

Kia ora to our pawesome Kind Matters readers!

We're thrilled to be back with another exciting issue of everyone's favourite animal welfare newsletter.

This issue is all about reptiles, both companion and wild. Specifically, we'll be taking a closer look at bearded dragons and tuatara. Not only will you learn about these incredible animals, but we have a special feature announcing the release of all 15 animal care videos on SPCA's Kids' Portal! After you're done watching the videos, you can complete the fun activities and crafts also featured in the issue.

Before you get stuck in, be sure to check out our latest competition below!

ART Competition

For this competition, we want you to create a piece of art featuring an animal you have given a forever home to, or an [SPCA animal](#) that is waiting to find their forever home, for a chance to win some truly pawesome prizes.

The catch is, you need to use repurposed materials in your artwork! You can create your animal art using every day things you find around your home, natural materials, or both. Or you can use crayons, paints, felt-tip pens, or whatever you would like to draw your animal, then incorporate the repurposed materials, like our bearded dragon example below, made with coloured pencils, cardboard, sand, twigs, and grass!

Email a photo of your creation, along with a photo of the animal who inspired your art, to education@spca.nz with the subject "Repurposed Art Competition 2022" by 24th October 2022. Please provide your name, age, school, and contact details.



Please note: by entering SPCA competitions, you're agreeing for SPCA New Zealand to share your work on all SPCA webpages and within social media postings. Thank you to our sponsors Kings Plant Barn and Faber-Castell NZ for the amazing prizes, and EUGY for our spot prizes!

What's Inside



A Closer Look at: Bearded Dragons - tarakona pahau
Find out what beardies need to be happy and healthy!



Kind Conservation: Tuatara
Learn all about this modern day dinosaur, found only in Aotearoa New Zealand!



Craft: Cardboard Lizard
Make your very own lizard from cardboard tubes!

and much more...



Visit www.spca.nz/kids for more animal information!



A Closer Look at: Bearded Dragons

Whoever said dragons aren't real?! Though they may not be like the fire-breathing, flying creatures we hear about in many fairy tales, bearded dragons are no doubt real, and incredible in their own right!

Native to Australia, bearded dragons, also known as beardies, have become popular companion animals. These super cool lizards have spines that grow on their head, throat, and the sides of their body, similar to that of the mythical dragon.

Bearded dragons have another feature that is true to their name - a "beard"! This is actually a spiny pouch



called a "dewlap." Bearded dragons can puff out their dewlap when they're feeling excited or stressed. It will also often become darker in colour when they do this.

Like other reptiles, beardies are "ectothermic." This means they use their environment to warm up and cool down. As such, beardies need a large environment, with a basking light at one end, and a cool zone at the other. Their environments need to have the correct temperature, lighting, and humidity. In fact, temperature and lighting help bearded dragons to get the most

nutrition out of their diet as well so it is essential for their overall health and wellbeing.

Bearded dragons can make great companions, however, before you decide to welcome a beardie into your home, you need to make sure they're the right companion for you.

Bearded dragons can live for at least 10-15 years and have very specific needs - they require proper nutrition, the right environment, specialised vet care, as well as lots of time, money, love, care, and a good understanding of their natural behaviours.



The Five Domains - Bearded Dragons

Below are the basic needs of bearded dragons - learn more on SPCA's Kids' Portal [here](#).



Nutrition

Bearded dragons need:

- fresh, clean water.
- a healthy, varied diet.
- vitamin D and calcium.
- safe veggies, plants, and insects.



Environment

Bearded dragons need:

- a large, clean enclosure.
- safe substrate.
- a hide box.
- proper humidity, temperature and lighting.



Health

Bearded dragons need:

- specialised veterinary care.
- preventative care.
- daily health checks.
- yearly visits to the vet.



Behaviour

Bearded dragons need:

- enrichment like toys, branches, rocks, plants, etc.
- exercise.
- places to safely dig, hide and brumate.



Mental Wellbeing

Bearded dragons need:

- time.
- love.
- care.
- privacy.
- proper handling.
- positive experiences.



Kind Conservation: Tuatara



Tuatara, meaning "peaks on the back" in Māori, are rare reptiles - so rare, in fact, that you can only find them in the wild on 32 islands in Aotearoa.

These incredible modern-day dinosaurs can live for about 60-100 years. It takes a tuatara 35 years to



reach their full length and when they do, they grow to a size of about 0.5 metres, making them New Zealand's largest reptile.

There are two sub-species of tuatara - the Brother's Island tuatara and the Northern tuatara.

Unfortunately habitat destruction is a big challenge that wild tuatara face, something that contributes to their at risk-relict (relict meaning has survived from an earlier time period) conservation status.

To help conserve tuatara populations, several breeding programmes have been put in place. For example, our friends at Hamilton, Auckland, and Wellington Zoo breed tuatara and release them into the wild.

How you can help:

Raise awareness about these special, ancient animals.

Sharing information can take many forms including speeches, stories, posters, art, music, drama, or a conversation. Get creative about the ways you can help spread the word about the importance of conserving New Zealand's very own dinosaur!

Fun Facts:

Check out the absolutely amazing tuatara facts below!

1. Beetles, weta, worms, spiders, and millipedes are among the favourite foods of the tuatara
2. Unlike many other reptiles, tuatara can be active in cooler temperatures, though they will often choose to spend cooler days in their burrows, and warmer days basking in the sun.
3. Tuatara are the only surviving member of the order Sphenodontia. This means they are the last living member of this species alive during the age of the dinosaurs.
4. The teeth of tuatara are actually serrated (saw like) parts of their jawbone. They cannot grow back after they have been worn down.
5. Tuatara have something called a "third eye." This is actually a spot on the top of their head that is likely used as a light sensor, and not for vision.



Birds: A Modern-day Dinosaur?

Though they are probably not what you typically think of when you hear the word dinosaur, birds are actually the closest living relatives of dinosaurs!

Scientists had long suspected that



dinosaurs and birds are related, and looking at the skeletons of both chickens and the Tyrannosaurus rex, for example, it's no wonder why.

Scientists have since been able to prove this theory by testing molecules from the T-rex.

In fact, the T-rex was found to group in with birds, specifically the chicken and ostrich, better than any other animal they studied, even alligators.

You can learn more about this by

watching this video from our friends at National Geographic.



Click here

Watch all of SPCA's BRAND NEW Animal Care Videos Now

All animal care videos are now on SPCA's Kids' Portal! Click on the animal below or visit www.sPCA.nz/kids to watch and learn all about the Five Domains for each animal now!



Rabbits



Rats



Mice



Chickens



Cattle



Horses



Pigs



Goats



Sheep



Companion Birds



Bearded Dragons



Fish



Turtles



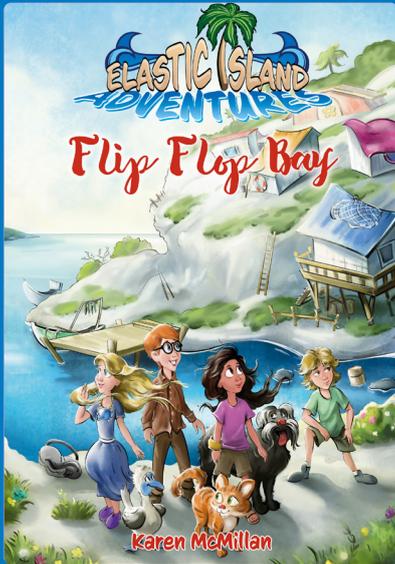
Ducks



Alpacas



Book Nook



Title: Elastic Island Adventures: Flip Flop Bay

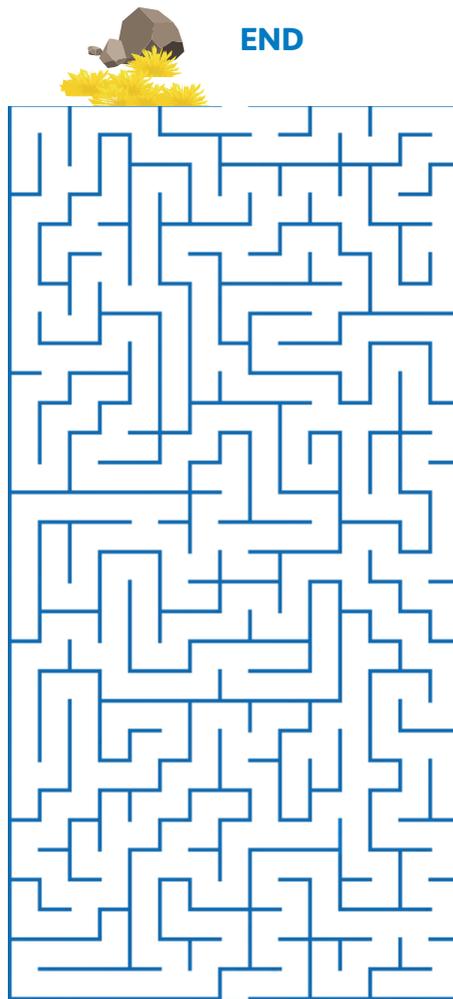
Author: Karen McMillan

Bob the Blue-Footed Booby is running a flying school, which sounded like fun until the children discover this means dressing in weird costumes and launching themselves off the end of the wharf. It's the latest silly idea in a series of doomed ventures from Bob the Blue-Footed Booby, who is trying to save their small fishing village from closure. Can the children come up with an idea that will save the island and its kooky inhabitants? And what about the complication of the Dastardly Captain Crook?

You can learn more about this book from SPCA Ambassador, and Flip Flop Bay narrator, Suzy Cato, [here](#). Please note that Suzy's giveaway has ended, but winner of the current Kind Matters Competition will receive their very own copy of Flip Flop Bay!

Maze

Help Taz the bearded dragon find more dandelions to snack on!



START



Matching Game

Draw a line to match the item to the domain. There may be more than one word for each domain.

Water



Food



Enclosure

Toys



Love

Vet Care



Hide out

Lighting



Visit the [Bearded Dragon Care](#) section of SPCA's Kids' Portal to check your answers!

Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to reveal the word.



1. ddeaebr gnodar _____

2. aautart _____

3. ievf smoinda _____

4. lieterp _____

5. pawedl _____

6. icmrethcote _____



Answers are on page 7!

Cardboard Tube Lizard

Materials needed

- > Paint
- > Paint brush
- > Hot glue gun
- > Scissors
- > Pencil
- > Googly eyes
- > Cardboard tubes



Instructions



1 Draw the shape of a lizard head and tail on a flattened cardboard tube.



2 Cut the outline of your lizard's head and tail, leaving the belly attached at the sides.



3 Cut the bottom head and tail shapes off, creating a belly.



4 Using the cut-offs, create four legs for your lizard.



5 Glue the legs to the body of your lizard.



6 Get creative and paint your lizard any way you'd like!



7 Glue googly-eyes or paint eyes onto your lizard's face.



8 Make your lizard some friends - the more the merrier!

You could even turn your lizard into a tuatara!



Split Pin Bearded Dragon

Print this page onto card paper, cut out the shapes, line up the dots, and use split pins to connect them to make Taz, the SPCA bearded dragon!



Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported SPCA's 150th Birthday!



Photos of our pawesome supports can be viewed [here!](#)

A huge thank you to our incredible Kind Matters Competition sponsors, and our spot prize sponsor, EUGY!



Is there something you'd like to see in the next issue of Kind Matters?

We'd love to hear from you!

Email education@sPCA.nz with your ideas!



1. bearded dragon
2. tuatara
3. five domains
4. reptile
5. dewlap
6. ectothermic