

# Australian Animals: From Beach to Bush

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR  
**BRENTOS**

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



## SYNOPSIS

Australia is home to many unique animals. Let's see how many we can meet!

Find Humpback Whales in coral reefs, seek out Australian Sea Lions in kelp forests, search for Short-Nosed Wombats on mountains and spot Saltwater Crocodiles in wetlands.

This is Australia's native wildlife as you have never seen before: a dreamy, pastel-popping meditation on these special animals, their conservation status and what we can do to protect them, from award-winning artist Brentos.

## ABOUT THE CREATOR

Brentos is an illustrator, painter and designer based in Sydney. He finds joy in watching birds and wildlife play and translating their unique quirks through his pastel colours and linework. The natural world, humour, surf culture and long summers also play a big influence on Brentos's illustrations, which aim to capture a playful spirit while shining a light on the importance of loving and protecting Australia's native wildlife.

To find out more about Brentos and his artwork, view his website at <https://www.brentos.com.au/>.

## THEMES

- Conserving and protecting Australia's animal and plant life
- Celebrating the unique natural landscapes around Australia
- Observing and understanding the natural world

## STUDY NOTES

### BEFORE READING

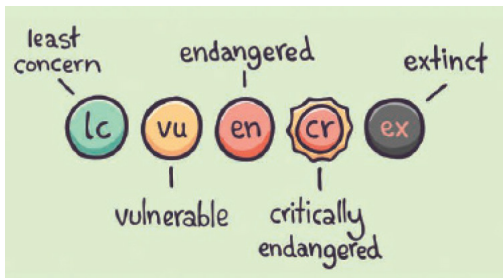
- Ask students to look at the front cover and call out the names of the animals they see. Are there any animals they don't know?
- Have students ever seen any of these animals in the wild? Ask them to tell the class (or a friend) which animals they've seen and where they saw them.
- Discuss the meaning of the words 'habitat', 'conservation' and 'protection'.
- Are there any animals students would like to see in the wild one day? Ask them what might differ between seeing these animals in a zoo versus seeing them in their natural habitats.

- This book is called *Australian Animals: From Beach to Bush*. Looking at the front cover, can students tell which animals live at or near the beach and which animals live in or near the bush? Could some animals live in both locations? Could some animals live in other habitats?
- How should we behave towards wild animals when we see them in their natural habitat?

## WHILE READING

### Comprehension

- Animal conservation status is an important part of this book. Have a discussion about the meaning of the word 'conservation'.
- Discuss the conservation status key shown below, explaining what each word or phrase means.



Then use any double-page spread from the book to discuss how the conservation key has been used throughout the book. Do students understand what this key shows?

- As a class or group activity, ask students to go online and find other animals listed as Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered on conservation websites.
- Turn to p 31, where the creator has listed some things we can do to help animals. Can students think of any other ways that you can help animals? Can you perform any of these as a class?
- What have students learned about the various habitats around Australia? Are there habitats here that they did not know about until they read this book?
  - Pick a habitat from the book and, using online or written resources, list other animals that live in this habitat, as well as the conservation status for these animals.
  - Which habitat was their favourite in the book, and why. Did they choose this habitat because of the animals that live there, the depiction of the habitat in the artwork or for other reasons?

### Literacy

- Some words in this book might be unfamiliar to students. Discover the meaning of these words, apply these words within a sentence, and identify whether these words are nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs. Here is a list of words to kickstart the activity:
  - shimmers
  - dense
  - foliage
  - regally
  - lurks
  - bounds
  - blistering
  - scurries
  - undergrowth
  - majestic
- There is a lot of movement in this book! Can students find verbs that describe animals moving?
- Ask students to form a sentence about any animal in the book, using a verb and an adjective.
- What do students think of the colours used in this book? Do they reflect the real colours of Australian nature?
- Which animals most blend into their surroundings? Which were hardest to find?
- Turn to the the double-page spread on extinct animals, which is coloured in mostly blacks and greys. What effect did

this have? Why might the creator have chosen to use these colours?

### AFTER READING

- Pick any animal from the book with a conservation status label of Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered. Next, create an informational poster that will tell the reader all about this animal and how we can help protect this animal so that it does not become extinct. You may wish to create your poster by yourself, or you could partner with a friend or a small group. Include the following on your poster:
  - A drawing or a printed picture of your chosen animal
  - The species name of your animal
  - The type of animal: amphibian, mammal, bird, fish, insect, reptile
  - How the animal looks, including any distinctive features or colours
  - Its diet, including whether it is a herbivore, omnivore or carnivore
  - Its sleeping patterns, including whether it is nocturnal or diurnal, and if it hibernates
  - Where it lives in Australia, and its migration patterns, if it moves to new places
  - Its conservation status (vulnerable, endangered, critically endangered)
  - The animal's predators (including humans!)
  - The reasons why this animal is threatened
  - What we can do to help this animal survive.
- This activity may span more than a single lesson. Create a tally of the animals that students see in their neighbourhoods over a given period, and then to use this information to create a chart or other form of data presentation. Determine the timeframe of this period (eg. a week, a fortnight, a month, etc.) and ask each student to write a list of the animals they've seen or heard in this time, using a tally to keep track of how many times they saw or heard these animals. Encourage the students to be as specific as possible. For example, to document what types of birds they see or hear.
  - Once the timeframe is complete, collate the student's data and use graphs or other means of data presentation to determine which animals were most spotted compared to the least spotted.
- Ask students to write a short stories from the perspective of an animal featured in this book. The story should be centred around an imagined event. Students must remember to introduce their character and describe its habitat in the beginning of the story, and then introduce an event that forces their character to make a decision. The event could be based around the animal's survival (eg. a predator finds them) or it could be a more creative event. The ending should see a resolution for the main character.
- Ask students to write a journal entry that captures a day in the life of an animal. It should involve some research of the animal's habitat, diet and sleeping patterns. Students should think about the types of things their animal is likely to see in their habitat on a regular basis and provide a description using nouns, adjectives and verbs. They should also describe their character's emotional response to the day.
- Discuss the following questions as a class after reading the book:
  - What have students learned about Australian wildlife through reading this book?
  - What did students think of the seek-and-find element of the book?
  - Would students recommend this book to a friend? Why/why not?