BE CREATIVE: Every board game needs a theme. It could be a space theme, like the game above; or your favourite sport, book or movie.

IT’S GAME TIME

PLAYING board games is fun and great exercise for your brain.

Board games originated thousands of years ago in ancient civilisations. Artefacts from important historical sites reveal evidence of board games that were played as far back as 3500BC.

And while a lot of people like playing video games, board games have increased in popularity in recent years. There are many varieties. Some games like Chess are decided by player skill, while others like Snakes and Ladders depend entirely on luck.

There are also games like Monopoly, where luck and strategy have a role to play. Have you ever made your own board game? It is a lot easier to do than you might think.

Start with a theme; any theme you like. For example, the person who designed the board game pictured above has used a space theme. Think about games you have played before, and what you might need?

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## Crossword No.1 solution (check your answers)

**Across**
1. Gum  
6. Warner  
7. Freycinet

**Down**
1. 7. Freycinet
6. Warner

**Solution next week.**

Across:
1. Baby duck  
4. Bird used by people to carry messages  
7. Tasmania's unofficial bird emblem - the yellow ...

Down:
2. The world’s largest bird  
3. Birds are the only animals that have ...  
5. Flightless bird from New Zealand  
6. Swift parrots are mainly this colour  
8. Birds lay ...
**backyard birds**

**of Tasmania**

For inquiries about birds and domestic gardens, contact:

BIRDS IN BACKYARDS
BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA
www.birdsinbackyards.net
www.birdlife.org.au

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Birds in Your Garden

How to bring back the little ones...

Australia-wide, populations of many of our woodland bird species are decreasing. Once common birds such as thornbills, fairy-wrens, silvereyes and small honeyeaters are becoming rare or, in some places, are no longer seen at all. There are many reasons for this, the biggest being the loss of places for them to live (habitat).

The decreases are widespread: from peri-urban and urban areas; from big cities to rural townships. All of us can contribute towards saving our woodland birds irrespective of where we live or how big our gardens are.

Small changes for a big difference...

Garden design and structure:

Simple open gardens provide little shelter or food for birds. We need to plant:

- dense shrubs close together so they form protective thickets.
- shrubs that provide a range of foods: nectar, seeds, fruit and habitat for insects.
- local plants that provide what the birds in our local areas need.
- below trees, creating a dense protective understory.
- less grass for mowing, but rather use native grasses that can seed and only need cutting occasionally.

We should:

- avoid using chemical sprays or applying chemical fertilizers.
- use lawn clippings and leaf litter on garden beds as mulch.

Providing water:

Birds need fresh water, but they are vulnerable when they are drinking or bathing and need to feel safe. We should:

- place birdbaths beyond the reach of cats, and in dappled shade.
- grow plants close to birdbaths so birds can perch and observe the area first.
- replace the water and clean the water container regularly.
- ask a neighbour to add water when we’re away, so the birds don’t lose their water supply.

Provision of supplementary food:

It is much healthier for birds to obtain natural food from our gardens than to be fed directly by people. However, many people enjoy the contact they have with birds. If you want to provide extra food for birds in your garden, make sure that

- the feeding area is kept really clean.
- you don’t feed meat-eating birds - encourage the small birds that are declining, not their predators.
- only provide good quality natural foods, e.g. finch seed rather than bread.

Be a responsible pet owner:

Keep your cat or dog inside or within an outside enclosure. This is safer for the cat as well as other wildlife.

- De-sexing prevents unwanted kittens or pups.
- Deter other cats from entering your yard by spraying them with water.

To find out more about the birds in your area, creating gardens and habitat for birds at home, in school grounds or any open spaces, or undertaking bird surveys in your own garden or local area, see the Birds in Backyards website www.birdsinbackyards.net

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Photo credits: Hayley Alexander (Male Superb Fairy-wren), Richard Barton (Common Blackbird), William Betts (Yellow Wattlebird), Doug Castle (Eastern Rosella, Silvereye, Female Superb Fairy-wren), Anthea Fleming (Spotted Dove), Stephen Garth (Galah), Bill Harding (Brown Thornbill, Eastern Spinebill), Gary King (Masked Lapwing), Anna Lanigan (Sulphur-crested Cockatoo), Wilson Leonard (Rainbow Lorikeet), Roy Peachey (Common Starling), George Pergaminelis (Male House Sparrow), Glenn Pure (Australian Magpie), Bronwyn Scanlon (Welcome Swallow), David Seymour (Green Rosella), Carol Trevanion (New Holland Honeyeater), Sonja Ross (Noisy Miner), Shane Walker (Grey Fantail, Laughing Kookaburra), Ian Wilson (Forest Raven, Grey Butcherbird, Female House Sparrow, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird), Diana Womersley (Black Currawong)