



PROBE

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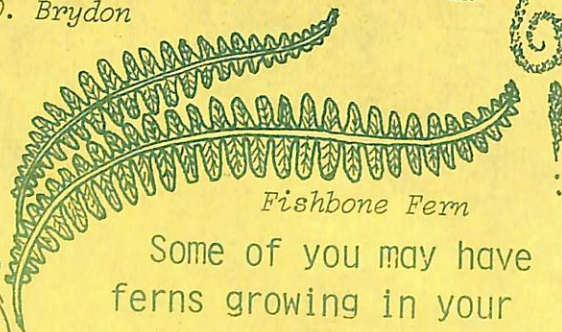
FERNS

by D. Brydon

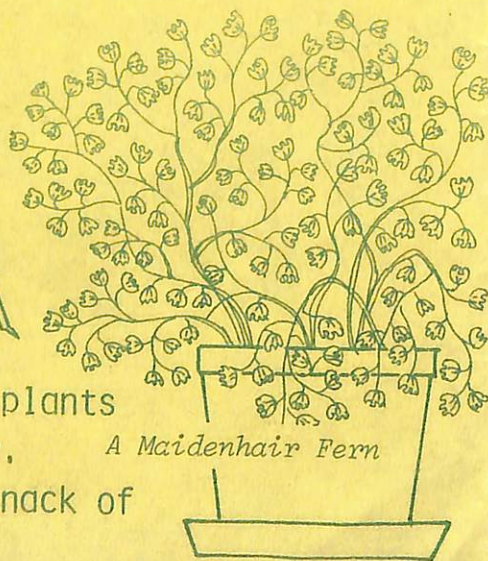
I wonder how many of you have been lucky enough to visit a beautiful fern gully like the one on the front cover?

There are many different types of ferns. The suburb in Melbourne, Fern Tree Gully is named after one of the tallest ferns: the Tree Fern. Some of you may have ferns growing in your outside garden. Many people enjoy growing some ferns as indoor plants to make the inside of their house look nicer. The Maidenhair fern is an 'indoor' fern many people enjoy to look at. Like many ferns that will grow indoors, it does not like to be in a hot room or in dry soil.

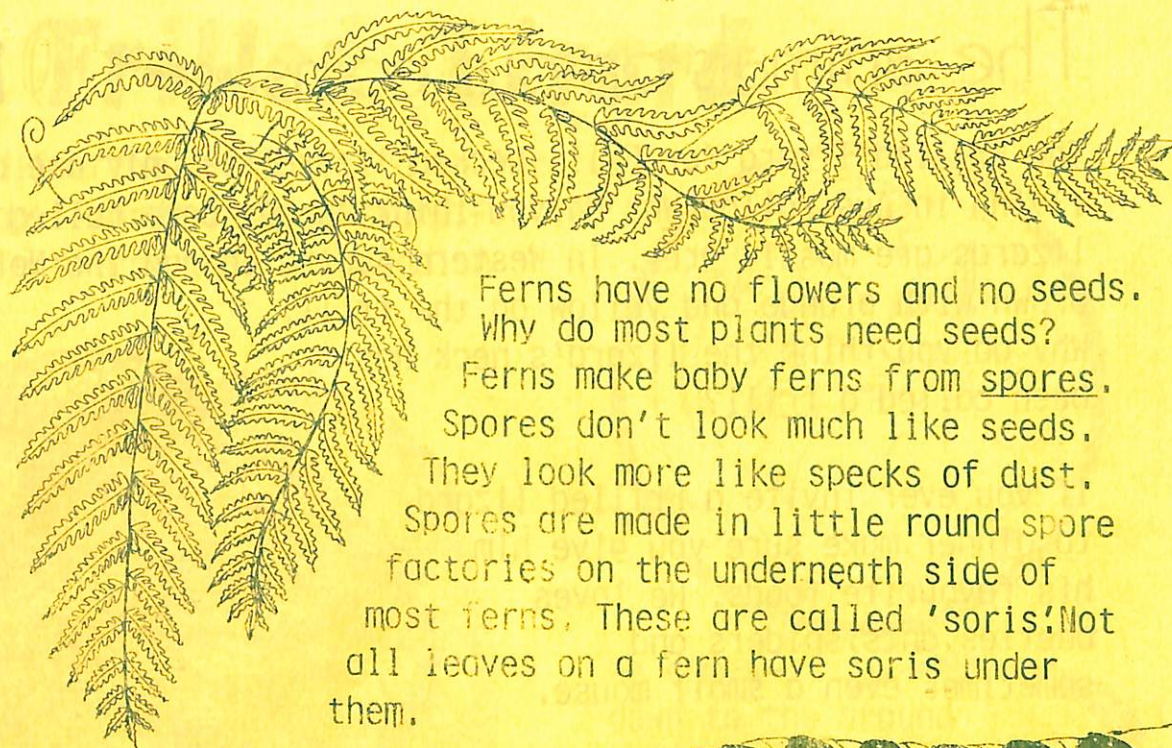
Ferns are very 'old' plants. That does not mean that all ferns are many years old. Some ferns may only be a few weeks old. It means that ferns began growing on our planet (Earth) before plants with flowers and seeds began to grow. Dinosaurs probably enjoyed a tasty snack of fern thousands of years ago.



Fishbone Fern

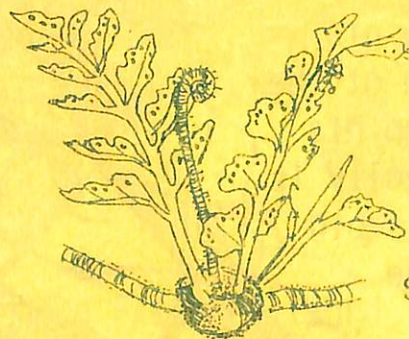


A Maidenhair Fern



Ferns have no flowers and no seeds. Why do most plants need seeds? Ferns make baby ferns from spores. Spores don't look much like seeds. They look more like specks of dust. Spores are made in little round spore factories on the underneath side of most ferns. These are called 'sori'. Not all leaves on a fern have sori under them.

When they are ripe, the wind blows the spores to a new place where baby ferns will have room to grow.



Spores become ripe in late autumn and winter. Then fern leaves can be picked and put in paper bags. The spores will fall off the leaf into the bag. Keep the bag dry until spring and I'll show you how to plant them. Don't forget

Fern leaves are called fronds. Some ferns grow baby ferns at the very end of their fronds. These can be cut off and planted to make new ferns.

that it is against the law to pick ferns in the bush.

The animals on our coins ○○○○

the Frilled Lizard

by D. Brydon

The Frilled lizard (or Frill-necked lizard) is only one of the different sorts of dragon-lizards living in Australia. Why do you think he has been called a dragon lizard? In Queensland, Frilled lizards are mostly grey. In Western Australia and the Northern Territory, they are reddish-brown with orange and yellow on the frill. Why do you think the lizard's neck has been called a frill?

If you ever invite a Frilled lizard to dinner, make sure you give him his favourite foods. He loves beetles, ants, spiders and sometimes even a small mouse.

Staying alive is not always easy. Hungry birds enjoy a snack of Frilled lizard. To stop himself from becoming bird food, the Frilled lizard tries to frighten his enemies away. By opening his mouth, he unfolds a flat piece of skin at the side of his head. This big frill around his head makes him look bigger than he really is. The birds see nasty sharp teeth in his big pink mouth. They are frightened by the snake-like hissing noise he makes. Often the birds decide that the Frilled lizard would be too hard to catch so they go away.

How do other animals protect themselves from their enemies?



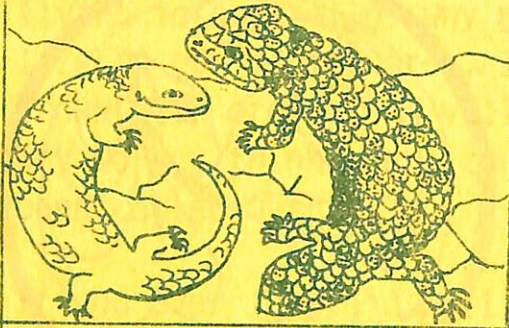
He comes down to the ground to feed after rain.

Artist: W. Prohasky

The Frilled lizard spends most of his time in rough barked trees

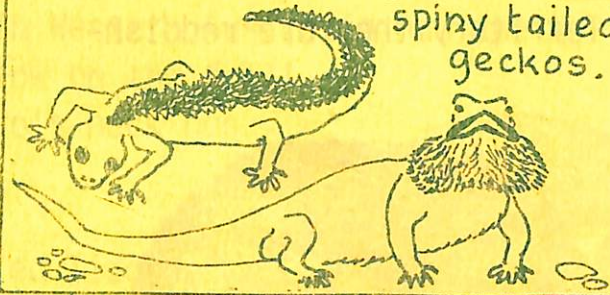
All dragon lizards have scales over most of their body. Scales are very hard for birds to chew or swallow. They are also water-proof like your raincoat. But instead of keeping the water out, scales keep the water in. Without his scales, the Frilled lizard would dry out in the hot sun and die.

There are many kinds of lizards.....blue tongues and stumpy tails...



LIZARDS

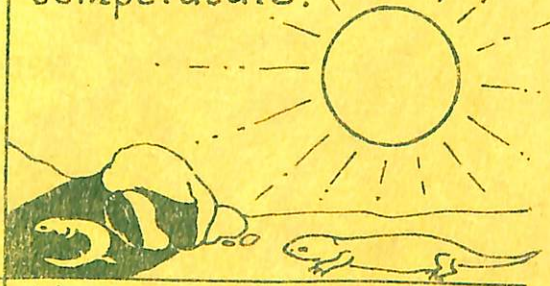
...bearded dragons and spiny tailed geckos.



The frilled lizard, and the mountain devil are just a few more of them.



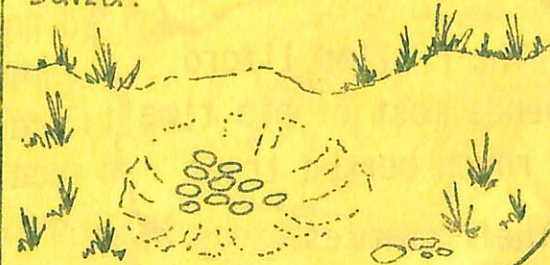
They live by the sun, they are cold blooded, so they have to move often from sun to shade to keep an even temperature.



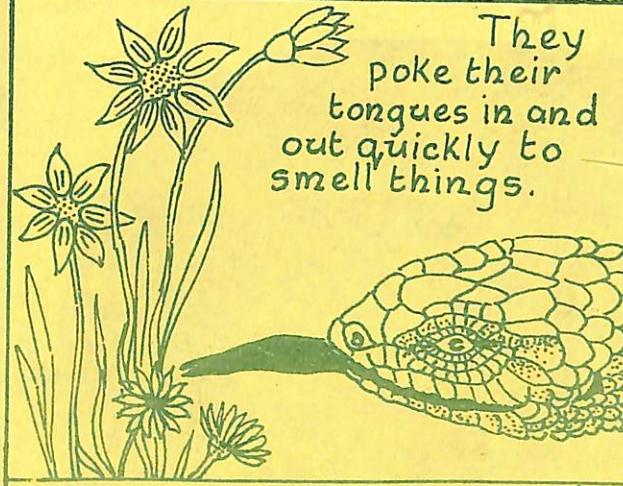
Blue tongues have about 7 babies. Stumpy tails have 1 or 2. Unlike some lizards the babies are not hatched from eggs.



Lizard babies are born in late summer. Bearded dragons lay soft shelled eggs. They bury them in sand.



They poke their tongues in and out quickly to smell things.



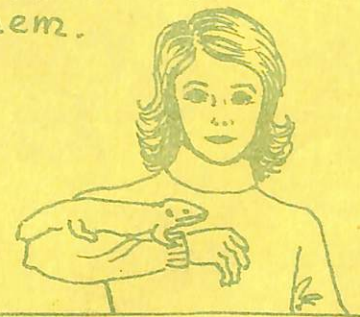
A few lizards don't have legs. They (lizards) are found all over Australia.



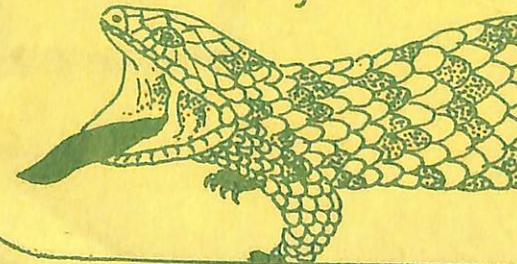
Some lizards hibernate in winter. Blue tongues, who live in Victoria, sleep all through winter. Never disturb one that is hibernating.



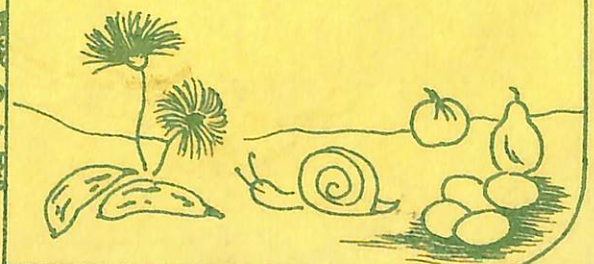
Some of them look quite fierce but they are really very timid animals. There is no need to feel afraid of them.



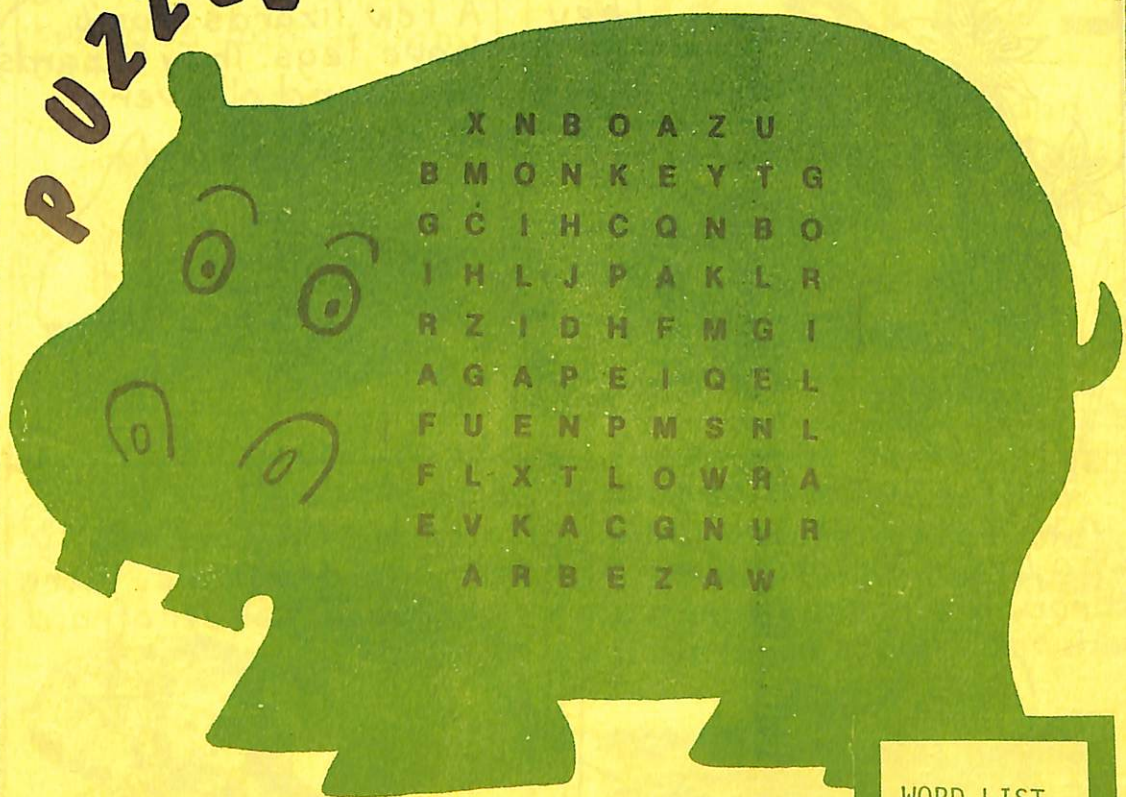
Their only defence when they are frightened is to open their mouths wide, put their tongues out and hiss loudly.



Lizards are useful because they eat insects. They also eat snails and slugs, berries and fruit, meat, eggs, and flowers.



PUZZLE



There are eleven African animals hidden in this puzzle. Find the hidden words by reading:

FORWARDS, from left to right.

BACKWARDS, from right to left.

DOWN, from top to bottom.

UP, from bottom to top.

DIAGONALLY, slanting in either way.

Put a ring around each word as you find it.

WORD LIST

Ape
Camel
Elephant
Giraffe
Gnu
Gorilla
Hippo
Lion
Monkey
Rhino
Zebra

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