

one of the most visually surprising examples of symbiosis occurs between the fearsome African crocodile and the small plover bird. When a plover is nearby, a crocodile will open its long, sharp-toothed jaws, to invite it inside. You might assume that the plover would quickly reject this invitation and fly off. Yet surprisingly, the plover does hop inside. Perhaps, even more amazingly, the crocodile, normally known for its aggression, does not snap its mouth shut and have the plover for a snack. Instead, it remains still not closing its mouth until the plover leaves. How can this strange behavior be explained? The answer is symbiosis! The plover picks out all the small pieces of meat stuck between the crocodile's teeth. In doing so, it cleans the crocodile's teeth, which prevents it from getting infections. Because the crocodile can not clean its own teeth, it depends on the plover to perform this service. In return, the crocodile provides an easy meal for the plover.