



Canning River Eco Education Centre



Taxidermy Animal Specimens

For Loan to Schools

Animal Fact Sheets

- Western Quoll/Chuditch
- Southern Brown Bandicoot/Quenda
- Bobtail Lizard/ Shingleback Skink/Yooran
- Dugite/Dobitj
- Short Beaked Echidna/ Nyingarn
- Brush-Tailed Possum/ Koomal

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Australia's aluminium

CREEC would like to acknowledge Alcoa of Australia for the kind donation of these specimens for educational use.



FACT SHEET

Western Quoll/ Chuditch

Dasyurus geoffroii

General Description: The chuditch is the biggest carnivorous marsupial in Western Australia, with its body size ranging from 26-40cm and it has a reddish- brown coat. The chuditch has white spots on its body, and a very long tail, which has a black brush on the lower half of the tail. The tail ranges from 21-35 cm long.

Males are larger than females, and on average weigh 1300g, as compared to females, who weigh on average 900g.

The chuditch feeds on invertebrates, and also eats small birds, lizards and mammals. It is a nocturnal predator, and is mostly solitary.

Habitat: The chuditch prefers to reside in a drier climate, such as an open savannah and dry woodlands.

The animal likes to burrow, and even though the chuditch prefers to stay on the ground, it can climb trees if needed.

Life cycle: The breeding season is during the winter months (May-July), and there is a short gestation period of about 16 days. The female however can only give birth to one litter each year, and a single litter will usually contain about 2-6 young. The young will remain in the pouch for approximately 90 days, and then leave the pouch, but stay within the group.

Threats:

- Predation by foxes and cats
- Road trauma
- Shooting and poisoning
- Loss of habitat by clearing of land
- Climate change

Adaptations: The spots on the coat of the chuditch helps to break up its outline in the moonlight, which protects it from predators and also hiding its movements as it moves throughout its habitat.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Near Threatened

State Law (WA): Vulnerable- under the EPBC Act

FACT SHEET

Southern Brown Bandicoot/ Quenda

General Description: The quenda has a yellowish brown or dark greyish coarse hair on its back. It has a short tail, and the top of its feet are dark brown. It has a long snout, and small, black coloured eyes.

It is approximately 500-1500g in weight, with males weighing slightly more than females. The quenda is approximately 300mm long, and has a relatively short tail of 80-1300 mm.

They have a backwards facing pouch that prevents it from being filled with sand whilst digging. The quenda is also an omnivore, and it digs in the soil to find earthworms, tubers and fungi.

Habitat: The quenda resides in wet or dry sclerophyll forest, or heath and costal scrub.

They build a dome shaped nest in dense vegetation to protect them.

Life Cycle: The breeding season is from May until October, and there are up to 3 litters per season. Each litter usually produces between 2-4 young.

The quenda has a short gestation period of between 11-12 days, and the young are weaned after about 60-70 days, and can breed at 3-4 months of age.

Threats:

- Loss of habitat
- Predation by feral animals

Adaptations: As the quenda is furry and dark brown, it is camouflaged easily in the bush and dirt. The front and hind feet of the quenda are also sharply clawed, which allows them to dig for food.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Least Concern

FACT SHEET

Bobtail Lizard/ Shingleback Skink/Yooran

General Description: The bobtail lizard has a robust body, with a large, triangular shaped head. Their tail is blunt ended, and their scales are very wrinkly.

The colour of the bobtail lizard is olive brown to black, however the colours can vary from location to location, with other colours including caramel, red and orange. They can be up to 45 cm long.

They live alone for most of the year, but reunite as pairs between September and November, and eat a variety of plants and animals.

Habitat: The lizard usually resides in the open country, with lots of ground cover such as leaf litter.

They shelter at night amongst the leaf litter, or under large objects such as logs or rocks.

Life Cycle: Female lizards give birth between 3-5 months after mating, between the months of December to April.

The young develop in the females' oviduct with the help of a placenta, and eat the placental membranes at birth. Within several days they shed their skin for the first time. They are ready to survive by themselves right after birth, and disperse after a few days.

Threats:

- Habitat loss from land clearing
- Road Trauma
- Feral Predators i.e. dogs, cats, foxes
- Habitat Degradation
- Poisoning of their foods i.e. snails
- The cane toad

Adaptations: They have large teeth and strong jaw muscles, which they use to crush beetles and the shells of snails. They also have heavy body armour which can put off potential predators.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Not Evaluated

FACT SHEET

Dugite/Dobitj

General Description: The dugite is a part of the brown snake family, and can grow to be quite large, growing to up to 1.8 metres. They can grow up to 1.5 kg!

The dugite can be shades of olive or brown, and can also appear to be completely black. The dugite is a shy snake, and is likely to retreat if disturbed, however they are very venomous, and will bite if feeling threatened.

The dugite preys upon small mammals, reptiles and other snakes, making them carnivores. They are diurnal, and activity will mainly occur in the morning when the weather is hot.

Habitat: The dugite can reside in a variety of habitats, such as shrubby heath land, semi-arid woodland and rock laden areas. They shelter in ground burrows, beneath tree roots, or in hollow logs and in piles of rocks.

Life Cycle: A female dugite can lay up to 10-20 eggs in one clutch, and during September to January she can have 2 clutches per breeding season.

They do not care for the nest, and once they have laid the eggs they leave them there to incubate. They hatch after a 10-11 week period, and are born independent from their parents. They are born as venomous as their parents.

Threats:

- Human Disturbance
- Birds of Prey
- Introduced Animals i.e. cats

Adaptations: The dugite has no legs, arms or ears, and it can slither through an area to its prey, causing no disturbance.

They can also move very fast, and are excellent hunters overall. Their teeth face backwards to ensure that their food cannot escape, and it has a forked tongue which it uses to smell and taste its surroundings.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Not Evaluated

FACT SHEET

Short- Beaked Echidna/Nyingarn

General Description: The short beaked echidna is covered with long, golden and black-brown spines. The echidna is covered with fur underneath the spines, and they have a long, tubular toothless snout.

The echidna has a very long tongue, which is approximately 18cm long. Its body is 30-45 cm in length, and an echidna can weigh up to 7kg!

The short-beaked echidna is an insectivore, as it eats ants and termites. It digs its way into the ant or termite nests with its front paws, and then extends its tongue into the nest.

Habitat: The short beaked echidna resides in forests and woodlands. It can also live in heath grasslands and environments that are arid.

Life Cycle: The echidna is an egg laying mammal, also known as a monotreme. The eggs hatch after 10 days, and the babies are carried around by the mother in a pouch-like skin fold.

The mother continues to carry the baby until it develops its spines, and then it is placed into a specially constructed burrow. The mother returns to feed the baby every 3-6 days and it resides there for the next 6 months.

Threats: The echidna has few natural enemies, however there are some threats present such as:

- Predation by dingos and cats
- Road Trauma

Adaptations: The short beaked echidnas' tubular snout, front paws and long sticky tongue help it with their foraging habits. If they are disturbed they will dig straight down and cover themselves with dirt. When disturbed they will also crawl into a ball, which is spiky and therefore protects it.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Least Concern

FACT SHEET

Brush Tailed Possum/ Koomal

General Description: Brush Tailed Possums have a pointed snout, large ears and vary in colour, ranging from black to copper coloured. They are around 55cm in size; this however can vary as to what region they are found in.

The possum consumes eucalypt leaves, and other types of leaves, as well as grasses, herbs and insects.

They are nocturnal, and are also an arboreal species, which means they primarily live in the trees.

Habitat: The possum can be found in forests and woodlands, and also reside in tree lined rivers and creeks. They usually make a home in the hollow parts of trees, and will also make their rooms in sheds or the roofs of houses.

Life Cycle: Mating usually occurs during the autumn months; however breeding can occur in any time of year. The gestation period is around 16-18 days and usually only 1 young is born.

Once the young is born it resides in the mothers pouch and attaches itself to her teats, where it continues to develop for about 120 days. This is to allow it to go from being underdeveloped, covered only in thin pink skin, to having fur.

By 7 months they are independent of their mothers and by 10 months they are fully grown. The possum usually will breed at 12 months of age.

Threats:

- Loss of habitat
- Predation by dingos, foxes
- Competition with other possums for a home

Adaptations: The brush tailed possum has strong teeth which they use for eating, and it is born with well-developed claws that it uses to grip onto the mothers fur.

Conservation Status: IUCN Red List: Least Concern

Australian Curriculum Links - Science

Curriculum Links: Years F-2

Foundation Year

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things have basic needs, including food and water

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and Predicting

- Respond to questions about familiar objects and events

Science Inquiry Skills: Processing and analysing data and information

- Engage in discussions about observations and use methods such as drawing to represent ideas

Year 1

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things have a variety of external features
- Living things live in different places where their needs are met

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and Predicting

- Respond to and pose questions, and make predictions about familiar objects and events

Science Inquiry Skills: Processing and analysing data and information

- Use a range of methods to sort information, including drawings and provided tables

Year 2

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and Predicting

- Respond to and pose questions, and make predictions about familiar objects and events

Science Inquiry Skills: Processing and analysing data and information

- Use a range of methods to sort information, including drawings and provided tables

Curriculum Links: Years 3-6

Year 3

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished from non-living things

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and predicting

- With guidance, identify questions in familiar contexts that can be investigated scientifically and predict what might happen based on prior knowledge

Year 4

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things have life cycles
- Living things, including plants and animals, depend on each other and the environment to survive

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and predicting

- With guidance, identify questions in familiar contexts that can be investigated scientifically and predict what might happen based on prior knowledge

Year 5

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in the environment

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and predicting

- With guidance, pose questions to clarify practical problems or inform a scientific investigation, and predict what the findings of an investigation might be

Year 6

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- The growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and predicting

- With guidance, pose questions to clarify practical problems or inform a scientific investigation, and predict what the findings of an investigation might be

Curriculum Links: Year 9

Science Understanding: Biological Sciences

- Multi-cellular organisms rely on coordinated and interdependent internal systems to respond to changes to their environment
- Ecosystems consist of communities of interdependent organisms and abiotic components of the environment; matter and energy flow through these systems

Science Inquiry Skills: Questioning and predicting

- Formulate questions or hypotheses that can be investigated scientifically

Australian Curriculum Links: Cross-Curricular Priorities

Sustainability

Organising ideas to be addressed:

- Systems
- The biosphere is a dynamic system providing the conditions that sustain life on Earth
- All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival
- Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems

- World Views
- World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice are essential for achieving sustainability.

- Futures
- Actions for a sustainable future reflect on values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments
- Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Organising ideas to be addressed:

- Country/ Place
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have unique belief systems and are spiritually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways

Australian Curriculum Links: General Capabilities

- Literacy
 - Ethical Understanding
 - Critical and Creative Thinking
 - Intercultural Understanding
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