



THE ODD-LOOKING KIWI

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

"What's this picture on this can of polish?" Mary asked her father as they polished their shoes.

"A kiwi," Mr. Jones answered.

Young Billy, always curious, looked over Mary's shoulder and disagreed, "No way! A kiwi is a fuzzy brown fruit!"

"You're right," Mr. Jones chuckled. "That is one kind of a kiwi, but there is another. Kiwis are odd-looking birds that are only found living in the forests, scrublands and grasslands on the small island of New Zealand."

Taking a book from a bookshelf, Mr. Jones showed Mary and Billy pictures of a kiwi.

"It looks like a big, hairy pear!" Billy exclaimed.

"Although they look like they're covered in fur, kiwis have long, loose, hair-like feathers. It even has special feathers that serve as whiskers on its face. Do you see anything else odd about it?"¹

"It has really long legs and a long beak,



but I don't see any wings or a tail," Mary answered.

"The kiwi does have wings and a tail, but they are so small that you can't see them hidden under the feathers. Its tiny wings (only about 1 inch {3 centimeters} long), are useless for flying and are also hidden under the feathers. Interestingly, each wing has a small claw on the tip, though its use is not known."^{2,3}

"Does that mean it can't fly?"

"No, it can't, Mary. It is flightless." Mr. Jones went on to explain that, "About the size of a chicken, kiwis are the smallest of living ratites. These are flightless birds with flat breastbones that lack a keel for attachment of flight muscles. Ostriches, emus, rheas, and cassowaries are also ratites."⁴

"The kiwis have very strong, muscular legs, which make up about a third of their total body weight. Other ratites have only two or three toes, but kiwis have four toes - each with large claws. Their feet are used for digging, running (they can outrun a person), fighting and for walking silently through the forest in search of food. They are omnivores, meaning they eat animals and plants. Their diet consists mostly of worms, grubs, bugs, berries and seeds."^{5,6}

"Compared to their body size, kiwis have eyes that are very small (the smallest eye of all birds) resulting in poor eyesight. However, they have excellent hearing and sense of smell."⁷

"Boy oh boy, they sure have long beaks!" Billy exclaimed.

"Not only is it long," Mr. Jones replied, "but kiwis are the only birds that have nostrils on the tips of their beaks, instead of being near the head. They use their sense of smell and

special sensory pads at the tip of the beak to find prey underground."⁸

"Kiwis usually mate for life; however, the female has been known to leave her current spouse if she finds a male she likes better. When not out foraging for food or patrolling their territory, kiwis prefer to sleep in burrows rather than nests. They also lay their eggs in burrows. The kiwi's

egg is one of the largest in proportion to its body size of any kind of bird in the world. Here is a picture of an egg inside the skeleton of



a female kiwi. Her egg can weigh 1 pound (450 grams), which is 15 to 20 percent of her body weight. That is comparable to a 120-pound (54 kilograms) woman giving birth to a 24-pound (11 kilograms) baby."⁹

"That is huge!" Mary exclaimed.

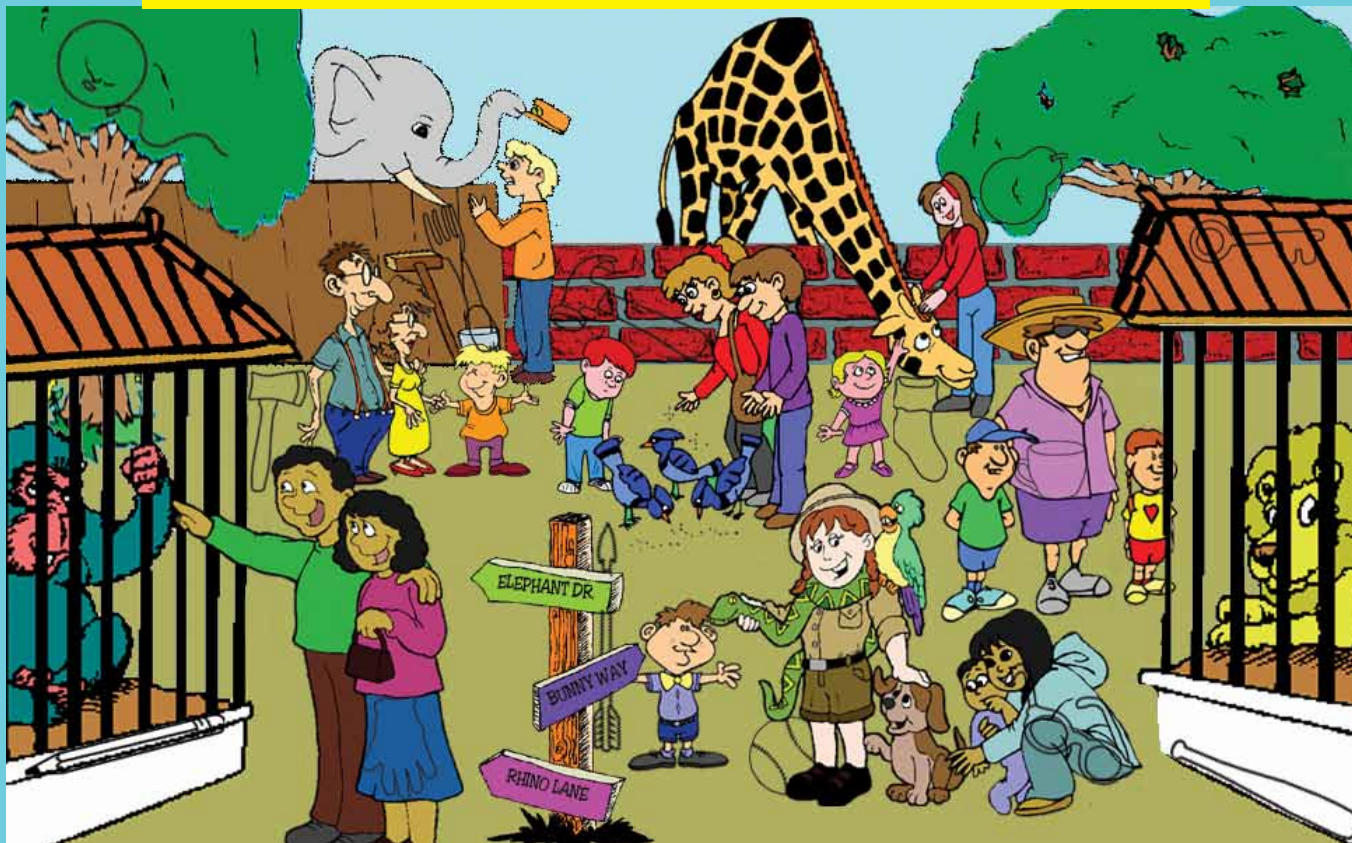
"She will lay one to two eggs at a time, up to three times per year. Usually, the male kiwi will sit on the eggs for about 80 days (11 weeks). At the end of that time, because the chick doesn't have an egg tooth, the chick must kick its way out of the shell. "When they come out of the shell, they are fully feathered with their eyes opened, looking like miniatures of their parents."¹⁰

"These are just some of the fascinating designs of a kiwi," concluded Mr. Jones. "Some might say that everything about the kiwi happened by chance and accident. But design points to a Creator – the God of the Bible."

For references go to: <http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm>

In the KT&B Jan- Feb 2020 issue, the answers were printed by mistake instead of the puzzles. So here are the puzzles.

See if you can find the 14 hidden objects from the Hidden Object List below.

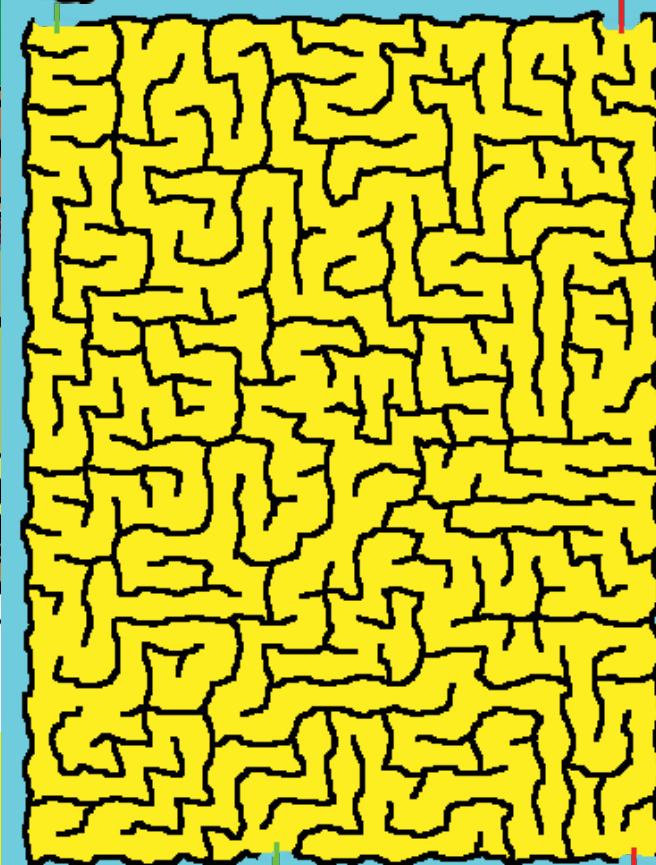


HIDDEN OBJECTS



Puzzles by Lanny Johnson © AOI 2020

Help the mothers find the path through the maze to get to their children of the same kind.



FOR ANSWERS GO TO: <http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm>