



# The Altered Earth Project

FMP

By Shelbie Ann Burgan

30006063

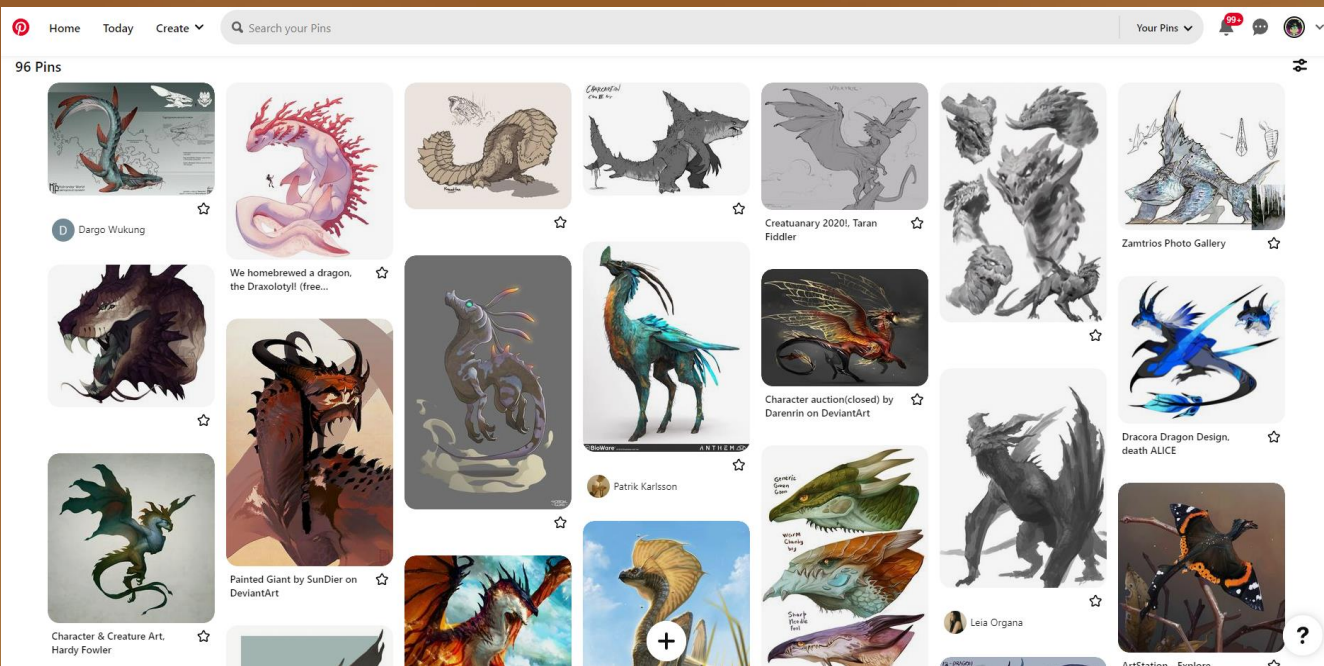
# Introduction

In this project I wanted to develop my creature designs skills by creating three unique designs that could all be from the same planet. I wanted to keep them somewhat similar to earths fauna to make them seem more believable and that this planet isn't too detached from our own.

I developed three designs, I wanted to make sure I had quite a broad range of designs, so I developed an arctic creature, a swamp creature and a flying costal creature. This way I could ensure that I could explore a wide variety of designs based off all sorts of animals.

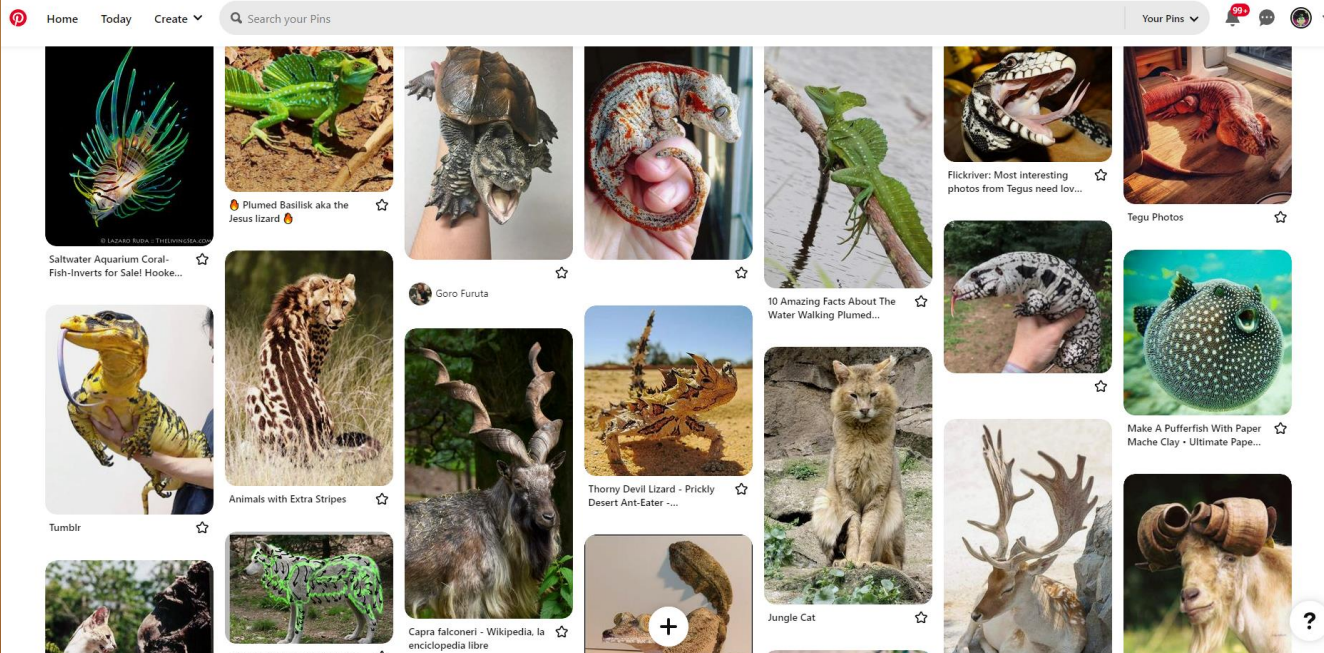
The outcomes for this project as stated in my research document were, one full render of each creature as well as a “book page” type journal entry. In this document I will be taking you through the stages that got me to my final outcomes and showing were research and feedback affected my choices.

Fig 1



To start my project, I decided the best course of action was to gather ideas. Pinterest is always my go to for collecting images fast. I made two boards for this project. I wanted inspiration for the creature designs as well as actual animals.

Fig 2



I looked up animals that fit the habitats my designs were going to be in, (arctic, swamp and cliffs) and gathered interesting designs that I felt fitted my idea of fantasy mixed with real animals.

Arctic



Altered Earth  
project

Swamp



cliff

First ideas of animals  
to edit/improve/combine

Using my Pinterest board, I gathered the animals that inspired me the most. Having them all together in one place helped me to decide which elements from each animal I wanted to incorporate.

# The Bear seal



Starting out with the land creature I played around with where this creature would be from before settling on the arctic theme. So, these designs are based off various animals not just arctic ones.

After exploring my initial designs, I decided to try and do silhouette studies as I found this helpful in making sure the creature had a bold design that was still readable.

I also started bringing in reference images to try and expand upon the silhouette, but I found I was struggling with this method.



Wetlands



- herbivorous
- lives marshland
- runs on 2 legs
- reptile base
- tunicable
- carry supplies
- pull carts
- loud calls = good at giving warnings





Due to having difficulty with the silhouette method I moved on to quick sketches.

I would pick some animals from a specific habitat and splice them together.

I started adding a human scale reference to help with visualizing how big the creature was going to be. I also did this as I wanted to start thinking about the use for these designs in regard to a game. Would they be mounts? Or just large creatures to avoid?



Because of this new line of thinking I also started to think about the shape theory of the creature as a creature that's a mount may be rounder and friendlier looking than an enemy creature.



# Sketches 2

This final design is when I started to go more toward the idea of an arctic creature.



Blubber used to make oil for lamps/other uses  
Solitary - only come together for breeding

Hide thick can be used similar to leather  
pups fur desirable for coats

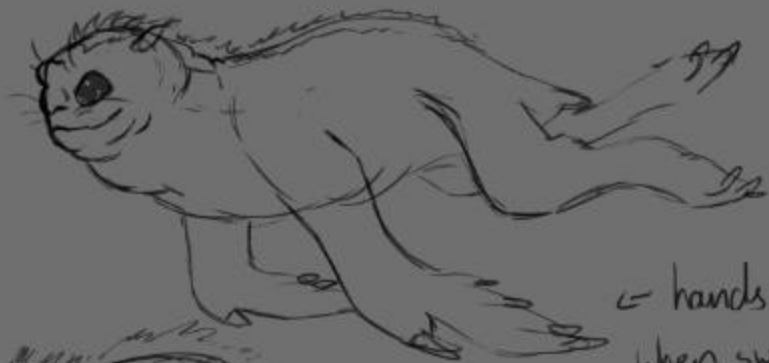


Difficult to tame

Doesn't go near settlements after

gookg

After receiving feedback on the previous sketch, I decided to refine this design and start to think in more detail about the anatomy and make up of this creature (changing the back legs to paws and fixing the back). As well as information on how it could be used in a survival type game. As one of my biggest influences for these designs was Ark: Survival Evolved and all the creatures in that game are accompanied by journal entries.



← hands open when swimming



floating bones

joined

fat pads for spreading impact weight

walks on a hoof like toe

joined finger bone holds rest of "hand/flipper" up



After some more feedback I realized the anatomy of the creature was off. I realized the front legs didn't look like the creature could run on them. I went back and thought about how the creature would support itself. I developed the feet and also expanded on the idea of this creature being seal like by adding an elephant seal nose.



cat study



Once my design was finalized, I decided to do some studies to explore what painting style I think would work for this project.

I did a colour study but found it hard to blend the colours but keep definitions in the shadows. I decided grey scale renders would be better for me.



Colour study for the creature

# Elephant seals

After finishing my initial design, I looked at elephant seals as I realized the nose I designed didn't match what seals actually have. Seals have very complex noses that can seal shut while they are under water, so I wanted to make sure my nose mimicked this.

I looked mainly at the males' noses as they were more pronounced and interesting.

Fig 3



Fig 4





I sketched the Bear Seal out using a polar bear and elephant seal I wanted to add more realism here. The background initially was going to be a large mountain, but this ended up being too dark and boring.









For the final render I was recommended to crop the piece as the original background didn't allow the creature to be a focal point.



# Bear Seal Attacks

Incident report: 1.3.7012-67.72  
 Sub adult male: 1yr old  
 Attacked researcher (team beta) near the base camp  
 4 people injured - No deaths

Incident report: 12.8.7012-67.72  
 Adult Female: 4yrs (with cubs)  
 Attacked researcher (team omega) near camp 4  
 Serious incident - 2 deaths

Incident report: 10.11.7012-67.72  
 Adult Male: 6yr old  
 Attacked researcher (team delta) near camp 2  
 5 people injured - No deaths

Incident report  
 Adult Male  
 Attacked researcher  
 2 people injured



# The Bear Seal

Malchik Utsidae  
Dangerous!!

Moderate (land speed - (30 km/h in short bursts)  
 Swim Speed - (50 km/h)

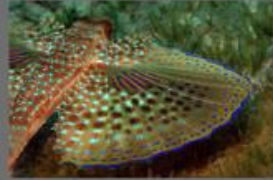


meat is edible  
 Pellet and fur can be used for clothing  
 Blubber can be made into oil

## Bear Seal journal entry

I wanted this to possibly be somewhere were in a game the player would come over to learn about the creature they find in the world. This would be the graphic before clearer information is provided.

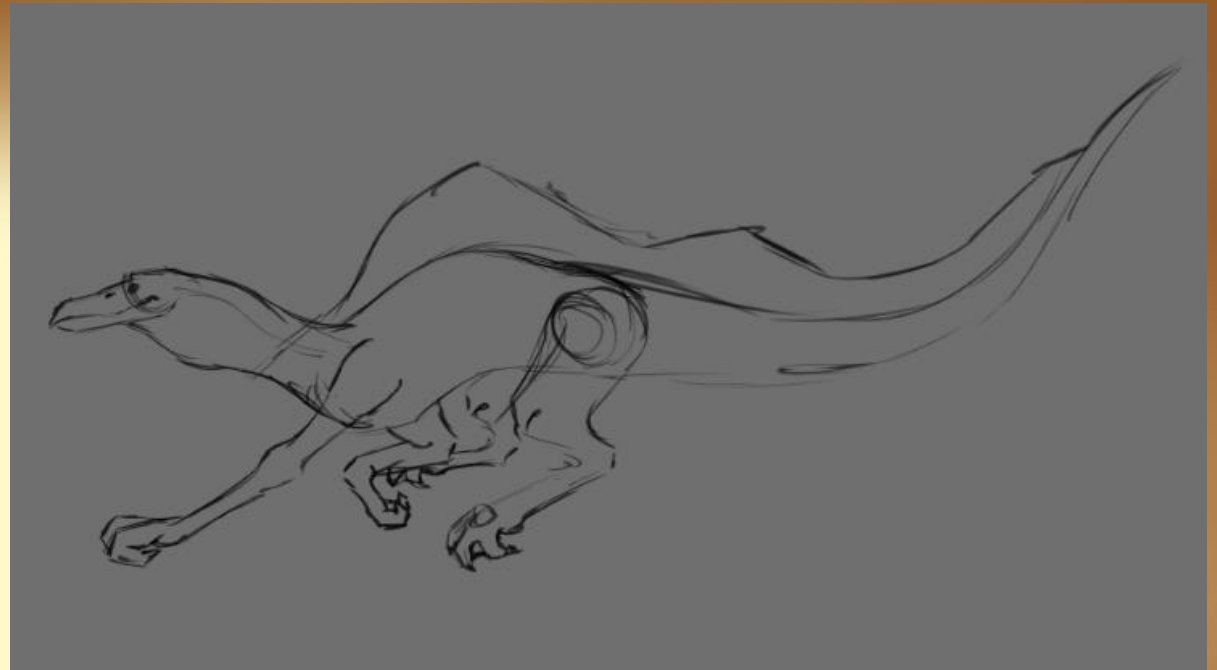
# The Frilled Ténág



After struggling with the first design in terms of a habitat, I made sure I had that figured out for this design. I wanted a creature that lived on the coast. I made a mood board of some coastal birds and added some flying fish to help develop ideas for the wings.

These designs I tried mixing most of the animals on the mood board.





Here I moved away from the mood board, I referenced the puffin more for the feathered design and I tried to make a longer design that wasn't so upright, but I struggled to add wings to this design.

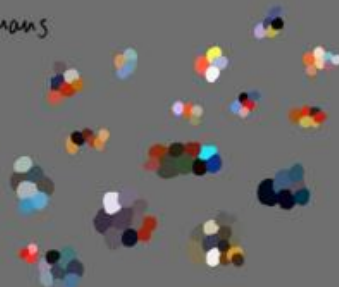


I liked this design a lot, the pelican face mixed with elements from the flying fish felt unique and less dragon like but when I took a step back, I realized this design didn't seem like it could fly. It felt too heavy and t-rex like.

Lives on cliffs  
diet of fish

Very territorial - aggressive to humans

head sort after for hunting trophies (males preferred for larger crest)



Males have large + colourful crest

Eggs stolen to be sold as exotic pets

Fairly heavy for a flying creature



Beak

Swallows fish whole  
Similar to Pelican

Very difficult to train/domesticate

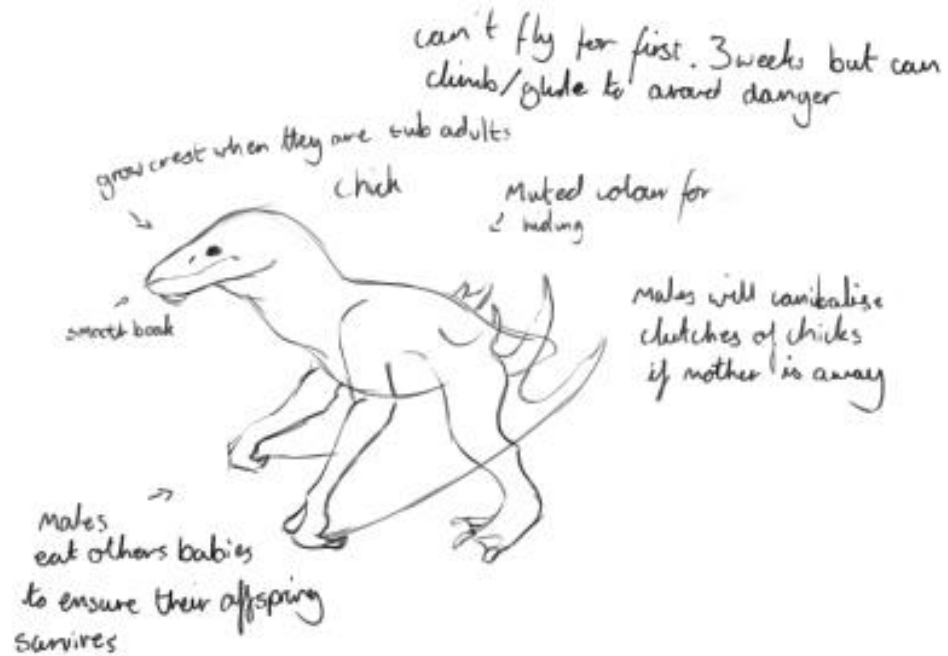
Walks on all 4's

Very good at climbing

can fly but mainly uses air currents to glide as it's less strenuous on its body

lives in pairs (they mate for life)  
- join in large colonies to lay eggs

180kg



can't fly for first 3 weeks but can climb/glide to avoid danger

grow crest when they are sub adults

chick

Muted colour for hiding

smooth beak

Males eat others babies to ensure their offspring survives

Males will cannibalise clutches of chicks if mother is away

I wanted to stay away from a dragon like design so found myself researching pterosaurs. I went for a more beak like design and added some features like crests to add interest. I also found a lot of larger pterosaurs lived near the coast, so this design fit well with my theme.



# Pterosaur research

After settling on the design, I looked into the crests of pterosaurs. I wanted to just research into them so I understood what could have been plausible for the colours or the crests. As well as the different sizes so I could think about other shapes. As this design was themed round sea birds and they don't have a lot of head plumage I decided to go with the smaller design I originally drew but with some colours and patterns based round these images.



Fig 5



Fig 6



The initial sketch for the render.

After drawing this and getting feedback I felt that the pose hide a lot of the design as well as it just feeling very stationary.

I like the next idea, but I also thought that this take away from the design which need to be the focal point.

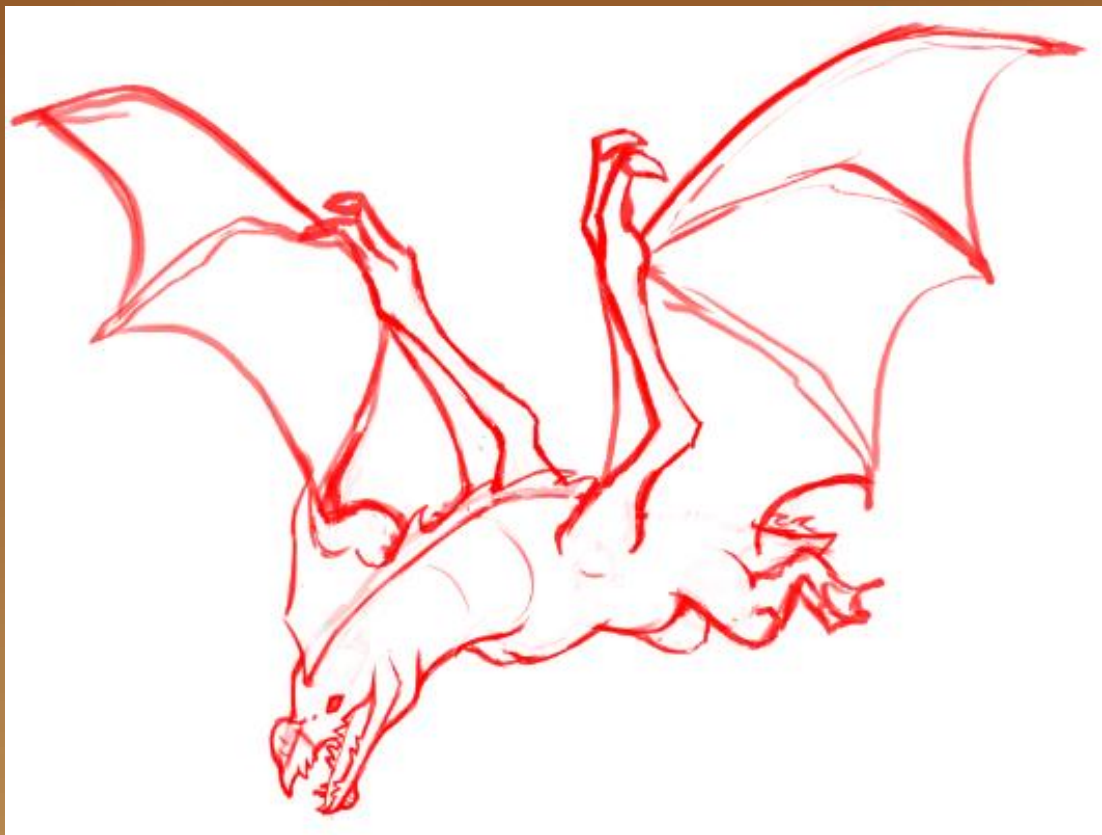


Fig 7

For the rendering of this piece, I decided to reference the bat in this picture. I drew out the wing editing it to fit my creature more and then rendered it. This saved a lot of time when doing this piece as I could just manipulate the wing into the right position.







crest colour - usually blue  
 or a mix of blue and white  
 This is only in mating season



crest is dull on side of wings

large crest



Female

Dappled eggs  
 Clutches are usually 4-6 eggs  
 chicks are in the nest for 3 weeks  
 they grow their crest in once they hatch.

They are very muted colours  
 Males will prey on other males

Anate

It has very good eyesight



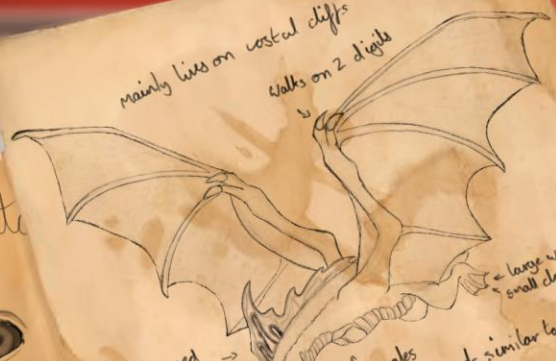
claws help with climbing

Used to keep feet and to build nests



Proto feathers

mainly lives on coastal cliffs  
 walks on 2 digits



Bright red crest  
 small proto feathers

thick scales  
 Neck expands similar to earthy pelicans.

front of face is beak like very sharp

This male has attacked unprovoked do not interact

Study: 1  
 Male - 4yr old  
 Cliff master - Alpha male  
 Very hostile

Frilled Ternag

Pelecanidae Agamidae  
 Dangerous



Males have large crests to attract females.  
 Males are very aggressive.  
 Females are only aggressive near nests.

Food

Flat headed grassper



2m



spined rock angler



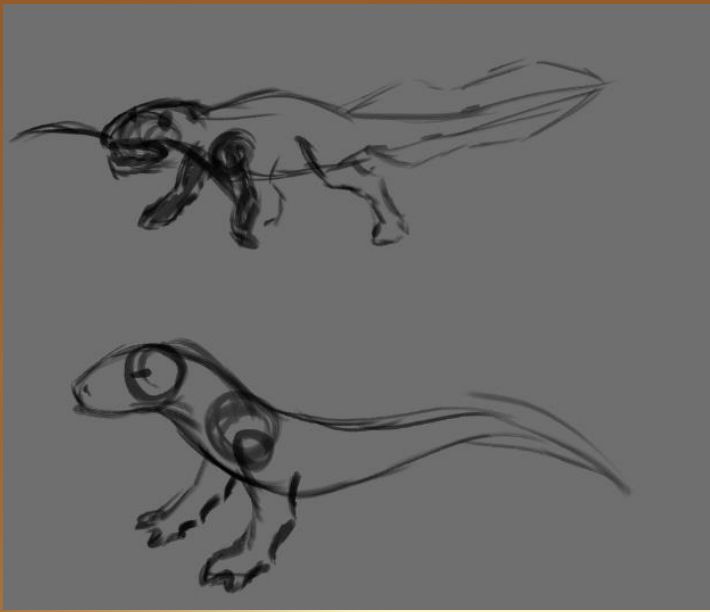
2 Male AVG

2.5m

Wing span 3m



# The Greater Spotted Frog



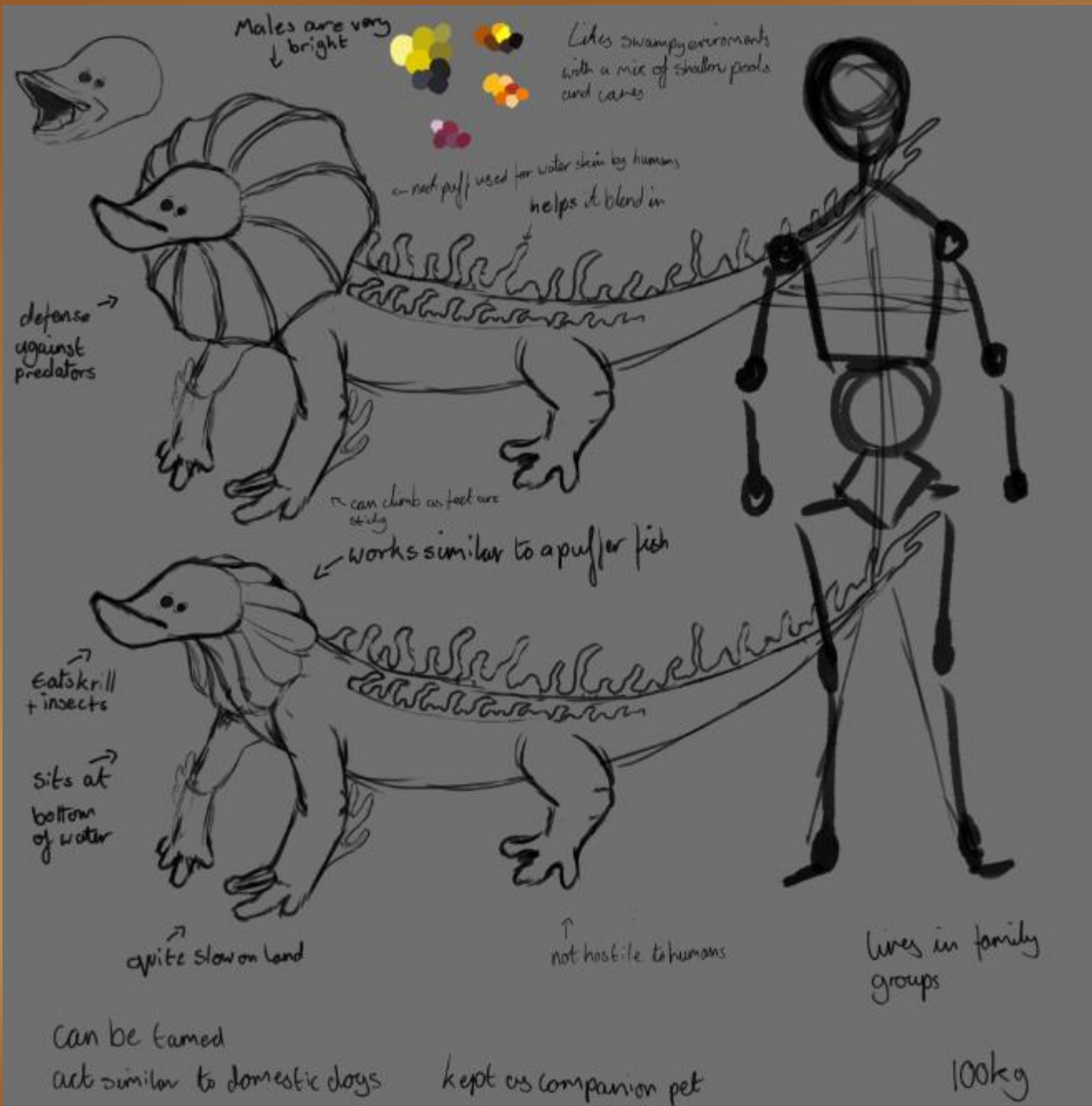
This design had the most initial sketches, I struggled to find a balance between the amphibian and fish elements I wanted to use. I had a lot of feed back on this creature.





I turned to jelly fish and pufferfish to try to make a unique design for the swamp creature  
I found that all the designs I did felt too complicated or too unrealistic as I was trying to keep the designs looking like they could be animals found on this planet.



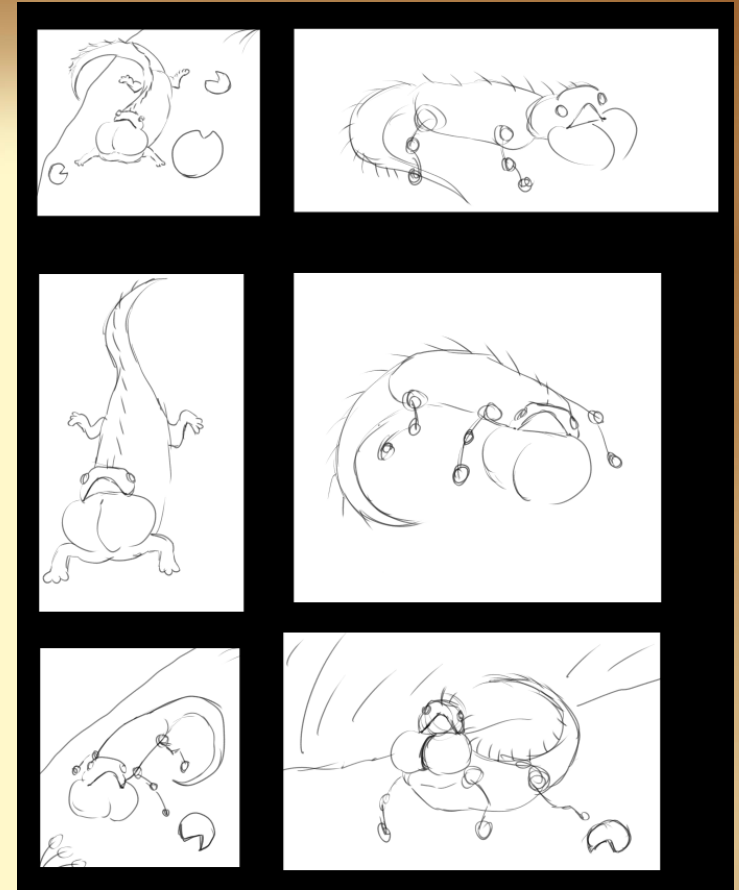
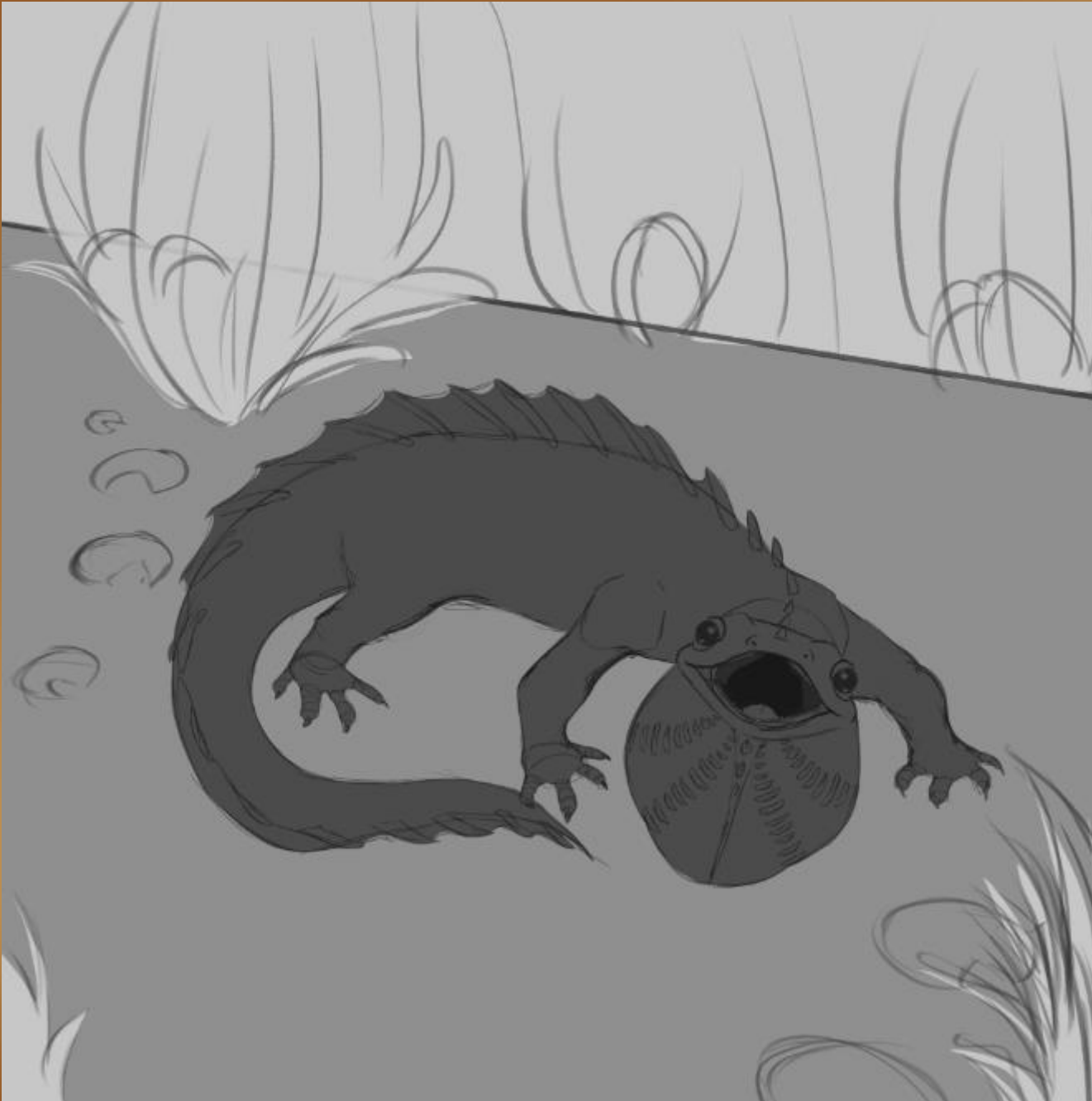


I really like this design so refined it further.

This was continuing the pufferfish theme, but I decided that the silhouette of the creature was quite boring, so I wanted to try going back to quick sketches.



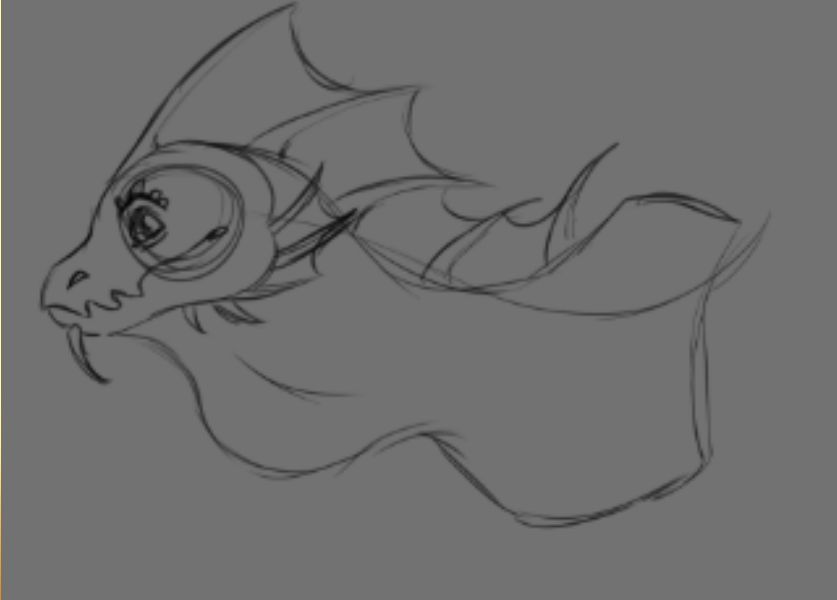
This led to me developing this more lizard like design based more on geckos, I was still struggling with making it look water themed. I was happy with the design though so continued with my process.



Referencing bearded dragons and other lizards I came up with this sketch. I liked it but after discussing it with others we agreed it didn't read like an amphibian or water like creature.



I decided to go back to sketching pulling some insect elements and trying different body types. I also looked at trying to add more amphibian features like larger eyes.





After going back to sketching I decided to think about what this creature might be if it was in a game, and I decided for this piece instead of it being an imposing creature I might try to move forward with a companion type animal. I picked a small dog breed (French bulldog) and edited its proportions to be the base for this design. I decided to make the head turtle like and added some amphibian features like webbed feet and fins. And I really connected this design.



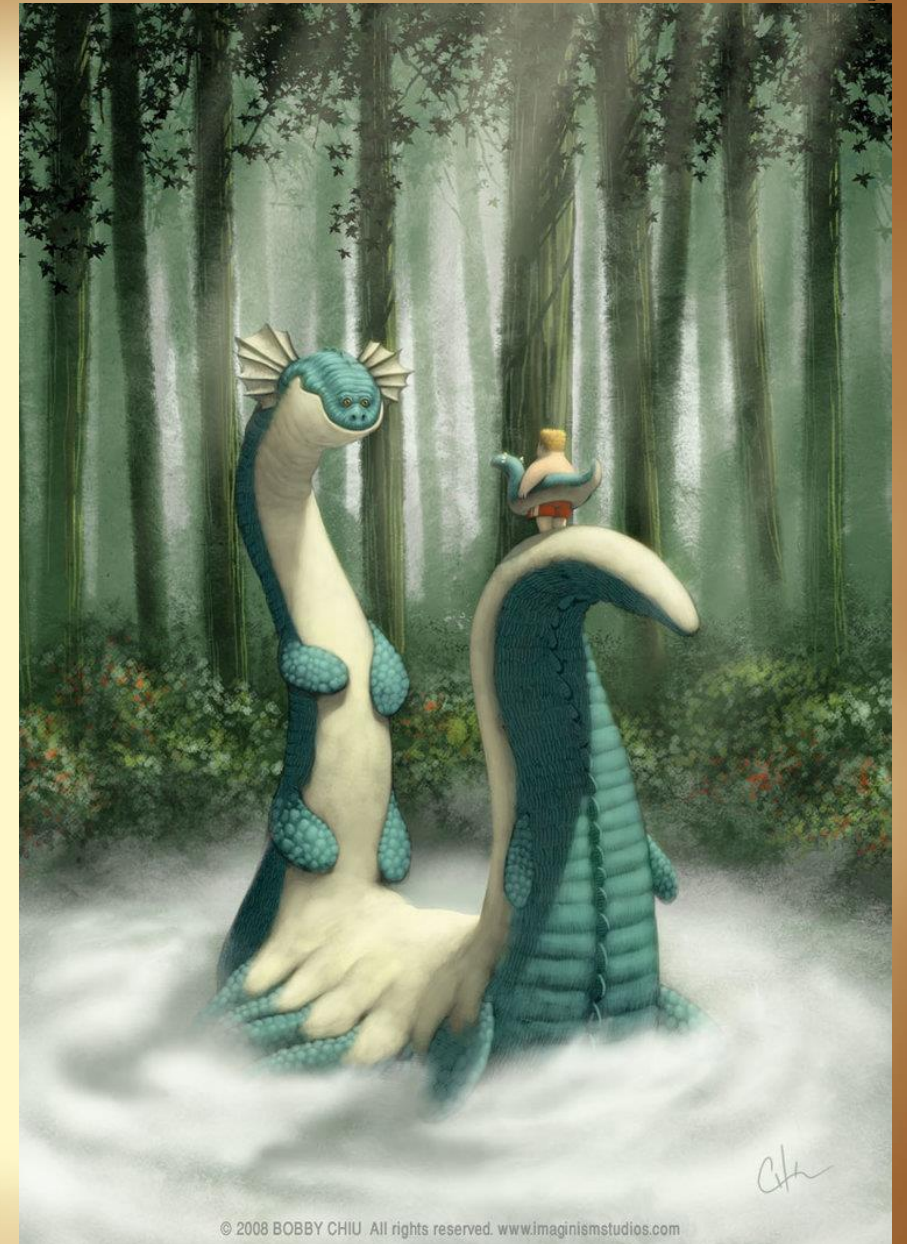
# Bobby Chiu - Artist Research

When drawing this cuter design, I looked to Bobby Chiu for inspiration. I liked the way his designs look cute but unsettling and the simplicity of the back grounds. He adds a lot of detail with out taking away from the simplicity of the designs. And I hoped to imitate this in my piece.

Fig 8



Fig 9





I designed this piece to have a forest like background but after spending some time on the sketch in the later renders I decided the trees were too dark and I changed it out for some longer grass and foliage. Which I think helped with the composition of this piece and helped the creature pop.







Common colour variants



Study 1: Male  
Has excellent eye sight  
Light used to attract food and mates  
Markings vary between individuals, males get brighter in mating season  
Has skin that is a hybrid of reptile and amphibian



Tail study

males have larger throats

Arm fins are similar

Some damage could be from males fighting

Claws are used to break open bugs

webbed

Height: 70 cm  
Weight: 50 kg  
Both males and females have bright markings

Long thin membranes



Beta fish like

x10 microscope

### Great Spotted Frog

Lophotrochozoa  
Tameable

Can catch fish  
Spotted small bass



nocturnal and light used to attract mate



Base of head light is bone  
for support!  
Jaw more mammalian than amphibian reptile?



sticky  
craps



30cm  
spined water fly

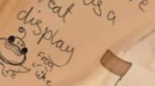


Preferred food  
Very dog-like - lives in social packs  
Mostly large groups of females to 1 alpha male

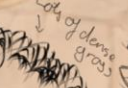


10cm  
Feathered beetle

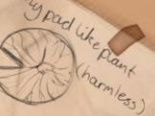
Males flare neck as a threat display



lots of dense grass

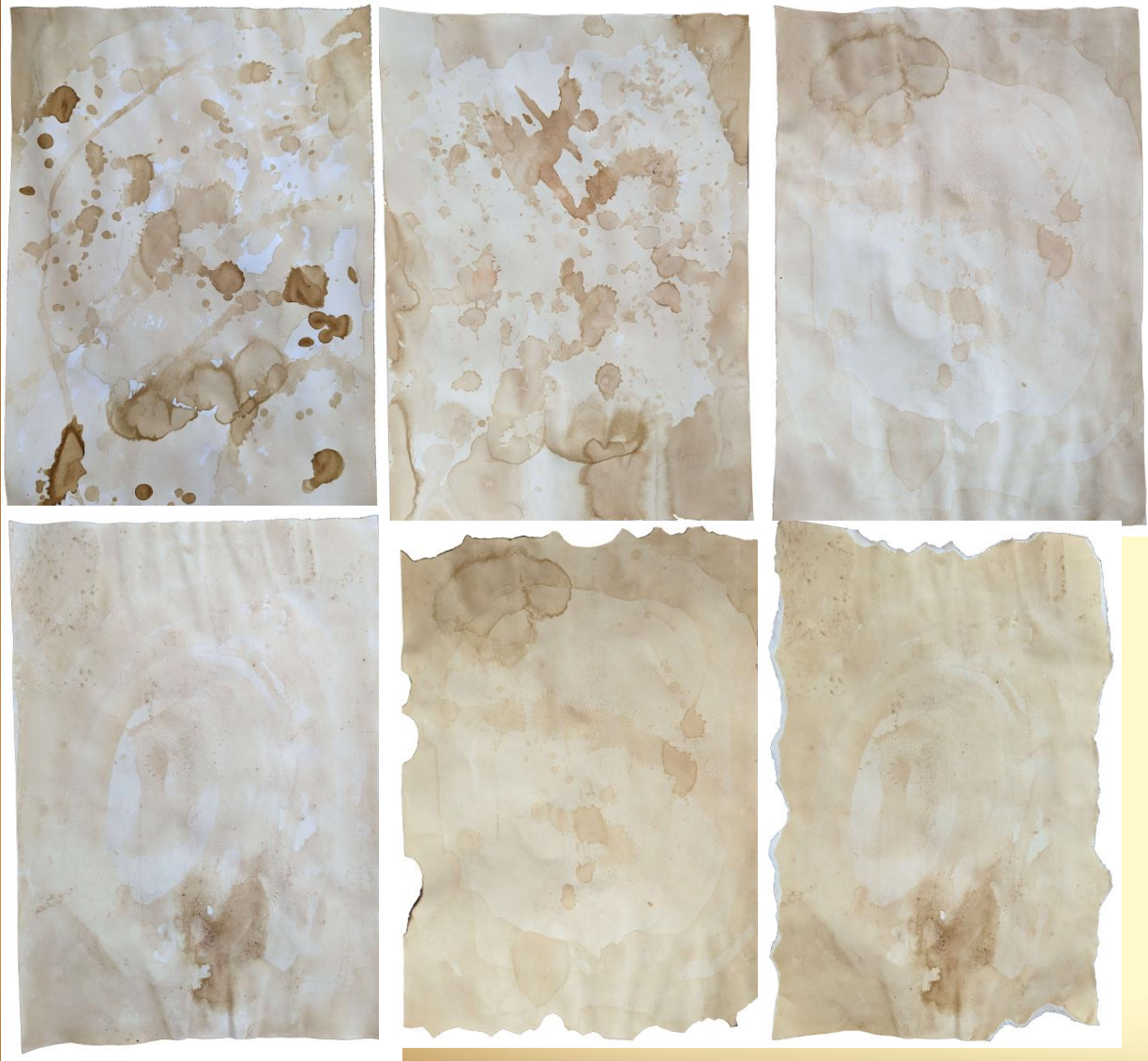


Wing pad like plant (harmless)



Swamp like foliage

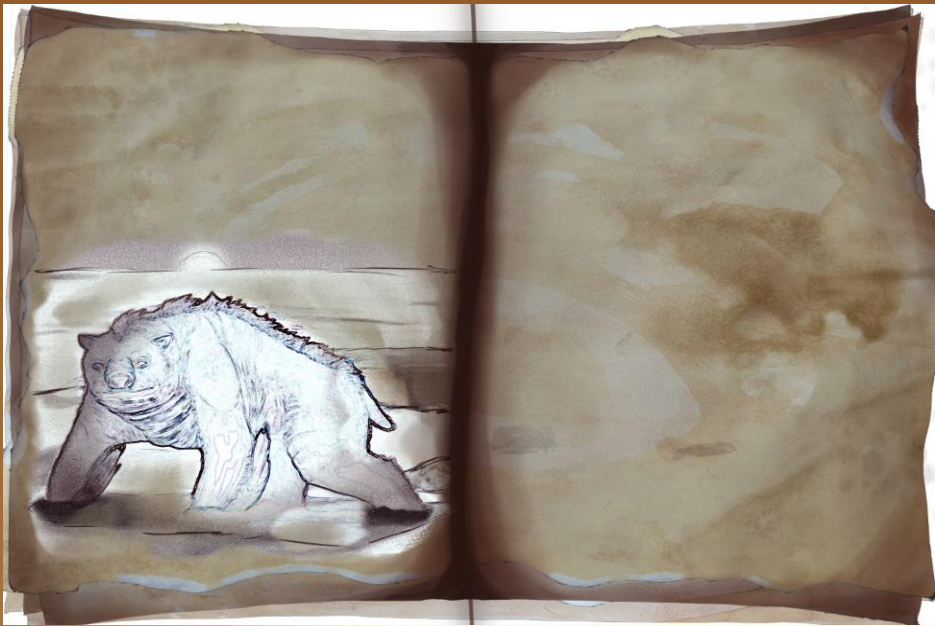




For the book pages I decided to do some physical piece of paper to reference.

I used coffee and tea to stain 6 pieces of paper as well as ripping and burning the edges of some of the paper.

I felt this would help me make a more believable older piece of paper.



I used some of my pages to try and mimic a book but after editing them I just couldn't achieve the look I wanted to. I also took this opportunity to try to figure out how I could edit my renders to look like drawn pieces in a research journal.



I decided to age one of my sketch books and found an older hard back book to try and make a composition I could use as a base for my journals. I mixed in my aged paper and some bits like a pencil and candle.



I painted over my photo and added a spaceship type floor.

I had a story line idea for the journals, the journals were from a crashed research team sent to the planet to gather intel on how habitable it was for a colony. Due to the crash they had to note everything down in books and wait to be rescued.



# Conclusion

For this project I wanted to develop my concept art skills and expand my portfolio towards a more concept art based one. I feel my project went well; I feel I achieved three very nice renders and three journals, and I believe they are done to a good quality. I prefer my water render over the others, but I still feel all three are acceptable outcomes for the time scale of this project. If I could change anything I think I would develop the flying creature more. I feel out of all the designs this one was the one I didn't like; I feel the piece is still nice I just think I could have done a better composition and improved the background.

For each piece I used the same or very similar methods. I always started with initial sketches or silhouettes, then I talked to others about which out of the sketches they like what details needed improving on and if any part of the creature didn't look right anatomy wise. After that I always refine the sketch to further smooth out any issue in the anatomy and get a solid foundation for the render. I then for this project decided to take inspiration from artist on artstation and begin all of them as grey scale. Then I used the colour balance setting in photoshop to add colour. This ensured I got the contrast I wanted but also the colours. Most of my research for this project was done during the planning document, I expanded on some elements like deciding to do the grey renders over colour renders as this method just worked better for me. I think that some of my added artist research like looking into Bobby Chiu helped me a lot with understanding where to add detail and where to allow the audiences imagination to fill in spaces, such as with some texture or the background fading out. I think through this project I've come to realize concept art is a lot harder than I initially believed, this specific specialist area is one of the most competitive areas as well as it being very demanding. The time it takes from initial concept to finished render was a lot longer than I expected, I did find that as I went through my work, I did get faster and developed more streamlines ways of working. I don't think my perception of this specialization has changed but rather I understand now how many steps actually go into concept art and that the finished pretty render is just 1 part of a much longer process. I feel after this project I am better prepared for looking for a job in this specific field I think I have developed a healthy workflow that works for me personally, but I defiantly think there are still areas I can improve on like adding texture.

Overall, I am really happy with my work I personally think I have all the fundamentals down and I have a decent understanding of lighting and texture. I do think compared to some of my artist references my work looks amateurish, but I think its mainly on the texture side I think my painting skills and composition is on a similar level. Texture is something I have struggled with I have a hard time understanding where to put the texture and where less is more, but I think this is something I could easily improve on with more time. I think I could improve a lot with doing more studies of animals, I think if I had a better understanding of how skin or scales wrap around animals, I can then apply this to my creations that have maybe more complex anatomy. I think I definitely have the raw talent to enter the entry level jobs in this area, but I do think im going to need to improve my fundamentals more to make sure my work is up to industry standard.

# References

*150 animal inspiration for FMP ideas in 2023 | animals beautiful, animals, cute animals.* (n.d.). Pinterest. <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/shellybean20021/animal-inspiration-for-fmp/> Fig 1

*FMP animal.* (n.d.). Pinterest. <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/shellybean20021/fmp-animal/> Fig 2

*Southern elephant seal.* (n.d.). Oceanwide Expeditions. <https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/to-do/wildlife/elephant-seal> Fig 3 & 4

*Pterosaur head crests.* (2008, July 19). Dave Hone's Archosaur Musings. <https://archosaurmusings.wordpress.com/2008/07/18/pterosaur-head-crests/> Fig 5

*Pterosaurs - A celebration of the diversity of life.* (2019, December 18). FossilGuy.com: Your guide to Fossil hunting and Paleontology - Fossil Hunting Locations, Guides, Identification, Information, and More!. <https://www.fossilguy.com/gallery/vert/reptile/pterosaur/index.htm> Fig 6

Sophie. (2022, January 14). *UK seller taxidermy bat Pipistrellus Abramus Japanese.* Etsy Singapore - Shop for handmade, vintage, custom, and unique gifts for everyone. [https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/970975043/uk-seller-taxidermy-bat-pipistrellus?ga\\_order=most\\_relevant&ga\\_search\\_type=all&ga\\_view\\_type=gallery&ga\\_search\\_query=bat+resin&ref=sr\\_gallery-1-2&organic\\_search\\_click=1](https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/970975043/uk-seller-taxidermy-bat-pipistrellus?ga_order=most_relevant&ga_search_type=all&ga_view_type=gallery&ga_search_query=bat+resin&ref=sr_gallery-1-2&organic_search_click=1) Fig 7

*BOBBY CHIU – Imaginism studios.* (n.d.). Imaginism Studios. <https://www.imaginismstudios.com/bobby-chiu> Fig 8,9 & 10