



Companies predict robotic playmates and chefs will be part of our homes of the future

Jennifer Dudley-Nicholson, April 7, 2020 6:30PM News Corp Australia Network

TECHNOLOGY

Reading level: **Green**

Homes of the future are getting a hi-tech* makeover with smart robotic balls as our playmates, front door entry by scanning your palm and electronic chef arms to prepare meals in the kitchen.

These were just some of the ideas on display at the 2020 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas recently. Other predictions included robotic maids to wait on us, driverless cars to fly us to work, and a fridge that automatically works out what food it has inside.

Making homes, cars and everyday items more intelligent was a big theme at the electronics show with huge predictions* about how our lives will change in the next decade.

But some firms are taking immediate steps towards our robot-filled future too, demonstrating working examples of products you might expect to see in a science-fiction movie.

Samsung showcased its Bot Chef, a pair of robotic arms attached to a kitchen wall and equipped to gather and prepare 35 salad recipes, a more artificially intelligent* fridge that automatically looks at its own contents and suggests meals, and Ballie, a bright yellow robotic companion*.

Ballie is designed to recognise and follow its owner, respond to commands, play with the family pet and, when required, patrol the home to ensure security.

Samsung Electronics Australia spokesman Jeremy Senior said the company had no plans to release the device yet but wanted to give consumers a taste of the technology to come.

“When you look at how we’ll be living in the future, this meets those needs.

“Realistically, this year we will see an expansion of appliances that use our SmartThings platform (to connect to the internet).”

LG had an even bolder vision of the smart home future with a driverless car, an intelligent door, and a restaurant filled with robots — some with animated faces, others without bodies.

LG Australia home entertainment marketing manager Tony Brown said some scenarios were conceptual* but other artificially intelligent solutions could arrive within one or two years.

“We know that our competitors have been talking about it for ages but we’re finally bringing artificial intelligence to products,” he said.

They included LG’s Smart Door and Keeper, a working prototype* that allowed homeowners to unlock their front door with a scan of their palm and provide chilled or cupboard storage for couriers delivering online grocery or shopping orders.

The company’s next washing machines were also designed to connect to the internet to automatically determine the correct wash cycle and alert owners to faults, and its latest smart fridges added technology to detect shapes and show a list of items in your vegetable crisper.

More futuristic developments included the mock-up of a self-driving vehicle with a snacks fridge, laundry-cleaning closet, 5G-connected TV screens, as well as a restaurant from the future with two roaming robotic waiters, and robotic arms to prepare meals, wash dishes, and make coffee.

“These robots can put all the components of an omelette together, for example. You don’t need Gordon Ramsey* to do that,” Mr Brown explained.

“There is obviously concern about robots taking jobs but these can free up humans to do more creative tasks.”

GLOSSARY

hi-tech: uses the latest technology

predictions: guesses

artificially intelligent: a computer developed to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence

companion: friend

conceptual: having to do with the mind

prototype: an early sample or model

Gordon Ramsey: a famous chef

EXTRA READING

[Muggles invited free into Harry Potter world\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/just-for-fun/jk-rowling-invites-all-muggles-into-harry-potter-world-to-help-children-beat-isolation-boredom/news-story/15ad2482bbfe8aac7333a6d420a0ee7 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/just-for-fun/jk-rowling-invites-all-muggles-into-harry-potter-world-to-help-children-beat-isolation-boredom/news-story/15ad2482bbfe8aac7333a6d420a0ee7)

[Take a virtual world tour\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/technology/take-a-virtual-tour-around-the-worlds-best-sites-galleries-zoos-museums-and-even-mars/news-story/5717c73be2321ba8dcfeedf35bf4d9c8 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/technology/take-a-virtual-tour-around-the-worlds-best-sites-galleries-zoos-museums-and-even-mars/news-story/5717c73be2321ba8dcfeedf35bf4d9c8)

QUICK QUIZ

Where was the electronics show held?

What is the Bot Chef?

Name the two companies with the boldest predictions.

Who is Ballie?

What is artificial intelligence?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

to come

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Sketch of a Smart Home

Draw a sketch of one of these ‘homes of the future’ incorporating as many of these new technological developments listed in the Kids News article as you can.

Label the smart features and list what they do. So your sketch should be an informative diagram of what a home of the future could look like.

Time: allow 30 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Digital Technologies, Design and Technologies

2. Extension

Work with a partner and make a list of other technologies you would like to see in one of these homes of the future, and explain how it would improve everyday living or make life easier for an everyday household.

Have the following two columns in your table:

Invention/Technology for a home of the future AND How it works/improves life.

Time: allow 15 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Digital Technologies, Design and Technologies, Critical and creative thinking

VCOP ACTIVITY

Uplevel it.

Scan through the article and see if you can locate three words that you consider to be basic, or low level. Words we use all the time and they can be replaced by more sophisticated words, words like good and said are examples of overused words.

Once you have found them, see if you can up-level them. Think of synonyms you could use instead of these basic words, but make sure they still fit into the context of the article.

Re-read the article with your new words.

Did it make it better?

Why/Why not?

HAVE YOUR SAY: Which of these invention do you think will be in homes within three years?

No one-word answers Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will show until approved by editors.





Farewell Aurora Australis, Australia's Antarctic research flagship

Kasey Wilkins, March 11, 2020 6:45PM Mercury

SCIENCE

Reading level: Orange

The Australian Antarctic Division's famous research ship *Aurora Australis* departed on its final voyage this week.

It is on its way to Macquarie Island, about 1500km southeast of Tasmania, and it will retire on its return in two weeks.

General manager of operations and safety Charlton Clark said the trip would mark the end of 31 years of operations.

"The *Aurora Australis* has had an amazing history and it's done some incredible work in support of our activities in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean," he said.

He said the ship had undertaken some "amazing science" in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic's Australian bases.

"It's helped our scientists uncover amazing new information about the role of the Southern Ocean, its food web, and also the science that underpins* our efforts in understanding a changing climate," he said.

"It's underpinned a lot of our research efforts."

"We've got a range of expeditioners* who are very excited to see and get on board the ship, and they're looking forward to hopefully some calm weather on the way down to the island."

Operations manager Robb Clifton said over the ship's decades of service it had carried about 14,000 people to and from Antarctica, with 58 heading on its final trip south.

"It's amazing when you travel through the Southern Ocean and perhaps many will see their first iceberg through the bridge*, see the wildlife, and then see the sea ice of the Antarctic continent as they travel south," he said.

"It has a really special place in the hearts of expeditioners."

A new vessel to replace the *Aurora Australis* is being built and is due to come into service next year.

Shipping company P&O owns the *Aurora* and is yet to decide its future, though there are calls for it become an emergency response vessel.

"When the *Aurora Australis* returns at the end of this voyage we hope to be able to be in a position to celebrate its arrival back to Hobart," Mr Clark said.

“Hobartians, and Tasmanians in general, have a great connection to the Aurora Australis. It’s an iconic part of the fabric* of the Hobart landscape. I hope that Tasmanians maintain that connection over a long period of time.”

AURORA AUSTRALIS

It is Australia’s Antarctic flagship* and is named after the coloured lights in the sky called aurora australis, best seen from Antarctica.

It was launched in 1989, is 94.9m long, has room for three helicopters and 116 people.

It can break up ice up to 1.23m thick

It travels the Southern Ocean, where wild storms can generate 10m seas. The ship has been known to roll 45 degrees in big swells, which makes the angle of the deck much steeper than any street in Australia.

Its bright orange colour makes it easily seen in icy waters.

It is equipped for science, with on-board laboratories and lots of equipment for biological* oceanographic* and meteorological* experiments.

On a six-week voyage, the ship’s kitchen can go through 4500 eggs, 1 tonne of potatoes and 280 litres of ice cream. The ship can produce up to 45,000 litres of freshwater a day.

Using satellites, people on board can phone and email anywhere in the world.

Expeditioners stay in small cabins sleeping three or four people on bunks that fold away into couches. Each cabin has its own bathroom and toilet. The ship has a gym, library and recreation areas. Everybody eats together in a large communal mess*.

Source: Australian Antarctic Division

GLOSSARY

- **underpins:** supports, or forms the basis for
- **expeditioners:** people on an expedition
- **bridge:** cabin where the ship is driven from
- **fabric:** the make up of something
- **flagship:** main representative
- **biological:** to do with the science of living things
- **oceanographic:** to do with ocean science
- **meteorological:** to do with weather science
- **mess:** ship dining room

EXTRA READING

[Counting penguins and trying not to get blown away\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/geography/meet-the-ranger-counting-penguin-chicks-in-the-wild-freezing-weather-on-macquarie-island/news-story/64e8a000d2aeeb0e0faa454bac15410b \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/geography/meet-the-ranger-counting-penguin-chicks-in-the-wild-freezing-weather-on-macquarie-island/news-story/64e8a000d2aeeb0e0faa454bac15410b)

[Life on remote Goudier Island, Antarctica\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/geography/life-as-a-post-office-worker-on-remote-goudier-island-antarctica/news-story/cae4b2193f8ca11ad8d8144bf137d863 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/geography/life-as-a-post-office-worker-on-remote-goudier-island-antarctica/news-story/cae4b2193f8ca11ad8d8144bf137d863)

[Australia's most incredible weather photos\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/weather/bom-chooses-australias-most-incredible-weather-photos/news-story/f5d224ab459b34587bd9264b8effb94 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/weather/bom-chooses-australias-most-incredible-weather-photos/news-story/f5d224ab459b34587bd9264b8effb94)

[Penguin population collapses\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/scientists-discover-alarming-collapse-of-king-penguin-population-on-remote-island/news-story/db71a91ff95b33ad1193d2e7939cfe4e \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/scientists-discover-alarming-collapse-of-king-penguin-population-on-remote-island/news-story/db71a91ff95b33ad1193d2e7939cfe4e)

QUICK QUIZ

1. Where is Macquarie Island?
2. Who owns the ship? What is it used for?
3. Where does the name of the ship come from?
4. What colour is the ship? Why is it that colour?
5. How many tonnes of potatoes are used on a six-week voyage? How many kilograms is that?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Name the New Ship

When the vessel that will replace *Aurora Australis* is built, it will need to have a name. What do you think it should be called? Choose a name and then write a letter to the shipbuilders. The purpose of your letter is to explain why you chose this name and why they should use it for the new vessel.

Time: allow 30 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English

2. Extension

Design a special Thank You card for *Aurora Australis*. Your card must include words, possibly a poem for the inside of the card, that describe why she has been such an important and special ship.

Time: allow at least 25 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Visual Communication Design, Science, Critical and Creative Thinking

VCOP ACTIVITY

After reading the article, with a partner, highlight as many wow words or ambitious pieces of vocabulary that you can find in yellow. Discuss the meanings of these words and see if you can use them orally in another sentence.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Would you travel on *Aurora Australis*? Would you like to go to Antarctica?

No one-word answers. Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will be published until approved by editors.

☺



Scientists film largest-ever stringy clone colony at Ningaloo, off WA coast

Charlotte Edwards and Ben Cost, April 14, 2020 6:45PM The Sun

ANIMALS

Reading level: **Orange**

Researchers off the Western Australian coast have filmed a long, luminescent*, stringlike, underwater creature made up of millions of interconnected clones.

Scientists are calling the specimen the largest of its type ever discovered.

The creature is a giant siphonophore.

In New Zealand, it is commonly called a “long stringy stingy thingy”.

Marine biologist Stefan Siebert of Brown University, US, told *Wired* magazine: “The whole thing looks like one animal, but it’s many thousands of individuals which form an entity* on a higher level.”

This type of siphonophore is also called Apolemia or a string jellyfish.

A team of international researchers came across the creepy creature on the Ningaloo Canyons Expedition.

They were exploring a biologically rich but little-studied area off the coast of WA.

Biologists Nerida Wilson and Lisa Kirkendale from the Western Australian Museum told ScienceAlert: “Everyone was blown away when it came into view.

“There was a lot of excitement. People came pouring into the control room from all over the ship.

“Siphonophores are commonly seen but this one was both large and unusual-looking.”

The creature hasn’t been officially measured but estimates suggest its outer ring is about 47m long.

It’s made up of tiny individual creatures called zooids.

They can clone themselves thousands of times and have different jobs.

Some have stinging tentacles and attract foods whereas others focus on moving and reproduction*.

They may technically be individual beings but they come together to work like organs in one larger organism.

They are connected by a branch, through which nutrients and nerve signals can be passed.

Experts think the giant siphonophore in the video has assumed a feeding position and that's why it looks a bit like a UFO.

“OMG I have CHILLS. This is an ANIMAL. I'm guessing it's over a hundred feet (30m) long, forming a spiral in the middle of the deep sea,” wrote Rebecca Helm, assistant professor at the University of North Carolina Asheville, US, on Twitter.

“I've gone on numerous expeditions and have never, EVER, seen anything like this.”

“This animal is a kind of jelly,” she added, noting that it's “made of millions of interconnected clones, like if the Borg* and the Clone Wars* had a baby together.”

It's likely the WA example isn't the only anomalous* siphonophore prowling the ocean.

“There are millions, probably billions of underwater siphonophore galaxies out there just like this one,” Helm wrote.

“As we explore the oceans more, who knows what other creatures we will see.”

This is an edited version of stories first published on The Sun and New York Post and is republished with permission.

ABOUT SIPHONOPHORES

They are animals that belong to a group called Cnidaria, which also includes corals and true jellyfish.

There are about 175 known species of siphonophores.

Well-known species are blue bottles (found in Australian waters) and Portuguese man o' war, both often thought of as jellyfish.

Siphonophores are very fragile and break apart easily.

Some are bioluminescent* and glow green or blue when disturbed.

They are all predators and eat small crustaceans and fish.

GLOSSARY

- **luminescent:** glowing
- **entity:** a thing or being
- **reproduction:** making more of something or itself
- **Borg:** a group of aliens in *Star Trek*
- **Clone Wars:** a TV series about the characters from *Star Wars*
- **bioluminescent:** naturally able to glow
- **anomalous:** different to what is normal or expected

EXTRA READING

[Get ready for a jellyfish boom!\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/ten-fascinating-facts-about-jellyfish/news-story/50c13de07ad5af633a5e58a6ef2b6c86 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/ten-fascinating-facts-about-jellyfish/news-story/50c13de07ad5af633a5e58a6ef2b6c86)

[Colourful dreams of a sleeping octopus\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/sleeping-octopus-changes-colour-suggesting-dreams/news-story/4ba255b62d5102c6f680a15a950848d0 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/sleeping-octopus-changes-colour-suggesting-dreams/news-story/4ba255b62d5102c6f680a15a950848d0)

[Kids find giant jellyfish\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/giant-stinging-jellyfish-washes-up-on-beach/news-story/bde4984c44b12d9fabd6ffb1051c4ebb \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/giant-stinging-jellyfish-washes-up-on-beach/news-story/bde4984c44b12d9fabd6ffb1051c4ebb)

[Big tubular sea worm dwarfs diver\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/divers-overcome-shock-to-study-a-massive-tubular-sea-worm-as-it-drifts-by/news-story/5a82ba83551b2cb0cc87d1a6c7521fae \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/divers-overcome-shock-to-study-a-massive-tubular-sea-worm-as-it-drifts-by/news-story/5a82ba83551b2cb0cc87d1a6c7521fae)

[Giant squid attacks fake jellyfish near midnight zone\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/scientists-using-a-special-camera-called-medusa-captured-rare-film-of-an-elusive-giant-squid/news-story/37ebd93e14d2bd5650aeb18dee751a4e \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/scientists-using-a-special-camera-called-medusa-captured-rare-film-of-an-elusive-giant-squid/news-story/37ebd93e14d2bd5650aeb18dee751a4e)

QUICK QUIZ

1. Where did they find this siphonophore?
2. How are individuals in each colony connected? What are the individuals called?
3. Why are blue bottles mentioned?
4. What do siphonophores eat?
5. What does it mean to say something is bioluminescent or luminescent?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Long Stringy Stingy Thingy Rap

Work in groups of 4 to compose your own rap song on the Long Stringy Stingy Thingy found off the coast of Western Australia. Use all the facts and information from the Kids News article to give you information to rap about.

See the example below about how to write a rap here: <https://images.scholastic.co.uk/assets/a/93/f8/less-sip-2453.pdf>

Perform your rap to the class.

Time: allow 25 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Music

2. Extension

Write an Acrostic poem for the scientific name of the creature 'siphonophore' using facts from the article.

Time: allow 15 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English

VCOP ACTIVITY

Verb adventures

With a partner see if you can identify all the doing words/verbs in this text. Highlight them in yellow and then make a list of them all down your page. Now see if you and your partner can come up with a synonym for the chosen verb. Make sure it still makes sense in the context it was taken from.

Try to replace some of the original verbs with your synonyms and discuss if any are better and why.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Describe and name a movie or documentary you'd like to make about this creature.

No one-word answers. Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will be published until approved by editors.

☺



Amazing video captures grey seals clapping at each other in the wild to warn off competitors and attract mates

David Hocking, Felix Marx and Ben Burville, April 1, 2020 6:45PM Kids News

ANIMALS

Reading level: **Orange**

Have you ever clapped your hands to get someone's attention? The resulting "crack!" sound is hard to ignore, rising above and making its way through any background noise.

Now imagine trying to do it underwater – you would be unlikely to achieve quite the same impact.

Amazingly, new video released in the journal *Marine Mammal Science* shows breeding grey seals doing just that: they clap at each other to warn off competitors and attract mates.

WHY IS THIS UNUSUAL?

Like their land-living relatives, marine mammals mainly communicate vocally* — think of dolphin whistles or the famous song of humpback whales. Grey seals do too, and can be surprisingly versatile*.

Besides the bizarre "rup" and "rupe" calls these seals normally make in the wild, some captive animals have even been trained to perform the *Star Wars* theme tune!

But vocals are only half the story. Many marine mammals also produce percussive* sounds, such as by slapping the water with their flippers or tails. Normally this happens at the surface, and only involves one flipper at a time.

What makes grey seals different is that – like humans – they literally clap their forelimbs together, and they do it entirely underwater.

THE BEHAVIOUR THAT TOOK 17 YEARS TO FILM

Recording the claps was far from easy, and took 17 years of scuba diving by "seal diver" and marine biologist Ben Burville.

Ben was no stranger to the clapping sound itself. For years, he had heard it when diving with grey seals during their breeding season. Similar noises had also been detected by researchers using underwater microphones, but had been mistaken for a vocal signal.

It wasn't until he actually saw a big male clapping together its paw-like flippers that Ben finally identified the true source of the sound. Yet the claps were quick and difficult to film; by the time he pointed his camera, things had usually moved on.

Years passed until finally, in October 2017, Ben caught the behaviour on film while diving near the Farne Islands, UK. A male grey seal performed seven claps right in front of him while his camera was rolling.

WHY DO GREY SEALS CLAP?

At first, the discovery might not seem that surprising. After all, seals are famous for performing this behaviour in zoos and aquaria*. However, there is an important difference: whereas captive animals (usually fur seals or sea lions) have been trained to clap for our entertainment, grey seals do so in the wild.

So why do they do it?

Imagine being in a noisy room, with everyone around you chatting away. Getting attention can be difficult unless you make a statement. That's exactly what a clap is: a sharp, loud noise that rises above the background chatter.

Usually, it's males that do the clapping – sometimes by themselves, and sometimes at each other. Depending on the context, the claps may help ward off competitors and/or attract potential mates.

Similar functions underlie* display behaviour in many other species. Think of a chest-beating male gorilla, for example. Like seal claps, those chest beats carry two messages: "I am strong, stay away", and "I am strong, my genes are good."

DO OTHER MARINE ANIMALS CLAP?

No, or at least not as far as we know.

Clapping seems to be a genuinely novel* behaviour that evolved in seals only once. Perhaps larger species such as sea lions are prevented from doing it by increased water resistance.

Of course, it is also possible that some other species also clap, but haven't done so in front of a camera.

Even if clapping were unique to grey seals, it seems the sharp signal it generates is important for many marine mammals. Several dolphins, whales and seals produce similar sounds via tail or flipper slaps, or even gunshot-like vocalisations. The oceans are a noisy place, after all, and it can be important to stand out in a crowd.

WHAT SHOULD WE LEARN FROM THIS?

Clapping seals show us just how much we still don't know about the remarkable mammals in our oceans. Clapping seems to be an important social behaviour, so anything that disturbs it may impact breeding success and survival.

Human noise pollution is known to interfere with other forms of marine mammal communication, including whale song. Loud industrial noises could disturb grey seals (and other species that rely on acoustic signals) in similar ways.

But if we do not know a behaviour exists, we cannot easily act to protect it.

Understanding the animals around us better can, therefore, help us to protect them and their way of life.

This article was previously published on Monash University's Lens and is republished here with permission.

GLOSSARY

- **vocally:** with your voice
- **versatile:** able to adapt to change
- **percussive:** short and loud sounds like those made by hitting a drum
- **aquaria:** aquariums; both plural of aquarium

- **underlie:** be the cause of something
- **novel:** new or different

EXTRA READING

Humpback whale spits out very lucky sea lion(<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/sea-lion-scooped-up-by-humpback-whale-just-in-wrong-place-at-wrong-time/news-story/7e6356f46456cb8724a5067b27a68666>).

Counting penguins and trying not to get blown away(<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/geography/meet-the-ranger-counting-penguin-chicks-in-the-wild-freezing-weather-on-macquarie-island/news-story/64e8a000d2aeeb0e0faa454bac15410b>).

Diver trapped in whale's mouth ... and lives(<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/dive-tour-operator-almost-eaten-by-a-brydes-whale-but-lives-to-tell-the-tale/news-story/fe645d59e515b9d0141a44747869181e>).

Underwater photographer of the year(<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/arts/incredible-pictures-of-life-under-the-sea/news-story/f941bd1adbc940d9d1f89ec63b6acfb>).

QUICK QUIZ

1. How did Ben Burville film the seals? How long did he try for?
2. What is one other way marine mammals make a noise? Give two examples.
3. What do grey seals use to make the clapping sound?
4. Do other marine mammals map? Do we know if that's accurate?
5. What is the point of learning about seals clapping?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Ask Ben Burville

Write down five questions you would like to ask Ben about his job and his study of seals. Then, write the answers that you think that he would give you. Use information in today's story to help you.

Time: allow 40 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Science

2. Extension

Imagine that you are a seal scientist: that is, a seal who is a scientist! You have been studying human clapping. Write a report about human clapping from a seal's point of view. Include how humans clap, why you think they might clap, and what you had to do to find out this information.

Time: allow at least 15 minutes to complete this activity.

Curriculum Links: English, Science

VCOP ACTIVITY

Verb adventures

With a partner see if you can identify all the doing words/verbs in this text. Highlight them in yellow and then make a list of them all down your page. Now see if you and your partner can come up with a synonym for the chosen verb. Make sure it still makes sense in the context it was taken from.

Try to replace some of the original verbs with your synonyms and discuss if any are better and why.

HAVE YOUR SAY: What is your favourite marine mammal? Would you swim with seals?

No one-word answers. Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will be published until approved by editors.

☺



NASA has revealed its early base camp plans as it prepares for humans to live on the Moon

Charlotte Edwards, April 8, 2020 7:30PM The Sun

SPACE

Reading level: Green

NASA has revealed some of its plans for life on the Moon.

The US space agency's Artemis program hopes to return astronauts to the Moon by 2024.

One of the program's aims is to create an "Artemis Base Camp" that will allow humans to live for short periods of time on the lunar* surface.

The most likely location for the camp is in the Shackleton Crater on the Moon's south pole.

NASA is planning for four astronauts to live in accommodation there, possibly for a week at a time.

If humans were to stay any longer their accommodation would require more complicated things such as a water and waste disposal system, radiation* shielding*, a launching pad and infrastructure* for power.

The base camp information was included in a 13-page report submitted to the National Space Council and was titled "NASA's Plan for Sustained* Lunar Exploration and Development".

Two transport systems have been suggested, including a lunar terrain vehicle.

The other vehicle is referred to as a habitable* mobility platform that could transport crew from the base. This vehicle would be used for longer trips as it would be contained and pressurised*, whereas the lunar terrain vehicle would require a human to wear protective clothing.

The habitable vehicle would be very similar to a camper van.

The Moon base is intended to help astronauts eventually prepare for a space flight to Mars.

GLOSSARY

- **lunar:** relating to the Moon
- **radiation:** the release of energy as waves
- **shielding:** protection
- **infrastructure:** things such as buildings, roads and power supplies
- **sustained:** continuing for a long time without stopping

- **habitable:** liveable
- **pressurised:** produce or maintain raised pressure artificially in a gas or its container

EXTRA READING

[China's giant fake moon plan\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/space/china-plans-to-launch-moonlike-satellite-by-2020-in-bold-energysaving-project/news-story/22a86af55aecd47c15cf9ab83421afef \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/space/china-plans-to-launch-moonlike-satellite-by-2020-in-bold-energysaving-project/news-story/22a86af55aecd47c15cf9ab83421afef)

[NASA wants your help to dig on the Moon\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/space/nasa-calls-for-everyday-people-to-help-improve-its-robot-to-dig-on-the-moon-and-explore-its-surface/news-story/bf00225856d4a941ed3878a5fd8fd544 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/space/nasa-calls-for-everyday-people-to-help-improve-its-robot-to-dig-on-the-moon-and-explore-its-surface/news-story/bf00225856d4a941ed3878a5fd8fd544)

QUICK QUIZ

1. What is the name of NASA's Moon program?
2. When does NASA hope to return to the Moon?
3. Where is the base camp most likely to be located?
4. What would the habitable vehicle resemble on Earth?
5. Which planet does NASA hope astronauts will fly to from the Moon?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

to come

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

1. Draw it

Using the information from the article, draw an image of what you think the Artemis Base Camp may look like. Consider the materials the astronauts would need to use to build the accommodation and how the vehicles they use may look.

Take care to make the lunar surface look realistic.

Time: Allow 40 minutes for this activity.

Curriculum Links: Science, The Arts – Visual Arts

VCOP ACTIVITY

Proper Noun Police

A proper noun is a noun that names a particular person, place or thing. It always has a capital letter.

How many proper nouns can you find within this article? Find them all and sort them into the category of name, place, time (date/month).

- Can you find any proper nouns included in your writing?
- What are they?
- Can you sort them into their categories?

HAVE YOUR SAY: Would you like to live on the Moon?

No one-word answers. Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will show until approved by editors.

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Wild animals explore quiet city streets as humans stay in during coronavirus lockdown

Dan Hall, April 6, 2020 6:30PM Kids News

ANIMALS

Reading level: **Green**

As humans across the world have retreated into isolation in their homes because of the coronavirus* shutdown, wild animals have started wandering into our empty city streets.

Pumas, jaguars, deer and goats from Peru to Japan have come out in packs during the shutdown to enjoy the peace and quiet that has fallen over our normally bustling* cities and towns.

Goats have taken over the coastal town of Llandudno in northern Wales, eating hedges and peering into front yards.

Andrew Stuart, who is living in a pub in the town, first shared footage of the goats on Twitter and called police to try and chase the goats away.

But the naughty goats didn't stay away for long.

"They run Llandudno now and we just have to accept that as fact," Mr Stuart said in one of his tweets.

He said the goats normally don't come this far into the centre of the town but have become more confident because of the lack of people.

"They're scared of me (a human) ... They don't like people. They usually only come down from the Great Orme (a headland*) when it's windy, and only the backstreets at the top of Mostyn Street. Now lockdown means it's empty, they're going further than ever," Mr Stuart said.

Some other wild animal sightings include:

1. Deer

Residents on a housing estate in Harold Hill, Essex, in England woke last week to find a crowd of deer gathering on the lawns outside their houses.

The deer, believed to have come from nearby Dagnam Park, were lazing* on the grass.

Council street works inspector Dean Zetter, 50, said when he saw about 20 sitting on the grass, he thought to himself: "It was a beautiful start to the day."

2. Puma

A wild puma was seen prowling* the city centre of Chile's capital city Santiago last week giving several residents a fright.

Santiago has set a night-time curfew on citizens, giving the predator* a chance to rule the roads in the evening. The puma was thought to be around a year old and weighed 35kg.

“This is the habitat* they once had and that we've taken away from them,” said Marcelo Giagnoni, the director of the agricultural and livestock service that took part in an operation to capture the puma and take it to a local zoo.

3. Wild boar

Hogs have been photographed searching for food in Europe including in Sassari, the second-largest city in Sardinia. They have also popped up on social media happily trotting along main roads in Barcelona, Spain and in Paris.

The boars are more typically found in forests outside European cities.

4. Coyote

Coyotes are sometimes spotted around San Francisco on the west coast of the United States, but reported sightings in the city centre have exploded since Americans went into isolation.

A security camera captured frightening footage of a coyote following a couple walking their dog at night. And other residents have been shocked to find packs of the canines* sleeping in broad daylight in usually busy suburbs.

5. Jaguar

The largest cat native to the Americas* is usually too frightened to enter the populated areas of Mexico's tourist hotspot Tulum, but not any more.

A jaguar was filmed on security cameras prowling around the quiet streets.

Sharing the footage of the jaguar on Twitter, Mariana Rios wrote in Spanish: “The animals begin to take what is theirs”.

GLOSSARY

- **coronavirus:** a virus that causes a variety of diseases in animals and humans
- **bustling:** busy
- **headland:** a narrow piece of land that projects from a coastline into the sea
- **lazing:** resting
- **prowling:** moving in search of prey
- **predator:** an animal that naturally preys on others
- **habitat:** the natural home of an animal, human or organism
- **canines:** dogs
- **the Americas:** all the continents of North and South America

EXTRA READING

[‘Spider-Man’ identifies seven new peacock spiders\(https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/spiderman-identifies-seven-new-peacock-spiders/news-story/7746ded379f85f10c2eb4e99d9e3ebd5 \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/spiderman-identifies-seven-new-peacock-spiders/news-story/7746ded379f85f10c2eb4e99d9e3ebd5).

[Why do grey seals clap like humans?\(<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/amazing-video-captures-grey-seals-clapping-at-each-other-in-the-wild-to-warn-off-competitors-and-attract-mates/news-story/51cc2d1b3401a820999a1862b5f17bd0> \)](https://www.kidsnews.com.au/animals/amazing-video-captures-grey-seals-clapping-at-each-other-in-the-wild-to-warn-off-competitors-and-attract-mates/news-story/51cc2d1b3401a820999a1862b5f17bd0)

QUICK QUIZ

1. Why have so many wild animals come into cities?
2. What were the deer eating in Wales?
3. Where do the goats normally live?
4. Name two wild cats that were roaming?
5. What rule in Santiago is keeping the streets empty?

LISTEN TO THIS STORY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Write a Journal entry or conversation

Imagine you are one of the animals mentioned in the article. You have ventured further into ‘human territory’ than you have been before.

Why did you go there? What did it feel like? What did you see? What could you hear?

Use the details provided along with your prior knowledge and imagination to write either a conversation you have with your family members when you return to your normal habitat or a journal entry of your experiences that day.

Time: allow 20 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Critical and Creative Thinking

2. Extension

Animals have been spotted out in the open in many places around the world. Use Google maps or an atlas to locate all the places mentioned in the article. On a blank map of the world, label these cities and note down the animal that was sighted and what it was seen doing.

If you have more time you could do some research on each animal and write a ‘Fact File’ about it, including:

- animal name
- usual habitat
- food it eats
- animal behaviour and
- any other interesting facts

Time: allow 30 minutes to complete this activity

Curriculum Links: English, Humanities and Social Sciences – Geography, Science

VCOP ACTIVITY

Wondrous Wow Words

After reading the article, with a partner, highlight as many wow words or ambitious pieces of vocabulary that you can find in yellow. Discuss the meanings of these words and see if you can use them orally in another sentence.

HAVE YOUR SAY: What wild animal would you like to see wander past your house on your street?

No one-word answers. Use full sentences to explain your thinking. No comments will show until approved by editors.

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