

A whimsical, hand-drawn illustration of a landscape. In the foreground, a stream flows from the bottom left towards the right, its water a vibrant teal color. The banks are dark and rocky, with several smooth, rounded stones scattered along the edges. A small, light-colored snail is visible on the left bank. In the middle ground, a mole is depicted on the right side, standing on its hind legs and holding a small white flower. The mole is dark brown with a lighter patch on its chest. The background features rolling hills in shades of brown and orange, with a large, glowing yellow sun or moon in the upper right. A large, dark rock with a glowing yellow interior is visible in the center. The overall style is painterly and imaginative, with a warm, golden light illuminating the scene.

Darcy's Tale



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innovativeresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk

Co-written and published by Tales from Mother Earth Ltd from the original short film created by Aardman.

Darcy's Tale is the second short film in a series to promote awareness of the different sources of flooding. The first film Missy's Tale, as part of the BeFloodReady Property Flood Resilience (PFR) brand, highlights the importance of property protection. The third film, Missy and Stanley's Tale, reminds people to sign up to receive flood warnings. A fourth film is currently in planning about how climate change leads to flooding.

Further information about flooding and PFR is available from **www.befloodready.uk**

Darcy's Tale is produced as part of project groundwater, which is funded by Defra as part of the £200 million Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes which is managed by the Environment Agency. The programmes will drive innovation in flood and coastal resilience and adaptation to a changing climate.

"As our climate changes, resilience to groundwater flooding is becoming ever more important. Darcy the Mole helps bring this hidden challenge to life through a heartfelt and powerful tale — reminding us that even what lies beneath our feet matters in building a nation resilient to climate change."

— Tom de la Rosa, Flood and Coastal Innovation Programme Manager,
The Environment Agency



Scan the QR Code to learn more about groundwater flooding and view the original animation of Darcy's Tale.

See if you can find these images throughout the book:



This is the story of Darcy and the flood.

After a long-wet winter, it seems the world is beginning to dry out. The puddles are disappearing, the flowers are starting to bloom and the birds are singing once again.

In fact, as the days begin to warm up, there's excitement all around as new life is emerging in the garden!



The ladybird family are exploring the lawn for the very first time, and with spring in the air everyone is finding love and setting up home.

Under the mushroom, Darcy sits alone and considers what life would be like with a partner, thinking it would be good to have someone to share it with perhaps?



Just at that moment Darcy spots fox! Then smiles with relief as fox bounds past, clearly in a hurry to meet up with his companion. Even fox has found the perfect match it would seem. Together the foxes dance and frolic in the sun, making the most of the day, and Darcy can only watch with interest as they gaze lovingly at each other.

Darcy sighs as no matter how hard Darcy's looked, finding love feels out of reach.



Or is it?

Searching through the tunnels and patrolling the network of chambers below the garden, Darcy suddenly catches a new scent. Darcy stops, looks up, and sees a lovely grey mole. Feeling slightly nervous and holding a flower tentatively, Darcy moves forward to say hello smiling with delight, and is even happier when the smile is returned with sparkling eyes!

Could this be the end of Darcy's long search? Could Darcy have found a special friend at last?



But from nowhere, Darcy's dream is left in tatters, as an explosive gush of water whooshes along the tunnel and carries Darcy's friend away!

Darcy can only look in despair! Where did the lovely grey mole go?! It was as if Darcy's new friend, who was there for only a moment had vanished before Darcy's eyes!



Unbeknownst to Darcy, groundwater can creep up through the earth, rising slowly but persistently, even weeks after the rain has stopped falling.

As water started to soak into the chamber, Darcy decided to head for higher ground. Climbing up through the tunnels, Darcy soon found that the water was following, and now alarmingly, it was overtaking!

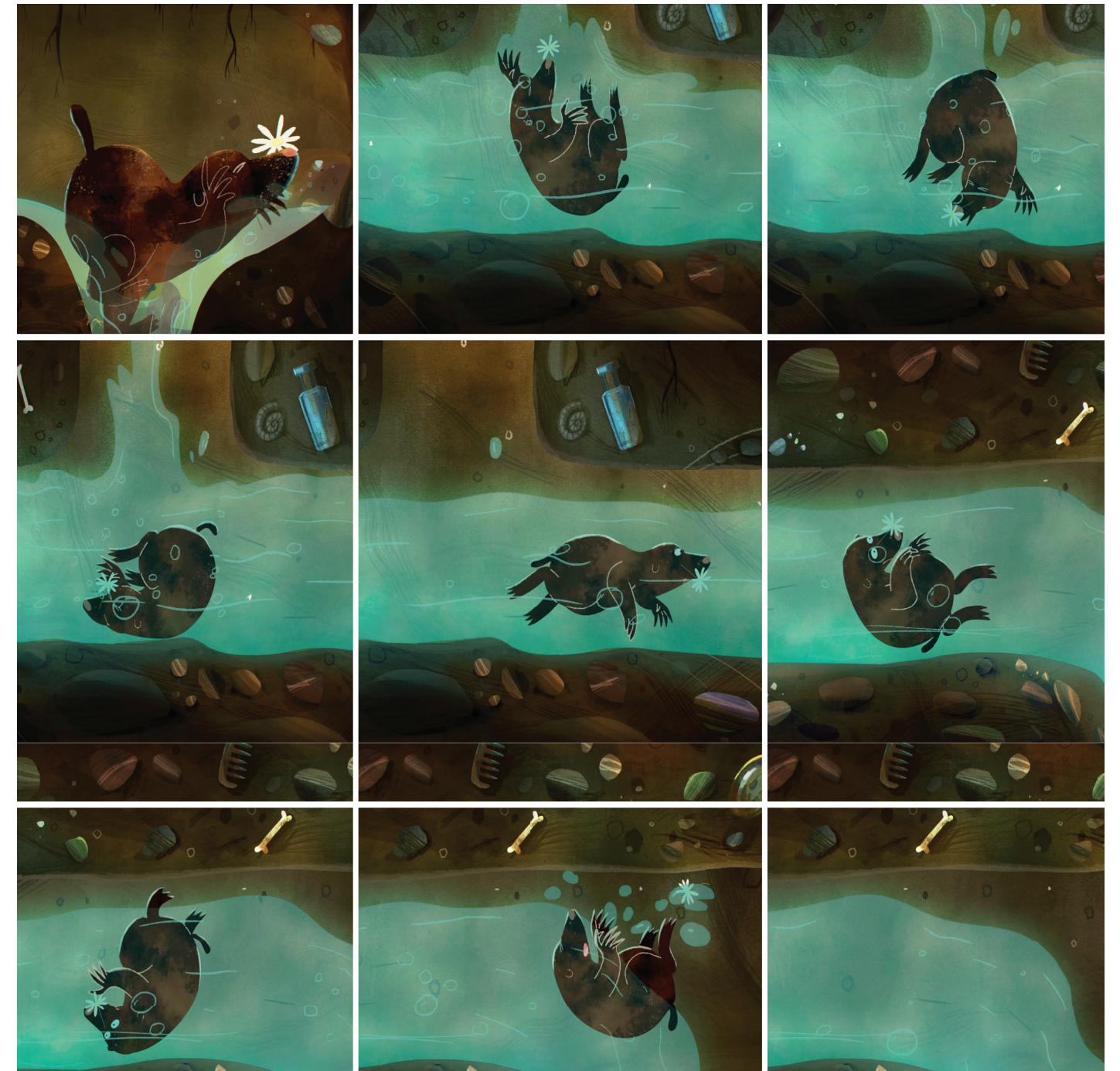
The water was soon all around the little mole, and no matter how fast Darcy dug, the level of the groundwater was getting higher. Then the unthinkable happened!



Suddenly, the ground gave way, and Darcy fell into the churning water below!

Darcy hardly had time to catch a breath as the force of the water was so strong. Tumbling, turning and twisting, the foaming rapids of the flood water carried Darcy away!

Darcy's experience shows us that groundwater flooding can be hard to predict, taking everyone by surprise, and it can even force people from their homes!



Missy the cat, had been sitting patiently waiting for a mouse to reappear when suddenly loud splashing sounds startled her! In a matter of moments, these noises were joined by underground vibrations that were getting more violent by the second.

And then the world exploded, as a fountain of water from the earth below erupted out of the floor, and with it came Darcy, who was ejected out of the ground and catapulted into the air!!



Landing back into the water, the strong current continued, and the flood whisked Darcy out through the cat flap and back into the garden.

Darcy was very thankful to see friends again, and reached out to them for assistance with getting out of the water and onto the safety of the trampoline. Darcy even managed to help a little ladybird up to safety.



All of the animals gathered together on the trampoline and started to tell their tales of what had happened to them. The flood had certainly caused a lot of hardship, but they were all very grateful to be safe and out of danger from the groundwater.

In these times, it's good to remember you're not alone. And when you've been affected by floods there are probably others suffering too.



Soon the discussion changed to how to get home, and then mouse had an idea. Turning to fox, who had also been resting on the trampoline, she came back to the group and told everyone to hold hands tightly!

With that fox leapt up into the air, and when he landed the little animal gathering, along with Darcy, were all launched high up into the sky!



Laughing excitedly, they flew over the garden fences below. Crossing the land, Darcy couldn't help but notice that only some of the ground showed further flood damage, while other gardens had been left completely dry?

This is because, groundwater flooding can happen in isolation, meaning there is no pattern or plan as to where the water will appear.

All the animals landed safely outside mouse's home, and mouse kindly invited them all to come in. Inside the home, Darcy was relieved to see more friends and realised that everyone was alright after the flood. Even the ladybirds were there, waiting for their little one that Darcy had helped to rescue.



Then Darcy's heart skipped a beat on spotting a grey mole – could it really be the lost friend who disappeared so suddenly back in the tunnels, the one who Darcy really wanted to meet again?

Yes it was, they had made it too!

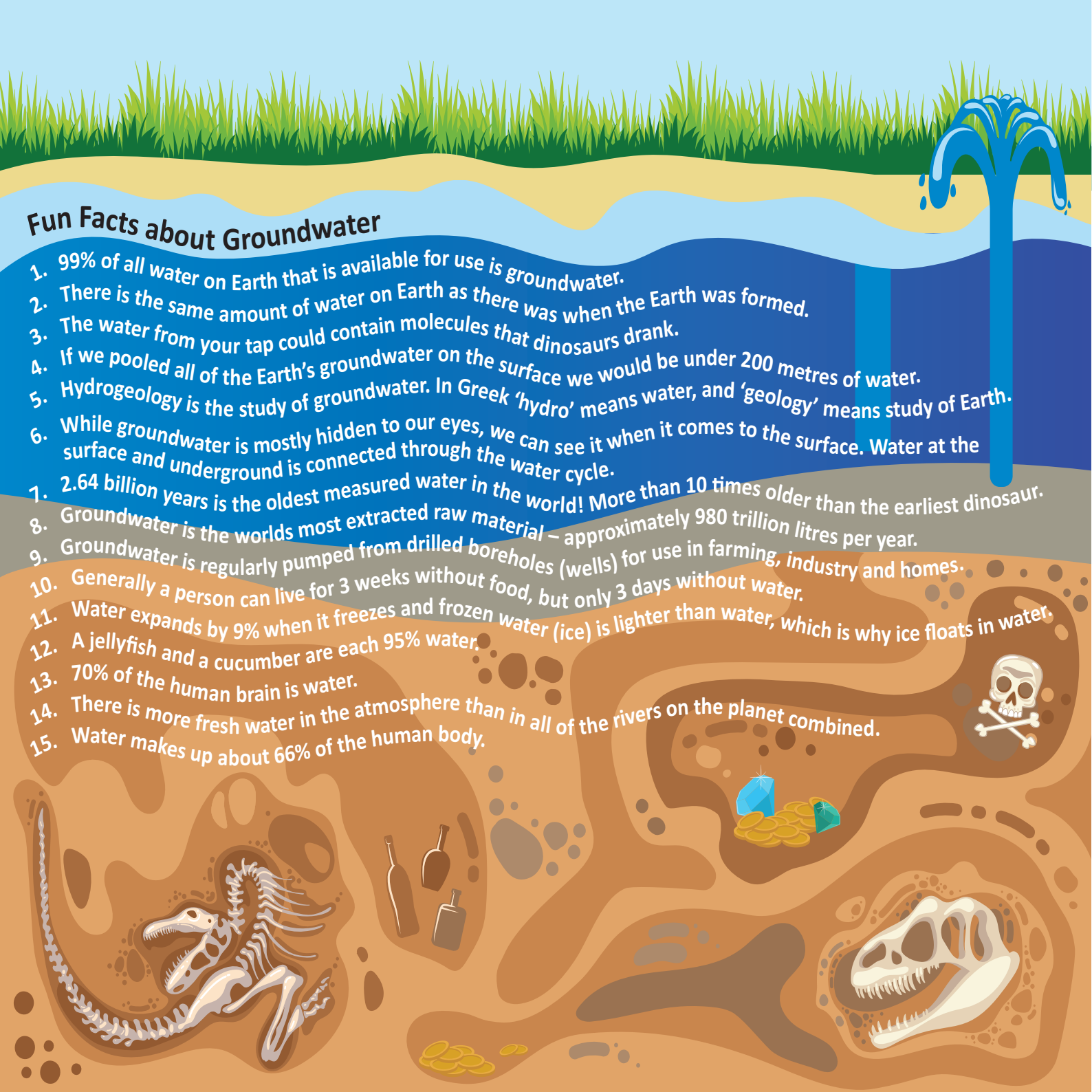
On realising this, Darcy beamed with delight and still clutching the flower offered it once again in the hope of friendship. This time, grey mole took the flower and with those same beautiful sparking eyes smiled back!



You see, this story shows you that groundwater floods can be incredibly hard to deal with, but if we pull together and help each other, we can find our way back to some kind of normality.

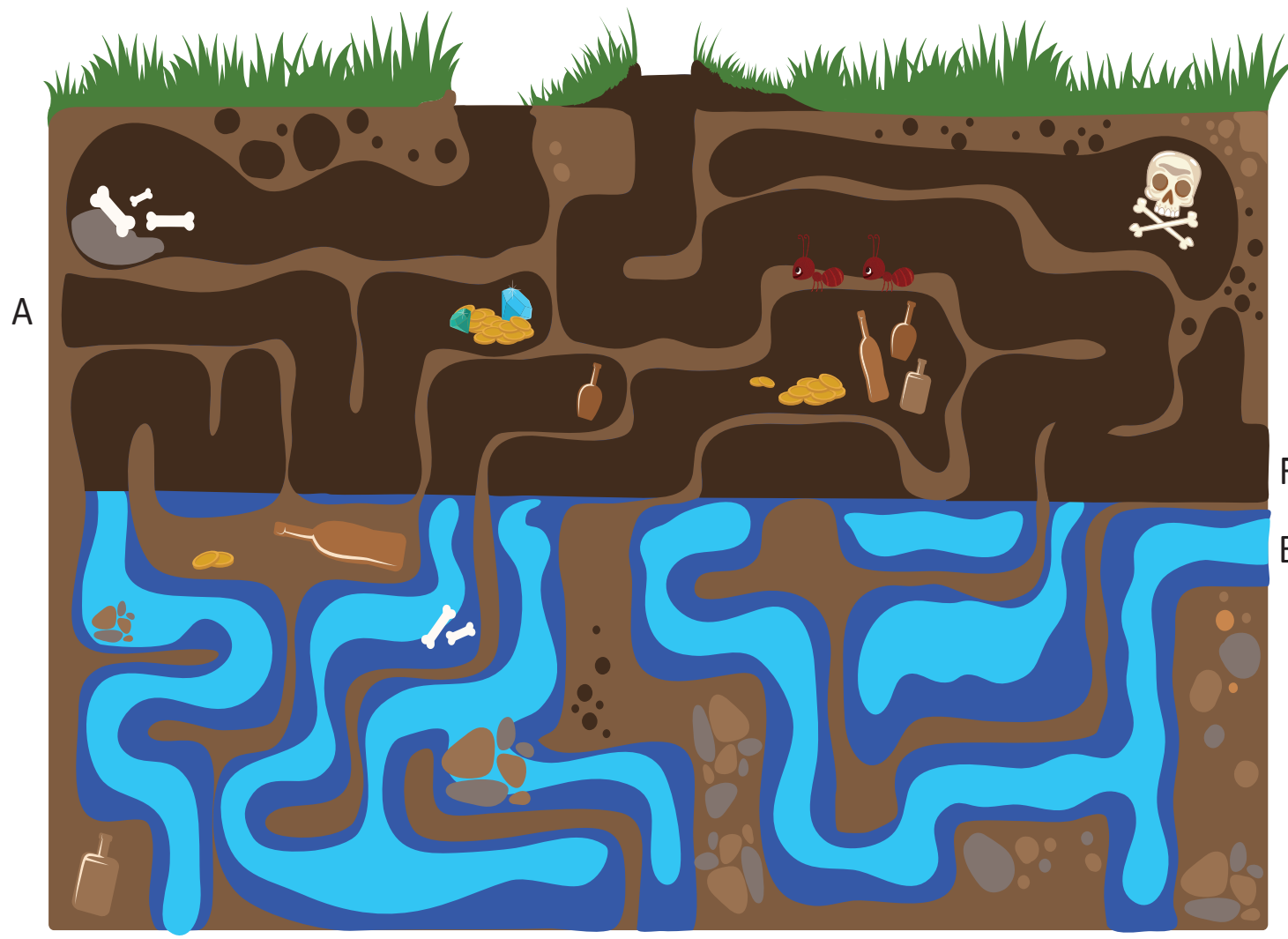
Then we can still look forward to happy times ahead, just like Darcy, grey mole, and their friends.





Fun Facts about Groundwater

1. 99% of all water on Earth that is available for use is groundwater.
2. There is the same amount of water on Earth as there was when the Earth was formed.
3. The water from your tap could contain molecules that dinosaurs drank.
4. If we pooled all of the Earth's groundwater on the surface we would be under 200 metres of water.
5. Hydrogeology is the study of groundwater. In Greek 'hydro' means water, and 'geology' means study of Earth.
6. While groundwater is mostly hidden to our eyes, we can see it when it comes to the surface. Water at the surface and underground is connected through the water cycle.
7. 2.64 billion years is the oldest measured water in the world! More than 10 times older than the earliest dinosaur.
8. Groundwater is the worlds most extracted raw material – approximately 980 trillion litres per year.
9. Groundwater is regularly pumped from drilled boreholes (wells) for use in farming, industry and homes.
10. Generally a person can live for 3 weeks without food, but only 3 days without water.
11. Water expands by 9% when it freezes and frozen water (ice) is lighter than water, which is why ice floats in water.
12. A jellyfish and a cucumber are each 95% water.
13. 70% of the human brain is water.
14. There is more fresh water in the atmosphere than in all of the rivers on the planet combined.
15. Water makes up about 66% of the human body.



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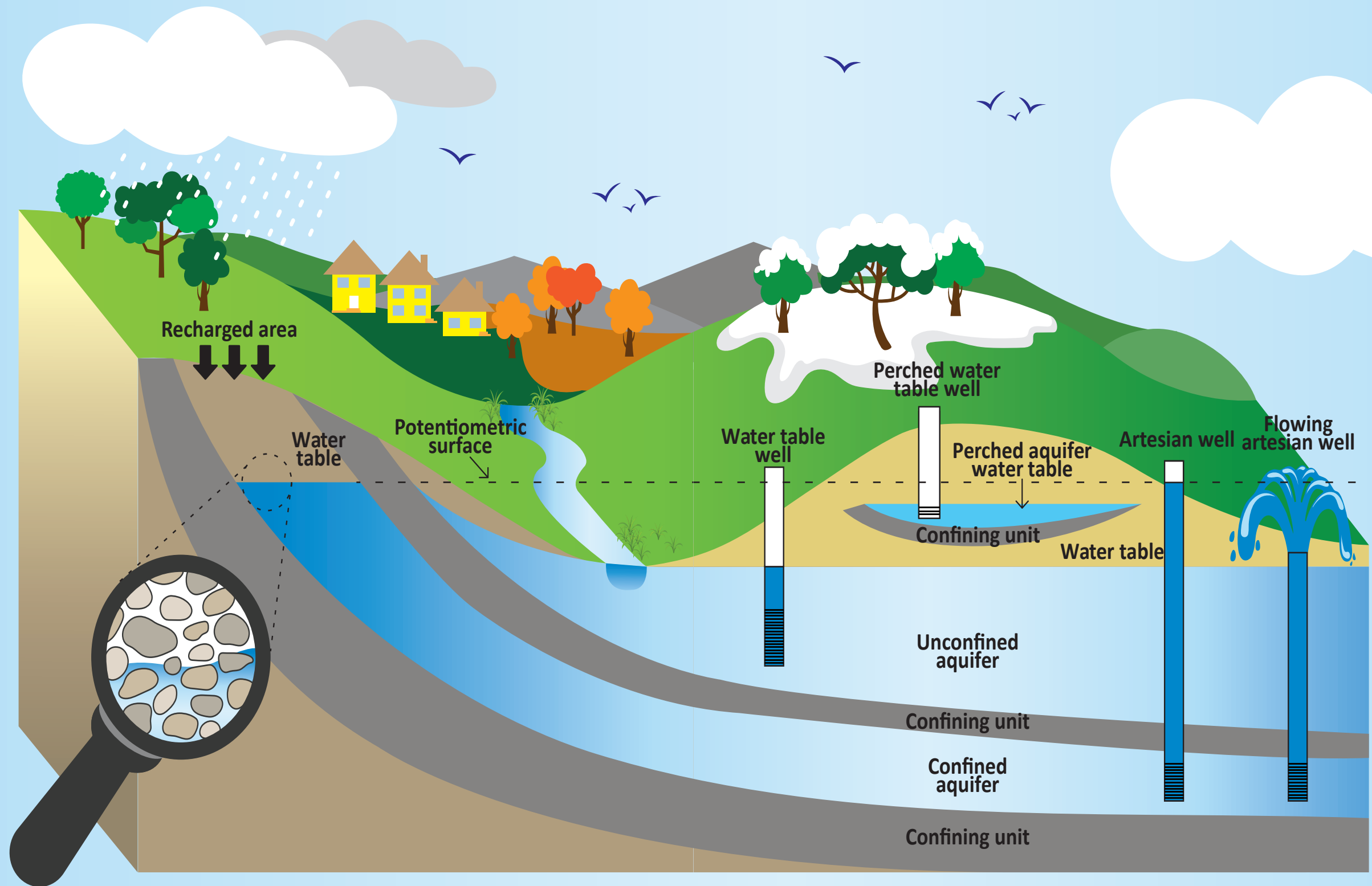
D



Help Darcy escape the groundwater to the garden and stay dry



Understanding Groundwater



This storybook has been beautifully created by Tales from Mother Earth from the original short film by Aardman for Let's Talk Groundwater Flooding to raise awareness of groundwater flooding and the devastating impact it has on affected communities, with the support of the following organisations:











Did you find me?

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We can also be found on the pages at the start of the book and the last page, did you find us?

-  Page 3
-  Page 27 & 17
-  Page 5
-  Page 23



Meet Darcy, our brave little mole who is on the search for love. Whilst patrolling the underground tunnels Darcy experiences the unfortunate and traumatic plight of trying to escape groundwater flooding, and consequently gets caught up in a struggle to survive!

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Tales from



Mother Earth

