

# Celebrating Animals

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**When my wife and I** were readying our new home for our family to move in, we discovered a nest atop a 7-foot-high light fixture on our back deck, nicely protected under an awning. The robins must have felt it was a safe place to raise their young since we were only there in the evenings and on weekends. It was the second nest we had the privilege to watch: At my in-laws, where we were staying temporarily, seven eggs perched in a low evergreen shrub not far from their front door.

Our daughters, 2 and 4 years old at the time, were entranced with these close-up views of nature. As soon as we'd arrive to work on our new house, I'd take them out back, lift them for a quick peek, and watch as their eyes lit up. Meanwhile, the eggs in the other nest kept disappearing one by one. My elder daughter was initially upset, but this gave me the opportunity to teach her that other animals also need to eat.

It was shocking how fast the robins grew. Each stage in the life cycle was a great learning experience for us, from the time we first observed four blue eggs cradled inside the nest to when we watched each featherless bird, eyes still closed, yawning for food. I remember

toward the end how crowded the nest was. And then one at a time they were gone.

I'd never seen a baby bird up close let alone watched that whole process. It was special to share that with my kids.

— Justin Strahorn, Lansdale, Pennsylvania



## YOUR BEST SHOT

Do you have an inspiring photo of a favorite pet or wild animal? Send it to us for possible publication in *All Animals*, along with an explanation of 150 words or fewer about why it's meaningful to you. Photos should be at least 300 dpi at a size of 5-by-7" and at least 2 MB.

To upload your photo and information, visit [humanesociety.org/yourbestshot](http://humanesociety.org/yourbestshot). Send hard copy submissions to All Animals—Your Best Shot, The HSUS, 2100 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20037. (Hard copies cannot be returned.)