



## Takahe - Why do animals become extinct?

### Fact

- Animals become extinct if they keep dying off faster than they're being born.
- This may be caused by changes in their natural environment (the place where they live and eat).
- This may also be caused by them being killed or hunted by other animals or humans.
- Takehe are native New Zealand birds and they're in danger of becoming extinct because wild deer like to eat the same things that Takehe eat and wild stoats are hunting the chicks and eating them.

### Do you know

- There are hundreds of species of animals around the world that are in danger of becoming extinct
- Some species of animals have features that make them more vulnerable to their predators. Like some birds can't fly so they can't escape from their predators as easily as birds that can fly.
- Endangered species in New Zealand are the Kiwi, Takehe, Kakapo, Giant Weta, Kea and trees like the Kauri
- Wild deer and stoats are not from New Zealand but have been introduced from other parts of the world but even domestic animals like cats and dogs can be a threat to some animals.
- There are special organisations working to prevent our endangered species from becoming extinct. Takehe are surviving on islands like TiriTiri Matangi where predators like cats and stoats have been removed.

### Experiments you can do

Keep the species alive!

#### What you need:

1 egg (raw not hard boiled)

1 weekend

#### What you do:

Pretend that the egg is the last surviving egg of a whole species. You have to take that egg with you wherever you go, all weekend, and protect it the whole time. If the egg gets a crack or is broken the species will die out and become extinct. Remember you've got to take the egg everywhere you go – except to bed – you can leave it by your bed.

Let me know how you get on.

### Other Investigations

Find out about another endangered species in New Zealand. Maybe the Giant Weta or the Chevron Skink (a tiny lizard that's very rare) or the Kiore (a pacific rat). Why is it becoming extinct? Is something killing it? Is its food running out?

*Imagine that you live on a tiny island with your family, including all your uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents and the only food you eat is blue M&M's. You all live on the islands in your little houses made of empty cardboard boxes, eating blue M&M's which grow on rocks near the sea. One day a UFO arrives with aliens from another planet. They start eating your M&M's and they knock down your cardboard houses to make room for their houses made out of leaves and twigs.*

*When the food starts running out you're in risk of becoming extinct!.*