

Unusual animals

1 Read the Kakapo fact file and answer the questions.

- 1 What is unusual about this bird?
- 2 Which part of the world does it live in?
- 3 Why do you think some animals only live in a particular country or region?

2a Read the animal fact files. Which animals eat plants and other animals?

KAKAPO

TYPE OF ANIMAL: bird

HABITAT: coastal areas of New Zealand

DIET: herbivore: eats plants, seeds, fruit

LENGTH: 58–64cm WEIGHT: 1–4kg

UNUSUAL FEATURE: It cannot fly and uses its wings for balance only.

DID YOU KNOW?

Kakapos are friendly birds. Both the Māori and early European settlers kept kakapos as pets.



ANIMAL FACT FILES

STAR-NOSED MOLE

TYPE OF ANIMAL: mammal

HABITAT: near lakes and rivers on the Atlantic coast of Canada and in northern USA

DIET: carnivore: eats insects, worms and crustaceans

LENGTH: 15–20cm WEIGHT: 35–75g

UNUSUAL FEATURE: The 22 pink tentacles on its nose which it uses for touch.



DID YOU KNOW?

It's an extremely fast hunter and eats its food quicker than all other mammals.

GIANT SPIDER CRAB

TYPE OF ANIMAL: arthropod

HABITAT: waters around Japan, inhabiting holes in the deeper parts of the ocean

DIET: omnivore: eats plants and small sea creatures

LENGTH: 3.8m WEIGHT: up to 19kg

UNUSUAL FEATURE: It has extremely long legs.



DID YOU KNOW?

In parts of Japan, the Giant Spider Crab is eaten and considered a delicacy.

PROBOSCIS MONKEY

TYPE OF ANIMAL: mammal

HABITAT: jungles of Borneo, a large island in southeast Asia

DIET: mainly herbivore: eats leaves, seeds and fruit, but sometimes insects, too

LENGTH: 60–70cm

WEIGHT: up to 23kg (male)

UNUSUAL FEATURE: The large nose of the male.



DID YOU KNOW?

In the ancient Egyptian Culture this and other species of monkey were worshipped as very unique animals and believed to be special to the gods.

FRILL-NECK LIZARD

TYPE OF ANIMAL: reptile

HABITAT: tropical forests of northern Australia

DIET: carnivore: eats insects and other small creatures

LENGTH: 85cm WEIGHT: 0.5kg

UNUSUAL FEATURE: The colourful frill on its neck, which it uses for defence.



DID YOU KNOW?

Some people keep these lizards as exotic pets!

AYE-AYE

TYPE OF ANIMAL: mammal

HABITAT: tropical forests on the island of Madagascar, Africa

DIET: omnivore: eats fruit and insects

LENGTH: 36–43cm, tail 56–61cm

WEIGHT: 2kg

UNUSUAL FEATURE: Its large eyes and ears, and a very large tail which is longer than its body.



DID YOU KNOW?

The people of Madagascar believe it brings bad luck so hunting the aye-aye is common, making it an endangered species.

HOODED SEAL

TYPE OF ANIMAL: mammal

HABITAT: icy north Atlantic and Arctic oceans

DIET: carnivore: eats fish and crustaceans

LENGTH: 2.6m (male)

WEIGHT: up to 300–410kg

UNUSUAL FEATURE: The male seal has a hood on its nose that inflates like a balloon when excited or threatened.



DID YOU KNOW?

People used to hunt them until not long ago for their oil, meat and skin but they are protected now by the governments of Canada, the USA and Europe.

2b Read the fact files again. Then complete the table with a tick (✓) or a cross (X).

	Star-nosed mole	Giant spider crab	Proboscis monkey	Frill-neck lizard	Aye-Aye	Hooded seal
lives in a hot climate	X					
eats plants						
lives in water						
eats animals						
has an unusual nose						
measures more than a metre						

2c Read and match.

- | | | |
|--|-------|--|
| 1 The Proboscis monkey and the Aye-Aye | | a aren't mammals. |
| 2 The Frill-neck lizard and the Hooded seal | | b have some very long body parts. |
| 3 The Star-nosed mole and Frill-neck lizard | | c live in tropical parts of the world. |
| 4 The Frill-neck lizard and Japanese spider crab | | d eat only meat. |
| 5 The Japanese spider crab and Aye-Aye | | e show a part of their body when they feel scared. |

2d Read the sentences and write an animal and a country.

- | | animal | country |
|---|--------|---------|
| 1 Some people keep these animals as pets. | | |
| 2 People believed these animals were special to the gods. | | |
| 3 These animals are protected by the government. | | |
| 4 People think that these animals bring bad luck. | | |
| 5 The indigenous people kept these animals as pets. | | |
| 6 Some people eat this animal and consider it delicious. | | |

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- Do you know of any animals that are native to your country? Which ones?
- Do they have any unusual features? What are they?

PROJECT

3b You are going to prepare a fact file for an unusual animal. Read the points and prepare your project research.

- Work in small groups. Choose one of the animals in A and match it with the country in B where it lives. Then find out about it.

A Gelada monkey • duck-billed platypus • pea-sized frog • giant coconut crab • blobfish • panda ant

B New Zealand • Mexico • Zanzibar • Borneo • Australia • Ethiopia

- Make notes on your chosen animal to include the following:

- type of animal
- what it eats
- its size
- any unusual features
- an interesting fact
- cultural attitudes towards it

3c When you have done your research, prepare your animal fact file. Present your fact file to the rest of the class. Compare the animals, their features and cultural attitudes towards them in their country of origin with those researched by other groups. Compare them also with native animals of your own country.