

Echidna

Echidna facts

Echidnas are monotremes (mammals that lay eggs). They are found in Australia and New Guinea.

The echidna is sometimes called the spiny anteater. Their sharp spines are made of keratin, the same material that makes up our fingernails. An echidna can lift objects twice its own weight. Echidnas eat ants, termites, grubs, larvae, and worms. Echidnas don't have teeth. A female echidna lays a single egg which takes about ten days to hatch. When confronted by predators, such as foxes, goannas, dingoes, and feral cats and dogs, they curl into a ball exposing only their spines.



Do you know any more interesting facts about echidnas?

Extension research questions

There is one other living species of a monotreme. What is it?

Do echidnas drink water and can they swim?

How big do echidnas grow and how long do they live?

What is special about an echidna's tongue?

Echidna sculpture

Plan and make a small echidna sculpture.

What materials will you use for the spikes? (sticks, toothpicks, cardboard)

What materials will you use for the body? (plasticene, clay, playdough, paper)



Number Crunchers

Charlie, Mary and Rex the echidnas went to the 'Ant Shop' and bought some bags of termites for a picnic.



If Charlie bought 5 bags of termites, Mary 4 bags and Rex 3 bags, how many bags of termites did they buy altogether?

If Charlie, Mary and Rex each ate 3 bags of termites at the picnic, how many bags of termites did they eat altogether?

How many bags of termites were left over?

Adjectives

Adjectives are words that add information about a noun or pronoun.

Select a suitable adjective for each animal.

echidna _____ soft

kangaroo _____ cuddly

elephant _____ jumping

fox _____ gray

buffalo _____ heavy

lion _____ fierce

laughing
gray
red

