

NATURE NOTES

Vol 15. No 8.

EDITORIAL:

No doubt you have seen many pictures of various animals from around the world as you flip through books and magazines. But how much do you really know about them? This month, Nature Notes features work sheets involving a small selection based on world animals. We want you to test yourself! Write a few lines about the animals you recognize. We have made the task a little easier for you by naming the animals. In the spaces provided on pages 8 - 10 name the countries where each animal lives and write as much information as much information as you know about them. Discuss your results with friends. For the animals you know least about, use the library at school to fill-in the incomplete descriptions. You could even work on this as a project in class. You could further extend the work sheets by answering such questions as: Do any of these animals hibernate in winter? Do they live in rain forests or scrub country? Are they fierce or timid when approached by man?

On page 15 of this issue you will find the 1979 order form. Why not order NOW!

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B. L. Whibald
EDITOR.



WOULD YOU BELIEVE!

- * That when threatened, hognosed snakes of North and Central America roll on their backs and feign death. When turned the right way up, they give the game away by instantly reverting to their "dead" posture.
- * That the world's only wild camel herds are in Australia.
- * The world's tallest hedge is in Scotland -- at Meikleour, Perthshire. It is 25½ metres high, 540 metres long and was planted in 1746.
- * That an albatross can glide for up to six days without beating its wings, taking the occasional nap while airborne.
- * That Sloths spend an average of 10 hours every week awake but motionless; 11 hours feeding; 18 hours climbing; and 129 hours asleep.



- * To prevent their being separated by their watery couch, families of sea otters bind themselves together with strands of seaweed before going to sleep.

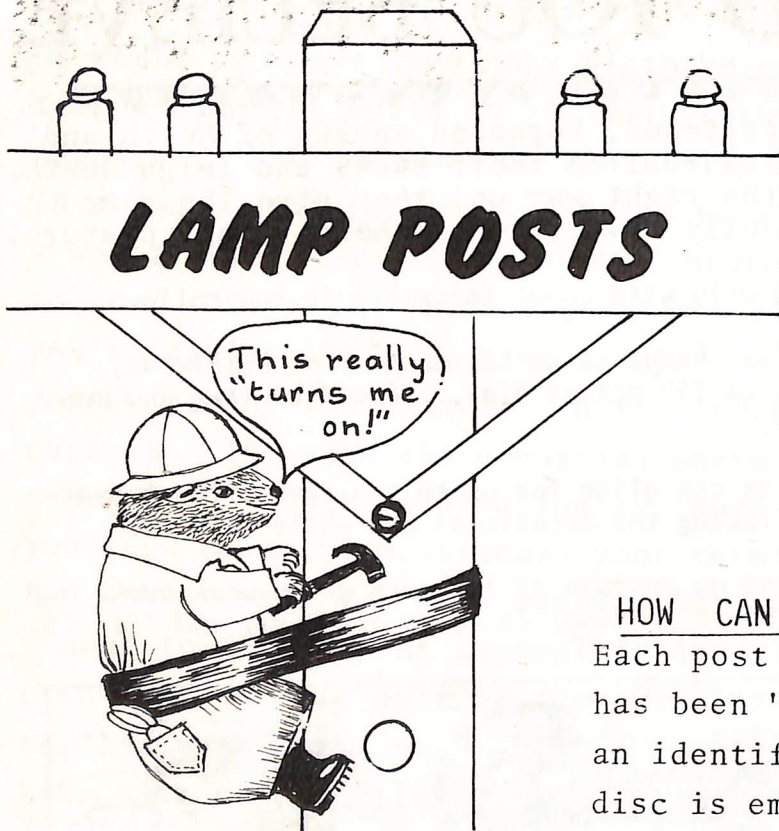


- * That Russian scientists found a live lizard in a chunk of Siberian ice approximately 10 metres below ground level.

- * That the simplest way to escape from an angry bull is to run downhill. As the animal's front legs are shorter than its back legs, it can run faster uphill than down.

- * That if they all survived and multiplied, at the end of a year the descendants of one aphid would weigh as much as 600 million men.

- * Giraffes are particularly susceptible to throat infections because they can't cough.



LAMP POSTS

DID YOU KNOW THAT
YOU COULD SPEAK TO
A LAMP-POST?

In return the
lamp-post can tell
you when it was put
there, how long it
is, but most import-
antly, what type
of wood it is made
of.

HOW CAN THIS BE?

Each post or "pole" when it
has been "processed" is given
an identifying disc. This
disc is embedded into the
post so it will not fall out.

This disc has stamped on it the following information.

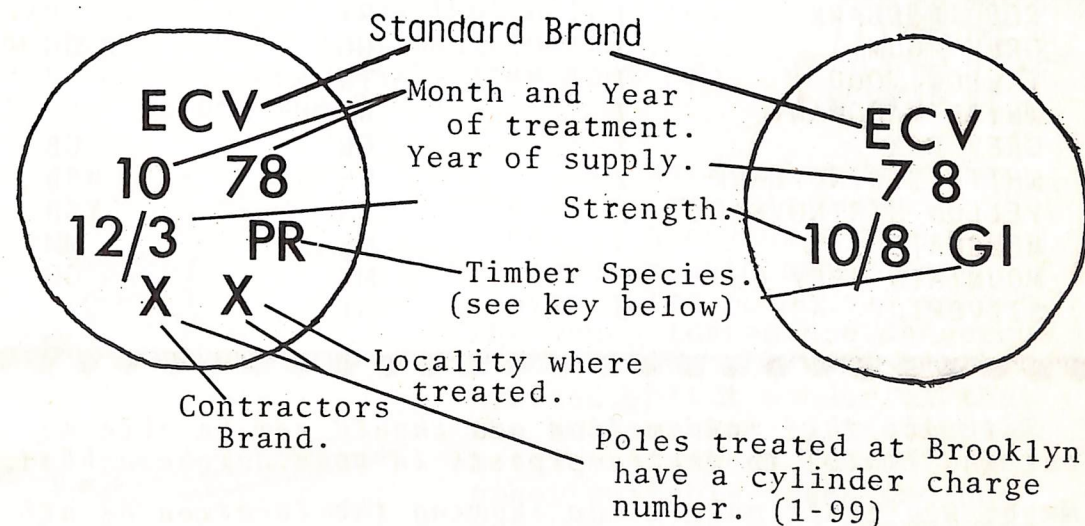
- (1) The year of processing. (Poles which have been treat-
ed with a preservative coating also have the month.)
- (2) The length of the post. *Why not the height?*
- (3) The strength of the post. *Why could this be important.*
- (4) The type of tree from which the post has been made
from.

4 The length is measured in metres, while the strength is
measured in kilonewtons. Maybe you could find out what
this means.

Have you ever noticed that often new poles placed
around the streets are a funny color? These are treated
poles; and are coated under pressure with a substance
called CREOSOTE. This is a by-product of the petroleum

industry. It protects the pole by killing the fungi and
insects which attack wood. Creosote is added to the poles
at Brooklyn, the main distribution centre for poles in
Victoria.

Treated Poles



Untreated Poles

TYPES OF TIMBER USED IN VICTORIA.

All timber is graded into DURABILITY CLASSES by the C.S.I.
R.O. This is based on the expected average life of the
timber in use.

CLASS

	Average life in years.	
	GROUND CONTACT	ABOVE GROUND
1	25-50 years	50+ years
2	15-25	30-50
3	8-15	10-30
4	1-8	8-10

As you can see from the chart contact with the ground
severely shortens the life of timber. With this in mind, the
choice of timber for lamp-posts is very important. CAN
YOU THINK WHY?

Set out below is a list of the common timbers used in the production of lamp-posts. The Durability Class is also included, along with the STANDARD SPECIES BRAND, as adopted by the C.S.I.R.O. IN 1970. The old SPECIES BRAND is included as many old lamp-posts can still be found around the streets.

SPECIES NAME	DURABILITY CLASS	STANDARD SPECIES BRAND	OLD BRAND.
GREY IRONBARK	1	GI	
RED IRONBARK	1	RI	
GREY GUM	1	GG	GG
TALLOW WOOD	1	TW	
WHITE MAHOGANY	1	WM	
GREY BOX	1	GB	GB
WHITE STRINGYBARK	2	WS	WSB
YELLOW STRINGYBARK	2	YS	YSB
MESSMATE	3	MS	MM
MOUNTAIN GREY GUM	3	MT	GG
SILVERTOP ASH	3	ST	



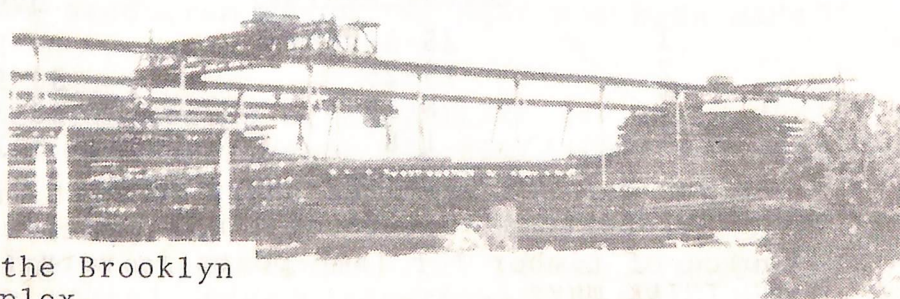
With all this information you should now be able to go out and "talk" to the lamp-posts in your neighbourhood.

Maybe you could make a map showing the location of all the lamp-posts, then build up graphs concerning AGE or TYPE of TIMBER USED.

If you are really keen, you could do some research on the locations where the different Timbers are found. The best book for this is L.F. Costermans' Pocket Field Guide "TREES OF VICTORIA!"

This can be obtained through the Gould League if your school library does not have a copy.

Based on a project by C. Seeley from Heathmont P.S.



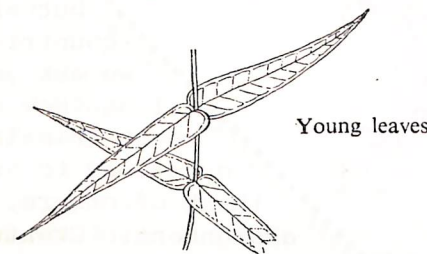
LIVE 'Teddy Bears'

Everybody loves the cuddly koala. Possibly you have seen one in a zoo or sanctuary. Some of you may have been lucky enough to have seen one out in the bush.

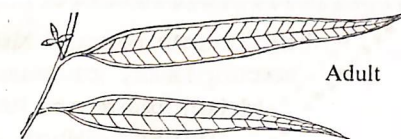
Do you know what the koala's favourite food is? Nearly everyone knows that gum leaves are the food koalas love. But did you know that only a few eucalypts really suit their needs, or that the one they really like most of all may poison them?



This particular tree is the manna gum. At certain times of the year a build-up of prussic acid makes the leaves quite poisonous to eat. The young leaves are dangerous at all times and must be avoided. Isn't it wonderful that the koalas know by instinct not to eat these leaves? The other suitable trees include red gum, blue gum, swamp gum and yellow box.



Young leaves



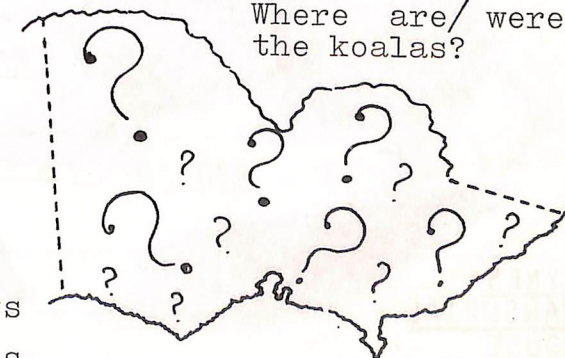
Adult

SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO.

Contact your local Forestry Office and find out whether there are suitable eucalypts for koalas in your area.

Talk to older residents and find out whether koalas were once natural to your area and, if so, what became of them.

Where are/ were the koalas?



Animals of the World.

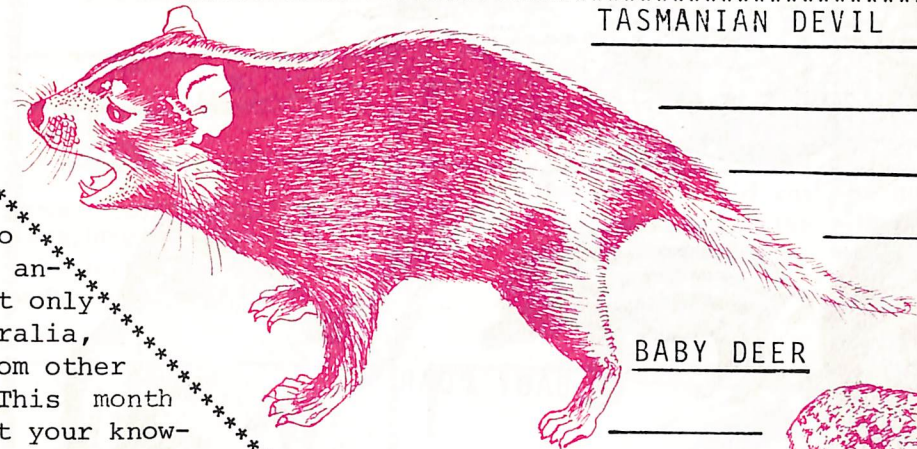
BANK VOLE



HAMSTER



TASMANIAN DEVIL



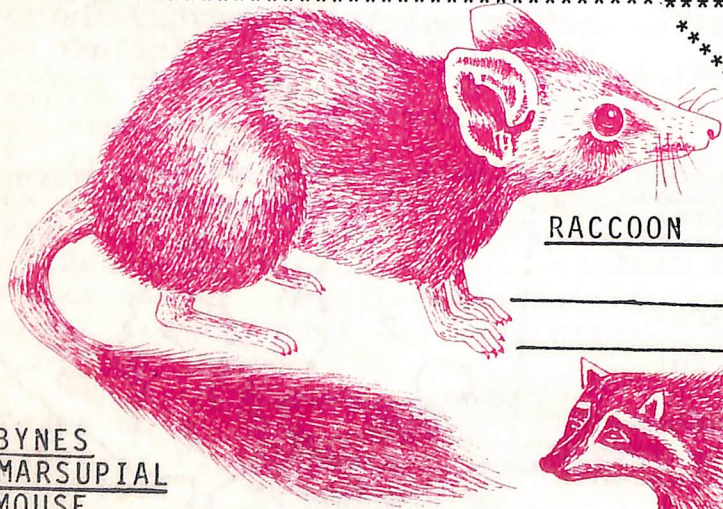
BABY DEER



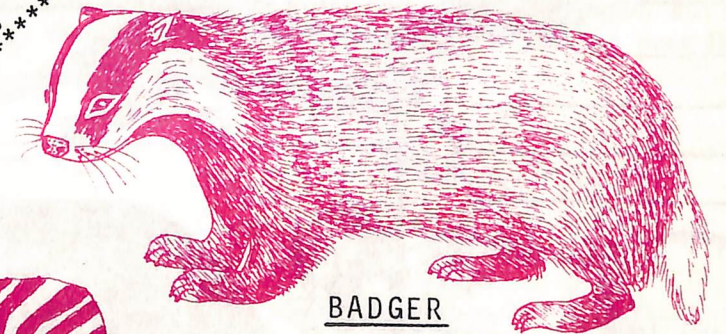
How well do you know animals,--not only here in Australia, but animals from other countries too? This month we ask you to test your knowledge. How much do you really know about animals? We have suggested some questions to answer. No doubt you can think of others. Treat this exercise as an assignment. Creatures that you don't know - study in more depth.

What countries do these animals come from? Are they marsupials, or mammals? Which ones are carnivores? Which ones are herbivores? Which ones are omnivores? What do herbivores eat? What do carnivores eat? What do omnivores eat? Find out as much as you can about them. Write your answers in the spaces provided for you. Your school library should prove very useful with books on this topic.

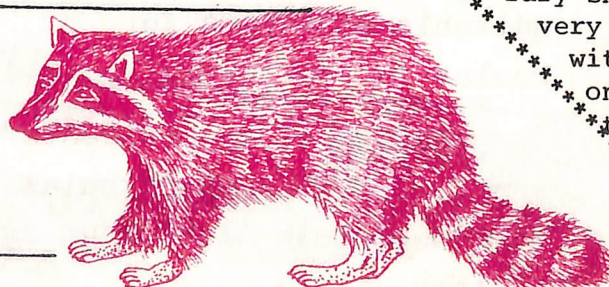
RACCOON



BADGER



BYNES MARSUPIAL MOUSE

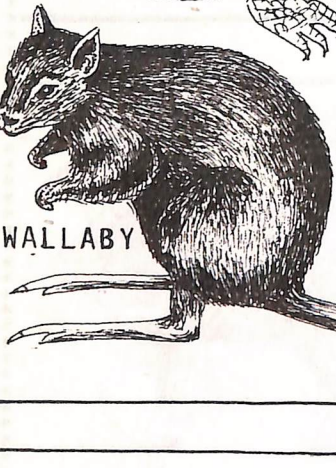
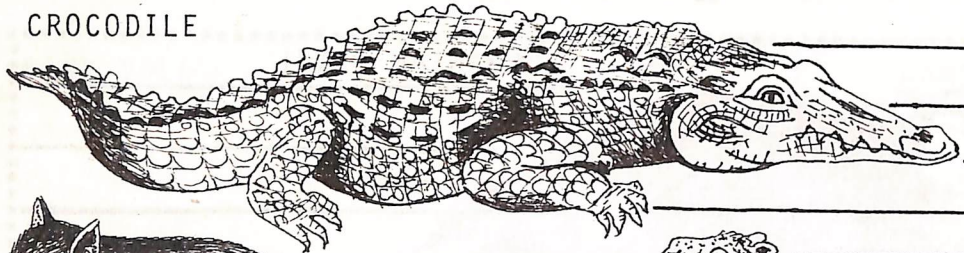


ZEBRA

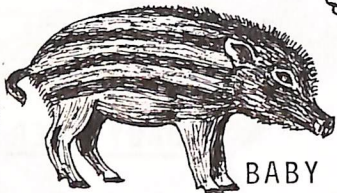


Animals of the World (cont'd)

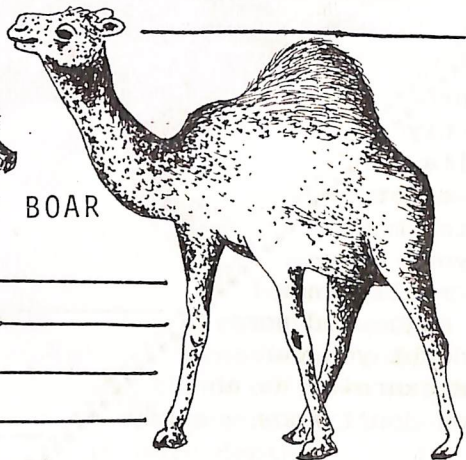
CROCODILE



WALLABY

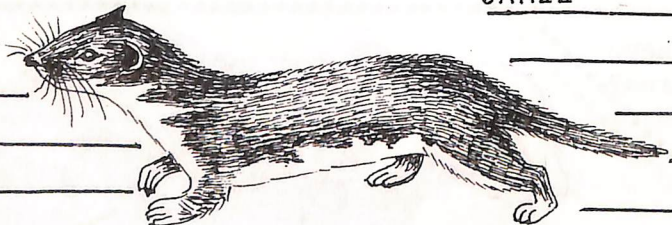


BABY BOAR

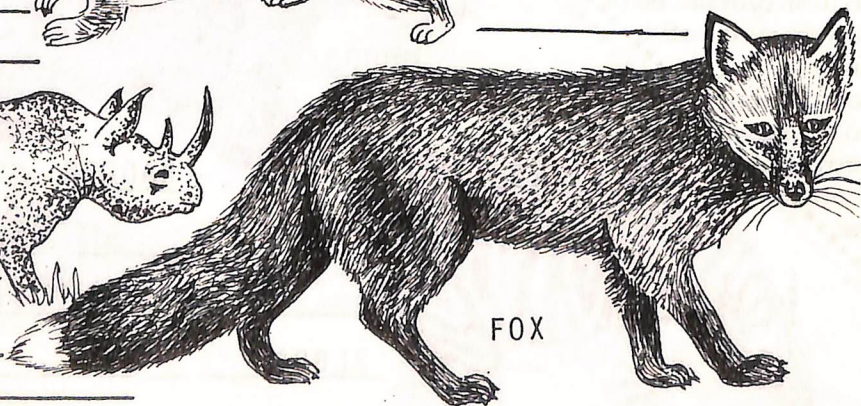


CAMEL

WEASEL

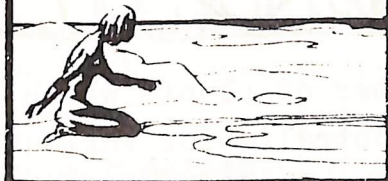


RHINOCEROS



FOX

The Legend of A BUBBLING SPRING



Long, long ago a beautiful young maiden used to play by a fresh-water spring near the seashore.



And one day while the girl was playing a seal came out of the sea to rest on the sand nearby. The girl soon became friendly with this seal and they used to meet near the spring every day.



But one day there was a great earthquake and the sea flooded over the land around the spring.



Then the spring was covered by the ocean and the girl and the seal went under the water, and all was quiet again. But even now there is still a fresh-water spring in the sea near the coast.



And people know that the girl is still alive because they see the water bubble up as she comes up for air and then hear her gurgling laughter as she goes down to play with her seal again.



INTRODUCED PESTS....



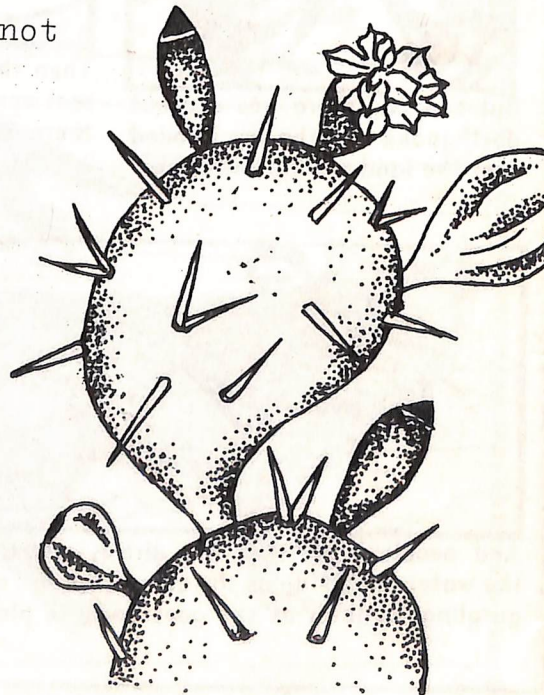
BONESEED

A great number of plants which have been brought to Australia for various reasons have so liked the conditions that they have multiplied and spread so rapidly that they are looked upon as weeds.

BONESEED grows from 60 to 300cm high.

Its leaves are 5-8cm long, oval to paddle-shaped and irregularly serrated. Bright yellow, daisy-like flowers with 5-6 petals and a brownish centre are produced during spring and summer.

PRICKLY PEAR or Cactus, is not as common in Victoria as it is in N.S.W. and Queensland. The story of its spread and efforts to eradicate it are worth reading in other books. It forms a large plant made up of many pieces joined together. These pieces are covered with stiff, sharp spines. If a piece is knocked from a bush it can start growing by itself. Pulling it out and burning it is about the only way to get rid of it!



PRICKLY PEAR

F.J.C. ROGERS.

GORSE or Furze is a shrub 60 to 90cm high with most of its short branches ending in a sharp spine. Yellow pear-shaped flowers appear during most of the year. Again cutting and burning is the way to get rid of this pest.



Gorse



Broom

BROOMS (a number of them)

have become widespread. They are usually hardy, evergreen shrubs 1 to 3 metres high.

Leaves are usually in threes with heads of yellow pea-flowers. Young

plants can be easily

pulled out

but old plants

will need to be cut out.

STINKWORT is an annual plant which grows 30 to 100cm high. It is a hairy and very sticky plant and when handled the smell from it is difficult to remove from your hands.



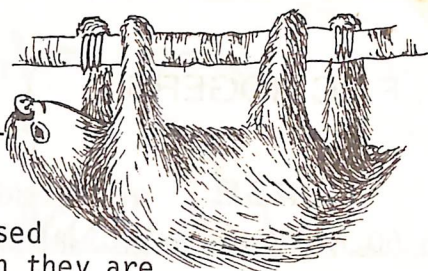
Stinkwort

P.S. Bracken is an Australian home-grown pest. Blackberries aren't!



RUFIOUS RAT-KANGAROO

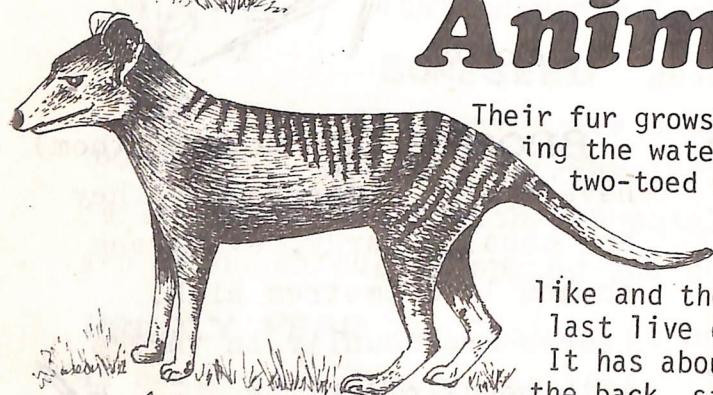
Thus unusual animal is found along the coastal regions of Eastern Australia. It has long thin feet and a very long tail which is used like an extra leg when they are moving slowly. When hopping at speed, the tail is used as a counter-balance to the body.



SLOTH

Because they spend almost their entire life upside down in forest trees! They have long hooked claws, which makes it easy for them to cling to the trees.

Unusual Animals



Their fur grows downward so that when it is raining the water runs off easily. There are two-toed sloths and three-toed sloths.

TASMANIAN WOLF OR THYLACINE

Because they are large and dog like and thought to be almost extinct. The last live one died in Hobart Zoo in 1933.

It has about sixteen brown clear bands on the back, starting at the shoulders, extending to the tail. You will notice that the base of the tail is different from a dog's tail -- that means that it cannot be wagged!

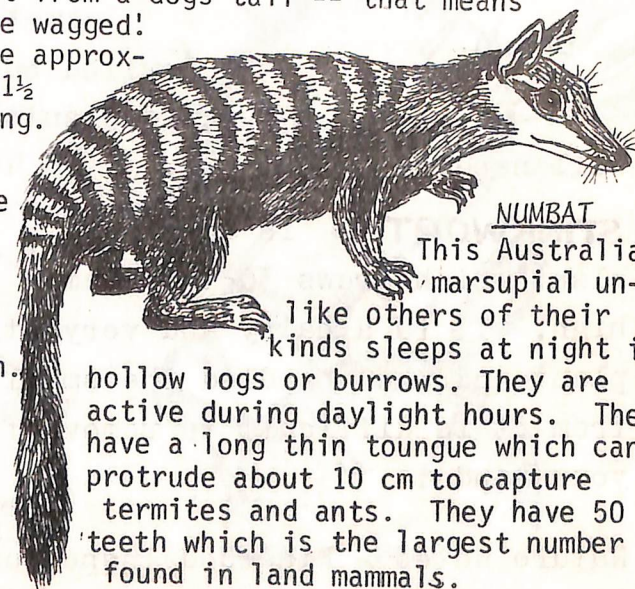
Adults are approximately 1½ metres long.



JERBOA MARSUPIAL MOUSE

This tiny, delicate, kangaroo like mouse is found in many parts of Australia. They have enormous eyes which are useful in their nocturnal (night time) living. They have a backward opening pouch. Sizes range from 8 cm to 25 cm.

They are the size of a mouse or rat, fawn and brown or grey in colour. The very long thin tail is much longer than the body, and is bushy at the end of the tip.



NUMBAT

This Australian marsupial unlike others of their kind sleeps at night in hollow logs or burrows. They are active during daylight hours. They have a long thin tongue which can protrude about 10 cm to capture termites and ants. They have 50 teeth which is the largest number found in land mammals.

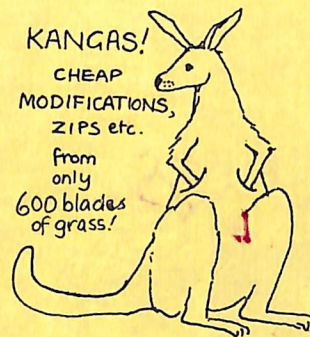
* * ANIMAL

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and yellow,
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will like you!

WANTED...

- 1 large, empty snail shell, for hermit's cottage by the beach. See: Harry Hermit-Crab, esq.
- 1 academic gown. See: Professor Uncle Sam Skunk B.O.

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I WISH TO ORDER

☐

NATURE NOTES AND

☐

PROBE.

Riddles

What animal at the North Pole has 2 humps?

~~If baby humans~~
sleep in cots,
what do baby
Apes sleep
in?

What do 2-toed Sloths have that no other animal has?

Apricots?



Babies

Write down the names of the babies of each of these animals:

FROG

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

DUCK

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

GOOSE

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

HORSE

--	--	--	--

SWAN

--	--	--	--	--	--

KANGAROO

--	--	--	--

CAT

--	--	--	--	--	--

DOG

Cow

The common name for this insect is also given * for a spider looking like this →



Insects



From Peal Picture Crosswords
Pealpress, Glasgow.

