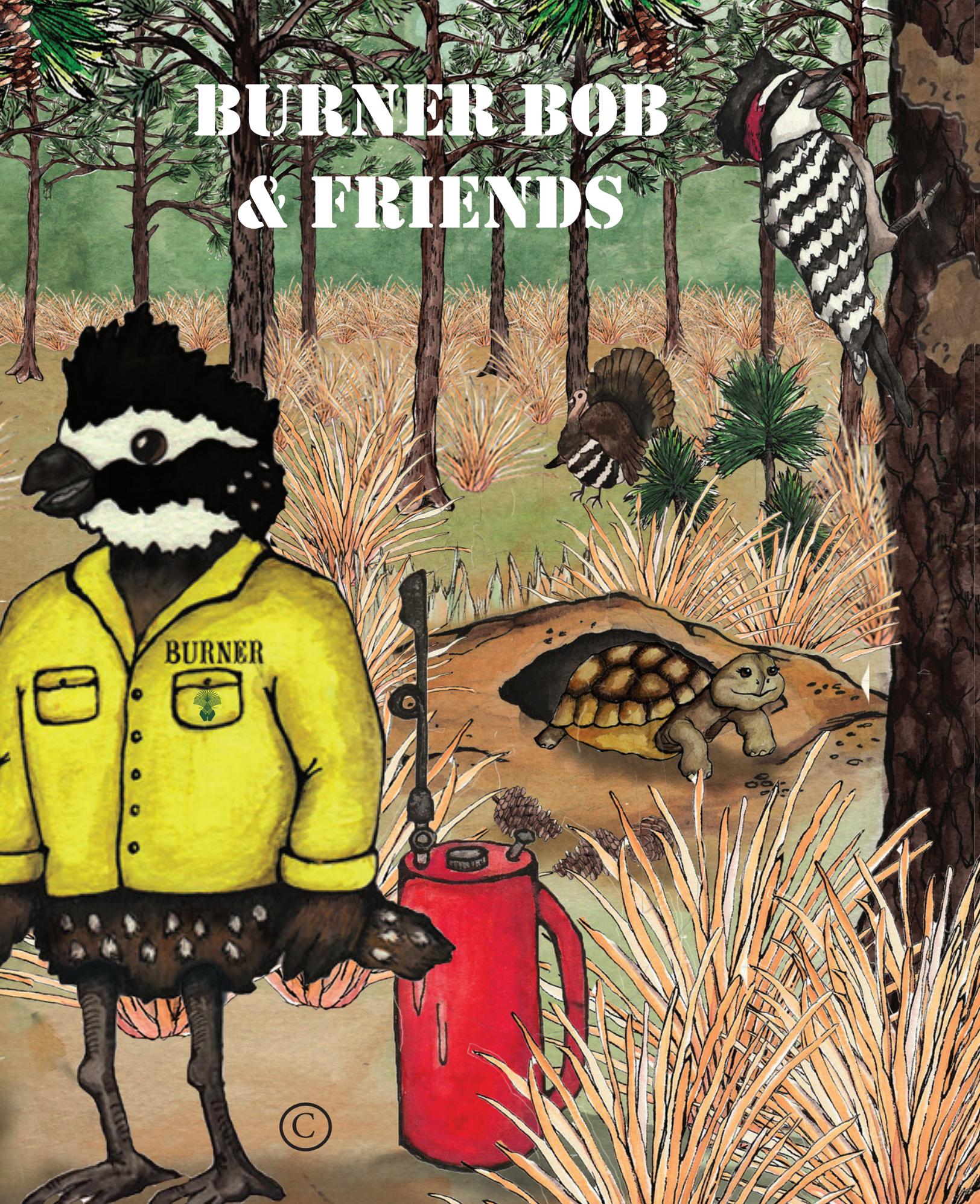


BURNER BOB & FRIENDS



©

BURNER BOB™

Once upon a time, a long time ago, before he became a burner, there was a quail named Bob. He lived with his bobwhite family in a beautiful longleaf forest. It was a grassland, carpeted with wiregrass, bluestems, and Indian grasses. Towering above were big old longleaf trees with their straight trunks and few limbs. Scattered in the grasses were forbs, that produced tiny blooms with every color of the rainbow. All was good.

The forest family included many animals. There were gopher tortoises that dug deep burrows in the sandy soil. It provided a home that was warm in the winter, and cool in the summer. Numerous other creatures enjoyed the gopher's hospitality. While spending most of his time sleeping, occasionally he would crawl around sampling the abundance of plants. Red-cockaded woodpeckers flew about collecting food for their young, while eyeing an old longleaf to begin pecking out a new nest cavity. Fox squirrels played chase among the limbs, stopping to chew open a green pine cone for the delicious seed inside. There was an indigo snake basking in the warm sunlight. Flocks of turkeys strolled about feeding on bugs and seed. Butterflies and bees were in constant motion collecting pollen and nectar from the mix of blooms. All was good.



During the summer months, afternoon thunderstorms drenched the forest with life giving rain. Occasionally lightning would strike one of the tall longleaf. It would be deadly for the tree, but soon a feast for the woodpeckers. Sometimes the strike was so forceful, that it would set the tree on fire, causing the surrounding forest to burn. This was nature's way of cleansing the forest. Old dead pine straw, grass, leaves and limbs were consumed by the fire, returning nutrients to the soil. Just a few days after the burn, new fresh tender grass sprouts would appear. The blackened forest would emerge bright green. The growing and burning cycle had been completed once again, as it had for many, many years. All was good.

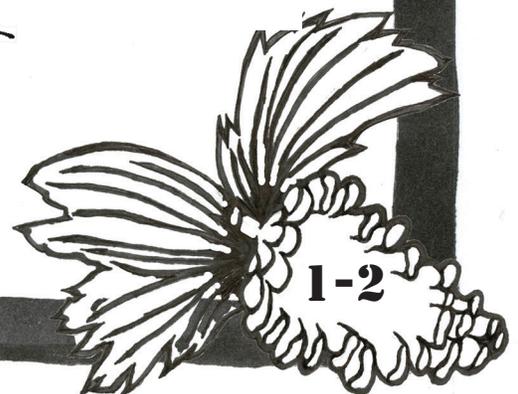
Then one day, settlers began arriving. First, they started cutting down large areas of the forest to clear land for farms, roads, houses, and cities. More settlers came, and more forests were forever lost. Things began to change. People rushed to extinguish the forest fires to protect their homes and cities. The fire cleansing ceased to be, the forest began to change, gradually and then completely. The pine straw, leaves, and limbs began to pile up on the ground year after year. Bushes started growing, shading the grasses. The forest once dominated by longleaf was being overrun by broadleaf hardwood trees. Each year, less and less sunlight reached the forest floor, which was covered by leaf litter. The tiny forbs with their blooms disappeared, as did the bees and butterflies, since there was no food. The grasses disappeared, replaced by litter. The gopher left because there was no food. So did many other animals that depended upon the gopher burrow for a home. The open spaces now filled with bushes and limbs. The red-cockaded woodpecker and the Bachman's sparrows flew away searching for a better home. The turkeys and quail could no longer find food, so they walked away. All was not good.

Bob realized that the beautiful longleaf ecosystem that he and his forest family friends loved and needed to survive was disappearing. He wondered, "What happened?", "Why?", "Couldn't it be like it used to be, when all was good?" After much thought, he came to understand that nature's way of cleansing and refreshing the forest was missing. Bob decided to devote his life to explaining to people that the longleaf forest with its many plants and animals had evolved over time to being burned on a regular basis. The forest needed fire to survive. He went about the land telling the story, and showing people how to control burn safely. He became the Johnny Appleseed of prescribed fire, earning him the name "Burner Bob." All is good.

Creator,
Reese Thompson



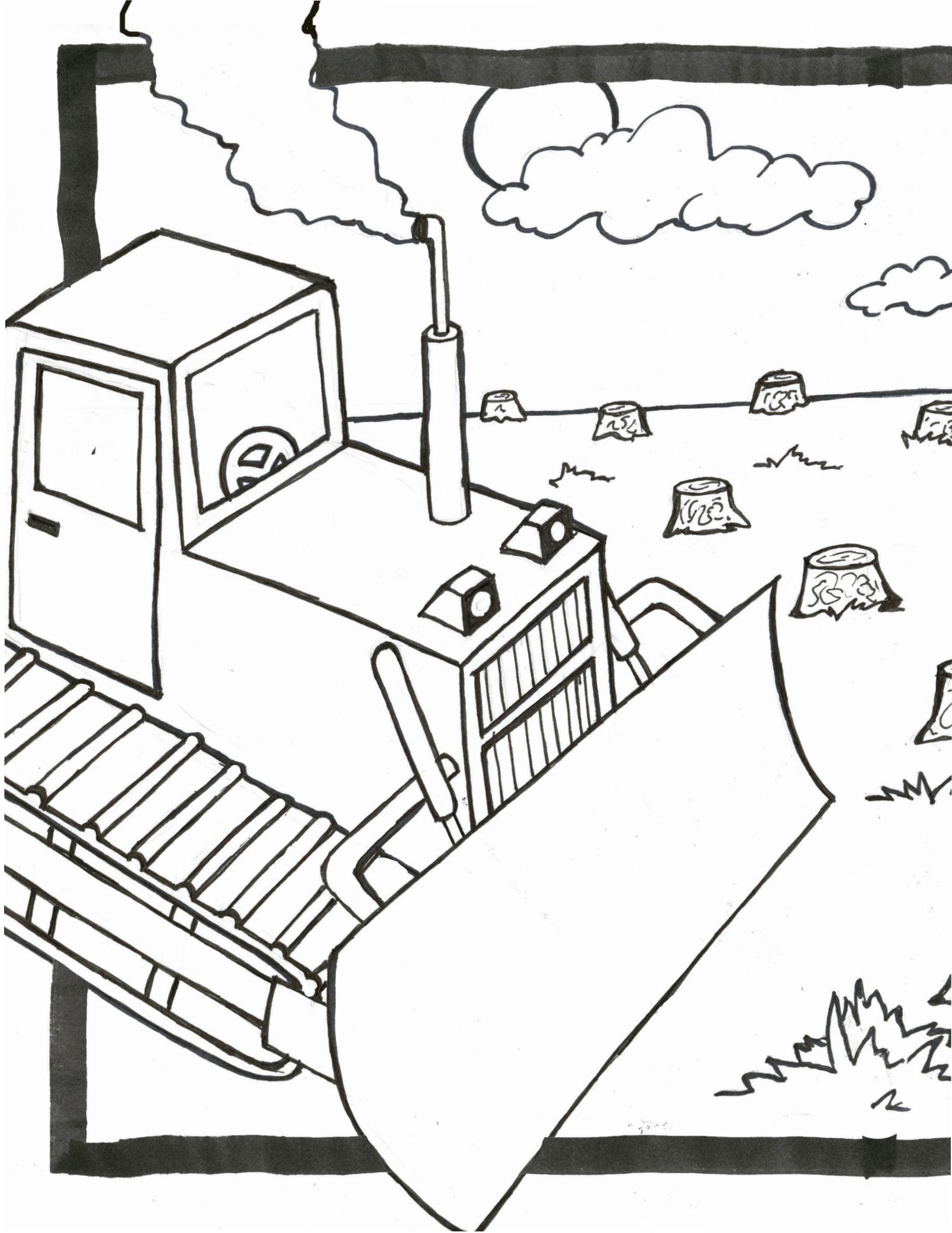
Illustrator,
Francie Lowman



A HEALTHY FOREST HABITAT









**WHAT HAPPENED TO
THE FOREST?**

A LONGLEAF FOREST OVERGROWN WITH HARDWOOD TREES









**BURNER BOB USING PRESCRIBED
FIRE TO RESTORE HABITAT**



A HEALTHY LONGLEAF FOREST



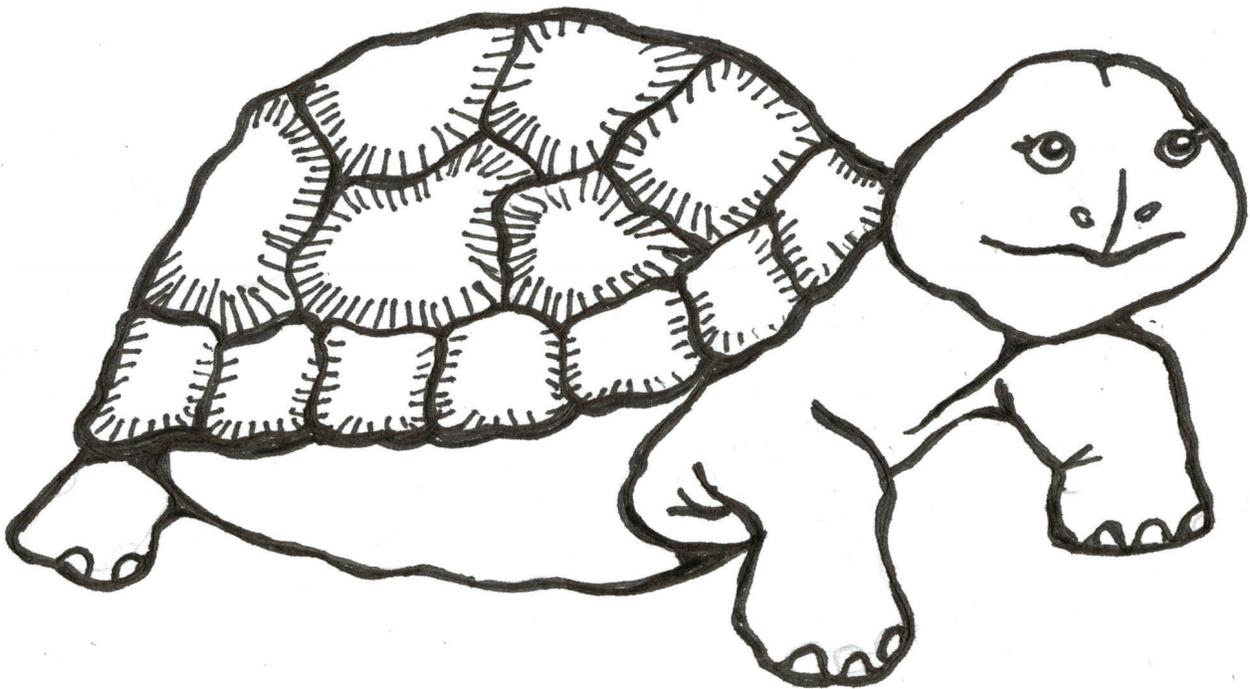
BURNER





GOPHER TORTOISE

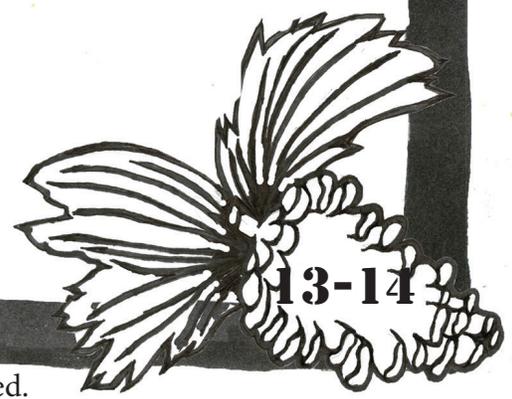
The gopher tortoise is known as a “Keystone Species” because the burrow he digs is used by some 300 other animals. He is only happy when he is living in a healthy forest habitat.



MAP OF THE LONGLeAF FOREST

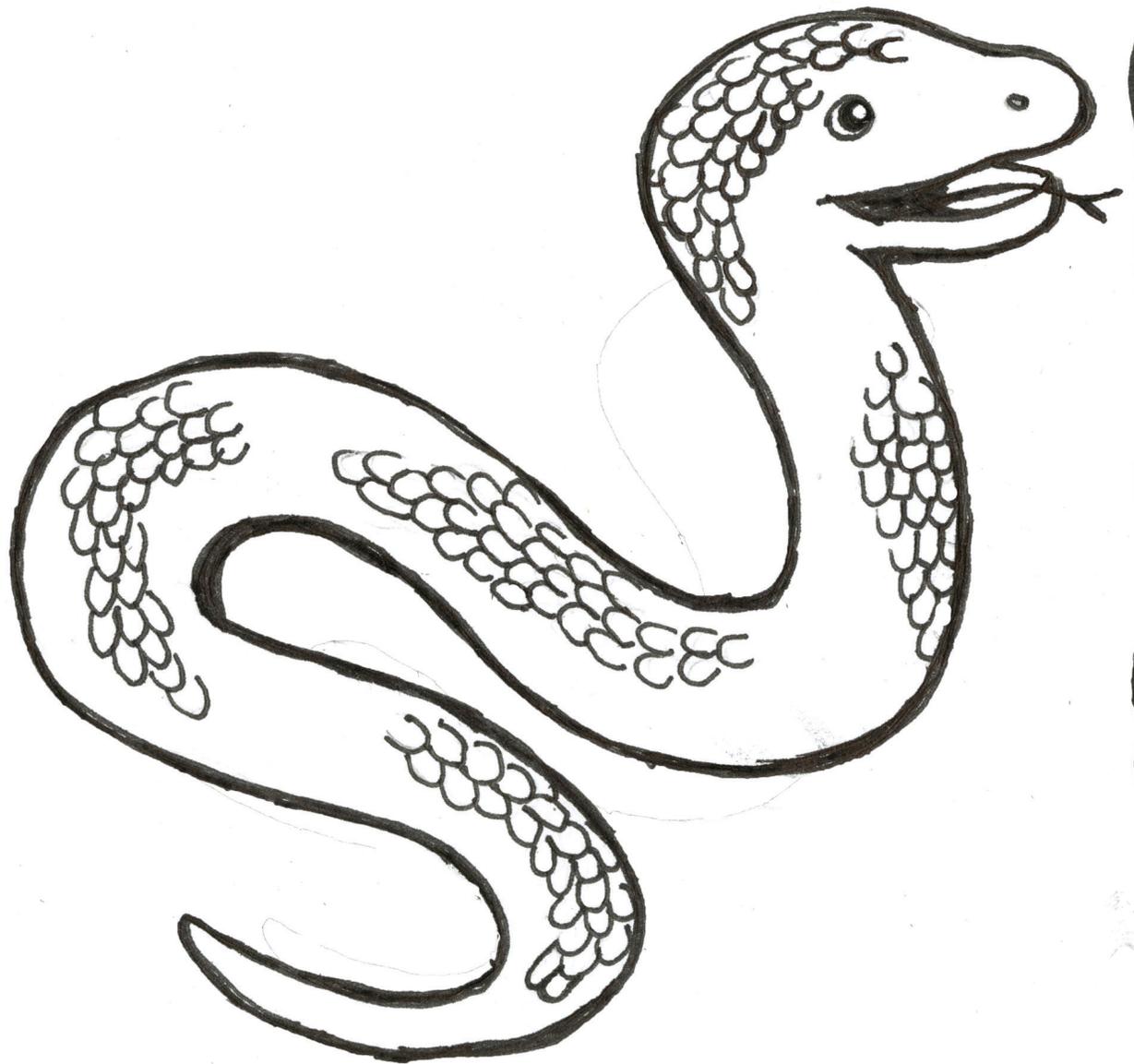


-  - OTHER
-  - LONGLeAF FOREST

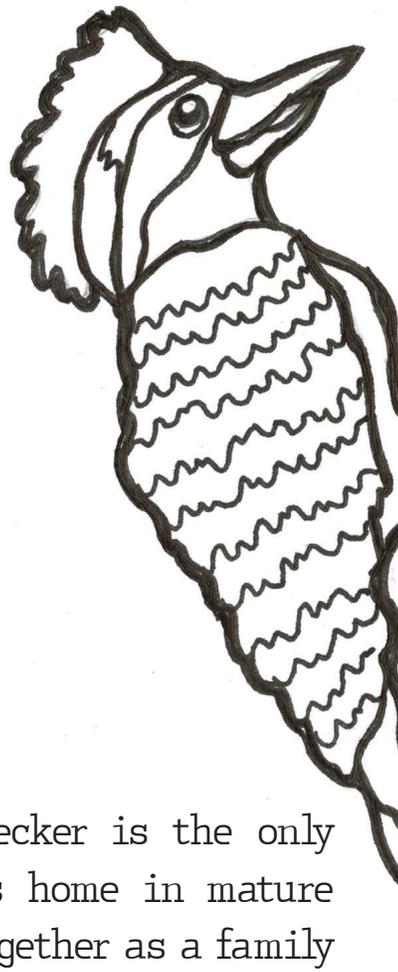


INDIGO SNAKE

The indigo snake is the largest snake native to North America. This gentle non-venomous snake feeds on other snakes, including rattlesnakes.



RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER



The red-cockaded woodpecker is the only woodpecker to make his home in mature pines. They also work together as a family to raise their young.



15-16

BURNER BOB HELPS SAVE THESE SPECIES

Canby's Dropwort
Rough-leaved Loosestrife
Cooley's Meadowrue
Godfrey's Butterwort
Harper's Beauty
Florida Skullcap
Apalachicola Rosemary
Scrub Buckwheat
Telephus Spurge
Michaux's Sumac
Gentian Pinkroot
Florida Torreya
Schweinitz's Sunflower
Mississippi Sandhill Crane
Red-cockaded Woodpecker
Gopher Tortoise
Eastern Indigo Snake
Frosted Flatwoods Salamander
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander
Mississippi Gopher Frog
White Birds-in-a-nest
American Chaffseed
Hairy Rattleweed
Navasota Ladies'-tresses
Texas-trailing Phlox
Beautiful Pawpaw
Rugel's Pawpaw
Chapman's Rhododendron

Go to The Longleaf Alliance website (<http://www.longleafalliance.org/what-we-do/education/next-generation>) to learn more about these species.

Use the blank space on this page to try your hand at drawing one of them!

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



The Longleaf Alliance

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