



Marvelous
MAMMALS
from
DOWN UNDER
by
Heather Horn



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY



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amazing place.

AUSTRALIA

Northern
Territory

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Australia

South
Australia

New South
Wales

Victoria

TASMANIA

INDIAN
OCEAN



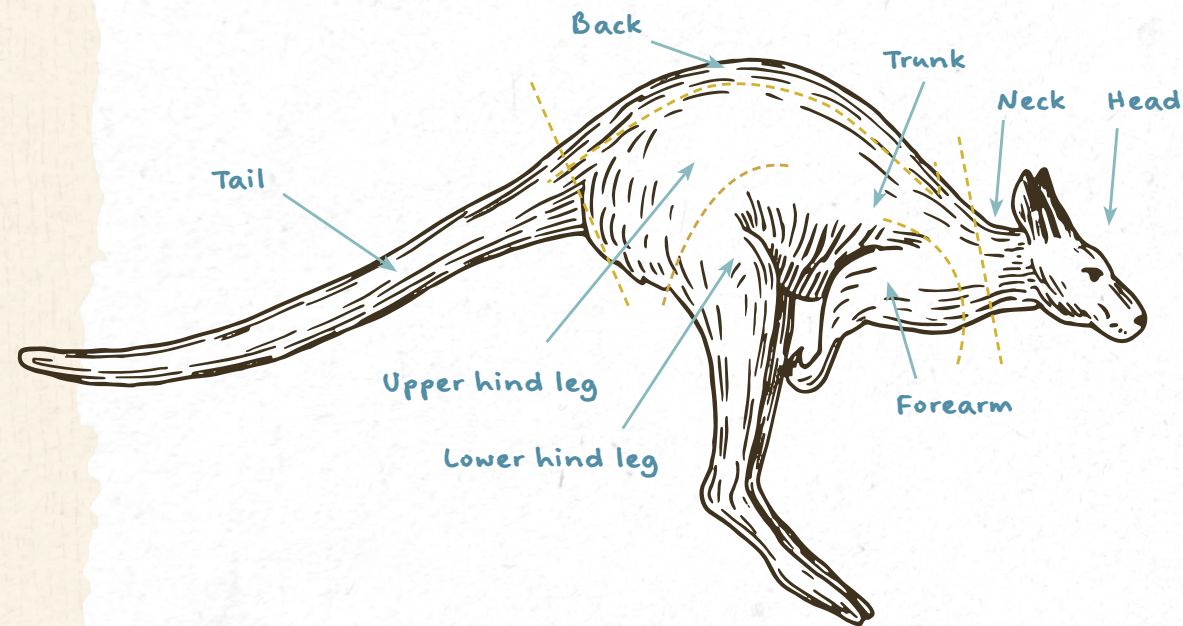


What do you
find unique about
this joey and his
mother?



Do you see the little joey standing next to his protective mother? His father is called a boomer while his mother is called a flyer, though sometimes they are called jack and jill. His family lives with many other kangaroos in a group called a mob. It was not too long ago that he was a baby hiding in his mother's pouch. Kangaroos are mammals, meaning the mothers have live births and make milk to feed their babies. They belong to an order of mammals called "marsupials." A marsupial mother carries her babies inside her body for a much shorter time than other mammals, about a month, and gives birth to a very tiny baby, smaller than a kidney bean. The baby then makes his way into his mother's pouch, or marsupium, which is a pocket on the front of his mother's tummy. Inside, he stays tucked away safe and warm. Over the next few months, he will continue to grow until he is bigger and jumps out from the safety of his mother's pouch to see the world outside.

Anatomy of a Kangaroo



Kangaroos do not walk like other animals. Their hind legs and feet move together when they jump. In fact, they cannot move their legs one at a time on land at all because their feet are so long, which is where their tails can help. Zoologists have studied how kangaroos use their tails, and they have learned that the tail is used to help push the kangaroo forward when jumping. In a way, it is like the kangaroo has a third leg.

WALLAROOS AND WALLABIES

Kangaroos are the largest species of macropods. Macropod means “large foot,” but there are medium and small macropod species too. Wallaroos are the medium macropods, while wallabies are the small macropods. Like kangaroos, wallaroos and wallabies jump everywhere.

Wallaroos are not much smaller than kangaroos, but they are stockier and have a different stance. They stand with their shoulders back, elbows tucked, and wrists raised. Their noses are also moist and black. While kangaroos live in the open grassland, wallaroos are found in the more rocky, mountainous areas. Most wallaroos prefer to live alone rather than with a group. Their name comes from a mix of their smaller and larger relatives: the wallaby and the kangaroo.






At one year old, she will leave her mother, and her mother will have another baby. She will be on her own to find food and protect herself, making her home alone in the trees. Spending many hours sleeping, between 18-20 each day, koalas miss most of the daytime. They need this large amount of rest for their bodies to break down their diet of toxic eucalypt.



Another interesting fact about the opossum is that the mother's pouch opening is not placed upwards like other marsupials. It is more of a vertical opening toward the tail end of the mother, like another mammal, the Australian wombat, whose pouch opening faces her tail.

A photograph of a Tasmanian devil lying in tall green grass next to a hollow log stump. The devil is curled up, resting. A yellow sun icon is in the top left corner, and a yellow sun icon is in the top right corner of the page.

What do you think
this Tasmanian
devil will eat for
his evening meal?

Look there, hidden near that hollow stump. A Tasmanian devil is curled up, taking an afternoon nap. Since he is nocturnal and awake all night, he is resting up for the evening. The warm sun is setting, and nightlife in the wild of Tasmania is just beginning. The Tasmanian devil stirs from his sleep and steps away from the log. Tasmanian devils don't really hunt. They search around for leftovers other predators have left behind, so he uses his keen sense of smell to find his next meal.

Mother platypuses hide away in burrows, so it took a long time for scientists to learn that they lay eggs. The mother carries the eggs inside her body for three weeks before laying her eggs. She then incubates them by lying on them to keep them warm for another week before they hatch. Once hatched, the baby platypuses crawl over to their mother to start drinking milk.



ECHIDNA

There is only one other egg-laying mammal species living today, and that is the echidna. Much smaller than a platypus, he is nicknamed the spiny anteater.



With spines like a porcupine or hedgehog and a slender snout like an anteater, it is a fitting nickname, though the echidna is not related to either animal.



GOD'S WONDERFUL DESIGN



1

Echidna



2

Kangaroo



3

Koala



4*

Opossum

*Found in North America



5

Platypus



6

Possum



7

Tasmanian devil



8

Wallaby



9

Wallaroo



10

Wombat