

AUSTRALIA'S WILD TREASURES

THREE BILLION
YEARS OF HISTORY,
ONE UNIQUE CONTINENT



SHOWCASING THE WILDERNESS AND WILDLIFE FROM SIX OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST TREASURED PLACES OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Australia's diverse and unique landscapes and ecosystems are unparalleled. Narrated by Aaron Pedersen (*Mystery Road, Total Control, A Place to Call Home*), *Australia's Wild Treasures* showcases six of these unique places of ecological significance and natural beauty, where animals have adapted to their particular habitats, each amazing in their own way.

Extending from shallow estuarine areas to the open ocean, the **Great Barrier Reef** encompasses a vast expanse of unique ecological communities, habitats and species. This complex system is home to a delicately balanced web of life including islands, mangroves, shallow coastal lagoons and the deep sea, anchored by coral – one of the most unusual animals on the planet.

Conjuring images of red soil and harsh sun, the **Red Centre** contains the towering figure of Uluru – a magnificent monolith that is an icon of wild Australia – remote, untamed, and mysterious. But the Red Centre and its surrounding desert landscapes hold much more than meets the eye.

In the Top End, on the flood plains and ancient sculptured escarpments of **Kakadu**, an incredibly diverse array of life is shaped by the tumultuous natural forces in two vastly different halves of the year: the Wet and the Dry.

Unique and breathtaking, the lush alpine regions of the Great Dividing Range play a central role to the animals living along the east coast, separating the verdant forests of the eastern coastline with the vast, flat plains to the west. The tallest mountains in the range, the **Australian Alps** is the only place in the country high enough for snow to settle over the hills throughout the winter months.

Queensland's **Ancient Rainforests** comprise just one fifth of a percent of the continent, yet they account for some of the highest levels of biodiversity not just in the country, but on earth. The Daintree Rainforest is a marvel of living history, older than the Amazon, offering us a window into an Australia that has otherwise now vanished into the past.

A world lost in time, **Tasmania** an isolated pocket of ancient forests and Jurassic mountains sheltering animals that live nowhere else on the planet. From the largest carnivorous marsupial left on earth, to platypuses that walk as well as swim, to giant underwater forests, Tasmania occupies a unique place in the national imagination.

An unmissable survey of the remarkable landscapes that make up this extraordinary continent.

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EPISODE 1: THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

A UNESCO World Heritage Site recognised for its globally outstanding universal value, the Great Barrier Reef is the world's most extensive coral reef ecosystem and an important natural wonder.

Extending over 2000km from shallow estuarine areas to the open ocean, and encompassing a vast expanse of unique ecological communities, habitats and species, the Great Barrier Reef attracts millions of visitors a year – not least for its extreme natural beauty.

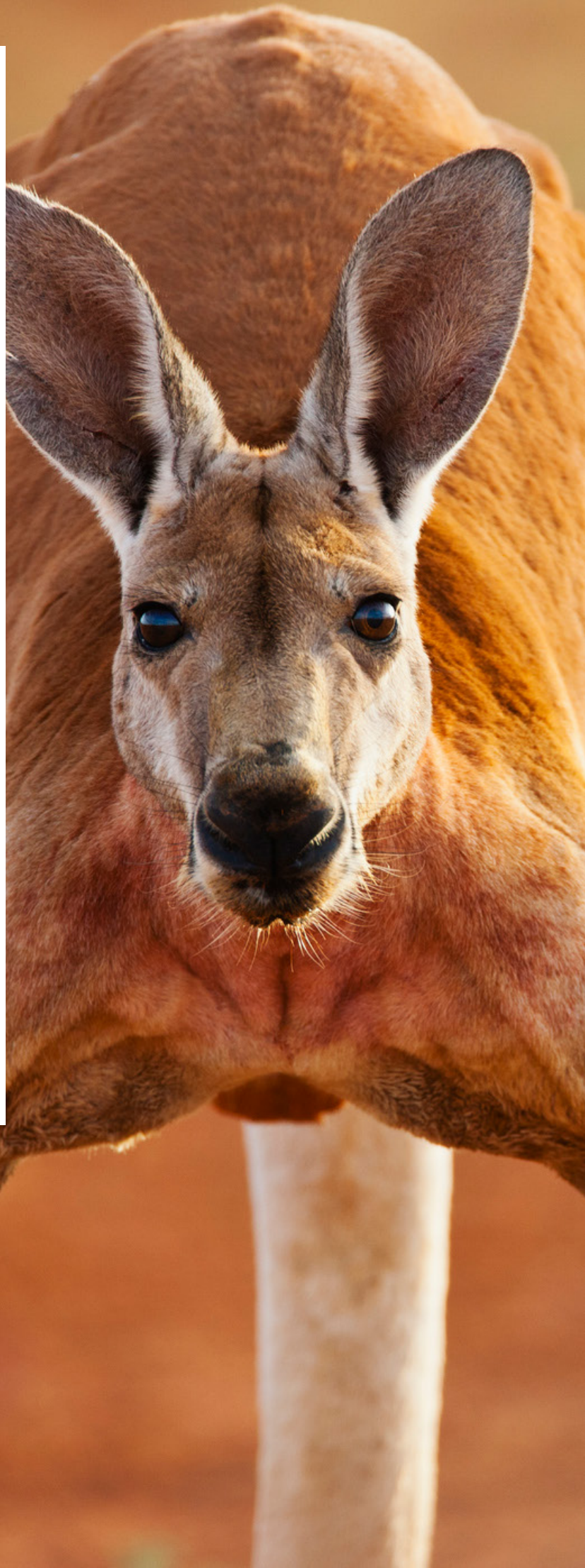
A delicately balanced web of life covering islands, mangroves, shallow coastal lagoons and the deep sea, it is anchored by one of the most unusual animals on the planet – coral. This fascinating episode explores the interplay of life in this incredible marine park, examining the role of breeders, feeders, travellers, engineers, and pioneers – and the way they all intersect to support and be supported by the reef.



EPISODE 2: THE RED CENTRE

Desert Australia conjures images of red soil and harsh sun, overlooked by the towering monolith of Uluru. This magnificent rock is an icon of wild Australia – remote, untamed, and mysterious. The surrounding desert landscapes of the Red Centre also hold much more than meets the eye – teeming with life, they are home to many species of which are found nowhere else on earth.

Across the heart of the continent, the boom and bust cycles of the Australian climate bring alternating heat and cold, droughts and flooding rains, periods of lean times and periods of growth and new life. Through it all, the creatures of the desert – the flora and fauna of the Red Centre – survive and exploit these extreme swings in their environments, and as the climate changes they must continue to adapt.



EPISODE 3: KAKADU

Included twice on the UNESCO World Heritage List for both its outstanding natural and cultural value, Kakadu is truly a world-class destination. A living cultural landscape, Kakadu's ancient escarpments, flood plains and stone country span more than two billion years of geological history – and its archaeological sites record the skills and way of life of Aboriginal people over tens of thousands of years. Kakadu's rock art documents Indigenous creation stories and makes up one of the longest historical records of any group of people in the world.

It is also home to an incredibly diverse array of life shaped by the tumultuous natural forces in two vastly different halves of the year: Wet and Dry. More subtly, Kakadu's Aboriginal custodians, the Bininj people, recognise six seasons, which are marked by the changes in the climate, landscape and animal behaviour. This episode is the story of a year in the life of Kakadu, told across the six seasons, revealing the web of relationships between its species.



EPISODE 4: ALPS

Part of the Great Dividing Range, which separates the verdant forests of the eastern coastline with the vast, flat plains to the west, the Australian Alps form the highest mountain range in the country – and play a central role for the animals living along the east coast. Consisting of two biogeographic subregions, the Snowy Mountains and the Brindabella Range, they also encompass Victoria's spectacular 'high country' – a region that has generated many myths and legends.

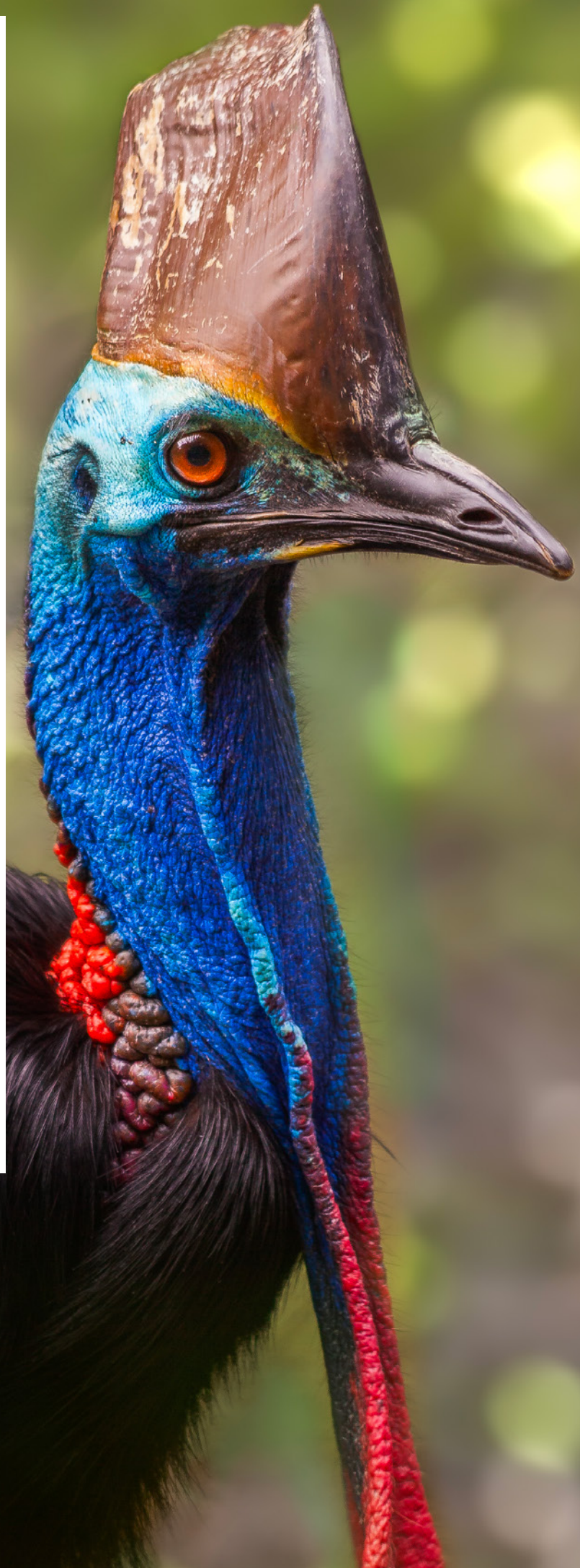
Home to lush alpine regions, the Alps is the only place in Australia high enough for snow to settle over the hills throughout the winter months. The winter may be a bleak time for those who remain above the snow line, but when spring arrives the snow will begin to melt, and what happens next is critical for life both here and far beyond the mountains.



EPISODE 5: ANCIENT RAINFORESTS

A marvel of living history, the Daintree is the oldest continually surviving tropical rainforest in the world, with one of the highest rates of biodiversity on Earth. The Daintree region encompasses an extremely rare combination of tropical rainforests, white sandy beaches, and fringing reefs just offshore. Along the coastline north of the Daintree River, the tropical forest grows right down to the edge of the sea.

A window into an ancient landscape that has otherwise vanished into the past, this stunning rainforest generates an explosion of plant life due to warm, wet Summer weather, and a sudden riot of animal behaviour after the 'quiet dry'. This episode observes the ways often unique creatures that inhabit the region have specialised and adapted to their environment and its challenges.



EPISODE 6: TASMANIA

Home to some of the last great wildernesses on Earth, Tasmania is a large island state off the south coast of Australia. With over 40% of its land area now encompassing national parks and World Heritage Sites, Tasmania was the founding place of the first environmental political party in the world.

Separated from the mainland approximately 12,000 years ago, it seems a world lost in time – an isolated pocket of Gondwana-era forests and Jurassic mountains sheltering animals that live nowhere else on the planet. In delicate ecosystems, wildlife started to evolve peculiarities both in appearance and behaviour to their close cousins on the Australian mainland.

From ancient temperate rainforests to the largest carnivorous marsupial left on earth, to platypuses that walk as well as swim, to giant underwater forests, Tasmania occupies a unique place in the national imagination.

