



What does a kauri snail eat?

Fact

- A kauri snail is a carnivore – it eats meat (the meat of worms and other creepy crawlies).
- Because a kauri snail hunts for its food it's also called a predator (which means it hunts for its food)
- Kauri snails can't move very quickly but when they find their prey (like an earthworm) they pounce on it.
- Kauri snails can grow to be as big as your fist and have shells up to 75 millimetres in diameter

Do you know

- The Maori name for the kauri snail is pupu rangi.
- Although it's called the kauri snail this snail doesn't even like being around kauri trees because the ground is usually too dry for its favourite food (earthworms) to live in it.
- You only find kauri snails in the far north of the North Island – in fact you only find kauri snails in New Zealand although they do have carnivorous cousins in other parts of the world.
- All snails have teeth, tiny microscopic ones and they have lots of them. In fact, they have hundreds of rows of sharp little teeth on its tongue.
- Most snails are herbivores which means they like to eat plants.

Experiments you can do

You won't find any kauri snails in your back yard but I'm sure you'll find lots of common old garden snails. See if you can find a couple and watch them for a while. You'll probably find snails in dark places away from direct sunlight. And if you find them in the middle of the day, they won't be doing much so carefully lift one up and put it in the middle of the garden path or the lawn and watch what happens.

How does it move along? Put something in its way, like an empty ice cream container, and see what happens. Will it go around the snail or will it climb over it?

Other Investigations

Listen to a snail eat.

You'll have to make do with a common garden snail for this investigation too (I don't think you'd want to listen to a kauri snail eat a worm, yuck!) Give your snail a nice crisp lettuce leaf to eat and then let the snail get stuck in. A snail uses its hundreds of teeth to grind its food and if you listen carefully you should be able to hear it eating.

Jokes

What do you call a girl snail? Shelly