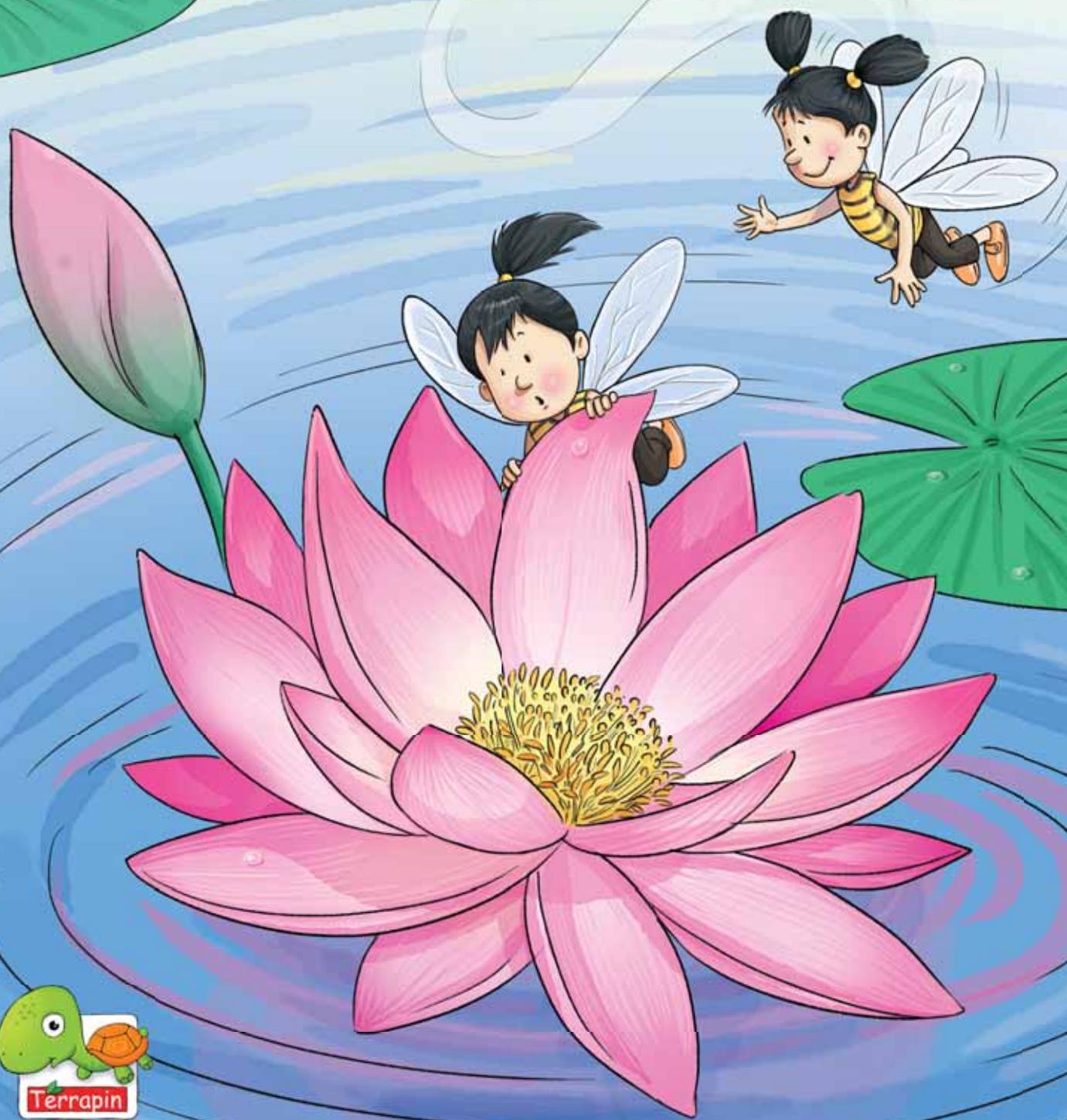


WONDERS OF INDIA

Flowers





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Author: Anchal Sondhi (TITLI TRUST)

Managing Editor: Anupama Jauhry

Series Editors: Arshi Ahmad and Rupak Ghosh

Design: Priyabrata Roy Chowdhury and Santosh Gautam

Cover illustration: Yatindra Kumar, Vijay Nipane, Neeraj Riddlan

Image Research: Yukti Garg

Production Head: T Radhakrishnan

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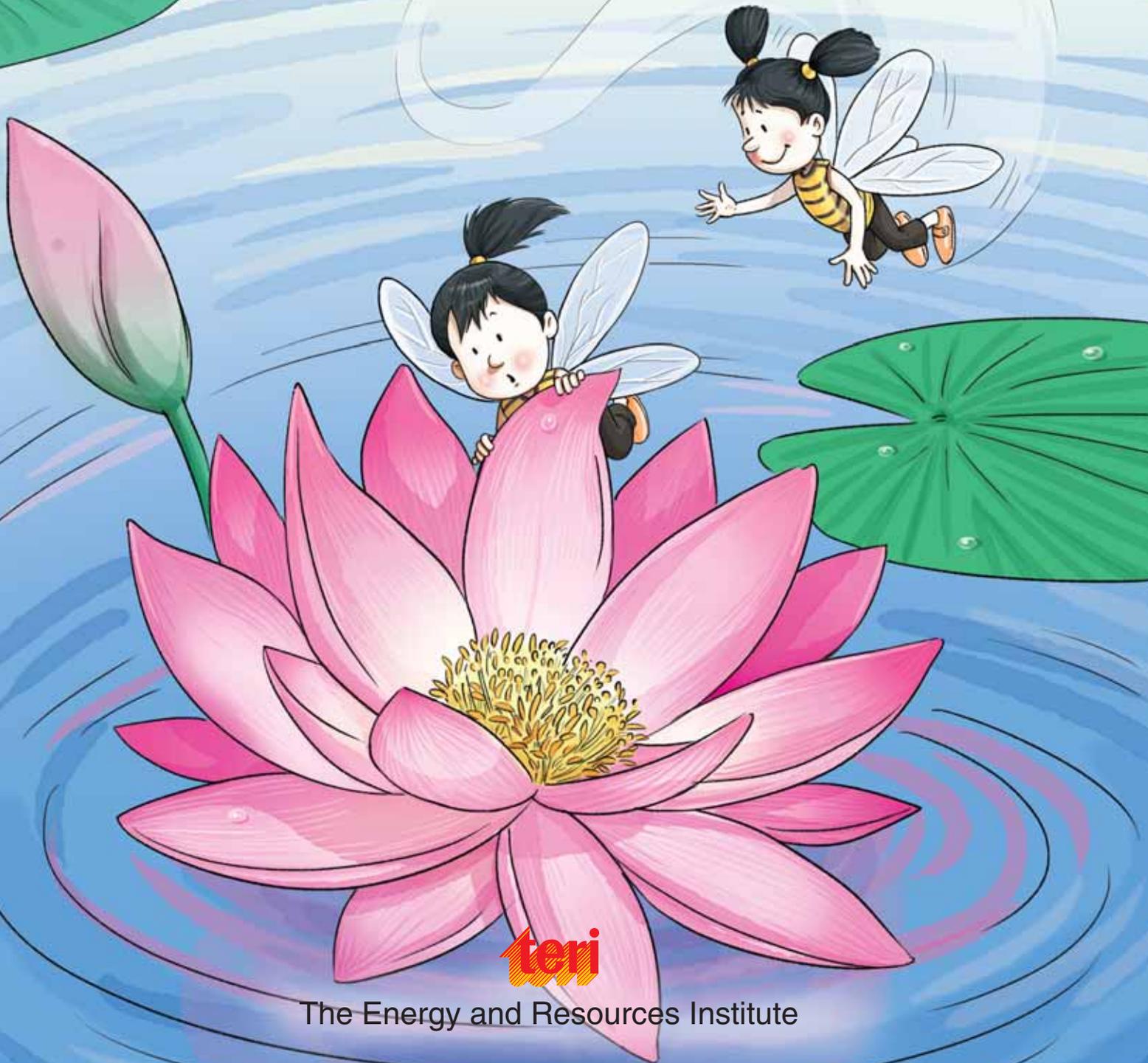
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INDIA

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The Energy and Resources Institute

A note by Dr R K Pachauri

India has made tremendous progress in the last century, with growth in business, industry, and science and technology. But our population has increased at a tremendous rate, and our cities are expanding rapidly into huge concentrations of human activity, often swallowing up forests and other natural spaces.

This series endeavours to acquaint children with India's natural and man-made heritage. We are endowed with a wide variety of flora and fauna and have also inherited beautiful monuments—forts, places of worship, palaces, and tombs—reflecting our glorious and multicultural past. Children, especially in towns and cities, are not very familiar with these. We need to take pride in these wonders around us, and preserve them for future generations.

I hope that by highlighting the rich heritage and natural diversity of India, these books will inspire our youth to make personal and civic choices that are better for families, communities, and our natural heritage. Children, being leaders of tomorrow, are ideally placed to create a beautiful, peaceful, and healthy future for the nation.



R K Pachauri

Director-General, TERI

Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

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The beautiful world of flowers

Flowers are usually the prettiest part of a plant. They come in all sizes—from the big sunflower to the small bougainvillea. They are also very colourful—from bright red to flaming yellow, to deep blue, and even shades of green! Some flowers on the same bush can be multicoloured such as lantana. Some, like jasmine and rose, have a lovely fragrance.

Flowers grow everywhere. The cactus flower is found in the desert, lotus in ponds, roses in gardens, and orchids in the wild.

If there were no flowers, there would have been no life on earth! Flowers bloom on plants and turn into fruits.

Marigold



Himalayan blue poppy



Tuberose



Wonders of India: Flowers



Periwinkle



Gladiolus



Chrysanthemum

Fruits contain seeds that grow into plants. This cycle is important to both humans and animals, as most of their food comes from seeds, fruits or roots of plants.

Many insects such as moths, butterflies, and bees feed on nectar from flowers, while some beetles eat flower petals. Birds and animals, too, feed on flowers.

People also use flowers. Flowers like jasmine are used to make perfume. Vegetable dyes and colours are made from flowers like marigold. Flowers are also an important part of festivals, *pujas*, and weddings.

Now that you know how important flowers are for nature, you must care for them. Plant them in your gardens, and make sure they are not needlessly plucked, whether at home or in the wild.

Lotus

I am the national flower of India.

Scientific name:
Nelumbo nucifera

Blooms: Throughout the year

Colours: Pink and white

Hindi name: Kamal

Also known as:
Indian lotus, bean of India, water lily



How can you recognize the lotus flower?

It is a cup-shaped flower with large, beautiful petals and a lovely fragrance. The leaves are round and so big that small birds can be seen walking on them! The flower appears at the end of a thick, long green stem.



Wonders of India: Flowers

Where does the lotus grow?

It grows in ponds and lakes. The roots are planted in the soil at the bottom of the water body, while the leaves and buds are seen above the water surface. When the sun rises in the morning, the lotus wakes up and opens its petals. As the sun sets, the flower closes its petals and goes to sleep.



Did you KNOW?

The Baha'i temple in New Delhi is shaped like a lotus.



Fried lotus root



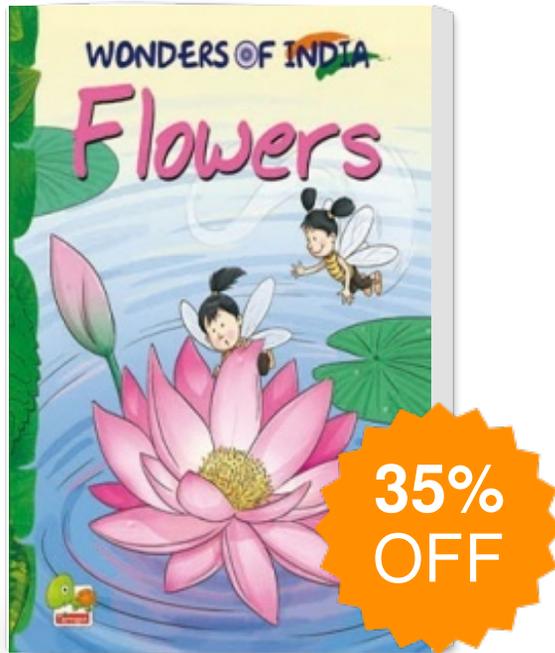
Seed

What makes the lotus special?

The lotus is a sacred flower. Goddess Lakshmi stands on a lotus while holding another lotus in her hand. Lord Vishnu is seen sitting on a lotus. The leaves, flowers, and roots are eaten and used to treat various illnesses. Lotus seeds can be made into popcorn, while the boiled and fried roots are eaten as lotus chips. Villagers use the large leaves to wrap and serve food.



Wonders of India : Flowers



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