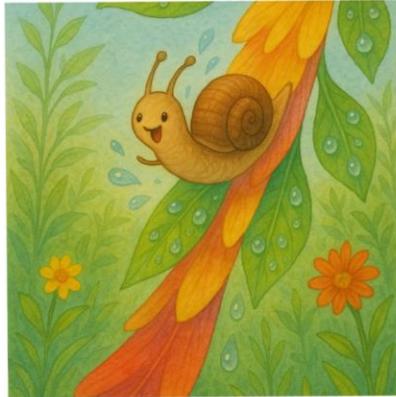


The Flutterbys



The Snail's slow surprise

By Nita Lesley

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MEET THE FLUTTERBYS

The Flutterbys are four friendly Butterflies who live in Flutterby Meadow. They love to explore, play and help their meadow friends. Bringing kindness, curiosity and a sprinkle of fluttery fun to every day.

Bold Red Ruby is full of energy and always ready to take the lead.

Sweet Pink Rosie is full of big ideas and endless excitement.

Thoughtful Bue Benny loves to figure things out.

Playful Orange Ollie, a mischief-maker, keeps everyone laughing with his playful ways.

Together the Flutterbys make the meadow a brighter, happier place, one flutter at a time.





It was a lovely morning in Flutterby Meadow, and the Flutterbys were playing their usual game of zip and zoom.

"Catch me if you can!" Ollie shouted as he twisted and tumbled in the air

"I'm right behind you!" called Ruby, flapping hard to keep up.

Suddenly, Benny screeched to a halt.

"Wait! I almost flew into a rock!"

But it wasn't a rock.

It blinked.

"That's not a rock," Rosie said. "That's a... snail!"



The 'rock' blinked again and gave a very slow smile.

"Hello," said the tiny snail, looking up slowly.

"I'm Sammy. I'm trying to catch up to my family, but it's hard. We're heading to the Big Leaf Feast. It's only once a year, and we don't want to miss it!"

The Flutterbys looked across the meadow and saw a long line of **snails** slowly making their way toward a shady grove of trees.

"That looks far," said Ruby.

"Really far," added Ollie, who was already tired just looking at it.

Sammy sighed. "And I'm always the slowest. I'll never get there in time."

Rosie fluttered beside him. "Don't worry. We're the Flutterbys, and we help friends in need."



The Flutterbys huddled together like top-secret mission planners.

"What if we make a leaf slide?" Rosie suggested.

"Or a wind tunnel!" Ollie said, already spinning and practicing his turbo flaps.

"Or we find a shortcut," Benny offered, holding a bent grass stem like a trail map.

Ruby had the best idea. "Let's try all three!"



They grabbed dewy leaves and flower petals to make a slippery snail slide.

"Hold on tight!" Rosie called as Sammy slowly wriggled onto the leaf. The Flutterbys gave a gentle push and whoosh!
Down he slid, faster than he'd ever gone before.

"Wheeee! That was amazing!" Sammy laughed, a little bit of leaf stuck to his slime trail.



Next came the wind-boosting. Ollie hovered behind Sammy, pumped up like a race starter.

"Ready, Sammy? One... two... FLUTTER!"

Ollie flapped so hard he spun backwards into a bush.

"Oops! Too much turbo!"

Still, the wind helped Sammy scoot forward fast enough to pass two of his siblings. He beamed. "I'm FAST!"



Then Benny spotted a shady little path that cut right across the clover patch.

"Shortcut! This way! But watch out for that grumpy beetle napping under the leaf."

They carefully tiptoed (or tip-scooted) around the beetle, who mumbled in his sleep, "No leaf taxes today..."

Finally, they reached a clump of tall grass and peeked out.

"There they are!" Rosie called. "You made it, Sammy!"



The snail family was already gathering around giant green leaves, nibbling and munching.

Sammy zoomed (well, scooted enthusiastically) into the group.

"You made it just in time," his mother smiled.

"With help from the Flutterbys!" Sammy said proudly.

The snail family invited the Flutterbys to join the feast.



There were crunchy leaf crisps, sticky nectar globs, and the famous Thistle berry Tarts—which Ollie tried to eat in one gulp and got his antennae sticky.

"Oops! Tart attack!"



Benny accidentally sat on a petal platter and spent the next five minutes with a daisy stuck to his back.

Rosie giggled. "You're a walking snack tray!"

The Flutterbys nibbled and laughed until their wings buzzed with happy exhaustion.



"Who knew going slow could be so much fun?" Ollie said,
licking honey from his toes.

"And delicious," added Benny, patting his tummy.



As the sun dipped lower in the sky, the Flutterbys waved
goodbye to their new friends.

"See you next year!" Sammy called.

"We'll bring the leaf slide!" Rosie promised.

And off they fluttered, giggling into the golden light.

THE END.

FUN FACTS about Snails

1. 🐌 Snails have thousands of tiny teeth on their tongue, called a *radula*!
2. 🐌 They carry their house on their back—it's their shell!
3. 🐌 Some snails can sleep for up to three years during dry weather.
4. 🐌 They leave behind a slimy trail to help them glide along the ground.
5. 🐌 Snails are very quiet, but they're also great explorers—slow and steady!

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Happy Fluttering

Nita Lesley

