

In this poem, each verse is a riddle – can you guess the animal or insect he is writing about?

Can you make up some of your own?

A Menagerie Of Animals

From Things You Find in a Poet's Beard by A.F. Harrold

i.

Great grey belly porker,
toothy yawning slug,
cow-nosed submarine,
giant in the mud,
unlikely ballerina
tip-toes underwater,
sleepy swampland-island,
river's favourite daughter.

ii.

Stripy-armoured tiny tiger,
pollen-pouched and humble,
a fairy-small furry flyer,
content to simply bumble.

iii.

An African agitator,
sleeping now, snapping later,
Living log with beady eyes,
a flash of jaws and something dies.
Antelope and sleek gazelle
know the dangers very well,
are careful by the river Nile's
toothy and serrated smiles.

iv.

Fish-chasing waiters,
waddling torpedoes,
ice-footed flipper-flappers,
swimmers with no speedos.

v.

Knitting hunter,
insect hater –
catch them now,
eat them later.

vi.

Orange as a sunset,
red as a pillar-box.
Entering the chicken coop,
unwelcome as Goldilocks.

vii.

As big as houses end to end,
glimpsed and then it's gone,
an island for a mariner
he won't step foot upon.

A water feature fountaining
between the foaming waves,
an oily mountain sinking fast,
takes plankton to their graves.

viii.

Purr-bearer,
fur-wearer,
tail-tosser,
mouse-bosser.

ix.

At first a dot,
then a hop.

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets/harrold-f>

Videos of him reading some of his poems. Including this one. Wonderfully eccentric