

NATURE NOTES

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EDITORIAL



Hello there,

I suppose that many of you are already preparing for the summer holidays. They're not far off now, are they? Some lucky children may even be planning to visit the Great Barrier Reef. It's one of the most beautiful places in the world. Unfortunately, it's been in the news quite often lately. Not only is a Crown of Thorns invasion killing much of the coral but the mining industry is eager to begin exploration for mineral deposits along some of its length. Let's hope that someone speaks up soon to preserve this unique area. This month's "Nature Notes" looks at the Great Barrier Reef. Don't miss the coloring competition on Page 7. Book prizes will be sent out to the winners early next year.

If you wonder why "Nature Notes" looks rather different next year, it will be because a new editor takes over the 'hot seat'. Saying good-bye to Wally, Ernie, Wilbur, Hairy Bungler and the Lowland Sisters is not so easy. Nevertheless, my study leave has come to an end and I face the prospect of spending the next year in exile. For all their help and support during my three year stay at "Nature Notes" and "Probe", I'd like to thank (and it's a long list) Wilma Prohasky, Carol Measures, Cindy Hunnam, Lynette Portlock, all the collators and packers from the Ringwood East Primary School's Parents Club, the "Nature Notes" committee, Mr. Russell Hall, Mandy Carmichael (the Assistant Editor), Ann Gibson and Catherine Mullins.

Cheerio, DEBRA BRYDON

WALLY & WILBUR WAFFLE ON..



W. PROHASKY · M. CARMICHAEL

THIS 'N' THAT

The Great Barrier Reef



SORRY, CAPTAIN COOK...

The discovery and naming of many of the islands of the Great Barrier Reef is always associated with Captain Cook and his voyage up the east coast and around Cape York in 1770. There is little doubt, however, that this great stretch of reefs, cays and islands were known

to voyagers long before the 18th century. According to a Chinese manuscript, the northern and eastern coasts of Australia were known at least 2000 years ago to Chinese fishermen (and the aborigines, of course). These Chinese fishermen came down to the Great Barrier Reef area to collect the succulent sea cucumbers, or beche-de-mer, which grew in large numbers on the reefs. Possibly, there were galleons from Spain and other European nations in the area long before Cook arrived. Coins, weapons, cannons and other items found on reefs and islands have been traded around Thursday Island and New Guinea for hundreds of years.

THE SAD JOB OF MOTHERHOOD

What look like tears rolling down the face of a marine turtle while it is laying eggs are not caused by the strain involved, as many people believe. Because the seafood they eat contains far too much salt for their bodies to use, turtles drip out this extra salt in a watery solution. They do this all the time but it is only noticeable to us when they are out of the water. All turtle eggs should be pleased to learn that their mothers really do love

ABOUT...

BY D. BRYDON

them!

FROM ANCHOVIES TO PHOSPHATE

One of the most valuable minerals to modern farmers is phosphate. By fertilising poor soils with this mineral, farmers have been able to grow healthy crops in areas they would not normally be able to. Unfortunately for farmers, the large deposits of this mineral have now almost been used up.



Although the search for rock phosphate goes on, farmers must 'look to the sky' for the answer to their problems. Calcium phosphate is also produced from the 'droppings' of seabirds nesting in huge colonies on offshore islands. As the years pass, the droppings harden into a crust. This is known as GUANO. Guano was first used by the early

inhabitants of Peru, the Incas. As far as is known, they were the only people of these far-off times who realised its value as a fertiliser. In the 1840's, the Western world became aware of the value of guano. A huge export trade developed. Soon, all the offshore islands of Peru were stripped of all their guano.

Today, most Australian phosphate comes from Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean and Nauru in the Pacific. Last century various islands of the Great Barrier Reef (especially Raine Island and Lady Elliot Island) were 'mined' for their guano. On many of these islands the remains of the huts and other workings are still to be seen.

Today, the guano 'crop' is in trouble. Pollution and the over-fishing of anchovies (on which the guano-making birds dine) have reduced the number of birds. By the year 2000, there may be fewer anchovies, fewer birds and even less guano. How do you think that this will effect farming? What other results could there be?

A GIANT WEB OF LIFE

Did you know that no less than 1400 different species of tropical marine animals have been recorded in the Great Barrier Reef alone? Sometimes more than 500 different types of fish can be found around one small coral reef!

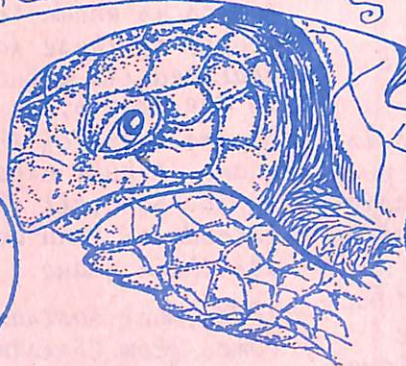
THE REEF

This is Your Life....

Greg, Green Sea Turtle



GOSH THIS IS UNEXPECTED..... BUT I ADMIRE YOUR GOOD TASTE.....!



YES GREG, .. YOU'VE BE CHOSEN AS THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL GUEST....

(ASIDE)....
'LET'S HOPE IT DOESN'T GO TO HIS HEAD'

LET'S GO BACK IN TIME TO YOUR VERY START IN LIFE. YOUR MOTHER SPENT A LONG TIME DIGGING A HOLE IN THE SAND IN WHICH TO LAY HER EGGS

...IT WAS A TIRING JOB FOR HER, ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE STARTED TO LAY HER EGGS - ABOUT 16 EGGS PER MINUTE! THIS LABOUR OF LOVE TOOK PLACE IN THE WARM SANDS OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF REGION IN QUEENSLAND.

* Find out about OTHER sorts of turtles.

GOOD OLD MUM, YES, SHE LAID 200 OF US YOU KNOW. IT WAS OCTOBER IF I REMEMBER RIGHT, AND 6 WEEKS LATER IN DECEMBER WE ALL HATCHED OUT AND THAT'S WHEN THE FUN AND GAMES STARTED....!

THANKS TO CAROL MEASURES FOR THIS ARTICLE

*Why do you think turtles need protection?

HERE'S A PHOTO SHOWING YOU ALL RUNNING TO THE WATERS EDGE.. IT SURE LOOKS LIKE A MAD SCRAMBLE TO GET THERE

SOMETHING TELLS ME I'M IN BIG TROUBLE

IT SURE WAS. APART FROM OUR EAGERNESS TO TAKE OUR FIRST DIP...

GEE I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT GREG. STILL YOU'RE HERE TO TELL THE TALE

...WE HAD TO TRY AND DODGE THE SEAGULLS AND CRABS. THEY FIND US RATHER A TASTY TIDE.T! HUMANS CAN BE A NUISANCE TOO, WANTING TO PICK US UP. WITH ALL THESE DANGERS, THERE WERE ONLY A FEW OF US WHO ACTUALLY MADE IT INTO THE SEA.

PHEW I'M GLAD THATS OVER!

FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW

AH YES! THOSE WERE THE DAYS...

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF GREG.

WELL I HAVE A STRONG PAIR OF SWIMMING FLIPPERS IN FRONT, MY LONG TAIL AND BACK FLIPPERS HELP STEER ME AS I SWIM. I HAVE STRONG JAWS, WHICH ARE MY MAIN PROTECTION AND MY GREENISH COLOURED BACK, WHICH IS VERY HARD AND ROUGH.

OH YES, MY FAVORITE FOOD IS JELLY FISH SEA WEED SPONGES AND SHELL FISH YUMMY!

THANKS GREG. LET'S HOPE YOU SWIM AROUND FOR MANY YEARS TO COME

HI GRANDAD!

OH YES.. WE LIVE TO A VERY OLD AGE, A SECRET YOU HUMANS HAVEN'T FOUND OUT YET, TEE HEE.

KEEP OFF! PROTECTED SPECIES SIGNED JON.A.P.

WHAT A RELIEF!

GORGONED
CORAL

CORAL KALEIDOSCOPE

BEAKED
BUTTERFLY
FISH

CORAL COD
FISH

STAGHORN
CORAL

STYLASTER
CORAL

BANDED
HUMBUG
FISH

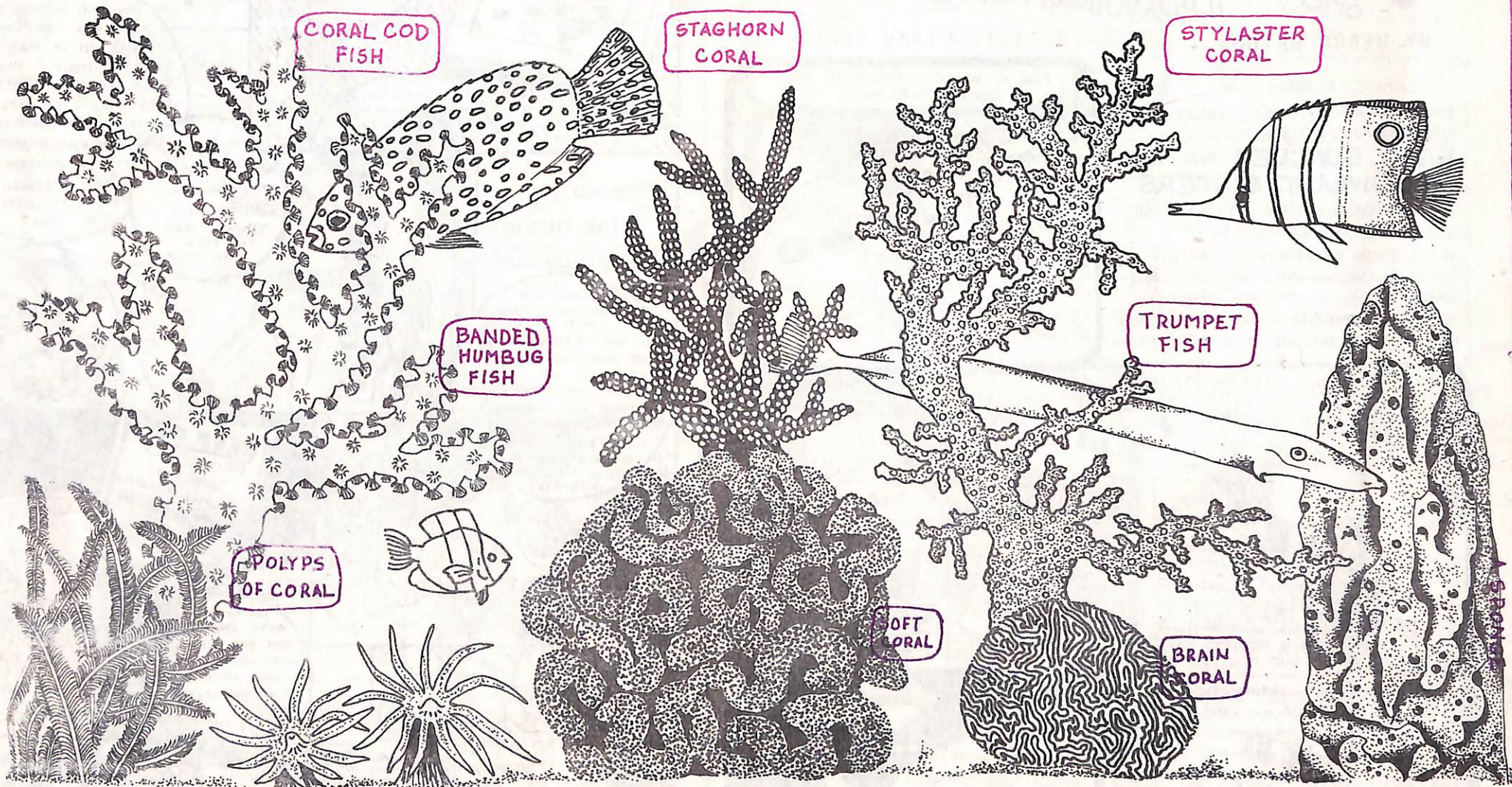
TRUMPET
FISH

POLYPS
OF CORAL

SOFT
CORAL

BRAIN
CORAL

STINGING CORAL



No other country in the world has a coral reef as long as our Great Barrier Reef. To view the beauty and color of its plant and animal life is a breath-taking experience. I hope that one day you can visit this special part of Australia. This month at "NATURE NOTES" Wally and Wilbur are holding a coloring competition. Send your entries to P.O. Box 28, Ringwood East, Victoria, 3135 by 16th December. Book prizes will be sent to the best efforts so don't forget to include your name, age and address!

Hairy Buncler and the Lowland Sisters

BY DEBRA BRYDON

ARTIST: Cindy Hunnam

TREKKING ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE, THOSE FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN NATURALISTS, **HAIRY BUNCLER** AND THE **LOWLAND SISTERS** JOIN TOGETHER IN AN UNENDING QUEST TO SOLVE THE MANY MYSTERIES OF NATURE. AFTER NEARLY DROWNING IN THE SWAMP, HAIRY IS SENT BY HIS DOCTOR TO THE BARRIER REEF TO REGAIN HIS HEALTH IN THE SURF AND SUN...



...FOR A WHILE, IT SEEMS AS IF ALL IS GOING TO PLAN...



HAIRY EVEN BEGINS TO PUT ON WEIGHT - AND ITS NO WONDER!

BUT SUDDENLY - HAIRY BEGINS TO LOOK VERY SICK INDEED!



DR. I.M.A. FISHBONE PAYS A BRIEF HOUSECALL...



WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR DINNER LAST NIGHT, SON?

HAIRY'S LIST IS RATHER LONG!

DR. REEF, ALL I HAD WAS A FRIED RED BASS, A GRILLED BARACUDA, A FILLET OF SPANISH MACKEREL, JUST A TASTE OF CORAL TROUT, AND A STEAMED SURGEON FISH. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT... I THOUGHT FISH WAS MUCH BETTER FOR YOU THAN RED MEAT....



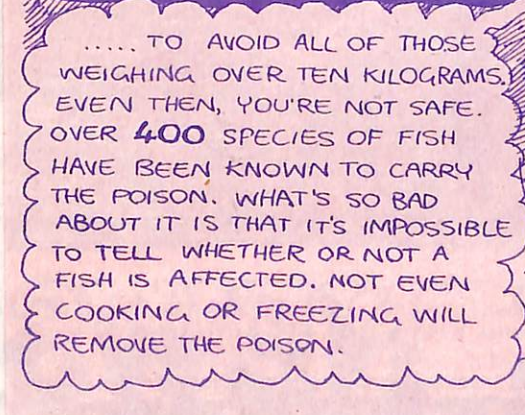
THAT'S NOT ALWAYS CORRECT, HAIRY MY LAD WHAT YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM AT THE MOMENT IS A PARTICULARLY NASTY FORM OF FISH POISONING CALLED CIQUATERA. THE DIZZINESS, ITCHINESS AND CHILLS YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ARE ONLY THE BEGINNING. FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, MONTHS OR EVEN ONE OR TWO YEARS, YOU MAY SUFFER FROM ANY OF THE LONG LIST OF CIQUATERA POISONING SYMPTOMS. EVERY TIME YOUR SKIN COMES INTO CONTACT WITH COLD WATER, YOU'LL PROBABLY EXPERIENCE A BURNING PAIN. SOME-TIMES YOUR FINGERS, TOES, LIPS AND MOUTH WILL FEEL NUMB, OR TINGLY. WHAT'S WORSE, EVERYTIME YOU DRINK SOMETHING ALCOHOLIC, YOU'LL DEVELOP A TERRIBLE ITCH...



OK, THEN, DOC, LET'S GET THE INJECTION OVER AND DONE WITH QUICKLY - I'VE GOT A COLD BOTTLE OF BEER WAITING IN THE FRIDGE....

...BUT IT SEEMS THAT HAIRY'S LUCK HAS RUN OUT....

SORRY YOUNG FELLOW. AS YET THERE IS NO ANTIVENOM OR CURE FOR CIQUATERA POISONING. PREVENTION IS THE ONLY CURE AT THE MOMENT. ALTHOUGH NOT ALL LARGE REEF FISH ARE AFFECTED, IT'S THOUGHT TO BE SAFER.....



..... TO AVOID ALL OF THOSE WEIGHING OVER TEN KILOGRAMS, EVEN THEN, YOU'RE NOT SAFE. OVER 400 SPECIES OF FISH HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO CARRY THE POISON. WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT IT IS THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL WHETHER OR NOT A FISH IS AFFECTED. NOT EVEN COOKING OR FREEZING WILL REMOVE THE POISON.

THE NEXT DAY SEES HAIRY STRUGGLING FROM HIS BED, DETERMINED TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER WORKER AT THE COMMONWEALTH SERUM LABORATORY



I'LL MAKE IT TO MELBOURNE IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO...

...BUT WILL HAIRY MAKE IT ALONE? WILL THE GIRLS BE ABANDONED? FIND OUT NEXT YEAR!!!

NATURE IN

LEFT: THANKS TO "THE SUN"
16-8-82, page 19

Dolphins ... fine threat

By JACKIE BITTELMAN

SHARK fisherman off Sydney are risking fines up to \$100,000 by using live dolphin for bait.

A diver who saved a dolphin tethered to the ocean floor last week said yesterday the practice was used "a fair bit."

Mr Chris Warner, who works with Manly Marineland, said there was little chance of catching the fishermen because they operated several kilometres offshore.

The dolphin found last Thursday was anchored for about nine hours to the ocean floor on 60 m of nylon rope, 3 km from Barrenjoey Head.

It was spotted by the skipper of the yacht Itchy Feet, Mr Ron Down, who radioed coastal surveillance.

Mr Warner and water police found and untied the dolphin under floor-lights.

"It seemed to be young and healthy, but was very tired, and had bruising and bleeding around the tail where the rope held it," Mr Marner said.

"I massaged it for several minutes until it realised it was released. Then it swam off."

Mr Warner said most fishermen were "ecology minded," but some were prepared to risk the \$100,000 fine for killing or harassing a dolphin.

"I was very upset and sorry for their lack of perception of cruelty," he said.

The dolphin was released at the same time it was revealed an 11-year-old boy was saved by a dolphin in the Cocos Islands, off north-west Australia.

Nick Christides fell from his surfboard in a lagoon and was swept out to sea.

A U.S. Air Force Orion found him four hours later with a dolphin in a seven metres swell.

The boy's father, Mr Tony Christides, said he was certain his son would have drowned without the dolphin's help.

Leeches to rescue

ADELAIDE — A man who had about 50 leeches placed on his leg last Saturday following a skin graft is in a satisfactory condition in the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The leeches were put on the man's leg to remove blood from around the graft.

The man, an opal miner in his early 20s, from the far north of SA, suffered flesh and bone injuries to a leg in a machinery accident about 10 days ago.

Hospital medical superintendent, Dr S. Britton said yesterday the leeches had been called for when blood flowing to a skin graft carried out on Thursday would not disperse.

The condition had been an unusual one, he said.

The man had requested that his name and address not be released.

THANKS TO "THE SUN"
15-2-82, page 5

Sailor, his best mate



BIRD enthusiast Jack Speed has lost his prized possession — a South American macaw named Sailor.

The blue-and-gold bird with the long beak, like the one above, went missing on Friday night from Mr Speed's Tynong North property.

And he said he would give a \$1000 reward if the bird was found safe and well.

"Sallor was given to me

as a gift 20 years ago, and until recently he was the only macaw in Victoria. The kids who come up here loved him," Mr Speed said.

Mr Speed has housed up to 1000 birds in the aviary at his home in Ty-nong North Rd.

"We had a lot of rain the sanctuary before, on Friday night, and I, they said.

THANKS TO "THE SUN", 3-8-82, page 3

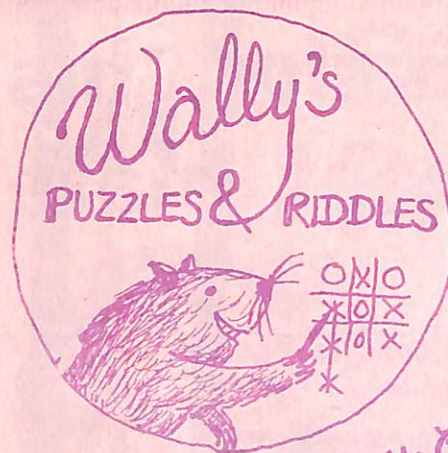
* Why do you think the shark fishermen used live dolphins as bait rather than other types of bait? What is your opinion of this practice?

* Why were leeches placed on the opal miner's leg? Is this the first time that they have been used in this way?



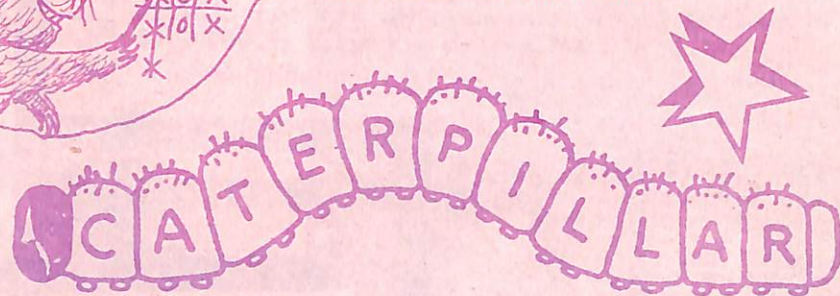
Picture: JOHN FRENCH

This is the striking visage of a Mandrillus Sphinx, or mandrill monkey, a baboon species from western Africa. The male's facial stripes are lined with blue and scarlet. The monkey was photographed at the Zoo yesterday.



THE CATERPILLAR PUZZLE

Here is a caterpillar with his name spelt out clearly on him. How many words can you make from the letters in his name?



ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, AND MINERAL

Taking one letter from each group of three and working from top to bottom, see if you can find: i, the name of an animal (beginning with B); ii, a vegetable (beginning with S); and iii, a mineral ore (beginning with U). They are all seven-letter words.

TWO-IN-ONES

L T I E O R N R I E R

(Take away the cat and leave the dog.)

D A W F A F T O D I T L L E

(Take away the flower and leave the tree.)

W H U N A T S M A S N P

(Take away the insect and leave the spider.)

E S H A M R U K

(Take away the bird and leave the fish.)



S	B	U
U	R	P
F	I	A
N	N	F
A	I	A
C	U	L
M	H	O

PERHAPS YOU CAN MAKE
UP SOME MORE TWO-IN-ONES

*** Wally's WobbleWord!

Below are listed several groups of mammals and examples of animals that belong to them. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND EVERY WORD (except the ones in brackets) in the wobbleword below. You should have three letters left over which spell what you might say when you finish this puzzle!



- Monotremes (Egg laying) platypus
- Marsupials (Young born in pouch) wallaby wombat
- Insectivores (Insect-eating) mole
- Chiroptera (hand-wing) bat
- Primates (eyes look forward, nails not claws.) ape baboon
- Rodents (teeth grow continually) muskrat
- Cetacea (marine mammals) whale

Color each word in a different color as you find it. Letters may be used more than once. There are no diagonal words.

M	O	L	E	B	M	O	W
A	N	O	T	A	L	L	A
R	S	U	R	B	I	H	C
H	Y	P	E	Y	R	O	S
E	T	I	M	A	R	P	E
B	A	A	E	S	E	T	R
P	L	L	Y	S	E	V	O
I	N	S	E	C	T	I	R
B	N	E	P	A	A	M	P
A	T	D	O	R	C	U	S
B	S	W	H	A	E	C	K
O	O	N	E	L	T	A	R



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