

PROBE

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In winter, eating a steaming hot steak and mushroom pie is a delicious way to warm up. Rather than buying them from the supermarket, some families like to pick their own mushrooms.

mushrooms OR toadstools?

by D. Brydon

How can you tell the difference between mushrooms and toadstools?

Wash your hands very carefully after handling 'toadies'.

See the spores?

This is a hard question to answer. Mushrooms are really only a sort of toadstool that are good to eat.

Are these

mushrooms?

Before you begin to collect your own mushrooms, mum or dad may warn you not to pick toadstools. They might tell you that toadstools are poisonous. Eating them by mistake could make you very sick.

LOOK CLOSELY AT WHAT YOU HAVE PICKED. IT IS A MUSHROOM IF...

...it smells like one....it has a thick stalk (at least as thick as one of your fingers)....it has a creamy white topits underneath is pinkish-brown (for a young mushroom) or brownish-black (for an older mushroom). Small 'button' mushrooms or very young unopened 'meadow' mushrooms have a creamy white 'skin' on the underneath part which falls away when the mushroom opens out.



HOW DO MUSHROOMS GROW?

Mushrooms and other toadstools are part of a big plant 'family' called fungi. Fungi plants have been grouped together because they grow and make new plants in almost the same way.

Unlike green plants who use the sun to help them make their own food, the important part of a mushroom grows underground.

Mushrooms often grow when heavy rain is followed by a sunny day.

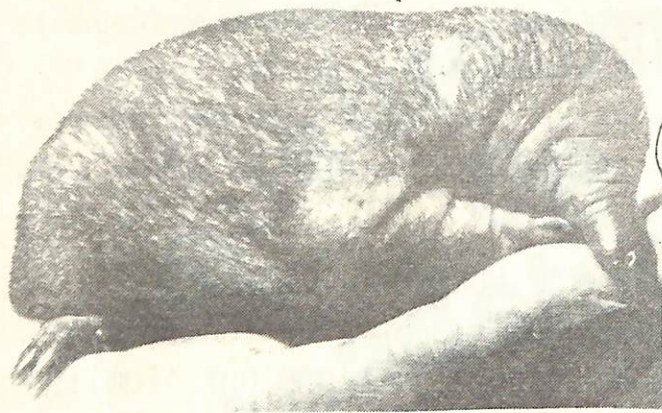


Put a mushroom (with the underneath facing the paper) on a clean piece of white paper. Leave it there for a day then lift it up. What you see are spores. Spores are spread by the wind to new places where they grow into new plants.

The animals on our coins

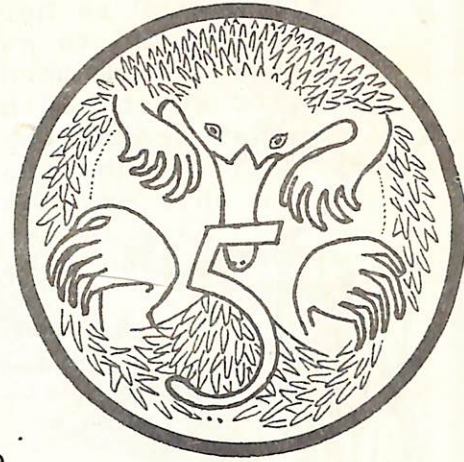
by D. Brydon

the Echidna



I'm just starting
to grow my
spines.

Not a very cuddly animal, eh? Yet the echidna's spines protect it well from hungry animals looking for food. Echidnas are found in all parts of Australia and Nuigini.

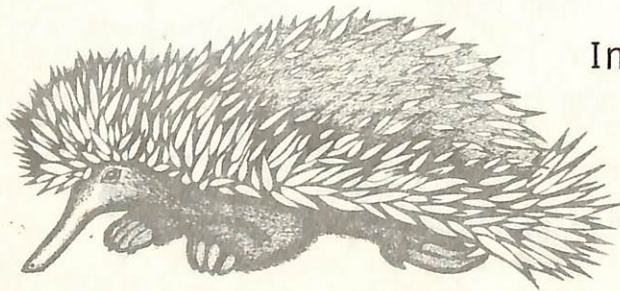


The Echidna (or spiny anteater) has a very long tongue. It is covered with a sticky mixture like glue. By sticking his tongue in and out very quickly, the echidna collects plenty of termites or ants to eat.

Echidnas are good swimmers, too.

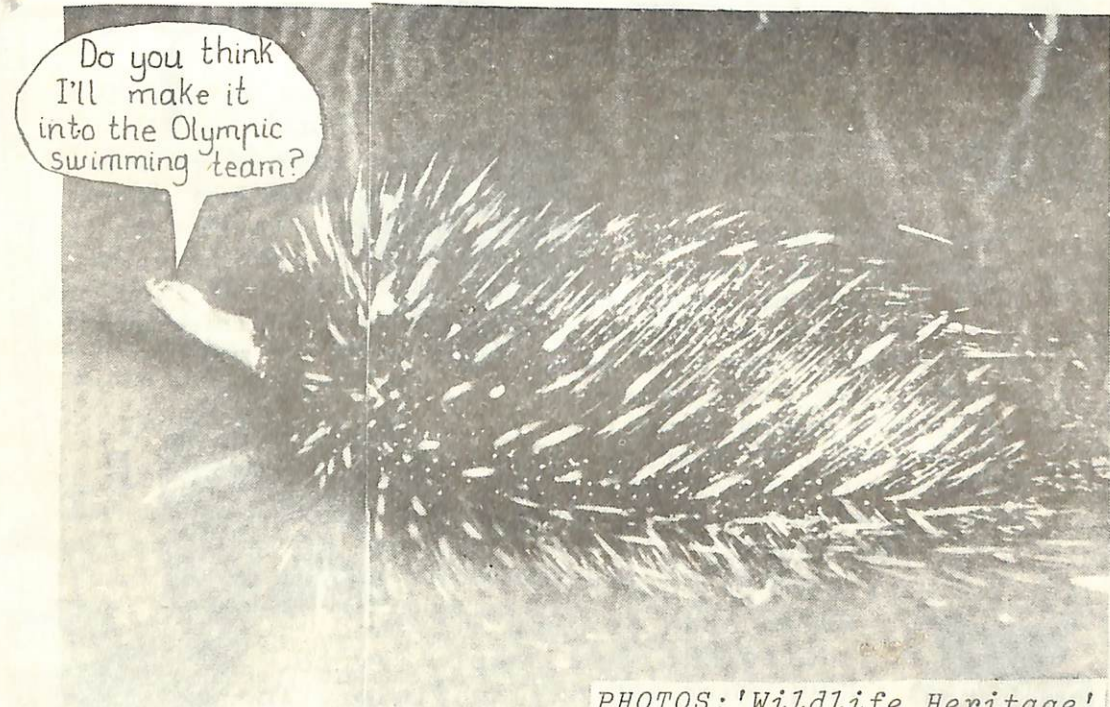
If attacked by another animal, the echidna rolls himself up into a tight prickly ball.

If he has enough time, he will use his very strong claws to bury himself underground.



In Tasmania, echidnas mainly eat ants. In dry, hot places they mainly eat termites (who have more water in them).

Echidnas are born in an egg. When the egg hatches, the baby lives in his mother's pouch. Look at the baby echidna at the top of the page. What other Australian animal do you think he looks like?



Do you think
I'll make it
into the Olympic
swimming team?

PHOTOS: 'Wildlife Heritage'

Well, winter is here again and many of you will find it hard to get out of bed on these cold and dark mornings. When does winter start? Which months of the year are winter months? Around the 21st. of June we had the shortest day of the year. On this day, the sun 'gets up' very late in the morning and 'goes back to bed' very early at night.

HURRY UP
SLOW
COACH!

HOT
WEATHER
200 KM.

Many birds fly thousands of kilometres to warmer places and fly back again in spring or summer.

Do you play the same games in winter and summer? Why or why not?

Many plants and animals find it hard to stay alive in winter. Why do you think this is?

Some trees and shrubs lose their leaves in autumn and have no leaves in winter. Are there any of these in your garden? Most of these plants come from other countries where snow lies on the ground for most of winter. Most Australian plants keep their leaves in winter (like gum trees).

Write down or draw all the different ways people try to keep warm and dry in winter. The front cover may help you do this.

WHAT IS

Some animals, like frogs and snakes, are cold blooded. They need the warmth of the sun to keep moving around, just like a car needs petrol. In winter, the sunlight is not warm enough.

Bears are not cold blooded but in winter it is hard for them to find enough food.

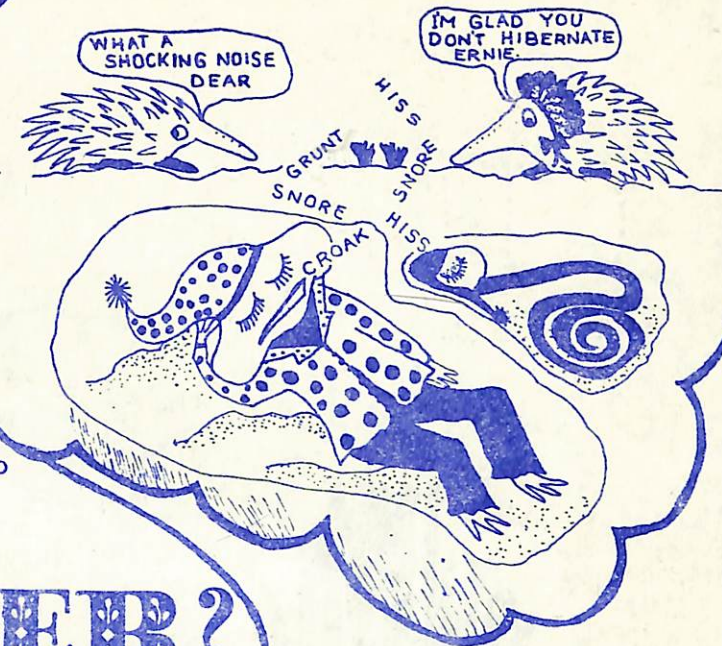
WINTER?

by D. Brydon

How many of you saw a lot of hair falling out of your cat or dog in the summer? This is called moulting. Why do you think cats and dogs moult in summer? In winter, cats and dogs grow much thicker, warmer fur.

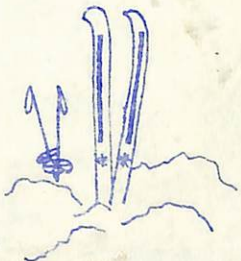
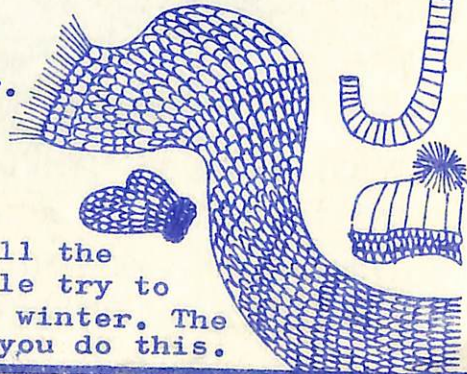
In winter, the caterpillar inside this cocoon grows into a

On those cold wet days when mum or dad won't let you play outside, some of you may wish that we didn't have a winter at all. In Singapore (a place far away over the sea) children do not have different weather in summer, autumn, winter and spring. Would you like every day to be the same?



To stay alive, many animals hibernate (or go to sleep) for the winter and wake up again in the spring.

The Australian Feather-tail glider hibernates for 2 or 3 days at a time. Then he wakes up, finds some food and goes back to 'sleep'.



Things to do

Coral
fungi



More!



There are many different sorts of fungi. Not all of them have the same shape or color as mushrooms or toadstools.



Collect as many different types of fungi as you can. Store them in jars filled with white vinegar. Make labels for the jars saying where the fungus was found, who found it and what it looks like. The vinegar will probably make its color fade.



Rainbow bracket

*PROBE: Registered at the G.P.O. as a
periodical Category B.
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