

# *Animals Unique to Tasmania*

## Lesson Plan

**Grade Level:** K-8

**Curriculum Focus:** Mammals

**Lesson Duration:** Three class periods

### ***Student Objectives***

- Learn where Tasmania is located in relation to Australia.
- Research the unique animals in Tasmania.
- Develop profile pages for selected animals.

### ***Materials***

- Discovery School video on *unitedstreaming: The Jeff Corwin Experience: Tasmania: Island Ecosystem*  
Search for this video by using the video title (or a portion of it) as the keyword.

Selected clips that support this lesson plan:

- Studying Quolls
  - Wombats
  - Pademelons
  - The Echidna
  - Duck-Billed Platypus
  - Tasmanian Devil
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- Computer(s) with Internet access
  - Map showing Tasmania (from an online or print source)
  - Paper and pencils
  - Colored pencils and markers

### ***Procedures***

1. Begin the lesson by showing students where Tasmania is located in relation to Australia on a map. You can find one at <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/school/Australia/Ausmap.shtml>. Point out that Tasmania is an island in the Tasman Sea, south of the mainland of Australia.

2. Discuss what often happens on islands: Because they are isolated, wildlife develops that is not found anywhere else in the world. Tasmania is no exception. Tell students that Tasmania's wildlife is unique and unlike anything they have ever seen.
3. Show students segments from *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Tasmania: Island Ecosystem*.
4. Divide the class into five groups. Tell students each group will develop a profile page of two animals in the video. Each profile page should include the following:
  - The name of the animal
  - Picture of the animal
  - Where it lives on the island
  - Its habits (what it eats, when it hunts, when it reproduces)
  - Social structure (solitary or lives in a group)
  - Status (threatened, endangered, or not)
5. Students have many animals to choose. Share the following suggestions with students if necessary. Don't worry about duplications; students should research animals they are interested in learning more about.
  - quoll
  - wombat
  - Tasmanian pademelon
  - echidna
  - duck-billed platypus
  - Tasmanian devil
6. Give students time in class to work on their profile pages, and encourage them to make the pages as attractive as possible. For additional information, suggest the following Web sites:
  - <http://tourtasmania.com/tasfaq/fauna/nasties.html>
  - <http://www.tasmanian-devils.org/tasmanian-devils-general-information.htm>
  - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/mammals/marsupial/Tazdevilprintout.shtml>
  - <http://www.australianwildlife.com.au/features/marsupials3.htm>
  - <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/naracoorte/wonambi/animals/living/devil.html>
  - [http://www.wilmap.com.au/tas\\_wildlife.html](http://www.wilmap.com.au/tas_wildlife.html)
  - <http://www.tourtasmania.com/content.php?id=echidna>
  - <http://www.tasmanianadventures.com/wildlife/wildlifemodule.html>
  - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/coloring/nocturnal.shtml>
  - <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/wildlife/reptile/tigr.html>
  - <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/wildlife/reptile/Cop.html>
  - <http://www.riverdale.k12.or.us/~dnebert/biome/tazanimal.htm>
  - <http://www.pbs.org/edens/tasmania/featured.html>

7. Conclude the lesson by having students share their profile pages. Then ask students which animal made the biggest impression on them. Make sure they can support their ideas with examples.

## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students were highly attentive when watching the video; researched their animals thoroughly and carefully; created accurate, informative, and attractive profile pages.
- **2 points:** Students were attentive when watching the video; researched their animals adequately; created satisfactory profile pages.
- **1 point:** Students were not attentive when watching the video; did not research their animals thoroughly; did not complete their profile pages.

## Vocabulary

### echidna

*Definition:* One of only three species of egg-laying mammals

*Context:* The echidna has soft quills all over its body.

### pademelon

*Definition:* The third smallest kind of kangaroo in Tasmania

*Context:* The pademelon stands about 40 centimeters (16 inches) tall.

### quoll

*Definition:* A mammal about the size of a cat, either light brown or black, with white spots on its body

*Context:* The quoll is extinct in Australia, but it can still be found in Tasmania.

### Tasmanian devil

*Definition:* An animal in the marsupial family that is a carnivore, makes loud noises, and is considered to be a dangerous predator

*Context:* Some people think that the Tasmanian devil does not deserve its reputation as a fierce and bloodthirsty animal; it is simply trying to survive in the wild.

### wombat

*Definition:* The largest burrowing mammal, also in the marsupial family

*Context:* The wombat's short legs and long paws are perfect for digging and pushing the dirt aside.

## **Academic Standards**

### **National Academy of Sciences**

The National Academy of Sciences provides guidelines for teaching science in grades K–12 to promote scientific literacy. To view the standards, visit this Web site:

<http://books.nap.edu/html/nses/html/overview.html#content>.

Grades K-4

- Life Science: Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8

- Life Science: Populations and ecosystems, Diversity and adaptations of organisms

### **Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

- Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Writing: Gathers and uses information for research purposes
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## **Support Materials**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>