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Preface

As a homeschool mother of four children very close in age, I often found the preschool years to be a mish-mash of what was happening with the older children. There wasn't a lot of intentional planning for the little's lessons, it was all very spontaneous. After they began some formal learning I still kept things fairly simple. However my preschool and kindy kids sometimes requested more school work. At these times I did a variety of activities and the ones that were a hit usually combined reading together, paper, glue, scissors and some coloured markers. These lessons also had the advantage of something to show Daddy when he came home.

Introducing science lessons was always well received because most young children are fascinated with nature and animals. And for that reason this is the perfect place to begin their science education. I am also passionate that children learn to love books so I decided to make a resource that would teach children to make their own books and give them a science lesson at the same time.

I know that when life is very full with little ones you want a no fuss curriculum that is easy to begin. Therefore as I prepared this resource it was a priority that it was pick-up-and-go.

I hope you enjoy using this resource with your young children.

Introduction

This simple zoology resource will teach your children about twelve of Australia's unique animals. Each lesson encourages children to learn about:

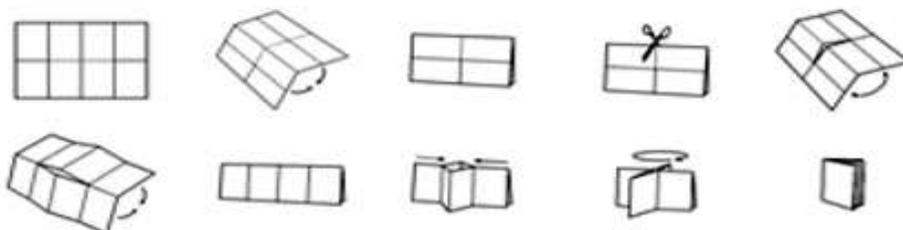
- classification – the names and some basic classification taxonomy
- identifying different species' habitats
- the lifecycle of different animals
- the biogeography of animals – where they live

You can use this resource without any embellishments or you can add to it from the additional book list. To complete the Australian Animal Mini Books you will need to print off the pages of this ebook and collect some glue, scissors and some markers for the copywork portion of the mini book.

Start by reading the information provided about the animal for yourself. I found talking about the animal in a conversational way worked best but you could read aloud the text as written. The poem is for reading aloud and should act as a conversation starter. You can also read from additional resources if desired. After you have read ask your children to tell back to you all that they know about the animal you are studying, then have them complete the mini-book.

Mini Book Instructions

- Cut off the strip of pictures at the base of the animal information page.
- Have your child glue the pictures on to the mini book. (The coins and stamp illustrations used are taken from real coins and stamps produced by the Australian Mint and Australia Post).
- Get them to mark in where the animals can be found in Australia.
- Give them markers to trace the letters of the animal name.
- Fold and cut out the book. As per folding instructions.



Australian Zoology Resource

Australia is a treasure trove of unique flora and fauna. According to the Australian Wildlife Conservancy Organisation, “87% of our mammal species, 93% of reptiles, 94% of frogs and 45% of our bird species are found only in Australia.” It has the largest population of living **marsupials** (carrying their young in pouches) in the world. The iconic kangaroos and koalas are only two of these curious marsupials. Australia and Papua New Guinea also have the only **monotremes** (egg laying mammals) in the world. When the platypus (a monotreme) was first sent to Britain to be examined it was so odd that it was thought to be a hoax. Most of Australia’s wildlife is found nowhere else on earth.

Zoology is a branch of biology that studies the animal kingdom, classification, origins, habitats, lifestyle and biogeography. In the study of Australia’s Zoology, explanations for why Australia’s **biogeography** (the science of the geographical distribution of plants and animals) is so different to other places around the world is speculative. No one really knows. Evolutionists believe the geographical distribution of Australia’s plants and animals neatly fits with the evolutionary timeline of millions of years but creationists believe that there are holes to the evolutionary theories such as the distribution of marsupial fossils worldwide. **Creationists** point out that many of the evolutionary theories of migration along land bridges during the ice age, migration through natural land rafts and adaptation to different environments are still plausible explanations that can be used by those who believe in the dispersion of animals after Noah’s flood. In fact, some of the **disjunct distributions** (when similar plants and animals are found on different continents) like the opossum in South America and the Australian possum are yet to be explained by evolutionists. The study of Australia’s zoology is more than the creation evolution debate and it will not be discussed in this resource.

You do not need an additional book for this resource but if you would like to add some books there are many with excellent photographic illustrations on Australian animals. All the booklist selections are secular and they usually discuss the theory of evolution.

Book Suggestions

Draw Aussie Animals by Steve and Marion Isham. This book is a simple guide to drawing Australian Animals

Steve Parish books. This photographer has many Australian animal books. There are too many to list.

Wildlife of Australia by Louise Egerton and Jiri Lochman. This book is more in-depth with very engaging narrative text.

Who Did That by Jill Bruce illustrated by Jan Wade.

Who Did That 2 by Jill Bruce illustrated by Jan Wade.

Sample Pages

Wombat

Where Can I Be Found?

You know a wombat lives nearby when you see his hole.

It is so wide and deep you think he must have found some coal.

His diet is so simple, you'll notice as you pass.

**He's quite content to feast all night on tonnes and tonnes of
grass.**



Wombats are extremely playful creatures that are quick to learn. They have an extraordinarily well-developed brain, but their intelligence is often underestimated and overlooked. Reaching the height of a human's knee, these animals are short but heavy, weighing in at nearly forty kilos (88 pounds). Being marsupials, wombats have a pouch to carry their young in but it faces backwards, just like the bandicoots, to prevent sticks, sharp rocks and dirt from hitting the baby when the mother is burrowing. As nocturnal creatures they are active at night, although you may occasionally find one sun baking in the early morning. A wombat's diet consists of shrubs, grasses and the occasional root.

These cute grey furry creatures are very territorial and are ruthlessly aggressive when another wombat invades their plot of land. Excavating is one of their favourite activities; they can dig two metres of a burrow per night. At one time a wombat may have several elaborate tunnels around the territory they dwell; some tunnels are up to sixty meters long which makes them the largest burrowing herbivores in the world. The constant burrowing really upset the farmers and land owners because they will dig up fences and excavate underneath buildings.

Dingoes, foxes and domestic dogs will kill wombats, but their main threat is not wild animals but humans, who hunt and kill them because of their destructive burrowing habits. There are three species of wombats: the common wombat, northern hairy-nosed wombat, and southern hairy-nosed wombat. The hairy-nosed wombats are endangered.



3

Wombat

2

My Name Is

Step 2: Cut along dotted lines

You know a wombat lives nearby when you see his hole.

It is so wide and deep you think he must have found some coal.

His diet is so simple, you'll notice as you pass.

He's quite content to feast all night on tonnes and tonnes of grass.

4

5

Step 1 Fold along this edge

Place
Coin
Here

Who Am I?

Where Do I Live?



6

My Tracks

Here Is My Stamp

7