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**A**

Locusts are really large grasshoppers that do immense damage to crops on the ground when they gather in large swarms. It is even worse when they grow wings after about 40 days as ‘hoppers’, and fly in huge numbers searching for food. One East African swarm covered an area of 300 square kilometres! Scientists have studied the behaviour of locusts, and have found that it is best to exterminate them at the ‘hopping’ stage with poison on the ground. They are sprayed with poison from an aircraft and attacked with flame-throwers.

In March 2004 a plague of locusts devastated crops in Australia. After heavy rains ended a long drought in north-eastern Australia the breeding conditions for the bugs were perfect. Farmers who were just recovering from the drought suddenly had to face swarms of crop-eating locusts. One farmer described how all her oat crop was eaten in one night. She needed the oats to feed her lambs who had no grass to eat because of the drought. More than 200,000 hectares were sprayed with poison but the heavy rains washed most of it away. Joe Davis, a farmer in New South Wales knew what to expect, “In a few days the locusts will blacken the sun out, there won’t be a green thing left. They’ll even eat the clothes off the washing line”.

**B**

An eagle is about the size of a goose. It has a strong, hooked bill and powerful claws, or talons. The talons are used to grasp and hold the small animals, snakes and birds which the eagle kills and eats. The eagle’s favourite nesting place is a high, rocky shelf on the side of a mountain. Its nest is called an eyrie and it is often the size of a small hut. Baby eagles (eaglets) are three months old before they can fly and fend for themselves. The Golden Eagle of North America is also called the War Eagle because Native Americans used its feathers for their war bonnets.