

Badge 3

Animals in Duffys Forest



Background Information

Duffys forest is home to a huge range of different animal species. Another name for animals is 'fauna'.

A survey of Duffys forest revealed that there are:

- at least three amphibian (frog) species,
- eight reptile species,
- sixty two bird species and
- four mammal species.

All these species are considered threatened when they live in Duffys Forest because their whole ecosystem is considered threatened. Some animals in Duffys Forest are so rare that they are considered to be endangered. An example of this is the Southern Brown Bandicoot.

There are many different types of animals found in Duffys Forest- here are some of them:



Diamond Python (*Morelia spilota spilota*)

- * Large black snake with cream to yellow markings
- * Non-venomous.
- * Kills its prey by constriction (squeezing) and swallowing them whole.
- * Lays between 12 and 50 eggs
- * Nocturnal - only active at night
- * Found in the coastal area of New South Wales
- * Lives in thick vegetation, but spends most of their time in the trees
- * Often move into the roofs of houses, where it causes no harm, but helps control rats



Golden Orb Spider (*Nephila plumipes*)

- * Large spider that weaves a golden web that is strong enough to catch small birds, although it eats only small insects
- * Females are silvery grey with brown, black and yellow banded legs and can grow to 4cm in length
- * Males are tiny and grow to only 5mm in size and are red-brown in colour.
- * Predators of orb weavers include birds and wasps.
- * Wasps land on the web and lure the spider to the edge. They then carry the spider away to store as live food for their young.
- * Orb weavers are not dangerous- their venom is weak and they are reluctant to bite. It is best to just leave them alone.



Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*)

- * Marsupial with short ears with white patches, big bulging eyes and has a long tail with a white tip on the end.
- * Found along the east coast of mainland Australia, and throughout Tasmania.
- * Lives in a nest in the trees called a drey. This nest or drey is made from shredded bark, grass, leaves and shrubs.
- * The Ringtail Possum is nocturnal which means that most of its activities happen at night.
- * Eat leaves and flowers, particularly those of eucalyptus trees.
- * Live in family groups and tend to nest and forage together.
- * Babies don't leave their mother's pouch until they are 4 months old, when they can be seen riding around on the mother's back while she eats.



Blue Tongue Lizard (*Tiliqua scincoids*)

- * A type of reptile with a big blue tongue found all over Australia.
- * They have dry scaly skin and use their tongue to help them smell.
- * Silvery colour with dark brown bands across the back of the tail and a black stripe between the eyes.
- * Eats worms, slugs, snails, small plants, fruit, flowers, compost and insects. They don't chew their food - they hold and crush it.
- * Shelters under trees and leaves or under large objects such as logs and rocks. Sometimes they live in gardens.
- * Baby Blue Tongues come out from a hole under the mother's tail. From the moment they are born they have to find their own food.
- * Dangers to Blue-tongued lizards include: cars, snail baits, lawn mowers, dogs and cats.



Southern Brown Bandicoot (*Isoodon obesulus*)

- * An endangered Australian mammal.
- * Has a long pointed snout, small rounded ears, robust body shape and short tail.
- * Grey or yellowish brown in colour and are creamy white underneath.
- * Nocturnal - feeds at night and rests during the day in a nest of grass and leaf litter
- * Eats eat small lizards, berries, spiders, plants, grubs, roots and small mammals including mice
- * Predators include feral cats and foxes.
- * You can help rescue the Southern Brown Bandicoot from extinction in Warringah by encouraging them to live in your backyard. To do this, keep your cat inside at night and plant locally native trees, shrubs and grasses in your yard.



Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*)

- * A nocturnal bird found throughout Australia (including Tasmania)
- * Can be found in habitats ranging from thick forest to dry deserts
- * Silver-grey in colour with yellow eyes and a wide, heavy bill that is olive-grey to blackish in colour.
- * The body length ranges from 35 - 50cm.
- * Often confused for an owl, but not closely related.
- * Eats insects, worms, slugs, snails, small mammals, reptiles and frogs.
- * Hunts by pouncing to the ground from a tree. Some prey items are caught in flight.
- * Hunts by night and spends the day sitting motionless on tree branches.
- * Grey streaky plumage helps it to look like a piece of dead wood.



Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*)

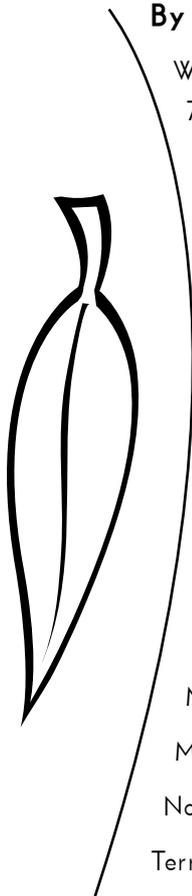
- * World's largest kingfisher and is only found in the forests and woodlands of eastern Australia.
- * One of Australia's most familiar birds because of its loud calls and large size.
- * Has brown coloured upperparts, cream underparts and a slight blue streak on its wings.
- * Kookaburras call to tell all the other kookaburras within earshot that this is their territory and that they are ready to defend it.
- * Hunt by watching forest clearings, agricultural areas, as well as backyards, by swooping on small mammals, snakes, lizards or frogs.
- * Kookaburras lay two eggs in the hollow of a tree without nesting material.
- * Can live 20 years or more.



Heath Monitor (*Varanus rosenbergi*)

- * Large terrestrial reptile (meaning it lives mostly on land).
- * Black in colour and finely dotted along its back with yellow or white markings. It also has narrow black bands across its neck and body.
- * The tail is banded with black-brown and pale yellow colours. The belly is whitish and it has black legs that have cream or pale yellow spots.
- * Found in coastal heaths, woodlands and in wet and dry gum forests.
- * Eats small reptiles, insects and small mammals.
- * Active by day and shelters in burrows, hollow rocks or rock crevices.
- * The female adult Monitor lays eggs, which she leaves alone in a termite mound until they hatch.





By

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