

THE CURIOUS PLATYPUS

The platypus is one of the most unusual animals in the world. It has a duck-like bill, webbed feet, and a furry body, making it look like a mix of different animals. Platypuses live in freshwater rivers and streams in Australia, where they swim using their webbed feet. Unlike most mammals, the platypus lays eggs instead of giving birth to live babies. The mother keeps the eggs warm by curling around them in her burrow until they hatch. When the babies, called puggles, are born, they drink milk from their mother's skin.

Platypuses are excellent swimmers and hunt underwater for insects, worms, and small shellfish. They close their eyes, ears, and nose when diving and use their bill to sense tiny movements in the water. The male platypus has a venomous spur on its back legs, which it uses to protect itself. Even though they are shy and usually avoid humans, platypuses are an important part of Australia's wildlife. Scientists study them because they are so different from other mammals.

1. Where do platypuses live?

2. What do baby platypuses drink?

3. What special feature helps a platypus find food underwater?

4. What do platypuses eat?

5. What unusual feature does the male platypus have?

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