

RANDOM HOUSE TEACHERS' RESOURCE KIT

A Very Important Godwit Jenny and Laughton Patrick

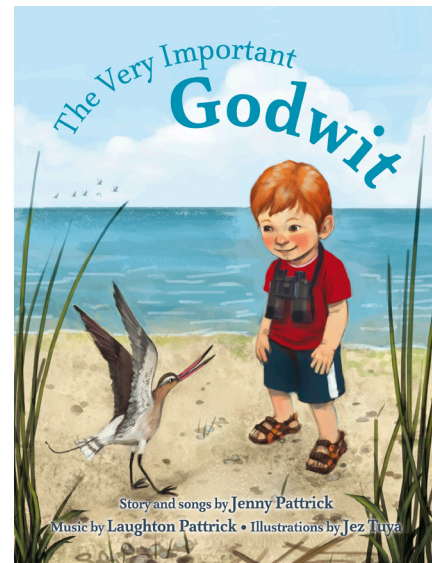
Little Will can count lots of adult godwits, but why can't he see any godwit chicks? The answer is more incredible than he could possibly imagine.

This delightful story explains the migration of this fascinating bird. Full of gorgeous pictures by Jez Tuya, the book is also accompanied by a CD of specially written lyrical, funny, toe-tapping songs from the best selling author of *The Denniston Rose*, Jenny Patrick and her husband Laughton.

As well as a heart-warming story, the book has a counting song and teaches children how godwits travel to the other side of the world to lay their eggs. There's an ecology message in there, too!



Jenny and Laughton Patrick's songs for children are sung in schools throughout New Zealand and Australia. Capital E, National Children's Theatre regularly tours shows for young children for which Laughton is the musical director and composer and Jenny the lyricist.



SPECIFICATIONS:

Imprint: RHNZ Children's
Classification: Children's picture flat
Publication: October 2010
ISBN: 9781869793487
RRP: \$36.99
Format: Audio and book
Extent: 40pp
Readership: 3+

RESOURCE KIT CONTAINS:

- Pre-reading exercises
- Comprehension questions
- Illustration
- Art
- Science
- Writing
- Music
- Caring for wildlife
- Maths and maps
- Further reading/viewing

Before reading

Assess student's existing knowledge:

1. What do you know about godwits?
2. Look at the cover. What kind of bird is this? What do you notice about its beak and tail?
3. Why do you think godwits might be important?
4. Do you think this is a true story?

Suggested reading order:

1. Read the text and song lyrics aloud.
2. Listen to the music while showing the pictures.
3. Join in the song.

Comprehension

1. Why are they counting birds? (p.2)
2. Why do you think the birds would need to get fat? What is body fat used for?
3. What do the godwits eat? (p.3 and p.24)
4. Why do you think godwits have long legs and long beaks? (p.4)
5. Where might the godwit babies be? (p.6)
6. What has trapped the godwit? (p.8,9)
Where did the fishing line probably come from?
7. What does an animal scientist (eg. biologist) do as part of their job? (p.9)
8. Why did the scientist put a radio transmitter on the godwit? (p.10)
9. Why are there no chicks here? Why do the godwits fly north when it is winter in New Zealand? (p.15)
10. Why is it a 'bad place' where they have landed? (p.19)
11. What products might factories like this produce? (p.21).
12. Why does the sun shine 'all through the night' in Alaska? (p.25).
13. Why does Little Red show off? (p. 26)
14. In what ways are godwit parents like human parents? (p.28-32)
15. Why are the male and female beaks different shapes? (p.29)
16. Why are bands put on the chicks' legs? (p.29)
17. What is the 'map' in the godwit's head? (32)
18. Why is Pipi called a 'world champion'? (p.33)
19. Why couldn't the godwits stop and rest on the ocean? (p.35)
20. How are godwits welcomed back by people in New Zealand? (p.36)

Science

Godwits

Look at the godwit's body and discuss the functions of each part.

Find out some more facts about the godwit. Make a chart with a drawing of a godwit in the centre. Write its scientific and Maori names, where they live, what they eat, what their enemies are, and how they nest.

Godwits have a world record flight (8 days non-stop). Find out some other record-breaking birds.

Wading birds

Wading birds feed in shallow water at estuaries, harbours, mudflats, beaches, lakes and rivers. They include godwits, oystercatchers, stilts, plovers, dotterels, snipes, and sandpipers. There are 60 species of waders in New Zealand. Make a poster with drawings of a few of these. Look out for them on your next trip to the water.

Animal navigation

Birds, butterflies, bees, turtles, and many fish can find their way around the world. The 'map' in their head is probably due to the magnetic material in their bodies. The Earth is a giant magnet, and has magnet fields which guide animals. Experiment with magnets and paper clips to show the strong magnetic fields at the poles of a magnet.

Seasons (p.15, 31)

Find out why the seasons are different in the Northern Hemisphere. (Teachers use models to show the tilt of the Earth, and position of the sun.) Discuss changes in day length, especially in Alaska and Antarctica.

Make your own model with plasticine or clay to show why the seasons change on planet Earth.

Caring for wildlife

Many creatures around New Zealand's shores are harmed by human activity: Hector's dolphins endangered by over-fishing; seals tangled in plastic rubbish; yellow-eyed penguins attacked by dogs; habitats destroyed (p.19); and poisoning by oil and chemicals.

1. Discuss what we can do to help conserve endangered creatures and habitats. For example, predator-free areas, protected nesting sites, breeding programmes.

2. Find a local species that needs protecting and 'adopt' it.

3. Learn about bird-watching and how to record local species without disturbing them.

Maths and maps

1. Younger children could practice counting (pages 4-6) using godwits.
2. Think of a way to show large numbers (thousands) of godwits in a diagram.
3. On a map of New Zealand, mark places where godwits are found (you could use the internet to help research).
4. Draw a world map, and mark the route of the godwit to Alaska and home again. Include a compass like the one on page 33. Illustrate the map with drawings of some events that happened to Pipi.

Illustrations

Look closely at the pictures by Jez Tuya. He created the pictures directly on computer, can you tell? What physical medium do they most resemble?

(E.g. water paints, pens, pastels, pencils)

What changes in viewpoint are used in the illustrations? For example: looking down (p.37), ground level view (p.8), and close-ups (p.28). Why do you think the illustrator has changed viewpoint? Does it help you experience the world as Pipi does?

Art

1. Explore the paintings and notice the background colours and amount of detail. Practice sketching the outline of a godwit shape first. Paint a picture of a background (eg. sea and sky) using watercolours; allow to dry; then draw a detailed godwit for the foreground.
2. Imagine the world from a godwit's perspective (eg. page 37). Draw what you would see if you were flying over your school or house.
3. Create a picture of different kinds of bird feet. Include a range of hunting birds, wading birds, swimming, and perching birds. Do the same for a variety of bird eggs.
4. Try different ways/mediums to paint and/or draw the birds, such as using pencils or crayons, pastels, paint, felt pens, play dough.
5. Find a pipi shell and try to re-create its colours using soft pastels.

Writing

1. There are rhyming words and repeating words in the song lyrics. Choose your favourite bird and write a short poem about it. Use repeated phrases and simple rhymes.
2. Write a short story about an animal that travels a long way. For example, a lost dog, an eel, or a migrating bird. Give the animal a human name and describe some exciting events on its journey.
3. Write an email letter to a godwit to encourage it on its journey around the world.
4. Make up a comic strip story about one of Pipi's chicks. Give it a name. What adventures could it have?

Music

Learn some of the songs on the CD and act out this story with dance and words. Put on a show! You can even make bird masks (but not over your mouth if you're singing).

NB: the authors allow performance of these songs without royalty or fee for school shows and concerts. Download sheet music with piano accompaniment and guitar chords from www.randomhouse.co.nz/theveryimportant-godwit — then click on the 'something else' link, or at www.sounz.co.nz.

1. Listen to other songs and music about animals (eg. Carnival of the Animals).
2. Create dances to match the movements of animals; and use instruments and sound effects to mimic the voices of wild animals.
3. Write and record your own animal songs.

Further reading and viewing

- *E3 Call Home* by Janet Hunt – the godwit's story for older readers
- *Red Tag Comes Back* by Fred Phleger – a tagged salmon's long journey to its spawning river
- *Elwyn's Dream* by Ali Foster – about saving the rare Takahe
- *Little Blue* – about the endangered Black Robin
- Department of Conservation video about the godwit:
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/meet-the-locals-videos/fifth-series/godwits/>
- Patricksongs website: www.homepages.paradise.net.nz/patricksongs – you can find some songs about other animals and insects here
- Jez Tuya illustration website: jeztuya.carbonmade.com