



Urban Wildlife UNIT OVERVIEW

The Theme

While some native animals find it difficult, or impossible, to live in places that have been disturbed by humans, others have been able to adapt to human presence. This means that many of us who live in built-up areas share our daily lives with native animals.

Some of these native animals include: possums, bandicoots, wallabies, pademelons, lizards, frogs, snakes, native hens, rosellas, owls and other birds.

This unit provides opportunities for lower primary students to learn about:

The native animals that live in our urban community.
What they need to survive.

Threats to the survival of these animals - including household pets.

What individuals and groups can do to help.

What students can do personally to help.

* Activities with a star have a detailed lesson plan page.

Getting Started

What Have You Seen? - Explore what the students have found in their own backyards - do they have any stories they want to share?

Our Own Backyards - What animals could we expect to see in our backyards? What is a native animal? What is an introduced animal? Use pictures/names of native animals on cards and sort animals into various groups - such as "bugs", "birds", "marsupials". Make a lists of animals that fall into each group.

Animal Salad! - Divide the urban native animals into groups: mammals, bugs, birds, reptiles and amphibians. To help reinforce these classification you could play an adaptation of 'fruit salad': 1) give each child an urban animal name.

2) When you yell the animal group (e.g. "reptiles!") they must try to reach the other side of an open area/tennis court/gym without being tagged by the 'dog' that is trying to chase them. 3) Play again and vary the introduced animals (e.g., cat, fox) that can pose a threat.

Animal Reports - Divide the class into groups and designate each one an urban animal to research, using reference material and photos. Ask each student to fill in an animal report. Consider:

What does your animal look like?

Where does it live?

What does it eat?

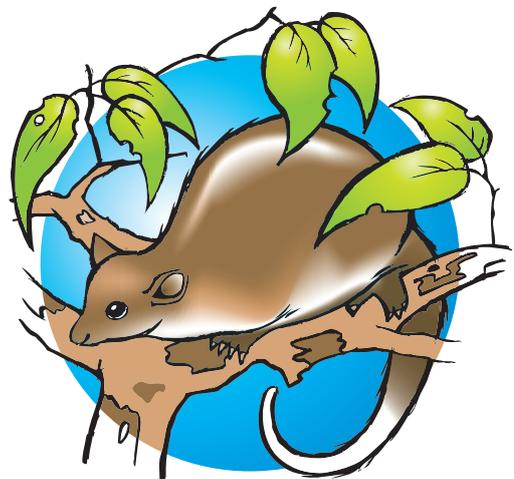
What threatens its survival?

* Food Webs - How is urban wildlife interconnected?

* What's a Habitat? - the 'Habitat Hustle' game.

* Neighbourhood Research - Ask your family and neighbours to complete a survey to help you investigate urban wildlife. What lives in their backyards?

Investigate Your School - Look around school grounds for clues (droppings, scratch marks) about what animals live there and different types of habitats.



Urban Wildlife E-Set suited for lower primary students.

Site Activities

Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Rangers are often available to conduct these and other activities at an excursion site. Please contact the Parks and Wildlife Service Interpretation and Education Section via email on parkseducation@parks.tas.gov.au.

Memory Game - This game requires children to use identification, classification and observation skills and is best conducted outside in an open area with access to a variety of different habitats. The whole class can play, though numbers should ideally not exceed 25.

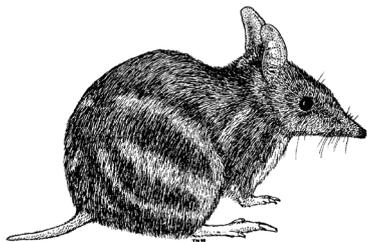
A collection of approximately 10 objects (previously collected natural, not-living objects such as feathers, rocks, bark) is laid out on a tarp covered with a blanket. The blanket is then removed, with the children having 15 seconds to look at the objects and remember as many as they can. They then have a few minutes to find and bring back as many of the objects they can find.

Adding an unnatural object can then extend the game.

(Taken from *Outdoor Environmental Games* published by The Gould League of Victoria)

* **Matt the Feral Cat Game** - Used with permission from the Gould Group.

* **Photo Journal** - students take photos of their discoveries.



Eastern barred bandicoot

Spotlight Tour - visit a local protected area or reserve and discover urban animal nightlife.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Head Office; 134 Macquarie Street Hobart Tasmania 7000
Internet: www.parks.tas.gov.au August 2007 © State of Tasmania

Follow-Up Activities

Discuss the Differences between the animals seen: night vs day, or home vs on the excursion.

Make Art Collages - using things that were found on the excursion together with any photos.

Native Animal Model - create an animal out of clay.

Personal Pledge - sign a self written pledge to make an effort to help native urban wildlife.

Action Plans - This activity is a good 'post visit' activity and requires students to think of practical ways in which they can improve their local environment for wildlife.

The plan can contain several steps that might be taken for an activity and the desired outcomes from such actions.

Suggestions for action plans might be: constructing a bird feeder, erecting a bird bath, planting native trees and shrubs, making sure that cats and dogs are locked away at night, installing a pond to attract native frogs and birds.

Students can trace the outline of their hand and summarise their plan by writing the 5 key ideas or actions on the fingers and the main message on the palm of the hand.

* **Lay It On the Line** - This activity involves compiling a series of statements about native wildlife. The students mark on a scale where their opinion lies (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree).

Other Ideas:

Ask the school principal and council to plant more native shrubs to create habitats. or build a school pond to encourage frogs or make a bird feeder. Visit SPASA website and rank your own backyard in terms of how environmentally friendly it is. Visit the excursion site at a different time of year to compare flora and fauna.

Urban Wildlife E-Set - Unit Overview

E-Sets are an Electronic Environmental and Educational set of notes for teachers