**ACTIVITY: Māori knowledge of animals – provocative questions**

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| **Activity idea**  In this activity, ākonga use provocative questions to explore issues or events – past or present – pertaining to animals of Aotearoa.  By the end of this activity, ākonga should be able to:   * identify an issue or event of personal or local interest * use literacy skills to locate information about the issue or event * communicate their findings. |  |

**For teachers**

This activity uses an inquiry approach to explore aspects of how we manage and/or interact with animal species. It is cross-curricular as it explores science concepts like conservation and animal behaviours as well as mātauranga Māori, New Zealand histories and animal ethics.

***What to do***

Use these questions to introduce the task. You could also include questions more specific to your rohe or local situation. Encourage ākonga to come up with provocative questions of their own. Invite them to report their findings and justify their conclusions. Choose a format that suits individual students, student groups or an aspect of the curriculum that you wish to cover.

* The [takahē](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2710-takahe-an-introduction) was rediscovered in 1948. Their conservation status has moved from extinct to nationally vulnerable but they still [face many threats](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2705-threats-to-takahe). Significant resources are required for their [continued conservation](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2704-takahe-conservation-efforts). Should we continue this investment in a single species or spread our efforts to include more threatened species?
* What are the benefits and drawbacks of ecological island sanctuaries – for example, [Orokonui Ecosanctuary](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/1383-orokonui-ecosanctuary-a-mainland-island), [ZEALANDIA](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/images/1766-zealandia) or Sanctuary Mountain [Maungatautari](https://www.sanctuarymountain.co.nz/home)?
* Rabbits and hares were introduced in 1838 and 1851 for food and sport. They are a huge pest problem in parts of the motu. How should they be controlled? What are the ethics, advantages, disadvantages and effectiveness of using [biological pest control](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/1462-rabbit-control)? Or is it preferable to control them via pesticides like [1080](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2684-1080-an-overview) or [alternative forms of pest control](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2689-alternatives-to-1080)?
* [Glow-worms](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2417-glow-worms) are famed tourist attractions in places such as Waitomo and Paparoa National Park. What are the advantages and disadvantages of allowing thousands of people to visit the insects’ natural habitats?
* What led to the Hokianga dog tax rebellion in 1898? Consider the significance of [kurī](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/3290-kuri) in te ao Māori and how might this have underpinned the protests.
* What happened to [kurī](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/3290-kuri) and [kiore](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/3307-kiore)? Why don’t we see them today? What is the significance of their loss?
* The [kea](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/images/3751-kea-nestor-notabilis) is known for its intelligence and curiosity. What else is it known for? What evidence points towards this being the case? Does it deserve this reputation?
* Humans have a long history of interacting in different ways with other animal species. Choose one of these and decide whether it is still appropriate: rodeos, racing, zoos, animal shows, hunting, fishing and pets.
* How do the [labels that we give other animals](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/3291-maori-perspectives-of-animal-ethics-introduction-tentative-title) influence our relationship with them? Do these labels ([or our biases](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/2863-do-our-biases-affect-what-we-protect)) affect what we value and protect?

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