



Teacher Resource

# Platypus Return

## Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. How long ago was a platypus sighted at the Royal National Park?
2. What caused platypuses to disappear from the park? Give one reason.
3. What is the conservation status of platypuses?
  - a. Least concern
  - b. Near threatened
  - c. Extinct in the wild
4. How is the team helping protect the platypuses that have been released in the park?
5. What did you like about the BTN story?

## Activity: Note taking

Students will practise their note-taking skills while watching the BTN Platypus Return story. After watching the story, ask students to reflect on and organise the information into three categories. What information in the story was...?

- Positive
- Negative or
- Interesting



## Activity: Class Discussion

Create a class mind map with PLATYPUS in the middle. Ask students to record what they know about the species. In small groups, ask students to brainstorm responses to the following questions:

- What do you know about platypuses?
- Why is it important to protect the species?
- What is the conservation status of platypuses?
- What questions do you have about platypuses?

### EPISODE 13

23rd May 2023

#### KEY LEARNING

Students will develop a deeper understanding of platypuses and investigate what is being done to protect the species.

#### CURRICULUM

##### Science – Year 4

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive.

Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions.

##### Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment.

##### Science – Year 5 & 6

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions.

##### Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment.

##### Science – Year 7

Classification helps organise the diverse group of organisms.

Scientific knowledge has changed peoples' understanding of the world and is refined as new evidence becomes available.

Interactions between organisms, including the effects of human activities can be represented by food chains and food webs.

## Activity: Species profile

Students will research and write a profile featuring the platypus! Students can use the animal profile worksheet at the end of this activity to record their findings. Encourage students to use a range of sources to find their information.

### Research

Students will research the following and then share their research findings with the class or create a display in the classroom. Students can use the Animal Profile at the end of this activity.

- Illustration or photo
- Name (common and scientific name)
- Conservation status – What is being done to protect the species.
- Appearance
- Adaptations
- Habitat
- Threats
- Unique features



### Share

- Share and compare your findings with your classmates.
- Present your research in an interesting way.
- Think of ways to raise awareness about threatened species in your area.

### Action

- What steps can you take to help protect the species?
- Email your local MP to voice your concern.
- Become a citizen scientist!

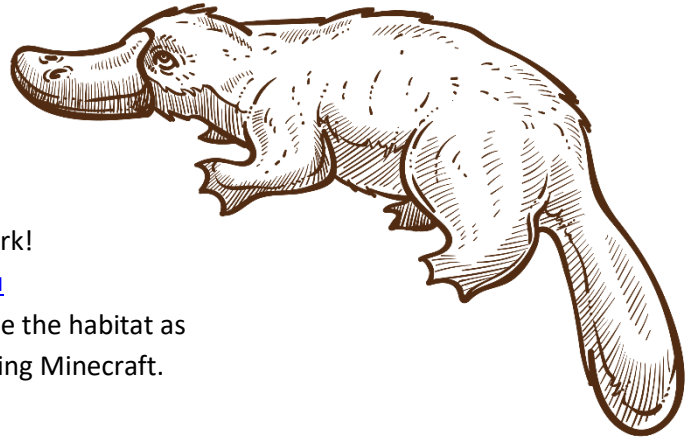
## Activity: Habitat

This literacy activity demonstrates students active listening and interpreting skills. Students will listen to a description of a platypus habitat and create a simple black and white artwork illustrating its habitat.

Teachers will use the following as a guide for this activity.

- In small groups students will discuss what they think a platypus habitat looks like.
- Find a description of a [platypus habitat](#) to read aloud to your students. Alternatively, choose another Australian native animal that is a near threatened or vulnerable species. Use the [IUCN Red List](#) to search for a species (use the Advanced filter to narrow your search). Visit the [Australian Museum](#) to explore a range of Australian animal habitats.
- Read the description of the platypuses' habitat aloud to your class, reading the description 2 or 3 times.
- Students will take notes and write down key words as they listen.

- Students will illustrate the habitat using only a black felt-tip pen (0.4 or 0.6) on a piece of A4 art paper. Students will include as much detail as they can.
- Display the student's artwork in a school exhibition.
- We would love to see your students' artwork! Send your artwork to us at [btn@abc.net.au](mailto:btn@abc.net.au)
- Challenge students by asking them to create the habitat as a diorama or a virtual reality experience using Minecraft.



## Activity: Biodiversity

### Improve the biodiversity in your local environment!

Students will work together to help introduce a native animal species into their school yard. Ask them to consider the following:

- What kind of animals could you reintroduce into your school yard? E.g., birds, bees, frogs, butterflies. Research the species native to your local area. Contact a ranger at a park near your school or the local council to learn more about the local species.
- Do you have the right type of habitat in your school yard for the native animal species to survive? Describe the climate and identify the plants in your school yard.
- What are some threats to the species that are caused by humans? How can you reduce these threats in your school yard?
- What materials and tools will you need to build the habitat or introduce new species to your area? Consider writing a guide or procedure manual.
- Build the habitat as a class and present the habitat to your school community. Teach students in other classes about the new habitat and involve them in caring for the new habitat.
- Prepare a map of the habitat which highlights key features. Include information labels in the habitat (for example, QR codes) for other students to learn more about the habitat and the biodiversity of your school yard. Include scientific information about the species.



## Activity: Caring for our Native Species

Watch these BTN stories to find out how kids are helping protect Australian species – [Bandicoot Tracking](#), [Kangaroo Island Dunnarts](#), [Threatened Flora](#), [Koala Carer](#), [Endangered Seeds](#) & [World Bee Day](#).



[Bandicoot Tracking](#)



[Kangaroo Island Dunnarts](#)



[Threatened Flora](#)



[Koala Carer](#)



[Endangered Seeds](#)



[World Bee Day](#)

## Useful Websites

- [Platypuses return to Sydney's Royal National Park after disappearing for decades](#) – ABC News
- [Platypus](#) – Australian Museum
- [Platypus Evolution](#) – Australian Museum
- [What is a monotreme?](#) – Australian Museum
- [Our Animals: Lives of Platypuses](#) – ABC Education
- [8 Interesting Platypus Facts](#) – WWF
- [A year in the life of Earth's weirdest animals](#) – TedED
- [Platypus](#) – IUCN Red List

# ANIMAL PROFILE

Scientific  
Name

APPEARANCE

Common Name

ADAPTATIONS

Unique Features  
or Interesting Facts

HABITAT

THREATS