Write a poem that imagines the secret life of an animal you wonder about.

The Donkey

I had a donkey, that was all right, but he always wanted to fly my kite; every time I let him, the string would bust. Your donkey is better behaved, I trust.  
—Theodore Roethke

The Hippo

A head or a tail—which does he lack? I think his forward’s coming back! He lives on carrots, leeks and hay; he starts to yawn—it takes all day—Some time I think I’ll live that way.  
—Theodore Roethke

The Donkey

One seal particularly I have seen here evening after evening. He was curious about me. He was interested in music; like me a believer in total immersion, so I used to sing to him...
—from Elizabeth Bishop’s “At the Fishhouses”

I am given a pony for my birthday, but it is the wrong kind of pony. It is the kind of pony that won’t listen. It is testy. When I ask it to go left, it goes right. When I ask it to run, it sleeps on its side in the tall grass...”  
—from Zachary Schomburg’s “Testy Pony”

Other poems to read:
“Three Foxes by the Edge of the Field at Twilight” by Jane Hirshfield
“The Pasture” by Robert Frost

Tips for making your poem come alive:
• Use your senses to describe the colors, patterns, scents, and sounds of both the place and the animal that is moving through the place.
• Describe everything you can about the animal: What do they look like? How do they move? What details capture their personality or behavior or favorite things?
• Describe what makes you curious. What questions do you wonder when you think about the animal you are describing?
• Don’t be afraid to make it funny or surprising or silly.

Nature poems = [ Place + Wildlife + You ]

When you write, try to combine three elements:
1. Details from a specific place that you know. For instance, a pasture, forest or shoreline.
2. Animals or wildlife that you know visit this place too, or animals that you would like to encounter.
3. How it makes you feel to spend time in this place or with this animal.