



MUDPUPPY'S

POND

Have you ever used a flashlight to send signals to your friends? There's an insect that can do the same thing, only it doesn't need batteries!

Every summer the night sky twinkles with these small flying insects. We call them "fireflies", but they aren't really flies at all. They're a kind of beetle. They use their ability to produce light to attract other fireflies. This is called bioluminescence.

A firefly starts life as a larva, sometimes called a "glowworm". It will remain a larva for months before becoming an adult. Once it's an adult, its lifespan is very short, usually only a couple of weeks.

Fireflies like to live in moist areas near water sources such as marshes or ponds. They also can be found wherever there is decaying vegetation. The larvae eat other bugs, such as worms and caterpillars, but most of the adult fireflies seldom eat anything at all during their very short lives.

You may wonder how a firefly makes its light shine. It's a biochemical reaction, sort of like photosynthesis in reverse. It transforms energy into carbon dioxide and light. The light is considered "cold light" because it produces no heat. However, the warmer the temperature outdoors, the better their lights work! Even the eggs of a firefly glow!

We're lucky to live in the Midwest where we have fireflies. If you travel west of the Rocky Mountains, you won't see them there! And what fun is summer without chasing fireflies? (Just be sure to release them after you've studied them for a while!)



Mudpuppy says, "Look up the underlined words in the dictionary."

*"How many new words can you make out of the letters in the word "**bioluminescence**"? Find ten and you're good; fifteen and you're very, very good; twenty moves you to the head of the class!"*

Daisy the Bunny Grows Up



April 9-Baby bunny Daisy and her brothers and sisters are born.

April 16-Daisy opens her eyes. It is dark in the rabbit nest. She is covered with a blanket of dead grass and bunny fur that her mother made.

April 18-23- Daisy leaves the nest to explore her world. She is still returning to the nest at night to nurse from her mother. Daisy is as big as an orange.

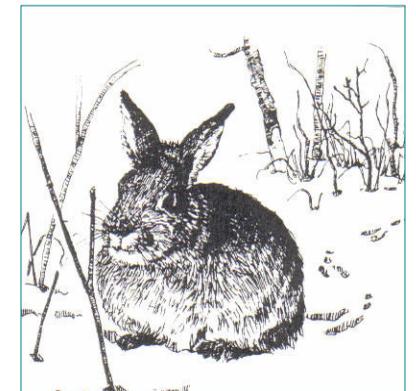
April 26-Daisy is independent. She no longer nurses, but she eats greens. She has her own home (a *form*) under a thicket. Her brothers and sisters have also left. She is as big as a softball.

As you can see, it takes less than three weeks for a bunny to leave the nest.

How much do you know?

- 1) Baby rabbits are called
 - a. pups
 - b. kits
 - c. kittens
- 2) A rabbit protects itself by
 - a. staying totally still
 - b. running in a zigzag path
 - c. kicking with its back feet
- 3) A rabbit's favorite food is
 - a. carrots
 - b. crab grass
 - c. pansy

(answers: 1-c; 2-a, b, c; 3-b)



It wasn't long before Daisy the Bunny was able to take care of herself.