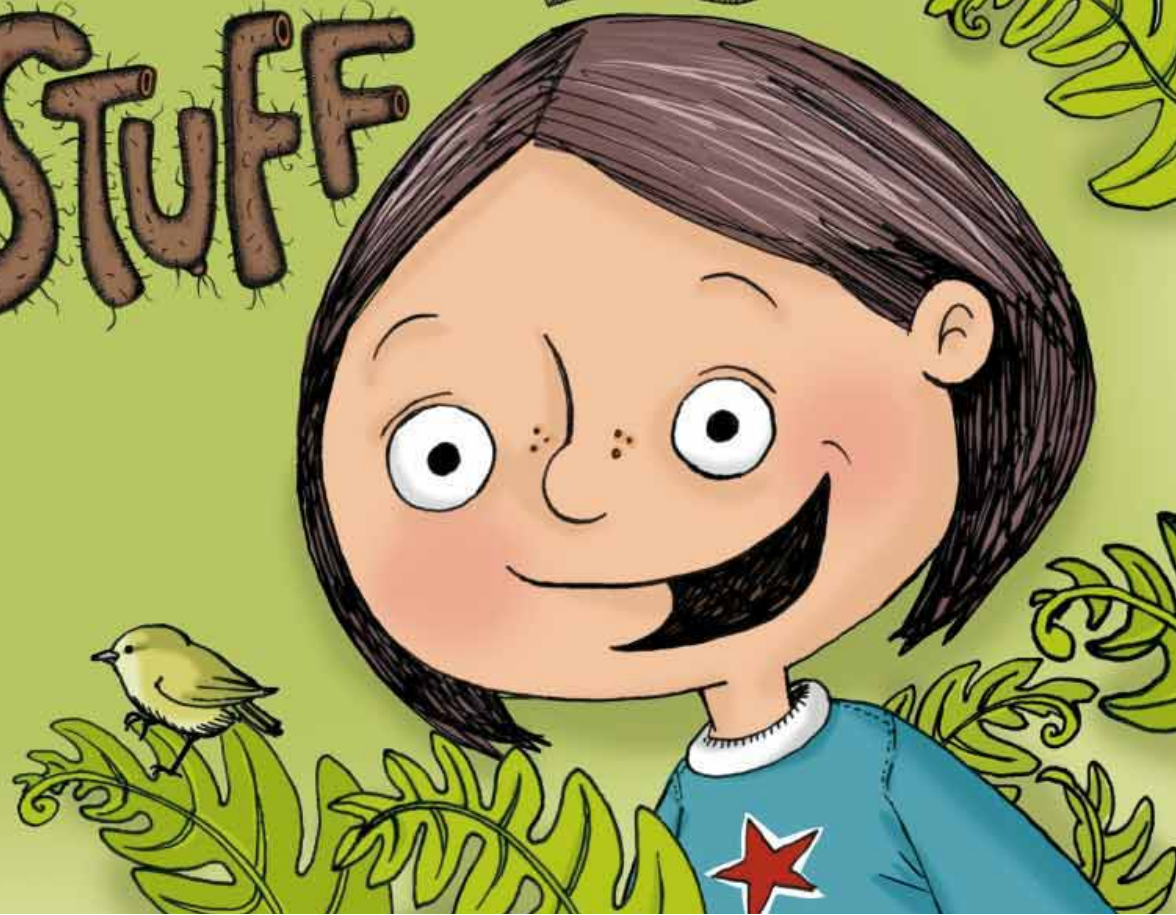


Uncle Don  
knows **HEAPS** of  
**WACKY** STUFF



Uncle Don  
Knows  
**Heaps** of  
Wacky Stuff

Written by Anna Griffiths,  
illustrated by Ali Teo,  
designed by Communication Arts  
for the Department of Conservation.

ISBN 0-478-14006-1

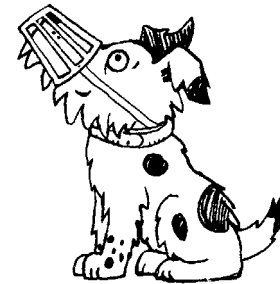
Published by the Department of Conservation  
PO Box 10-420  
Wellington

Printed on Ambassador Recycled Gloss & Works Smooth 100% Recycled  
because the environment matters. ♻️

All rights reserved

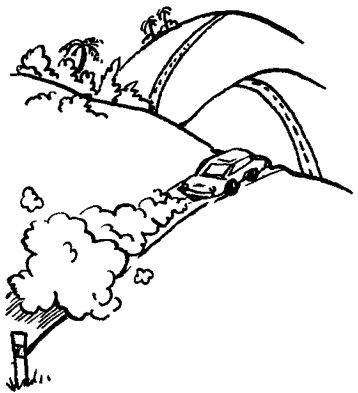
© Department of Conservation 2005

Uncle Don  
knows WEAPS of  
WACKY STUFF





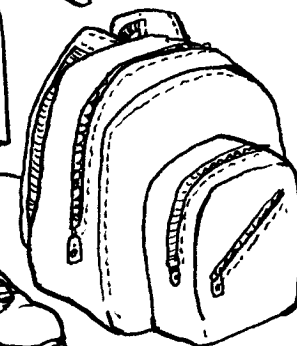
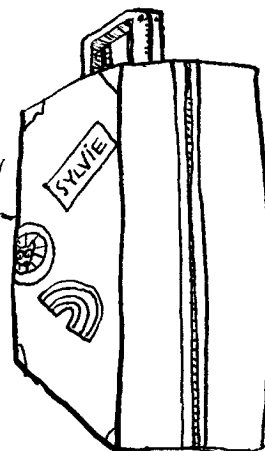
☆ NEW ZEALAND HAS ABOUT 3,080 NATIVE PLANT SPECIES AND ANOTHER 20,000 HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED



**I**n the holidays, Sylvie went to stay at her Uncle Don's and Aunty Mary's. They live wayyyy away.

Uncle Don's a DOC ranger and he knows heaps of wacky stuff about wetas and starfish and snails and possums and eels and birds and plants and trees and rivers and lakes and forests and mountains and loads of other things as well.

KIA ORA!  
Welcome to  
WAAAYAWAY



SOME OF THE WACKY STUFF UNCLE DON KNOWS... NZ'S SHORT TAILED BAT'S NEAREST RELATIVES INCLUDE THE VAMPIRE BAT

☆ THEY SWIM ON ONE SIDE - WITH BOTH EYES FACING UPWARDS ☆ WETLANDS ARE LIKE FILTERS AND HAVE POTENTIAL AS SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS

FLUNDER START OUT LOOKING LIKE NORMAL FISH, BUT AS THEY GROW, ONE EYE MOVES TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THEIR HEAD, THEIR BODIES FLATTEN OUT, AND...

☆ ADULT EELS SWIM ABOUT 5,000 km FROM INLAND N.Z. TO SOMEWHERE NEAR TONGA TO LAY THEIR EGGS BEFORE DYING ☆

UNCLE DON

KINA

Kina is one of a number of special dogs in New Zealand that have been trained to find kiwi nests, which are burrows in the ground. When he finds one, he stands still, and points at it with his nose.

Hi, I'm Kina!

underwater note pad

Pack

video camera

diving mask

drill

special poison

loppers

muzzle: just in case Kina forgets he's saving birds and nips one by mistake!

☆ SOME STARFISH DON'T NEED A MATE - THEY SPLIT THEMSELVES IN HALF AND GROW NEW ARMS INSTEAD ☆ MOUNTAINS GROW AND MOVE... VERY SLOWLY ☆

On Monday Uncle Don and his workmate Rewi went diving to count seahorses.  
 Sylvie couldn't go with them because she's 10. Besides she didn't really want to after  
 Uncle Don told her about the icky, slithery things down there.

PAIKEA ARE WHALES FOR  
 FIVE FOR  
 50 YEARS.  
 HUMAN CAN  
 THEY TRAVEL AROUND  
 BREEDING IN  
 70,000 KILOMETRES - VELLING  
 THROUGH NEW ZEALAND  
 WATERS TO THE ROSS SEA  
 BEFORE THEY FEED  
 TO TONGA AGAIN

BABY EELS ARE  
 CALLED ELVERS AND  
 COME TO NEW ZEALAND  
 ALL THE WAY FROM  
 TONGA

WATCH OUT!  
 YOU'LL STRANGLE  
 YOURSELF ON  
 THAT THING!

INDIAN SEAWEED  
 AND ASIAN DATE  
 MUSSELS ARE  
 INVADING OUR  
 WATERS!  
 THEY  
 GET A FREE  
 RIDE TO NEW  
 ZEALAND  
 WITH SHIPS  
 CARRYING  
 THEM HERE  
 FROM OTHER  
 COUNTRIES

SOME FISH ARE GREAT CLEANERS...  
 SCVENGE ON DEAD AND  
 DYING CREATURES, AND  
 YELLOW-EYED  
 MULLET LIKE  
 SPOTS TO TURN  
 DIRTY WATER  
 (EVEN WATER  
 WITH POOS  
 IN IT!) INTO CLEAN WATER

ORANGE  
 ROUGHY

★ If scientists find seven new species every fortnight – how many do they dis-  
 cover in a year? ★ If YOU were a paikea, how many kilometres would you  
 have swum in your lifetime so far?  
 ★ Colour the orange roughy orange (of course!). How many  
 have you coloured in?  
**ADD  
 'EM UP!**

Sometimes when Uncle Don dives he counts other fish, or measures underwater plants and takes water samples to see how healthy the sea is.

He keeps an eye out for anything new. Once he even had to save a whale stranded on the beach (something that wasn't exactly hard to miss).

While Uncle Don and Rewi dived deeper and deeper and deeper Sylvie explored

the rock pools and let the anemones tickle her fingers. But Sylvie didn't notice the crab eyeing up her toes and cracking his pincers!

**SNAP**

### IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACT:

UNCLE DON SAYS THAT WE SHOULD STOP POURING PAINT, DETERGENT AND OIL INTO STREET DRAINS! OTHERWISE THEY GO STRAIGHT INTO THE SEA, MAKING THE SEA AND THE CREATURES THAT LIVE THERE SICK. WHAT IF YOU TURNED ON YOUR TAPS AND PAINT CAME OUT?! BRUSHING YOUR TEETH, WASHING YOUR HAIR OR DRINKING WOULD MAKE YOU SICK TOO!

OUR ROCKPOOLS CAN HAVE UP TO 83 SPECIES LIVING IN THEM AND 54 OF THESE ARE ONLY FOUND IN NEW ZEALAND

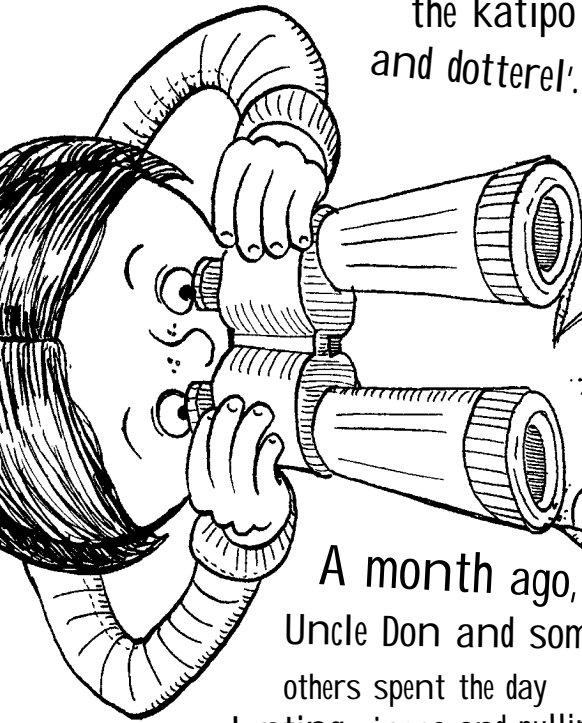
WE KNOW OF ABOUT 8,000 MARINE AND COASTAL SPECIES. YET, ON AVERAGE, AROUND SEVEN ARE DISCOVERED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

OCTOPI CAN CHANGE THEIR COLOUR AND TEXTURE IN AN INSTANT TO BLEND IN WITH THEIR BACKGROUND

On Tuesday, Uncle Don took Sylvie to see how the pingao grass on the sand dunes was growing.

'Watch where you hop!' he said.

'We don't want to freak out the katipo and dotterel!'



A month ago, Uncle Don and some others spent the day planting pingao and pulling out marram grass to help the sand dunes.

While there they found a dotterel's nest in the dunes, and Uncle Don put a little fence around it so that no-one would stand on it by mistake. Uncle Don showed Sylvie the nest through his binoculars. It was just as well there was the fence, otherwise, even with binoculars the eggs would have been very hard to see.

WE'RE TAKING OVER THIS DUNE!

STOP THREATENING ME - I'M TAONGA!

Marram grass

## WATCH OUT!

★ Help Sylvie through the sand dunes to Kina – remember, she mustn't stand on pingao, dotterel eggs or katipo along the way!

MAORI REGARD PINGAO AS TAONGA (TREASURE) AND USE IT FOR WEAVING.

PINGAO CREATES SAND DUNES THAT ARE THE RIGHT SHAPE FOR NEW ZEALAND'S COASTAL CONDITIONS. UNLIKE MARRAM GRASS WHICH MAKES SAND DUNES STEEPER AND LESS DURABLE.

DOTTERELS ARE NESTING IN MORE EXPOSED SITES, CLOSER TO THE SEA BECAUSE OF THE STEEP SAND DUNES THAT MARRAM GRASS CREATES.



SAND DUNES ARE SOME OF THE RAREST HABITATS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND ARE HOME TO SOME OF OUR MOST ENDANGERED SPECIES INCLUDING PINGAO, THE KATIPO AND DOTTERELS.

UNCLE DON SAYS WE NEED MORE SAND DUNES BECAUSE THEY PROTECT US FROM THE SEA! WE NEED TO STOP WRECKING THEM BY DRIVING OVER THEM AND SLIDING DOWN THEM. IF WE WALK ON THE SAND DUNES, WE SHOULD STEP AROUND THE PLANTS, BECAUSE THEY HELP TO BUILD THE DUNES - AND IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, THEY ARE HOME TO THE KATIPO SPIDER!

IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACT:

it's best to keep dogs away from the sand dunes but if you do take your dog make sure it's on a lead and that you keep it right beside you.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'D LIKE TO BE YOUR FRIEND. MY NAME'S KINA!

DON'T TRY FOOLING ME! YOU'RE NOT A KINA - YOU'RE A DOG!

BUT I AM KINA!

IF PEOPLE ARE ABOUT AND THE DOTTEREL CHICKS ARE A BIT OLDER, THE PARENTS WILL GET THEM TO HIDE. BUT IF THE CHICKS SPEND ALL THEIR TIME HIDING, THEY WON'T SPEND ENOUGH TIME FEEDING, AND WILL TAKE LONGER TO GROW AND FLY.

IF PEOPLE ARE ABOUT, PARENT DOTTERELS WON'T GO NEAR THEIR NESTS. BUT IF THEY'RE AWAY FOR TOO LONG, THEIR EGGS OR CHICKS MAY DIE FROM GETTING TOO HOT OR TOO COLD.

dotterel eggs that are getting cold

the katipo - New Zealand's only poisonous native spider

dotterel



Wednesday was rainy but Uncle Don and Sylvie still visited some nearby wetlands. They rowed to the middle of the swamp and the water was really murky. Uncle Don had set a net there and he began to pull it in. There were heaps and heaps of koi carp which Uncle Don says eat everything in sight.

Sylvie helped to pull the koi carp from the net.

UNCLE DON SAYS WE NEED MORE WETLANDS BECAUSE THEY DO A REALLY IMPORTANT JOB IN MAKING OUR LAND HEALTHY. WE DRAINED HEAPS OF WETLANDS BEFORE REALISING THEY HELP TO STOP FLOODING, HEAPS OF BIRDS LIKE THEM, AND THEY CLEAN POLLUTED WATER - WHICH IS WHY THEY'RE LIKE OUR KIDNEYS. YOUR KIDNEYS ACT LIKE A FILTER, SO IF MOST OF YOUR KIDNEYS WERE TAKEN AWAY YOU'D BE IN HOSPITAL MOST OF THE TIME!

IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACT:

INTRODUCED PESTS ARE THREATENING OUR WETLANDS! KOI CARP GOBBLE A LOT OF OUR NATIVE WATER PLANTS

WE'VE DRAINED ALMOST 90% OF THE NATURAL WETLANDS THAT EXISTED 100 YEARS AGO

THE EARLIEST MAORI SETTLED AROUND COASTAL ESTUARIES AND LAGOONS BECAUSE THERE WERE HEAPS OF SHELLFISH, FISH AND EELS

brown teal

pukeko

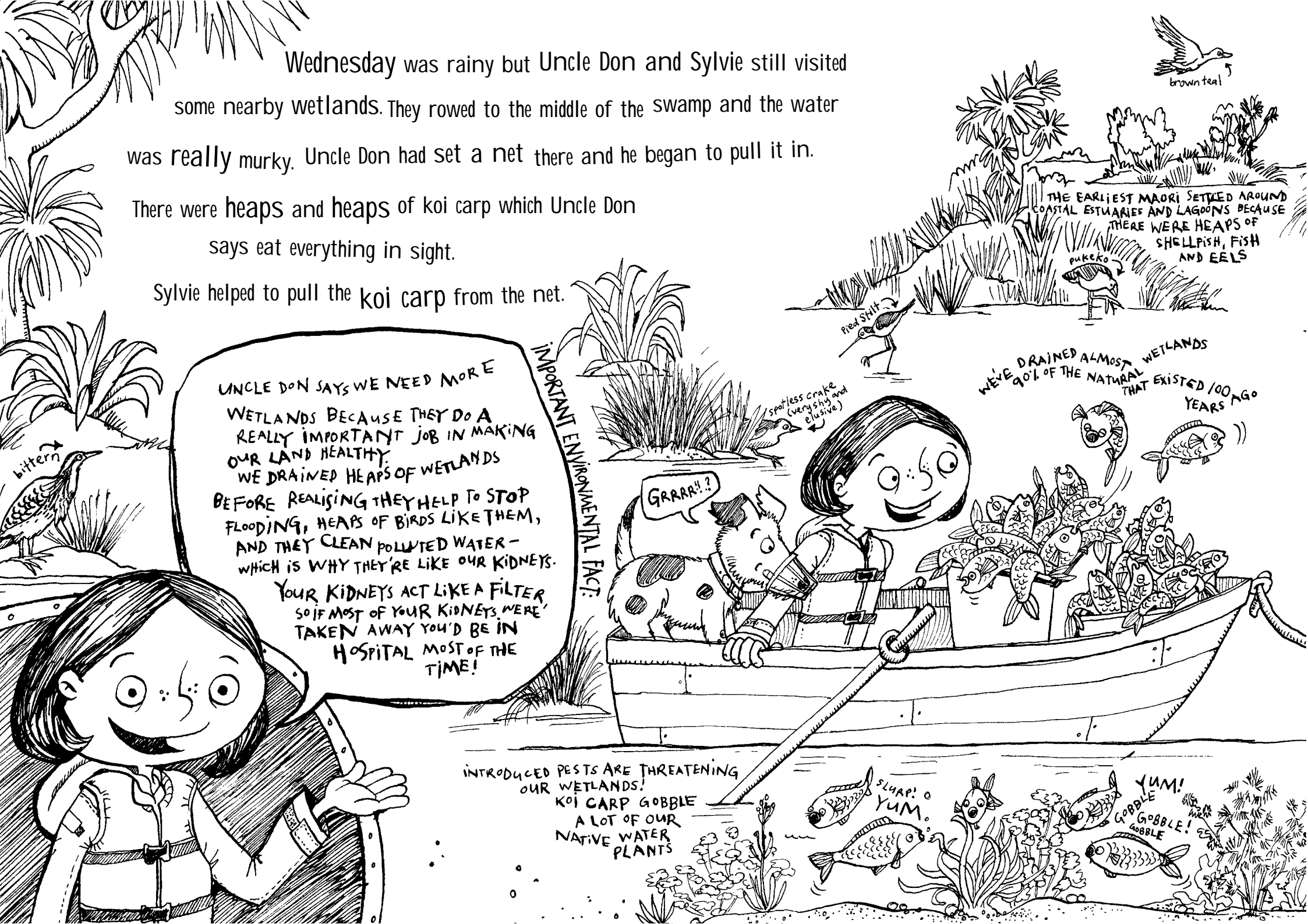
Pied Stilt

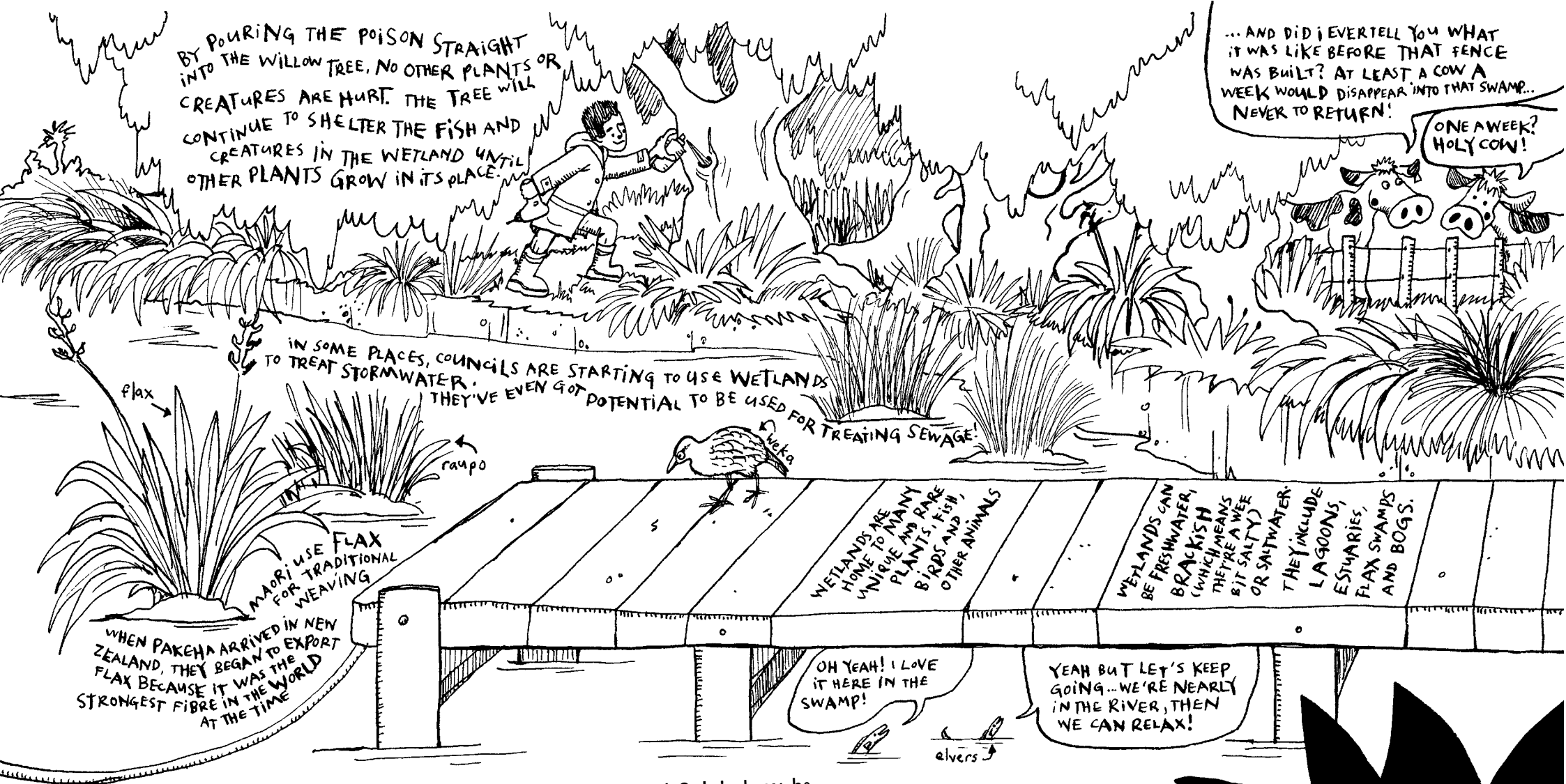
spotted crane (very shy and elusive)

GRRRR!?

SLURP! YUM!

YUM! GOBBLE GOBBLE! GOBBLE





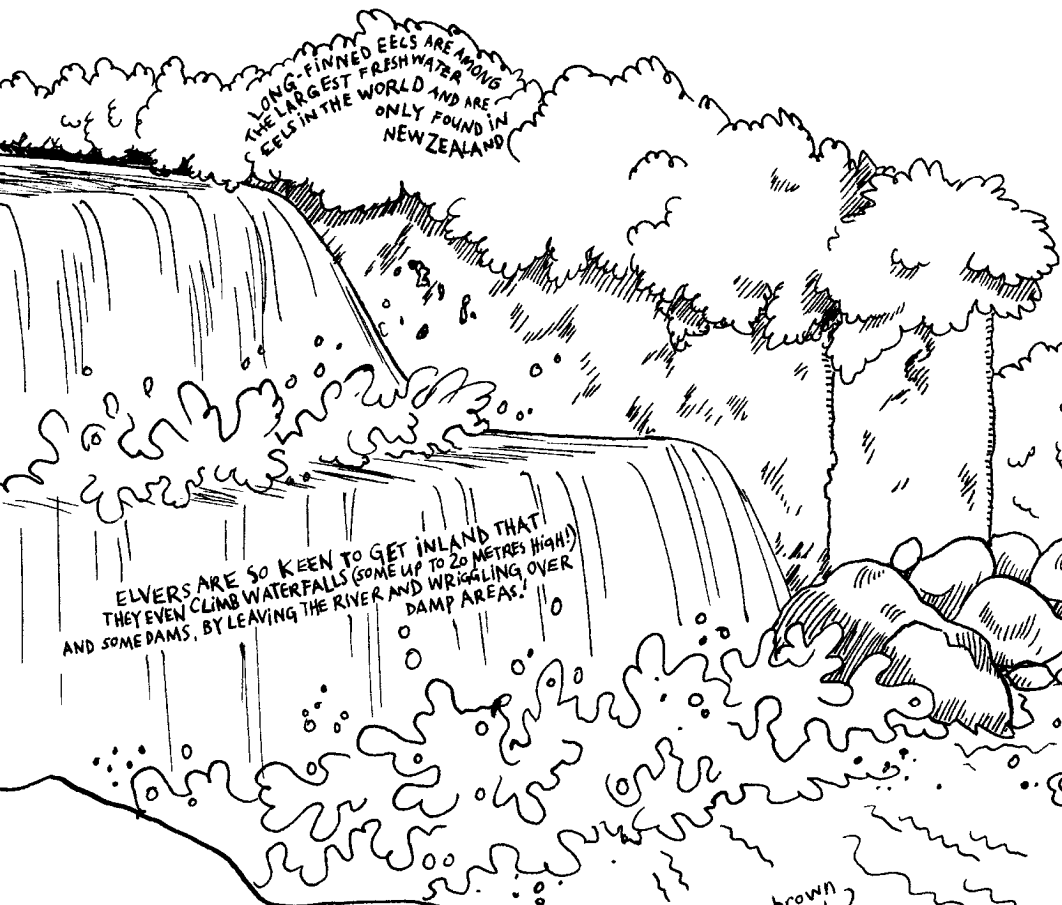
Later Uncle Don moored the boat and showed Sylvie how he was poisoning the willow trees, because their roots clog up the waterways and they attract rabbits as well as other pests that prey on birds. He drilled a hole in the willows' trunks and poured in poison.

Even though they were a pest, Sylvie couldn't help feeling a bit sad about the willows.

### THINGS THAT ARE THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT!

When you stop the car and go for a walk...

- ★ How many different leaves can you find on the ground?
- ★ Collect them and stick them in this book.
- ★ Describe their different shapes and colours.
- ★ Find out what plants they belong to.



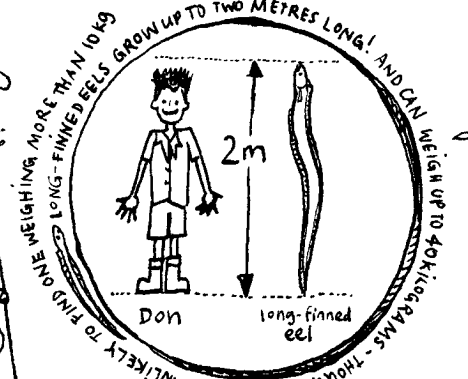
Uncle Don had a call from Rewi on Thursday.

'The elvers have arrived!

We have to give them a hand!'

MY! WHAT BIG WORMS YOU ARE!

OH NO! WE WON'T MAKE IT UP HERE! HELP, UNCLE DON!!



## FIND THE LETTERS!

Read the number plates of cars that you see. How long does it take before you have the letters to spell the following words?

- \* Dam
- \* Eels
- \* Weir
- \* Elvers
- \* Culvert

ALTHOUGH YOU'LL FIND LONG FINNED EELS IN MOST OF OUR WATERWAYS, THEY'RE IN DECLINE DUE TO FISHING, POLLUTION, DRAINING AND HYDRODAMS BLOCKING THEIR JOURNEYS

LONG-FINNED EELS BREED ONLY ONCE - THEY LEAVE NEW ZEALAND AND SWIM 5000KMS TO SOMEWHERE NEAR TONGA WHERE THE FEMALES LAY MILLIONS OF EGGS. THE MALE FERTILISES THE EGGS AND THEN THE PARENTS DIE, NEVER TO RETURN TO NEW ZEALAND.

THE AVERAGE AGE EELS MIGRATE IS 23 YEARS FOR A MALE AND 34 FOR A FEMALE

COME ON YOU GUYS!

Uncle Don told Sylvie that elvers, which are baby eels,  
come all the way from somewhere near Tonga  
only to get stuck at the dam as they try to swim inland. When they can,  
he and Rewi help the elvers to continue their journey upstream by  
scooping them into containers, then setting them free above the dam.  
The dam was built a long time ago  
and it was too high for the elvers  
to cross even though they're really good climbers.  
Sylvie helped Uncle Don and Rewi  
but the elvers kept giving her frights!!! YIKES!

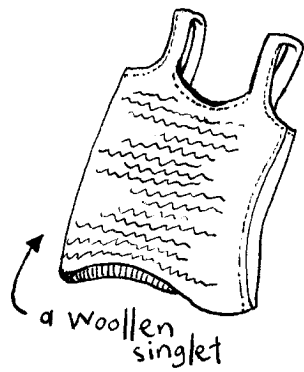




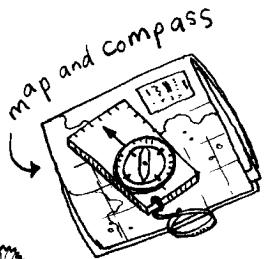
That evening, Uncle Don and Sylvie packed their bags because next day they were off into the forest for the night!

Uncle Don put a big plastic bag inside his pack and then all his things inside that. Uncle Don said that way everything would stay dry as a bone.

Sylvie reckoned there was a heck of a lot going into Uncle Don's pack but he said that, in the forest, things can change in a flash so it's better to have more stuff than not enough.



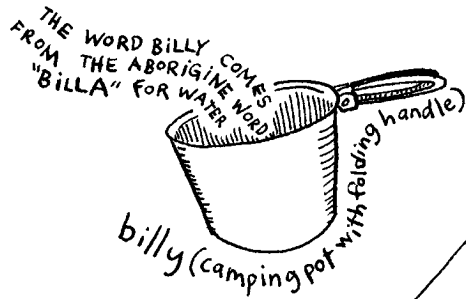
a woollen singlet



map and compass

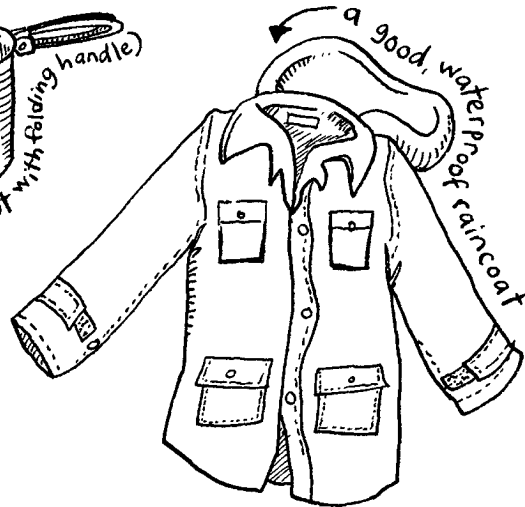


a woolly hat

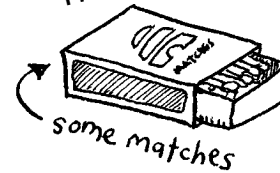


billy (camping pot with folding handle)

THE WORD BILLY COMES FROM THE ABORIGINE WORD "BILLA" FOR WATER



a good, waterproof raincoat



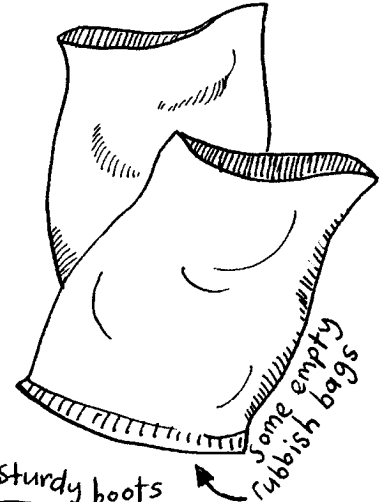
some matches



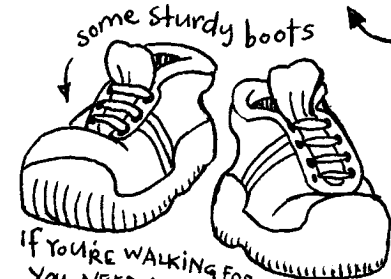
sunblock



socks



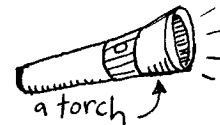
some empty rubbish bags



some sturdy boots

IF YOU'RE WALKING FOR A WHILE, THEN YOU NEED A GOOD PAIR OF BOOTS. JANDALS, AND EVEN SNEAKERS, ARE NOT VERY GOOD FOR WALKING IN THE BUSH

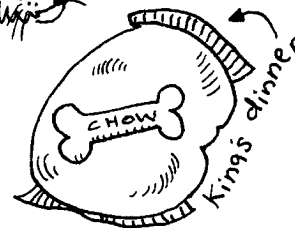
HMMM... I'D QUITE LIKE SOME OF THAT NOW ACTUALLY!



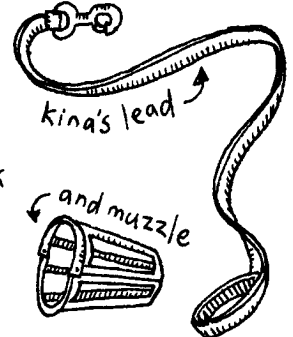
a torch



some food



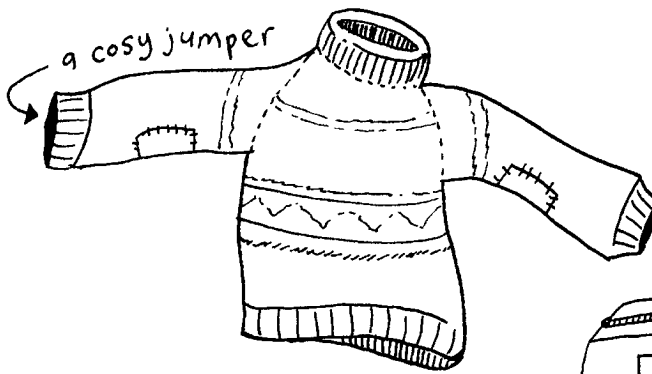
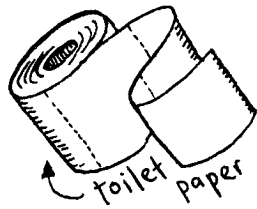
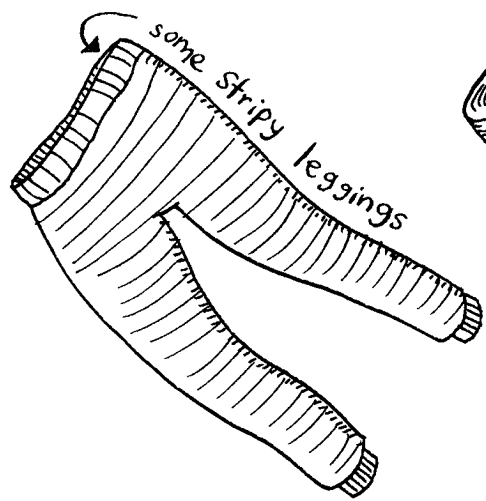
Kina's dinner



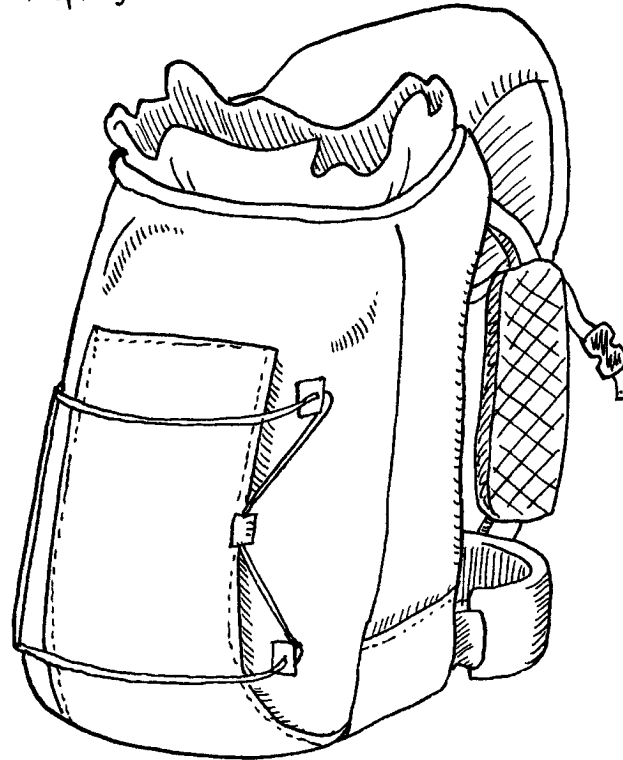
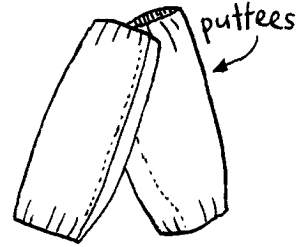
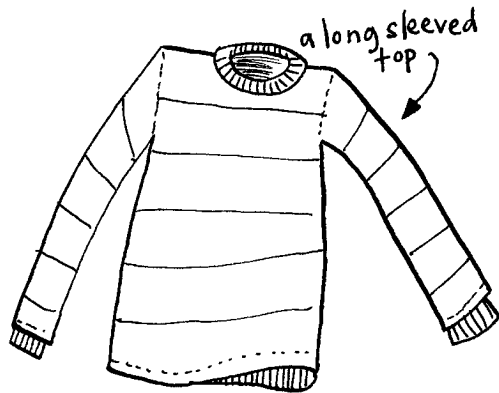
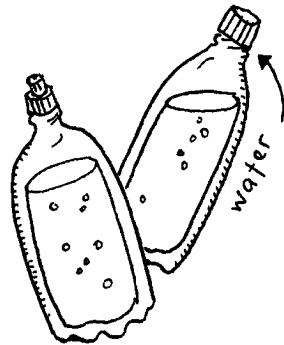
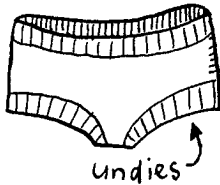
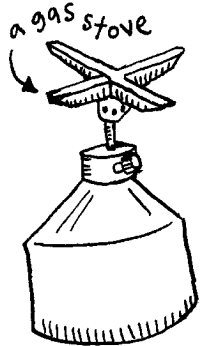
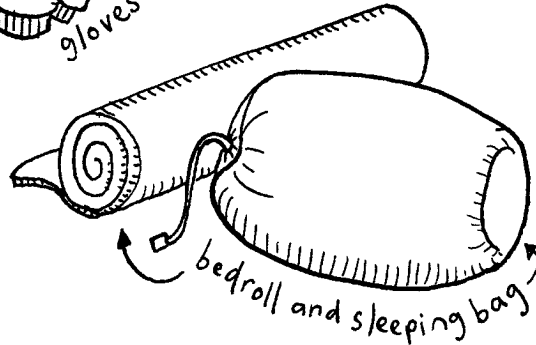
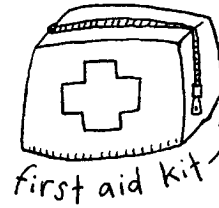
Kina's lead

and muzzle

**REMEMBER!**  
Look at the picture for one minute. Then close the book and write a list of all the things you can remember. How many things could you remember?



SCROGGIN IS A KIWI WORD  
TO DESCRIBE A MIXTURE  
OF CHOCOLATE, NUTS AND  
RAISINS THAT TRAMPERS  
TAKE TO KEEP THEM GOING  
BETWEEN MEALS



LOTS OF LAYERS ARE A GOOD IDEA.  
IF IT GETS HOT, YOU CAN PEEL OFF THE LAYERS  
AND IF IT GETS COLD, THE AIR TRAPPED BETWEEN  
THE LAYERS WILL KEEP YOU WARMER THAN A SINGLE LAYER WOULD...  
EVEN IF IT WAS A BIG, WOOLLY JUMPER



SOME SPECIES OF KIWI BECOME COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT BY THE TIME THEY ARE A FEW WEEKS OLD. OTHERS KEEP RETURNING TO THE NEST AND REMAIN WITH THE FAMILY GROUP FOR UP TO SEVEN YEARS.

### FEELIN' HUNGRY?

- ★ Find the predators in this picture.
- ★ What do they eat?
- ★ If a forest had 41 deer, 328 stoats, 976 possums, 7539 rats and 23,944 mice, how many mouths would be gobbling the forest foliage and creatures?

A couple of times he found some droppings and put them in a box that he labelled and popped in his pocket. He even put a dead stoat from a trap into a bag in his pack. **Uuugh!**

Along the way, Kina found **THREE** kiwi burrows. Uncle Don said there was an egg in one! And he found some feathers in another which showed that an egg he'd kept his eye on had hatched recently!

On Friday, Uncle Don and Sylvie set off with Kina into the forest. As well as his pack, Uncle Don took a video camera, some empty rubbish bags, a notebook, and a pair of loppers to help clear the track.

Every so often Uncle Don would pull out the notebook and write stuff in it about birds he could hear or flowers he saw.



RANGERS TAG KIWI SO THEY CAN TRACE THEIR WHEREABOUTS IN THE FUTURE. SOMETIMES THEY ATTACH RADIO TRANSMITTERS SO THEY CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW KIWI LIVE. THEY ALSO TAKE SAMPLES OF THE KIWI FEATHERS FOR DNA.





UNCLE DON SAYS WE MUSTN'T LET DOGS ROAM IN THE BUSH - UNLESS THEY'RE SPECIALLY TRAINED AND WEARING A MUZZLE, LIKE KINA. KIWI HAVE A REALLY STRONG SCENT, SO DOGS CAN FIND THEM EASILY. AND AS KIWI DON'T HAVE WING MUSCLES TO PROTECT THEIR CHESTS, DOGS CAN KILL THEM JUST BY PICKING THEM UP!

IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACT:

MANY BIRDS DON'T HAVE A SENSE OF SMELL, BUT KIWI CAN LOCATE FOOD (LIKE WORMS), WAY BELOW THE GROUND

BEFORE 1995, WE THOUGHT THERE WERE JUST THREE SPECIES OF KIWI: NINE WE KNOW OF AT LEAST FIVE - THE LITTLE SPOTTED, THE GREAT SPOTTED, THE BROWN KIWI, THE RUPIKI, AND THE TOKOMARA.

IN SOME AREAS, RANGERS REMOVE KIWI EGGS AND CHICKS FROM THEIR BURROWS AND TAKE THEM TO A SAFE PLACE TO INCUBATE, HATCH AND GROW. AT ABOUT SIX MONTHS OLD THE YOUNG KIWI ARE BIG ENOUGH TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST PESTS LIKE STOATS AND CATS AND CAN BE RETURNED SAFELY TO THE FOREST.

YOU CAN FIND OUT LOTS MORE ABOUT KIWI CONSERVATION AT [WWW.KIWI-RECOVERY.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.KIWI-RECOVERY.ORG.NZ) - THE WEBSITE OF BANK OF NEW ZEALAND KIWI RECOVERY

KIWI CAN LIVE FOR UP TO 30-40 YEARS.

60% OF KIWI ARE MORE LIKE MAMMALS THAN BIRDS. THEY HAVE WHISKERS LIKE A CAT, AND WHISKERS AT THE END OF THEIR BILL, AND NOSTRILS ARE MORE LIKE HAIR!

UP TO 95% OF KIWI CHICKS DIE BEFORE THEY ARE SIX MONTHS OLD - MOST OF THEM KILLED BY STOATS.

EEK! A THOUSAND SPECIES OF NATIVE LAND SNAILS, INCLUDING CARABIDIDS  
 NEW ZEALAND HAS AROUND A THOUSAND SPECIES OF NATIVE LAND SNAILS, INCLUDING CARABIDIDS  
 SO BIG, THEY'D COVER YOUR ENTIRE HAND! EEEK!

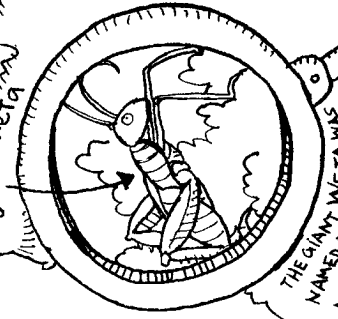


tui

BEFORE PEOPLE BEGAN TO LIVE IN NEW ZEALAND,  
 IT WAS COMPLETELY COVERED IN FOREST - EXCEPT  
 FOR THE MOUNTAIN TOPS. NOW LESS THAN A  
 QUARTER IS COVERED IN NATIVE BUSH.

UNCLE DON SAYS IF WE SNOOZE,  
 WE'LL LOSE. WE'VE GOT TO LOOK AFTER  
 OUR FORESTS NOW. SINCE PEOPLE  
 ARRIVED IN NEW ZEALAND, LOADS OF  
 THINGS HAVE BECOME EXTINCT,  
 INCLUDING NEARLY A THIRD OF OUR  
 NATIVE LAND AND FRESHWATER BIRDS,  
 ALMOST ONE-FIFTH OF OUR SEABIRDS,  
 THREE-OUT-OF-SEVEN SPECIES OF FROG,  
 ONE FRESHWATER FISH, ONE SPECIES  
 OF BAT, AT LEAST 12 INVERTEBRATES  
 SUCH AS SNAILS AND INSECTS, AND  
 11 PLANTS!

# IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS!

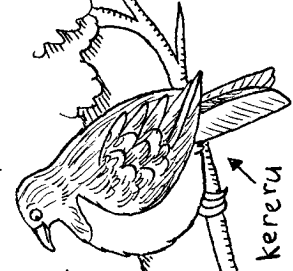


giant weta

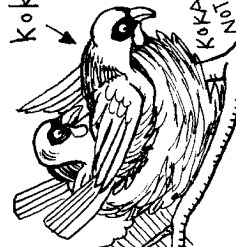
THE GIANT WETA WAS  
 NAMED "WETARANGA" BY  
 MAORI, MEANING "THE GOD  
 OF UGLY THINGS". IT WAS  
 THOUGHT TO BE EXTINCT IN  
 THE 1960'S BUT HAS BEEN  
 BREED SUCCESSFULLY IN  
 CAPTIVITY AND RELEASED TWO  
 TIMES AGAIN. IT LIVES FOR NOW ONLY  
 IN SOME OFFSHORE ISLANDS.



puru



kereru



kokako



pekapeka

NEW ZEALAND'S BROWN TAILED BAT  
 ARE ABOUT THE SIZE OF A MOUSE.  
 WE HAVE THE SHORT TAILED BAT.  
 AND THE LONG TAILED BAT. LIVE IN  
 REALLY OLD TREES.



(introduced pest plants (weeds) are threatening over 60 of our native plant species as the long-term survival of some of our native

toutouwai

# WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!

Match these English names with the creatures and their Maori names in the picture!

- ★ weta
- ★ wood pigeon
- ★ morepork
- ★ parson bird
- ★ brown parrot
- ★ robin
- ★ wattled crow
- ★ fantail
- ★ bat

When they **FINALLY** got to the hut, it was time to relax.

While Uncle Don set a camera to film a pair of kokako and their nest, Sylvie lay beneath the trees.

She could see **loads** of things going on way up high...

POSSUMS CHOMP THROUGH MILLIONS OF TONNES OF PLANTS EVERY YEAR. OUR NATIVE FORESTS CAN'T COPE!

MMM... YUMM...  
GOBBLE NATIVE  
SNAILS... SLURP...  
EGGS FOR BREAKFAST  
...SLURP... BURP...  
GREEDY... GIMME  
MORE Poo D...  
ZZZZ...

HEY WASPS,  
DIDNT YOUR  
MOTHER TEACH  
YOU TO SHAKE?!

NAFF OFF  
BIRDS, THIS  
HONEYDEW  
IS OURS!

YEAH!  
BZZZZZZ...  
STING!

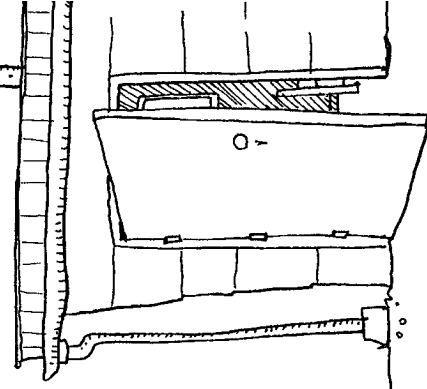
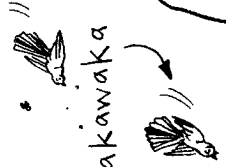
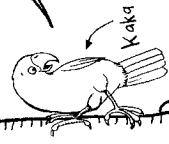
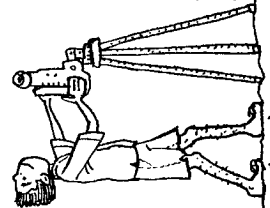
WASPS ARE INVADING  
OUR BEECH FORESTS  
AND EATING ALL  
THE HONEYDEW -  
DEPRIVING MANY NATIVE  
BIRDS OF AN IMPORTANT  
FOOD SOURCE

Poo! THESE  
socks SURE  
STINK!

Uncle Don's  
socks

KEEP MOVING  
UNCLE DON,  
THESE BUGS  
ARE TASTY!

piwakawaka

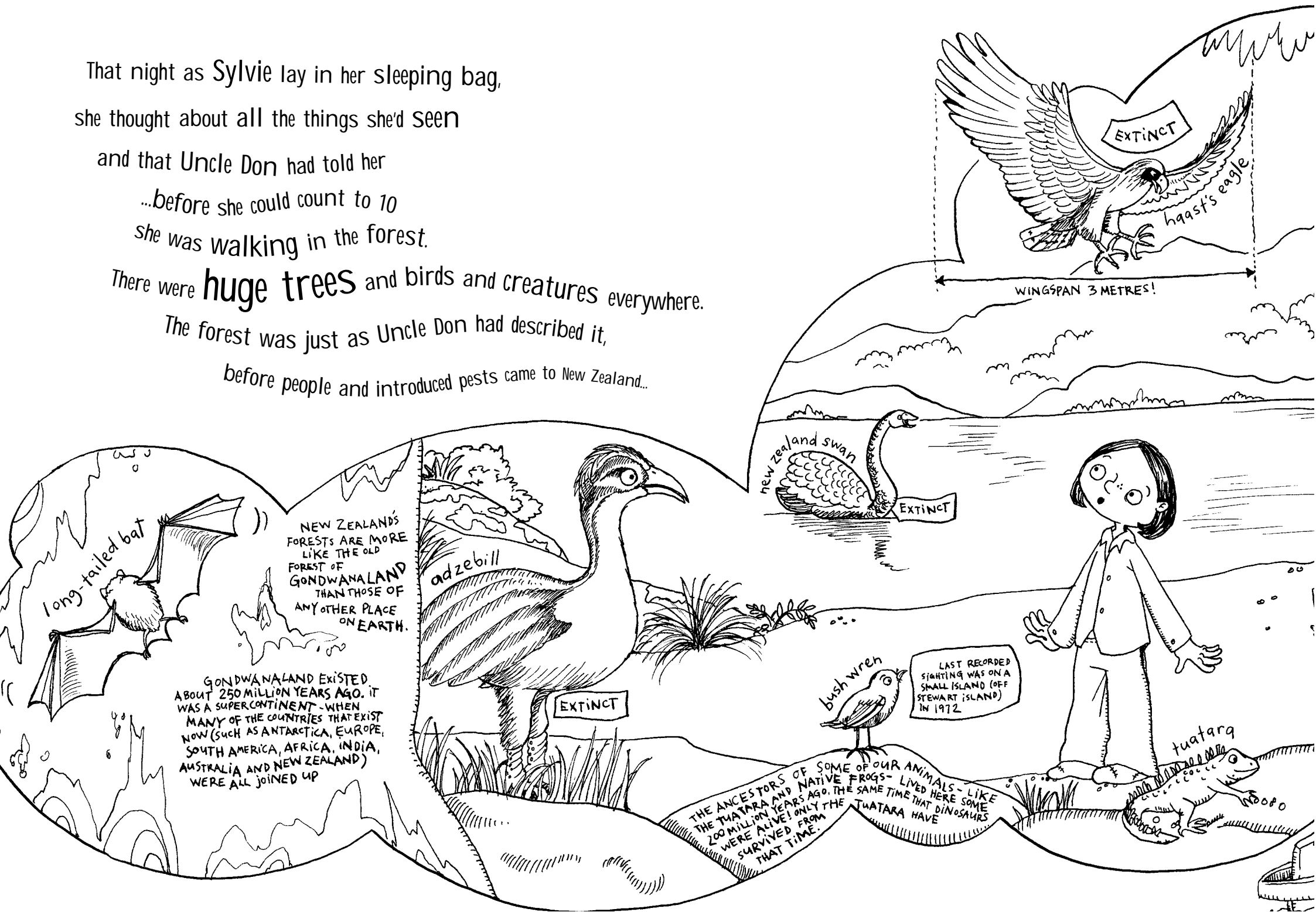


That night as Sylvie lay in her sleeping bag,  
she thought about all the things she'd seen

and that Uncle Don had told her  
...before she could count to 10  
she was walking in the forest.

There were **huge trees** and birds and creatures everywhere.

The forest was just as Uncle Don had described it,  
before people and introduced pests came to New Zealand...





PODOCARP  
FORESTS ARE  
SOME OF THE  
WORLD'S MOST  
ANCIENT FORESTS.  
THEY INCLUDE  
TREES LIKE THE  
TOTARA, MIRO,  
MATAI, RIMU  
AND  
KAHIKATEA

laughing  
owl  
RIP 1914

south island piopio  
(native thrush)

LAST  
SEEN  
IN 1900

huia

LAST  
SEEN  
IN 1907

kiwi

ENDANGERED

south island kokako

LAST  
SEEN  
IN 1950

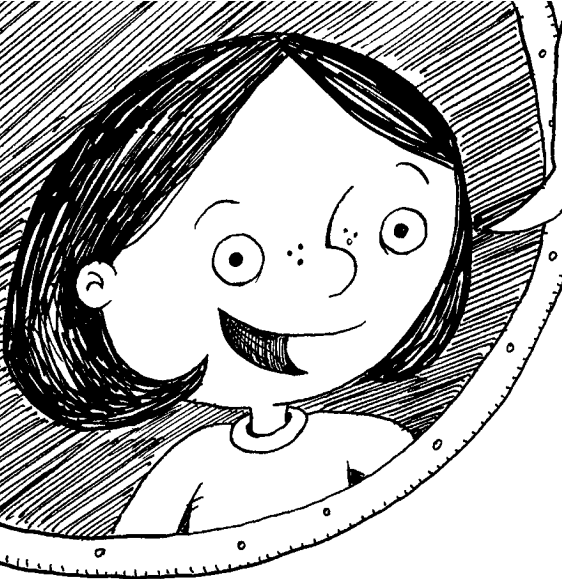
3 METRES!

THE GIANT  
MOA WAS  
TALLER THAN  
THREE METRES  
AND ONE OF THE  
BIGGEST BIRDS  
KNOWN IN

THE  
WORLD.  
IT'S THOUGHT  
THE LAST MOA  
BECAME EXTINCT  
ABOUT 400-500  
YEARS AGO.

giant moa  
EXTINCT

SCIENTISTS USING ANCIENT  
DNA HAVE IDENTIFIED THAT AT LEAST  
14 SPECIES OF MOA ONCE LIVED IN  
NEW ZEALAND.



UNCLE DON SAYS PEOPLE NEED  
TO BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT  
INTRODUCING PLANTS AND CREATURES  
FROM OVERSEAS BECAUSE THEY OFTEN  
AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENT IN  
WAYS WE COULDN'T IMAGINE.

IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACT:

When Sylvie woke, it was Saturday morning

and Uncle Don was making porridge.

They packed their packs (and their rubbish too!)

and Uncle Don left some candles

and boxes of matches

in the hut for other trampers.

Then he and Sylvie began

to climb the

mountain....up and up, along and zig



Uncle Don was on the lookout for thar and deer. He'd been hunting them for six months because they eat heaps of our native alpine plants and cause erosion, which isn't good for our mountains.

ARE WE THERE YET?

NOT FAR NOW! JUST UP AND AROUND AND AROUND AND UP AND UP AND UP AND UP AND OVER AND THEN WE'LL BE THERE!

BEFORE PEOPLE AND RATS ARRIVED, SEABIRDS WERE VERY OFTEN FOUND IN THE MOUNTAINS.

GRRR!

ALPINE PLANTS OFTEN HAVE LEAVES WITH FURRY UNDERSIDES TO HELP THEM STAY MOIST.

WITH ALL THE CHOMPING GOING ON, OUR NATIVE ALPINE PLANTS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RARE, AND SOME HAVE DISAPPEARED ALTOGETHER.

THE NEW ZEALAND KEA IS ONE OF THE FEW PARROTS IN THE WORLD TO LIVE IN THE SOUTH ISLAND. THEY LIVE IN THE MOSTLY HIGH COUNTRY AND ARE MOSTLY VEGETARIAN - AND ARE ALSO VERY BRAINY!

kea

mountain buttercup

UNSCRAMBLE THESE LETTERS TO FIND THE PESTS.

\*REAH

\*RATH

\*EDER

\*ASTTO

\*MP SOUS

\*SCIOMAH

\*ECMI

\*TRA

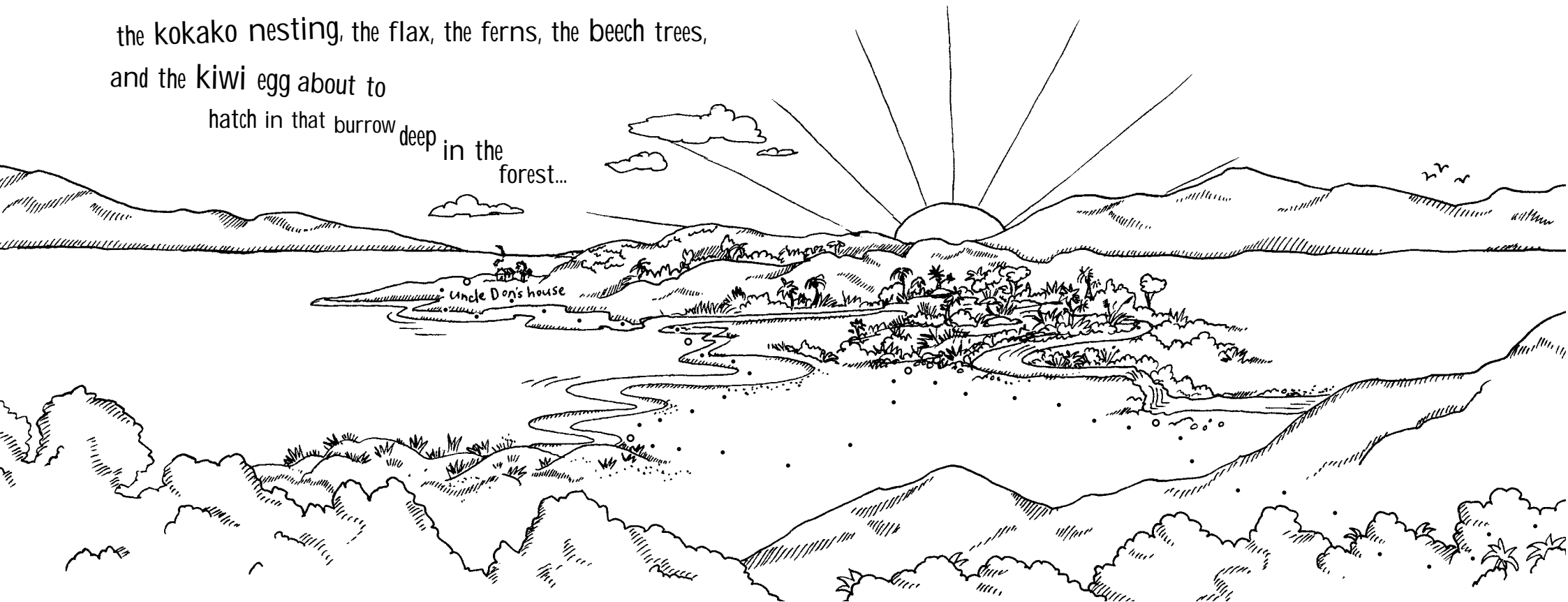
THE MAIN PROBLEM FOR MOUNTAINS IS THAT THEY'VE BECOME A POPULAR SPOT FOR MAJOR FEEDING FRENZIES. THE PESTS THAT CHOMP AT THEIR FOLIAGE INCLUDE DEER, THAR, CHAMOIS, HARES, RATS AND MICE, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED INTO NEW ZEALAND. IN THE SUMMER, POSSUMS JOIN IN AND STOATS ALSO TURN UP TO PREY ON THE BIRDS.

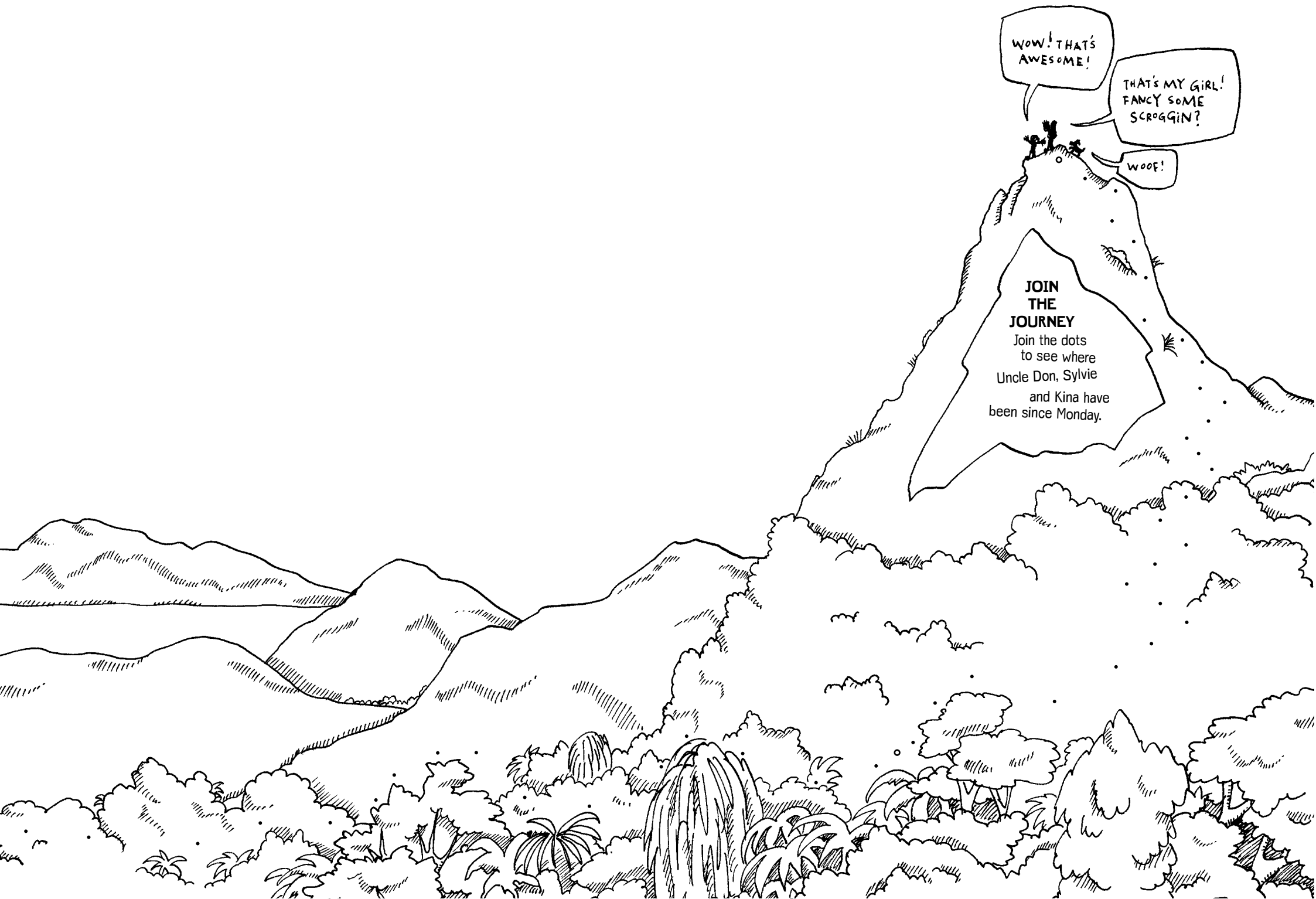


...and just as Sylvie was thinking she couldn't go uphill any  
more no matter what anybody said... she got to the top!

The forest stretched below with the river snaking its way  
to the wetlands, then the sand dunes  
and the sea beyond.

Sylvie thought of all the creatures and plants living in all those places -  
the whales voyaging across the deep sea, the octopus in the ocean,  
the dotterels hopping amongst the pingao, all the birds living in the  
wetlands, the eels waiting for Uncle Don at the dam,  
the kokako nesting, the flax, the ferns, the beech trees,  
and the kiwi egg about to  
hatch in that burrow deep in the  
forest...





WOW! THAT'S  
AWESOME!

THAT'S MY GIRL!  
FANCY SOME  
SCROGGIN?

WOOF!

# JOIN THE JOURNEY

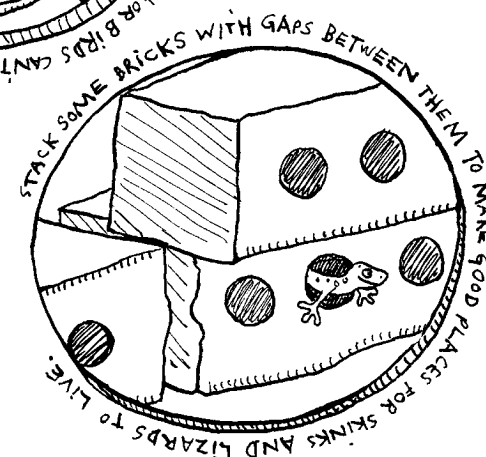
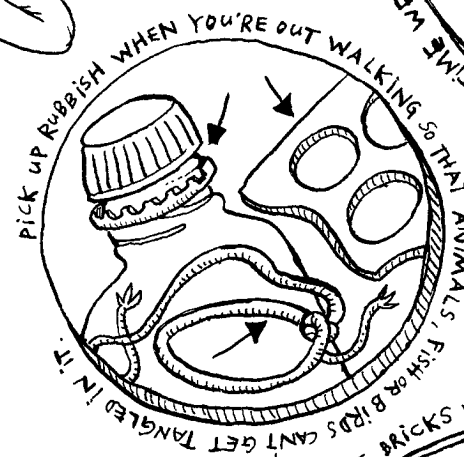
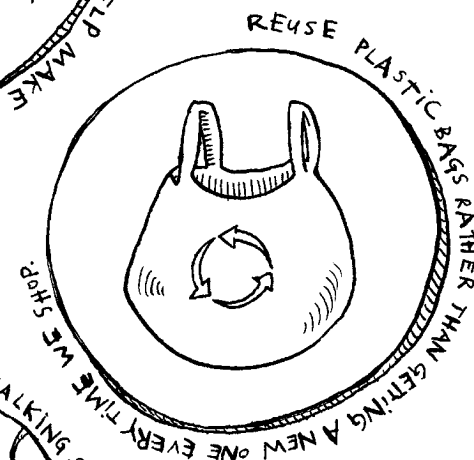
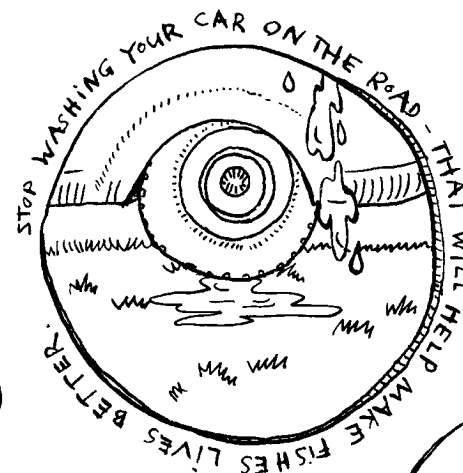
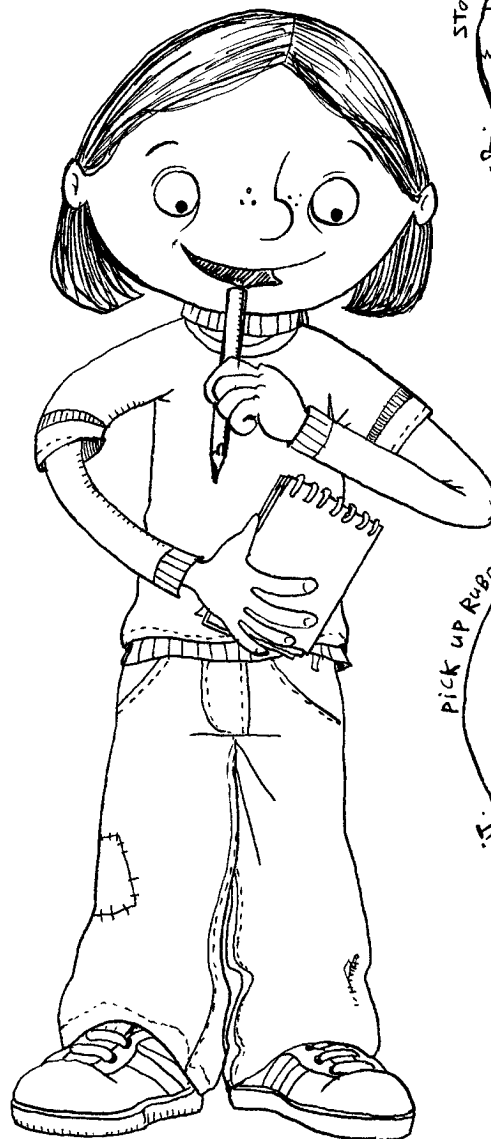
Join the dots  
to see where  
Uncle Don, Sylvie  
and Kina have  
been since Monday.

When Sylvie got back home,  
she told her mum and dad  
all about her holiday with  
Uncle Don and how there's heaps  
more to conservation than meets the eye.

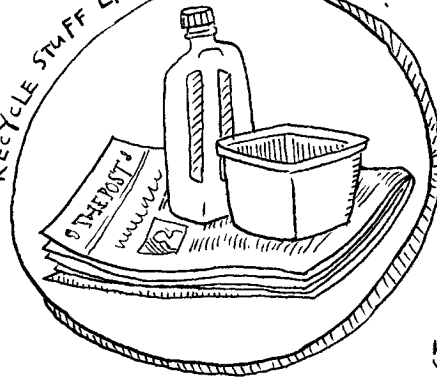
Then Sylvie made a list of all  
the things she could do differently  
to help New Zealand's plants  
and creatures and their  
special environments  
to survive:

#### WHAT RUBBISH!

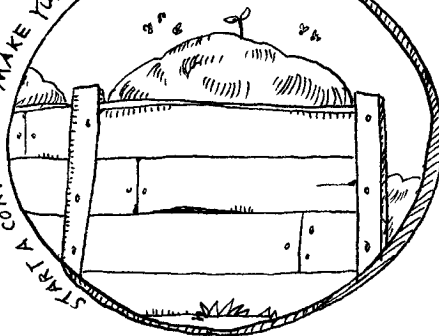
- ★ List all the rubbish you can find in this book.
- ★ Collect all the rubbish you make when you go on holiday.
- ★ Can you recycle any of it?
- ★ What can you do with the rest of it?



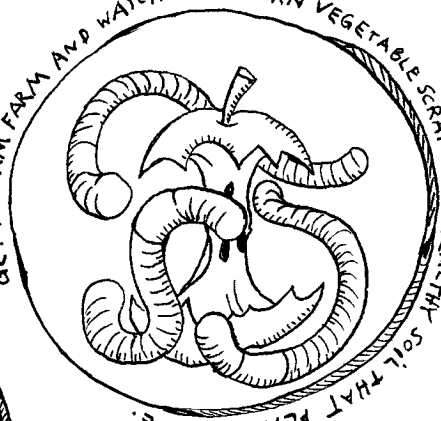
RECYCLE STUFF LIKE PLASTIC AND PAPER.



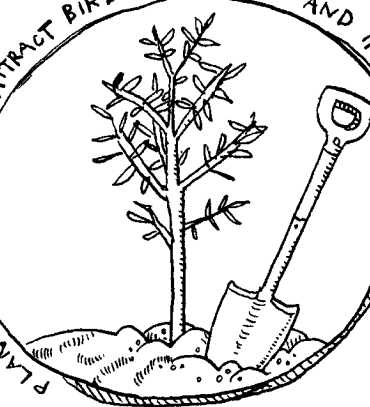
START A COMPOST TO MAKE YUMMY SOIL FOR OUR PLANTS.



GET A WORM FARM AND WATCH THEM TURN VEGETABLE SCRAPS INTO HEALTHY SOIL THAT PLANTS LOVE.



PLANT A NATIVE TREE TO ATTRACT BIRDS AND WETAS AND INSECTS.



ENVIRONMENTAL FACT FROM KINA:  
YOU CAN SET AN EXAMPLE JUST LIKE ME! EVEN THOUGH I'M A DOG I DON'T HURT BIRDS, WHEREAS MOST DOGS DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER. DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY MIGHT SEEM HARD AT FIRST BUT IT MAKES YOU FEEL REALLY GOOD!



## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES:

### ADD 'EM UP!

Q1: 728 new species a year.

### REMEMBER!

Raincoat, woolly hat, woollen singlet, long-sleeved top, jumper, stripy leggings, undies, gloves, boots, puttees, torch, matches, gas stove, billy, food, scroggin, water, sunblock, toilet paper, socks, insect repellent, map and compass, empty rubbish bags, first aid kit, Kina's lead, Kina's muzzle, sleeping bag and bedroll, Kina's dinner.

### FEELIN' HUNGRY?

Q1: Possums, mice, deer, rats, pigs.

Q2: Possums and deer eat trees and bushes; mice eat seeds and leaves; rats eat eggs and chicks and bushes and seeds; pigs eat leaves and eggs.

Q3: There would be 32,828 gobbling mouths in the forest.

### WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!

weta: wetapunga.  
wood pigeon: kereru or kukupa.  
morepork: ruru.  
parson bird: tui.  
brown parrot: kaka.  
robin: toutouwai.  
wattled crow: kokako.  
fantail: piwakawaka.  
bat: pekapeka.

### UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS!

SCIOMAH: chamois	MPSOUS: possum
EDER: deer	ASTTO: stoat
RATH: thar	TRA: rat
REAH: hare	ECMI: mice

### WHAT RUBBISH!

Beer can holder; Beer bottle; apple core; iceblock wrapper; old fishing line; empty water bottle; plastic tape; chippy packets; chocolate wrappers; coke bottle; toilet paper; plastic bag.

This book is about Sylvie  
and her holiday with her Uncle Don  
and Aunt Mary and their dog Kina.

BUT IT'S MAINLY  
ABOUT SYLVIE  
AND UNCLE DON  
AND THE THINGS  
THEY DO EACH  
DAY.

Anyhow, they live in the wops and  
Uncle Don's a ranger. So it's about  
the sea, the sand dunes,

the wetlands, the rivers, the forest  
and the mountains

and all the amazing things  
going on in the middle of nowhere...

It's got a story, activities  
and heaps of

WACKY facts.

Active minds in the  
backseat - A Department  
of Conservation  
activity book for  
youngsters on  
road trips.



Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

Also check out our website to find out more stuff: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

