



SCHOOL JOURNAL

AUGUST
2016



TITLE	READING YEAR LEVEL
The Chess Champions of Nūhaka	4
Seals	4
Queen of the Board	4
Becoming Toroa	4
Good as Gold	4

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The Chess Champions of Nūhaka

by Kiwa Hammond

The game of chess is very old, but it's still popular – and it's played all over the world.

People play chess in London, New York, Paris, Nūhaka ... Nūhaka? Where's that?



The Travelling Chess Team

Nūhaka (or Ngā Nūhaka to use its proper name) is a small town near Wairoa. It's home to the Ngāti Rākaipaaka people. There's only one school in Nūhaka, and it's a school with a difference. The students know all about chess. Not only that – they're really good at it! The school team has done well at tournaments all around the country. So how does a student become a member of the Nūhaka School travelling chess team?



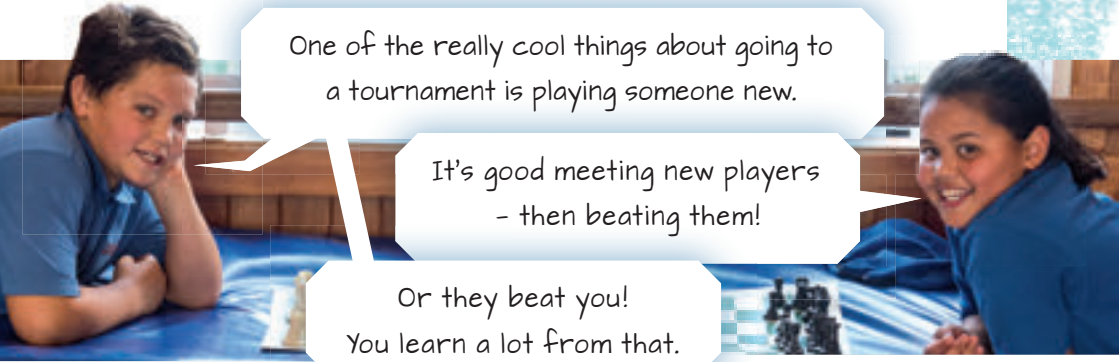
First, you need to be a really good player.

We play games against each other to find the best players.

But you don't just have to be a good chess player. It's also important to support and encourage the other team members.

Always Learning

The students get to know each other's moves and strategies because they play one another every day. But at tournaments, they often play total strangers.



One of the really cool things about going to a tournament is playing someone new.

It's good meeting new players - then beating them!

Or they beat you!
You learn a lot from that.

In chess, there's always a lot to learn, such as the special moves with names like The Lawn Mower, Queen's Gambit, The Fork, and The Pin. Knowing when to use these moves is just as important as knowing how to do them.



When you play, you learn to focus on what's happening on the chessboard.

All that concentration must be working. Nūhaka School's chess players have won or finished near the top in many tournaments. Their champion chess team is well known in Hawke's Bay and throughout New Zealand too.



The Dark Horse

One chess trophy in particular is very special at Nūhaka School. It's the one the students all want to win. The trophy is called The Dark Horse in memory of a man who came to Nūhaka School to teach the kids about chess.

That man was a very talented chess player named Genesis Potini. Genesis was from Gisborne. As part of a group called the Eastern Knights Chess Club, he taught children from Gisborne how to play chess. At the same time, he inspired them to believe in themselves. In 2014, a movie called *The Dark Horse* told his story. Sadly, the real Genesis passed away before the movie was finished.



Genesis dedicated his life to teaching as many children as he could about chess. He believed that being involved in chess could change their lives. Genesis and other adults from the Eastern Knights Chess Club regularly visited Nūhaka School to share their skills. When the students were ready, the school formed a chess team of its own.

Ask anyone at Nūhaka School, and they will tell you it's an honour and a privilege to be picked for the team. It's also lots of fun.

It's great when we go to the big tournaments. We go to new places and do cool stuff - and we play chess!





Keeping the Passion Alive

The children who Genesis taught are now grown up, and there's a new set of students at Nūhaka School. They have the same passion for chess that Genesis inspired in their older brothers, sisters, and cousins. Today, if you walk round the school during break, you'll see children of all ages gathered round chessboards and the big outdoor chess set. Some will be playing while others will be watching, encouraging, and giving advice.





Some games are quick, and you'll hear the winner call out "Checkmate!" Other games can take a long time and still end in a stalemate (a draw).

But it doesn't matter how long a game takes or who wins – the players always shake hands and congratulate each other. You'll hear them say "Good game" and "Well done". This is a very important part of chess because it's showing respect for your opponent.

And don't be surprised if you also hear the following words:

Can you play
chess?

Do you want
a game?

and then ...

CHECKMATE!



CHESS NOTATION

What are these strange letters and numbers?

Are they some kind of secret code? No – they’re part of a special language used by people who play chess. The language is called “notation”. It’s the way chess players keep a record of all the moves they make in a game.

	White	Black
1	e4	Nc6
2	Nf3	d6
3	b4	f5
4	Bc4	Nf6

For chess notation, each chess piece (except the pawns) is given a letter. Each square on the board is given a letter and number.



King = **K**



Queen = **Q**



Knight = **N**



Bishop = **B**



Rook = **R**



Pawn = **NO LETTER**

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	
1									1
2									2
3									3
4									4
5									5
6									6
7									7
8									8
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	

Notation tells you which piece moved and which square it moved to.

e4 means the white pawn moved to square e4. (A player knows which pawn must have moved because, under the rules, only the pawn on e2 is able to move to e4.)

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	
1									1
2									2
3									3
4									4
5									5
6									6
7									7
8									8
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	

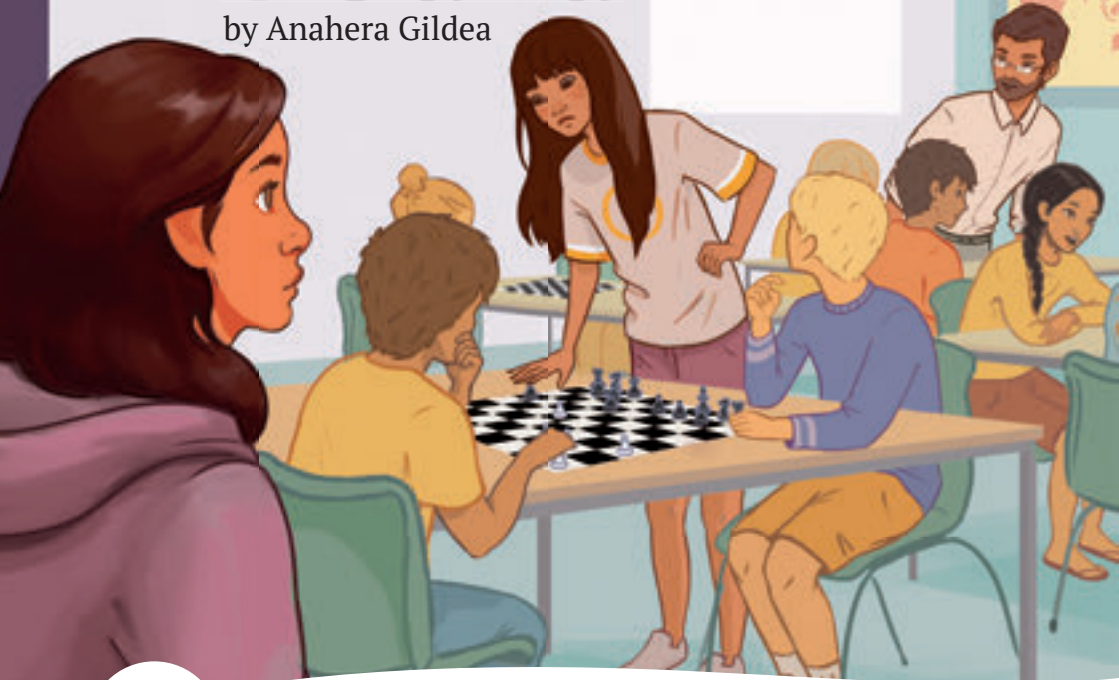
Nc6 means the black knight moved to square c6. (Again, only the knight on b8 is able to move to c6, so a player reading the notation will know which black knight moved.)

Chess players can use notation to replay a game and learn from it.



Queen of the Board

by Anahera Gildea



My sister Tiana won the school chess championship, and ever since, it's like she thinks she's Genesis Potini or something.

“What are you doing here?” she said as I walked into chess club. “Chess is only for masterminds.” Mr Porter is the teacher in charge, but Tiana was the one barking commands. Anyone would think she was running it. In my mind, I call Tiana “Tianiwha” because she’s a total dragon. She doesn’t breathe fire or anything, but I bet she could if she wanted to.

The junior chess competition was coming up at school, and I'd put my name down to play. All I knew was the basics: use my pieces to protect my king and, at the same time, try to get the other person's king. I didn't know much more than that. I'd been secretly hoping that someone other than Tiana would teach me. But the minute I sat down in front of the chessboard, she raced over and sat down in the chair opposite.

"It's all about strategy," she said. "All the pieces move differently. This one goes two up and one across. See?" She moved her knight and took my castle, waving it back and forth in front of my face before putting it to one side.

I slid my bishop diagonally across the board.

"You can't move there. I'll take you."

"Eh?" I frowned. "What about my prawn then?"

Tiana snorted. "Prawn? You said prawn!" Her scornful laughter drew Mr Porter over.

"When someone doesn't know something, Tiana, it's your job as one of the tuakana of this room to help them and teach them," he reminded her.

"But Miri doesn't count, Mr P. She's my sister."

Mr Porter's eyebrows crinkled. "Then it's doubly important, Tiana. You're not just her tuakana in this classroom – you're her tuakana for life."

Tianiwha made a face like a fish.

"If we have a gift, it's our job to share it," Mr Porter added.



Gift? Chess wasn't Tiana's gift. Bossing people around was what she was good at. She placed her fingertip on top of each piece in turn while she decided her next move.

"Why don't you move your castle? Or your horse?" I said.

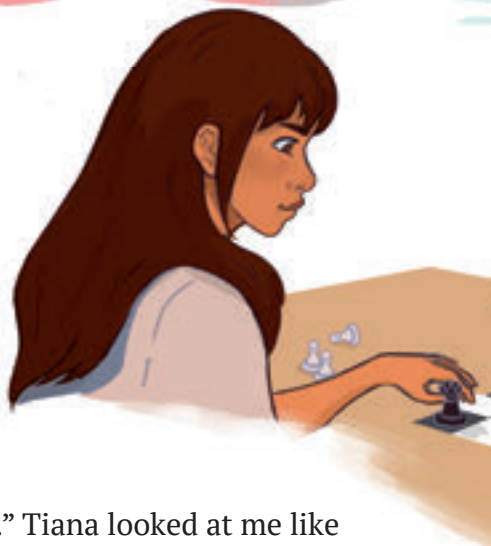
"Make a quick getaway!"

"It's not called a castle – it's a *rook*." Tiana looked at me like I was crazy. "And it's not called a horse – it's a *knight*." Boss, boss, bossy. My sister had rules for everything. But in the back of my mind, I thought she might actually be a chess genius for real, so I tried to concentrate. Tiana moved her rook one step forward.

"Hah!" I said. "My knight is going to jump over your prawns and take your ugly queen to the dungeon."

"Ugh," Tiana sighed. "Dungeon? There's no dungeon. You can't just make up stories, Miri. Chess is about thinking ahead." She tapped the side of her head.

"I am thinking ahead," I said. "I'm imagining your queen in my dungeon after I capture her."





Tiana rolled her eyes.
“If you’re going to win any of your games, you have to think sensibly.”

“But it helps me to work out the best moves if I can make them into a story.” I imagined that Tiana’s queen had long brown hair, just like her. And a dress made of spikes. And pointy shoes.

“Well, this is a game of thinking, not imagining. All you need to do is relax, breathe, think, and then make the best decision you can.”

I tried to focus on the board like Tiana said, but it was no good. I was worried – and I had one more question. “What if I can’t decide? What if I just don’t know what’s the best move?”

Tiana shrugged. “It’s never happened to me. I guess you’d have to take a risk.”





The day of the tournament arrived. Tiana was set to play a match against Jean Watson, the second best player in the school. I was against Huia Fisher. Tiana looked at me across the room as the buzzer went and tapped the side of her head. She was reminding me to concentrate.

Huia and I battled it out, piece by piece, until she had me cornered. My castle was the only thing stopping her from taking my king. I imagined it as a real castle, with battlements for shooting arrows between, but it was no help. Two moves later, she'd taken my castle and won the match.

“Good game.” I held out my hand, and Huia smiled and shook it.

“You played well,” she said. “Really well. You must take after your sister.”

“Thanks,” I said, suddenly pleased – and a bit shy.



Tiana was waiting. She’d finished her game, too. “How’d it go?”

“Lost.” I shrugged. “I just couldn’t make the right decisions the way you can. How about you?”

“Won, of course,” she said. “But only at the last minute.”

Tiana paused as if she was wondering whether to tell me more.

“I had every possible move worked out, but for once in my life, I had no idea which one was the best.” She had a sly look on her face. “So, I took a risk.”

She paused again.

“What? What did you do?”

A huge smile broke across her face.

“I used my imagination, of course. I got the knight to protect the king while my rook circled the entire kingdom and doubled back. I cornered her. And won. It’s a new strategy I just learned.”

I couldn’t believe it. “But I thought you said it was all about thinking ahead and making the best decision you can?”

“I did. The best decision was to use my imagination. Just like you do. All the rest was me, though,” she said, cracking up. “All me.”





Becoming Toroa



We are driving down
the twists and turns
of Carsick Road.

It is sunny. Inside the car
it's hot. And I can smell rubber.

I already know how it will go.
So I have the window down.

At every corner, I feel an ocean
tossing in my stomach.

I lean across
and gulp the fast air.

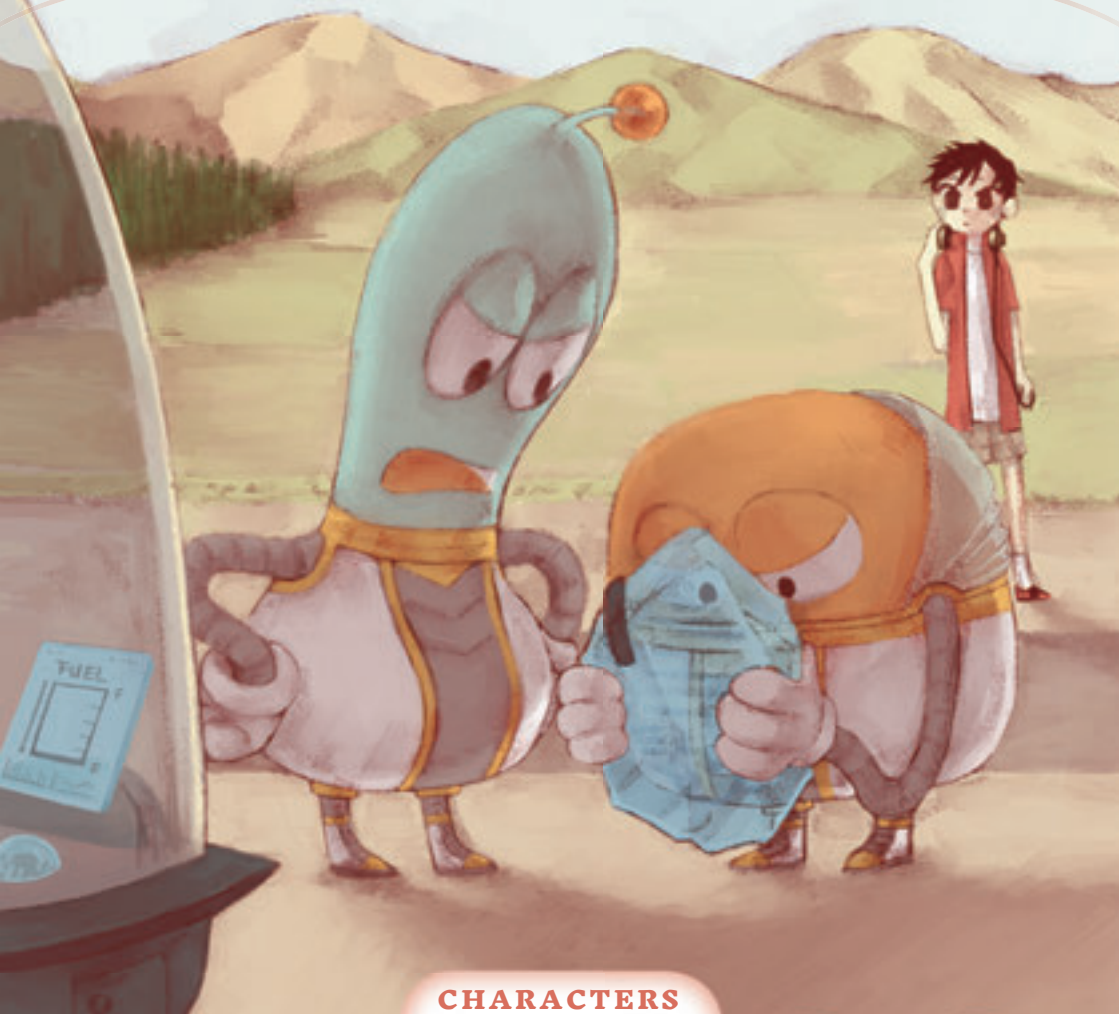
My mind leaves the land behind.
Now I am toroa, the albatross.

I fly in a straight line.

Greg O'Connell

GOOD AS GOLD

by James O'Sullivan



CHARACTERS



SALA



ZERG



JOSH



ANITA
HERD



SAMMY
SHARK



OWEN
LEND

SCENE ONE: *An open field on Earth. SALA and ZERG enter.*

SALA (*sarcastically*). Well, this is just great, Zerg. Now we're stuck here on this strange planet. Why didn't you stop at that last fuelling station?

ZERG. I thought we could make it to the next one.

SALA. "E" means "empty". It doesn't mean "enough".

ZERG. Point taken, Sala. Luckily I've brought my *Lonely Galaxy Travel Guide*. It will tell us all we need to know about this place. (**ZERG** *reads from the guide.*) "Planet Xylan, local name Earth. The locals are mostly friendly but have a strange liking for personal media devices."

SALA. Here comes one of them now!

JOSH *enters, listening to an MP3 player.*

JOSH. Oh, hello. I'm Josh. You're aliens, aren't you?

SALA. We're holidaymakers. Well, we were until our spaceship ran out of fuel.

JOSH. What does it run on?

ZERG. Gold.

JOSH. Gold is very expensive around here. It will cost you lots of money.

SALA. What's money?

JOSH. If you want something from someone, usually you have to give them money to buy it.

ZERG. And how do we get money?

JOSH. You work for it.

SALA. I don't like the sound of that.

ANITA HERD enters.

JOSH. Ah, here's my friend Anita Herd. She's a farmer. She might be able to help you. Hello, Anita. These two aliens need some money. Do you have any jobs for them on your farm?

ANITA HERD (to aliens). How good are you at rounding up sheep?



ZERG. What's a sheep?

SALA. What do you mean by "rounding up"?

ZERG. And what's a farm?

ANITA HERD. You'll do just fine. Come with me.

ANITA HERD, SALA, and ZERG exit.

JOSH. I can't wait to tell my friends about these aliens.

JOSH exits.



SCENE TWO: *The same field, late afternoon. SALA and ZERG enter, looking weary.*

SALA. I'm exhausted. Why couldn't you have stopped at that fuelling station?

ZERG. You've already asked me that. It's the past, Sala. I can't do anything about the past.

ANITA HERD (*enters*). That was a good day's work, guys. It saved me doing all those jobs myself. (*She hands over some money.*) Here's your pay.

JOSH (*enters*). How did it go?

ANITA HERD. I had a very relaxing day.

SALA. I had a lousy day. I'm tired, I smell of sheep, and I'm all greasy.

ANITA HERD. And I'm happy because I'm none of those things. You aliens should visit more often. I think I'll go and have a spa.

ANITA HERD *exits.*

ZERG. Anita gave us this papery stuff.

JOSH. That's money. But it's not enough to buy gold. You'll have to work some more.

SALA. I'm not working for an Earth minute longer.

ZERG. How can we make money without working for it?



SAMMY SHARK enters.

SAMMY SHARK. I heard that. Well, it's your lucky day! I can lend you all the money you need. Just fill in this form and sign it here.

SALA. That's very kind of you.

JOSH. Hold on. Let me see that. (*He grabs the form and reads it.*) What's this written

in small print? "The borrower must pay back double the money they borrow – by the end of the month."

SAMMY SHARK. Well, that's fair. You don't get something for nothing in this world.

ZERG. What if we can't pay it back?

JOSH. It says here that Sammy Shark will own your spaceship.

ZERG and SALA (*together*). Thanks, but no thanks!

SAMMY SHARK. All right, I guess I'll have to take my business elsewhere.

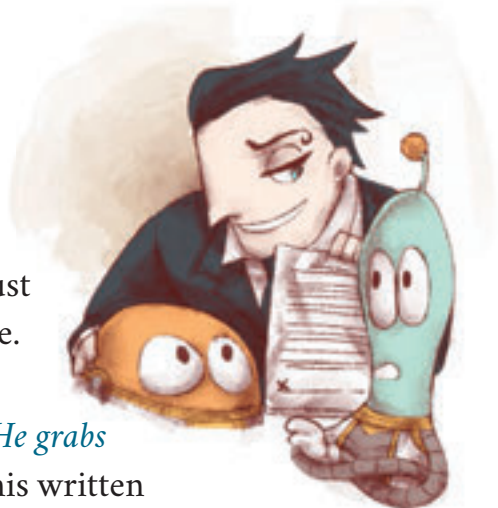
SAMMY SHARK exits.

JOSH. You could put your money in a bank. Here comes my friend Owen Lend. He owns a bank.

OWEN LEND enters.

OWEN LEND. Hello, Josh.

JOSH. Hello, Owen. My alien friends have some spare money. Can you tell them what will happen if they put it in your bank?



OWEN LEND. It's very easy. You put your money in my bank, and some time later, when you ask, I'll give you back your money plus a bit more, which is called interest.

ZERG. And what's in it for you?

OWEN LEND. Well, I take the money you give me, and I lend it to somebody else. That way, I can make a bit of money for myself.

SALA. How much will you give us?

OWEN LEND. The rate of interest is about 5 percent, which means that for every one hundred dollars you give me, I'll give you back your hundred plus another five dollars.

ZERG. How long will it take for this interest to build up so we can buy some gold?

OWEN LEND. About ten years.

SALA. We haven't got time to wait ten years. We have a wedding to go to next week!

ZERG. Can you give us more interest?

OWEN LEND. Sorry, times are tough. I've had to make cutbacks.

JOSH. You could try bartering.

SALA. What's that?

JOSH. That's when you exchange goods.

OWEN LEND. If you want gold, I have a gold watch. I could exchange that.



JOSH. I thought you said times were tough.

OWEN LEND. They are. I can only afford to have a gold watch on one wrist. It's very inconvenient.

ZERG. I haven't got much to exchange, just this *Lonely Galaxy Travel Guide*. It's only made out of diamond.

OWEN LEND. Did you say diamond?

SALA. Yes. I guess it's not worth much. There's lots of diamond on our planet. But it's hard wearing. It won't break easily.

OWEN LEND. Well, I'd like to help you out. Here, take my watch. *(He exchanges his watch for the guide.)* I'm rich ... I mean, I'm richer ... I mean, thank you for this very hard-wearing but not very valuable guide.

OWEN LEND *exits, chuckling happily.*

ZERG. There should be enough gold here to get us to the next fuelling station.

SALA. Good, let's go. Thank you for your help, Josh. Here, have this money for your troubles. We can't use it. Sorry it's got sheep grease on it.

JOSH. Thanks.

SALA and ZERG *exit.*

JOSH. Well, I'm going to put this money in a bank. I've got plenty of time to wait.

JOSH *exits.*



illustrations by
Yunie Lee



Seals

by Susan Brocker

Imagine swimming underwater for an hour without coming up for air! Some seals can. Like us, seals have to breathe air to stay alive. But unlike us, seals have **adapted** to living both in the sea and on land. They can store lots of oxygen in their blood. This lets them stay underwater for a long time without needing to breathe.

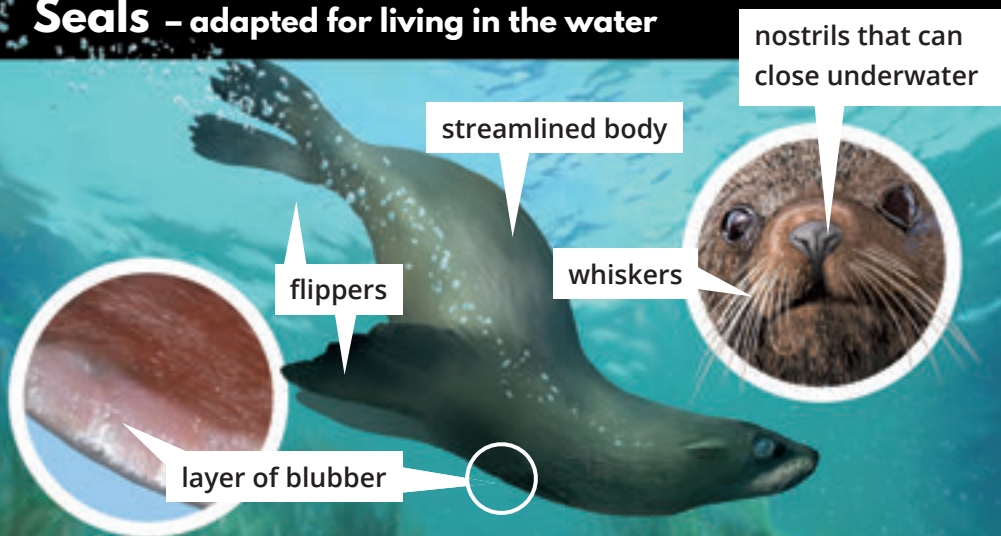
Made for Land and Sea

Seals are found in every ocean of the world. They eat mainly fish and squid. Their long whiskers help them to find **prey** by sensing movement in the water.

Seals have **streamlined** bodies so they can swim underwater easily. They also have four powerful flippers to push themselves along. Seals have a layer of fat under their skin called blubber. It keeps them warm in cold water and also helps them to float.

Seals don't just live in the water, though. They can move about on land too. They often come ashore to rest, and once a year, female seals (cows) come out of the sea to give birth. Each cow has one baby, called a pup. Like all mammals, young seals drink milk from their mothers. Most cows come together to care for their pups in large areas called rookeries.

Seals – adapted for living in the water



Rookeries

Rookeries are noisy, busy places. When a mother seal heads out to hunt in the sea, she leaves her pup behind to sleep and play. When she returns, she finds her pup by calling out with loud barks. Each mother has her own special “voice” and smell, and so does each pup.

Meanwhile, the male seals (bulls) defend their territory by snorting, grunting, and roaring. Sometimes they pump up their chests and thump into each other until one of them gives up and goes away.



New Zealand's Seals

Three **species** of seal live around the coast of New Zealand.

New Zealand fur seal (kekeno)

This is our most common seal. Fur seals have large dark eyes and a pointed nose, as well as the furry coat that gives them their name.



New Zealand sea lion (whakahao) (also known as Hooker's sea lion)

The New Zealand sea lion is larger than a fur seal and has a flatter nose. The females are cream-coloured, and the males are dark brown. The male sea lions are a lot bigger than the females. The adult males also have thick hair around their necks like a lion's mane. (This is how sea lions get their name.) There are only about 10,000 New Zealand sea lions left alive.

Southern elephant seal (ihupuku)

This is the world's largest seal – some elephant seals are as heavy as a small truck (weighing up to 3,700 kilograms). The male has a big, fleshy nose like an elephant's trunk. Because of its size, the elephant seal moves very slowly on land.



New Zealand Seals:

Where they mostly live

New Zealand fur seals: along mainland New Zealand's rocky coastline, on small outer islands, and on the Chatham Islands

New Zealand sea lions: Auckland Islands, Campbell Island, Snares Islands, Stewart Island, and the Otago coast

Southern elephant seals: Campbell Island, the Antipodes Islands, Macquarie Island, and sometimes on the mainland



Macquarie Island

Leopard seal

Another seal that can sometimes be seen around the New Zealand coast is the leopard seal. Although the species lives mainly near Antarctica, leopard seals visit our beaches now and then.



Seals in Danger

When the first people arrived in New Zealand from Polynesia, they found huge **colonies** of seals. They hunted the seals for their meat and used their fur to make warm clothing. Seal teeth also made excellent fish-hooks.

In 1792, the first European sealers arrived in New Zealand. Over the next hundred years, they killed tens of thousands of seals for their fur and the oil in their blubber. Seals almost became **extinct**, so the government passed a law to protect them.





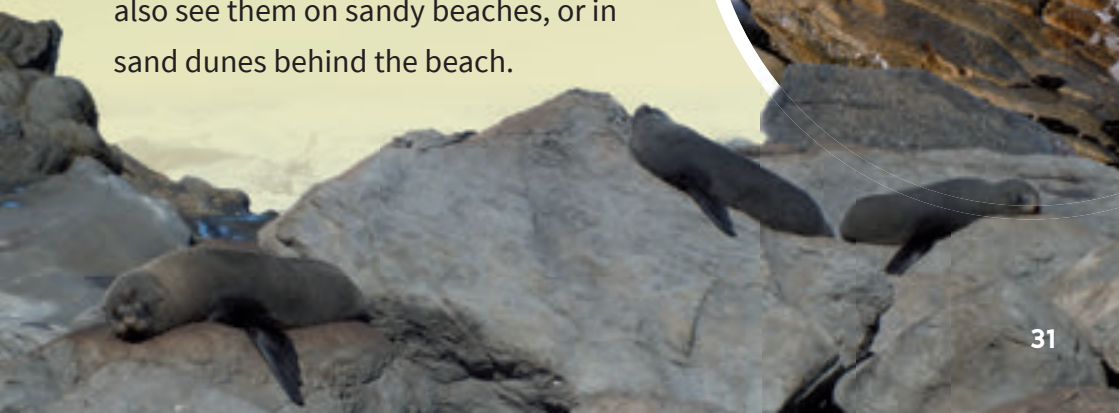
SEAL SOS

If you see a seal in trouble, call the Department of Conservation hotline on 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468)

Today, seals still face many dangers. A big problem for seals is human rubbish, such as plastic bags, in the sea. Chemical and oil spills can also kill seals. Another danger is fishing nets. Sometimes seals are trapped in nets and drown.

Seal Spotting

Seals are very social animals. In summer, large numbers gather at rookeries to have their pups. Seals usually return each year to the same place. They also come ashore to rest at areas called haul-outs. Look out for them on rocky beaches that have big boulders for shade and pools for cooling off. In Otago and Southland, you might also see them on sandy beaches, or in sand dunes behind the beach.



TAKE CARE!

Remember that seals are wild animals and can move quickly for their size. Watch them from a safe distance (at least 10 metres).

- Don't make loud noises or throw things.
- Keep dogs away.
- Never touch a seal; they can get angry.
- Don't feed seals; it can make them sick.



Glossary

adapted: become better suited to conditions

colonies: large groups of the same species living together

extinct: no longer existing

prey: an animal hunted by others for food

species: a group of living things that can breed with one another

streamlined: shaped to move easily through water

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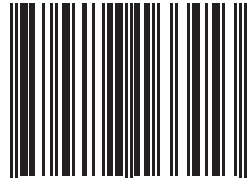
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