

A dense, monochromatic photograph of a forest floor. The ground is covered with a thick layer of dry leaves, twigs, and branches. Numerous butterflies of various species are scattered throughout the scene, some resting on the ground and others on the foliage. The overall tone is a warm, reddish-brown or sepia color, giving it a vintage or artistic feel. The text 'NATURE' is printed in large, bold, red capital letters, and 'NOTES' is printed in smaller, white capital letters inside the 'N' of 'NATURE'.

NATURE

NOTES

VOL. 13, NO. 2

EDITORIAL

As temporary Editors for Vol. 13 No. 7, we are not having an editorial for this month because they are too boring!

Signed...
James
ERNIE
C.C. Crow
Wally

OK. Wally, you edit the letters and I'll organize all the page numbers.



PIGEON POST

Dear Editor,
I wonder if you can help me.
My pet human doesn't walk as well as he used to. What should I be feeding him on?

Yours,
Barry Bulldog.

P.S. This is a picture of me taking my pet human for a walk.



The Kennel.
Saturday.

Editor's reply:
Dear Barry,

We have heard this is a common problem amongst humans. We suggest that although many of them don't seem to like it, you should feed them with plenty of fresh fruit and vegies - rather than sweets, soft-drinks and rubbish like that. Make sure your pet gets plenty of regular exercise too!

Dear Nature Notes,

One day in our ferny dell a terrible thing appeared and damaged some nests and trees. We have drawn a picture of it and hope you can tell us its name...

signed: Lionel Lyrebird.



These plant names are jumbled because of Wally's bad typing the machine broke down. Can you unjumble them? (They're all Australian natives)

SIKABAN

TEAWTL

PETCAULY

VILLAGEER

SHRUBBOTTLE

AKEAH

LIPILLYLLY

ACCAIA

RICHOD

WHATARA

(Answers hidden by James.)

Editor's reply:
Dear Lionel,

Your drawing is that of a Smallicus boyicus and we are happy to tell you that some of this species are really quite nice and look after wildlife instead of destroying it. Next time you see him, find out his address and we'll send him a copy of Nature Notes so he can appreciate our wonderful wildlife.



FASTEST!



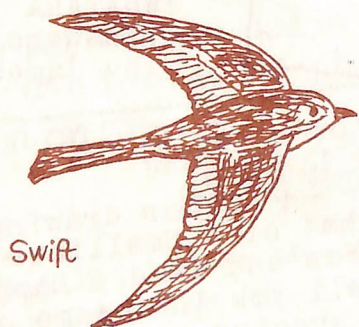
Hi Folks! Last month news in the human world was full of the Montreal Olympics and the amazing record-breaking performances of their athletes. But let us take a closer look at the real WORLD CHAMPIONS :

Greyhounds are fast at 48kph but a fine racehorse can manage 64kph - a little less than most deer.

Emus and kangaroos are faster still - around 70kph

But the real record-breaker, and the gold medallist at last month's Animal Olympics in Nature Notes, is the cheetah from Africa and India. This big cat with his long legs has been trained by humans for hunting for many thousands of years. He can reach 70kph in 2 seconds and has a brief top speed somewhere between 95 and 115kph!

But even this is a lot slower than the fastest flying bird. Though most of our magpies, ravens, rosellas etc. average 32 to 48kph, some eagles can reach 128kph. The fastest of all in level flight is the spine-tailed swift, that long distance migrant who is so stream-



Swift

lined that he is not able to take off unless on a cliff-face or tree! The swift can speed through the sky at 160 kph (or 100mph!) Some have reported much higher speeds but could be exaggerating. Falcons reach speeds like these, but only when diving on their prey. So it can be said that the only animals to 'pass the ton' (ie.

* TRANSLATED FROM THE RAVEN TONGUE BY
L. DELACCA.

HAUGH!

& SLOWEST!

YAWN!

100mph) for any length of time are two birds - the spine-tailed swift and the diving falcon.

Now let's look at the other end of the scale. Possibly the slowest mammal is the three-toed sloth, who gets sleepier and slower as he gets older. He lives in the tropics of America and often hangs upside down from a tree limb. When he climbs he is so slow that he seems to be in a dream. You may not see a sloth but I'm sure you are all familiar with the common garden snail. How fast James snail travels depends on the weather.



If it is too cold or dry he does not move at all. To travel, snails have to spread a layer of slimy material or mucus along which they glide. A

slug (which is like a snail without a shell) can travel about 30cm per minute. At this rate, if it travelled night and day, it would take four days to go 1.6km or 1 mile - a real slow motion champion.

Remember the old story of the tortoise and the hare? You may wonder why rabbits are so fast when tortoises are so slow. It is all a matter of protecting themselves and earning a living. When a fox discovers a rabbit it needs speed to escape - whereas a tortoise just hides in its large shell!



TREES ~ an animal's



WHY ON EARTH did you put a big, old tree on the cover of a Nature Notes edited by animals? Why not a picture of me?!

Simply because trees and plants are so IMPORTANT for keeping all animals alive! We depend on them. In fact, if you look very closely at the cover you will see 5½ of us animals HIDDEN IN THE TREE! Can you find them?



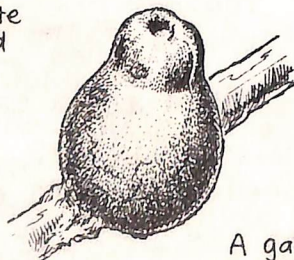
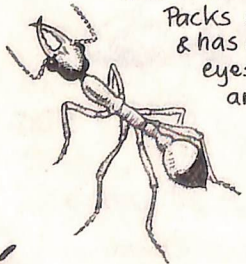
Native Parrots like to nest in hollow trees - but are being chased out by 'imported' birds.



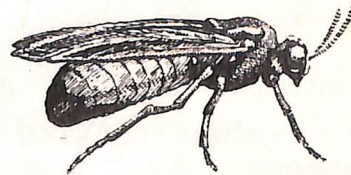
Of course it is sometimes necessary to chop down trees. They can become diseased and rotten - and certainly wood and paper have to come from somewhere. But it would be a good exercise for anyone about to chop down a tree to sit near it for a day and observe how many animals depend on that tree for food and/or shelter. This might be a good science activity for you to do if you are lucky enough to have a tree near you - but you will have to watch closely. Here are some tips.

Bull-ant.

Packs a nasty bite & has quite good eyesight for an ant.

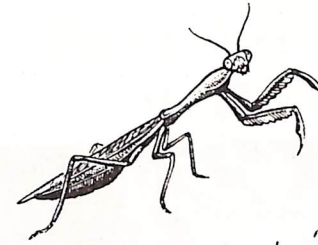


A gall made by gall insects. A different shape means a different type of insect.



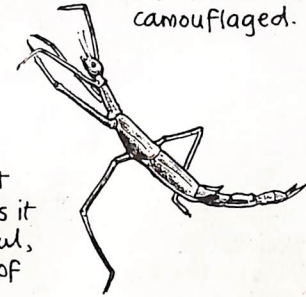
A saw-fly.

best friend.

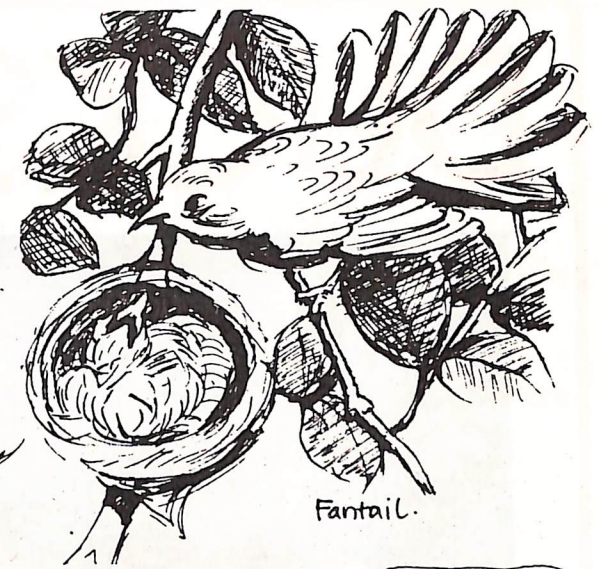


Mantis - rarely misses!

Stick insects make a tasty meal for many birds - luckily they are well camouflaged.



Stick insect. → Looks like a mantis but because it feeds on plants it does not need the powerful, insect-catching forelegs of the mantis.



Fantail.

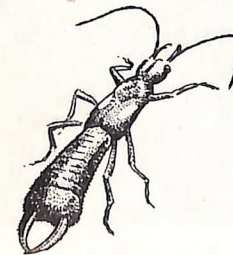
You may be lucky enough to have some mammals visit your tree (apart from dogs!) You are not likely to see possums in the daytime - but certainly you can see them at night - even in the parks in the centre of Melbourne! Brush-tails nest in hollow logs whilst Ring-tails seem to go for the Melaleuca armillaris trees. Reptiles are also uncommon - but you may find a tiny skink under the bark or down at the roots of your tree. By far the most common visitors and residents in your tree will be the birds and the insects. Try and notice whether the birds come to eat the insects or the fruit/seeds of the tree.



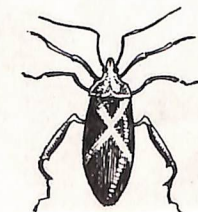
Trees are great - except when you fall out of them!

See page 12 for Possum pictures.

[INSECT PICTURES ON THIS PAGE FROM 'NATURE WALKABOUT' - COURTESY OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.]



Earwig (The 'nippers' are just for show!)



Crusader Bug.



DON'T LET YOUR WASHING BE A DUDSO, BUDDSO. TRY SUDSO (With REAL Bananas!)

CHUCKO I think that I shall never see, A billboard lovely as a tree!

Perhaps unless the billboard fall, You'll never see a tree at all!!

COME ALIVE TO CHANNEL 5

DUCKS

LAND, SEA OR AIR -
THEY'RE AT HOME IN
ALL THREE...!!



8 FLUFFY & TUFFY (Pekin Ducklings)
NATURE NOTES - SEPTEMBER 1976.

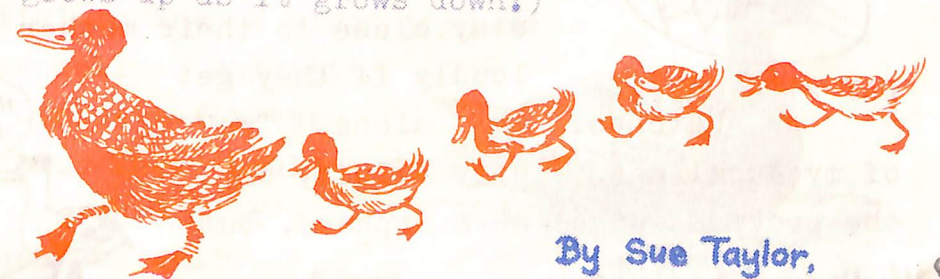
Ducks are strange but lovable birds of the Antide family, which includes swans and geese. There are many different sorts of ducks - some wild, some domestic, some native and some not. Two of the most common pet ducks are the Pekin and Mallard ducks, which are both introduced species.

Ducks are distinguished from swans and geese by their shorter necks and weaker legs, which are placed further back on the body. Drakes (male ducks) are distinguished from females by their deeper 'quack' and curly tail feathers.

Ducks lay between 8 and 15 eggs of which most will hatch if the mother is a good one.

INTERESTING FACTS

- * A duck has a fringe inside its bill with which to sieve food from mud and water.
- * Ducks and geese eat a certain amount of grit and gravel to aid in grinding and digesting the food they eat!
- * Ducks have an oil gland on their back from which they spread oil with their beaks to help in water-proofing themselves and their babies - before the ducklings grow feathers.
- * Ducklings are not born with feathers, but with a fluff called down - which they later lose. (That is why you can say a duckling is the only animal that grows up as it grows down!)



By Sue Taylor,
(Maroondah High.) 9

WE'VE ALREADY HAD TWO PAGES ABOUT
DUCKS - THAT'S ENOUGH!



DUCK

OH NO IT ISN'T,
WALLY WOMBAT!



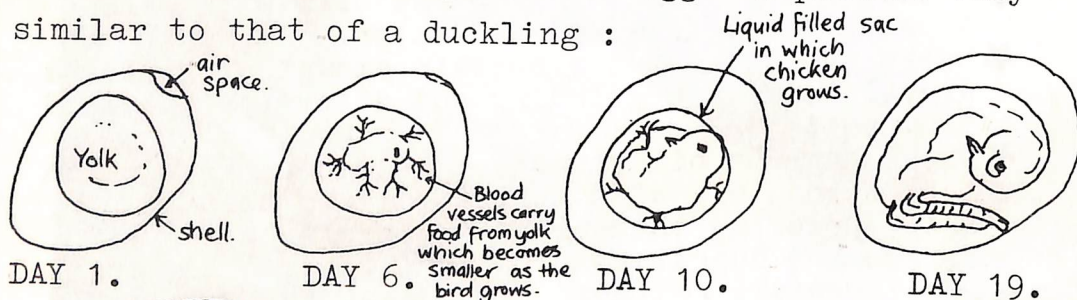
DUCKS

(CONTINUED. By Sue Taylor.)

OH WELL. AT
LEAST THERE'S
2 PAGES ABOUT
ME IN PROBE!



Pekin and Mallard ducks sit on their nests for 28 to 30 days before the ducklings hatch (compared with about 21 days for a chicken to hatch.) Ducklings usually take between 24 and 48 hours to break out of their shells after which the mother eats the tube that connected the duckling to the egg and through which it was fed whilst in the shell. Here are some sketches of the stages through which a chicken develops in the egg - a process very similar to that of a duckling :



DAY 21 - Chicken Hatches. Two of my ducklings (Fluffy & Tuffy on the previous page) were orphans, but

When the ducklings dry out they become twice their size, being fluffy, and stay close to their mother - cheeping loudly if they get left alone. Two



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OLD DAFFY DUCK? YOU KNOW, THE GUY WHO USED TO FLY UPSIDE DOWN?



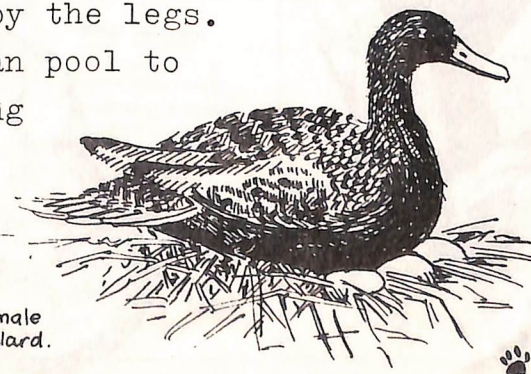
HE QUACKED UP!

they soon adopted me as their 'mother' and would give a high-pitched cheep if I left them before they went asleep. (At this stage of her project Sue gives a very detailed growth chart of her ducklings - we only have space for the following points :)

<u>Day 2</u> - wobbly legs, love cleaning themselves, afraid of water.	<u>Day 7</u> - Tuffy loves swimming now.
<u>Day 12</u> - down not as thick, tiny feathers forming.	<u>Day 32</u> - tail feathers and some wing feathers forming, must hold one in each hand they're so big!
<u>Day 44</u> - squeaky cheep and just forming quack.	
<u>Day 64</u> - wings nearly fully grown - love swimming!	

HOW TO HANDLE AND LOOK AFTER DUCKS :

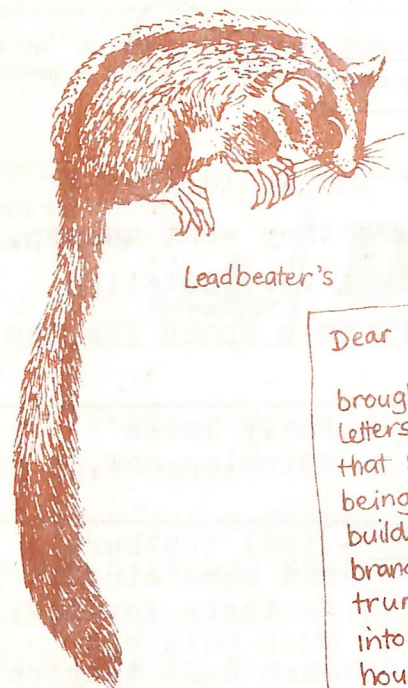
The proper way of handling ducks is to pick them up with one hand around their neck and one underneath their breast. They can then be securely tucked under the arm. Full-grown ducks are sometimes carried by their wings - carefully folded over their backs - but they should never be carried by the legs. It is essential to have a clean pool to keep ducks, as well as something better than concrete for them to bed down on. They should be fed well - with a diet including mash and grit.



A female Mallard.



A MESSAGE TO ALL POSSUMS FROM THE BOSS POSS.



Leadbeater's

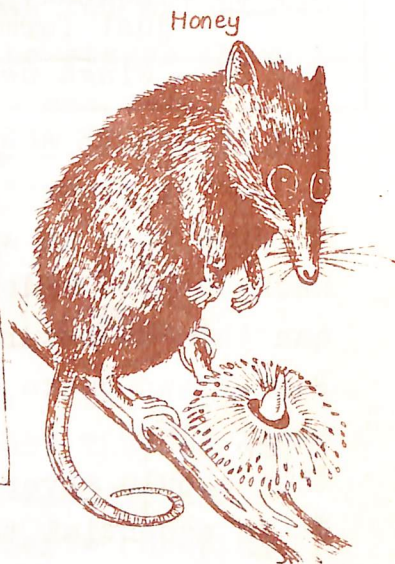
Dear Fellow Possums,
It has been brought to my attention by several letters written in to Nature Notes that some of our members are being very lazy! Instead of building their own home in branches of trees or hollow trunks, they have been moving into the lofts of human houses!! This is not a good idea because humans are strange animals that sleep at night and they don't seem to like being woken up by noises on their roof. If they are kind humans they will trap you and release you out in the bush (...and I won't tell you how the trap works because I think you deserve to get caught!), but some humans may poison you or shoot you. So be warned Fellow possums - building your own home is not imposs(um)able!
Signed: BOSS POSS.



Brush-tailed



Striped



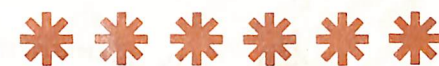
Honey



Ring-tailed

All possums on this page were drawn by Mrs. Prohasky - aren't we fantastic!?

SOME HUMAN LETTERS



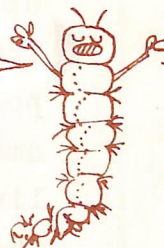
I went for a nature walk with the grade 5 & 6's and my teacher Mr. Willoughby. We went down to the creek behind the school. As the creek was dried up it was quite easy to walk through. We came to a part where the creek became very deep so we had to walk up on the bank.

We walked past the school oval and at the end of it we found a dead animal covered in moss hanging on a tree. We weren't sure whether it was a snake or a bird. When Mr. W. turned it over we saw it had a jaw. We came into the paddock behind the church and found a hole in the ground where a rabbit had been trying to dig a burrow. Past the paddock, my friend Gloria found 3 mussels stuck in the side of the creek. It was nearly bedtime so we headed back to school.

Abigail Barnes(St.Andrews P.S.)

Damian Byrdy of Vermont sent us a letter with some of the answers to the weather questions we asked last month. Hailstones are formed when clouds are forced high into cold air and the water drops freeze. Each time the clouds rise the hailstones get another layer of ice until they are so big that they fall. As to whether trees bring rain we are not sure, as different people give different answers - as trees like to grow where water is already.

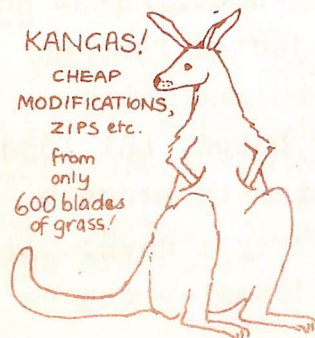
More tremendous letters came from Shayne M. Kennedy, Justin Higgs, Jenny Wright, Rod Shaw, Rebecca Askew, Matthew Davine, Phillipa Davey, Lynda Pascoe, Linda Sewell, Linda O'Sullivan, Darryn Pasma, Kay Thorne, Michelle Skidmore, Robyn Taylor, Stuart Jones, Sharon Amos, David Morrison, Michael Brennan. We'll have to print a book!!



* * ANIMAL ADVERTISEMENTS * *

KANGAS!

CHEAP
MODIFICATIONS,
ZIPS etc.
from only
600 blades
of grass!



SPECIAL!

BOOKS WITH
NOTHING IN
THEM

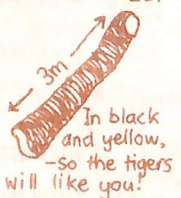


for
WOMBATS THAT
CAN'T READ.

3 carrots
ONLY!!

FOR SALE:

ONE GIRAFFE
NECKWARMER.
KNITTED, WARM!
HARDLY USED!



WANTED...

- 1 large, empty snail shell, for hermit's cottage by the beach. See: Harry Hermit-Crab, esq.
- 1 academic gown. See: Professor Uncle Sam Skunk B.O.



it's elementary my dear Wally!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE?

That white tigers do occur - though not very often - and that they aren't albinos as they don't have pink eyes and do have some pigment in their skins. They are just freak tigers that have almost white fur, dark-brown stripes, blue eyes and pink noses.

That whereas a dog is old at 15, a horse at 25 and people, elephants and parrots at 70 years or so, the giant Tortoises of the Galapagos Islands are thought to live up to 400 years old!

Yes, I remember when I saw Captain Cook on Sandwich Is. "James" I says to him,

That giant squid do exist and are possibly big enough to pull down small boats. Fortunately they live in very deep water, where they may grow up to 20m long!

But of course, no one believes in sea-monsters nowadays.

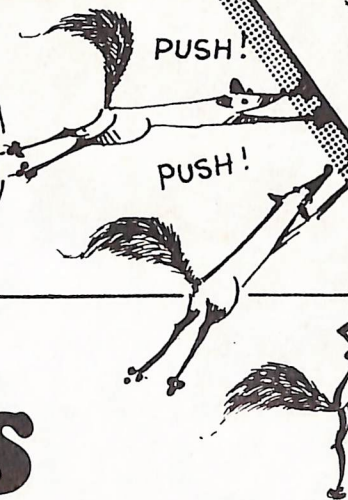


That a snake can flick its tongue in and out without opening its mouth - because they have a groove in the upper jaw. Snakes use their tongue for 'smelling' - not for poisoning things. The poison is injected through the fang - a hollow tooth (or teeth).

That camels do not store water in their humps, but food in the form of fat. Camels do store water in stomach pouches, but need to fill up at least every 7 days. It is thought that a close relative of the camel - the giraffe - can last longer without water.



That's better! Fancy our Mr. Dyer writing about dreary clouds when there're such interesting animals about!



PUSH!

PUSH!

FABULOUS

FOXES



RED FOX

Although we are hunted and chased by all sorts of humans, we have managed to survive. This is because of our intelligence (some call it cunning), for we never take chances. If we smell humans near our nest we shift it that night. We're not exactly sure how we came to be in Australia but we haven't been here for very long. Probably those humans brought us here especially so they could chase us out again - that's the sort of strange thing they go in for. We do eat some of their chooks it's true, but most of us live on rats and mice.

Our babies are suckled by their mother (called a vixen) but are soon weaned onto meat. They leave us after about 2 months and are fully grown in 6 months. Before that, we teach them how to hunt, which involves a lot of TOP SECRET methods. One of our more well known ones is to "charm" rabbits by putting on a show of acrobatics as we gradually get closer to them - then we pounce on the plumpest spectator!



...13, 14, 15. It's no good. These 'paw' page numbers are getting too big! We'll have to ask a mouse to do them.

the breath is always 70
How do clouds form?
Water is always 70
the earth, of which 70
the air it exists in three
vapour. The amount of water
"humidity". Warm air can hold
example as air at 30°C.
Heat evaporates millions of
water as air at 10°C.
daily. Lakes, streams, rivers
of water vapour. A single
from leaves of grass can
7000 litres of water
season. When the air is
vapour in it. These small
kettle spots form.

PUZZLES

Eg. Take away the dog & leave the cat

APLESRASTIAIANN
= A L S A T I A N
P E R S I A N

1. Take away the spider & leave its dinner

FUFLNNELYWEB

2. Take away the cat & leave the bird

L I O O S T R I N C H

3. Take away the bird & leave the insect

M I M A N N A T I D H

4. Take away the fish & leave the bait

W H I W O T R I N M G

5. Take away the tree & leave the flower

W A B L O T T S S L E O M

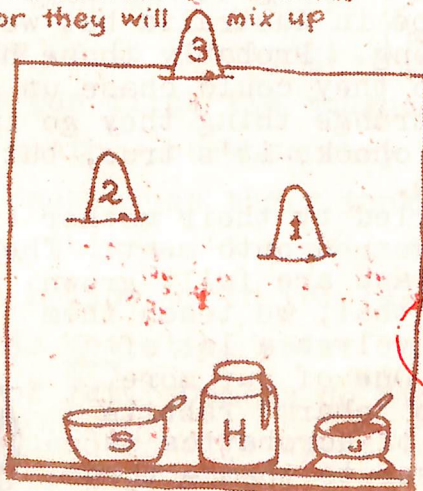
☆☆☆

—Can you make these two dead dogs
alive and running by drawing four
lines with your pencil?



☆☆☆

3 nests of ants must walk from the
sugar to nest 1, the honey to nest 3
and the jam to nest 2 — without
crossing or they will mix up
scents and
lose their
way.



How do you stop
a skunk from
smelling?
(Hold its nose.)

What did the
mouse buy in the
music shop?
(A mouse organ.)

from
Nick Gibson
from
Gordon Fraser

Nature Notes

P.O. Box 28,

Ringwood East, 3135.

Phone: 879.1263

it must fit
somewhere
here!



☆☆☆