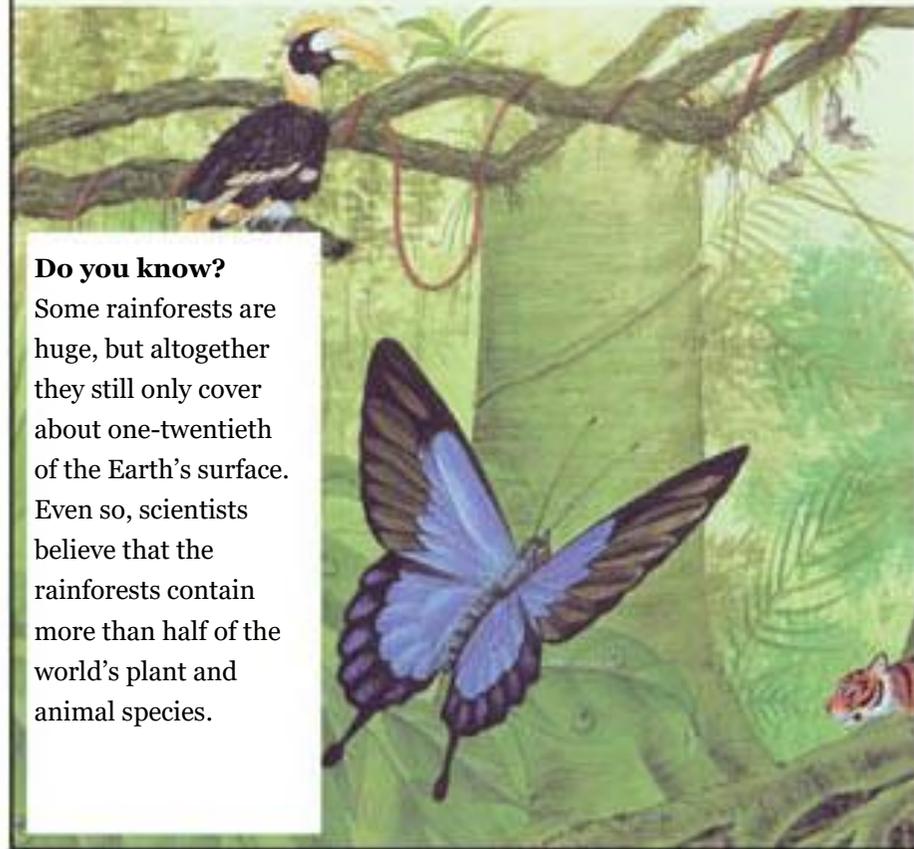


WHERE DO RAINFORESTS GROW?

Rainforests grow in places where there is lots of rain. Most rainforests are found in the tropics, on either side of the Equator. Most of the plants there are evergreen – they never drop all their leaves at once, but grow the whole year round in the hot, steamy atmosphere. Animals live at all levels in the forest, from the ground to the tree-tops.



Do you know?

Some rainforests are huge, but altogether they still only cover about one-twentieth of the Earth's surface. Even so, scientists believe that the rainforests contain more than half of the world's plant and animal species.

WHY ARE RAINFORESTS IN DANGER?

Rainforests are among the most threatened places on Earth. Millions of trees are cut down each year for timber. Huge areas are also felled every day to make way for farming. Thousands of animals are probably becoming extinct every year because there is nowhere left for them to live. Even if new trees are planted, these places will never get their original wildlife back again.

Many kinds of beautiful forest birds and insects will never be seen again because their forest homes are being cut down. The problem is especially bad in South America and South-East Asia.

Greenhouse effect

Every time we breathe, we give out a gas called carbon dioxide. The same gas is made in car engines and whenever we burn anything. It forms a layer round the Earth and traps heat, just like greenhouse glass. The heat warms the Earth and can cause droughts and other big changes in the world's weather. Trees use up carbon dioxide, so cutting down the rain forests is making this 'Greenhouse Effect' even worse.

