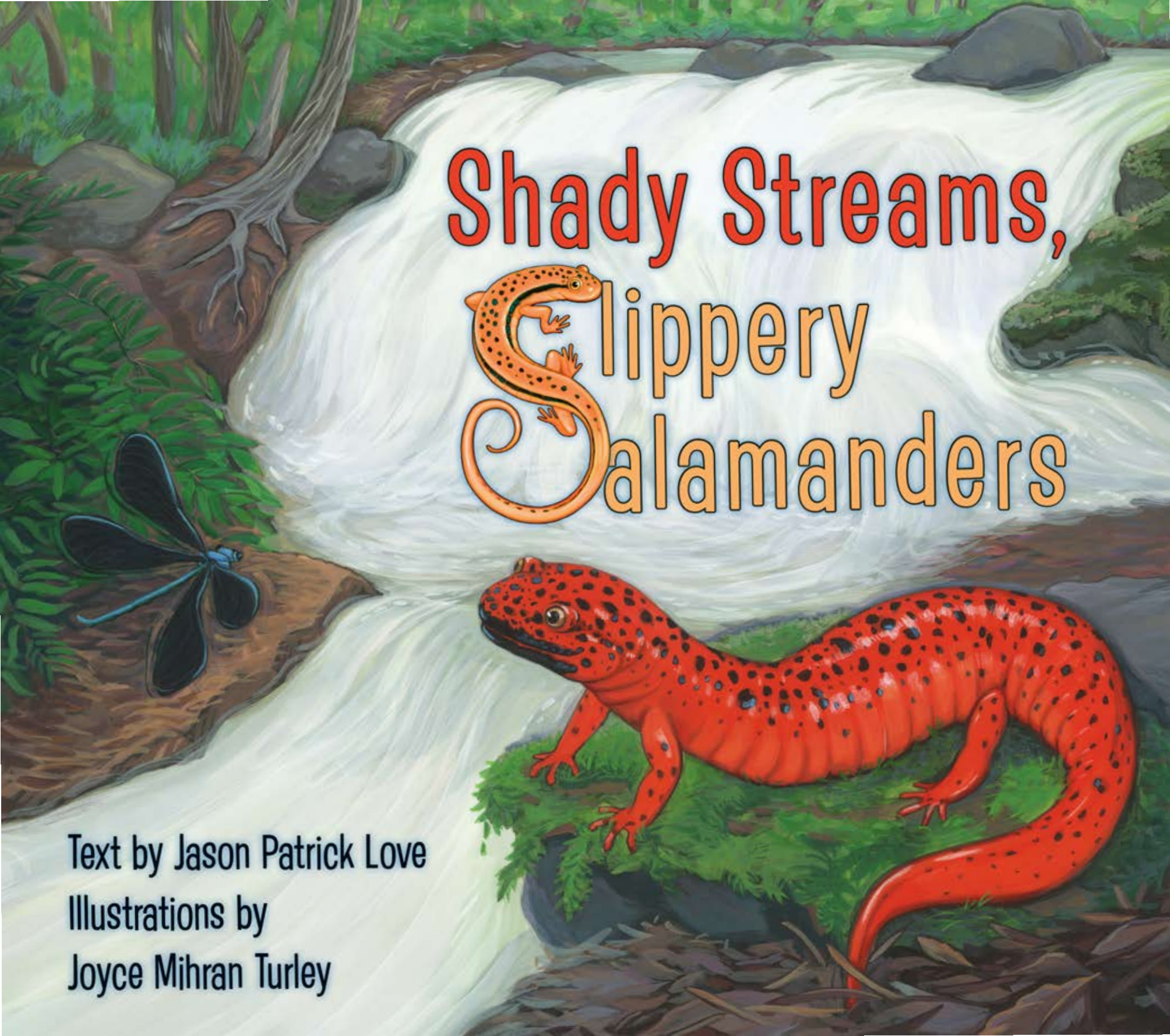
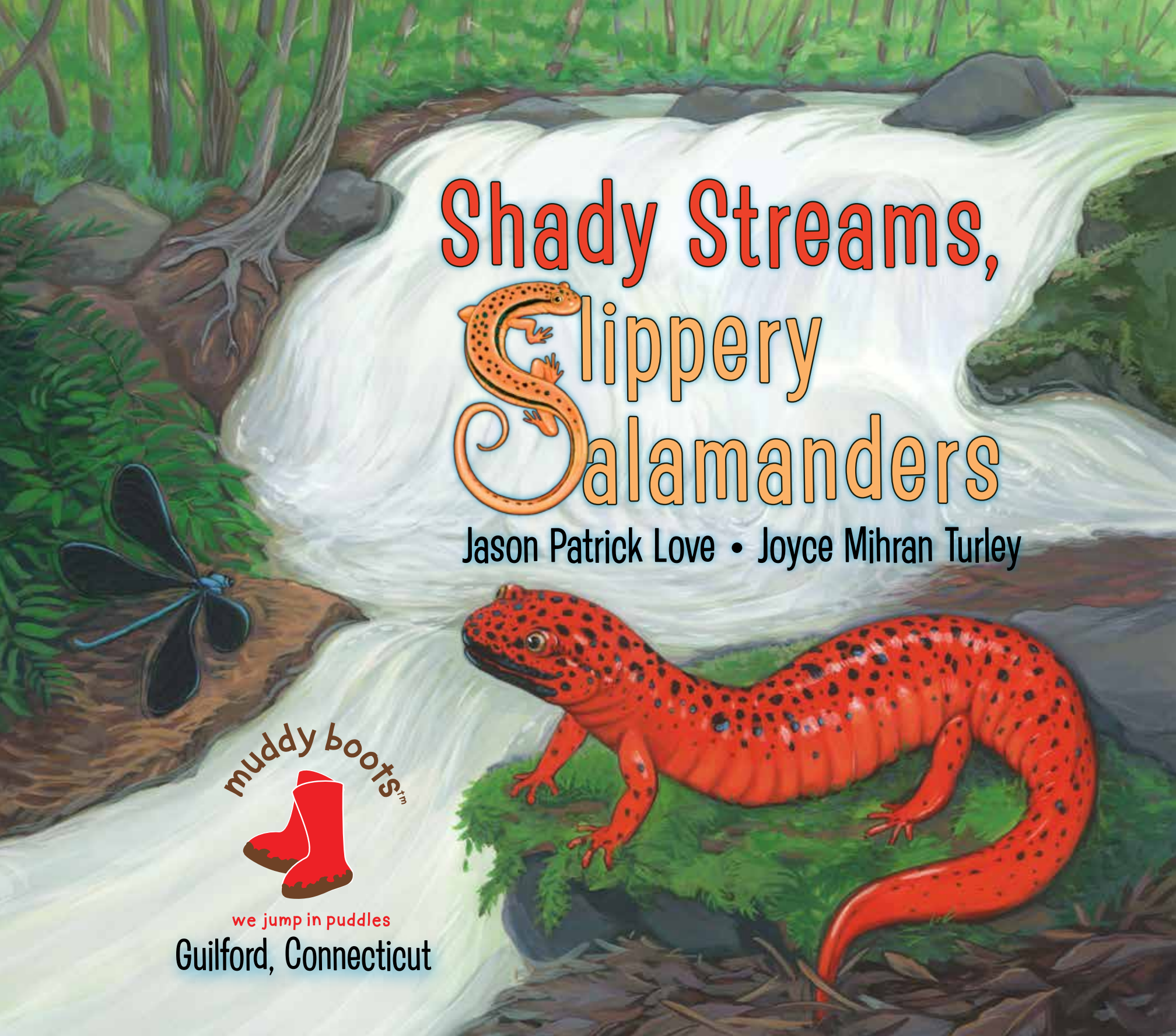
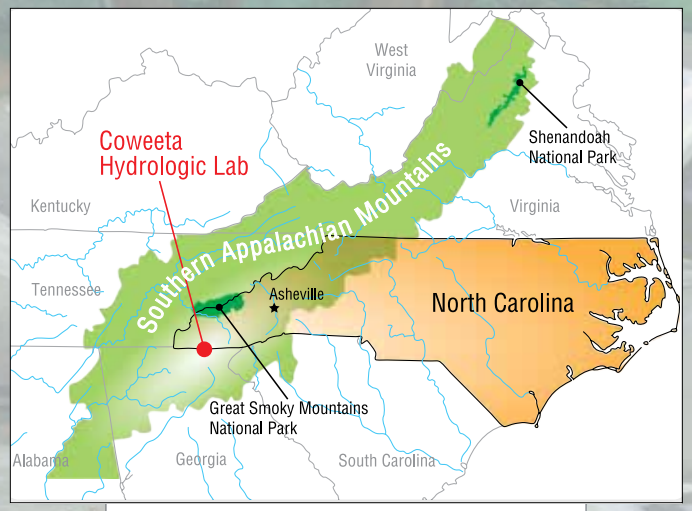

Shady Streams,
Slippery
Salamanders
Text by Jason Patrick Love
Illustrations by
Joyce Mihran Turley



Shady Streams, Slippery Salamanders

Jason Patrick Love • Joyce Mihran Turley

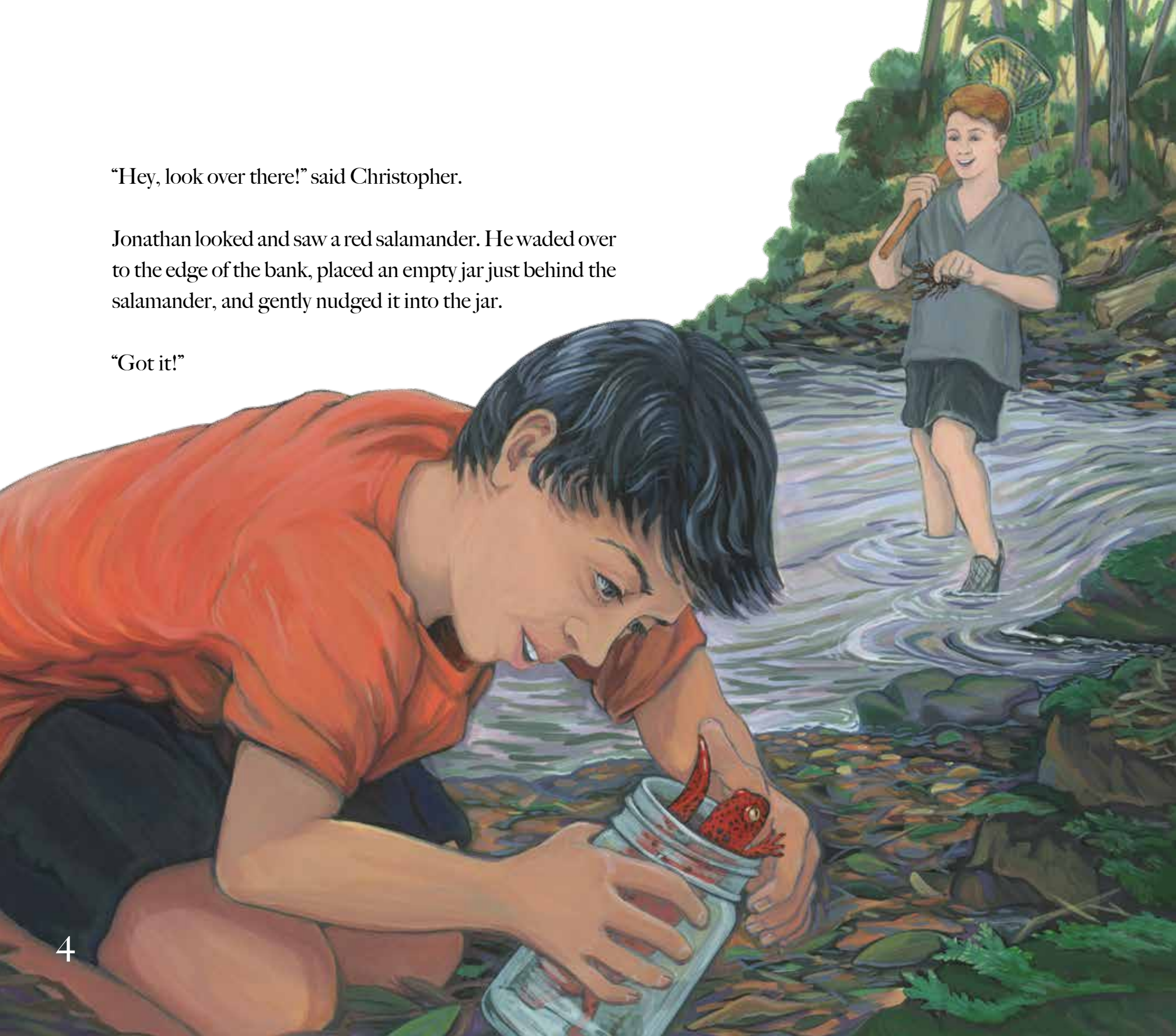
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Jonathan and Christopher live in the southern Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina. These mountains are among the oldest mountains on Earth and the highest can reach over 6,500 feet in elevation. A temperate deciduous forest blankets most of the mountains and the ample rainfall and range of elevation supports many different types of plants and animals. Many streams and rivers are born in these mountains. There are so many streams and rivers, in fact, that scientists often think of the southern Appalachian Mountains as being the "water tower" for the Southeast.

School was out for the summer. When Jonathan and his best friend Christopher weren't out in the woods, exploring and building forts out of sticks and leaves, they could be found in the small creek that rushed down the mountain behind Christopher's house. There they built small dams, searched for crayfish, and looked for salamanders. They liked to pretend they were explorers and secretly hoped that one day they'd find a new species of salamander that had never been discovered before.





"Hey, look over there!" said Christopher.

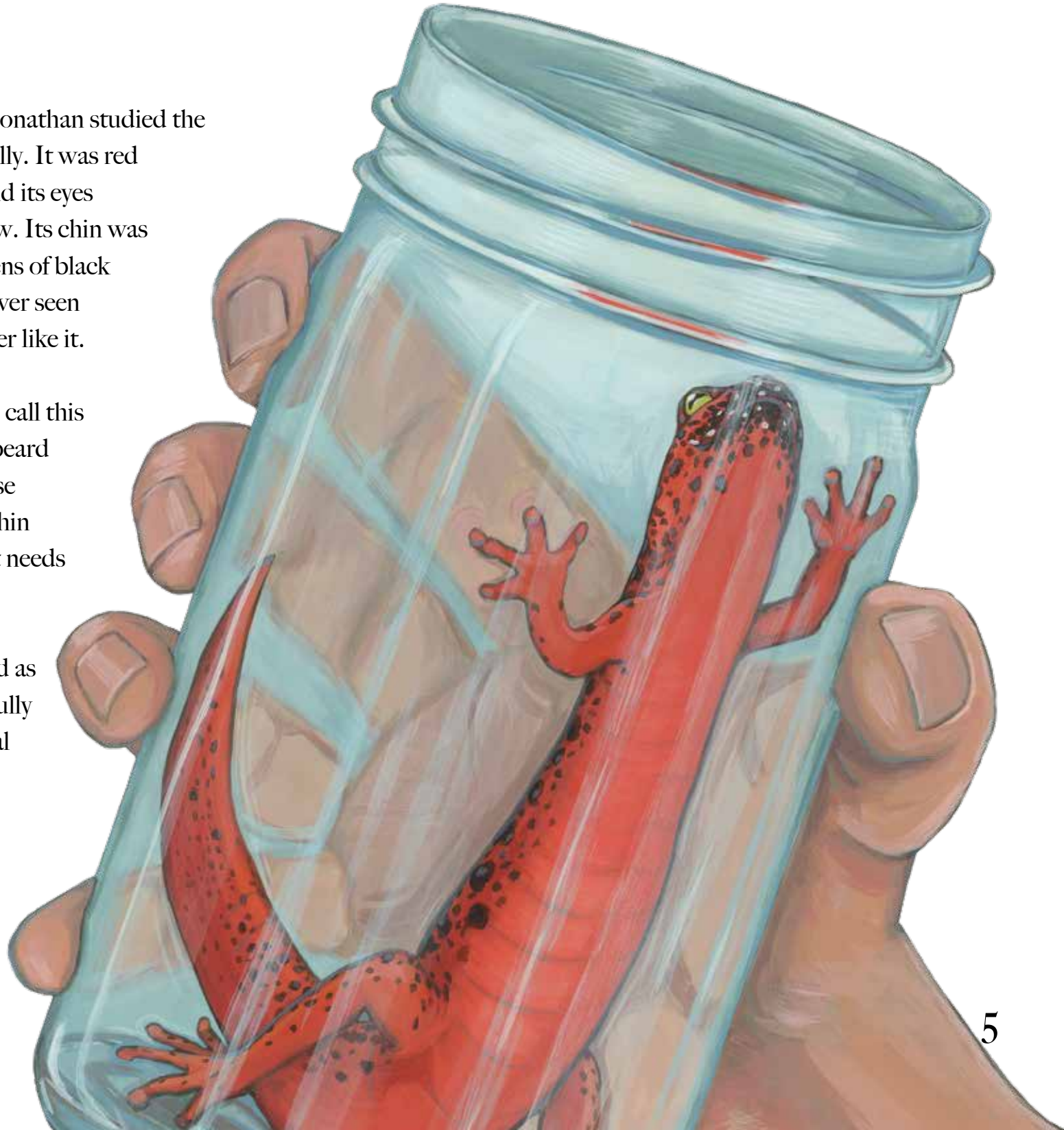
Jonathan looked and saw a red salamander. He waded over to the edge of the bank, placed an empty jar just behind the salamander, and gently nudged it into the jar.

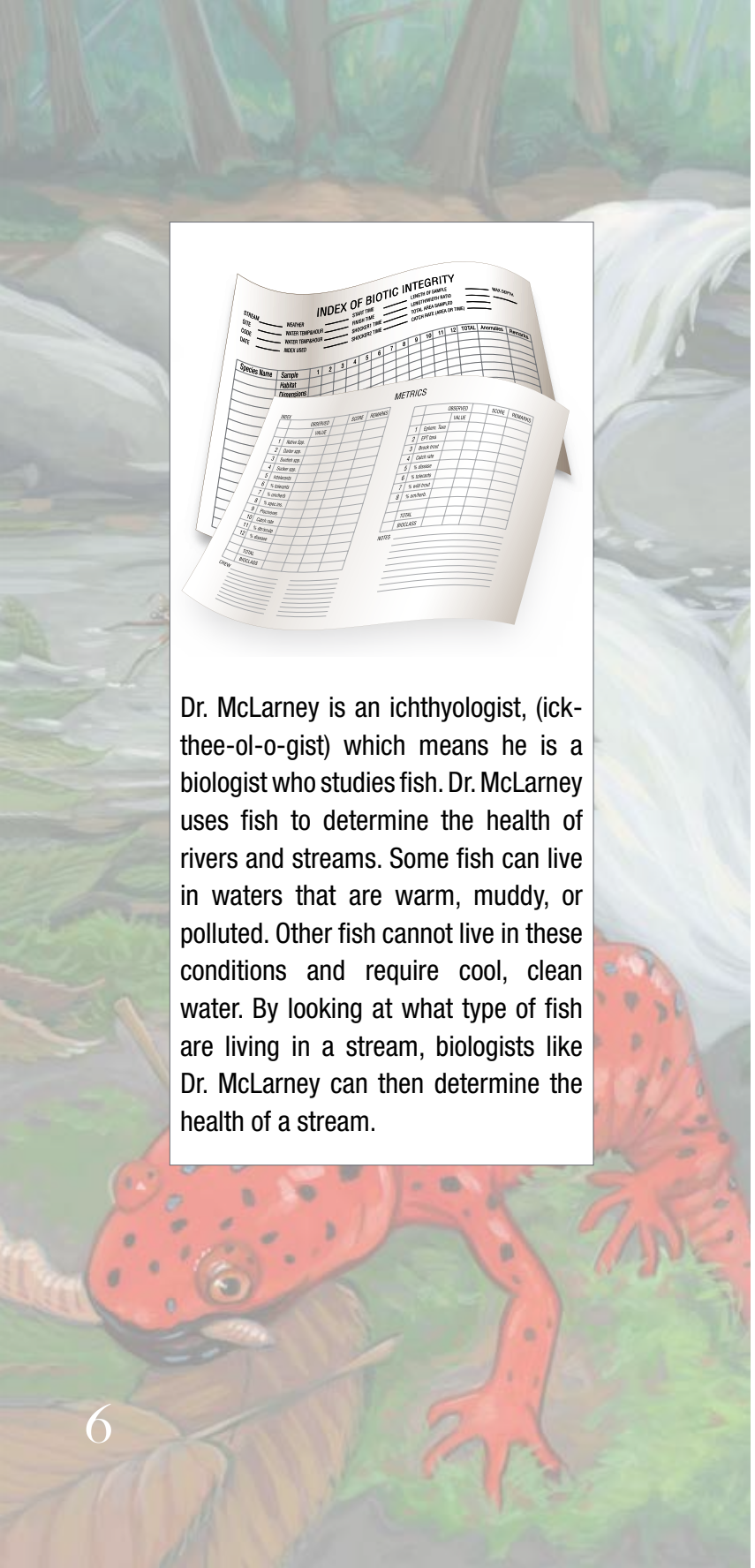
"Got it!"

Christopher and Jonathan studied the salamander carefully. It was red with black dots and its eyes were golden-yellow. Its chin was covered with dozens of black dots. They had never seen another salamander like it.

"I think we should call this species the Blackbeard Salamander—those black dots on its chin make it look like it needs to shave!"

They both laughed as Christopher carefully released the animal back where he found it.





Dr. McLarney is an ichthyologist, (ick-thee-ol-o-gist) which means he is a biologist who studies fish. Dr. McLarney uses fish to determine the health of rivers and streams. Some fish can live in waters that are warm, muddy, or polluted. Other fish cannot live in these conditions and require cool, clean water. By looking at what type of fish are living in a stream, biologists like Dr. McLarney can then determine the health of a stream.

The next day, Christopher's mom dropped the boys off by a bridge over a large creek. She had signed them up to help a biologist catch fish for a stream study. Jonathan looked forward to meeting a real biologist, especially one that liked to catch fish. Maybe he also knew something about salamanders.

There were already several other people at the bridge when they arrived. A man with a white handlebar mustache and long gray eyebrows greeted them.

"You must be the budding biologists I've heard about. My name is Dr. Bill McLarney." Bill firmly shook each of the boy's hands.