



NATURE PROBE

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Natural mimics

Mimics are tricksters. They fool their enemies by imitating another animal or plant.



Some stick insects also mimic leaves.



Stick insects rest with their front legs out straight. This makes them look even more like twigs.

If you had an enemy who wanted to eat you alive you would try very hard not to be caught. You would have two choices. Either you could run away, this would not be much use if your enemy could run faster than you, or you could hide behind or amongst something and keep very still.

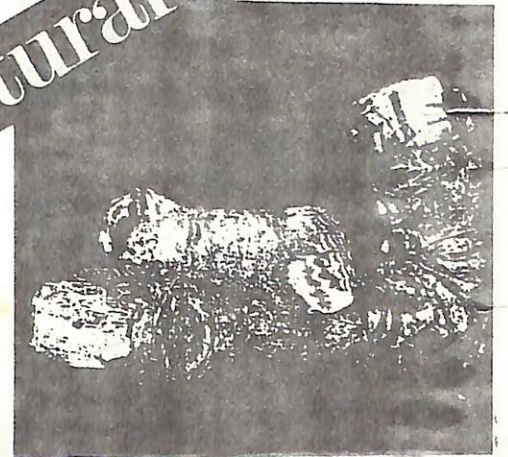
This is what mimics do. But not only do they keep very still, they also pretend to be part of what they are hiding amongst.

Most mimics are insects, although some other animals are mimics too. There are insects which look like flowers and leaves, insects which look like sticks, thorns or bark, and some which look like other insects.

They are all mimics. They have developed this ingenious way of protecting themselves from harm. Of course, mimics cannot change back again into what they once were. Over thousands of years they have grown to look exactly like the plant or animal which they are imitating.

Natural mimics

This moth is a perfect replica of a broken twig.



Some mimics imitate the warning colours of poisonous butterflies and beetles. By copying these colours the mimics fool their enemies into believing that they too, are poisonous.

Most mimics are nocturnal. They feed and move only at night. During the day they 'freeze' into their daytime positions. They are even more difficult to see when they are completely still.

PLAY CHARADES

with a partner and mimic insects in front of your class.

DRAW THESE MINIBEASTS

SPIDER MILLIPEDE
ANT

WORM STICK INSECT
GRASSHOPPER

CICADAS
CENTIPEDE

PILL BUG

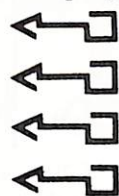
SLATER

SNAIL

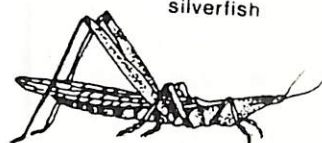
Can you think of other insects
to add to this list ?????

WHERE ARE YOU?

1 USE THIS LIST OF WORDS.



silverfish



grasshopper



earthworm



millipede

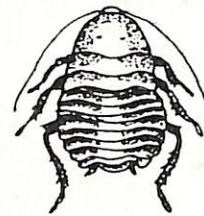


slug

FIND YOUR FRIEND!!!
MINIBEAST



beetle grub



cockroach



earwig

2 Write these words twice on separate cards.

e.g.

SNAIL SNAIL

3 Shuffle the cards.

4 Hand out to a group of people.

5 Don't show your card to anyone.

6 You must now **move** in the way your minibeast would move.



slater



caterpillar

7 Find the animal moving in the same way as you are to find your minibeast partner.



ant

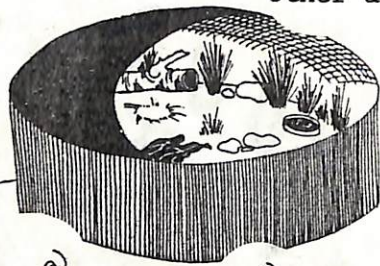
YOUR LIZARD AT HOME

...and how to care for it

Outside enclosures should be in a place that gets plenty of sun.

netting over top to stop lizard from escaping and other animals from attacking

rocks that lizard can bask on



water dish (keep in shady area)

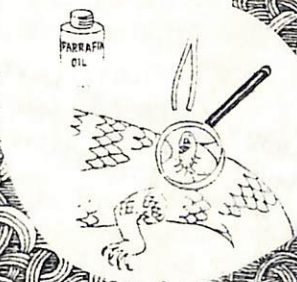
plants, logs and rocks that give the lizard shade and a hiding place

a place where the lizard can stay dry when it rains or when the soil is very wet.

45 cm. wall should be at least so that lizard can't escape.

If lizards are kept in outside tank, let them hibernate in winter under the rocks and logs.

DO NOT DISTURB them at all during winter.



PARENTS: The only lizards you can legally keep without a license are Stumpy tails & Blue - Tongues.

If you keep them inside, you will need to keep them warm in winter and summer, or else they might catch a bad cold. Lizards do not like draughts or damp places.

If a lizard keeps his head up in the air it means he is very sick. Take him to a vet. Blue tongues like temperatures around 30* C. Stumpy tails like temperatures around 35* C.

"My nose is all stuffed up... I feel awful."

If you find a tick on his body, (often found near his ears) put some paraffin oil on the tick. Grab the tick firmly with tweezers and pull it off the lizard's body.

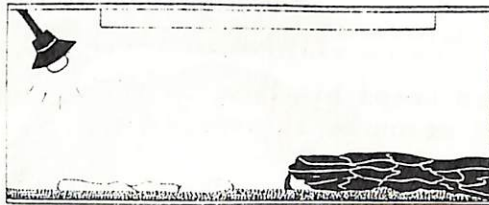
CONT

by Pauline Halpin

1 metre tank enclosure for a large lizard.
Larger tank for more lizards.

a 100 watt globe to
keep the lizard warm

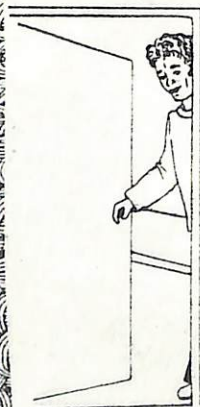
fly wire mesh cover to
stop the lizard from
escaping



a hiding area or dry leaf
litter so that the lizard
can hide

a flat rock or log under
light so lizard can bask
river stones and coarse
sand on bottom

a shallow water dish with
sloping sides (away from
light)



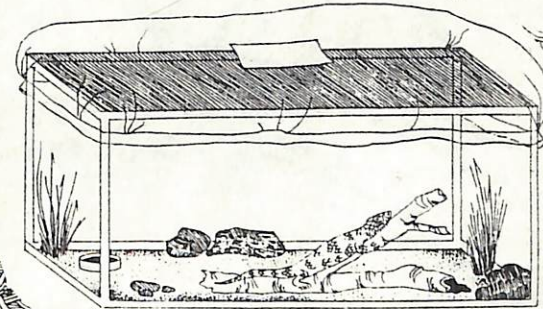
Read: 'LIZARDS' by George Warren
Burwood State College
for more information.

If your lizard does not seem healthy
take him to a friendly vet.

DRAWINGS BY WILMA PROHASKY

If you find tiny mites under the
scales of the lizard place a
PEST STRIP on top of the fly wire
mesh at the top of the tank and
then cover the top with a sheet
of plastic. Leave pest strip on
tank for a SHORT time only!

Give the lizard fresh water every
day in a shallow bowl that has
sloping sides.



Clean the tank and wash and dry the stones
every few weeks.

Pick up lizards droppings and food scraps
every day so as to keep the cage clean.

Feed lizards fresh food every day.
A healthy meal is a tablespoon of
finely chopped fruit and vegetables.

PLUS...a tablespoon of Pal dog food
or Whiskers cat food and
boiled egg...

PLUS...a pinch of 'Petvite' (from Pet Shop)

Lizards also enjoy eating live snails,
worms, insects, dandelions & blossom.

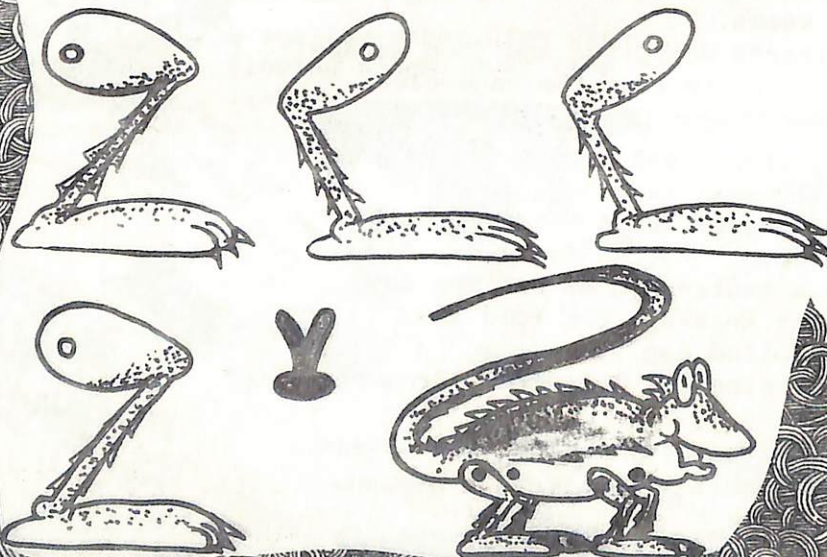
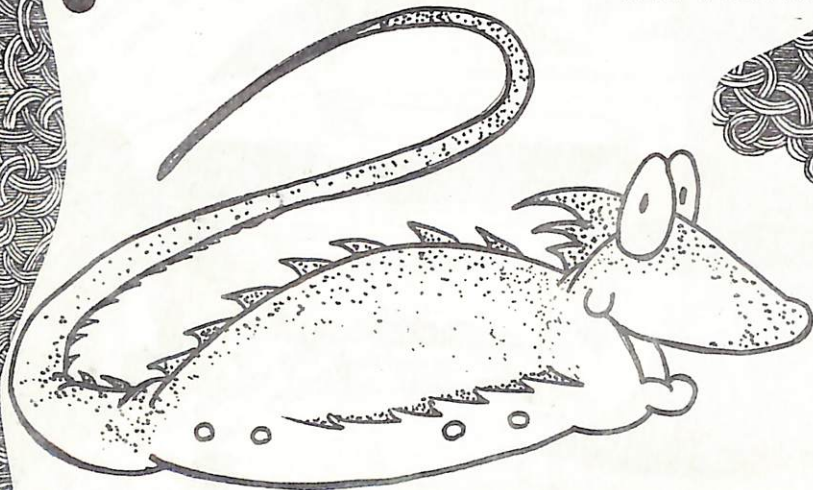
Put the food in a flat bowl away
from heat. Only leave in tank for
4 hours as food will go rotten.



MAKE A MOVEABLE

lizard

- PHOTOCOPY THIS PICTURE AND STICK IT
- ON TO A PIECE OF WHITE CARD,
- COLOUR IT IN AND CUT IT OUT.
- USE SPLIT PINS TO JOIN IT ALL TOGETHER.



Plants as a shelter

Watch a bee to see what it does.



What are these?

Hidden in this picture is a jumping spider - find it.

What is this spider and what is it waiting for?



Nature Notes wishes to thank the Gould League of Vic. for this information.

Grasshoppers feed on ... Is this a male or female?

Follow a beetle.

This is a cocoon. How many other egg cases or cocoons can you find?

Follow an ant to see where it is going.

This ladybird is looking for food - what?

What has been eating this leaf?

How many slaters can live under a single plant?

Now go outside and look around.



ANT-MIMICKING SPIDER

As its name suggests, this spider feeds on ants which it traps by luring the prey towards what seems like just another ant. To do this, the spiders have evolved a shape and markings on their abdomens which, from behind, actually make them look like ants. Sometimes they hang from a silk thread which is attached to a branch used as a pathway by the ants. As the insect goes to investigate the other 'ant' down the line, the spider seizes it. Others mimic the unusual behaviour of certain ants ... with the same results.

Ant-mimicking Spider



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