

PET PLAY TIME! 🐾 WHAT IS FOSTERING? 🐾 PROJECTS FOR ANIMALS

kids speaking for animals Vol. 21 • No. 1

BCSPCA

Bark!



**POLLINATOR
POWER**

(and how you can help!)

High Paws

kids helping animals!



Rylann, 9, and Robbie, 11, are the owners of Rylann's Cat Cookies and Robbie's Canine Cookies! Inspired to help animals by their grandparents' adopted dog, Cosmo, these entrepreneurial brothers have donated hundreds of dollars from their businesses to the Comox SPCA.



Rylann started testing cat cookie recipes last year before putting his product on the market, while Robbie has been in business since 2018. Both kids bake and package their own cookies, in bags with labels they designed themselves. The goodies are then delivered by bike to Just Like Mom's Self-Serve Bakery in Union Bay, where they can be purchased for \$3 a bag. A dollar from each is donated to the SPCA, helping animals in need with every tasty treat!



Emily generously donated \$70 in Christmas money plus two bags of dog food to the Tri-Cities SPCA. What a wonderful gift to the animals!



Emma made and sold cookies to help animals like Hoptart. How kind! Emma's bake sale raised \$94 for the Comox SPCA.



Elwyn donated supplies to the Comox SPCA, including food, toys, a bed, a crate, leashes, collars, brushes and even a nail trimmer! Not only that, Elwyn also contributed allowance money to help care for the animals. While delivering her donation to the centre, Elwyn met adoptable cat Simba as well as some of the mice and baby rats in care!



Nolan and Harrison teamed up and recycled cans and bottles to raise money for the Tri-Cities SPCA. They collected and returned enough recyclables for a donation of \$45. Paw-some!



Bella and Isaac celebrated their ninth birthday and made a difference for animals at the same time, collecting \$300 for the Vancouver SPCA at their party.



Payton donated \$145 in birthday money to the Nanaimo SPCA. What a thoughtful way to celebrate turning seven!



Amelia is a repeat summer camper and valued friend to the animals at the West Kootenay SPCA. This year, Amelia donated \$190 in birthday money to help with their care.



Send us a letter and drawing!
How did you and your pet have fun this winter?
kids@spca.bc.ca



Marina is a great supporter of the Abbotsford SPCA, most recently holding a bottle drive for the animals. Thanks to Marina's hard work and generous neighbours, the drive raised \$365!

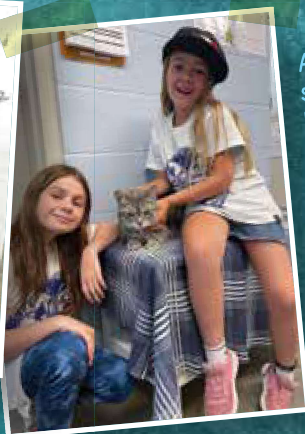
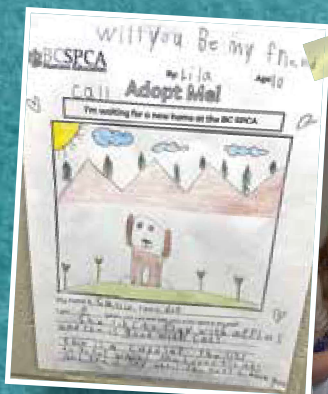


Three classes at Aberdeen Elementary, wanting to support the animals even before their upcoming BC SPCA classroom presentations, collected this amazing bunch of supplies for the Kamloops SPCA!

Kiana and Riley worked together to prepare and then sell items at a local market. The sale raised \$220 for the Richmond SPCA! Here's what Kiana and Riley's mom has to say about them: "They are both committed to animals and doing anything to help them."



Maya and Ash sold iced tea to fundraise for the Penticton SPCA. With the money they raised, Maya and Ash were able to buy some fun toys and treats for the animals, plus donate money to help with their care.



After attending BC SPCA summer camp last year, Lila and Audrina decided to donate their birthday money to help the animals - a combined total of \$129. Lila also made this amazing adoption poster to help find a home for one of the long-term dog residents.



A group of 21 students at Glanford Middle School took part in an animal activism group focused on supporting the Victoria SPCA. After seeing a plea for sheets and blankets on an SPCA social media page, they decided to hold a blanket/towel, toy & pet food drive. The students made posters and announcements about the drive, then collected two giant boxes full of supplies! The group plans to continue working to support animals in need in their community.

PET PALS



Jude, 8, from Ladner, has been learning about Arctic animals. His favourite is the snowshoe hare because they can hop 2.5 metres with their big back legs!

River, 6, of New Westminster drew pictures of his precious dogs, Daisy and Diesel!



Cecily, 5, from Ladner, drew a picture of her Grandma and Grandpa's dog, Rosie.

Hey Kids! Send your letters, photos and artwork for Pet Pals, High Paws or Litterbox to:
BC SPCA Kids Club
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5T 1R1



Haddie's story

Then . . .

At only six weeks old, little Haddie found herself in a terrifying situation. Somehow, she had become trapped in a garage, under a storage crate. In trying to free herself, Haddie twisted her leg so much that it broke. Thankfully, a kind person happened to clean their garage, and moved the crate to find Haddie underneath, just in time. They bundled and brought her to the Vancouver SPCA, where staff rushed the frightened kitten to the veterinarian.

It didn't look good. Not only was Haddie cold, dehydrated and hungry, but her broken leg had become badly infected. She was clearly in terrible pain and needed life-saving emergency surgery to remove her leg.

After the surgery, Haddie needed time to heal before being placed for adoption. Not only that, but as a young stray, she hadn't had a chance to learn to trust people.

Living temporarily with a volunteer BC SPCA foster family would be the perfect chance for Haddie to recover and be socialized.

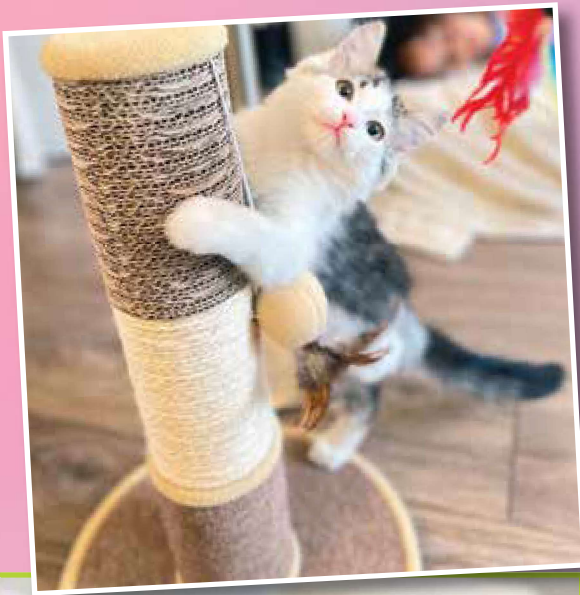
Little did Haddie know, her foster family had a very special neighbour: a young girl who adored cats. Every time the family took in a new foster cat, they invited this neighbour to meet them. This time was no different. Soon the girl came to visit Haddie every day, and the two became very special friends.

While Haddie continued to recover, her new friend's family put in an application to adopt her – and they were accepted! Soon Haddie moved to her forever home. When she first arrived, her special friend took care to help Haddie feel safe, sleeping on the floor beside her as she got used to the new surroundings.



Now . . .

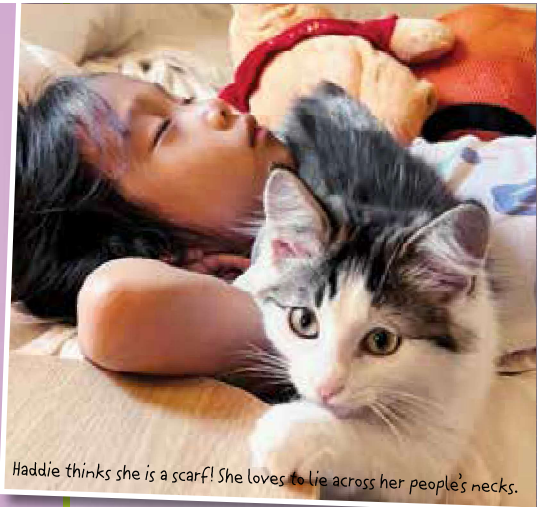
Recovered from her surgery and settled in her home, Haddie loves to play. She jumps all over the place, getting up to every surface but the kitchen counter. Haddie especially enjoys her feather wand. She even does somersaults in the air while playing! (Learn more about how cats play on page 6.)



Haddie's new family doesn't include just one kid to play with, but two (the brother and sister share the litter box cleaning duties), as well as a mom and dad whose bed she likes to sleep on at night. A 12-year-old beagle named West completes the family, but he hasn't shown Haddie much interest yet.

Haddie still gets to visit her old foster home. There, she reunites and plays with the two cats she was fostered with. The house has tree walls and a cat hammock, which Haddie loves. Her new family plans to set up the same things for her at home.

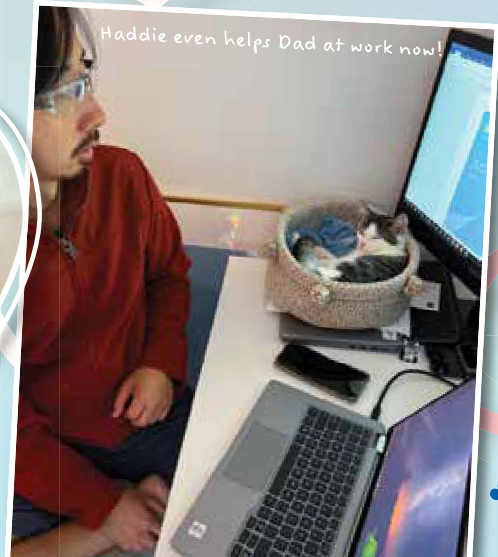
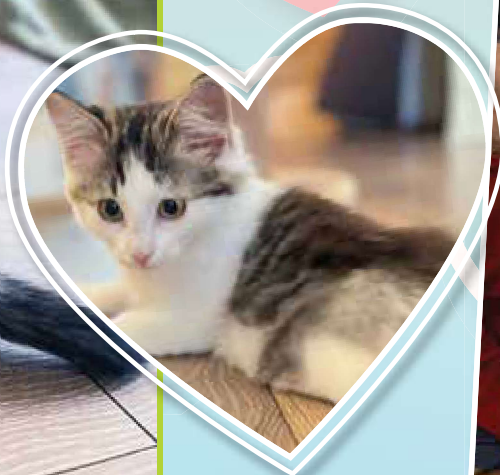
From hurt and afraid all alone to playing and snuggling with a loving family, Haddie's story has a true happy ending. It's hard to tell who is luckier – Haddie or her people! Says her family: "Haddie is such a delight and brings so much joy and laughter to our home."



Haddie thinks she is a scarf! She loves to lie across her people's necks.

We ♥ foster families!

Thanks to a foster family connection, Haddie found her forever home. But not only that, she received fully focused attention and care as she recovered from her ordeal. Volunteer foster homes are a very important part of how the BC SPCA helps animals – and can make a world of difference for those individual pets needing extra care. You can learn more about becoming a foster family on page 8 and by visiting spca.bc.ca/foster.



Haddie even helps Dad at work now!

Kitten



AROUND

If you've ever heard someone compare cats and dogs, you might have learned that cats are "less work."

People often think of cats as independent, "easy" pets. But to be happy and healthy, cats need an interactive, stimulating indoor environment. This takes time and effort on the part of us, their guardians!

POUNCE on PLAY

When you notice your cat in the mood to play, get ready to "pounce" on the opportunity! Clues can include spontaneous movements and interaction with objects around your home. Imagine: your cat suddenly jumps and pounces on a toilet paper roll that has fallen out of the recycling bin.

You might notice some classic feline stalking behaviour: legs crouched, head lowered and eyes fixated on the object. Take advantage of these signs and join your cat for a play!



"We're used to taking time out of our day to walk our dogs or play fetch with them in the backyard," says Meghann Cant, a companion animal expert with the BC SPCA. "We need to get in a similar habit with our cats."

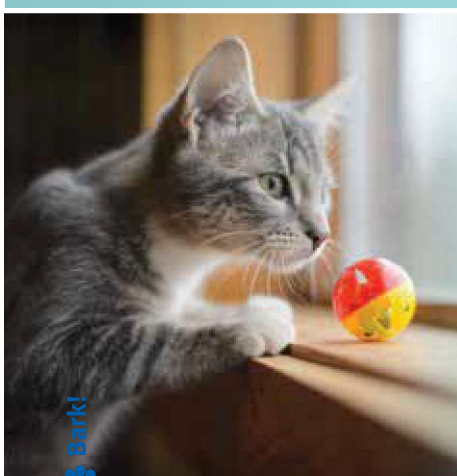
Luckily for *Bark!* readers, kids are some of the best people to take on this challenge. Playtime not only keeps our cats' minds and bodies healthy but also enhances the bond we share, says Meghann.

While kittens are best known for their playful antics, cats of all ages will play when given the chance. The key? To understand your cat's specific likes and dislikes so that you can provide that chance. Meghann explains, "Learning what entices your cat takes trial and error, which is why it's so important to set time aside each day to play with them."

A CAT'S INSTINCTS

Cats have a natural ability to search, stalk, chase, pounce and catch. Wild cats follow this sequence when they hunt. For cats at home, play can mimic this sequence.

Playing keep-away games with your cat lets them express their natural hunting behaviours. Wand toys work well for this (and are easy to make at home – see sidebar)! Move the toy through the air and pretend it's flying prey. Drag it along the floor like ground prey scurrying away. "Be sure to allow your cat to catch the toy sometimes," says Meghann. "A successful 'hunt' will help keep them interested in the game." You can also try tossing a small toy, like a ping-pong ball or fake mouse, down a hallway – and watch your cat's instincts kick in.





TOY JOY

Cats like novelty! That means providing a variety of toys and rotating them regularly. Not sure which cat toys to choose? Remember what Meghann says: “Most are designed to appeal to people, not necessarily to cats.” In fact, cats care more about the feel of a toy than the look of it. Some go for toys made with feathers and fake fur. Some like large, soft toys they can bite and rake with their claws.

Involving food in play can be especially motivating for some cats. Food-dispensing toys, such as balls that drop kibble as they roll, offer challenges for both the brain and body. You can find these at your local pet-supply store or easily make your own.



Safety alert!

Watch out for toys with non-food parts that can be accidentally swallowed – like bells or string – and only bring them out for your cat when you’re watching them.



Fleece wand toy

To make this classic crowd-pleaser, all you need is some fleece fabric and a chopstick. Cut the fleece into strips then tie them to the chopstick – and your cat has a new toy! Follow the tips in this article to help your cat mimic hunting behaviour by dangling or dragging the fleece along the floor. Be sure to let them “win” sometimes!

Plastic bottle treat puzzle

Turn a plastic drink bottle into a food-dispensing cat toy before it hits the recycling bin! Make sure the bottle is clean and dry. With permission and help from an adult, use an X-ACTO knife to cut a few holes in the sides of the bottle (big enough for kibble to pass through, but small enough to take a bit of effort to empty). Pour some kibble or a few treats in the bottle, then screw on the lid. Pass your cat their new toy to bat around and release tasty treats as they play.





MAKING A *difference* FOR ANIMALS

The youth who support the BC SPCA are truly amazing. Lemonade stands, bake sales or birthday money, kids across B.C. are seriously creative in supporting animals in need. But did you know there are lots of things you can do that don't involve money?

What to DO

Be a foster family!

A foster home provides a safe, temporary home for animals who need a little "extra." It might be a pregnant cat waiting to have her babies, orphaned puppies who need bottle feeding, or a sad senior dog who can't feel better in a busy kennel. All of these animals do better in a "foster" home where they can get the care they need on the way to their forever home.

The BC SPCA provides everything your family needs to foster! Food, litter, bedding, bottles and bowls – it all comes from your local BC SPCA. They even provide training so everyone in your home feels comfortable giving the best care possible to a foster pet.



Ava and kitten Mavis enjoying snuggle-time. Right: daily weigh-ins are logged.



So what DO you need to provide? A calm, quiet, separate space for the animal, and lots of love! Foster family member Ava says their favourite part of fostering kittens is the daily weigh-in.

"It's the perfect time to sneak in a little snuggle," says Ava. "But it's also amazing to see them grow so fast, and become more playful every day."

Watch out for wildlife!

Is your freezer filled with extra meat, fish or berries that you want to clear out? Wildlife rehabilitation centres, including the BC SPCA's Wild Animal Rehabilitation Centre on Vancouver Island, may appreciate a donation! Frozen items in edible condition can help feed their wild patients. Needs change depending on the season and the patients centres have in care. Call first to make sure Wild ARC or your local centre can put your donations to good use.



Wildlife don't mind freezer-burned foods!

Help out the food bank (the PET food bank, that is!)

Do a pet food drive in your class or community group. Collect treats, canned and dry pet foods to donate to your local BC SPCA centre OR directly to your local food bank. Groceries are expensive, and every little bit helps support pets and families in need.



Lead the way at school

Gather animal lovers together at school by starting a club! School clubs can work as a team on any of the projects on this page but can also help raise awareness. Your club might learn about an animal issue and share it with others at your school through a presentation or poster project.



What to MAKE

Staff at the BC SPCA work hard to make sure animals feel comfortable and safe while they wait for their forever family. YOU can help as well, by crafting items to make life more interesting or cozy for pets. The instructions for these projects can be found on our website at spca.bc.ca/learn-at-home.



Snuffle mats are perfect for dogs who need to keep busy. Dogs are natural foragers, so having them use their noses to snuffle out hidden kibble or treats is a way to satisfy that need.



With simple strips of fleece and a plastic grid, you can provide an enrichment toy to help dogs feel less stressed.

Pet treats help with positive reinforcement training. Volunteers at the BC SPCA use treats to reward dogs they are walking and cats that they are socializing. Homemade treats have healthy ingredients, and we have recipes for that!



No-sew cat beds help kitties feel cozy and comfortable in the shelter. Each cat has their own special spot called a "Hide, Perch and Go," a specially designed cardboard box that provides places for a cat to hide or sleep. You can make a simple no-sew bed that fits perfectly into the box and can be easily machine-washed. Every pet should have their own comfy bed!



Wow, there really are so many things you can do to help animals! Way to go, team.



The **POWER** of *pollinators*

There is certainly a lot of “buzz” these days about pollinators! Why should we care about them, and what we can do in our local communities, at home and on our school grounds to help them?

A pollinator is an animal that helps plants reproduce by moving pollen from one plant to another or within the same plant. Pollinators such as bees, butterflies, wasps, ants, flies, moths, birds and bats move around plants to eat nectar. At the same time, they collect pollen onto their bodies, ready to take that pollen to the next plant or a different spot on the same plant. Pollinators continue this all day long, every day! Moving pollen around is called pollination, and that helps plants produce more seeds and fruits. Plants depend on the hard work of pollinators to grow new plants, and we depend on plants to provide us with a nutritious diet!

Pollinators may be small in size, but they play a huge role in our local ecosystems. They are responsible for helping plants produce many of the foods we enjoy, including apples, pears, strawberries, blueberries, peaches, nectarines, cucumbers, squash, wildflowers and so many more. In fact, it is estimated that one out of every three mouthfuls of food on our plates is due to the efforts of pollinators.



Pollinators are facing many threats, including **habitat loss**, **disease**, use of **pesticides**, **parasite infestation** and a **rapidly changing climate**. As our climate changes, temperatures are fluctuating and water is harder to find in the summer. There's no doubt that pollinators are in trouble and need help. The good news is that there are many ways we can help them!

Planting for pollinators

The Victoria SPCA has launched a youth club garden project for pollinators. Along with the Burnside Community Centre, participants have been working on a large garden plot, themed the "BC SPCA Pollinator Garden." The plot was overgrown and waiting for some inspiration!



The group chose pollinator-friendly and native plants for the garden plot. Native plants that are local to our ecosystems thrive when grouped together and create a beautiful canvas of colour. Very soon, the garden began to attract bees and butterflies. The group created resting spaces, a bee bath and so many plants for them to explore. Everyone involved had so much fun creating this pollinator paradise.



What to plant

Native plants contribute food and habitat spaces in the garden, so there is something for all pollinators to enjoy.



Some native plants to consider:

White yarrow, red columbine, sea thrift, great camas, field chickweed, larkspur, bicoloured lupines, fireweed, white fawn lily, beach pea, western St. John's wort.



Pollinator friendly plants:

Sedum, Echinacea, calendula, bee balm, borage, dahlias, cosmos, verbena, zinnia, hollyhocks, butterfly weed, lavender, blazing star, golden rod, joe-pye weed, globe thistle, chives.



How you can help

You can help pollinators wherever you live – at home or at school!



AT HOME:

- Plant a few native plants in your home garden.
- Make pollinator seed bombs and give them as gifts to people.
- Grow some of your own food.
- Make a shallow bee bath filled with rocks and fresh water.

Visit spca.bc.ca/learn-at-home for instructions on some of these projects!

AT SCHOOL:

Want to help pollinators with friends? Maybe you have a teacher at school who loves to garden? Start a Garden Club! Here are some club project ideas:

- Create a pollinator garden on your school grounds.
- Build bat houses to help bats in your community (visit bcbats.ca to find building plans!).
- Make a "bee hotel" and place it near a tree.
- In the spring, make "nest helpers" to assist birds with gathering materials to build their nests!

A garden can be a beautiful, restful space for people, as well as a great place to explore and learn about nature. We discover that everything is connected in some way, and that we need to take care of our environment, the animals and each other.

Check out the **BC SPCA camps this summer** to learn even more about pollinators and how we can support them.

10 TIPS for picking a pet name

1



ALFRED

Write a list. Jot down all the names you like, then see which ones stick after a few days.

2



CEDAR

Choose as a family. Offer one or two names each, then narrow it down until you find one everyone agrees on.

3



CLEO (CLEOPATRA)

Celebrate your interests. For outdoorsy families, think of nature words, like Maple, Clover or Petal. Or how about a beloved book or movie character, or a favourite athlete?

4



HUGO

Get to know them first. Bring your new furry family member home and learn about their personality to find a name that suits them best.

5



LINK

Avoid rhyming with a command. Calling your dog "Kit" or "Ray" could make training harder when you try to teach them "sit" or "stay."

6



**ROSIE
(ROSEBUD MOON QUEEN)**

Keep it simple. Short names can be easier to call out and for pets to understand. If you love a longer name, you might choose a nickname for daily use.

7



PANDA

Consider starting with a consonant. Names starting with harder sounds like "T" or "K" can be easier for pets to hear. Of course, this isn't a rule. You may have an "Olive" or an "Oreo," and names starting with vowels are great, too.

8



POPPY

Search for inspiration. Browse a baby name book or website to find names and their meanings. Look to your family's culture for a name with special significance.

9



PRYNNE

Dare to be different. If your neighbour's dog is named "Sadie," you might want to choose something else to avoid confusion. Looking up "popular pet names" can spark ideas, but make sure you really love a name.

10



MAVIS

Let your pet choose! One fun way suggested to a BC SPCA staff member naming a kitten: Ball up pieces of paper with different names. Whichever one the kitten plays with is their name!

BONUS TIP!



**REX
(REXTOPHER)**

The most important thing is that your pet is loved and well-cared-for – no matter their name.

DON'T FORGET THE ID TAG!

Once your pet has a name, make sure they have identification. Along with a permanent tattoo or microchip (registered at bcpetregistry.ca), dogs and cats should have a collar with their name and your family's phone number.



TRANSFORM YOUR TUB INTO A SMALL ANIMAL PLAY GYM!

Design an interesting space for your companions to explore. Stack boxes. Make tunnels. Create ramps!

Line the tub with an old towel to provide your pets with a warm and comfortable surface to walk on.

Raid your recycling bin for paper and cardboard. Cereal boxes, paper towel rolls, toilet paper rolls, paper bags, egg cartons and paper cups are good choices.

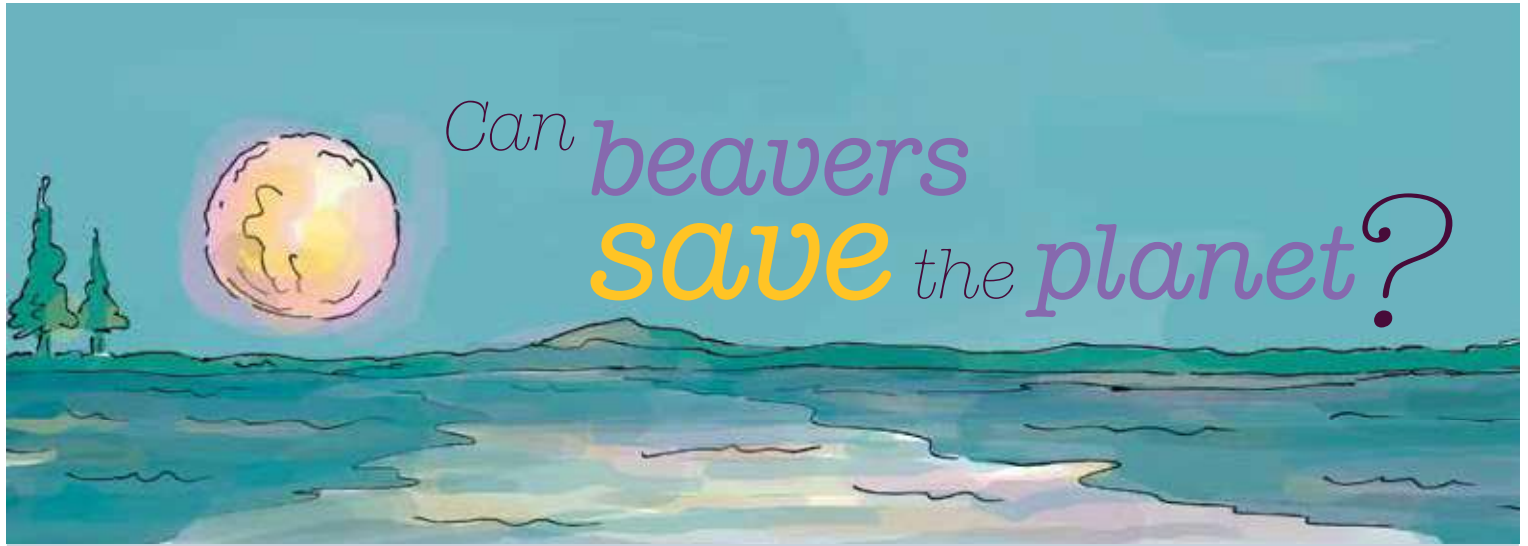
Be sure to make your structures as sturdy as possible to keep them from collapsing on your pets!

Small animals such as gerbils, hamsters and mice spend hours inside a cage each and every day. Although they may have toys to play with and wheels to run on, they still need to be let out to exercise. Being cooped up all the time can make them feel bored and frustrated – even depressed.

By giving your pets out-of-cage time, you are helping to provide them with the **fifth Freedom: the freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being**. When they have a chance to run, jump and climb, they have better welfare. You can easily turn your bathtub into a safe and fun exercise area.

Wait until your pets are awake to take them to their new play gym. Then supervise them as they zoom around the tub, checking out every inch of the awesome space you have created for them! Set up your exercise area as often as you can – ideally every day, but at least twice a week!

>> **VERY IMPORTANT: PLUG THE DRAIN!** <<



Can beavers save the planet?

Beavers have orange teeth because of an iron-rich protective enamel that strengthens them.



Like people, beavers dramatically change their environment. They dam moving water in streams using trees they cut down with their enormous, powerful teeth. They weave the branches into a wall and then pack it with mud. The dams are so well constructed the water backs up, flooding low-lying areas.

In the wilderness these flooded areas create marsh habitats for lots of animals – ducks, geese, songbirds, moose, mink, frogs, and insects, just to name a few. **This increases the biodiversity of the planet.**

But, closer to where people live – in towns, suburbs and farms – beaver dams can be a real nuisance. Some people call for their removal. Yards, roads, parks and farmers' fields are at risk of being flooded. Beavers also chew down the leafy trees along stream edges, which makes some people angry.



A national symbol

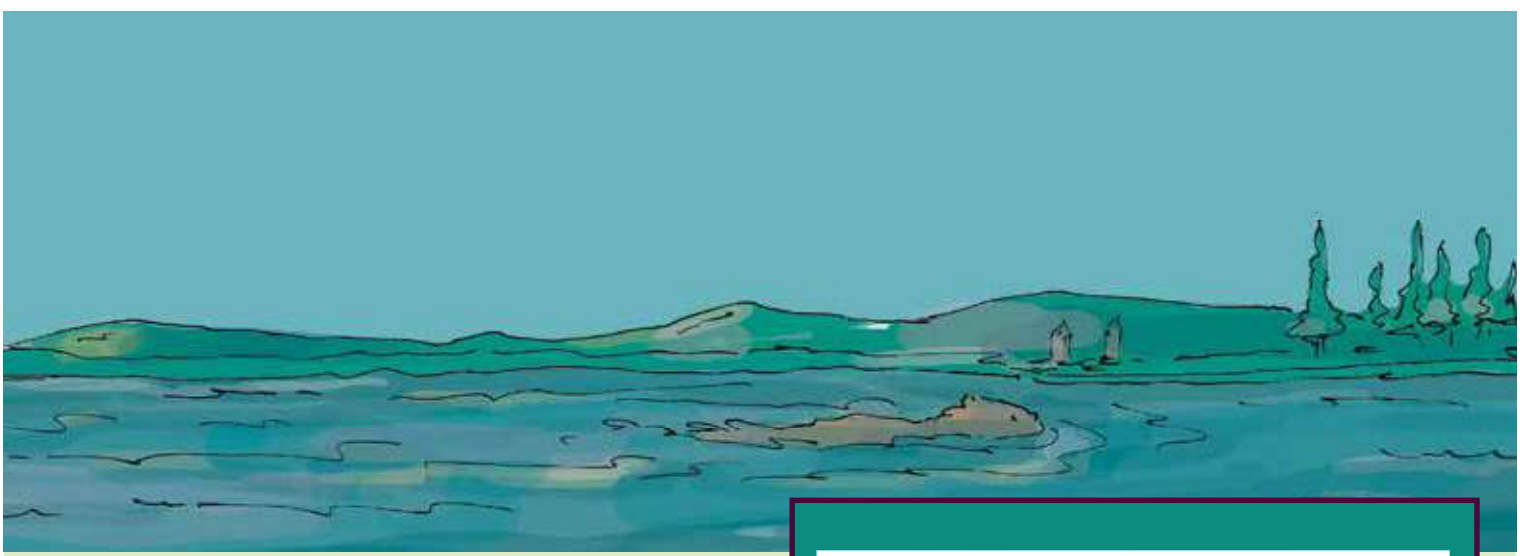
In the 1600s, beaver skin hats, called stove-pipe hats, became a fashion trend in Europe, as did coats and other fur clothing. The beaver was so important for trade that it became the symbol on Canadian stamps and the nickel.



Canadian stamp circa 1859.

Where did all the beavers go?

Before Europeans settled North America more than 300 years ago, there were an estimated 400 million beavers covering nearly two thirds of North America. Beavers were everywhere. Because their fur was so valuable, most of them were wiped out. Today there are far fewer beavers.



Further, as our cities grow, beavers are often removed from flooded lands and the water is drained so the land can be used by people. But recently, scientists are thinking differently about this water-wise rodent. **And it is mainly because of global warming and climate change.**

The planet's warming is causing changes in weather, including summer droughts. This last summer we all had to avoid wasting water, including not watering lawns or even playing at water parks. We also had many forest fires because the forests were so dry.

The dams that beavers build do two things to help fight global warming. **They help to prevent water from rushing down streams and disappearing into the ocean.** Beaver dams store water, allowing it to soak back into the ground like a giant sponge. The wetlands they create help prevent droughts. This lessens the risk of wildfires.

The dams also keep vast areas under water. This stops the leaves, sticks and other carbon-rich organic matter from decaying. Rotting plant matter releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which adds to global warming.

In fact, the wood buried in soggy beaver marshes can last about 600 years! This is much, much longer than it takes for a log to rot in a typical forest. **But if the beavers disappear and the water level drops, all that wood and leaf matter will quickly decompose.** This would release harmful carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This is why some scientists are now looking at beavers not as nuisance animals, but as climate saviours. **Maybe it's time we learned to live with beavers.**



ILLUSTRATIONS: SCOT RITCHIE

Pond home

A house of sticks and mud – that's a beaver lodge. Beavers build their lodges with underwater tunnels to protect them from predators and for warmth in winter. There are different rooms and levels. Some are for storing food – branches, leaves and roots – and some for sleeping and hanging out.





What Animals Want

Everyone knows animals need food, water and shelter. But did you know they have *social* and *emotional* needs too? So how can we help give animals what they want – and need? The answer is: By providing them the Five Freedoms!

What Animals Want: The Five Freedoms in Action is the first book about the Five Freedoms for kids. The Five Freedoms is a science-based animal welfare tool. It is a way to help ensure animals thrive under the care of people.

Thinking about getting a pet? Use *What Animals Want* and the Five Freedoms to help you decide. For example, make sure there is a veterinarian in your community for medical care – Freedom 1. If choosing a small animal, like a pair of guinea pigs, be sure you have a very large habitat. Include items they can explore – Freedom 5. Also, make it safe and comfortable – Freedom 4.

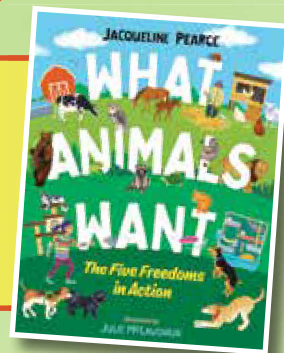
Along with the needs of companion animals, *What Animals Want* explores what the Five Freedoms look like for other animals, like those on farms or in zoos. Do the animals you see enjoy all of the Five Freedoms?

The FIVE FREEDOMS are:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from pain, injury and disease
3. Freedom from distress
4. Freedom from discomfort
5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being

What Animals Want is an animal-care book with a difference!

Find it at your library, in bookstores or on the BC SPCA website (shop.sPCA.bc.ca).



IF YOU'RE NOT ALREADY A BC SPCA KIDS CLUB MEMBER, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? The Kids Club unites youth (13 and under) who LOVE ANIMALS. Sign up today: sPCA.bc.ca/kidsclub.

BCSPCA

Who squeezed in *fun playtime* while making this issue:



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