

AUSTRALIA!



Our School Council Representatives.

Story and song time.

- Watch this video of a reading of, "Ouch in the Pouch," by Jeanne Willis and Garry Parsons.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qBFrZIA-ZA>
- Watch this traditional origin story - "Why koala has a stumpy tail."
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itszep0duwI>
- Watch and sing along with this traditional Australian nursery rhyme.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2VitpGRalw>



Animals

Australia is home to a variety of unique and wonderful animals, some of which can be seen in the photos above.

Can you find out what each are called? Choose your favourite and complete some of the activities below.

Arts and Crafts.

- Make a 3d model of your chosen animal
- Use junk modelling, playdoh or Lego to recreate its habitat.
- Create a mask of your animal.
- Find out some facts about your animal and make an informative poster
- Paint or draw the animal. Perhaps you could use traditional Australian dot art as shown in the examples below.
- Follow this link for some more amazing Australian art ideas.
<https://www.danyabanya.com/aussie-animal-crafts-kids/>
- Use grass, yellow paper and glue to make some artwork of golden wattle, Australia's national flower.
<https://www.danyabanya.com/australian-wattle-craft-kids/>



Quiz

Can you research and find out the answers to the following questions? Perhaps you could present your findings in a fact sheet or poster.

- What is the capital city of Australia?
- Marsupials are unique to the continent of Australasia. What is a marsupial?
- What is a baby Kangaroo called?
- A platypus lays eggs. True or false?
- Name four different species of kangaroo.
- What do koalas eat?
- An emu is a large bird with feathered wings. Can it fly? Yes or no?
- Australia is the largest country in the world. True or False?
- Who is the queen of Australia?
- What percentage of Australia is covered in desert?

Other Activities

- Kangaroo Hops. Keep your feet together, tuck your arms in and put your hand in front of your chest – like a kangaroo. Count how many kangaroo hops you can do.



- The Australian flag is blue, white and red. How many blue objects can you find around your home? How many white? How many red? Can you keep a tally? Can you find an object with all three colours?
- Choose an Australian themed word and write an acrostic poem.

Example

Wondrous cuddly creature

Over the outback you go walkabout

Munching on tussocky grasses.

Burrowing deep under

Australia's golden, sandy desert.

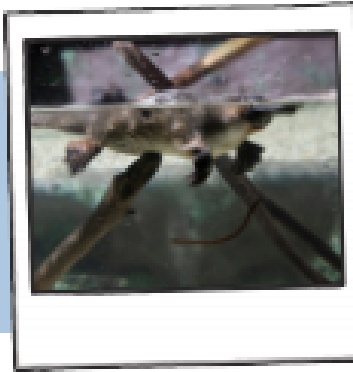
Today you sleep but at night you emerge to munch, munch, munch.

Reading

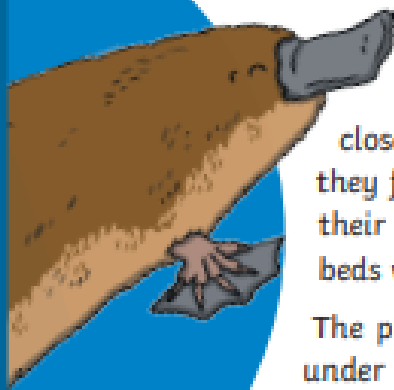
- Read the below fact sheets about two Australian animals.

Platypus

The platypus is a semi-aquatic mammal found in small rivers and streams in Queensland, New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania.



It is duck-billed, has a beaver-like tail, has otter-like fur and webbed feet. Platypus are monotremes, which means they lay eggs instead of giving birth.



Platypus are nocturnal, which means they come out at night or at twilight to feed. They close their eyes and ears when under water. When they feed on worms, insects and crayfish, they use their sense of electroreception and dig up the river beds with their bills.

The platypus is an excellent swimmer. It can stay under water for around 30 seconds before coming up for air. The average length of a male platypus is 50cm and the average length of a female is 43cm. They can weigh between 1 and 2.4kg. Their predators include snakes, water rats, hawks, owls, eagles and sometimes crocodiles.

Did you know...?

The platypus has been used as a mascot for national events in Australia and is featured on the Australian 20 cent coin.



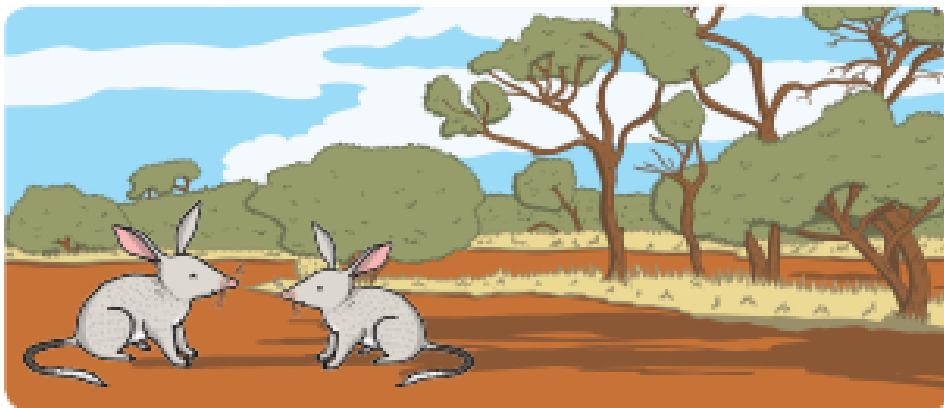
Bilbies

Bilbies are an Australian native marsupial, which means they carry their young in a pouch. Part of the bandicoot family, they are small, fur covered animals with large ears, a pointed snout and a long, thin tail.



There were once two types of bilby in Australia, the greater bilby and the lesser bilby. The lesser bilby was last officially sighted in 1931 and since the 1950s/1960s has been considered extinct. The greater bilby is now endangered due to low numbers in the wild.

Bilbies once lived across Australia. However, as farming activities have extended over the more fertile regions, the bilby's habitat has rapidly changed. Competition with introduced animals is still a major threat, as domestic stock like cattle and sheep eat the same plants. Rabbits compete with bilbies for their food and burrows, also foxes and feral cats are known to prey on them. Having disappeared from the areas intensively grazed by livestock, as well as those areas densely populated by feral animals, bilbies now only survive in the driest and least fertile parts of the country.



To avoid the daytime temperatures, bilbies sleep in burrows and only become active at night. Unlike other animals, they do not pant or lick themselves to stay cool and in this way, they conserve their water supplies. Their large, thin ears contain many veins close to the skin and as blood flows through these, heat is lost to the outside environment.



Bilbies live on a diet of termites and ants, although they sometimes eat other small insects, seeds and fruits. They find food using their strong sense of smell and by listening to insect noises under the ground.

