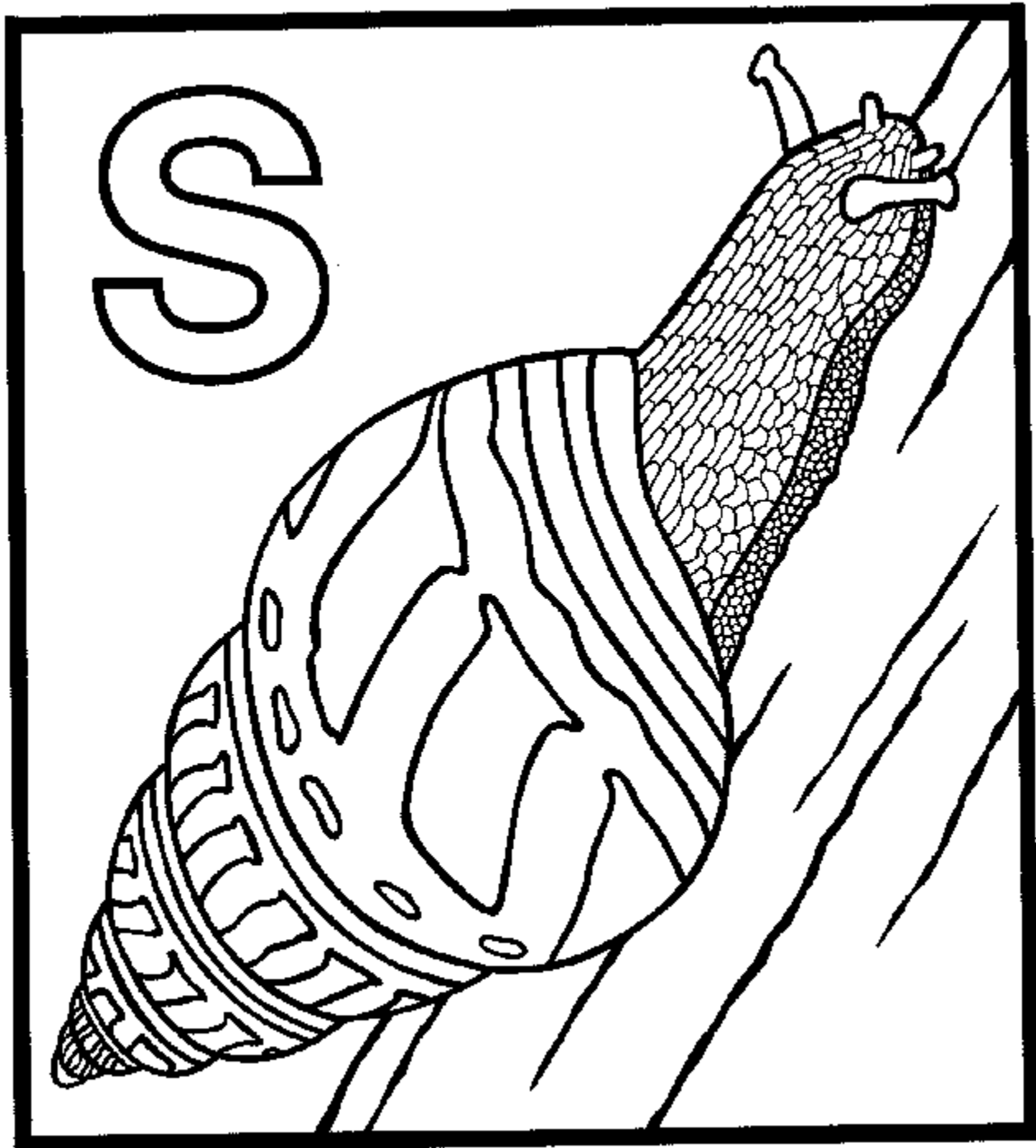
### Queen Angelfish

Bright yellow and blue queen angelfish live around the coral reefs in the shallow ocean waters of south Florida. Their thin, flat bodies help them make quick turns and fit into narrow hiding places. Young angelfish sometimes help other fish by eating tiny insect-like creatures that live on their scales.



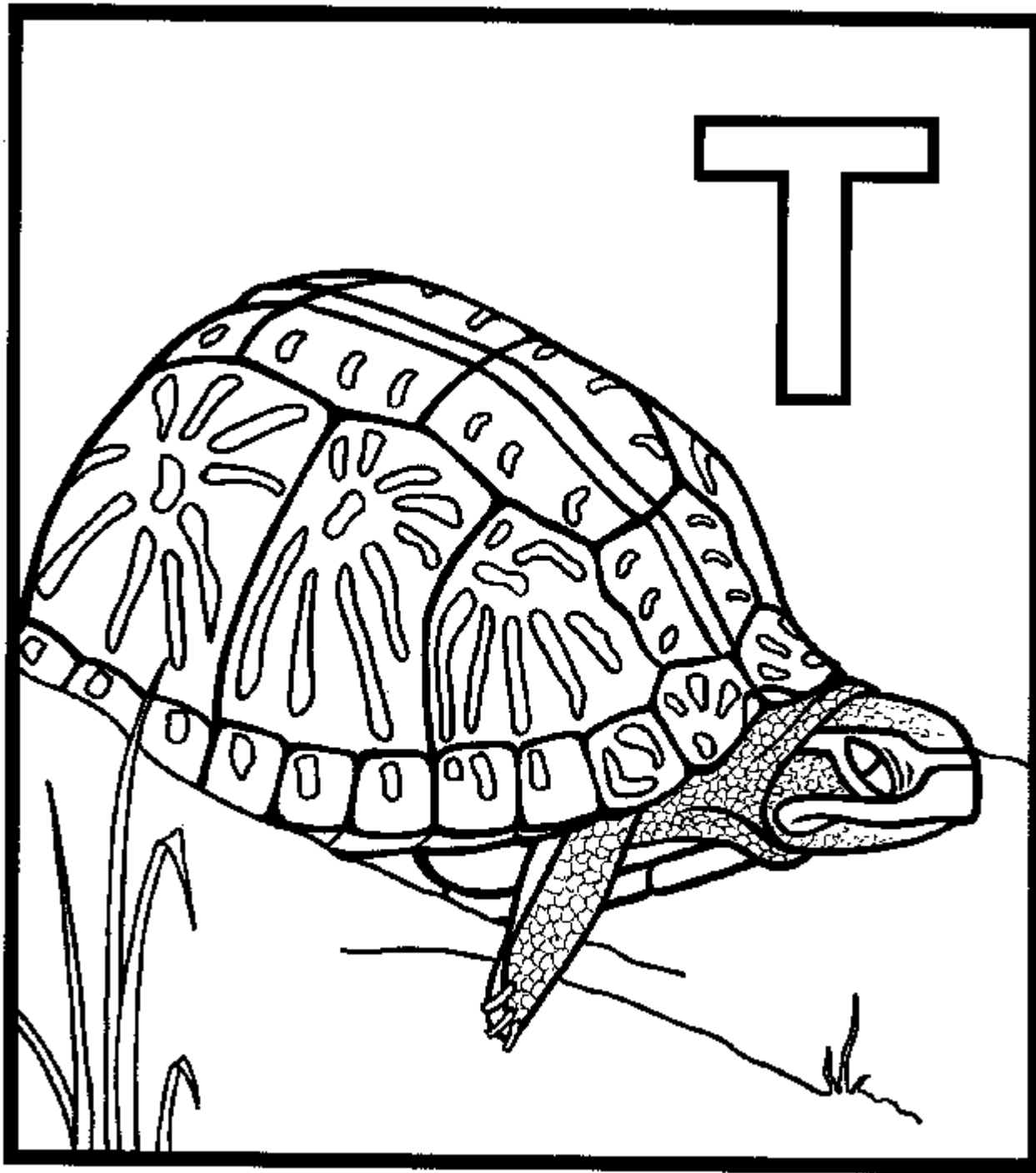
### Florida Water Rat

Florida water rats are really round-tailed muskrats. They are good swimmers and live near marshy swamps, ponds, lakes and rivers. Muskrats eat water plants at night and sleep in mound-shaped houses during the day. Their houses are made of mud, sticks and plants with two hidden underwater doorways.



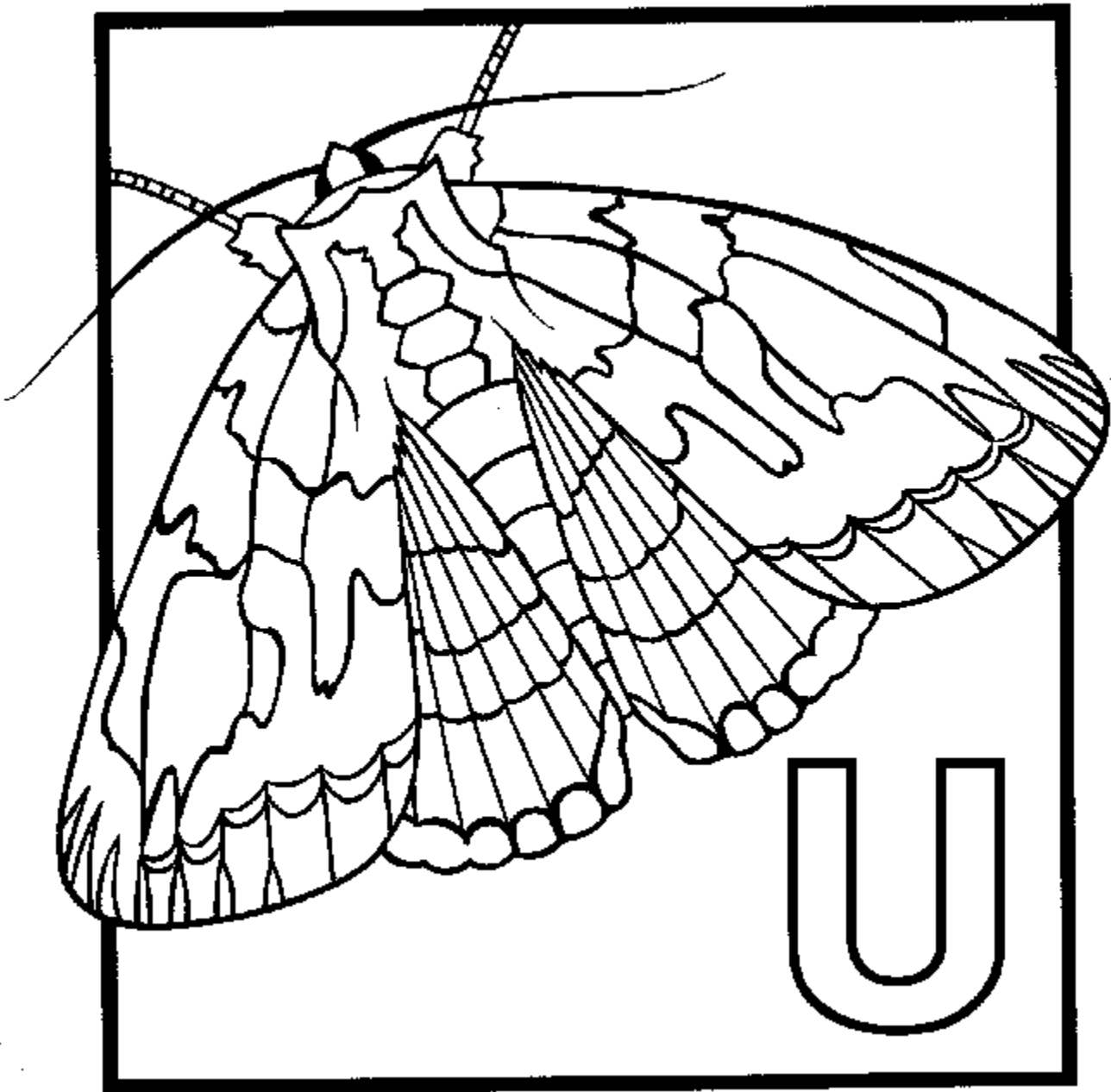
### Florida Tree Snail

The Florida tree snail's cone-shaped shell comes in many different colors and patterns. These snails live on trees with smooth bark where they eat tiny plants (fungi, algae and lichens) that grow there. Adult snails dig small holes in the ground, under the trees, to lay their eggs. When the baby snails hatch, they head straight up the nearest tree.



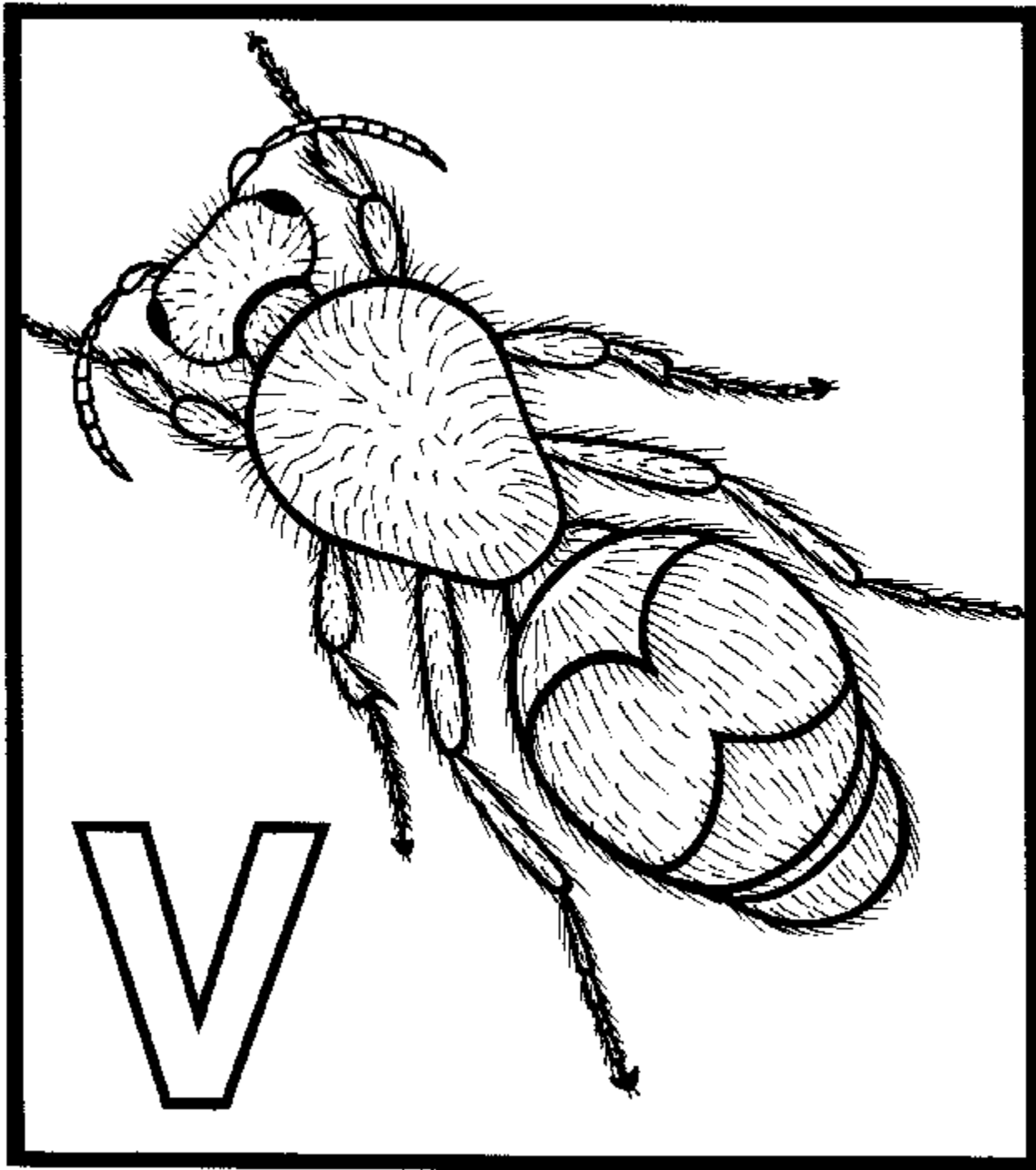
### Florida Box Turtle

Box turtles live on land, not in the water like most turtles. They eat many different kinds of plants, berries, insects and worms. When frightened, a box turtle can fold its bottom shell on a special hinge, pull in its head, tail and legs and close up tight like a box. Florida box turtles may live to be 100 years old!



### **Sweetheart Underwing**

Sweetheart underwing moths feed at night and rest on the branches of trees during the day. During flight, the pink and black underwings are visible and attractive. But, if seen by a hungry bird, the sweetheart underwing lands on the nearest tree, closes its wings to hide the bright colors and "disappears" because its front wings look like the tree bark.



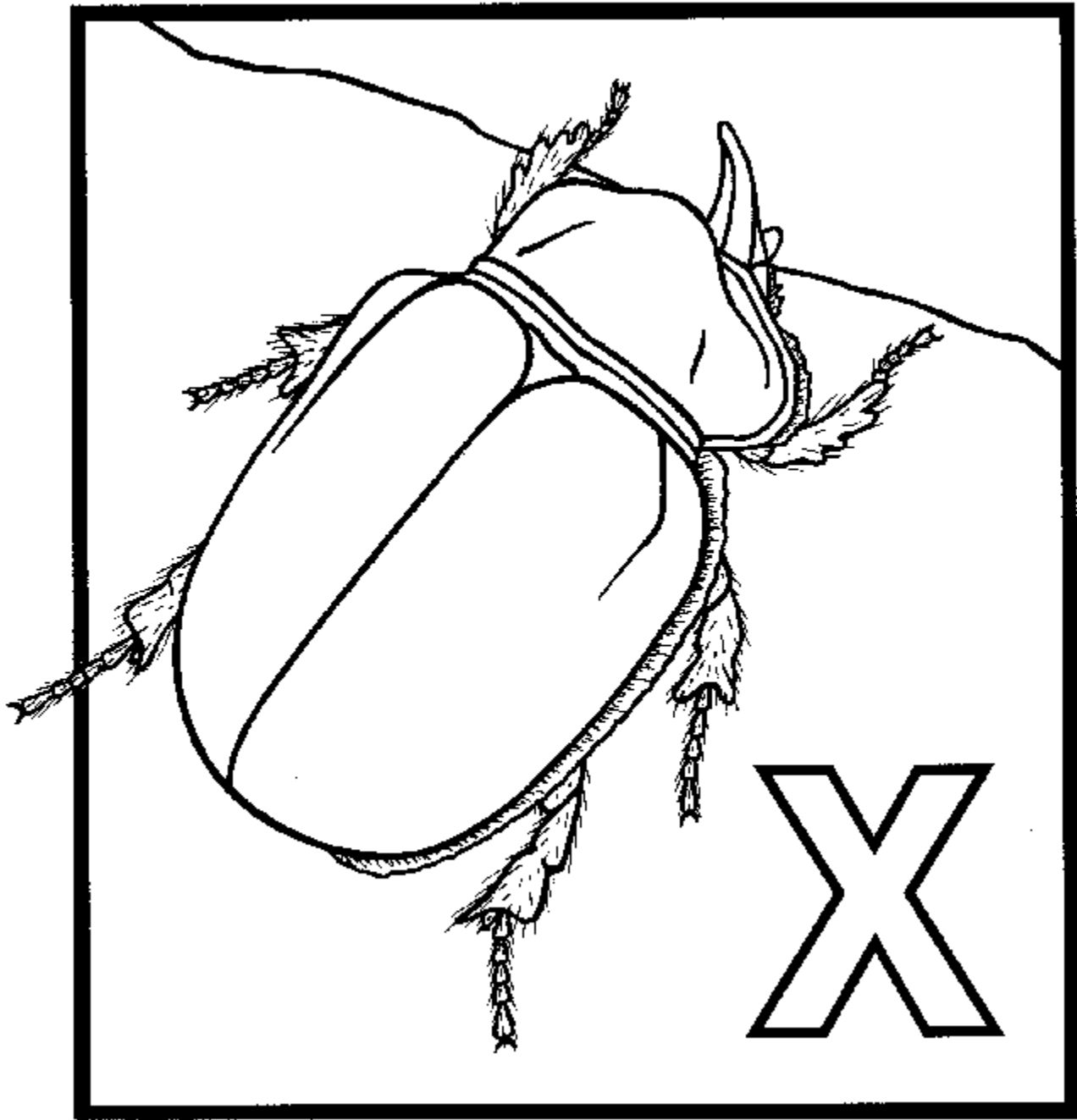
### **Velvet Ant**

Velvet ants are really wasps covered with red and black hairs. Female velvet ants do not have wings like the males do, so don't be fooled by their ant-like appearance. Velvet ants have very painful stings!



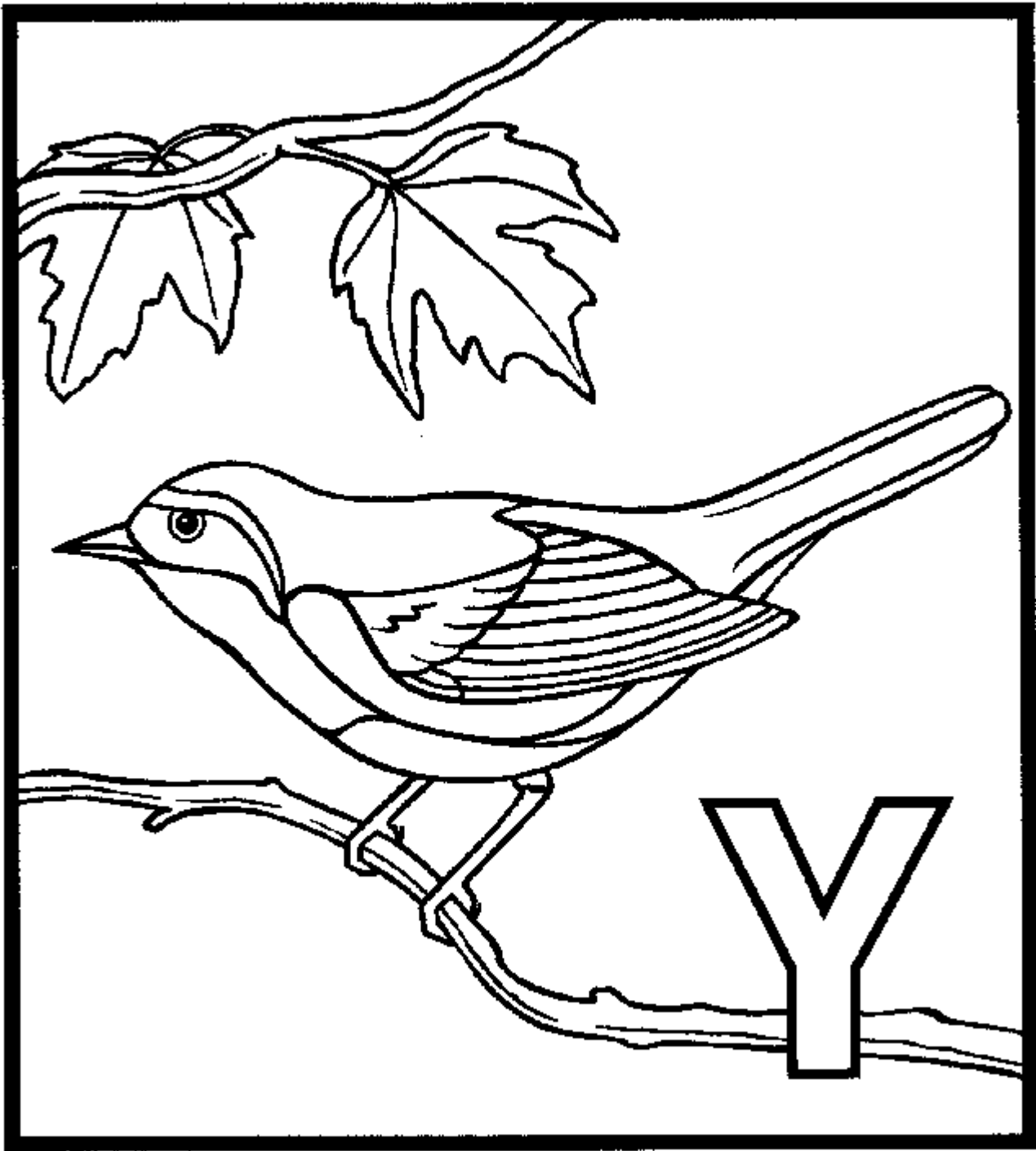
### **Pileated Woodpecker**

Pileated (pronounced: pie-lee-ate-ed) woodpeckers have bright red crests on top of their heads. They usually live in forests that have lots of large trees. Woodpeckers use their long bills to dig out and eat insects living deep inside tree bark. Other favorite foods include ants, acorns and wild cherries. Their strong bills also help them carve out nesting holes in dead trees.



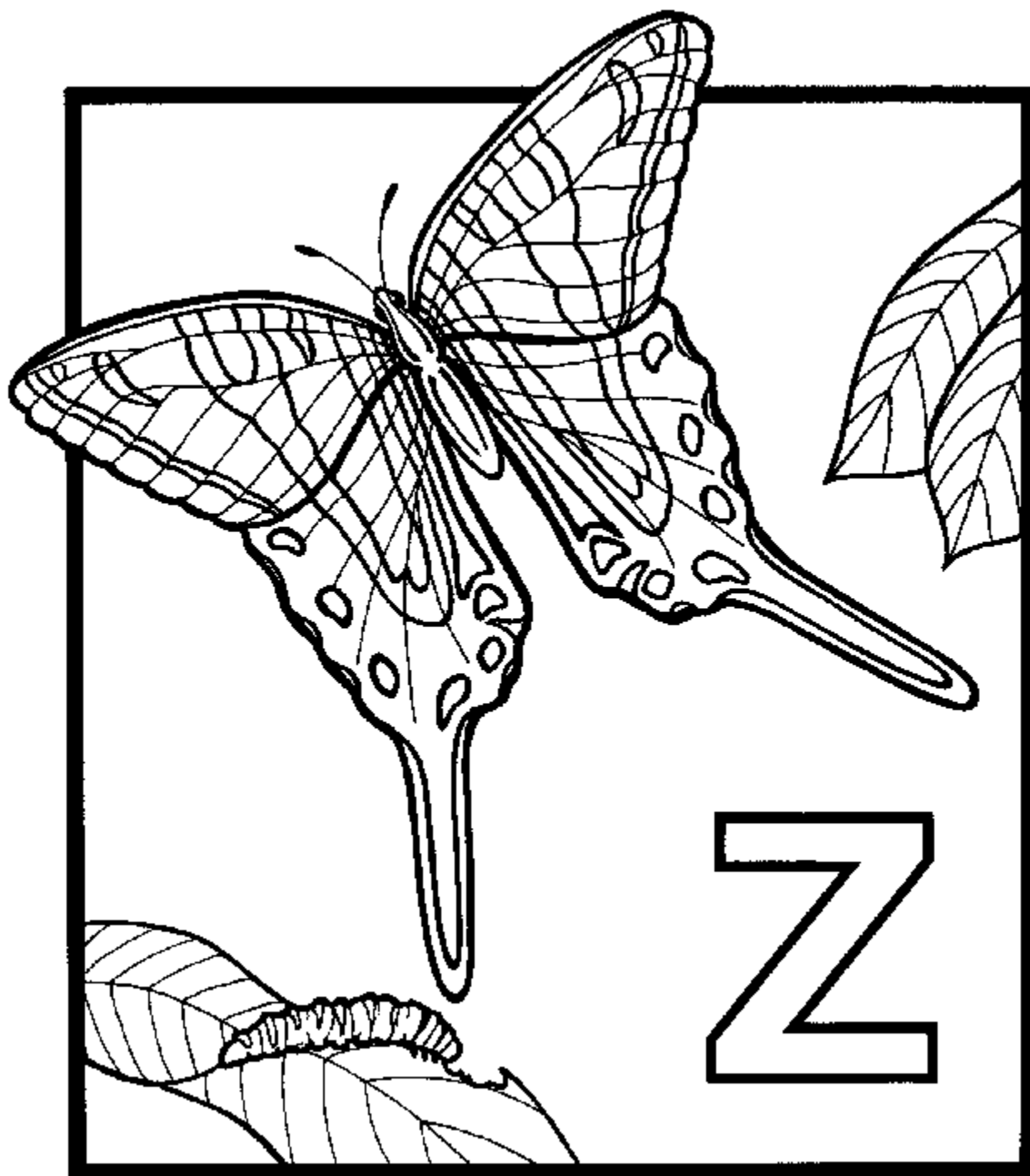
### **Xyloryctes Beetle**

Only a male Rhinoceros beetle has the large horn on its head. That horn gives this insect its common name. He may use the horn to fight with other male beetles. Why do you think the rhinoceros beetle is put under the letter "X?" This is because scientists call this beetle Xyloryctes (pronounced: Zi-lore-ick-teez). What a funny name!



### **Common Yellowthroat**

Common yellowthroats live along streams, ponds or marshes where there are bushes, vines, tall grasses or cattails that provide good shelter. Yellowthroats eat many different kinds of insects like grasshoppers, flies and ants. Only male yellowthroats have black "masks" and sing a bright "witchity-witchity-witchity-witch" song.



### **Zebra Swallowtail**

Zebra swallowtails are very picky about where they live and lay their eggs. They like places near water and often gather at puddles or lakeshores to drink water and warm their bodies in the sun. Zebra swallowtail mothers lay their eggs only on paw paw plants. When the eggs hatch, the caterpillars eat paw paw leaves until they are ready to change into adult butterflies.