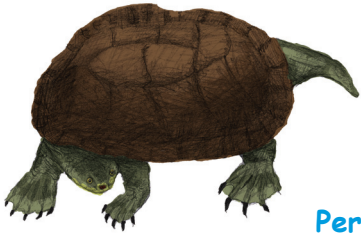


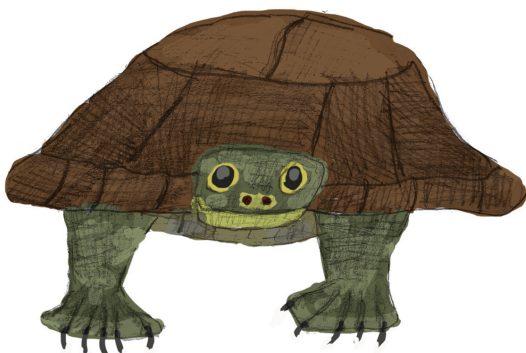
What have we got here



MURRAY RIVER TURTLE

Permanent rivers and lakes in the Murray catchment are home to many native fish, but they're also the only place to find the very special Murray River Turtle.

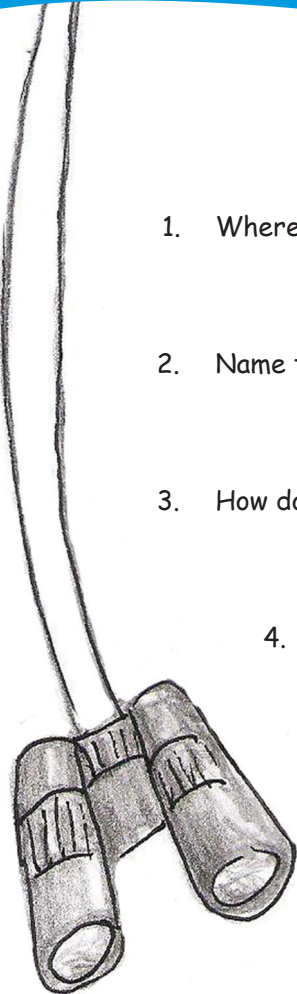
- The Murray River Turtle is only found in the Murray-Darling Basin in south-eastern Australia.
- The Murray River Turtle only inhabit larger rivers like the Murray and Macquarie rivers as well as permanent lakes within the Basin.
- The Murray River Turtle has a short neck and can grow to be around 30cm long.
- Male Murray River Turtles have a much fatter and longer tail than the female.
- The turtle's shell is a medium brown to dark brown in colour on the top, whilst the underneath is a creamy yellow.
- They have small eyes that are yellow with a large round pupil.
- The Murray River Turtles eat molluscs (snails), crustaceans (yabbies) and water plants.
- In spring and summer, Murray River Turtles lay eggs in a burrow near the water's edge- these hatch about 80 days later.
- Eggs and hatchlings have many predators, including goannas, rats, birds, cats and foxes (the main predator). One study found that more than 90% of eggs were eaten by foxes.
- Adult Murray River Turtles have few natural enemies. Fish hooks and human disturbance, like being run over by cars, are also a cause in their decline.
- Murray River Turtles are popular pets and sold as "penny turtles". However, due to poor diet and housing, their shells can become deformed causing owners to release unwanted turtles into urban lakes and ponds.



ACTIVITIES



1. Where in Australia is the Murray River Turtle found?
2. Name the two main rivers where the Murray River Turtle lives:
3. How do you tell the difference between male and female Murray River Turtles
4. Draw a Murray River Turtle and colour it in with the correct colours.
5. List some of the foods the Murray River Turtle likes to eat:
6. In what season do they lay their eggs?
7. How many days does it take for the eggs to hatch?
8. List the predators of Murray River Turtle's eggs and hatchlings.
9. Why do people get rid of their Murray River Turtles as pets?



- Factsheets compiled by Miss Stacey Staunton-Latimer, Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre,
- Sketches drawn by Jacqui Kirk, Year 6 Burrumbuttock Public School
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