

## The Origin of Species

My friends Webster and Merriam are... -ologists. I can't remember what kind--they were always a lot better with languages than I am. Anyway, I found a list of critters in their office. I bet it means something.

Alpaca  
Bandicoot  
Beluga  
Collie  
Dachshund  
Giraffe  
Hamster  
Kiwi  
Malamute  
Nautilus  
Ocelot  
Saluki  
Shar-Pei  
Toucan  
Tsetse Fly

(jump down for solution)

Players get a blurb: "*My friends Webster and Miriam are... -ologists. I can't remember what kind. Anyway, I found a list of critters in their office. I bet it means something.*"

This clues that they should use the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. They are supposed to be etymologists, thus concerned with the origin of words. Solvers should find the etymological root of each word (using the most recent/first mentioned language if there are multiples listed) and take the first letter from each language. But finding the language isn't enough, since it will give you STREGIGMNIFACFA which doesn't mean anything and doesn't have any meaningful anagrams. Players will need an ordering for this list of languages, and hopefully will note that under the origin (etymology) section for each entry there's a date for first known use. Ordering by that date gives FINGERFASTMAGIC which I hope is enough to clue a particular word with few synonyms, **PRESTIDIGITATION**.

Toucan (1568 French)	F
Giraffe (1600 Italian)	I
Nautilus (1601 New Latin)	N
Hamster (1607 German)	G
Collie (1651 English)	E
Beluga (1772 Russian)	R
Ocelot (1774 French)	F
Saluki (1809 Arabic)	A
Alpaca (1811 Spanish)	S
Bandicoot (1813 Telugu)	T
Kiwi (1835 Maori)	M
Tsetse Fly (1865 Afrikaans)	A
Dachshund (1882 German)	G
Malamute (1898 Inupiat)	I
Shar-Pei (1975 Chinese)	C