

Made
in **RSA!** 

Supernova

The mag for curious kids

Unmasking
the Boy

KING

Vol
12.1



BK
PUBLISHING

PUZZLES | SCIENCE | NATURE | ACTIVITIES | SPORTS | COMICS

2024

Environment

JANUARY

- 20 Penguin Awareness Day
- 26 World Environmental Education Day
- 31 International Zebra Day

FEBRUARY

- 2 World Wetlands Day
- 15 World Hippopotamus Day
- 18 World Pangolin Day
- 18 World Whale Day

MARCH

- 3 World Wildlife Day
- 4 Community Environment Day
- 8 International Day of the Girl Child
- 8 Solar Still Day
- 14 International Day of the Girl
- 18 Global Recycling Day
- 20 World Rewilding Day
- 21 International Day of the Girl
- 21 Human Rights Day
- 22 World Water Day
- 20-26 National Water Week
- 25 Earth Hour
- 30 International Day of the Girl

MAY

- 3 International Leopard Day
- 3 World Sun Day
- 5-11 International Compost Week
- 17 Endangered Species Day
- 20 World Bee Day
- 22 International Day for Biodiversity
- 25 World Fish Migration Day
- 25 Africa Day
- 31 World Parrot Day

JUNE

- 1 World Reef Day
- 3 World Bicycle Day
- 4 World Food Safety Day
- 5 World Environment Day
- 8 World Oceans Day
- 15 Global Wind Day
- 16 Youth Day
- 17 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 21 World Giraffe Day
- 22 World Rainforest Day

- 14 Shark Awareness Day
- 15 World Youth Day
- 16 World Snake Day
- 18 Nelson Mandela International Day
- 26 World Mangrove Day
- 28 World Nature Day
- 29 National Soils Day
- 31 World Rangeland Day

SEPTEMBER

- 1 International Primate Day
- 1-7 Arbor Week
- 7 International Vulture Awareness Day
- 16 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- 16 International Coastal Clean-up Day
- 17 World Manta Day
- 18 World Water Monitoring Day
- 21 Zero Emissions Day
- 22 World Rhino Day
- 26 World Environmental Health Day
- 27 World Tourism Day
- 29 International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste

OCTOBER

- 2 Energy Efficiency Day
- 4 World Animal Day
- 5 World Teachers Day
- 7 World Habitat Day
- 7-13 National Marine Week
- 14 E-Waste Day
- 16 World Food Day
- 17 International Day for Eradication of Poverty
- 21 National Reptile Day
- 23 Sustainability Day
- 24 International Day of Climate Action

NOVEMBER

- 1 World Ecology Day
- 2 National Children's Day
- 20 World Children's Day

#PeopleCaringForTheEarth

Hi SuperKids



Candice

Welcome to the first issue of our brand new Volume 12! The start of a new year (and a new volume) always brings lots of excitement for our team, as we plan out new ideas, new articles and new content for you! And, we are super excited to celebrate *Supernova* turning 12 this year!

As we enter the new year and our new volume, I thought it was fitting to feature an animal that is very special and unique to the African landscape – meerkats! They are so resilient and adaptable, with unique strategies for finding food and shelter in the harsh desert environments they call home. By embracing change and being open to new experiences, meerkats can teach us to navigate life's challenges more effectively and emerge stronger than before!

Most remarkably, meerkats thrive because they rely on each other and work together. This lesson is especially true for me as I enter my third year of being the editor of *Supernova* magazine – not only do I rely on the brilliant skills and hard work of my awesome team, but I am also very thankful for their innovative ideas and family spirit.

We hope you enjoy this new issue packed with fascinating bits on the world around us, and we look forward to embarking on new adventures together in the coming year! Happy reading, and stay curious kids!

Special thanks to our contributors:

Andrea Vermaak
Alexandra Botha-Green
Edward Allemann
Xolani Makoene
Chanel Roux
Alexa Simon
Sinekhaya Fikeni
Lizé Behrens
James Dufana
Kirsten Wessels
Alyx Bell
Misha Preller

BK PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 6314
Pretoria
0001
South Africa
T: +27 12 342 5347



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Alexa's top picks in this issue!

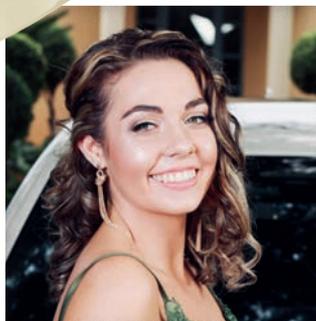
Hey guys! These are my absolute top picks that you **HAVE** to check out in this new issue!

I loved the beautiful photo of the Southern Pinwheel Galaxy! Did you know that it is 15 million light years away?

My favorite article is the **Get Active** (page 38), all about creating a paradise for our feathered friends!



I loved the tips on how to make my garden more bird friendly, and how to make a bird feeder that is non-toxic!



Alexa
Intern

I loved that this issue covers my favorite animal - a meerkat!

I was super surprised to learn that meerkats can eat some types of venomous snake and scorpions without getting hurt!

Check out more super facts about meerkats in **Ant's Eco Adventure** (page 24).



I was thrilled by this marvelous adventure to Madagascar in **Andy's Atlas** (page 16). Everything is so bright and colourful!



The Regulars

The Pinboard
By you. For you.

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I never get picked...

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The Features

24 Marvelous Meerkats

In the world of meerkats, adventure and friendship reign supreme! These lovable critters are famous for their playful nature and strong family bonds. From their cozy underground homes to their lookout duties for sneaky predators, meerkats have a lot to teach us about teamwork and fun!



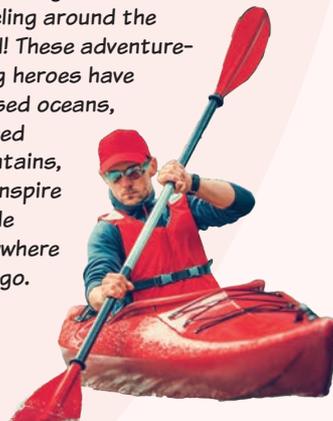
29 Make a meerkat bird feeder



Get ready to bring a bit of the savannah to your backyard with this super fun craft! Let's turn a simple Pringle can into a meerkat bird feeder that will attract feathered friends from far and wide! Get ready to get crafting and bring a touch of the wild to your own backyard habitat.

Amazing African Travelling the World 34

Embark on a thrilling adventure across continents as we showcase the incredible journeys of Amazing Africans traveling around the world! These adventure-loving heroes have crossed oceans, climbed mountains, and inspire people everywhere they go.



King Tut: The Boy King 30

Step back in time and uncover the mysteries of ancient Egypt, and one of history's most iconic pharaohs. Known as the 'boy king', we'll take a closer look at the life, death, and treasures of King Tut, exploring the secrets hidden within his tomb and the fascinating discoveries made by archaeologists!



Answers for What'cha Reading, page 41:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1a. 18 th | 2a. afterlife |
| b. animal | b. burial |
| c. Kings | c. death |
| d. sarcophagus | d. intact |

Answer for Brain Games, page 40:
Secret Phrase: The Afterlife

Ask Jules?

Louise (8)

from Irene asked us:

Why is the ocean salty?



Jules

Excellent question! Let's dive a bit deeper into the salty secrets of the sea! The ocean is salty thanks to a process called salinity. Every time it rains, water flows over the land, picking up tiny particles of minerals and salts along the way. These minerals and salts, like sodium and chloride, eventually end up in rivers and streams, and are then carried to the ocean. But that's not all – underwater volcanoes and vents also release minerals and gases, including salts, into the ocean. Over millions of years, this process has led to the ocean becoming salty.

But why doesn't all that salt just sink to the bottom of the ocean? Well, the ocean is constantly in motion, with waves, currents, and tides stirring things up. This mixing action helps distribute the salt evenly throughout the ocean, so it doesn't all collect in one place. So, the next time you splash around in the ocean and taste its salty goodness, remember that it's not just water – it's also filled with minerals!

South African champions flying the flag

Although the Springboks received most of the praise for their Rugby World Cup win in 2023, here are a few South African achievements that you may have missed!

Sheep-shearing Champions

At the Golden Shears and Woolhandling World Championships, Bonile Rabela and Zwelamoakhosi Mbuweni took home the gold and silver medals, respectively, flying the South African flag high once more in 2023!

National Honey show

The winning streak didn't end there, though! South African beekeepers did the country proud as they competed and won at the 2023 National Honey Show held in the UK. What a year for our rainbow nation!



Taking a leap!

Ever wondered where the 29th of February comes from?

This year, we're in for a special treat because we've got a whole extra day in the month of February! Yep, that's right – it's leap year time! A leap year is like a regular year, but with a fun twist. Instead of the usual 365 days in one year, leap years have one extra day, making it a total of 366 days.

The science of leap years all come down to our planet's journey around the sun. It takes Earth 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes and 45 seconds to complete one orbit around the sun. So, every four years, those extra 6 hours add up to make one whole extra day. This year, enjoy your bonus day of playing, learning, and exploring!

?! Get this!

Julius Caesar introduced the first calendar leap year in 46 B.C.

?! Get this!

Babies born on the 29th of February are called 'leapers' or 'leaplings'. Technically, their birthday only comes around every 4 years!

Creature FEATURE

Found only in the forests of Madagascar, the fossa is a mysterious predator that looks like a mix between a cat and a mongoose. Fossas are actually the largest carnivores on the island! They are skilled climbers and hunters, with long, slender bodies and sharp claws that help them navigate the dense jungle canopy. Despite their cat-like appearance, fossas are more closely related to the mongoose. They have a unique way of moving through the trees called 'dorsal walking', where they use their back feet to propel themselves forward. Fossas are solitary and keep to themselves, except during mating season. They are known for their incredible agility and stealth when hunting lemurs and other small prey, and can hunt during the day or night, from trees or from the ground. Despite their fearsome reputation, fossas are also excellent tree seed dispersers, playing a vital role in maintaining the health of their forest habitat. Fossas communicate with each other using their scent glands, which they use to spray rocks and trees in their territory.



Did you know?

It's illegal to own just one guinea pig in Switzerland!



Did you know?

Butterflies taste with their feet.

This helps them find the best flowers to lay their eggs on.



Learn your Local Languages

afrikaans edition



HALLO, MY NAAM IS...
Hello, my name is...

ASSEBLIEF
Please



BAIE DANKIE!
Thank you!

HOE GAAN DIT MET JOU?
How are you doing?



JAKKALS TROU MET WOLF SE VROU
Translation: Jackal marries wolf's wife
Meaning: The sun is shining while it rains



TOTSIENS
Goodbye



AI TSA!
Meaning: Nice!

DIS 'N FEIT SOOS 'N KOEI
Translation: It's a fact, like a cow
Meaning: it is a fact and can't be disputed



DIE POPPE GAAN DANS
Meaning: Something troublesome is going to happen



LEKKER
Meaning: Something extremely good



SPRINGMELIES
Meaning: Popcorn



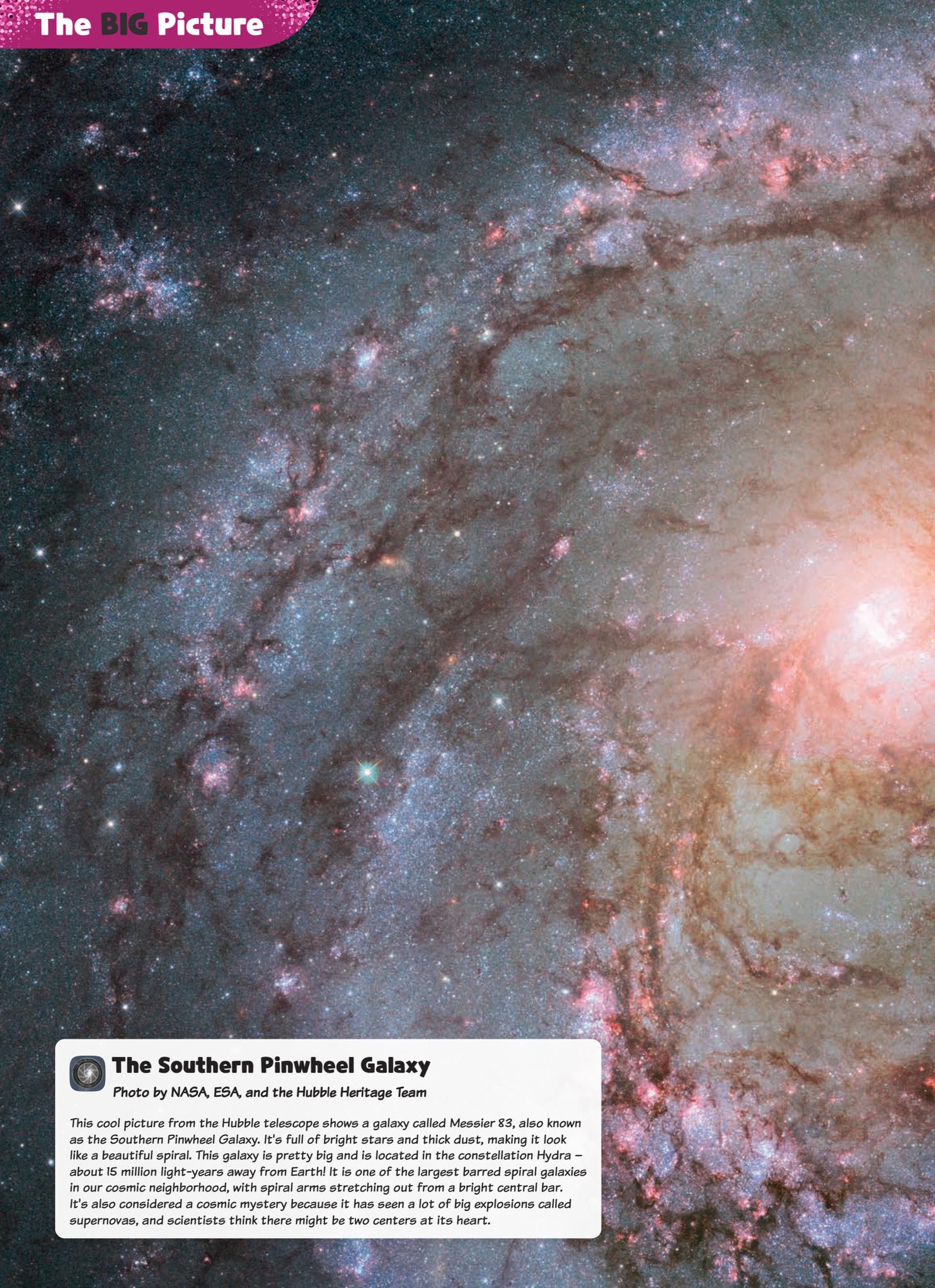
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The Southern Pinwheel Galaxy

Photo by NASA, ESA, and the Hubble Heritage Team

This cool picture from the Hubble telescope shows a galaxy called Messier 83, also known as the Southern Pinwheel Galaxy. It's full of bright stars and thick dust, making it look like a beautiful spiral. This galaxy is pretty big and is located in the constellation Hydra – about 15 million light-years away from Earth! It is one of the largest barred spiral galaxies in our cosmic neighborhood, with spiral arms stretching out from a bright central bar. It's also considered a cosmic mystery because it has seen a lot of big explosions called supernovas, and scientists think there might be two centers at its heart.



Get to know the
Composers

Elvis Presley

The king of rock 'n roll

Elvis Aaron Presley was born on January 8th 1935, in a small town called Tupelo, Mississippi.

Elvis, whose twin brother died at birth, grew up an only child in a poor family.

Growing up, he was surrounded by music – gospel tunes at church, blues in the neighborhood, and country music on the radio – which all sparked his love for music.

In 1953, he became the first member of his family to graduate with a high school diploma.

After graduation, Elvis burst onto the music scene with a sound that was brand new – a mix of rhythm and blues, gospel, and a touch of country.

His hip-shaking moves and powerful voice were unlike anything people had seen or heard before. Teenagers everywhere couldn't resist the charm of this young rebel, and soon, Elvismania took over the world!

His hits like "Heartbreak Hotel," "Hound Dog," and "Love Me Tender" became instant classics.

Already a household name, Elvis was drafted into the US military in 1957. Even though he was stationed in Germany, he still received stacks and stacks of fan mail!

Once he was released from the military in 1960, Elvis went on to release a whopping 24 studio albums during his career.

And Elvis wasn't just a musical marvel; he was a movie star too! He starred in over 30 films, showcasing his talent on the big screen.

He had a staggering 18 number one hits on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, won three Grammy Awards, and received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award at the age of 36.

Elvis remains one of the best-selling solo artists in the world, having sold 600 million to one billion record globally.

Even though Elvis died in 1977, his legacy lives on. From Graceland, his iconic home, to his gold records and countless awards, Elvis is still the King of Rock 'n' Roll!

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FUNKY FESTIVALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Did you ever think that making a baby cry, playing toe wrestling, or chasing after cheese could turn into big celebrations? Think again! Some yearly events come from old traditions or religious rituals, while others started because people liked things on social media or were just feeling bored!

Illustrations by Alexandra Botha-Green

The Monkey Buffet festival takes place in the ruins of the Phra Prang Sam Yot temple in Lopburi, Thailand. A huge pyramid of over two tons of fruit and vegetables is constructed for the guests of honour – around 2 000 local monkeys! The mischievous monkeys, which are considered sacred, eagerly participate in the feast and create a lively spectacle that captivates both locals and visitors alike.



Held in the town of Buñol, Spain's La Tomatina Festival is the world's largest food fight! Thousands of people from around the world gather to throw overripe tomatoes at each other, transforming the streets into a sea of red. The event is not just about playful chaos – it symbolizes unity and friendship.

Naki Sumo is a 400-year old tradition where sumo wrestlers compete to make babies cry. The rules are simple; whoever makes one of the babies cry first, wins! Traditionally it is believed that a crying baby has the power to ward off evil spirits, and a strong, loud cry means that the child will grow strong and healthy. Parents dress their little ones in colourful outfits, and the wrestlers use lots of amusing tactics to draw out their tears.



The History

Of Arcade Games

Words and layout by Misha Preller

Imagine this: flashing lights, catchy music, and the sweet sound of coins clinking – welcome to the world of arcade games! Before having fancy consoles at home, kids of all ages flocked to these magical places where giant machines with colourful screens ruled the gaming scene.

The Birth of Arcades

Long before arcades, people used to hang out with their friends at fun venues called amusement halls. These places were filled with games, but not the video kind. We're talking about cool stuff like pinball, skee-ball, ping pong and other classic games. Later on, someone had the genius idea to make games that could be played on a screen, and the arcade era was born!



Evolution of Fun

Kids worldwide rushed to arcades to experience unique and interactive games like Pac-Man, Space Invaders, and Donkey Kong. As technology got even better, graphics improved and arcade games became more and more engaging, competitive, and imaginative. With flashy lights and catchy music, arcades turned into the best spots for players and onlookers to hang out and have fun!

?! Get this!

Pac-Man's iconic shape was inspired by pizza!



The Legacy Lives On

As technology continued to sprint forward, the magic of arcades didn't disappear; it just found a new home. Home consoles like Nintendo, PlayStation and Xbox brought the arcade experience right into your living room. The legacy of arcades lives on in the games we play today, making every gaming adventure a piece of that awesome arcade history.

SELF-DRIVING CARS

Words by Lizé Behrens
Layout by Misha Preller



The world of self-driving cars is full of excitement, adventure, and a touch of magic. It's like living in a science fiction story! As technology keeps on evolving, buckle up and enjoy the ride – the future of driving is here, and it's as thrilling as a rollercoaster!

What are self-driving cars?

Imagine hopping into a car, settling into your seat, and saying, "Take me to the park!" without touching the steering wheel. That's the magic of self-driving cars! These futuristic vehicles use special technology to navigate and drive without needing a human to steer.



Get this!

The idea of driverless cars dates back to the 1930s, and the first prototype was built in 1958.



How do they work?

Self-driving cars use sensors and cameras to see all of the things around them. Basically, they are like super eyes! These eyes watch for other cars, people crossing the street, and even traffic lights! The car's brain, a super smart computer, then processes all this information and decides how to drive safely.

Improving our lives

These high-tech vehicles are designed to make our lives better. First off, say goodbye to asking "Are we there yet?" because you can play games, read, or even take a nap while the car takes you where you want to go. Self-driving cars can also help people who can't drive to get around easily!



What should we keep in mind?

Some people worry about self-driving cars and don't completely trust them. They are concerned with things like the computer making mistakes or hackers trying to play tricks on the cars. But, scientists and engineers are working hard to make sure self-driving cars are as safe as possible!

Snake rescuer



Hi, I'm Nick!

I am passionate about all wildlife and conservation. Most of my work focuses on reptiles (particularly snakes) and rescuing and relocating them.

What does a snake rescuer do?

Most people don't want snakes in and around their house, especially venomous ones! So, for the safety of people, pets, and the snakes themselves, we are called to capture the snake and release it back into natural areas.

What is a typical day like for you?

No two days are the same! Sometimes, I'm out the whole day rescuing & relocating snakes and even monitor lizards. Other days, I may spend a morning looking for pythons for a research project, or measuring and weighing rescued snakes, or giving a snake safety talk. On rainy, quiet days, I'm usually behind my laptop working on my research projects or writing educational articles.

What are some challenges in your job?

Sometimes, you will come across injured animals that can't be saved, which is really sad. Seeing our

rivers being polluted, natural areas being destroyed, or animals being poached is really hard for me too! One of the biggest challenges of my job is money, since many people I help cannot afford to pay me.



Do you need qualifications to do your job?

Qualifications are not necessary (experience is more helpful!), but there are some great snake handling courses you can do with the African Snakebite Institute. You have to be over the age of 16 though! You can also study herpetology (the study of reptiles & amphibians) at a university, which will give you lots of valuable knowledge and skills.



What is the best part of your job?

I obviously love rescuing and relocating reptiles, but what I enjoy most is research! I love learning more about these animals, finding out more about different species behaviour, and learning how best to conserve them – which is the most important thing!

N Nick's advice

The world desperately needs more people, especially young people, to take an interest in wildlife and conservation, and to take action too!

VAN LIFE

Living on the road

Words by Sinekhaya Fikeni

Ever dreamt of turning your home into a super cool, rolling adventure? All you need is a van packed with everything you need, and an open road calling your name!



Van life is like having a house on wheels – a cozy little space that can take you anywhere! Instead of a stationary home, you get to explore new places and wake up to different views every day. Some explorers have set up their vans with mini-kitchens, sleeping areas, chill nooks and some even have their own on-board bathrooms!

While van life is a blast, it's essential to know the real scoop. Yes, you'll have incredible experiences, but there might be some bumpy roads too.

- If you don't have an on-board bathroom, you might not have access to a shower every day!
- Not every country allows wild camping, so you won't be able to just sleep anywhere. You also need to make sure that you park and sleep in a safe place.
- Make sure you budget for unexpected expenses, like if your van breaks down!
- Van travelling might not be that cheap, depending on how far you drive.
- Travelling in winter might not be as enjoyable – if you can't sit outside, you'll be stuck in your van all day!



?! Get this!

39% of van lifers use public restrooms, while 35% have a built-in van toilet.

?! Get this!

People living on the road most commonly use showers at a gym to wash! The second most common option is with a built-in van shower.



Madagascar

The enchanting island



Words by Andrea Vermaak

Madagascar is an island east of Africa, filled to the very edges of its shores with history, culture and natural beauty.

Luc and Malala showed me around and told me more about their home...



Beautiful baobabs

Road No. 8 on the island's west coast is not an ordinary dirt road. It's lined with rare Grandidier's baobab trees. Known as the Avenue of the Baobabs, many of the trees are more than 800 years old and have trunks more than 45m in circumference.

The baobabs were granted temporary protected status in 2007 and may become Madagascar's first official natural monument.



The Tsingy de Bemaraha Nature Reserve is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It's a vast area of limestone caves, canyons, tunnels and towers and is extremely difficult to explore, with pinnacles up to 100m high!



I simply had to explore an old ruin before going home. My friends took me to Fort Manda. King Radama I's followers from the Merina tribe built it on the east coast in the early 1800s for the Royal Army.



Photo by Sylvain Cordier & Gamma-Rapho

The island is home to many creatures found nowhere else on Earth. One example is the aye-aye – the largest nocturnal creature in the world. They may look rather scary, but they're actually really gentle, harmless animals.

Marvelous Malagasy

Between seeing so many wonderful sights, I learnt a few interesting things about the Malagasy people. Their culture reflects aspects of East African and Southeast Asian cultural practices. Arabic, Indian, French, English and Chinese settlers have also influenced the Malagasy culture. It reminds me a lot of our Rainbow Nation!



You can find panther chameleons all around the tropical forests of Madagascar. They can grow to be the size of your pet cat! And, did you know that more than half of the world's chameleons live in Madagascar?

COMEDY OF CONSEQUENCES

WHEN PLANS TAKE A WACKY TURN

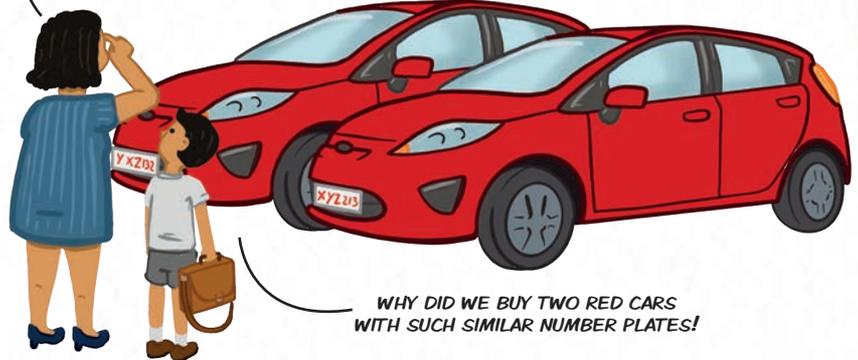
Words by Edward Allemann
Illustrations by Benoît Knox

In the complex world of policies and decisions, even the best intentions can sometimes lead to unexpected outcomes. Let's explore some examples where intended solutions brought about unintended consequences.

Cobra conundrum

When the British Empire colonised India, they found that they had a bit of a cobra problem! They created a reward system to pay for every cobra that was brought to them, hoping to cut the numbers down. The Indian population discovered that they could get more money by selling cobras to the government than through their other jobs, and so they started farming the snakes to give to the British! Realising their system did not work, the British got rid of the cobra bounty, but a whole lot of cobras had already been farmed. The cobras were released into the wild, meaning that the overall cobra population went up from before the reward!

WHICH ONE IS IT TODAY? I ALWAYS FORGET...



Mexico City's Traffic Rationing

To try and reduce air pollution, Mexico City introduced a traffic rationing policy around 'no drive' days. Cars with license plate numbers ending in certain digits could only drive on certain days of the week! To get around this, many families bought a second car with an alternative license plate to avoid the restriction. This led to an increase in the traffic and congestion in Mexico City, and a total policy backfire!



Username

E Egg

* New Password

#!123.Bt@C*/0oFF9

SERIOUSLY!!!!

* This password does not comply with our password requirements. Please use a more complex password



The Password Predicament

Nowadays, creating a new password

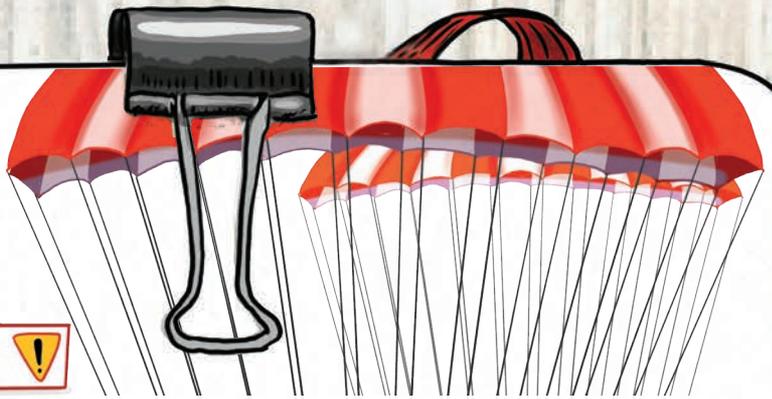
involves tricky rules like using uppercase letters and numbers to make your password more secure. But they're so hard to remember! Many people end up writing their passwords down, which is not safe at all, and defeats the purpose of having a secure pin!

Tax Dodge Décor

In Greece, a old policy allowed homeowners to avoid property taxes until their homes were finished. As a result, many homeowners left their houses unfinished, leaving off roofs or other final touches, to delay tax payments! This created a landscape dotted with incomplete structures.

DAAAAAAD! IT'S RAINING INTO MY ROOM AGAIN!

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO CHEAP!?



Operation Cat Drop

In Borneo in the 1950s, malaria was a big problem. To fight this, poison was sprayed on everyone's thatch roofs, which worked in killing the mosquitoes. However, it also killed a type of wasp that survived on thatch-eating caterpillars, and roofs around the town started collapsing. Even worse, animals like geckos ate the poisoned insects, and cats were eating these animals and getting poisoned too! When many of the cats died, the rat population grew out of control, and diseases spread quickly (but at least they didn't have to worry about mosquitoes, right?). To solve this problem, cats were reintroduced to the town by dropping them using parachutes, in an event called Operation Cat Drop.

WELL THAT'S THE LAST TIME I RESPOND TO, "HERE KITTY KITTY!"



Medicine Bottle Maze

A Chinese pharmaceutical company was determined to make a childproof medicine bottle, so they created one with 13 moving parts, which took 39 steps to open. For added safety, they also changed the design every six months! Ironically, most adults couldn't open the pill bottle and were giving it to their kids to play with.



FREAKY FLOWERS

Venus Flytrap
Photo by Andi Superkern

The Venus flytrap is a fascinating plant that has special hairs on its leaves. These hairs can feel when an insect lands on them. When an insect touches the leaf, it quickly snaps shut like a trap! Once the insect is trapped, the leaf releases special juices that break it down into food for the plant. This process takes about 10 days, and then the leaf opens up again.

The species is currently under the Endangered Species Act and people are working hard to protect it and make sure it doesn't go extinct.



Bleeding Heart Flower

Photo by Allie Remler



Bleeding Heart is a pretty flower that blooms in cool spring. When summer starts, it disappears. While the flowers are toxic, the roots of the plant actually help decrease pain in sprains and bruises! [#BloomingMystery](#) [#BleedingHeartNinja](#) [#UndercoverBloomer](#)



Witches' Hair or Strangleweed

Photo by CABI



Hold onto your broomstick! This mischievous greenery doesn't have roots – instead, it attaches itself to other plants and takes their nutrients using a special attachment called haustoria. [#MagicalHugger](#) [#EnchantedTresses](#) [#TangledInGreen](#)



Belladonna or Deadly Nightshade

Photo by Colin Underhill



Even though its berries are deadly and poisonous, this plant feeds many woodland animals and has even been used to create some medicines! [#BerryBling](#) [#CautionaryCauldron](#)



Carrion or Toad Flower

Photo by Filosofia



This beautiful starfish like plant smells like rotten meat, and attracts flies to help pollinate it! It can survive without much water and makes a great houseplant. [#StinkySeduction](#) [#Eww](#)



Cobra Lily

Photo by Noah Elhardt



This clever plant lures insects into its special leaves with a sweet smell! Once the insects are inside, they can't get out, and the plant begins to digest them using special enzymes. [#InsectBuffet](#)



Ghost Plants

Photo by Emily Stone



These crafty plants don't need sunlight to thrive; they prefer the shade and turn invisible in the bright sun! They melt if you touch them, and are part of the blueberry family. [#ShadySpectacle](#)



Young orangutan in the treetops

Photo by CHUTERSNAP

Orangutans are super cool red-haired apes that live in the tropical rainforests of Sumatra and Borneo in Southeast Asia. They are one of humankind's closest relatives – in fact, we share nearly 97% of the same DNA! The word orangutan comes from the Malay words *orang hutan*, meaning 'human of the forest'. Orangutans spend most of their time up in the trees, where they use their long, strong arms and hook-shaped hands to climb and swing from branch to branch. When it is time for bed, they sleep in leafy nests high off the ground, where it's harder for hungry enemies (such as leopards and other big cats) to get them!



Meerkat MANIA

Words by Candice Robertson
Illustrations by Kirsten Wessels
& Benoît Knox

Little Legends of the Savannah

?! Get this!

A meerkat is not actually a cat! They are suricates, a member of the mongoose family.

There are few animals on Earth who work together as well as meerkats...

Their social structures are complex and they are able to work together to feed their large families and stay safe from predators!

Habitat

Meerkats are social, burrow-dwelling mammals that live in the dry and arid regions of southern Africa. They thrive in the Kalahari Desert, the Namib Desert, and the southwestern tip of the African continent. These energetic creatures can be found in dry, open plains, savannas, grasslands, and even some rocky areas!



Meerkats are very vocal animals and use a variety of calls and chirps to communicate with each other.

?! Get this!

A group of meerkats is called a mob or gang, and usually all of the meerkats are relatives.

?! Get this!

There can be up to 50 meerkats in a mob!



Meerkat burrows

Meerkats live together in burrows, which they dig with their long, sharp claws. Living underground keeps the meerkats safe from predators and cool from the hot African sun. These burrows can be up to 5 metres long and have multiple entrances, tunnels, and rooms. Burrows can consist of sleeping chambers, nurseries, dining rooms, and even a toilet room!

These burrows can be quite complex, with a maze-like structure designed to confuse any predators that might be able to get inside. The meerkat mob moves from one burrow to another every few months.

Habits & Diet

Meerkats only go outside during the daytime, meaning that they are diurnal. Each morning, as the sun comes up, the mob emerges and begins looking for food. They use their excellent sense of smell to locate their favorite foods, which include beetles, caterpillars, spiders, and scorpions. They also eat small reptiles, birds, eggs, fruit, and plants.



During the day, they will also take turns grooming each other, taking care of the group's babies and keeping watch for potential predators. While the rest of the mob forages for food, one meerkat, called a sentry, will find a high point where they can watch for predators like eagles, hawks, and jackals. If a sentry senses danger, they will let out a high-pitched squeal, and the rest of the mob will run for cover.



If a predator attacks, meerkats will fight back together! They will form an intimidating group with their hair raised, their backs arched, and they'll make hissing noises.

Adaptations and Anatomy

These pint-sized creatures may be small, but their adaptations make them perfectly suited for life in the challenging African wilderness.

Ears

When digging, meerkats will always close their ears to keep out dust and dirt. However, even with closed ears, meerkats are still able to pick up alarm calls.

?! Get this!

Meerkats also have a clear protective membrane over their eyes that shields them from dirt while digging.

Eyes

Meerkats are farsighted and can spot a bird of prey over 1km away. However, their vision up close is rather blurry. So, they use their sense of smell to find prey and identify other meerkats rather than using their eyes.



Eye markings

The dark markings around a meerkat's eyes act like built-in sunglasses, deflecting the rays of the desert sun and allowing them to see their surroundings clearly. They also serve well against some predators, as the rings make the meerkat's eyes appear bigger and more threatening!

Fur

Meerkats have thin fur to help them moderate their temperature, as they don't sweat. However, their fur does not keep them warm in cold conditions, particularly at night. So, they cuddle together and stay warm in their burrow!



?! Get this!

Meerkats can actually eat some venomous snakes and scorpions as they have a certain amount of immunity to venom!

?! Get this!

Despite living in the desert, meerkats don't need extra water in their diets – they get all the moisture they need from the things they eat!

Teeth

Meerkats have sharp incisor teeth for grabbing and tearing apart their prey. These teeth, along with their powerful jaw muscles, allow them to handle a diverse diet of insects, small mammals, and even the occasional reptile. They can replace their teeth if they break or wear out. With several sets of teeth ready to go, meerkats stay equipped for a lifetime of hunting and foraging adventures.



Claws

Meerkats have sharp, curved claws that are perfect for digging. They also use them to scratch predators in self defence when they are threatened, but prefer to use their teeth for this.



Scent markers

Located near their tails, meerkats produce a musky odor that they use to mark their territory. When they rub their scent glands against objects in their surroundings, their unique smell is left behind to tell other meerkats that the area belongs to them. This behavior helps set out the boundaries of their territory and is a way for meerkats to communicate.



Hind legs

Meerkats are famous for their habit of standing on their hind legs, using their tails for balance. This behavior not only gives them a better view of their surroundings but also showcases their adorable and curious nature.

Tail

Meerkats use their long tail for balance when they stand up on their hind legs. They also hold their tails high and straight when they are excited, alarmed or assertive – this makes it an important part of body language that meerkats use to communicate. Meerkats also use their tails to snake-mob – they use the tip of the tail to act like their head, telling the snake to strike the tail rather than the real head! This helps meerkats avoid a potentially fatal bite. The tail is almost always raised during combat or play behaviour.





Threats

Meerkats face threats from natural predators like birds of prey and snakes. These predators are a constant danger to meerkats, especially when they venture out of their burrows to look for food or stand guard.

However, the most pressing threat to meerkats comes from humans. As human populations grow and more space is needed to grow food and build houses, meerkat habitats are becoming smaller and smaller. Losing their natural homes means that meerkat populations could decrease, as their food options become scarce and they become more vulnerable to predators.

Impact on the ecosystem

Meerkats play a very important role in the delicate balance of their ecosystems!

- **Pest Control:** By feeding on insects and small vertebrates, meerkats contribute to pest control and help maintain a healthy balance in their environment.
- **Burrow Engineers:** Meerkat burrows have a positive impact on the ecosystem by creating shelter for other animals and influencing soil structure.
- **Social Sentinels:** The sentinels in a meerkat mob watch for predators and serve as an early warning system for other animals in the area!
- **Seed Scatter:** Meerkat poo helps spread seeds as they move around their habitat, which propagate vegetation and supports plant diversity.



In
the heart
of the African
savannah...

...the
meerkat proves
that even the
smallest members of
the animal kingdom
play a vital role in the
intricate balance
of life!





Make a MEERKAT BIRDFEEDER

Grab your supplies and let's get ready to craft a meerkat masterpiece that will have birds flocking to your yard in no time!

What you need:

- A Pringles can
- 2l Plastic bottle
- Scissors
- Glue
- Green paint
- Brown paint
- Black paint
- String
- Bird seed



1

Cut a rectangle opening in your can and draw your image of a meerkat around it.



2

Paint your meerkat and wait for it to fully dry.



3

Poke holes on two ends of the bottle and pull the string through. Next, tie a knot at the end to create a loop.



4

Cut off the bottom of the plastic bottle. Paint it green to look like grass.



5

Stick the plastic bowl onto the bottom of your pringles can to form the bowl of the bird feeder.



6

After your glue has dried, pour some bird seed into the bottle. Now hang it up for the birds to enjoy!

!! Warning

Ask an adult to help you with using the knife.

?! Try this!

You can use a plastic bottle to make your feeder waterproof against rainy weather.

TUTANKHAMUN

THE BOY KING

Words by Candice Robertson

In ancient Egypt, where the Nile River flows quietly and the pyramids tell stories of the past, there was a young king named Tutankhamun. His life is like a fascinating puzzle waiting to be solved, full of mystery and wonder. Come along on a journey through time to uncover the secrets of this legendary boy king and explore the wonders of ancient Egypt!

 **Get this!**

King Tutankhamun was born during the New Kingdom period.

THE KID WHO BECAME A KING

Tutankhamun, or Tut for short, was born around 1341 BCE – during the 18th dynasty of ancient Egypt. He became king of Egypt when he was just 9 years old, after his father, Akhenaten, died. King Tut's adventure began when he stepped into the big shoes (or sandals) of his pharaoh father and took charge of the fascinating land of ancient Egypt.

?! Get this!

He was born with the name Tutankhaten, which translates to 'living image of Aten'. After he became pharaoh, he changed his name to Tutankhamun, or 'living image of Amun'.

?! Get this!

Since Tut was so young when he became king, it is likely that he relied heavily on his advisors to help him rule.



A re-creation of King Tut made from his child effigy. Found in his tomb, the head of Tut as a child is meant to represent regeneration.

A CHALLENGING ERA IN EGYPT

Tutankhamun became king during a challenging time in ancient Egyptian history. His father, Akhenaten, had tried to change the religious beliefs of the land. He wanted Egyptians to worship just one god—the sun, called Aten—instead of the 2 000 gods that people had believed in for thousands of years. The people hated this change, but had to follow their pharaoh's orders.

When nine-year-old Tutankhamun took the throne, he changed the religious practices back to the way things used to be, repaired the old temples and paid for new statues of the gods.

?! Get this!

Statues and images of Gods and Goddesses would normally have a human body with the head of an animal. Animals they looked like included crocodiles, snakes, cats, rams and birds.



ANUBIS



BASTET



OSIRIS



RA



ISIS

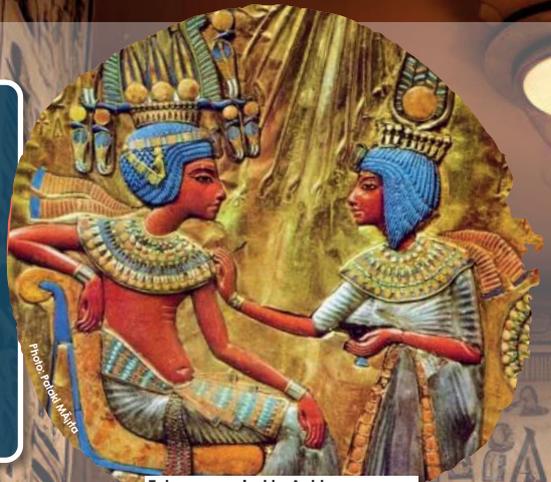


THOTH

A SHORT-LIVED RULE

King Tut didn't have a lot of time to rule – only 10 years. He died when he was just 19 years old. Experts aren't sure if his death was caused by an injury from a chariot crash, a mosquito-borne illness, a bone disease, or if he was murdered.

King Tut didn't leave behind any children, so the throne went to his advisor, Ay.



Tut was married to Ankhesenamun, daughter of Queen Nefertiti.

THE FORGOTTEN PHAROAH

Most pharaohs' tombs from this time were cut deep into the rock and contained many rooms. But Tut's mummified body was placed in an unusually small tomb in the Valley of the Kings, a hilly area where pharaohs were buried for about 500 years.

Pharaohs who ruled after the young king wanted people to forget Akhenaten and anyone connected to him—including Tut. Their names were removed from the list of kings, and all statues made in their honor were destroyed. Over time, people forgot all about King Tutankhamun. 150 years later, workers built the tomb of Ramses VI almost right on top of Tut's, having forgotten his tomb was ever there.



The Valley of the Kings



The entrance of King Tut's tomb, just in front of the entrance to King Ramses VI's tomb.

FINDING TUT'S TOMB

Historians didn't know much about Tut. Through the years, other archaeologists working in the Valley of the Kings had found small items – a cup, a jar, a piece of linen – with Tut's name, but nothing more was found. However, in 1922, a British archaeologist named Howard Carter uncovered Tut's tomb and discovered all of the treasures inside.



Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon enter the burial chamber inside Tut's tomb in 1922.

THE TREASURES IN THE TOMB

In King Tutankhamun's tomb, there were incredible treasures waiting to be discovered! The ancient Egyptians believed tombs should be filled with all the things a ruler might need in the afterlife. And since they believed the afterlife would be a lot like normal life, that meant packing everyday items like clothing, food, beds, chariots, headrests, and games. The pharaoh would also need all his ceremonial items like thrones, statues, and jewelry!

?! Get this!

During ancient times, most tombs in the Valley of the Kings had been ransacked and robbed. Historians were super surprised to find Tut's tomb completely intact!

?! Get this!

King Tut's sandals were also found in the tomb. These had paintings of his enemies on the soles – so everywhere the king went, he trampled all over his foes!

THE DEATH MASK

One of the most iconic artifacts from the tomb is King Tutankhamun's golden death mask. It is a masterpiece of ancient Egyptian artistry, made of solid gold and decorated with precious stones, symbolizing the pharaoh's divinity and eternal reign.



The death mask is considered one of the masterpieces of Egyptian art. It originally rested directly on the shoulders of the mummy inside the innermost gold coffin.

THE MUMMY

Howard Carter and his team spent more than two months removing and recording more than 600 items they found in the first room of King Tut's tomb, which he called the antechamber. In the second room, the burial chamber, they found a large golden shrine, or box, that filled almost the entire space. Inside it—all nested within one another—were three other shrines, a stone sarcophagus, three golden coffins, and finally, the mummy of Tutankhamun.



It took nearly 10 years to remove more than 5 000 objects from the tomb. King Tut's tomb is still one of the most intact royal Egyptian tombs ever found, giving historians important information about the ancient Egyptian culture! Although the pharaohs who came after Tut wanted him to be forgotten, today he's one of the most famous ancient rulers of all time.

?! Get this!

Even after more than 3 000 years, King Tut is still loved by the people! Treasures from his tomb have travelled around the world, visiting museums and impressing people everywhere.



King Tut's sarcophagus, which kept his preserved mummy safe for 3 300 years.

AMAZING AFRICANS

travelling the world

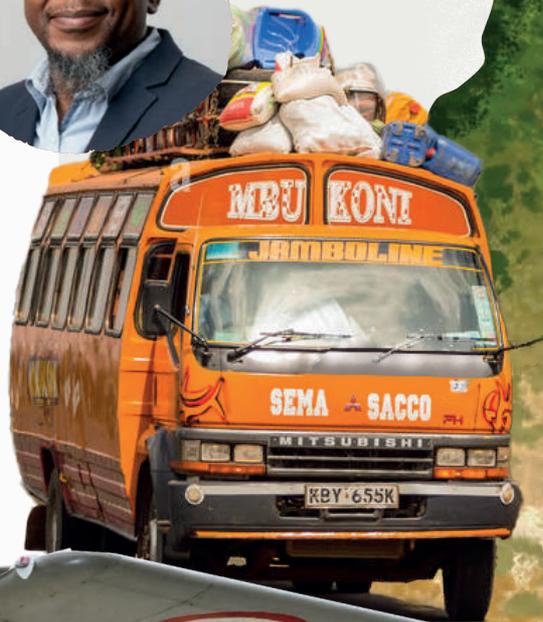
Words by Euan Springfield

Layout & illustrations by James Dufana

Have you ever found yourself dreaming of fantastic adventures in far-away places? Travelling to exotic lands and discovering things no one else has? Well look no further than these bold South African adventurers for some inspiration!

Sihle Khumalo

Journeying across Africa is not something many would do without thinking long and hard about it. However, Sihle Khumalo simply decided in the spur of the moment! The best-selling author decided to make his dream of travelling Africa a reality and set out to do so using the public transport available throughout the continent. He travelled from Cape Town to Cairo using buses, bikes and even donkey carts!



Cape Town

Egypt

Cairo

Joe Labuschagne



How far are you willing to go to help those in need? Well, if you're anything like Joe Labuschagne, that number is about 3 175 km! Joe, an eager adventurer, decided to take on the challenge of running across Africa to raise awareness and funds for an orphanage that desperately needed support. He began his running journey in the Egyptian capital of Cairo. The first stretch of his adventure through Egypt took him 825km south into Sudan, where he continued for another 2 000km. The final stretch of this inspiring achievement saw him run 350km into Ethiopia, bringing his route to an astounding total of 3 175km.



! Get this!

It typically takes 3 000 hours to build a Sling 4 plane, but this group of teenagers built theirs in just over 500 hours.

U-Dream Global

Inspired to create their own adventure, a group of South African teenagers came together to build their very own aircraft! The group, consisting of 20 teens from various backgrounds, constructed their own aircraft four-seater Sling 4 plane. It took three weeks to construct, and flew 12 000km, landing in Namibia, Malawi, and Zanzibar to deliver motivational talks to amazed spectators. The aircraft was piloted by 17-year-old Megan Werner and her co-pilot, Driaan van den Heever. During their expedition, the crew encountered a few challenges: struggling to refuel in Addis Ababa, some troubles with their navigation system, and even a forced landing in Egypt which almost resulted in their arrest! Despite these challenges, the crew successfully completed their journey and inspired people everywhere with their tenacity, creativity and perseverance.



Riaan Manser

Travellers don't come any more adventurous than South Africa's very own Riaan Manser. He is the very first person to ever cycle the entire perimeter of Africa – an insane 37 000km of pedalling! He visited over 30 different countries on his journey and faced some truly challenging situations. His adventure took 24 months of cycling. During this time, he was imprisoned, help captive, and even climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and descended to Lake Assal (the highest and lowest points on the African continent).



?! Get this!

Madagascar is the world's fourth-largest island!



After that, Riaan also became the first person to ever paddle solo around the island of Madagascar in a kayak. He braved sun, sea and storms for 11 months and 5 000km to end off this adventure!

?! Get this!

The water temperatures in Iceland range from 3 to 6°C.

In March 2011, he took on his next big challenge and set out for the freezing waters of Iceland. With a partner, Dan Skinstad, the pair braved 147 days of arctic winds and freezing water before returning to their starting point in September 2011.



Sibusiso Vilane

When setting goals, you should aim to reach heights you never thought possible. Not many take this idea as seriously as Sibusiso Vilane. This legendary South African adventurer became the first African man to climb Mount Everest, the tallest mountain on Earth, twice! His climbing journey began when climbing the Drakensberg mountains in 1996, before moving on to Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.



Drakensburg



Kilimanjaro



Mount Everest



It wasn't long before his drive to do the impossible took him all the way to the Himalayas. In 2003, he climbed to the summit of Mount Everest, becoming the first black person in the world to achieve this. He returned again in 2005 to summit it for a second time, this time from the most dangerous North Ridge.

Make your own

COMPASS

Before you can start your own adventures around the world, you need to know where you're going!

With just a few simple materials, we'll craft our own compasses that will lead us on countless adventures, whether we're exploring the backyard, going on a hike, or venturing into uncharted territories.



What you need:

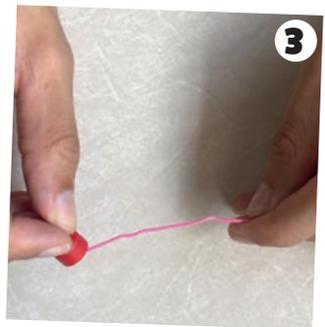
- Bowl
- Water
- Paperclip
- Magnet
- Water bottle cap



1 Fill the bowl with water.



2 Take your paper clip and straighten it out.



3 Run the magnet along the paperclip in a single direction 5-6 times.



4 Place the bottle cap in the water, making sure it floats.



5 Place the paperclip on the bottle cap.

?! Pro Tip!

Make sure to pull the magnet from the paper clip when returning to the start point.

?! Pro Tip!

If the paperclip doesn't rotate, try running the magnet over it a few more times.

A Bird's Paradise

Make your garden bird friendly

Words by Alyx Bell

Layout by Kirsten Wessels and Alyx Bell

Did you know that birds are picky about the types of gardens they choose to visit? Get ready to transform your backyard into a bustling bird paradise with a few simple tips and tricks, as we explore all the ways to attract our feathered friends and turn your garden into a chirping hub of activity.

1

Know your garden

Invasive Plants

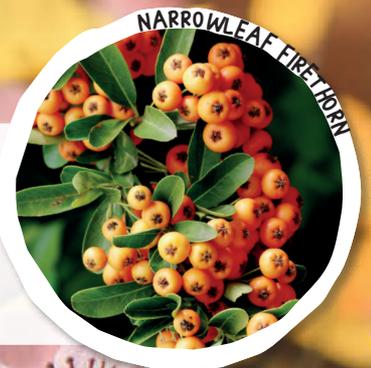
There are many plants in gardens that South African birds will try to avoid when picking a place to eat, drink and rest in. These are called invasive plants.

These plants can be toxic to insects and then those insects become toxic to birds. Find out which plants in your garden are invasive and dig them out of your garden.

Indigenous Plants

Replace invasive plants with ones which are native to where you live – these are called indigenous plants.

These plants are essential as they provide birds with fruit, shelter and serve as a host for insects which are an important part of a bird's diet.





2 Make your own birdfeeder

One of the best ways to encourage birds into your garden is by making a birdfeeder. One of the most simple birdfeeders that you can make is by putting peanut butter on a pinecone and then covering it in birdseeds. Hang this up in a tree or high up by your patio!



?! Get this!

Since most plants cannot pollinate on their own, they rely on other animals such as birds to help spread their seeds so more plants can grow.



3 Elevate the experience



Cats may be our friends, but they are a threat to birds. It is important that any birdfeeders you make are placed high up and out of reach of any cats. Your garden must be a safe environment so the birds can relax and enjoy the paradise you've created for them.

?! Get this!

The infamous South African Hadeda Ibis is related to the African Sacred Ibis, a prized bird in Ancient Egypt.

4 Safe and sound

Windows work as mirrors, reflecting the outside greenery. This results in birds flying straight into them! Window strikes can seriously injure a bird, so in order to make this an inviting and safe space for all birds, you'll need to help them identify the windows. You can hang old CDs and DVDs by all the windows in your house. These work as moving suncatchers, which the birds will avoid.



Remember that every little effort you take can make a big difference in welcoming birds to your outdoor space. By providing food, water, shelter, and a safe environment, you're not only inviting feathered friends for a visit, but also contributing to their well-being and conservation!

HIEROGLYPH SUDOKU



How to play

You are exploring a pharaoh's tomb, and the archaeologist needs you to help translate these Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs in order to uncover the secret code.

1. Complete the grid with the hieroglyphs below so that each row, column, and 3x3 square contains all the hieroglyphs from 1 to 9 without repeating any.

1		H
2		E
3		A
4		L
5		F
6		T
7		P
8		R
9		I

2. Discover the secret message by matching the coloured hieroglyphs in the grid to the correct letters!



Find the answer on page 3

Test yourself

How much did you understand about King Tutankhamun?



Read the article, *Tutankhamun The Boy King*, on page 34-37.

Then, answer the following questions from the text.



1. Read the sentences below, then circle the incorrect word in the sentence. Write the correct word on the line next to the sentence.

a. Tutankhamun was born during the 16th dynasty of ancient Egypt. _____

b. Egyptian gods usually have the body of a human, and the head of a plant. _____

c. Tutankhamun's hidden tomb was found in the Valley of the Pharoahs. _____

d. Tutankhamun's mummy was found preserved in a beautifully decorated coffin. _____

2. Unscramble the words, then use them to fill in the blanks.

headt

ftilafere

rubial

cinatc

a. Tombs were filled with things rulers would need in the _____.

b. Tutankhamun's mummy was found in the _____ chamber.

c. The most precious piece found in the tomb was the golden _____ mask.

d. Tut's tomb is special because it was found _____.

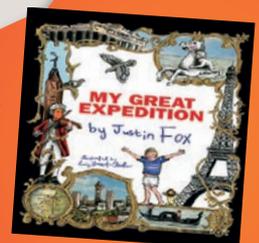


! Reading Tip

Reading makes you smarter – it's a fact. Be sure to keep up good reading habits:

- Read anything
- Find a topic that excites you
- Read something difficult sometimes
- Ask someone to recommend a book
- Talk about the things you've read – reading is contagious!

Here's a fun new book to read!

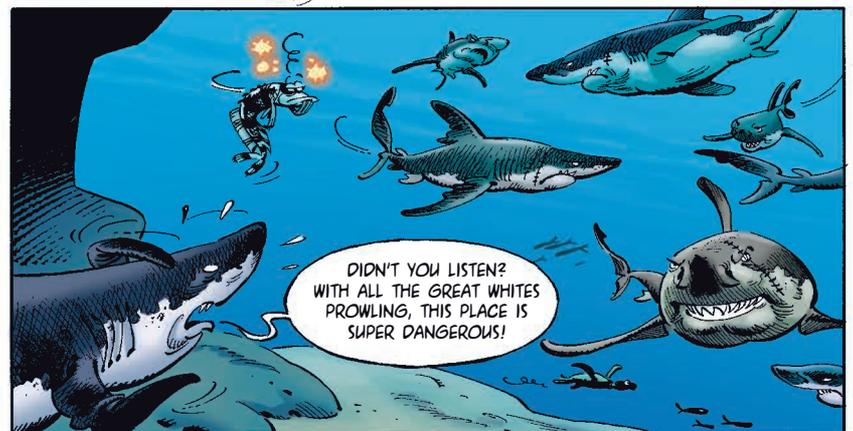
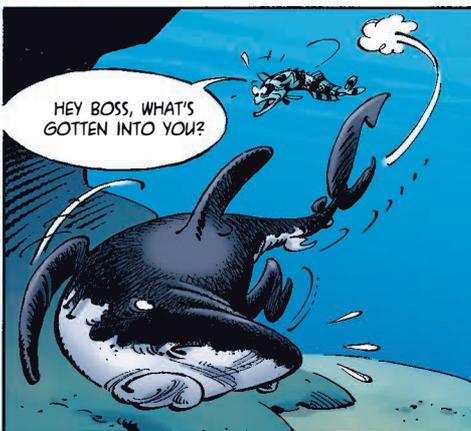
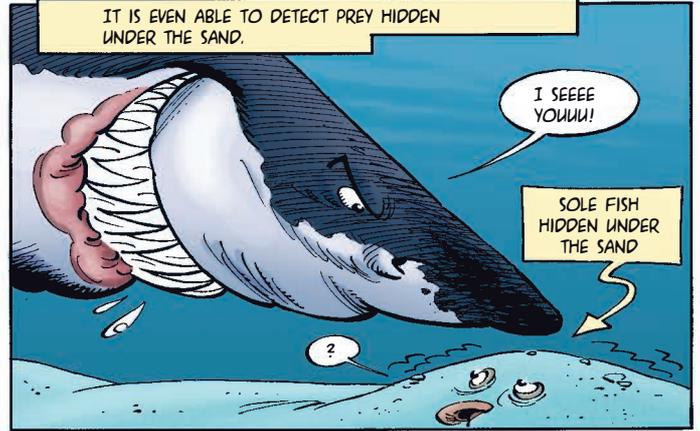
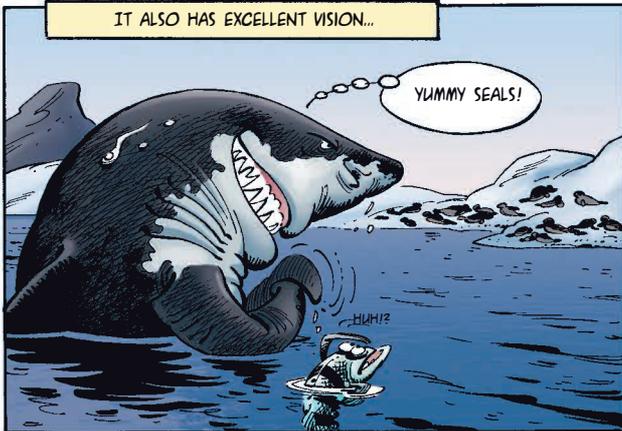
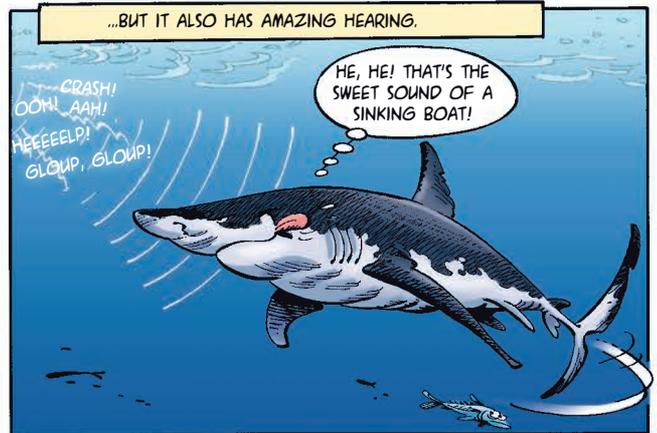
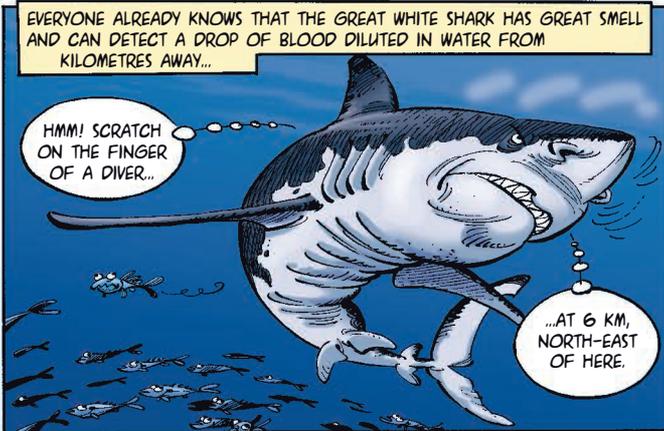


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MARINE ANIMALS

THE COMIC

The Great White Shark



I never get picked



Remember, sports are about more than just winning or being picked first. They're about teamwork, friendship, and personal growth!

Jeffrey 11 years old

Whenever we play sports at school, I always seem to be the one who gets picked last for teams. It makes me feel really frustrated and sad because I love sports and I want to be a part of the team like everyone else. No matter how hard I try or how much I practice, it feels like I'm always left out!

Being picked last can feel really frustrating and disheartening. But remember that this doesn't define your worth as a person! Everyone has their own unique strengths and abilities, whether it's speed, agility, teamwork, or determination. Instead of dwelling on being picked last, focus on what you're good at and how you can contribute positively to the team! If

you're passionate about sports, keep practicing and improving your skills. The more you practice,

the better you'll become, and eventually, your skills may catch the attention of your teammates and coaches. And even if you're picked last, approach each game or practice with a positive attitude and good sportsmanship! You can also always talk to a coach or an adult you trust about how you're feeling. They may be able to offer advice, give you some tips on how to improve, or even reassess how teams are chosen!

Have a question for Candice?

Do you have a burning issue on your mind? Need advice? Send your questions to supernova@bkpublishing.co.za and Candice could give you advice next!

Hobby-X

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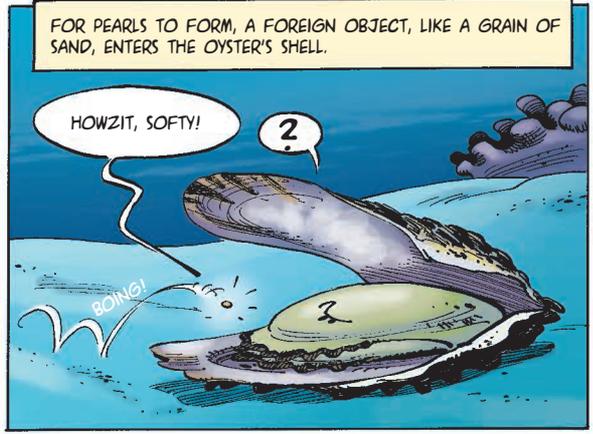
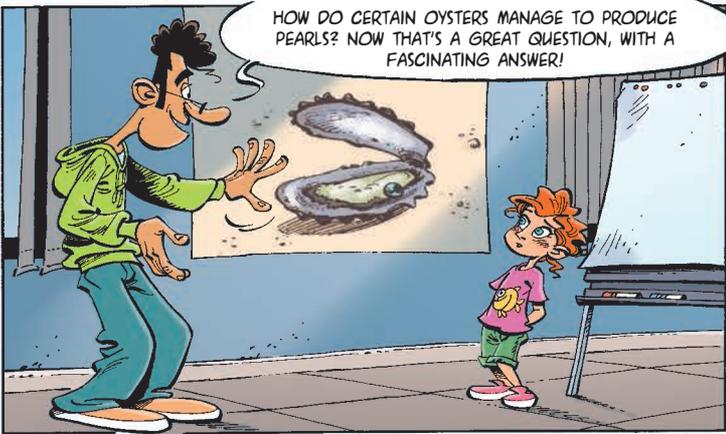
SCAN ME

**IT'S TIME TO ADD YOUR MAGICAL TOUCH
READY, SET, COLOUR AWAY!**



Join us from the **2nd until the 5th of May** at
Kyalami Grand Prix Johannesburg.

messe frankfurt



THE OYSTER GETS IRRITATED BY THE GRAIN, WHICH IT COVERS WITH LAYERS AND LAYERS OF MOTHER-OF-PEARL TO REDUCE THE DISCOMFORT.

