

JUNIOR RANGERS

Body Armour

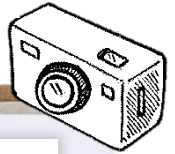


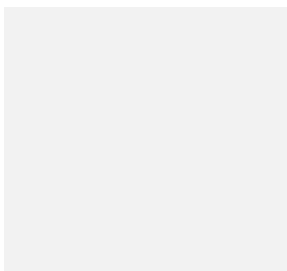
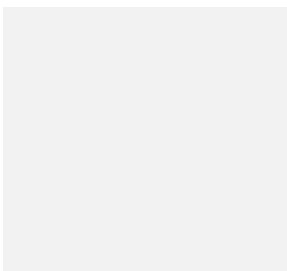
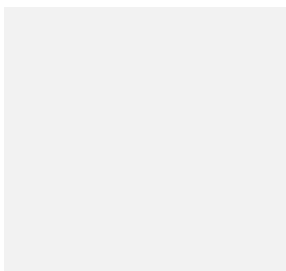
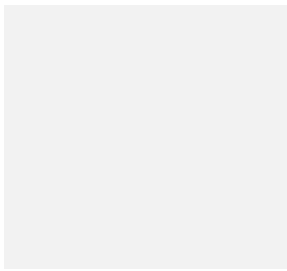
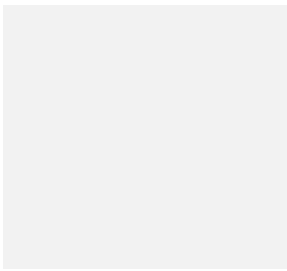
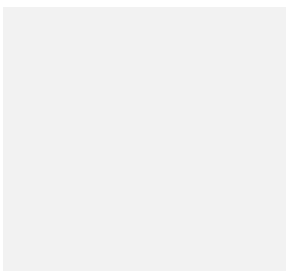
For millions of years our wild plants and animals have been looking after themselves. They only need our help now because humans have started to change their habitats.

But how did they keep themselves safe before we arrived?

There are lots of ways that plants and animals can protect themselves.

See if you can photograph or draw some examples in your garden or local park.



 Camouflage	 Exoskeleton	 Stinger (stay a safe distance away)
 Prickles/thorns	 Claws	 Warning colours

Exoskeletons are hard skeletons that grow on the outside. Human skeletons are called endoskeletons because they grow on the inside. Animals that have exoskeletons like crabs and beetles will have to moult (shed) them and grow new ones. It's a vulnerable time for them when they do.

Spider crabs have evolved in a way that keeps them safe from predators whilst moulting, and that is to moult together in a big group like we see in this picture. Very clever!



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As our oceans warm up due to the effects of climate disruption, scientists are finding that the water is becoming more acidic as it absorbs lots more carbon dioxide that us humans are pumping out into the atmosphere. This is a big problem for our marine life, particularly our crustaceans. Here's why...

You will need:

- 2 x clean jam jars or clear plastic beakers
- 2 x pieces of eggshell (to mimic animal shells) of the same size
- 50-100ml of white vinegar (vinegar is acidic)
- 2-4tsp of salt
- 50-100ml of water

Instructions:

1. Keep hold of the eggshells next time you crack an egg and place the same size piece in each jar.
2. Pour some vinegar over one of your shells so that it is covered (white is best as it is easier to observe your shell).
3. Pour some tap water or a mixture of 1-part salt to 5-parts water to recreate seawater and cover the other shell.
4. Watch what happens for the first few minutes. Leave the shells for 24 hours, then check to see if there are any differences. Write your results below and send in your observations to juniorrangers@parks.vic.gov.au



In the vinegar

In the first few minutes: _____

After 24 hours: _____

In the saltwater solution

In the first few minutes: _____

After 24 hours: _____

Want to do more? We can all do our bit to reduce the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere.

Pledge to do these as often as you can when you next go to visit our parks:



- Walk
- Go by bus, tram or train
- Ride your bike



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