



## PROJECT GECKO. WHERE REPTILE EDUCATION RULES.

Thank you for taking part in Project Gecko. We are thrilled to have you participate and look forward to the entries you and your students will submit. In the meantime, here's an opportunity to help you build some in-class excitement, not only about coming up with names for Project Gecko, but around reptiles in general. Whether you choose to have a reptile class period or an entire reptile week, we've included some useful stuff to help you get started: a reptile environment guide, a copy of Reptiles magazine and some fun mental and artistic challenges to get your students in a reptile state of mind.

*Remember, submissions must be postmarked by January 31, 2008 and received no later than February 15, 2008. See official contest rules in Weekly Reader for more details.*

### *What's In A Name?*

*Don't forget these important tips as your students create their unique Gecko name!*

- 1. Descriptive names are more scientifically accepted than nonsensical ones. Be sure to review the characteristics that make this one different!*
- 2. The new gecko species is in the genus *Bavayia*, so each name should begin with that.*
- 3. Scientific names are made up of Greek or Latin words. Be sure to check the online resources listed in the instruction pack from Weekly Reader.*
- 4. Be sure to check [www.Reptile-Database.org](http://www.Reptile-Database.org) to see if your students' gecko names have already been chosen.*
- 5. *Bavayia* is a feminine word in Greek and Latin. This means that the species name should also be feminine.*

*Happy Naming!*



## PROJECT GECKO

Here are some fast facts about Project Gecko that you and your students can use to help complete the enclosed activities or to generate names for the contest.

### THE DISCOVERY

A new species of gecko was discovered on the Isle of New Caledonia, located in the middle of the South Pacific.

The gecko was discovered by Dr. Aaron Bauer, a Professor of Biology at Villanova University.

### FEATURES OF THE GECKO

The gecko belongs to the *Bavayia* genus. *Bavayia* contains 12 species of moderately small to medium-sized lizards restricted to New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands.

The genus can easily be distinguished from other geckos by the shape of its digits and the length of its tail.

It has moderately long digits with expanded pads. The tail is also moderately long and is covered with numerous scales.

It is nocturnal with brown and cream colored skin.

It forages on vegetation and spends most days under rocks on the forest floor or in rock crevices.



Photo: R. Sadleir & A. Bauer