

ANIMAL NEWS

SHARK SECRETS

A DETAILED study of great white sharks has found they spend a lot more time feeding along the seabed than previously thought.

The study into their diet was done by a team at the Charles Perkins Centre and School of Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Sydney. They studied the predators off the east coast of Australia and found the remains of fish that live on the bottom of the ocean in the stomachs of more than 40 young sharks. This evidence supports data from tagged great white sharks that shows they spend a lot of time many metres below the surface of the ocean.

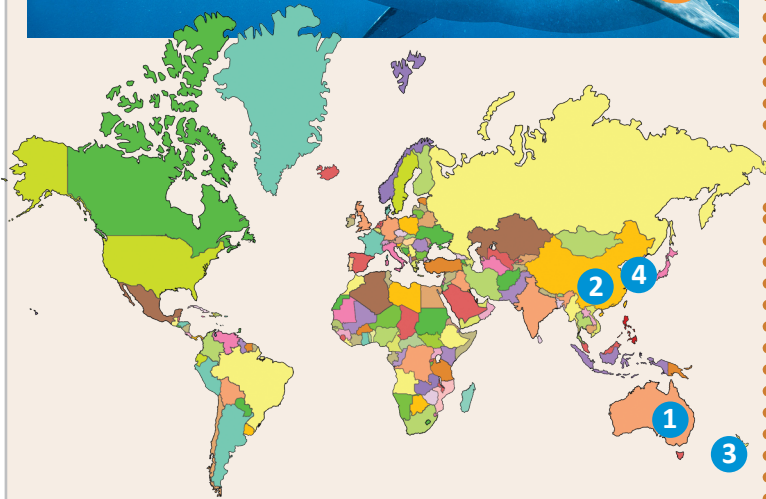
Lead author Richard Grainger said: "The stereotype of a shark's dorsal fin above the surface as it hunts is probably not a very accurate picture."

The full study was printed in the journal *Frontiers in Marine Science*.



istock

1



CHOOKS IN CHARGE

3

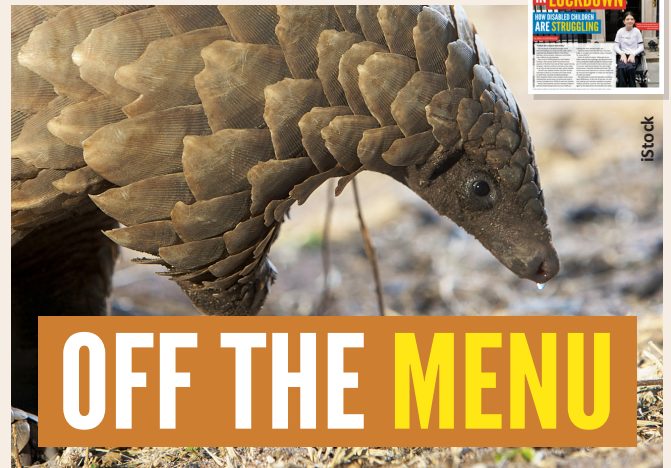
A VILLAGE in New Zealand has been taken over by chickens! People in Tiritangi in west Auckland got a shock when they came out of lockdown to find chickens were running wild. Before the pandemic, authorities had already caught around 230 feral chickens. But it's thought someone had been leaving chicken feed out, so the chooks have returned and seized the streets!



getty



istock



OFF THE MENU

PANGOLIN scales are no longer officially listed as an ingredient to be used for traditional Chinese medicine.

2

The news was reported in medical journals in China this week. It comes as China raised the protection level for pangolins to the highest in the country. Both changes are good news for pangolins, which are the most-trafficked animal species in the world. They've come very close to extinction due to the illegal wildlife trade. As many as 200,000 are consumed each year for their scales and meat.

DINO-CROC!

SCIENTISTS believe that an ancient species of crocodile that lived around 120 million years ago walked on its two back legs – just like a dinosaur!

4

The discovery comes after researchers analysed huge fossilised footprints found in South Korea. The study, which appeared in the journal *Scientific Reports*, revealed that the footprints belonged to what scientists think is a new species of crocodylomorpha, the ancestors to modern-day crocodiles and alligators.

They think these super-crocs were more than three metres in length and moved in the same way as many two-legged dinosaurs, such as the *T rex*. No fossils of the croc's bones have been found yet, but researchers have named it *Batrachopus grandis*.



© Anthony Romillo/The University of Queensland

An artist's impression of how the ancient crocs might have looked

ANIMAL NEWS



GLOSSARY

consumed – Ate/used/bought

extinction – Died out

feral – Living in the wild after escaping from captivity or living as a domesticated animal

journal – A type of magazine that publishes academic reports, news, findings, ideas and information.

illegal – Not within the law

predator – An animal that hunts other animals

stereotype – A widely-held but over-simplified image or idea of something

trafficked – illegally bought and sold

■ Look at all the articles.

1. Complete the sentences by filling in the missing animal.

- A **Batrachopus grandis** is believed to be an ancient species of _____.
- A **chook** is another name for a _____.
- A **great white** is a type of _____.
- A _____ is a **small mammal** covered in scales.

■ Look at the article 'Off the menu'.

2. Pangolins are the most trafficked – illegally traded – animals in the world.

Identify the facts:

- Approximately, how many pangolins are thought to be illegally sold each year?
- Which parts of their body are they bought for?

3a. What **two changes** have been made in China that are 'good news' for pangolins?

3b. What **impact** do you think these changes could have on pangolins?

■ Look at the article 'Shark secrets'.

4. The study of great white sharks found that they spend more time feeding on the seabed than previously thought. What two pieces of evidence are there for this?

5. The lead scientist said: "The **stereotype** of a shark's fin above the surface as it hunts is probably not a very accurate picture." What do you think Richard Grainger means by this?

■ Look at the article 'Dino-croc!'

6. Find the facts.

Evidence of this ancient creature that scientists studied:	
What scientists have worked out about how the crocodile moved from this evidence:	
When do scientists think these super-crocs lived on Earth:	

7. Draw and label a diagram of a **Batrachopus grandis**, use evidence in the text.

■ Look at the article 'Chooks in charge'.

8. Imagine you are a resident of Titirangi. Describe the scene you are met with when you walk around the village the first time you leave your house after lockdown.

■ Consider all the articles.

9. A **journal** is a type of magazine that publishes academic reports, news, findings, ideas and information. Three of the news stories were reported in journals.

Match the **source of the story** to the *First News* article:

'Frontiers in marine science'	Dino-croc!
Medical journals in China	Off the menu
'Scientific reports'	Shark secrets

10a. Which of these four news articles do you think is most interesting?

	Shark secrets		Off the menu		Dino-croc!		Chooks in charge
--	---------------	--	--------------	--	------------	--	------------------

Explain why.

10b. Who would be a useful person to interview to find out more about this particular news story?

10c. Write three questions you would like to ask them to find out information.

ANIMAL NEWS



GLOSSARY

consumed – Ate/used/bought

extinction – Died out

feral – Living in the wild after escaping from captivity or living as a domesticated animal

journal – A type of magazine that publishes academic reports, news, findings, ideas and information.

illegal – Not within the law

predator – An animal that hunts other animals

stereotype – A widely-held but over-simplified image or idea of something

trafficked – illegally bought and sold

■ Look at all the articles.

1. Complete the sentences by filling in the missing animal.

A **Batrachopus grandis** is believed to be an ancient species of

A **chook** is another name for a

A **great white** is a type of

A is a **small mammal** covered in scales.

■ Look at the article 'Off the menu'.

2. Pangolins are the most trafficked – illegally traded – animals in the world.

Identify the facts:

• Approximately, how many pangolins are thought to be illegally sold each year?

• Which parts of their body are they bought for? and

3a. What **two changes** have been made in China that are 'good news' for pangolins?

Change 1:

.....

Change 2:

.....

3b. What **impact** do you think these changes could have on pangolins?

.....

.....

.....

■ Look at the article 'Shark secrets'.

4. The study of great white sharks found that they spend more time feeding on the seabed than previously thought. What two pieces of evidence are there for this?

Evidence 1:

.....

Evidence 2:

.....

5. The lead scientist said: "The **stereotype** of a shark's fin above the surface as it hunts is probably not a very accurate picture." What do you think Richard Grainger means by this?

.....

.....

.....

■ Look at the article 'Dino-croc!'

6. Find the facts.

Evidence of this ancient creature that scientists studied:	<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/>
What scientists have worked out about how the crocodile moved from this evidence:	<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/>
When do scientists think these super-crocs lived on Earth:	<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/>

7. Draw and label a diagram of a *Batrachopus grandis*, use evidence in the text.

■ Look at the article 'Chooks in charge'.

8. Imagine you are a resident of Titirangi. Describe the scene you are met with when you walk around the village the first time you leave your house after lockdown.

■ Consider all the articles.

9. A **journal** is a type of magazine that publishes academic reports, news, findings, ideas and information. Three of the news stories were reported in journals.

Match the **source of the story** to the *First News* article:

'Frontiers in marine science'	Dino-croc!
Medical journals in China	Off the menu
'Scientific reports'	Shark secrets

10a. Which of these four news articles do you think is most interesting?

Shark secrets

Off the menu

Dino-croc!

Chooks in charge

Explain why.

10b. Who would be a useful person to interview to find out more about this particular news story?

.....

10c. Write three questions you would like to ask them to find out information.

Question 1)

.....

.....

Question 2)

.....

.....

Question 3)

.....

.....

TEACHER ANSWERS

AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS: News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE: The teacher answers are intended to provide a quick reference guide. Suggestions are given for the 'Expected response' or starting point that pupils could give. The 'Development' then gives more in-depth ideas that students can work towards as they develop their reading comprehension skills.

For a list of the reading skills used, please email schools@firstnews.co.uk.

■ Look at all the articles.**1. Complete the sentences by filling in the missing animal.**

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- A **Batrachopus grandis** is believed to be an ancient species of **crocodile**.
- A **chook** is another name for a **chicken**.
- A **great white** is a type of **shark**.
- A **pangolin** is a **small mammal** covered in scales.

■ Look at the article 'Off the menu'.**2. Pangolins are the most trafficked – illegally traded – animals in the world.**

Identify the facts:

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- Approximately, how many pangolins are thought to be illegally sold each year? 200,000
- Which parts of their body are they bought for? Scales and meat

3a. What two changes have been made in China that are 'good news' for pangolins?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- Change 1: Pangolin scales are no longer listed as ingredients for Chinese medicine.
- Change 2: China has raised the protection level for pangolins to the highest in the country.

3b. What impact do you think these changes could have on pangolins?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- The changes should help to protect pangolins and save them from extinction.

Development

- Pangolins are hunted for their scales and meat illegally, so high protection makes this more difficult for the traffickers.
- Removing pangolin scales from the list of Chinese medicine ingredients means the demand for scales should be lower.

■ Look at the article 'Shark secrets'.**4. The study of great white sharks found that they spend more time feeding on the seabed than previously thought.**

What two pieces of evidence are there for this?

READING SKILL – Summarise information

(NC 2e)

Expected response

- Evidence 1: There were the remains of fish that live on the bottom of the ocean in the sharks' stomachs.
- Evidence 2: The sharks spend a lot of time deep in the ocean.

5. The lead scientist said: “The stereotype of a shark’s fin above the surface as it hunts is probably not a very accurate picture.” What do you think Richard Grainger means by this?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- Great white sharks spend most of their time at the seabed, hunting and feeding, not swimming with their fin above the surface.

Development

- An image often portrayed in films, on TV and in drawings is of a shark’s fin poking out of the water as it hunts down its prey. However, this study shows that the sharks mostly hunt along the sea bed and therefore their fins would not be showing on the surface of the water.

■ Look at the article ‘Dino-croc!’

6. Find the facts.

READING SKILL – Find and explain information (NC 2a)

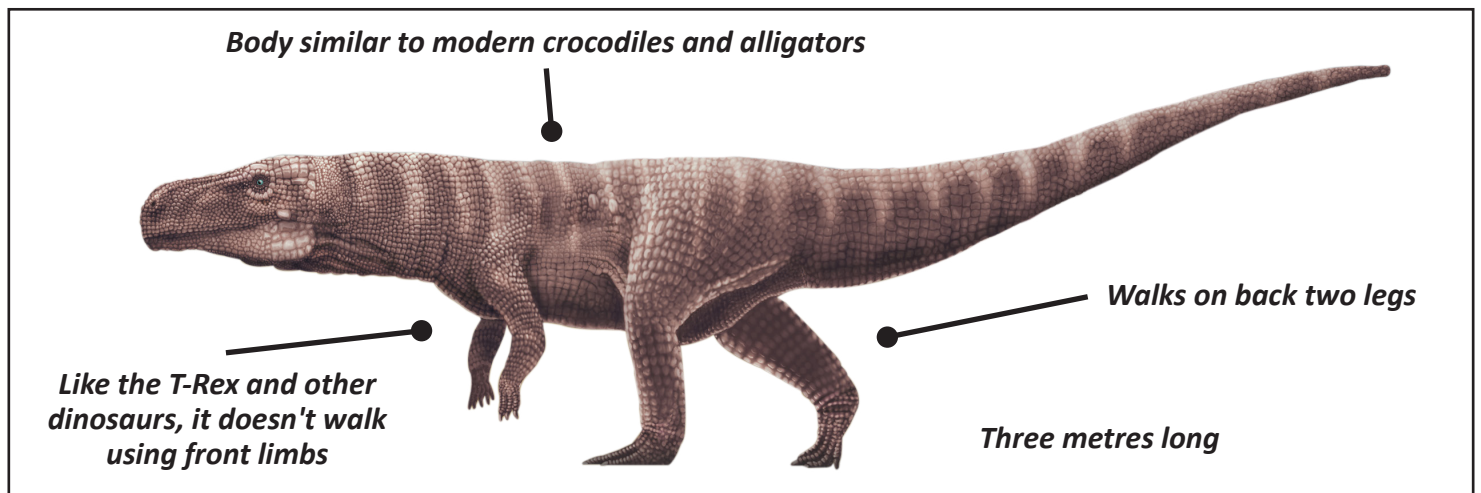
Expected response

Evidence of this ancient creature that scientists studied:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossilised footprints
What scientists have worked out about how the crocodile moved from this evidence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They walked on their two back legs
When do scientists think these super-crocs lived on Earth:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 million years ago

7. Draw and label a diagram of a *Batrachopus grandis*, use evidence in the text.

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response (students own drawing)



■ Look at the article ‘Chooks in charge’.

8. Imagine you are a resident of Titirangi. Describe the scene you are met with when you walk around the village the first time you leave your house after lockdown.

READING SKILL – Develop personal ideas from reading news stories (NC 6, 7 & 8)

A personal, creative response, eg,

- I took my first walk into the village since lockdown restrictions were lifted. I can’t believe what I found. While we’ve all been staying in to keep ourselves safe from the coronavirus, the chickens have used the opportunity to take over Titirangi. Before the coronavirus we thought this problem had been solved, as a whopping 230 chooks had been removed from the village, but, oh my, the problem is far worse now. There are chickens all over: on the roads, all the grass verges, in the park and school field. They leave their trail of scratches and chicken poop wherever they go.

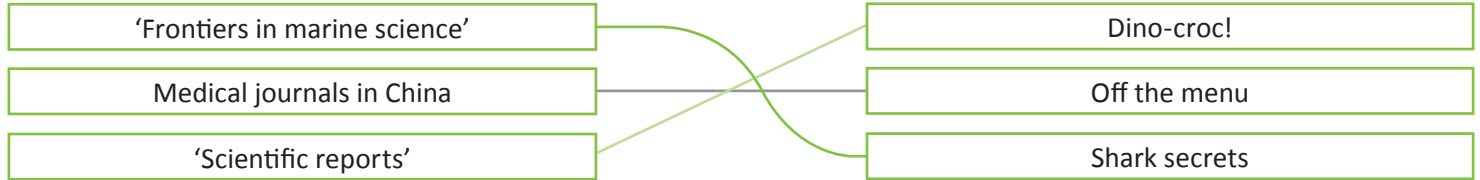
■ Consider at all the articles.

9. A journal is a type of magazine that publishes academic reports, news, findings, ideas and information. Three of the news stories were reported in journals.

Match the source of the story to the First News article:

READING SKILL – Find and explain information
(NC 2a)

Expected response



10a. Which of these four news articles do you think is most interesting?

Shark secrets
 Off the menu
 Dino-croc!
 Chooks in charge

Explain why.

READING SKILL – Develop personal opinions and provide justifications for viewpoints
(NC 6, 7 & 8)

Personal response given

10b. Who would be a useful person to interview to find out more about this particular news story?

READING SKILL – Infer information based on own knowledge (non-text based inference)
(NC 6,7 & 8)

Possible responses

- The people who have removed pangolin scales from the official list of ingredients used in Chinese medicine.
- A resident of Titirangi who has been feeding the wild chickens.
- The scientist Richard Grainger.
- The scientists studying the fossilised footprints.

10c. Write three questions you would like to ask them to find out information.

READING SKILL – Ask questions to help understanding
(NC2b)

Possible response

- **Off the menu:** Who decided to make these changes? Have the new rules come in to place already? How will the officials publicise this information so pangolin scales are no longer used in traditional medicine?
- **Chooks in charge:** Why did you feed the chickens during lockdown? Were you surprised that so many came to live in your village? Do you think the chickens should be removed or allowed to stay?
- **Shark secrets:** How did you track the sharks in your study? For how long did you study them? Did you see a pattern in their behaviour?
- **Dino-croc:** How many footprints did you find? What made you think they were only walking on two feet and not four? How did you know these footprints were from this crocodile, when no fossils of it have been found so far?