

BEACH-NESTING

Birds



The Birds & WHERE they LIVE



Pied Oystercatcher

Habitat: They are found mostly on sandy ocean beaches, all around Australia.

Facts:

- They don't really eat oysters but prefer other molluscs like pipis!
- They use their bill to pry open shellfish.

Sooty Oystercatcher

Habitat: Prefer rocky coasts and are found all around Australia.

Facts:

- Their chicks have dark feathers which blend into their rocky habitat.
- The female's bill is longer than the male's.



more black on back
Western subspecies



Red-capped Plover

Habitat: Found all over Australia, in inland salty or freshwater wetlands, and on beaches.

Facts:

- The chicks hatch with adult-sized legs, ready to run!
- The male has a bright rusty red head and the female's head is duller. The male incubates at night so he doesn't stand out to predators, and the female takes the day shift, as she is more camouflaged.



Eastern subspecies
STATUS VULNERABLE



Beach Stone-curlew

Habitat: Found mostly around the northern coasts of Australia (WA, NT, QLD, NSW), on beaches, estuaries, mangroves, mudflats and islands.

Facts:

- Being a large bird, they are extra shy and sensitive to disturbance.
- Their favourite food is soldier crabs.



STATUS VULNERABLE



Fairy Tern

Habitat: Found in WA, SA, VIC and TAS. This seabird feeds out at sea and nests on land.

Facts:

- They choose to nest closest to their favourite fishing spot!
- They look like fairies when they hover overhead.

Hooded Plover

Habitat: There are two subspecies: the Eastern subspecies is found on ocean beaches in SA, VIC, TAS and NSW. In WA, the subspecies uses beaches and inland salt lakes.

Facts:

- There are fewer than 6,000 left in the world.
- They nest out in the open to have a full view of any approaching threats.
- Their nickname is 'Hoodie'.

Little Tern

Habitat: Mostly found on the northern coasts of Australia but they do extend south in to VIC, TAS and NSW.

Facts:

- They are the smallest of the terns.
- They look just like fairy terns but look closely at the pics for the differences!



PROTECTING EGGS & CHICKS

These mums and dads have a full-time job trying to look after their eggs and chicks on the beach!

Terns defend their colony of eggs and chicks, many eyes spotting a threat early and then they begin their defence as a group, even dive bombing someone who comes too close!

Oystercatchers will call out/pip loudly and even fly in a circle above you, worrying about their chick and trying to warn you to leave.

Hoodies quietly sneak off the nest or if they have chicks, call out an alarm and the chicks run to hide. The hoodies will wait patiently until the threat has gone from the area, and then sneak back to their nest or chicks. They are masters of camouflage and secrecy.

Red-capped plovers

frantically do broken wing displays when they spot a threat near their eggs or chicks. They will drag their wing and run along the ground in front of you like a mouse. 'Take me instead, I'm easy to catch' is the message they are trying to give to a hungry predator.

MASTERS OF CAMOUFLAGE



Can you find the chick?

The Beach Stone-curlew is a large shorebird with bold markings, but did you know that this is just the right colouring to match their coastal habitats?

bold markings







When danger is near, the chick will crouch on the ground and keep perfectly still. This amazing camouflage saves them from being eaten!



See how well the eggs match the colours of the sand. Imagine how easy it is to step on them!



If you see these birds on the beach or signs that say they are nesting, please give them plenty of space so they can safely care for their eggs and chicks.

 SECRET CAMO SEARCH	8		6		9		Tick the box when you have found the number shown. ✓
	5		10		Can you find these items hidden throughout this booklet?		

SHOREBIRDS VS SEABIRDS



Long legs



molluscs

They have long legs for a life spent running around onshore.

They nest as pairs, setting up their 'territory', which they fiercely defend, so they have enough food to raise a family.

Shorebirds feed on beaches, rocks and shores of lakes. They eat mainly crustaceans, worms and molluscs.



worms & crustaceans

Seabirds are streamlined, with short legs, as they spend most of their time flying over the sea foraging. They will dive for fish!



short legs & webbed feet

They nest in colonies, choosing the 'safety in numbers' approach to protecting their eggs and chicks. They need to leave their chicks to fly out to sea to fish, so the chicks hang out together.

It's very busy in the tern colony below, with eggs to be incubated and chicks to be fed. Can you spot the **10** differences between the two scenes below?



Put your litter in the bin so it doesn't end up on the beach.

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OYSTERCATCHER CHALLENGE

You're a Pied Oystercatcher chick and have to survive on the beach for 50 days before you can fly. **GOOD LUCK!**

You will need: dice, some counters and some friends to play with. To play, roll the dice and run!

START



1 You're so excited to be out of the egg! Hop ahead one day.

2

3

4

5



You are almost trampled. Go back to the start.

6

7



It's very hot and you need to stay sheltered. Skip a turn.

8

9

10

Your parents find lots of food for you. Follow the worms trail and fill your tummy.

11



Hot weekend on the beach and there's no space to feed. Miss a turn.

12

13

14

15

16

Oh no, you're chased by an off-leash dog. Follow the dog prints back five days.

17

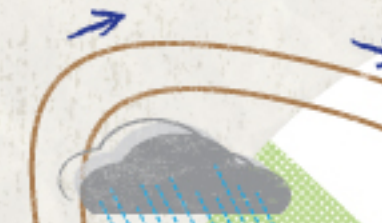
18

19

A lady puts her dog on a lead. Follow the dog lead forward four days.

20

21



There's a hailstorm today, you have to hide in the dunes. Miss a turn.

22

23

24

A 4WD on the beach just misses you. Move back four days.

25

26

27

Your protective fencing is keeping the crowds at a distance. Roll again.

28

29

A child picks up fishing line from the beach so you're safe from entanglement. Move forward six days.

30

31

You can now feed yourself, you found a nice juicy worm. Roll again.

32

33

A kestrel swoops but misses. Close call! Go back one day.

34

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50

A family sets up their tent for the day, you can't come out to feed. Go back two days.

43

44

45

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48

49

50

HOORAY!
You can now fly - you're a fledgling!

END

A fox is on the prowl for food. You run for your life back to day 13.

49

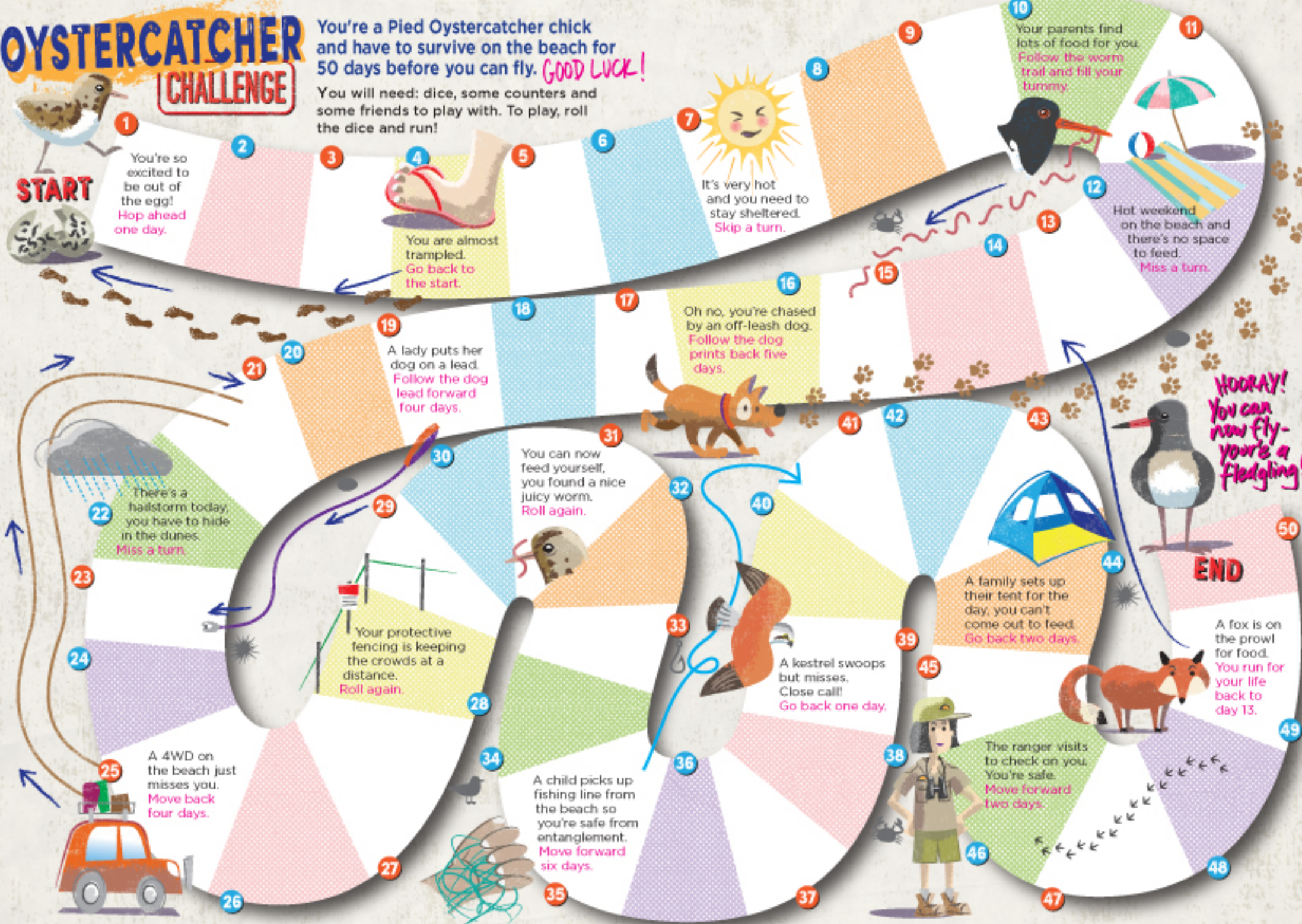
48

47

46

45

44



BEACH BIRD

Words

Find the words below hidden in the puzzle.

T	B	W	G	C	R	A	V	E	N	Q	I	R	B
G	I	E	Q	P	K	C	O	L	O	N	I	A	L
D	P	S	A	M	P	H	I	R	E	H	P	B	J
W	H	A	B	I	T	A	T	A	B	M	A	O	W
S	C	X	X	N	J	B	N	S	D	R	A	V	V
P	L	E	E	X	V	G	T	O	C	G	G	U	Z
N	U	Z	J	X	H	W	Z	R	Y	R	S	J	X
R	T	B	Y	S	T	P	E	N	J	C	A	U	I
G	C	D	N	E	V	I	W	E	J	R	U	P	P
H	H	Q	N	P	D	Y	N	L	J	Y	N	H	E
A	C	U	Q	L	B	E	A	C	H	P	H	Q	Q
T	D	H	O	D	M	R	I	V	T	T	D	B	P
C	D	S	I	E	C	L	Z	X	Z	I	N	N	R
H	N	V	G	C	S	Z	G	Z	K	C	O	U	J
P	I	X	L	X	K	H	U	C	W	J	S	N	A
Q	Z	Z	C	A	M	O	U	F	L	A	G	E	T

- camouflage
- dune
- colonial
- chick
- raven
- extinction
- hatch
- sapphire
- soldier crab
- cryptic
- beach
- habitat
- clutch
- scrape

Hatch Match

Draw a line to match the adult bird with their chick/s.

Hooded Plover



Little Tern



Sooty Oystercatcher



Red-capped Plover



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

3. When walking on the beach and there are signs for beach-nesting birds, should you walk on the dry or wet sand?
4. What is an Oystercatcher's favourite food?
7. What is one of the most common predators of a beach-nesting bird?
8. True or false: Plover chicks find their own food (soon after hatching) and are not fed by their parents.
9. Name a state where Beach Stone-curlews are found?

10. If you're taking your dog to the beach, what should you put on your dog?
11. Is it the male or female Red-capped Plover that has the bright red head?

DOWN

1. What do you call a chick that can now fly?
2. Why are the eggs speckled?
5. What is the all black oystercatcher called?
6. Which Plover is threatened with extinction?



If you take your dog to the beach, please keep it on a leash during nesting season and never let your dog chase birds!

RED CAP RESCUE

A dog off the lead has frightened this little red-capped plover chick into hiding. Now it needs your help to find its way back to its parents.

HINTS! ① Chicks can swim
② When tracks end you cannot continue. You can only follow tracks this way (see arrows)



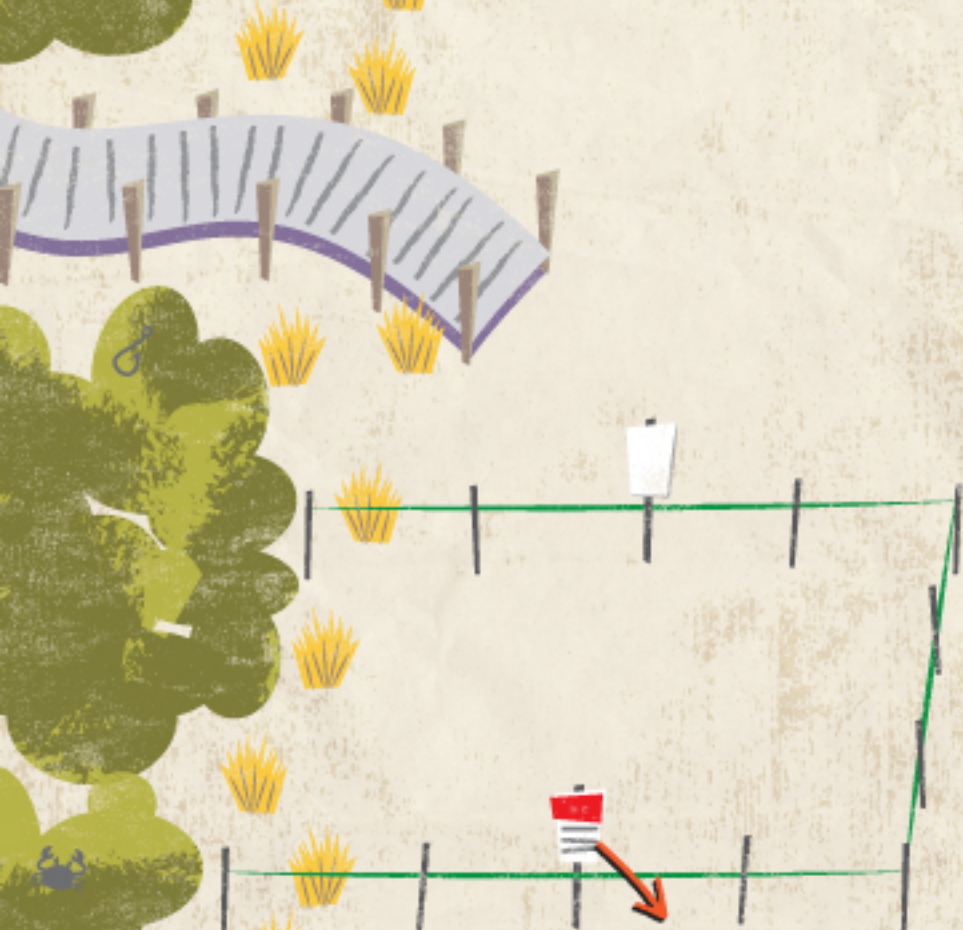
START

SAFE

 Keep your dog on a leash!



HELP *the* HOODIES




CAUTION AHEAD
HOODED PLOVERS ARE CURRENTLY BREEDING



- Put your dog on a leash
- Don't enter the fenced area
- Walk past on water's edge
- Don't linger in front of the fence

 birdlife

 Always look out for signage

Cut out and place the people and objects where you think they would be best for the birds on the beach.



birdwatchers



children playing



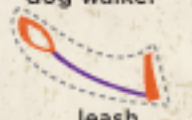
adult birds



dog walker



Eggs



leash



ranger



dog



sun bather





BirdLife Australia's Beach-nesting Birds Program aims to improve the conservation outlook for resident shorebirds and migratory seabirds that nest on beaches around Australia. Through a range of on-ground conservation actions (such as fencing to protect nests), citizen science monitoring, research and education, we are helping these threatened birds! You can help by looking out for signs at the beach and giving these birds a safe space to raise their chicks!

To find out more visit: www.birdlife.org.au/beach or use the contact details below

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[http://www.birdlife.org.au/documents/
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BirdLife Australia is dedicated to achieving outstanding conservation results for our native birds and their habitats. With our specialised knowledge and the commitment of an Australia-wide network of volunteers and supporters, we are creating a bright future for Australia's birds.

Add your voice

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