



Year 8 students from St Kentigern Boys' School learned about animal enrichment and made toys for SPCA animals!

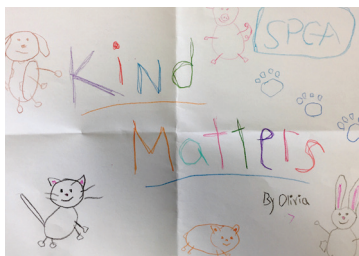
Kia ora,

To kick off our second issue of the SPCA Kids' Newsletter, we have a special announcement – we have chosen a winning name for our newsletter...

Kind Matters!

We would like to thank the winner, Olivia, age 7, for her paw-some suggestion! 'Kind Matters' will be proudly displayed on the front page of our next edition! We had so many amazing submissions, it made choosing very difficult. Some of the other great suggestions we had were: "Compassionate Kids" (Tejas, age 8 and Anuradha, age 5) "The Scratching Post" (Oliver, age 13) and "Caring Companions" (Suraya, age 9). Thank you to all who submitted their wonderful ideas!

This spring issue is focused around cats and wild birds. Read on to learn about how you can help wildlife, teach your feline friend to sit, make this term's enrichment toy, and much more!

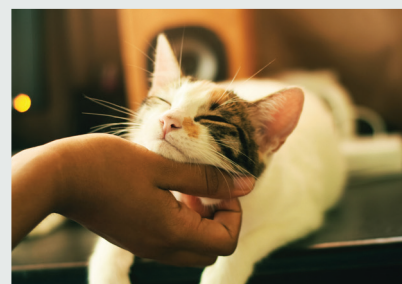


SPCA Competition!

Are you a keen photographer? Send us your snap and be in to win a prize!

The photo can be of any animal in New Zealand. The only criteria is that they need to be displaying one of the five freedoms! To enter, email your photo(s) to education@spca.nz with the subject "Education Photo Competition." Please include your name, age, school, contact info, and a blurb about your photo(s).

What's Inside



A Closer Look at: Cats - Ngeru

Learn more about our feline friends.



Kind Conservation: Green Thumb

Create a bird friendly garden.



Craft Time: Sun Catcher

Help birds with this awesome craft.

and much more...



Diwali, Guy Fawkes, and New Year's Eve

Diwali, Guy Fawkes, and New Year's celebrations are just around the corner. This time of the year is often celebrated with friends, family, bonfires, and fireworks.

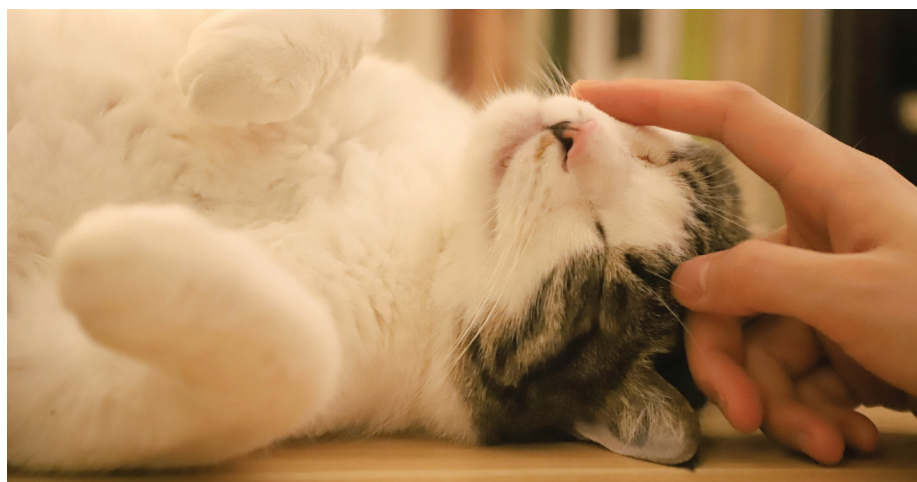
It's extremely important to remember that while the loud noises and bright flashes of fireworks can be exciting for humans, they are extremely scary for animals big and small.

Below are some tips for how you and your family can keep your animals safe during this time:

- > Be aware and prepared that fireworks will be happening.
- > Talk to your veterinarian to see if calming medicine is needed.
- > Keep your animals inside, safe, and secure.
- > Create a safe and calm environment.
- > Don't leave your companion animals alone.
- > Do not punish your animal for any damage or bad behaviour at this time.
- > Ensure your animal is microchipped with up to date contact details registered.



For more information about keeping animals safe around fireworks, check out our fireworks advice at: [kids.sPCAeducation.org.nz/responsible-pet-ownership/fireworks-advice/](https://spcaeducation.org.nz/responsible-pet-ownership/fireworks-advice/)



A Closer Look at: Cats – Ngeru

Almost half of the families in New Zealand have opened their hearts and homes to at least one feline friend. In fact, cats have been a family favourite for about 4,000 years. From their calming purr-filled cuddles to their extraordinary intelligence – it's not hard to tell why!

When a cat becomes a member of the family, it's important to remember that it is our responsibility to ensure they are getting everything they need to be happy and healthy. This includes appropriate cat food and fresh, clean water.

Cats require certain types and amounts of food depending on their age and lifestyle. It's always best to have a chat with your vet to establish

the best suitable diet for your cat. Cats also always need access to clean, fresh water both inside and outside.

Not only does a balanced diet promote good health and energy, but when your cat is well fed, they are less likely to want to hunt for food. This will also help protect wildlife!

True or False? Cats should be given milk.

FALSE! Cats should never be given milk. Cats are lactose intolerant which means that after they stop drinking milk from their mum, they can no longer digest the sugar (lactose) found in milk. Even though most cats love the taste of milk, if they drink it, they will get a very sore tummy.

Fun Fact: Did you know that a cat's nose is as unique as your fingerprint?

Did you know that a cat's nose is as unique as your fingerprint? In our last newsletter we talked about dog noses. Now we want to tell you about the fascinating nose of a cat. The skin on a cat's nose, called "nose leather," is very unique. Just like fingertips, there are lots of bumps and grooves on every cat's nose. These markings are completely different for every single cat in the world – another feature that reminds us how each cat is an individual!



Baby birds

Spring is a time for flowers, changing weather, and best of all – baby animals!

Among these adorable new born animals are baby birds. New Zealand is home to lots of birds who breed during spring. Once they've hatched from their shells, baby birds are referred to as hatchlings. Hatchlings spend the first part of their life safely in the comfort of their cosy nest. The time eventually comes where the baby bird must take their first flight. At this stage, birds are called fledglings.

It's not uncommon to see fledglings sitting on the ground or hopping

around by themselves. This is often a sign that they are taking time to strengthen their wing muscles and grow flight feathers. It's important to remember that this is a normal behaviour, as long as the fledgling is in a safe area and seems healthy.

Interfering with a fledgling can actually do more harm than good. To prevent disturbing a key developmental phase, you'll need to do some investigating. This involves waiting to see if the fledgling's parents are nearby, gathering food for their babies.

To ensure a fledgling's parents are still around, it's best to observe the fledgling from a distance for about 60-90 minutes. If the fledgling's parents can see you they will not



return, so if you can, watch the fledgling through a window inside your house. Make sure you look very carefully - birds are speedy! If you discover that the fledgling's parents are gone, or that the fledgling is visibly sick or injured, call your local SPCA or bird rescue centre.

Kind Conservation: Creating a garden for native wildlife



In our first newsletter, we told you all about the magnificent Kea. Our kind conservation section featured the amazing steps people have taken to ensure the safety and mental enrichment of Kea by providing an interactive playground.

Just like the Kea, New Zealand has many other **endemic birds**. Endemic birds are birds that only live and breed naturally in New Zealand.

New Zealand also has many **native birds**. These are birds that arrived in New Zealand by themselves and

made New Zealand their home, but they can also be found in some other countries. **Introduced birds** are birds that have been brought to New Zealand by humans.

People enjoy interacting with all types of birds and will often feed them bread. Unfortunately, most people do not realise that bread is not a healthy food for birds. Even though birds will gobble it up, bread has very little nutritional value for them. This means bread will fill up a bird's stomach without giving them any of the vitamins, minerals, and other goodness they need to be happy, healthy, and strong. Most endemic and native birds require a diet of fruit, nectar, seeds, and/or insects to achieve this.

It can be hard for birds to find healthy food, especially in areas without many fruiting and flowering plants.

This is where you come in! We want to see you take kind conservation action in your own backyard. With the help of an adult, you can plant a bird friendly garden so that endemic and native birds can enjoy foods that are good for them.

You can find a lot of information online about bird friendly gardens!

Here are a few simple tips to get you started:

- 1 Reflections on windows can confuse birds and cause them to accidentally fly into them, so make sure that anything you plant is far from windows.
- 2 If you have space, you can add a bird bath so birds can have a drink and cool off during summer.
- 3 If you have a small outside area, you can try growing native flowering plants in containers and hanging baskets.
- 4 Try to use eco-sourced plants! These are plants that naturally occur in your area. Check in with your local garden centre, they will be able to tell you more.

We'd love to see your bird friendly garden creations! Send a photo to: education@spca.nz



Responsible Guardianship Tip:

Cats and Collars

Be sure that your feline friend is well equipped for adventures with a **safety release** collar. Here's why they are great:

- 1 They have breakaway clasps so if your cat accidentally gets caught on something, the collar will release without causing injury.
 - 2 You can place a bell on the collar to help prevent your cat from turning their play-hunting skills into real life hunting of wildlife.
 - 3 A collar and tag with your name and phone number means people can contact you if they find your cat lost.
- Make sure your cat's collar is not too tight or too loose. Remember to check it fits as they grow too!**



Cat Training

Sit, paw, come – these are all familiar words for communicating with your dog... but what about your cat? Believe it or not, you can actually train your cats to learn all sorts of tricks!



Cats are very intelligent and can learn a wide range of commands. Just like dogs, reward-based training is the best form of training for cats. This can be accomplished through **clicker training**.

A clicker is a device that makes a clicking noise so your cat can

associate the noise with the positivity of a delicious treat. It's a good idea to start small and work your way up to more complicated and advanced tricks.

Training your cat provides them with essential mental stimulation and physical exercise. Cats need this all year round, but spring is a particularly important time to keep them preoccupied while there are baby birds outside learning how to fly. By keeping your cat busy with enrichment, they are less likely to hunt precious wildlife.

Matching Game

Match the name of the baby animal in the letter column with the adult animal in the number column

Did you guess them all? Check page 5 for answers

Baby

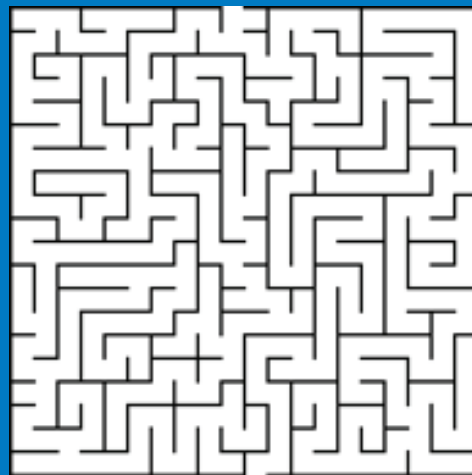
- a. Fledgling
- b. Lamb
- c. Joey
- d. Kit
- e. Foal
- f. Kid

Adult

1. Rabbit
2. Possum
3. Bird
4. Horse
5. Goat
6. Sheep

Maze

Help the kereū get to the kowhai by solving the maze!



Book Nook

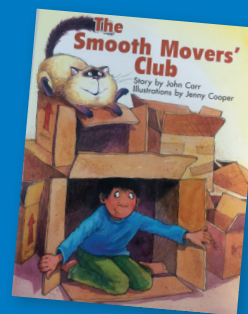
Title: The Smooth Mover's Club

Author: John Carr

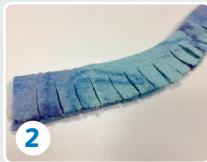
Illustrator: Jenny Cooper

A boy and his father want their move to the city to go smoothly for their cat Noah. It does, until Muscles, the fearsome neighbourhood tomcat, turns up.

You can find the SPCA book series at your school or buy your own set online at: www.sPCA.nz



Cats are awesome!



Make it Yourself: No Sew Cat Toy

Did you know that cats need at least 30 minutes of play time each day? This play can and should be provided in a variety of different ways – one of them being through interactive play. Interactive play is fun and positive for both you and your companion animal. Not only does it strengthen your bond, but it also allows your cat to express their normal behaviour!

Try making a No Sew Cat Toy out of the simple materials below. This is a great interactive toy that will provide endless entertainment!

Materials needed:

- > Fabric (fleece or flannelette sheets work best)
- > String
- > Scissors

Remember to always supervise your cat when they are playing with their toys. You don't want them swallowing something they shouldn't or getting tangled up and hurt!



Instructions:

1. Cut a strip of fabric approximately 5cm x 30cm and a piece of string at least 45cm long.
2. Fold the fabric lengthwise and cut small strips all the way along the fabric. Be sure not to cut all the way through.
3. Unfold the fabric and roll it up as snug as possible along the middle.
4. Tie one end of the string tightly in the middle of the fabric and secure with two knots.
5. Work material into ball shape

For your cat at home, try attaching the other end of the string to a plastic or wooden stick to make a wand toy!

Craft Time: Animal Sun Catcher

Help keep New Zealand's birds safe by hanging a beautiful handmade sun catcher in your window!



Materials needed:

- > Thick paper
- > Tissue paper
- > Scissors
- > Glue
- > String
- > Tape

Instructions:

1. Start by printing or drawing your chosen animal onto thick paper.
2. Cut the photo/drawing to create an outline.
3. Cut tissue paper into strips.
4. Glue strips to the back of your animal outline.
5. Cut excess tissue paper.
6. Tape piece of string to the back of your sun catcher.
7. Hang your masterpiece in your window!



Share your ideas!

Have an idea for something you want to see in the next newsletter? We want to hear from you! Email education@spca.nz with your creative and educational ideas!