

# PAKO Kids Magazine

[www.pako4kids.com](http://www.pako4kids.com)

## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT RABIES?

## Lions on the Brink: Conservation in Action

## Desert Conservation



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*it's our planet to save*





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**"A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal."**  
Proverbs 12:10



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# RABIES



## What is Rabies?

Rabies is a serious disease that affects the brain and nervous system of both animals and humans (all mammals). It is caused by a virus and can make animals and people very sick if they are bitten or scratched by an infected mammal. Wild animals like jackals and kudus can carry rabies. Sometimes even pets like dogs and cats can catch it, if they are not vaccinated. But do not worry - there are ways to stay safe and prevent rabies!

### How Do You Get Rabies?

Rabies spreads when an animal with rabies bites you. Sometimes, even a scratch from an infected animal can spread the virus. The virus is found in an infected animal's saliva, so if it gets into a wound, it becomes infected.

### Symptoms of Rabies in Humans

If someone gets rabies, they may start to feel like they have the flu - fever, headaches, or feeling tired. But if it gets worse, rabies can make it hard to think, swallow, or even move around. That's why it is so important to see a doctor right away if you are bitten by an animal.

### Symptoms of Rabies in Animals

Animals with rabies might: **Act strangely:** They might be more aggressive or act unusually friendly. **Drool a lot:** Infected animals might have a lot of saliva. **Have trouble walking:** They might seem clumsy or unable to walk normally. **Avoid water:** Animals with rabies often avoid drinking water, because it hurts to swallow.

### How Can You Stay Safe?

**Stay away from wild animals:** If you see a wild animal, do not try to touch it. **Do not touch stray pets:** Dogs and cats without owners could be carrying diseases like rabies.

### How Can You Stay Safe?

**Tell an adult** if you see an animal acting strangely: If an animal is stumbling, drooling, or behaving oddly, it might be sick. **Vaccinate your pets:** Make sure your dog or cat gets its rabies shot to stay safe and healthy.

### What to Do if Bitten?

If an animal bites or scratches you, tell an adult right away! They will clean the wound and take you to the doctor. The doctor can give you medicine that can stop rabies before it makes you sick.

## HISTORICAL FUN FACTS

**Ancient disease:** Rabies has been around for thousands of years! The first known record of rabies was in ancient Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) around 4,000 years ago. People back then knew that animals with rabies could spread the disease, even though they did not yet know about viruses.

The word "rabies" comes from the Latin word "rabere", which means "to rage" or "go mad", because animals with rabies often act very strangely, sometimes even becoming aggressive.

A scientist named Louis Pasteur created the first rabies vaccine! This was a huge breakthrough, because before that, rabies was almost always fatal. He first tested the vaccine on a young boy who had been bitten by an infected dog, and it saved the boy's life.

William Shakespeare, the famous English playwright, mentioned rabies in his play "Romeo and Juliet". He called it "the infectious pestilence", showing how scary the disease was even in the 16th century.

The first written record of rabies causing death in dogs and humans, is found in the Mosaic Esmuna Code of Babylon in 2300 BCE, where Babylonians had to pay a fine if their dog transmitted rabies to another person.

In 2007, World Rabies Day was created to raise awareness about rabies prevention. It is celebrated every year on the 28th September to remind people to vaccinate their pets and stay safe.



# HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT RABIES?

13 statements are wrong. Can you spot them?

1 Rabies is only spread by dogs.

2 Rabies is caused by a virus.



16 You can get rabies from a dead animal.

17 Rabies spreads quickly between animals.

18 Only animals with rabies can spread the virus.

3 If you are bitten by an animal, you should wash the wound and tell an adult right away.



4 Rabies is found all over the world.

19 There is no cure for rabies after symptoms appear.



21 Animals with rabies are often active during the day, even if they're usually nocturnal.

5 You can get rabies from petting a dog or cat.

6 Vaccines can prevent rabies.

20 Rabies can make animals lose their balance.



7 Rabies can be treated with regular medicine like a cold.



22 Rabies easily spreads through the air.

23 A rabies vaccine can protect you for life.

8 You can tell if an animal has rabies just by looking at it.

9 You can see the rabies virus with your eyes.

10 Humans can also get rabies.

24 Rabies has been nearly eliminated in many countries thanks to vaccines.

25 Dogs that have been vaccinated can still get rabies.



11 All animals with rabies foam at the mouth.

12 Rabies affects the brain and nervous system.

26 If you see an animal acting strangely, you should tell an adult.

27 All pets need rabies vaccinations regularly.



13 Rabies can be spread by mosquitoes.

14 All animals that have rabies will show symptoms.

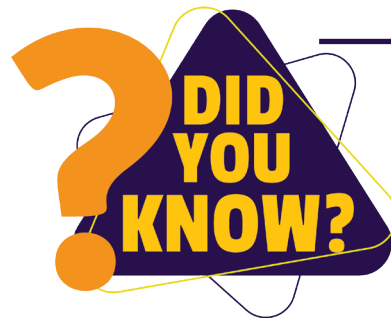
15 Only stray or wild animals can get rabies.

28 Cats can not get rabies.

29 Bats can also get rabies.

30 Rabies is always deadly to animals.





**Sunflowers are bright, cheerful flowers that are fun to learn about!**  
**Here are some cool facts about sunflowers.**

**1. Sunflowers Follow the Sun**

One of the most amazing things about sunflowers is that they follow the sun as it moves across the sky. This is called *heliotropism*. During the day, young sunflower buds face the east in the morning, then

slowly turn west as the sun moves, and at night, they turn back east to start all over again! However, when the sunflower gets older and blooms, it usually faces east all the time.

**2. Sunflowers Can Grow Really Tall**

Sunflowers are some of the tallest flowers around. The tallest sunflower on record grew to be over 9.17 metres tall—that is taller than most houses! Even regular sunflowers in gardens can easily grow 1.5 - 3 metres high.

**3. Sunflowers Come in Different Colours**

While most sunflowers are bright yellow, they can also be found in other colours like orange, red, and even purple! Some sunflowers have petals that are a mix of colours.

**4. Sunflower Heads Are Made of Hundreds of Tiny Flowers**

What looks like one big flower in the middle of a sunflower is actually made up of hundreds of tiny flowers, called florets. These florets eventually turn into seeds.

**5. Sunflowers Produce Lots of Seeds**

Sunflowers are famous for their seeds, which people and animals love to eat. A single sunflower can produce up to 2,000 seeds! These seeds can be roasted for a tasty snack or used to make sunflower oil.

**6. Sunflowers Can Help Clean the Environment**

Sunflowers are special, because they can absorb harmful substances from the soil. After disasters like oil spills or radiation leaks, sunflowers have been planted to help clean up the environment.

**7. Sunflowers Are a Symbol of Happiness**

Because of their bright and sunny appearance, sunflowers are often seen as a symbol of happiness, positivity, and warmth. They are also a symbol of loyalty and adoration.

**8. There Are Many Types of Sunflowers**

There are over 70 different types of sunflowers, and they can vary in size, colour, and shape. Some are small and grow just a metre tall, while others can grow to be giants!

Sunflowers are not just beautiful to look at—they are also full of interesting surprises. Next time you see a sunflower, remember all these fun facts!



©Bonnie Kittle on Unsplash

# RABIES

While it's very important to vaccinate cats and dogs against rabies, other animals might also need to be vaccinated, especially if they live near people, other pets, or at a rescue station.

Do you know which animals must also be vaccinated against rabies?





# Does Spay and Neuter help prevent Rabies?



Spaying and neutering don't directly prevent rabies, but they are still very important to keep pets healthy and safe!

## What is Spaying and Neutering?

Spaying is a surgery that makes sure female animals, like dogs or cats, can not have babies. Neutering is a surgery for male animals to make sure they can not father babies.

## How Does This Help?

While spaying and neutering do not stop rabies directly, it helps in other important ways:

**Fewer Stray Animals:** When pets are not spayed or neutered, they can have many babies. Some of these animals might not have homes and could end up living on the streets. Stray animals are more likely to catch diseases like rabies from wild animals because they do not have people to take care of them. By spaying and neutering pets, we can help prevent more stray animals, which lowers the chance of spreading rabies.

**Keeps Pets Safe:** When pets are not spayed or neutered, they may try to run away to find a mate. If they run away, they might come across wild animals that could have rabies. Spayed and neutered pets are more likely to stay close to home, where they are safe.

**Healthier Pets:** Spaying and neutering also help pets live longer and healthier lives. They are less likely to get into fights with other animals, which means they are less likely to get injured or bitten. Bites can spread diseases like rabies, so fewer fights mean fewer chances of getting sick.

## Why Spaying and Neutering is Good for Everyone

By spaying and neutering pets, we help prevent the problem of too many stray animals.

Strays are more likely to catch and spread diseases like rabies. Keeping the pet population under control helps protect both people and animals from dangerous illnesses.

So, while spaying and neutering won't stop rabies directly, it plays an important role in making sure fewer animals are at risk, which helps everyone stay safe!



# TO MY HUMAN

I wish I could tell you in your words how much I love you when I look at you with my soulful, soft brown eyes or I curl up against you or by your feet. Do you know that what's I try to say when I put my paw gently on your lap or on your shoulder? Sometimes you might think I don't care, because I live from moment to moment and do things you not always like: If I see a ground squirrel running over the street, I have to go for it! It doesn't matter to me that I've literally never caught one - not even close - but I'm still going to give it my best shot. Even if I have to jerk your arm off in the process. Or that day we met this one dog I don't really like, I just had to bark at him and do this little lunge - sorry I made you fall.

And while I'll gladly apologise for that, there are some things about you humans I don't understand: Here I am getting that silly old kibble day after day after day after day while you have that gobsmackingly human food? You say you have my best health interests at heart, but what about sharing is caring and all that? On the topic of food: I love it when you bribe me with my favourite biscuit to do some tricks or come back when called! You say I'm a good girl and give me that little treat - and that's how I know I've trained you well. Juuuust kidding (...or am I?).

I hope you always know that I love you endlessly. I wish I could spend every waking (and every sleeping) moment with you. When you leave the house and don't come back the very next moment, I'll be waiting to see or hear any little sign of you coming back. And then I'm just happy you're with me again and want you to give me a hug and cuddle, or have a quick game of ball with me.

I'm so grateful for you and your love and I hope you know that I trust you unconditionally. Thank you for all the treats, belly rubs, head scratches, cuddles and kisses. I hope you know that I'm there for you no matter how busy you get or how much else you have going on with your life. Thanks for being my human.

And now - because there's never going to be enough time to spend with the ones you love - let's go for a walk?

YOUR BEST FRIEND



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**PAKO**

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Website for parents, teachers and children.

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**Olympia Optics** (Windhoek)  
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www.olympiaoptics.com

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**Eye Store** (Windhoek)  
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biancaniem@gmail.com

**Alna Swartz Physiotherapist** (Kleine Kuppe / Windhoek)  
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### Dog clubs

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www.windhoekdogclub.com  
info@windhoekdogclub.com

**German Shepherd Dog Club** (Windhoek)  
C/o Sean McBride / Frankie Fredericks Drive  
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svnamibia@gmail.com

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info@whkvet-cc.com  
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Tel: 061 250 120  
info@whkvet-cc.com

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# Lions on the Brink: Conservation in Action

## Why are lions important?

Lions are top predators, and without them, herbivore populations would increase unchecked. This would lead to overgrazing, and in turn, degrade habitats.

Lions play a key role in keeping ecosystems diverse. When they hunt, they usually target weaker or sick animals, which helps prevent the spread of disease and keeps animal populations strong and healthy.

Supporting conservation efforts to protect lions benefits animals, people, ecosystems and the planet. Lions are also one of the main attractions for tourists visiting national parks and help boost local economies.

## What are the threats to lions?

Lions once roamed throughout all of Africa and parts of Asia and Europe. However, the African lion is now found only in small areas of sub-Saharan Africa. There is also a small population of Asiatic lions in India.

Lions' ranges have been seriously reduced over the last 100 years, mainly due to agriculture and other human land use. Today they inhabit only 8% of their former range.

At the current rate of habitat loss and poaching, African lions could be completely extinct by 2050.

Lions no longer have access to the vast stretches of savanna grasslands they need to find food and viable mating partners - and to thrive as a pride.

Many lions live outside of National Parks or other protected areas. As their habitat has become more fragmented (broken up), there has been an increase in inbreeding, diseases and conflict with humans.

Lions are difficult to count, but an estimated 20,000 lions are remaining in the wild.

The major threats to lions are loss of habitat, human-wildlife conflicts, reduction in the number of prey animals, use of lion body parts in traditional medicine and trophy hunting.

Lions can become trapped in wire snares set for the illegal bushmeat trade. If a lion manages to escape from the wire, it can be left with serious wounds.

Climate change is a very serious threat to lions. As the temperature increases and the land becomes drier, lion habitats may be lost and they will have nowhere to go.

## What are the solutions?

Communities should be supported to find ways of coexisting with lions and protecting themselves and their livestock. This will help to decrease the predation of livestock and the revenge killings of lions.

By placing satellite tracking collars on lions, researchers can collect important information about lion movements. This can also help reduce conflicts by warning communities when they move close and advising them where to avoid active lion corridors.

Livestock farmers can reinforce cattle bomas to make them stronger.

Farming groups can employ local community members to serve as 'lion guardians', helping to monitor lion movement and alert communities when they are close.

Many conservation organisations focus on raising awareness and educating communities, particularly younger generations, about threatened wildlife such as lions.

The employment of local people as wildlife scouts, safari guides and tourist lodge staff makes a big difference in improving their attitudes towards lions and learning ways of living in harmony with them.

"Every lion lost is a piece of the wilderness that disappears forever." - Unknown

"Conserving lions is not just about saving a species; it's about preserving the balance of our ecosystems." - Beverly Joubert

"The fate of lions is a reflection of the health of our planet. Saving them means saving ourselves." - Dereck Joubert



# Desert Conservation

The vast open plains and rolling sand dunes are far more sensitive than most people can imagine. The Namib desert is home to hundreds of endemic animal and plant species that have adapted to this harsh environment.

The information below is about the **DOROB NATIONAL PARK** and how it came into existence in 2010.

Most of the Namib Desert is made up of Gravel plains which are made up of stones called gravel, ranging in

various sizes, mixed with a fine dust called gypsum. The combination of gravel, gypsum and fog causes a crust to form over hundreds of years. When travelling with a vehicle or even walking over these plains the tracks can remain for hundreds of years.

This sensitive environment has some of the most scenic desert landscapes on earth and is worthy of protection to share with tourists from all over the world. It is also the inheritance of local Namibians to enjoy and pass on to their children for generations to come.

## SOLUTION

Try to create a protected area where the public can continue enjoying the environment in a sustainable manner.

To achieve this dream of a protected area where activities can be conducted within a protected area was a great achievement which involved a lot of hard work from many dedicated people over a span of about 8 years. Many meetings, many tears, many press articles and lots of international and local funding which eventually led to the creation of the **Dorob National Park** in 2010.

This unique people's park covering 7,800 square kilometres or 780,000 hectares has 3 towns within the park boundaries, namely Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Henties Bay. The park is a people's park which is zoned for protection and recreational use in a sustainable manner.

Permits have been granted to tour operators to conduct sustainable tourism within the park and areas have been set aside for the public to enjoy recreational Quad biking and dune driving with 4x4 vehicles.



## VICTORY

A dedicated team of conservationists, including myself, spent many hours, day after day and year after year publicising the destruction of the Namib Desert in the media by means of posting pictures and letters depicting this destruction around the world, in order to create international attention. Having endured many threats from angry members of the public who did not like the idea of having their destructive activity regulated, victory was eventually rewarded through the creation of the Dorob National Park in 2010, and it's within this special park that we conduct our living Desert tour.

I need to mention that there were many special and dedicated people who played a role in creating this wonderful park. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them for their tireless contributions.

A very special thanks to my awesome wife Katja Nel, for standing by my side day by day and encouraging me.

A very special thanks to Rod Braby, a dedicated warden that went out of his way to protect the environment and make the Dorob a reality. Rod Braby was one of the last of his kind of real conservationists and wardens that no longer exist.

And finally Marilyn Leippert, the original owner of Levo Dolphin Tours. Marilyn was a fighter, a legend in a league of her own, and I have yet to meet another like her.

- Chris Nel



## THE PROBLEM

People want to have fun and drive everywhere, testing their bikes and vehicles. However, driving all over the place causes significant aesthetic and ecological damage.

Gravel plains, like those shown in the pictures below, will bear scars for hundreds of years. Some of the old ox-wagon tracks from the early German settlers, who arrived in 1880, can still be seen today.

Many ask the question - but why does the wind not remove the tracks? The reason is that the gravel plains are made up of stones of various sizes (gravel) which is mixed with a fine dust called gypsum. This combination, mixed with humidity from the daily fog forms a crust

over thousands of years. Once this crust is broken and the stones are displaced, the wind cannot move the stones back into position leaving a permanent scar on the landscape.

Over a hundred endemic lichen species exist along the coastal Namib. Once the lichens are driven over, they never recover and the damaged soil remains scarred.

Concerning the dunes, many endemic insects and reptiles live just beneath the surface of the dune sand. Driving over the dunes will kill many animals that the driver is not aware of just below the surface of the dune and unsightly tracks will be left on the dunes till the next wind arrives to erase them - only to be replaced by new ones if regulations are not in place.



Living Desert Adventures

nature@iafrica.com.na  
www.livingdesertnamibia.com





## Ant Candy Hunt

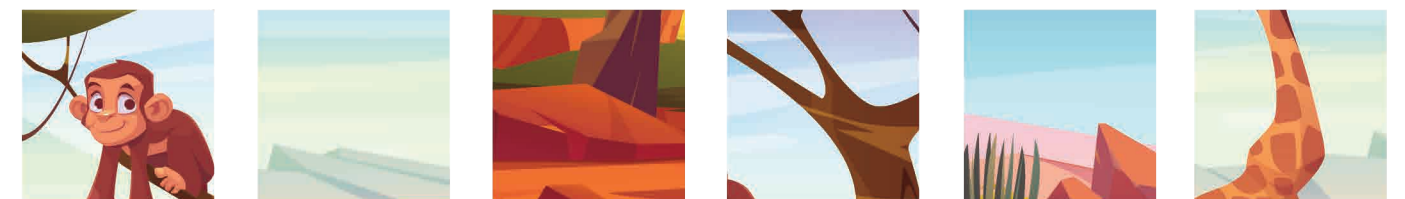
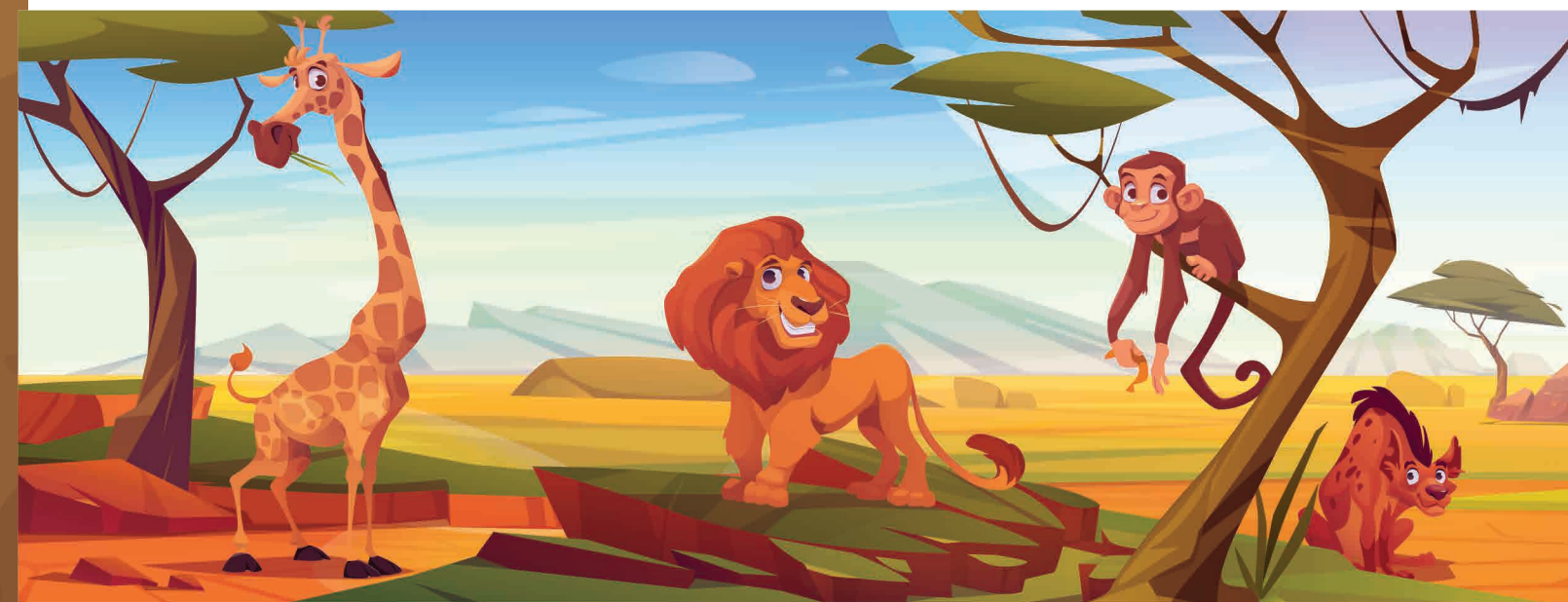
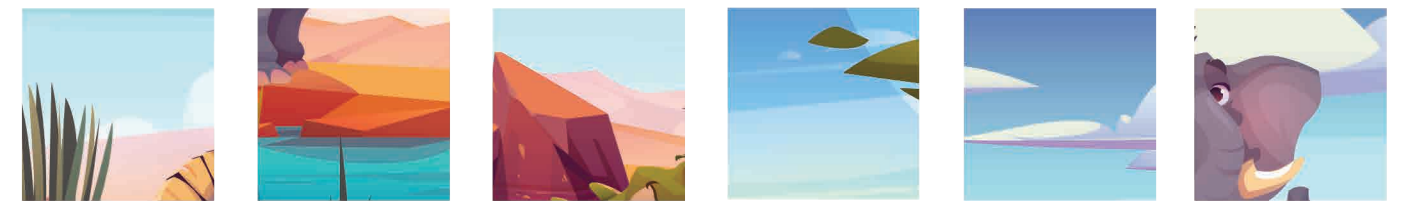
Help the ants collect sweets by guiding them through the maze.

- Start at the top of the ant hill.
  - Follow the numbered paths through the tunnels.
  - Your goal is to reach the sweets at the bottom!
  - Add up the numbers you pass on your way to the sweets.
- If the sum is equal to the number on the candy, the ants can keep it.

Have fun finding your way through the maze!

e.g.  $2 + 6 + 4 + 6 = 18$

## Help Pako to find the fragments, which are not in the pictures:





Wrong statements:

- 1 Rabies is only spread by dogs. ~~It is spread by all mammals~~
- 5 You can get rabies from petting a dog or cat.
- 7 Rabies is only spread by dogs.
- 8 You can tell if an animal has rabies just by looking at it.
- 9 You can see the rabies virus with your eyes.
- 11 All animals with rabies foam at the mouth.
- 13 Rabies can be spread by mosquitoes.
- 14 All animals that have rabies will show symptoms.
- 15 Only stray or wild animals can get rabies.



- 22 Rabies easily spreads through the air.
- 23 A rabies vaccine can protect you for life.
- 25 Dogs that have been vaccinated can still get rabies.
- 28 Cats can't get rabies.

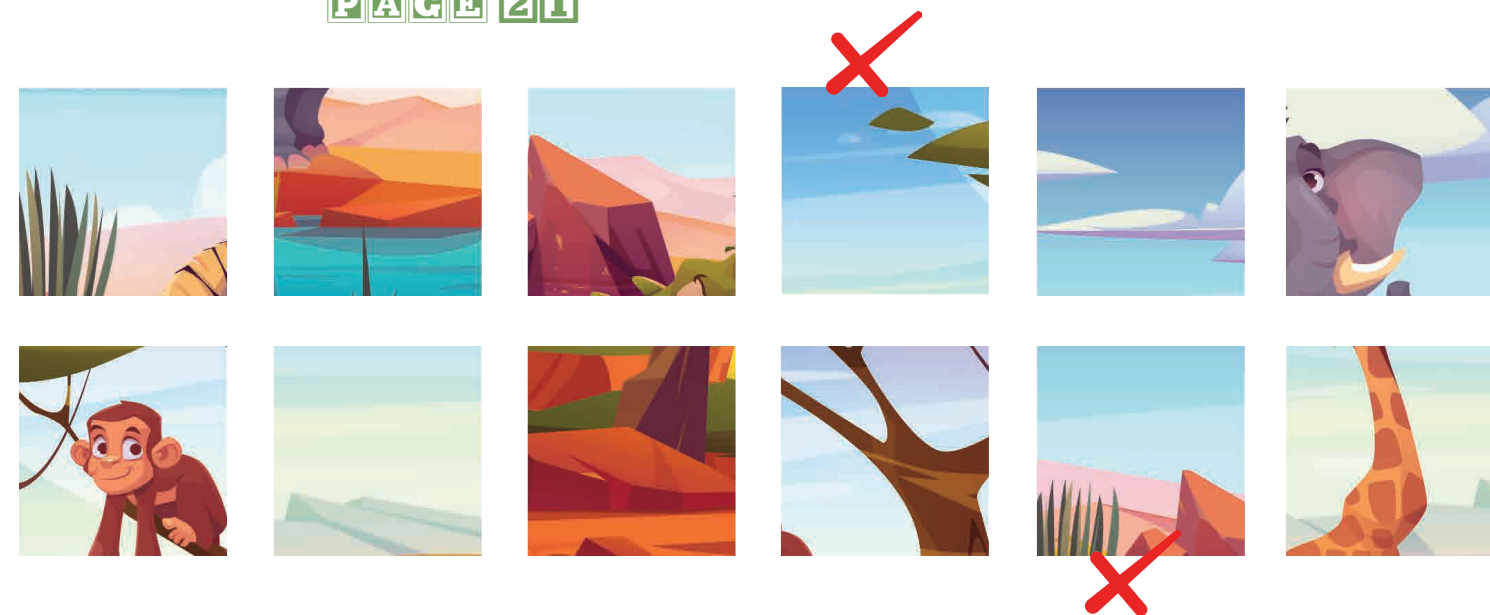
- Horses ✓
- Chicken ✗
- Ostrich ✗
- Tortoises ✗
- Cheetahs ✓
- Vultures ✗
- Jackals ✓
- Monkeys ✓
- Goats ✓
- Antelopes ✓
- Eagles ✗
- Chameleons ✗

Only mammals can get Rabies!

RABIES FACT:

**Myth:** You don't need to vaccinate your pets if they stay indoors.

**Fact:** Even pets that stay indoors can get out or come into contact with wild animals. Vaccinating your pets is the best way to keep them, and you, safe from rabies!







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