



Chessie



A Chesapeake Bay Story

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in North America. The Bay watershed, the land that eventually drains into the Bay, covers 64,000-square miles and parts of six states—Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia, Delaware—and our nation’s capital, the District of Columbia.

Each person in the Chesapeake Bay watershed lives just a few minutes from a stream or river that eventually flows into the Bay. These waterways are home to thousands of different plants and animals.



The Chesapeake Bay Program is the unique local, state and federal partnership leading the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. Bay Program partners include the states of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania; the District of Columbia; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government; and the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative body; and citizen, scientific, and local government advisory committees.

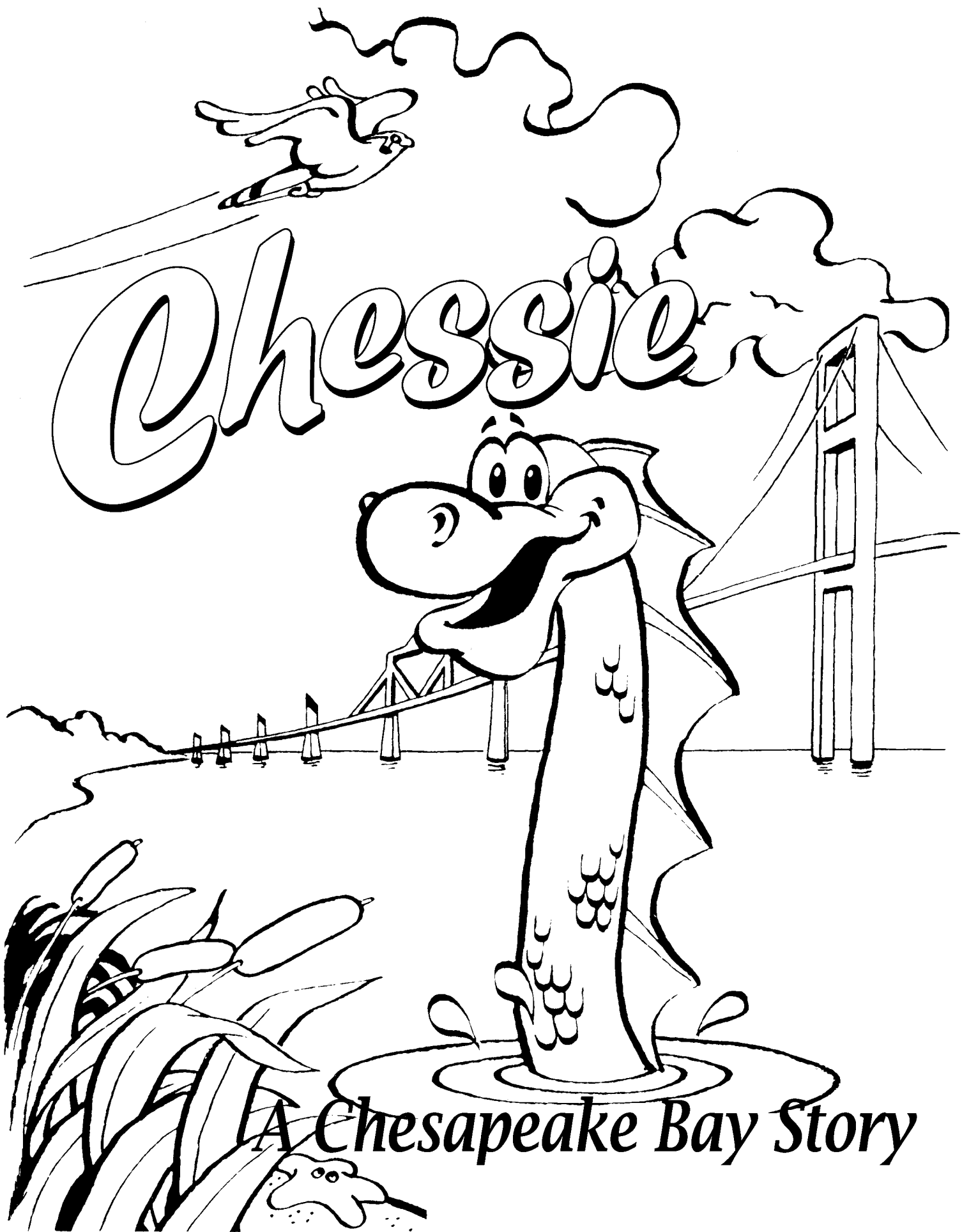
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Along with other federal, state and local agencies and private organizations, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working to improve the health of the Bay and its rivers.

*Concept by Dave Folker
Art and Verse by Britt Eckhardt Slattery*

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This book belongs to _____

Chessie

For at least half a century people have reported seeing a “sea monster” in the Chesapeake Bay. Affectionately known as “Chessie,” popularized cousin of Nessie (Scotland’s Loch Ness monster), the creature is reported to be gentle and good natured.

What Chessie really is and whether this Chesapeake phenomenon actually exists is a matter of speculation—but Chessie does exist in the following pages with an important message for everyone who values the natural heritage of the Chesapeake Bay. Our fictional character Chessie represents all those creatures that depend on the Bay for food and habitat.

I'm Chessie, the monster
of Chesapeake Bay.

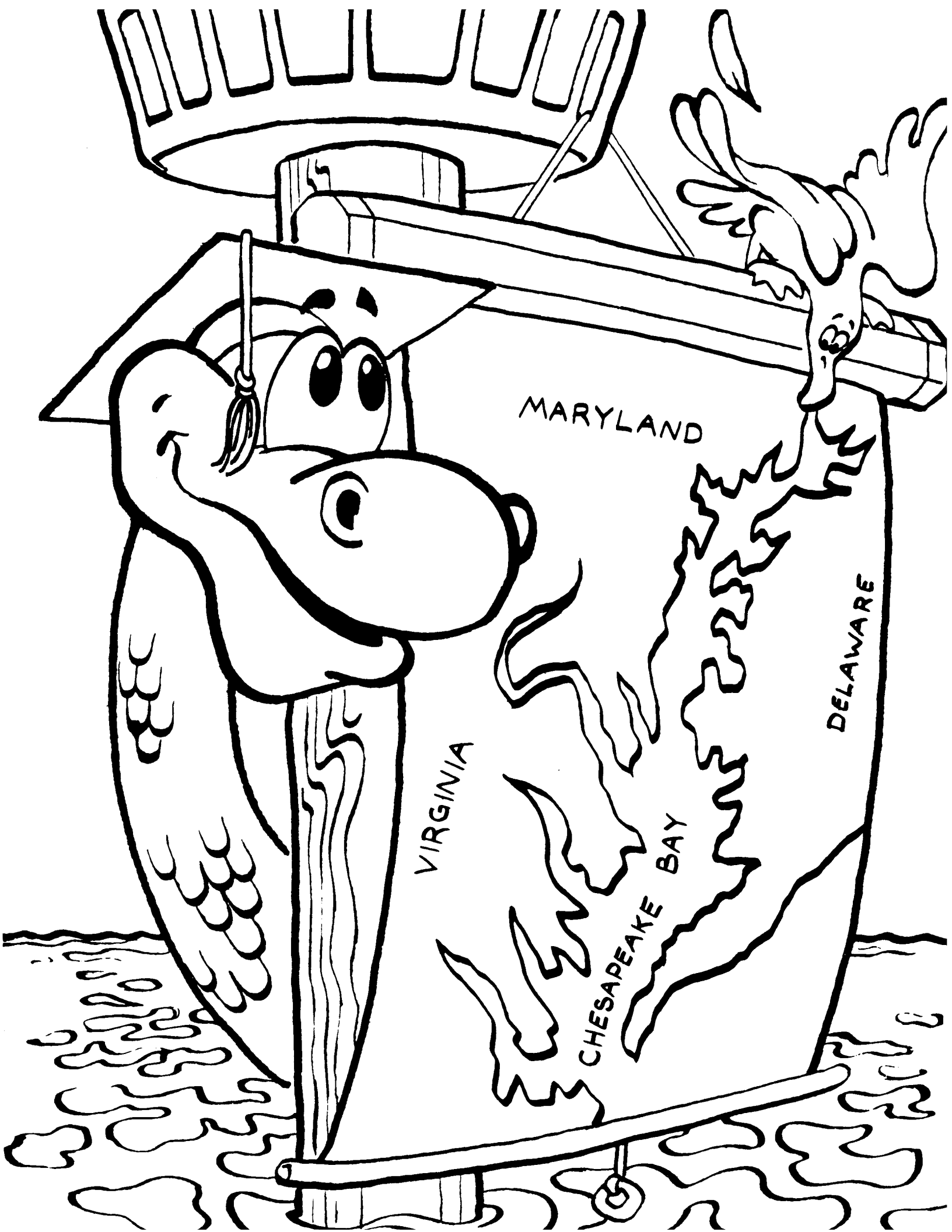
I'm not very scary —
I stay out of the way,

And some people don't believe
I'm even there.

But I am — as you see —
with a story to share.



I swim in the Bay,
from the north to the south,
From its freshwater streams
to its saltwater mouth;
For two hundred miles
between its two ends,
The Bay is my home and
the home of my friends.



MARYLAND

VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE BAY

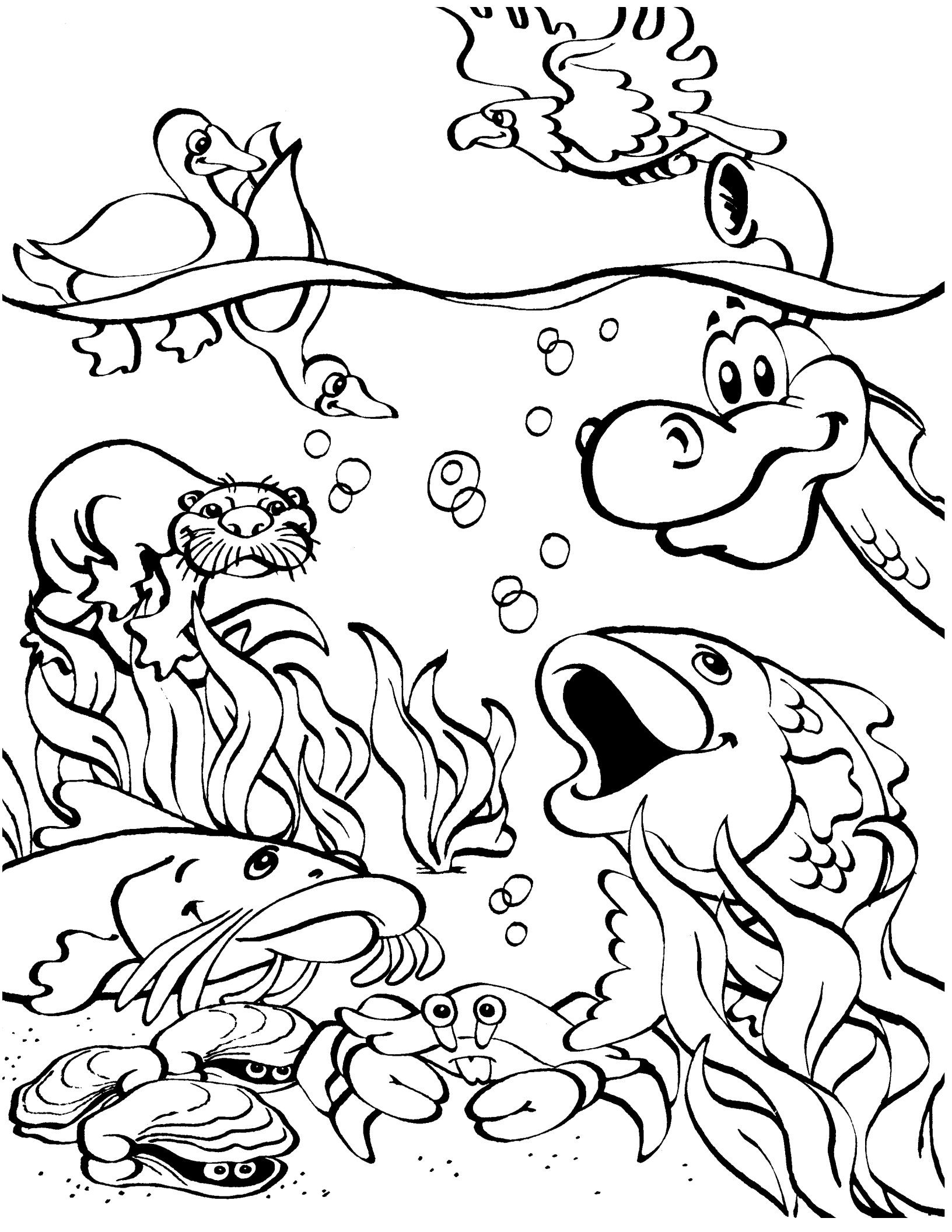
DELAWARE

We all live together in
Chesapeake waters:

The catfish and rockfish,
the muskrats and otters,

The oysters and crabs,
the minnows and eels,

With our neighbors —
bald eagles, black ducks,
widgeons and teals.



And plenty of people —
by the millions — come in
To fish or catch oysters,
to sail or to swim.

They bring in their freighters
and build on the shore.

Each year there seem to be
more, more, **MORE, MORE . . .**



People! I love them,
but oh, what a mess
They can make with
their projects.

Sometimes, I confess,
My patience gets thin.

They don't think for a minute
how the Bay will survive
When they dump so much in it.



So the Bay's become dirty.
It's mucky and brown
From the poisons that come
from each factory and town.
The oil, soil and trash
that pour in it each day
May force us to leave,
But we'd much rather stay!



So we've got to clean up
if we want to be sure

To have seafood to eat
from water that's pure.

And we've got to start NOW—
there's no time to wait.

Things will only get worse
until it's *too late*.



SEAFOOD

NO MORE FISH

CLOSED

Who's going to clean up?

Well, it has to be *you*,

And your parents and friends
and you neighbors. Me, too!

Whoever likes having
the Bay here — that's who.

We *all* have to help

Here's some things you can do.



Obey fishing laws.

Take what you need
and no more.

Pick up litter and trash
on the shore.

And *never* put anything into
the Bay that might hurt me
or my friends in some way.



That's all of my story.
Now I've got to hurry and
tell all my animal friends
not to worry.

We'll get the job done,
day by day, week by week,
and together we'll bring back
the rich Chesapeake.



Related publications about the Chesapeake Bay

Chesapeake Bay: Introduction to an Ecosystem

A comprehensive overview of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem that includes information on the Bay's ecology, geology and plants and animals. A helpful resource for students in grades 8-12.

Bay-B-C's

A multi-disciplinary approach to teaching about the Chesapeake Bay. *Bay-B-C's* includes background material and lesson plans for teachers of grades K-3, with songs, games and stories for students.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Activity Kit

A three part kit —A non-technical Bay watershed map emphasizing the immense network of rivers and streams that make up the Chesapeake drainage system, student work maps and a teacher guide.

The State of the Chesapeake Bay

This report, published every two years, describes the health of the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries, habitats, and the creatures that call the Bay home.

For copies of these publications contact:

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Chesapeake Bay Program
A Watershed Partnership

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