

AB: Welcome to Brain Junk, I'm Amy Barton,

TK: And I'm Trace Kerr. And it's time for a Brain Storm. And this Brain Storm is special for two reasons. One, because we're going to talk about penguins, and two because I want to make a quick shout-out to one of our biggest fans, Madelaine.

AB singing: Shout out Madelaine!

TK: This Brain Storm is for you! So this is from a BBC news article in 2014. It's about a pair of male penguins in the Wingham Wildlife park. They paired off in 2012, which was great for them, because they were very happy, but unfortunately the zoo wasn't so thrilled, because that meant that the two ladies which they had brought in for them to pair with now were alone and they four penguins that weren't breeding.

AB: They're just painting their nails and....

TK: Luckily for Jums and Kermit, who they got to be foster dads.

AB: Oooh, I like that!

TK: Another pair of penguins, the female Isabel, and her partner, Hurricane, they are very good at making eggs, but once an egg is laid Hurricane is completely disinterested in helping out, and male and female penguins take turns incubating the egg while the other eats.

AB: Not hurricane. He has no time to hang around.

He has no time. We made an egg, check, I'm done, and he's off. And then Isabel is stuck, and she can't eat.

AB: Ohhhh...

TK: Yeah. So in 2013 they tried to give Jums and Kermit her egg, and it didn't end up hatching. The next year, same thing happened, so they gave them the egg. These two very diligently incubated it and it hatched on the 20th of April in 2014.

AB: Did somebody tell Isabel that Hurricane is just not that into her?

TK: I don't know. They're just stuck. But what's really sweet is that the staff say that pair bonding between two males often just results-and this also happens in the wild- in having two males that are together and that means they're not going to be breeding, and that's a negative thing. But in captivity they're finding that these male bonded penguins that can be very excellent parents, are great as foster parents. Cause it has a hugely positive effect.

AB: Really?

TK: Yeah!

AB: Happy penguin babies?

TK: Happy penguin babies, happy penguin dads, and they're still very much starting their breeding effort with the species and it's only their second year of breeding, but with having such good surrogate parents available, is a huge bonus.

AB: Awesome. That's lovely.

TK: It is lovely. And that is a penguin Brain Storm.

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