



The

WONDER WEEKLY



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The amazing adventures of Trim the cat: Page 2



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Fun word changer puzzle: Page 2

Word CHANGER

Change one letter and arrange them on the next line to make a new word. Use the clues to help you change a toucan into a howler monkey. The answer is below.



T O U C A N

Names or adds up in numerical order _____

Soldiers who are sent out to check what is ahead _____

Yells loudly _____

Worn in warm weather _____

Animals that people ride _____

A brief, light falling of rain _____

H O W L E R

SOLUTION: TOUCAN, counts, scouts, shorts, shorts



Pictures: iStock / idal; Wikimedia Commons.

CATS ON SHIPS

CATS have not always been talked about in the kindest terms in *The Wonder Weekly*.

If you are a regular reader, you will remember our story about Nui the detector dog, and his important job to keep Macquarie Island wildlife safe.

If you do, you will also remember the damage feral cats did to seabird populations on 'Macca'.

In an article on April 13, we focused on the threat of feral cats and other invasive mammals to wildlife on mainland Tasmania.

But some cats are very popular, and not just as family pets.

Since ancient times, ship cats have been regarded as very important.

The major reason is that cats can rid ships of mice and rats.

As well as eating or spoiling the food stores on a ship, and cargo such as grain, rodents can damage ropes and the wood of ships, and in more recent times, electrical wires.

Ship cats are even considered good luck, and some have become famous.

For example, the photo in the top

left corner of this page is of Winston Churchill, the former Prime Minister of Britain, bidding farewell to Blackie, the ship's cat aboard the HMS *Prince of Wales*, in 1941.

While another British Royal Navy cat, Convoy, pictured right, had his own tiny hammock to sleep in aboard HMS *Hermione*.

Unsinkable Sam was the name given to a cat who survived the sinking of three ships during World War 11, before being limited to shore duties.

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"Education perhaps more than anything else is a passport to a better life." - Peter Underwood AC

A cat of many tales

THE most famous ship's cat of all is undoubtedly Trim, also known as Captain Matthew Flinders' cat.

Trim was born on the high seas and accompanied Flinders on his epic voyages, including his circumnavigation of Australia in 1802-03.

He fell overboard several times, but was such a strong swimmer and rope climber that he always made it safely back onto deck.

He even survived a shipwreck.

Flinders was so fond of Trim that he allowed the cheeky black and white cat to join him at the captain's dining table, where he was known to swipe food off other guests' forks.

When Flinders was taken captive by the French and imprisoned on the island of Mauritius, Trim was by his side.

Flinders even wrote a biography about Trim.

"The most affectionate of friends, faithful of servants, and best of creatures," Flinders wrote.

But this is not the only book about the brave seafaring cat.

Trim: The Cartographer's Cat, and subtitled *The ship's cat who helped Flinders map Australia*, was released just last year.

Author Bryce Courtenay wrote a well known novel called *Matthew Flinders' Cat*.

There have also been several



Picture: Wikimedia Commons

statues erected of Flinders and Trim in Australia and England, including the one pictured above, which stands at Port Lincoln, in South Australia.

A biography is a true story about a person, or in the case of *To the Memory of Trim*, an animal.

Your challenge is to write a biography about an animal.

It could be a family pet, such as a cat or dog, or another animal you know of.

You could provide facts like how old they are, their breed and what they look like.

You could also write about their

personalities, and what is special about them.

For example, are they cheeky and brave like Trim?

You can write as little or as much as you want to, and draw a picture of your animal.

Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passports for this challenge.

Remember, we would know little about Trim if Flinders' had not written about him.

FACTS about cats

1. The domestic cat belongs to the Felidae family, which also includes lions, tigers and leopards and other wild species. This family had a common ancestor 10-15 million years ago.
2. Cats can extend and retract their claws.
3. Cats sleep for 13-14 hours a day.

4. The average lifespan of a cat is about 15 years.
5. The oldest known cat, Crème Puff, lived to 38.
6. There are more than 500 million cats throughout the world (3.77 million in Australia).
7. Cats can see at one-sixth the light level required by humans, and their whiskers allow them to navigate in the dark.
8. They can detect ultrasound (sound waves with higher frequencies than humans can hear), such

9. The "cat righting reflex" enables cats to land on their feet when they fall.
10. Cats are very efficient hunters, and if allowed to roam, are a major threat to wildlife. A recent study revealed pet cats kill an estimated 230 million native birds, reptiles and mammals in Australia every year. www.publish.csiro.au/wr/Fulltext/WR19174

Seafaring companions

From Page 1

Cats were not the only animals who served as seafaring companions.

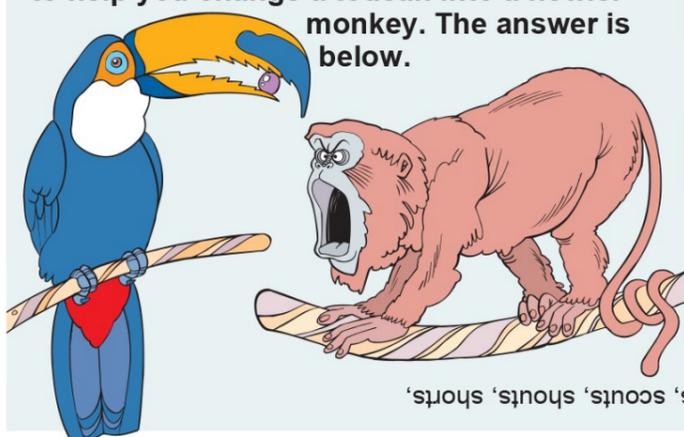
The Australian National Maritime Museum has a fantastic collection of historic photographs of cats, dogs, birds and monkeys on board ships.

To see the collection go to www.sea.museum

Legend has it that pirate ships were also home to cats and other companion animals.

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SOLUTION: TOUCAN, counts, scouts, shouts, shorts, horses, shower, HOWLER.

H O W L E R