

LEGO® Bionicle

IT WAS A TRICKY PUZZLE: How could the LEGO Group break into the world of action figures without losing what made its products so distinctly LEGO sets? The company tested the water with the Technic-themed RoboRiders and Throwbots (a.k.a. Slizers) in 1999, but the real answer came in 2001 with the launch of BIONICLE. The “Biological Chronicle” blended technology with mythology to create a universe filled with buildable heroes, creatures, and villains, with an original story that was told through comic books, novels, movies, and online games and animations. BIONICLE quickly became one of the most unique and popular LEGO themes of all time ●





The Legend Begins

MONTHS BEFORE the first toys were released in 2001, the BIONICLE story emerged through an intriguing series of teaser ads and a popular online adventure game. The setting was a mysterious tropical island called Mata Nui, where bio-mechanical villagers were under attack from fierce creatures controlled by an evil being called the Makuta. When all seemed lost, six heroes arrived who were prophesied to save the universe from darkness. The BIONICLE legend had begun ●

THE ISLAND OF MATA NUI

Named after the islanders' sleeping Great Spirit, the island (pictured right) had ice fields, rocky deserts, underground catacombs, dense jungle, a great lake and a volcano. The isle was home to living mechanical beings, who wore masks called Kanohi.



8540 Vakama (2001)

8544 Nuju (2001)

8543 Nokama (2001)

8542 Onewa (2001)



8545 Whenua (2001)

8541 Matau (2001)

The wise were the elders of the island's villages and the keepers of its many secrets. Their toys raised their staffs at the push of a lever, and their Noble Kanohi masks gave them powers such as invisibility, mind control and telekinesis.

THE VILLAGERS

The villagers of Mata Nui lived in six villages, one for each of the island's elemental themes. Originally known as Tohunga, they were renamed Matoran after the Maori people of New Zealand objected to the theme's use of words from their language.

8595 Takua and Pewku (2003)



Once called the Chronicler, Takua would later be transformed by the Mask of Light into the 7th Toa, Takanuva.

8566 Onua Nuva (2002)



8568 Pohatu Nuva (2002)

8567 Lewa Nuva (2002)

8572 Tahu Nuva (2002)

Each Toa Nuva's tools had a double function. The magma swords of Tahu Nuva, Toa of Fire, could also attach to his feet to make a lava surfboard.

THE TOA

The six Toa came to the island in canisters—matching their toys' packaging—that washed up on shore from the endless sea. Imbued with elemental powers and wearing Great Kanohi masks, they were figures of legend to the islanders, who believed that the heroes were destined to awaken the Great Spirit Mata Nui and save the universe from Makuta's evil.

The Toa battled Makuta, the Rahi, and other threats to the island. In the theme's second year, they became the Toa Nuva (pictured below) and gained new armor, tools, and enhanced mask powers.

Collectible Kanohi came with sets and in assorted mask packs



8538 Muaka & Kane-Ra (2001)

THE RAHI

From the mosquito-like Nui Rama to the mighty Kane-Ra bull, the beasts of the BIONICLE universe were collectively called Rahi. In the theme's first year, five sets of Rahi were sold in 2-packs, each with instructions for combining the pieces into a new, larger creature. The models were designed with Technic action features that let them battle Toa and each other by knocking off their opponents' masks.

Ice blades convert to skis

8571 Kopaka Nuva (2002)



8570 Gali Nuva (2002)

MAKUTA

The dark being known as the Makuta had been trying to dominate the inhabitants of Mata Nui for centuries before the arrival of the Toa. He used infected masks to control wild Rahi, set the Bohrok swarm loose on the island, and unleashed the reptilian Rahkshi to prevent the discovery of the Toa of Light.

8593 Makuta (2003)



THE SWARM

The six breeds of insect-like Bohrok were the first Toa-sized BIONICLE villain sets. They could curl up and hibernate inside their plastic containers, or attack with lunging heads and rubbery parasite "brains" called krana. These controlled heroes by taking the place of their masks..



8562 Gahlok (2002)

Aqua axes become swimming fins

New Islands, New Adventures

AT THE CONCLUSION of 2003's *BIONICLE: Mask of Light* movie, the heroes of Mata Nui discovered a second island deep beneath their own. For the first time, the BIONICLE story departed from its original home, first in an ancient tale from the high-tech city of Metru Nui, and then with an epic quest that led from the imperiled island of Voya Nui to sunken Mahri Nui, and finally to Karda Nui at the heart of the BIONICLE world ●

8605 Toa Matau (2004)



TOA METRU

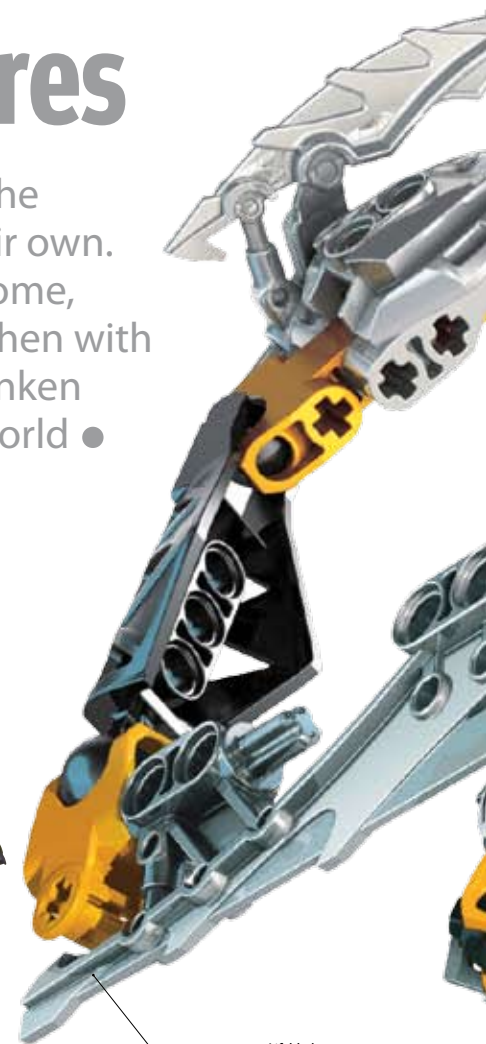
The rediscovery of Metru Nui led the Turaga to tell a tale from 1,000 years before, when they were the Toa Metru, guardians of the ancient island city. Like the Toa Nuva, their sets' tools could be reconfigured into travel forms, and their action figures were the first BIONICLE heroes to feature articulated elbows, knees, and heads.

THE VISORAK INVASION

The flashback continued as the Toa Metru were transformed into savage, mutated Toa Hordika and battled the spider-like Visorak. The Metru Nui chronicles were animated in the movies *BIONICLE 2: Legends of Metru Nui* (2004) and *BIONICLE 3: Web of Shadows* (2005).



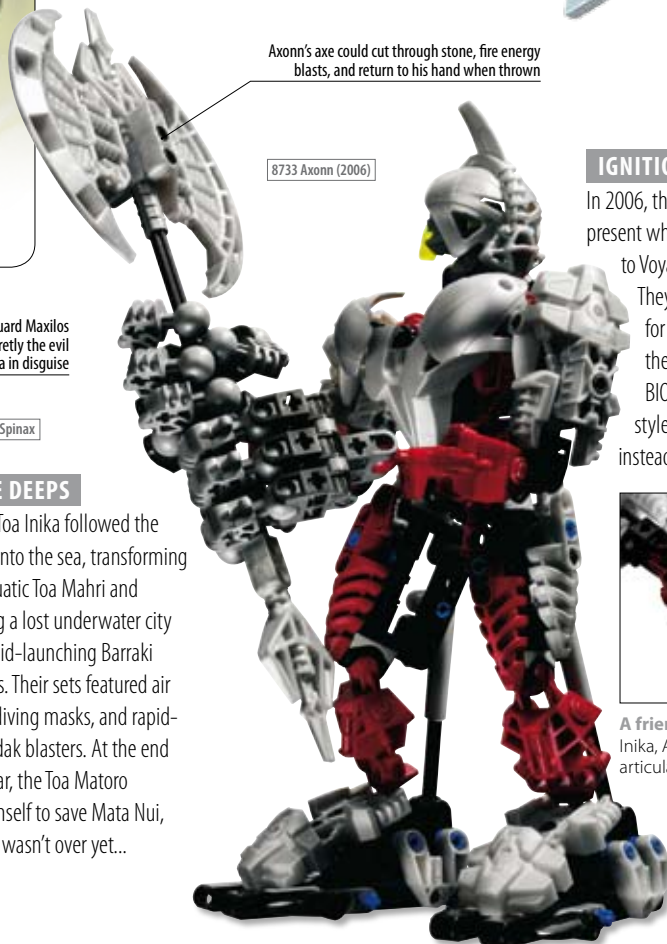
The six Rahaga (2005), companions to the Toa Hordika



Lifeblade measures 5 in (13 cm) long

Axonn's axe could cut through stone, fire energy blasts, and return to his hand when thrown

8733 Axonn (2006)



IGNITION

In 2006, the BIONICLE story returned to its present when six Matoran villagers traveled to Voya Nui and became the Toa Inika. They fought the mercenary Piraka for the Mask of Life that could save the Great Spirit Mata Nui. These BIONICLE figures lacked Technic-style gear mechanisms, focusing instead on new parts and posability.



A friend to the Toa Inika, Axonn even had articulated fingers.

The robotic guard Maxilos was secretly the evil Makuta in disguise

8924 Maxilos and Spinax

INTO THE DEEPS

In 2007, the Toa Inika followed the Mask of Life into the sea, transforming into the aquatic Toa Mahri and defending a lost underwater city from squid-launching Barraki warlords. Their sets featured air hoses, diving masks, and rapid-fire Cordak blasters. At the end of the year, the Toa Matoro sacrificed himself to save Mata Nui, but the story wasn't over yet...



Kanohi Ignika, the Mask of Life

WILD BLUE YONDER

The original Toa returned to toy form in 2008, when they entered the great cavern of Karda Nui and took on forms specialized for its skies and swamps. There, equipped with Midak Skyblasters and Nynrah Ghostblasters, they found themselves up against an entire Brotherhood of Makuta in a final battle to save their world.

2008 was the first year to include both hero and villain sets in the same assortment of canister-packaged action figures.



8689 Tahu Nuva (2008)

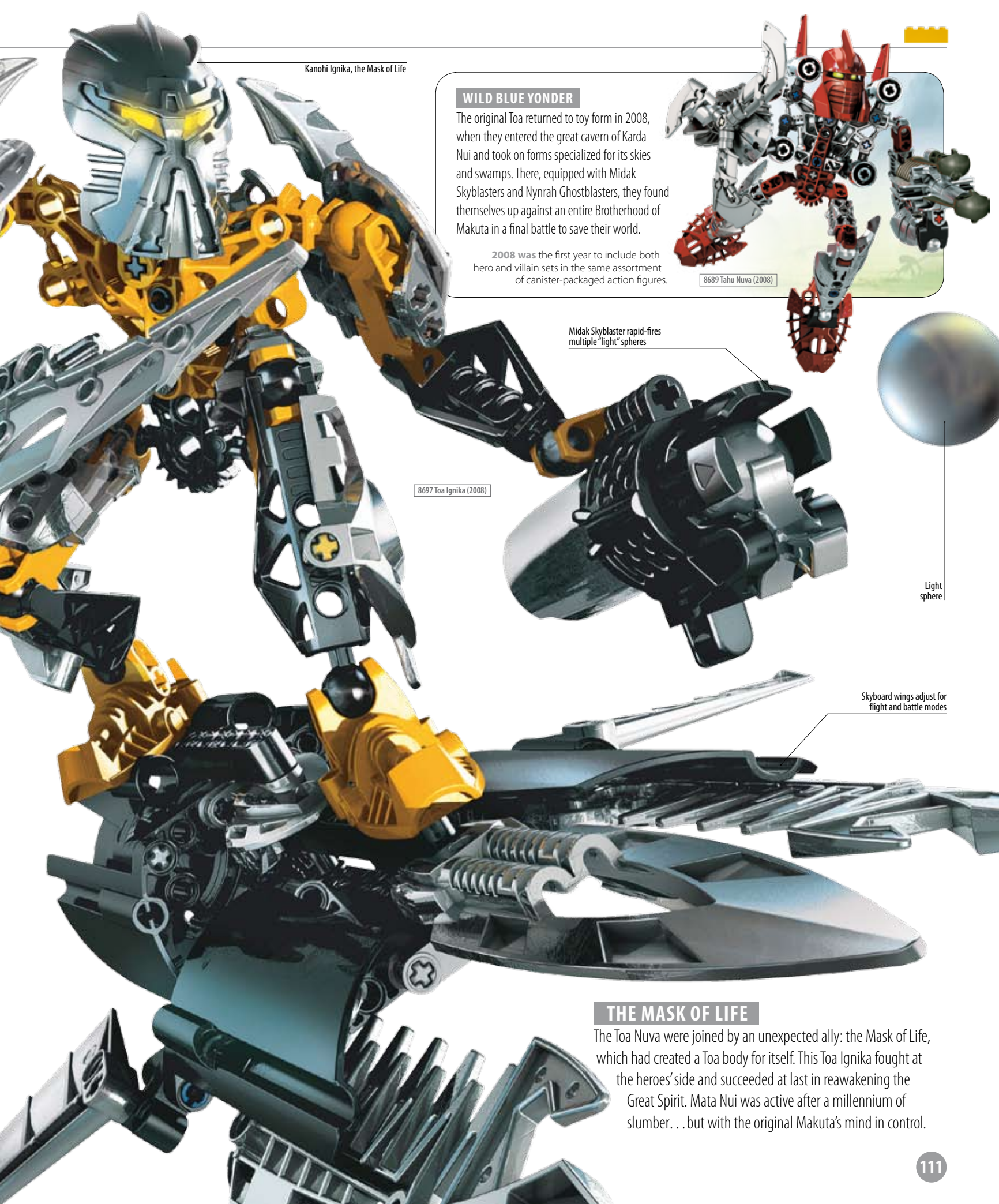
Midak Skyblaster rapid-fires multiple "light" spheres



Light sphere

8697 Toa Ignika (2008)

Skyboard wings adjust for flight and battle modes



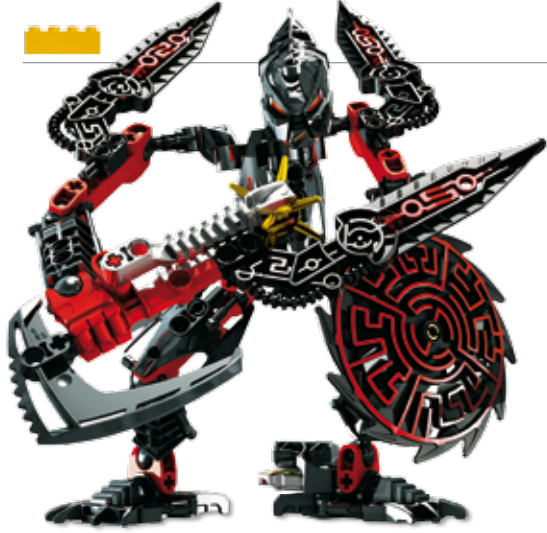
THE MASK OF LIFE

The Toa Nuva were joined by an unexpected ally: the Mask of Life, which had created a Toa body for itself. This Toa Ignika fought at the heroes' side and succeeded at last in reawakening the Great Spirit. Mata Nui was active after a millennium of slumber. . . but with the original Makuta's mind in control.



Endings and Beginnings

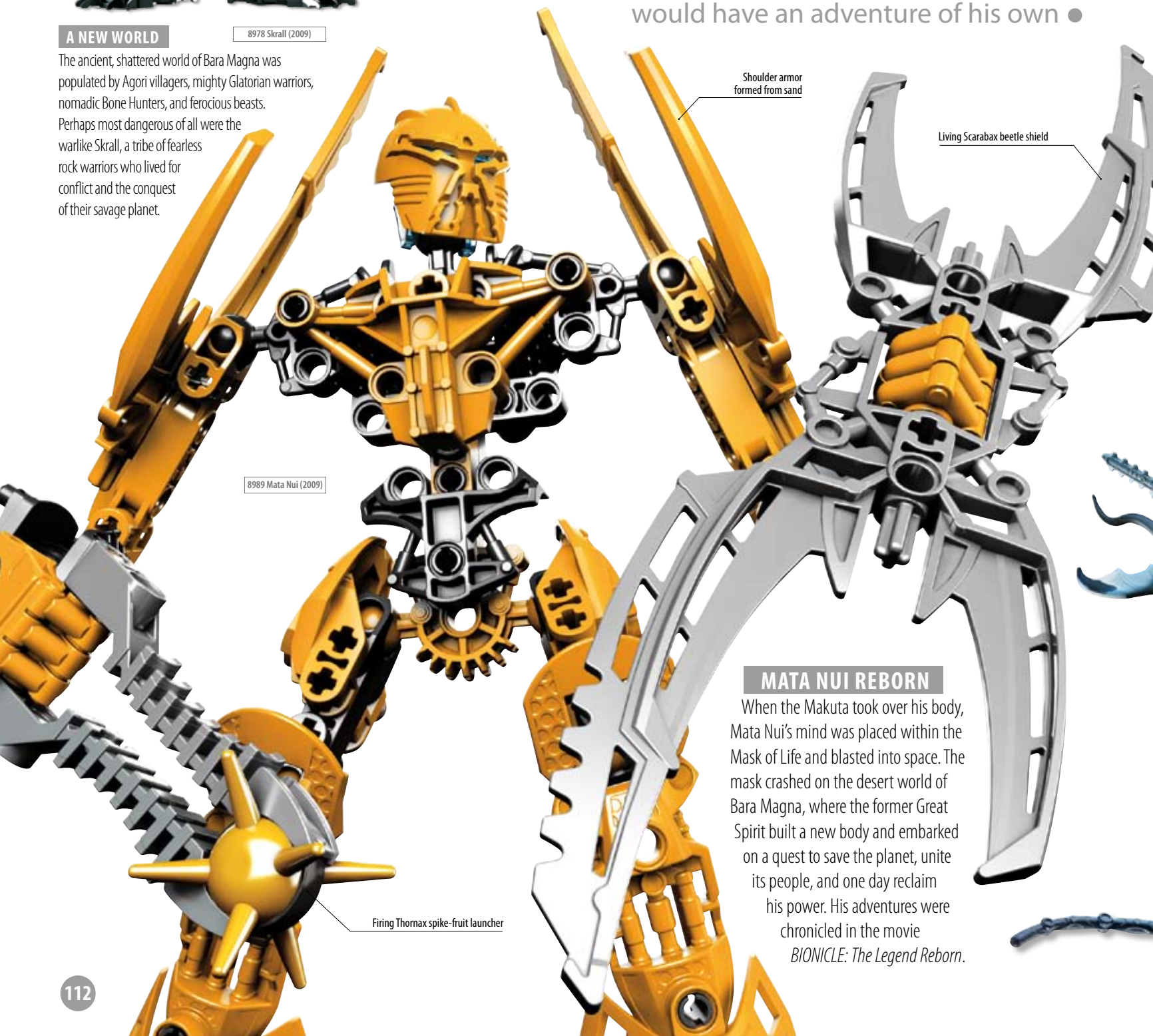
AFTER EIGHT YEARS of mystery, the biggest secret of the BIONICLE universe was at last revealed: the Great Spirit Mata Nui was a space-faring robot 40 million feet (12,200 km) tall, and the story's islands and cities were just parts of his colossal body. Now, in 2009, Mata Nui would have an adventure of his own ●



8978 Skrall (2009)

A NEW WORLD

The ancient, shattered world of Bara Magna was populated by Agori villagers, mighty Glatorian warriors, nomadic Bone Hunters, and ferocious beasts. Perhaps most dangerous of all were the warlike Skrall, a tribe of fearless rock warriors who lived for conflict and the conquest of their savage planet.



8989 Mata Nui (2009)

Shoulder armor formed from sand

Living Scarabax beetle shield

Firing Thornax spike-fruit launcher

MATA NUI REBORN

When the Makuta took over his body, Mata Nui's mind was placed within the Mask of Life and blasted into space. The mask crashed on the desert world of Bara Magna, where the former Great Spirit built a new body and embarked on a quest to save the planet, unite its people, and one day reclaim his power. His adventures were chronicled in the movie *BIONICLE: The Legend Reborn*.



Thornax launcher

8979 Malum (2009)

Flame claws

THE GLATORIAN

To avoid all-out war between villages, territorial conflicts on Bara Magna were settled in combat arenas. Each tribe employed warriors called Glatorian to fight duels on their behalf. The hot-tempered Malum was a gladiator for the Fire Tribe until he broke the rules of the arena and was exiled into the wastelands.

BATTLE WHEELS

Glatorian and other large 2009 sets had built-in wheels for playing an action figure game against friends. Thornax strikes on figures, vehicles, and canisters made life counters tick down until only one was left standing as the winner.

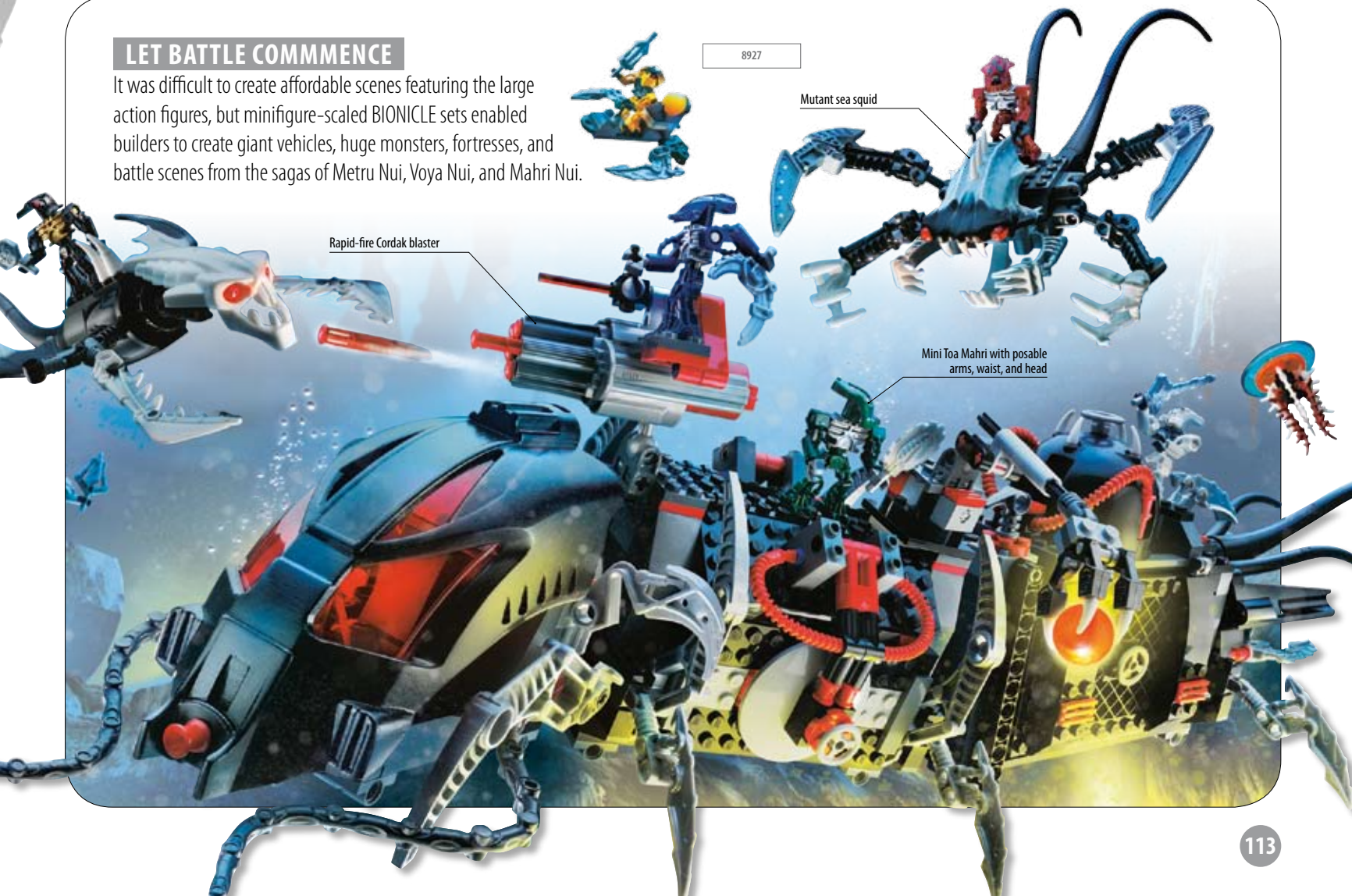


8993 Kaxium V3 (2009)

The BIONICLE universe was filled with imaginative alien vehicles packed with action features, from the Bohrok-punching Boxor and the Exo-Toa battle armor of the theme's earliest years, to the rocket-powered flyers of Karda Nui and the post-apocalyptic, scrap-metal desert rollers of Bara Magna.

LET BATTLE COMMENCE

It was difficult to create affordable scenes featuring the large action figures, but minifigure-scaled BIONICLE sets enabled builders to create giant vehicles, huge monsters, fortresses, and battle scenes from the sagas of Metru Nui, Voya Nui, and Mahri Nui.



8927

Rapid-fire Cordak blaster

Mutant sea squid

Mini Toa Mahri with posable arms, waist, and head