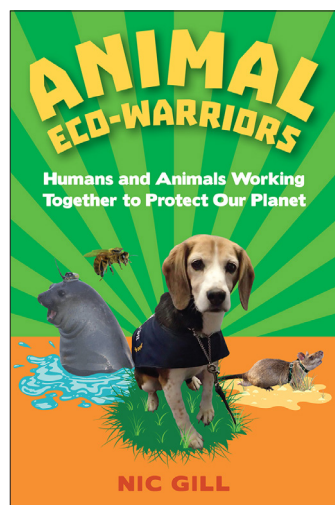


# TEACHER NOTES



PUBLISHING



## **Animal Eco-Warriors: Humans and Animals Working Together to Protect Our Planet**

**Author:** Nic Gill

**ISBN:** 9781486306213 (paperback)  
9781486306220 (epdf)  
9781486306237 (epub)

**Extent:** 144 pp

**RRP:** \$24.95

### **About the book**

Come on an action-packed adventure with an amazing mob of animal eco-warriors as they use their special talents to help solve our planet's environmental problems!

From the nosy noses of biosecurity beagles at airports to rats learning to sniff out landmines in war-torn landscapes, animals are using their unique abilities to help make the world a better and safer place. With fantastic colour photos of animal eco-warriors at work, this book is full of fun facts on how animals are helping humanity work towards a more sustainable future. There are also plenty of tips on how you can make a difference to the planet. Join the animal eco-warrior team today!

This book is ideal for teachers and librarians looking for locally relevant, teachable materials addressing environment and sustainability issues, as well as for children and their families with an interest in animals and science.

### **About the author**

Nic Gill grew up in Tasmania, on a small farm with a large number of animals. Nic lives in Hobart with her three-legged cat, a family of ring-tailed possums, some Pekin frizzle bantams, countless native birds, and her human partner, James. When she's not writing books, she's helping people to care for their local natural environments. She was bitten by an impressive array of animals while researching this book.

Nic Gill strongly believes that we have to work together today to build the world we'd like to live in tomorrow. Five per cent of her proceeds from this book will go directly to supporting animal eco-warrior projects.

# TEACHER NOTES

## Curriculum Links

Science (Science Understanding, Science as a Human Endeavour, Science Inquiry Skills); English (Literacy); Humanities and Social Sciences (Geography); Health and Physical Education (Personal, Social and Community Health); Critical and Creative Thinking; Technologies (Digital Technologies)

## Study Notes

- Read Chapter 1, 'Noses on legs' (pp. 1–10). Beagles are a good choice for a biosecurity dog, but they have some personality traits that can make them a not-so-great pet. Research beagles' traits and identify what would make them annoying to live with. Research other dog breeds' behaviours and personalities, and identify a dog breed that you would choose to have as a pet. Explain your reasons.
- Rhonda explains that she uses rescue dogs as biosecurity dogs; dogs that aren't likely to be rehomed, dogs that are naughty and will do anything for food. Why would these things make the dogs good at this job?
- Fruit and meat are some of the things biosecurity dogs look for in their work. Why is it important to stop diseases from other parts of the country



or world being introduced into an area? In groups, research all of the things that are banned from coming in to Australia.

- Chapter 2, 'The ants go marching' (pp. 11–17), discusses efforts to stop invasive animals being introduced to new areas and damaging the native animal population. Research Australian animals that are now extinct, and why their extinction occurred. What could humans have done differently to stop these animals becoming extinct?
- In groups, find out which Australian animals are now endangered. Choose one and research the following:
  - \* description of the animal, its food sources and its habitat
  - \* why it is endangered
  - \* programs that are in place to try to save them.Present your findings to the class as a group. In their groups, have students create a website or PowerPoint presentation to present the information they have learned about their chosen endangered animal.
- Chapter 2 discusses the damage Argentine ants can do. What would be the consequences of letting a pest like this continue to live here without trying to eradicate it?
- Rangitoto is a volcanic island that emerged out of the sea 600 years ago (p. 12). How does this happen? What is the island made of? What other landmasses throughout the world have been formed this way?

# TEACHER NOTES

- Read Chapter 3 (pp. 18–25) and then research what plants and animals might live in Antarctica. How do they manage to survive in such a harsh climate? Write a report about your findings.
- Researchers live in Antarctica. What do they do there? Do they stay there year-round, or only at certain times? How do they protect themselves from the freezing weather?
- What is an ecosystem? What makes up an ecosystem?
- On p. 26 we read about human-made deserts. Grazing animals are one cause of damage to vegetation and erosion. What else can cause vegetation to die? Use both Chapter 4 (pp. 26–33) and other research for your information. If vegetation can no longer grow on large areas of land, what are the implications for the human race? What kinds of things can farmers do to help avoid this problem?
- Choose either a ringtail possum or a sugar glider and research their habitat. What are their food sources? When and where do they sleep? Are their numbers in the wild healthy? Write a report on your findings.
- Chapter 5 (pp. 34–40) tells us that goat is the world's most widely eaten meat. In which countries is goat meat commonly eaten? Can you find a recipe for cooking goat meat?
- What are herbicides? Why might people not want to use herbicides on their crops? Investigate what herbicides can do to both people and animals.
- Goats digest food differently from humans. Try to find out how humans digest the food they eat. Write a report and include diagrams.



- Imagine you are a ranger at Phillip Island, tasked with looking after the little penguins that live there. Read Chapter 6 (pp. 41–46) and then investigate what these rangers do, how they look after and research the little penguins, and what they have to protect them from. Write a diary entry that outlines your day as a ranger.
- Read Chapter 7 (pp. 47–53), about how calves learn to find and choose the right food to eat. Write, design and publish a meal plan for a child your age, for one week. Include breakfast, lunch and dinner for each day, as well as two snacks. Try to include a variety of food in your meals, with the kinds of foods we should eat every day.
- What is an invertebrate? What is a vertebrate? How are they different? Why are invertebrates' bodies the way they are? Draw up a table with two columns, one for invertebrates and one for vertebrates, and list as many creatures as possible for each one.
- Cane toads were introduced to Australia to try to control cane beetle numbers, with disastrous results (see pp. 66). In groups, investigate another example of an animal that was introduced to solve an environmental problem, but it went wrong.



# TEACHER NOTES

What happened, and why did the plan not work?  
What could have been done differently? Present your findings to the class.

- In groups, explore your school's grounds and collect some samples of different plants and grasses. Try to find out what those plants are, and whether they are weeds. Create a database of the plants. All of the groups' databases can then be combined to form a record of some of the plants that grow at your school.
- Read Gloria's story on p. 77 (chapter 11). Imagine you live in Gloria's village. Write a narrative about a day in the life of your character, and how you help APOPO clear landmines.
- Research the different wildlife conservation organisations that exist in Australia, or around the world. Choose one and design a poster to advertise the organisation. Include details about the animals the organisation protects, what the organisation does, and what people can do to help.
- What are some of the effects of climate change? Include things that are happening now and that may happen in the future. Chapter 15 (pp. 107–113) discusses how scientists are studying the link between ocean currents and climate change. In

groups, research some of the other things that scientists are studying in their efforts to learn more about climate change. What do scientists believe needs to be done to reduce the effects of climate change? What can we do as individuals to combat it?

- Chapter 16 (pp. 114–120) discusses pollination. How does the act of bees pollinating food and other plants help them to grow?

