



Platypus
By C4A Academy



<https://a-z-animals.com/media/2021/07/Platypus.jpg>

A PLATYPUS is a unique and fascinating animal that is native to the freshwater rivers and streams of eastern AUSTRALIA. This SEMI-AQUATIC mammal has a distinct appearance, with a duck-like bill, webbed feet, and a beaver-like tail. The platypus is one of the few mammals in the world that lay eggs, making it a MONOTREME, or egg-laying mammal. Despite their strange appearance and unusual biology, platypuses have been able to survive and thrive in their HABITATS for millions of years.

Spell: PLATYPUS THRIVE AUSTRALIA

An egg-laying mammal is called a ____ MONOTREME

Platypus have been able to thrive in their ____ for millions of years.

HABITATS

A platypus is a semi- ____ animal. AQUATIC

Platypuses are native to the freshwater what of eastern Australia. RIVERS, STREAMS

The physical APPEARANCE of a platypus is one of its most distinctive features. The bill of a platypus is broad and flat, similar to that of a duck, and it is used to find and capture its food. The fur of a platypus is dense and waterproof, helping to keep it warm and dry while swimming. Its feet are webbed, allowing it to easily swim and NAVIGATE through the water. The tail of a platypus is flat and broad, much like that of a beaver, and it is used to store fat RESERVES, and provide STABILITY while swimming.

Spell: APPEARANCE STABILITY DUCK SWIM

Platypus store fat ___ in their tails. RESERVES

Webbed feet help the platypus swim and ___ through the water.

NAVIGATE

Platypus tails are similar to the tails of what other animal? BEAVERS

The fur of a platypus keeps it ___ while swimming. WARM, DRY

When diving for food, the platypus can close its eyes, ears, and nostrils, so that it can focus on finding food without being distracted by the surroundings. Platypuses use their ELECTROSENSORY system to hunt. This system, located in the bill, allows the platypus to detect electric SIGNALS given off by PREY animals, such as insects and small fish, in the water. This system is so SENSITIVE that the platypus can even detect the movement of its prey in the mud at the bottom of the riverbed.

Spell: SENSITIVE PREY RIVERBED

Another unique physical characteristic of the platypus is what system?

ELECTROSENSORY

This system helps the platypus detect electric what? SIGNALS

This system is located in what part of the platypus? BILL

One of the prey animals mentioned was ____. INSECTS, SMALL FISH

The size of a platypus varies greatly depending on its GENDER, with males typically being larger than females. Males can reach up to 50 cm (19 in.) in length, while females can reach up to 43 cm (16 in.). On average, the WEIGHT of a platypus ranges from 1.0 kg (2 pounds) to 2.4 kg (5 lbs.).

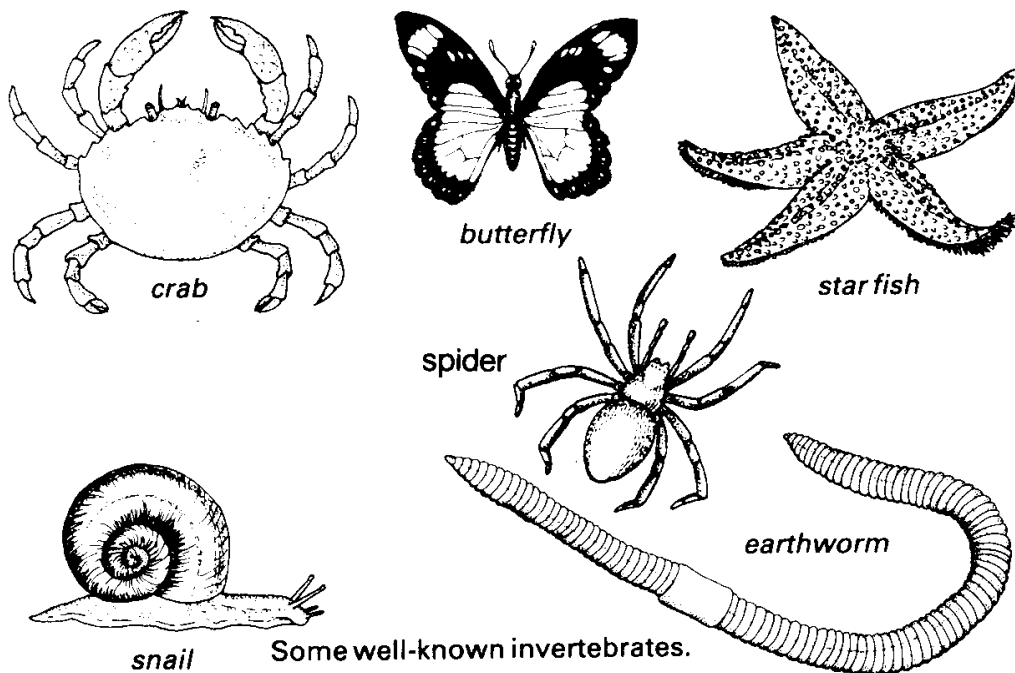
Spell: SIZE BEING FEMALES WEIGHT

Males can reach up to how long in length? 50 CM / 19 IN

The size of a platypus varies depending upon its ____. GENDER

Females are typically smaller than the _____. MALES

Platypuses are SOLITARY animals that spend most of their time in or near the water. They can be difficult to spot in the wild. They are most active during the early morning and late afternoon, and they spend most of the day in their BURROWS or on the riverbank. The diet of a platypus consists mainly of small INVERTEBRATES such as insects, CRUSTACEANS (such as crabs and shrimps), and small fish, which it hunts by diving to the bottom of the riverbed and using its bill to locate and capture its prey.



Source: <http://www.arthursclipart.org/biologya/biology/invertebrates.gif>

Spell: SOLITARY INVERTEBRATES ACTIVE
Platypuses are most active during the early _____. MORNING
Platypuses eat invertebrates like insects, small fish, and _____.
CRUSTACEANS

Platypuses spend their nights in where? BURROWS, DENS

Platypuses are one of the few SPECIES in the world that lay eggs making them egg-laying mammals. Female platypuses will dig a burrow in the riverbank and lay a CLUTCH of 1 to 3 LEATHERY eggs. After the eggs are

laid, the female will INCUBATE them for approximately 10 days until they hatch.

Spell: SPECIES LEATHERY
Female platypus lay a ___ of eggs. CLUTCH
Female platypus ___ the eggs for 10 days. INCUBATE
How many eggs do they lay? 1 TO 3

Once the young platypuses hatch, they are blind, hairless, and completely DEPENDENT on their mother for food and warmth. The mother will nurse her young for several months until they are ready to be on their own. During this time, the young platypuses will grow and develop, gaining fur and developing the physical CHARACTERISTICS of an adult platypus.

Spell: HATCH DEPENDENT CHARACTERISTICS
Platypus mothers nurse their young for several ____. MONTHS
Young platypuses are dependent on their mothers because they are born blind and what? HAIRLESS
Young platypuses are dependent on their mothers for what? FOOD, WARMTH

The platypus is facing a number of threats that are endangering its SURVIVAL in the wild. One of the biggest threats to platypuses is habitat DESTRUCTION. As human populations grow and URBAN areas expand, the freshwater rivers and streams that platypuses depend on for food and shelter are being lost. This can lead to a decline in the population of platypuses and other species that rely on these habitats.

Spell: SURVIVAL HUMAN RIVERS
Platypuses face threats that are endangering their survival in the ____. WILD
One of the biggest threats is habitat ____. DESTRUCTION
Because human populations are growing what kind of area is expanding?
URBAN
Platypuses depend upon rivers and streams for what? FOOD, SHELTER

Another threat to platypuses is HUNTING. In the past, platypuses were hunted for their fur, and today they are sometimes caught as BYCATCH in fishing nets. CLIMATE change is also a concern, as rising temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns can disrupt the delicate balance of the

ECOSYSTEMS that platypuses rely on.

Spell: BYCATCH HUNTING CLIMATE

In the past, platypuses were hunted for their ____. FUR

Climate change can disrupt the delicate balance of the ____.

ECOSYSTEMS

One of the ways that the lesson mentioned the climate changes is ____.

RISING TEMPERATURES, RAINFALL PATTERNS

When the first SPECIMENS of the platypus were brought to Europe in the late 1700s, many scientists believed that they were a HOAX, as the animal's combination of features was so unusual and seemed almost impossible. Males platypuses also have VENOMOUS SPURS on their hind legs that are capable of delivering a venomous STING. The venom is not LETHAL to humans, but it can cause intense pain and swelling.

Spell: SPECIMENS LETHAL VENOMOUS

When the platypus was first brought to Europe it was considered a what?

HOAX

It was brought to Europe in the late ____. 1700S

Male platypuses also have venomous ____. SPURS

The spurs deliver a venomous ____. STING

The venom can cause what? INTENSE PAIN, SWELLING

The platypus is a fascinating and UNIQUE species that continues to CAPTIVATE scientists and animal lovers alike. From its unusual combination of FEATURES to its shy and ELUSIVE (evasive) behavior, there is much to learn and discover about this amazing animal.

Spell: CAPTIVATE DISCOVER UNIQUE

The platypus has an unusual combination of what? FEATURES

The word defined as evasive was ____. ELUSIVE

VAKTivity: For more information, <https://a-z-animals.com/animals/platypus/>

What do you think is most interesting about platypuses?

This lesson was written with the assistance of ChatGPT.