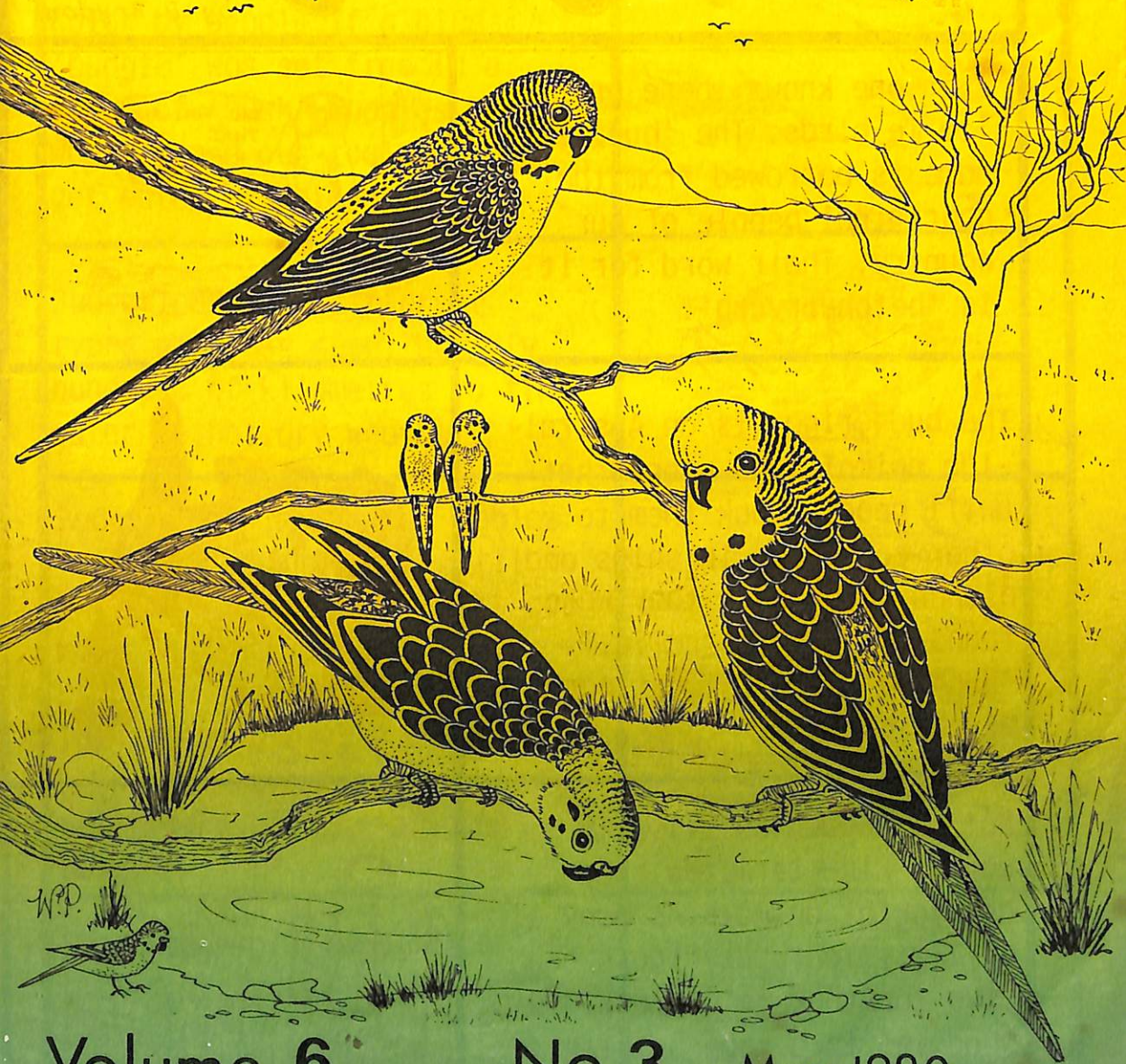


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Budgerigars

by D. Brydon

Everyone knows these pretty little birds. The 'budgies' name is borrowed from the aboriginal people of our country. Their word for it is 'betcherrygah'.



The budgerigar is an Australian animal. This means that until people took them to other countries in ships and planes to be pets, they were found only in Australia. 'Budgies' live in most parts of our country.



Not all 'budgies' live in cages. Like termites, they are social animals. As many as 2 million budgerigars can live together in a flock. One 'budgie' in a cage by itself can get very lonely.



'Budgies' born in the bush have green, yellow and some brown feathers. The blue, white and violet ones you see in cages have been made a special color by people. If a blue 'budgie' was set free in a flock of 'bush' budgies, he would stand out too much and get eaten by falcons or hawks.



Budgerigars eat different types of grass seed. They fly hundreds of kilometres to find water in hot, dry weather.



Budgerigars have their babies from the beginning of April to the end of September. Nests are made in fence posts, old logs or holes in trees. The mother lays about 6 eggs and must keep them warm for 17 days before she can get off the nest.



The father brings food to the mother. After the chicks hatch, they stay in the nest for about 30 days.



The animals on our coins ●●●●

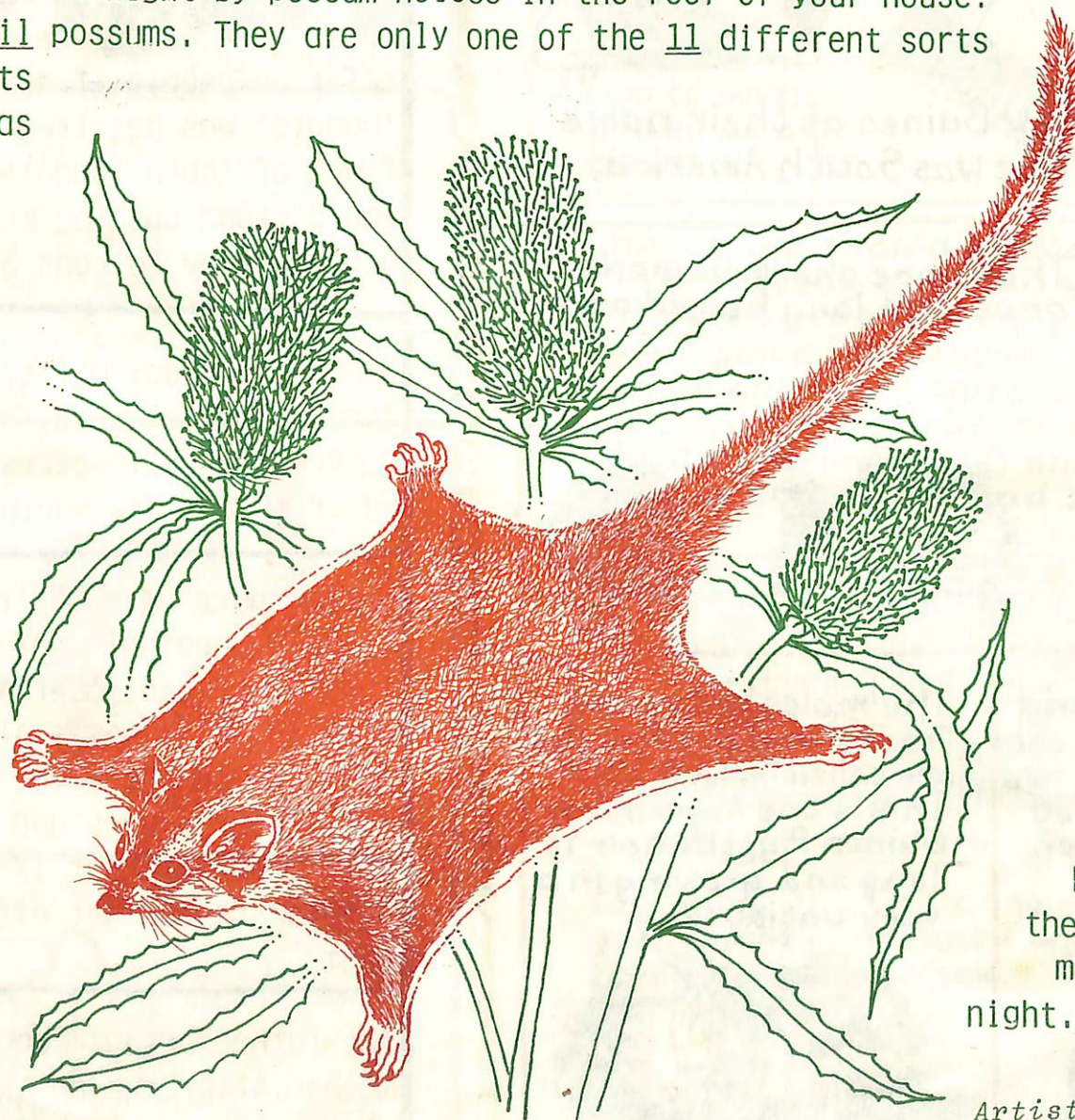
the Feathertail glider

by D. Brydon

How many of you have been kept awake at night by possum noises in the roof of your house? These are probably made by Brushtail possums. They are only one of the 11 different sorts of possums living in different parts of Australia. About the same size as a mouse, the Feathertail glider is the smallest possum of all.

Feathertail gliders hardly ever go on the ground. Their bodies are specially made for living in trees. Can you think of any other animals that live mostly in trees?

Long, stiff whiskers help the Feathertail glider to find his way into tiny cracks in the bark of trees. Beetles and tree termites are two of his favorite foods.



The Feathertail glider has webs of skin stretched between his hands and feet. When this skin is stretched out tightly, the tiny possum can glide from tree to tree. How is gliding different to flying?

Feathertail gliders sleep in their nest during the day. They move about and feed mainly at night. What other animals do this?

Artist: W. Prohasky

Nectar from the tree's flowers is another tasty snack. What other animals eat nectar?

GUINEA PIGS

By
W. Prohasky



They do not come from New Guinea as their name suggests, but their first home was South America.

Guinea pigs are easy to care for, and are gentle and loving pets.



There are short haired ones and long haired ones.



Some are all one colour, and others have hair with patches of several colours. Orange, red, brown, white, blue, tan, grey and black. Some white ones (albinos) have red eyes.



The males are called "boars" and the females are called "sows." This is the Abyssinian Guinea Pig, the hair is long and growing in a very untidy way.



They are very clean animals.

They usually have from two to seven babies at a time.

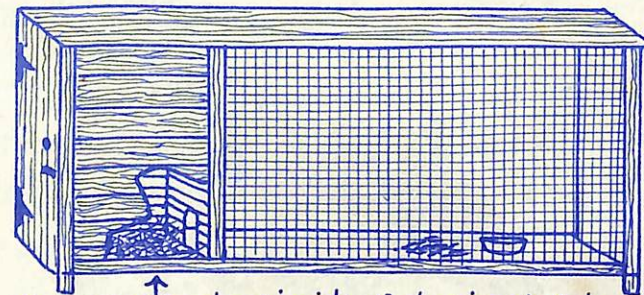
The hair should be kept nicely combed and brushed every few days.



They do not like loud noises.

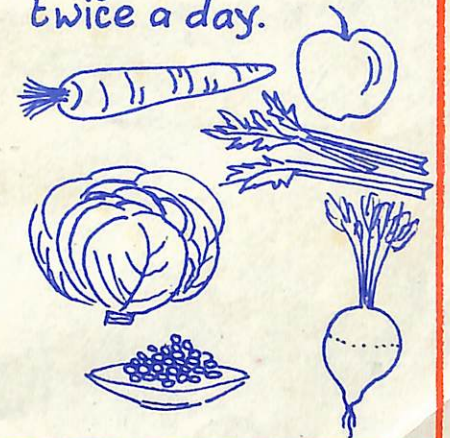
They live for about seven years.

Their cage should be made of very strong wire and wood, with wire over the top part too. A place for sleeping, with hay on the floor, and an open part that gets lots of sun. The hay (dried grass) should be changed often, and kept dry.



Cut away ↑ to show inside of sleeping hutch.

They like to eat green vegetables, carrots, apples, oats, celery tops, lawn cuttings, and hay. They should be fed twice a day.



You must give them fresh water every day.



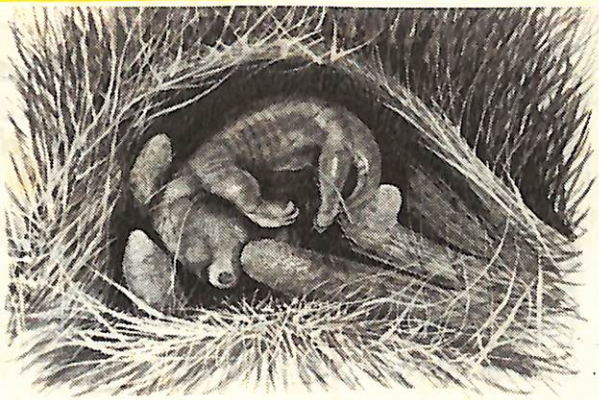
The cage must be cleaned out twice a week.



Make sure that they do not eat grass that has had snail killer on it, or near it.

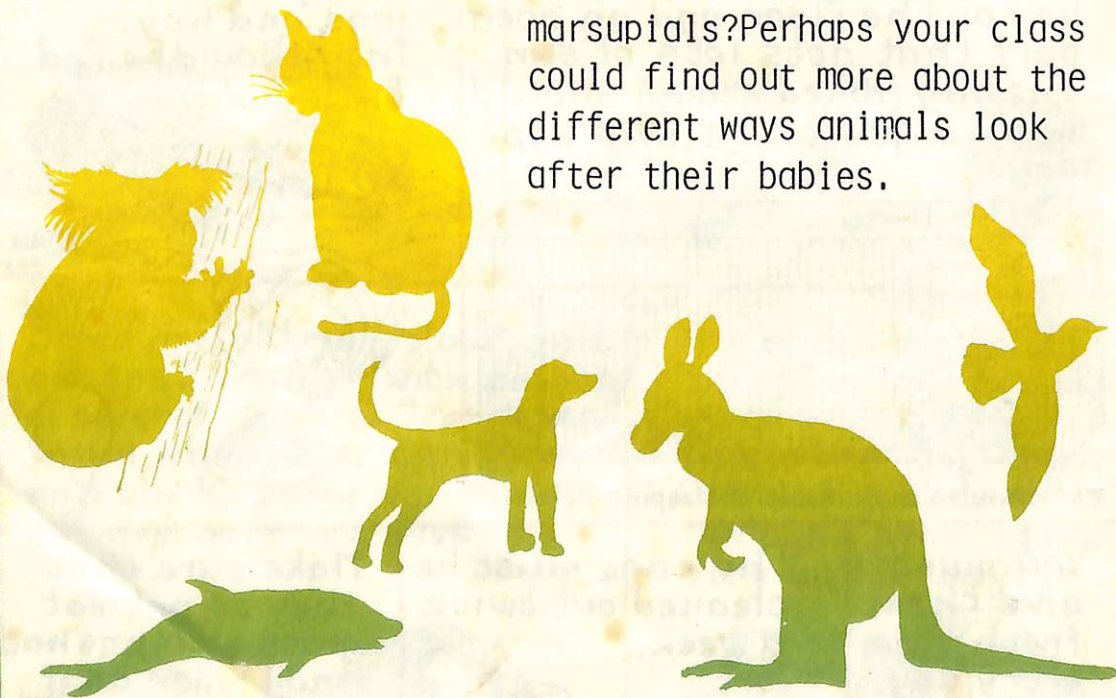


The Feathertail glider is part of an animal family called marsupials. Marsupial animals have babies which are born very small. The tiny babies then crawl into their mother's pouch where they keep growing until they are old enough to look after themselves.



A baby joey having his dinner(milk) in his mother's warm pouch.

Which of these animals are marsupials? Perhaps your class could find out more about the different ways animals look after their babies.



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