

Fauna

Mammals

Suitable age group: 10 and older
These printable lessons will be
added to as time goes along.
(Solutions to questions are not provided)



Australian Mammals 1

Provide information about each animal, including any special characteristics. Mention at least three of the following: appearance, habitat, diet, distribution, predators, prey.

kangaroo



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koala



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platypus



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Australian Mammals 2

Echidna



Many people do not know that echidnas are named after a monster in ancient Greek mythology, Echidna, who is half woman, half snake.

Echidnas, together with platypuses, are the only mammals that lay eggs. Such mammals are called monotremes.

Echidnas are small (35-53cm long) and covered with coarse hair and spines; with their diet consisting largely of ants and termites echidnas are also known as spiny anteaters.

Echidnas' long, slender snouts function as both mouth (eating) and nose (smelling). Their mouth is tiny and their jaw toothless. They feed by tearing open soft logs and anthills and use their long, sticky tongue, which protrudes from their snout, to collect their prey.

Echidnas have very short, strong limbs with large claws and they are powerful diggers.

The female lays a single soft-shelled, leathery egg and deposits it directly into her pouch.

Hatching takes place after ten days; the young echidna, called a puggle, then sucks milk from the pores of the two milk patches (monotremes have no nipples) and remains in the pouch for 45 to 55 days, at which time it starts to develop spines.

The mother digs a burrow and deposits the puggle, returning every five days to suckle it.

Talk about or Write about

- 1) What do echidnas have in common with reptiles and birds?
- 2) Echidnas have coarse hair. What does *coarse* mean?
- 3) How might an echidna's spines be of use to it?
- 4) Echidnas have a tiny mouth and no teeth. Does this 'fit' with its diet?
- 5) An echidna's tongue protrudes from its snout. What does *protrudes* mean?
- 6) Here is something to think about and if you can come up with a good answer you're very clever! ... How do mother echidnas know when 5 days have passed by? (see final sentence in the passage) *Hint: take a guess or do some research.*



Australian Mammals 3

Numbat



Numbats are animals that are found only in Western Australia. They are small (35-45 cm in length) and have a long pointy snout. Numbats have black and white stripes and a bushy tail.

Numbats live in hollow logs and they feed on termites. A numbat can eat up to 20 000 termites in a day; it digs up the termites from loose earth with its front claws and captures them with its long sticky tongue.

Numbats are marsupials. Marsupials are mammals which have a pouch to carry their young. Australia has more kinds of marsupials than any other country.

Talk about or Write about

- 1) In which Australian State are numbats found?
- 2) Are numbats longer than your school ruler?
- 3) Can you think of a reason why a numbat's snout needs to be pointy?
- 4) Numbats have stripes. What are some other animals that have stripes?
- 5) Which two parts of its body does a numbat use to capture termites?
- 6) Can you think of another word for capture?
- 7) Are all mammals marsupials or are all marsupials mammals?



Fauna

**Reptiles &
Amphibians**

Suitable age group: 10 and older
These printable lessons will be
added to as time goes along.

(Solutions to questions are not provided)



Australian Reptiles & Amphibians 1

Provide information about each animal, including any special characteristics. Mention at least three of the following: appearance, habitat, diet, distribution, predators, prey.

frill-neck
lizard



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Green
Tree Frog



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tiger
snake



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Fauna

Birds

Suitable age group: 10 and older
These printable lessons will be
added to as time goes along.

(Solutions to questions are not provided)



Australian Birds 1

Provide information about each bird, including any special characteristics. Mention at least three of the following: appearance, habitat, diet, distribution, predators, prey.

emu



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brolga



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kookaburra



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Fauna

Insects & Arachnids

Suitable age group: 10 and older
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added to as time goes along.

(Solutions to questions are not provided)



Insects & Arachnids 1

Provide information about each creature, including any special characteristics. Mention at least three of the following: appearance, habitat, diet, distribution, predators, prey.

red back
spider



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forest
scorpion



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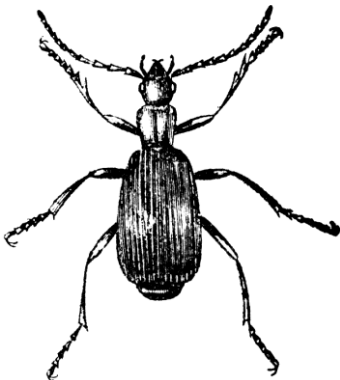
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Bombardier
Beetle



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More on Australia's fauna coming soon.