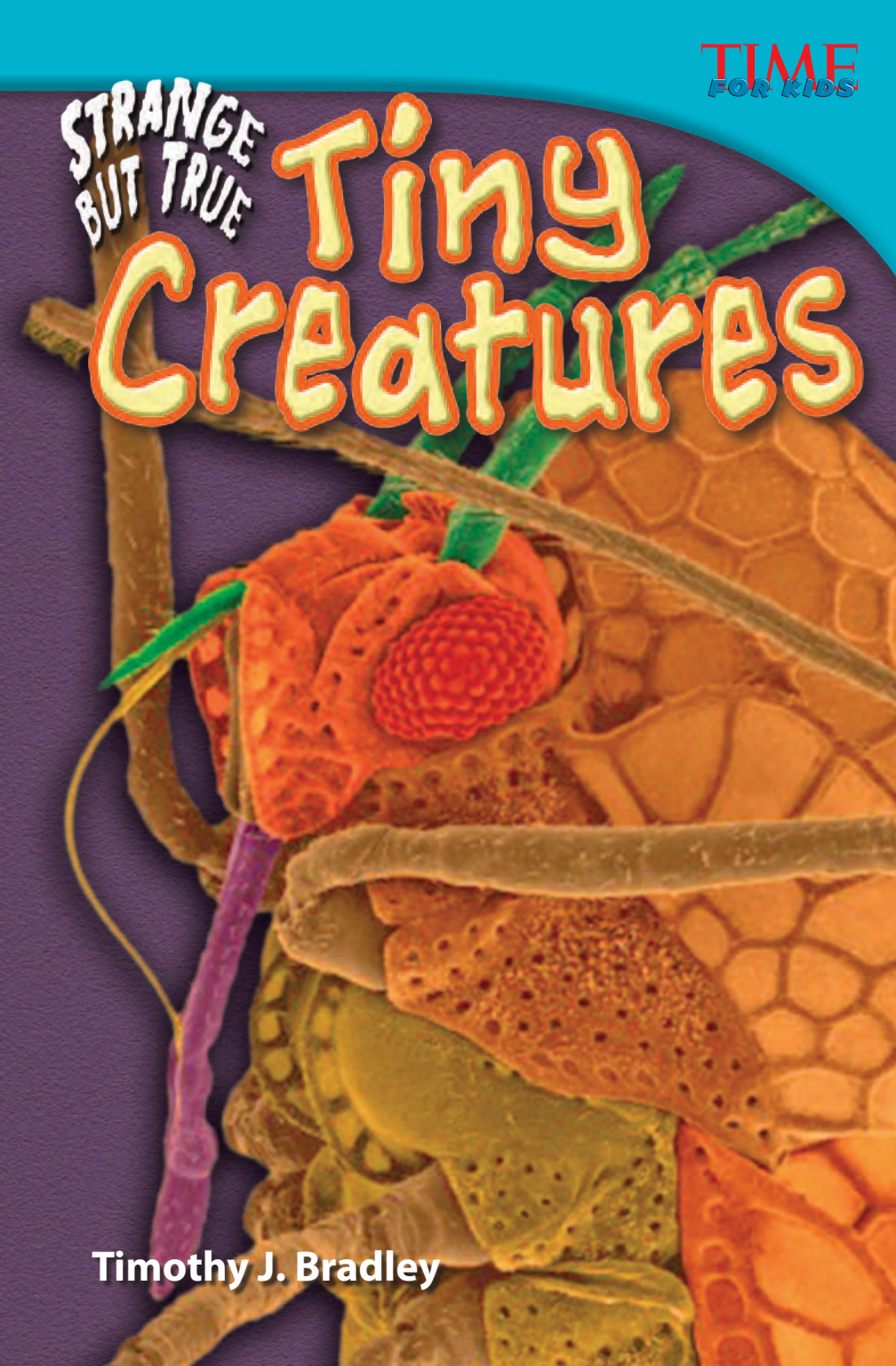

TIME FOR KIDS
STRANGE BUT TRUE
Tiny Creatures
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Little Lives

Enormous creatures like whales and lions get lots of attention. But there are billions of unseen creatures on our planet. Their numbers are large. And so are their effects!

Being tiny has its advantages. These creatures need fewer resources to survive and reproduce. Some of the tiniest creatures are the toughest. And they can survive conditions that would kill any human. Dive into this strange, invisible world, and find out just how tiny these tiny creatures can get!



dust mite

The images in this book have been magnified—BIG time! Some are shown at 100 times bigger than their natural size.

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flea

human head louse



1. What are the smallest creatures on Earth?
2. What are the advantages of being small?
3. Why are tiny creatures so important?

Bullet Ants

Bullet ants build their nests at the base of trees in the rainforest. These ants have the most painful sting in the world. Victims shake and moan as the ants' **venom** affects their muscles. The intense pain lasts for days.

Bullet ants aren't **aggressive** creatures. But they will defend their nest if it is disturbed. The worker bullet ants look for food in the top layers of the rainforest. They use their **potent** sting as a way to kill prey. Multiple stings from these little bugs can kill a human.



The stinger and venom are located at the back of the bullet ant's body.

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Schmidt Pain Index

Scientist Justin Schmidt has been stung by more than 150 different types of insects! Based on his experience, he created a system to compare the stings of different insects. Take a look at how he ranks the sting of these nasty creatures in the Sting Pain Index.



4.0+ Bullet Ant

A sting in your toe will make you feel as if your whole foot is on fire. Avoid this mighty ant at all costs.



4.0 Tarantula Hawk Spider

It's about as bad as sticking your finger in an electrical socket.



3.0 Paper Wasp

This feels like acid on a papercut. Nasty!



2.0 Bald-faced Hornet

Experts say it feels like getting your hand stuck in a door.



1.0 Sweat Bee

Try pulling just one hair on your arm. It feels a bit like that.

Deadly Assassins

Like many spiders, the **assassin** spider is small but deadly. But it is different from other **arachnids** (uh-RAK-nidz). An assassin is a person who kills another person in a surprise attack. Most spiders prey on insects. But the assassin spider preys on other spiders. That's why they are called *assassins*!

The assassin spider was only just discovered. Scientists think there are hundreds of new spiders still to be found.



Discovery

Forty million years ago, a tiny spider crawled into a bubble of tree sap. Over time, the sap hardened and turned into amber. In the 1840s, a piece of amber was found with a fossil of an assassin spider in it. Before then, no one had seen a spider like this. Thirty years later, the first living assassin spider was found.

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Ferocious Fangs

An assassin spider stabs its prey using the fangs at the end of its long jaws. Its long neck allows it to lift its massive mouth.

Assassin spiders can be found in Australia, Madagascar, and South Africa. There are 62 species of assassin spiders around the world.