Most frogs and toads like to live near or in the water, and need moisture to breed and lay their eggs. But the Spade-foot Toad lives in the deserts of North America, and is specially designed to live in such dry conditions.

First of all, its back legs are shaped like a spade, which explains its name. These special feet are used to dig its way backwards into the ground. It digs a burrow and buries itself underground, where it will stay for as long as a year, without any food, waiting for rain to fall. It seems that the toads can hear the rain falling in the distance, which is a signal for them to come out of the ground and search for a mate. Their eggs are laid in pools left by the heavy rain, and hatch within days.

When the babies hatch, they only have a few weeks at the most to eat enough food to last them until the next rains arrive. Then, like their parents, they dig a burrow, and hide underground until rain returns — which may not be for another year. Then the whole process is repeated.

Walking the road of life

We are born we are quite helpless, and depend on other people to look after us. After a few months we begin to crawl, but after a while —usually before we reach the age of two — we learn to walk, with a bit of help from Mum or Dad. Once we start walking, there’s no stopping us! Life then becomes very exciting as we discover new things. Being able to walk upright is just one of the things that makes us special and different from animals.

Walking the road of life can be difficult. Sometimes, walking the road of life is difficult, but we put our faith in Jesus, He will never leave us. He promised “You can be sure that I will be with you always.” (Matthew 28:20).

Walking the road of life

FOOTPRINTS TELL A TALE!

In 1973, a trail of footprints was discovered in hardened volcanic ash in Tanzania, Africa. Footprint experts said they looked exactly like the footprints of modern humans, and not at all like apes’ footprints (see below). Yet the scientists who found them decided they were made by ‘ape-people.’ Why? The reason was that they believed the rocks were 3½ million years old, and the prints were made by people just like us! If the prints were made by ‘ape-people,’ they would not believe that humans have walked on two legs since that long ago. So even though the prints look modern, they would not believe that humans could have walked on two legs so long ago.

Jesus died on the Cross so that we could be forgiven for all the wrong things we have done, and He rose from the dead so that we can live for ever with Him. If Jesus died on the Cross, we are forgiven for all our sins. God hasn’t left us alone through life. He has given us His Bible as our map and guide, and the Holy Spirit to help our faith. Jesus’s call to His first disciples was “Follow Me.”

Do you think that evolution by small, gradual changes could have produced the Spade-foot Toad? Why would it start to live in a desert? And how would these toads have survived before they had their special feet, and the ability to breed quickly and survive so long underground? We believe God created and designed these fascinating toads!
When we run short of food it is usually easy to pop along to a food-store. And most people have freezers or cold stores where food can be kept. During winter in cold countries, many animals find it difficult to get enough food. How do they survive? Some animals hibernate, and many manage to find food, even if it means digging through deep snow. However, some animals actually store up food before winter begins. Moles store clumps of worms, and wood mice (left) store up berries and seeds. Squirrels (below right) gather nuts and bury them, but not all in the same place. This means that if some other animal discovers one of the squirrel’s hoards, it can still eat food from the other stores — a very clever trick!

How do these animals know that winter is coming, and that they need to store up food before the cold weather begins? They do it by instinct, which means that they are programmed to do it, just as a computer is programmed to do different things. We know that computer programmes were designed by intelligent people. Surely animals that prepare for winter by storing food had an intelligent Creator too? —Jeff Chapman

**NATURE NOTES**

By the editor

When we run short of food it is usually easy to pop along to a food-store. And most people have freezers or cold stores where food can be kept. During winter in cold countries, many animals find it difficult to get enough food. How do they survive? Some animals hibernate, and many manage to find food, even if it means digging through deep snow. However, some animals actually store up food before winter begins. Moles store clumps of worms, and wood mice (left) store up berries and seeds. Squirrels (below right) gather nuts and bury them, but not all in the same place. This means that if some other animal discovers one of the squirrel’s hoards, it can still eat food from the other stores — a very clever trick!

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**FEET GALLERY!**

How many feet does a starfish have? Five, right? Wrong! Most starfish have five arms, but along each of them are hundreds of tiny feet (below right). Lots of tiny valves make them open and shut as water is pumped through. A very clever design that evolution can’t explain!

Centipedes (below) have lots of feet — some as many as 300! It’s a good thing they don’t need shoes!

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**PUZZLE CORNER**

Use the code to decipher the Bible verse, which gives good advice about our feet!

**Find the ODD ONE OUT**

1. Orange, apple, banana, potato, pear.
2. Hedgehog, mole, newt, mouse, squirrel.
3. Swan, goose, eagle, owl, bat.
4. Shark, trout, seahorse, dolphin, tuna.
5. Oak, dandelion, ash, sycamore, maple.
6. Frog, tortoise, alligator, gecko, iguana.

**Code key:**

BCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

XNTQ VNQC HR KHJD Z KZLO
ENQ LX EDDS ZMC Z KHFGS
ENQ LX VZX

(Answers on the next page)