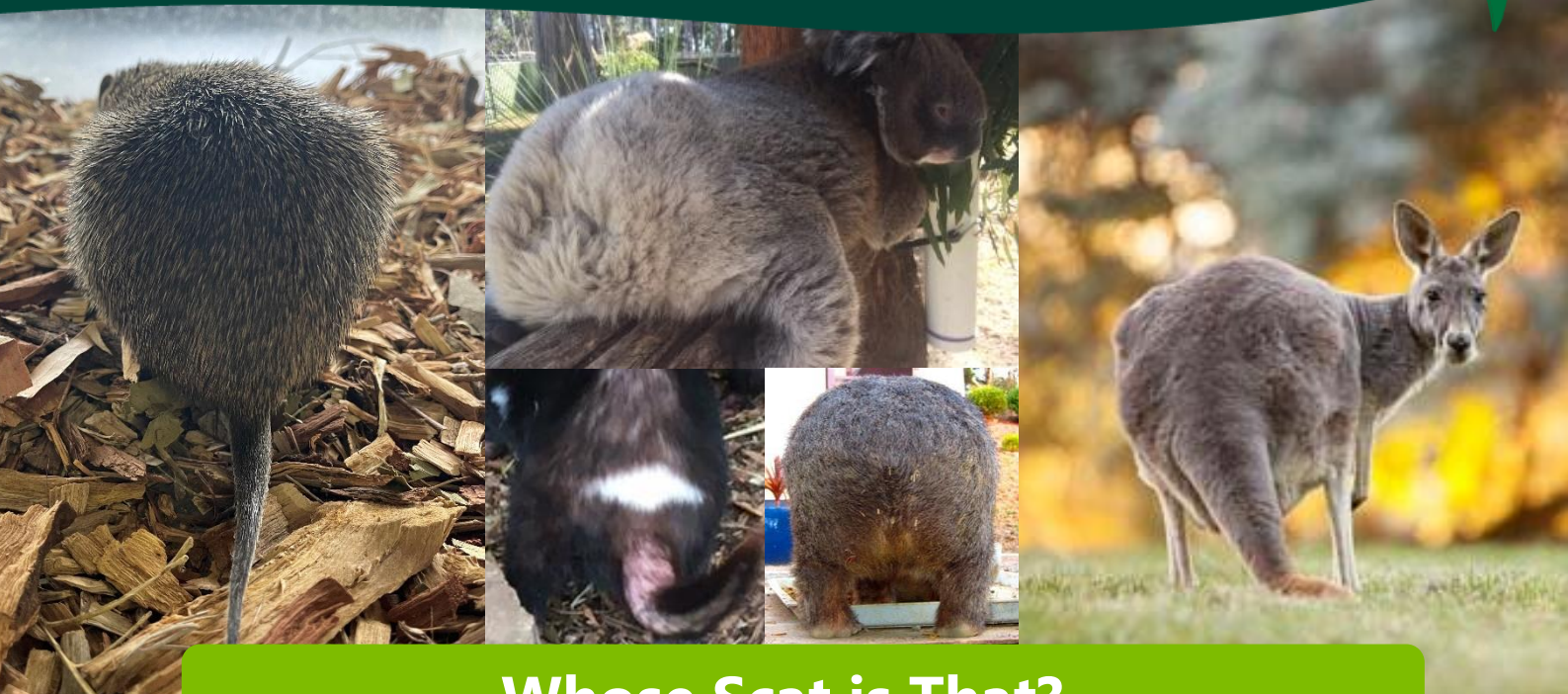


Gumnut Gazette

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Whose Scat is That?

All About Poo!

So, what is scat? Scat is just a science word for animal poo!

Animals come in all shapes and sizes, and their poo does too. By studying scat, scientists can discover what animals eat,



Cleland Animals and their bottoms, credit to CWP Staff

where they go, and how healthy they are. Scat can help us tell which animal was nearby, helps animals mark their territory, and even helps the environment.

In this edition of the Gumnut Gazette, we will discover some interesting facts about scats and the animals they belong to.

Keep reading to find out all about the wonderful world of poo!

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Acknowledgement to country

The Department for Environment and Water acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep

spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country.

The Department works in partnership with the First Peoples of South Australia and supports their Nations to take a leading role in caring for their Country.

FUN FACT

Some animal poo (Elephants, pandas, kangaroos) can be turned into paper!



Fun and games

Track that Scat!

Find-a-word

E	O	O	R	A	G	N	A	K	E	K	I	I	R
L	I	V	E	D	N	A	I	N	A	M	S	A	T
S	E	T	A	B	M	O	W	E	V	E	T	D	K
E	B	S	T	E	L	L	E	P	S	E	I	A	N
K	S	D	U	R	I	C	A	C	I	D	N	E	R
M	A	N	U	R	E	L	I	S	L	D	K	A	I
E	R	O	V	I	B	R	E	H	B	I	Y	P	I
R	C	T	E	T	M	V	A	N	I	N	R	T	O
A	O	R	A	A	A	N	L	M	L	G	A	S	B
U	D	C	L	E	D	P	I	I	E	O	N	N	I
Q	S	A	L	I	E	B	V	A	Z	A	C	A	R
S	O	M	H	N	P	N	E	M	E	A	T	K	D
K	U	C	C	O	S	E	N	T	O	O	R	E	S
G	E	X	O	S	K	E	L	E	T	O	N	D	N

POO
WOMBAT
KOALA
ECHIDNA
DINGO
TASMANIAN DEVIL
SNAKE
LIZARD
KANGAROO
BIRDS

SCAT
SQUARE
GUM LEAVES
EXOSKELETON
MEAT
STINKY
URIC ACID
MANURE
HERBIVORE
PELLETS

Who do you think has the most interesting poo? And why?

Match That Scat

Which animal made this scat? Write their name under the picture...



W _ _ _ _



K _ _ _ A



K _ _ _ _ _ O

Tell me a story...



Emu Poo from Cleland Wildlife Park
(credit to CWP Staff)

Did you know?

Bird poo often contains seeds, which can be spread to new areas when the bird does a poo while flying.

There's more to poo than meets the eye

Animal scat comes in all different shapes, sizes, colours and smells and can mean different things. Animals use their poo to communicate. It can send different messages depending on the species.

Some animals want their scat to be smelt and seen to attract a mate or to mark their territory. Like wombats who drop their poo around their burrows to tell other animals "Hey, this is my home- leave me alone". Koalas leave scat at the base of trees they use often. The scent helps them recognise familiar trees and lets other koalas know the area is occupied.

Scientists can learn a lot from animal scat. By studying poo, they can find out what species an animal is, what it has been eating, where it lives, and even what other animals might live in the same area. Zookeepers can also use scat to identify if an animal is healthy or not, by looking at the colour or texture of poo - just like our human doctors!

Poo can also be great for our environment. Poo provides rich fertiliser and soil for new plants to grow. Many birds such as cockatoos and emus will eat seeds from native plants and then spread these seeds through their poo. New plants can then grow, and the ecosystem will cycle on.

Koala joeys eat their mum's special poo, called "pap", so they can develop the right gut bacteria to be able to eat and digest gum leaves!

Who has the most interesting poo?

Some of our Australian animals have super strange poo...

Wombats have square shaped poo! It takes roughly 14-18 days to digest their food. As the food moves slowly through their special, bumpy intestines, all the water and nutrients get squeezed out, leaving behind small, cubed lumps. This also helps to mark out their territory, as the squares don't roll into their dens.

Snakes and lizards wee and poo at the same time! They come out of the same opening, called the 'cloaca', different to mammals. Their droppings usually have a white, chalky substance called 'uric acid' which is their form of wee, along with their brown poo.

Meat eaters, like **dingoes** or **Tasmanian devils** have stinky poo! This is because of what they eat. Dingo scats look very similar to a dog and may have fur or bones inside. Tasmanian devils scat also may have bones and fur inside but is usually smaller and tightly packed compared to dingo poo.

Herbivore (eats plants) poo is not as stinky as a meat-eaters poo.

Koalas, for example, only eat gum leaves, so guess what their poo might smell like? That's right, gum leaves!

Have a think about any other animal scats and how they're different from these ones...



Wombat poo, credit to Dey Alexander via greenrosechemistry.com / Dingo poo, credit to ABC.net / Lizard poo, credit to A-Z animals / Koala poo, credit to ABC.net



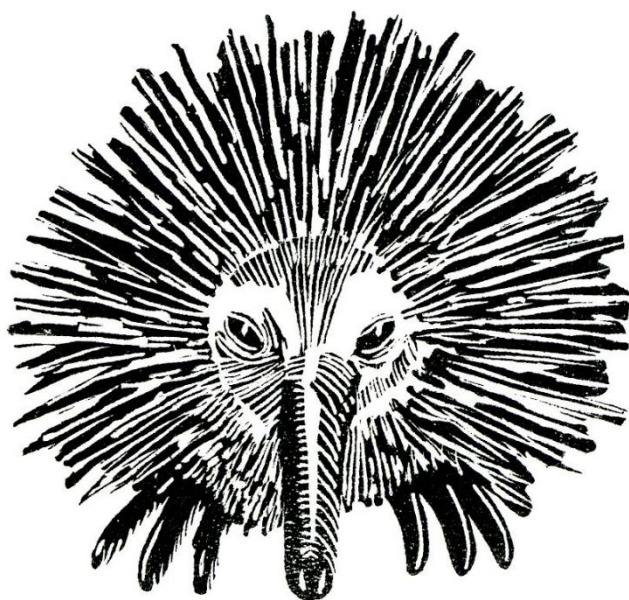
Fun and games

Colour in the animal heads

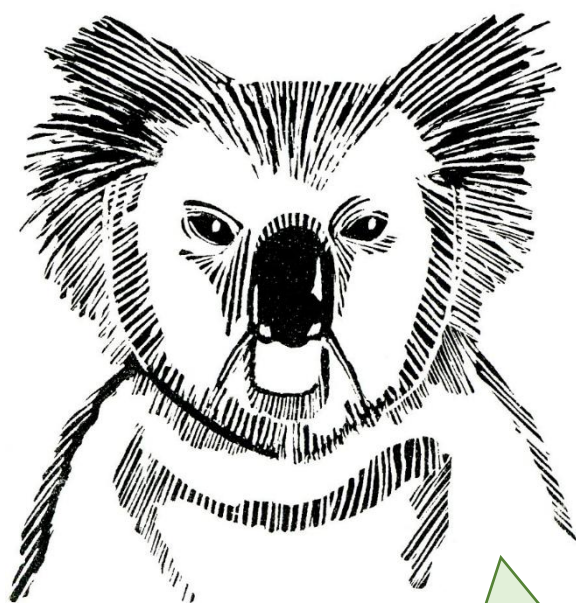
Kangaroo:
My poo looks
like little
black/brown
balls and are
green on the
inside!



Wombat:
My poo is
famous for being
square shaped!



Echidna:
You can see insect
exoskeletons
inside of my poo!



Koala:
My poo is dark
green and smells
like eucalyptus!

Tawny frogmouth at Cleland Wildlife Park



Tricked you, I'm not poo

Some birds of prey birds like owls cough up a pellet made of all the things they can't digest a few hours after eating. Smaller birds like currawongs and magpies may also produce these pellets.

They can include things like fur, hair and bones from small mammals and reptiles, wings and exoskeletons from beetles and other insects, and seeds.

The size of the pellet depends on the size of the bird. A magpie pellet is about 3cm long, but a larger bird like a barn owl can produce one that's about 6 or 7cm long.

Poop Rule:

Look don't touch!
All poop has germs that could make you sick, as it can carry harmful bacteria.



Bird pellet compared to a 10c coin, credit to DEW, environmentsa.gov.au

Cleland Events:

August: Mud & Play

Join Playgroup SA at Cleland Wildlife Park for their annual Mud & Play event for a range of fun nature-based activities and outdoor adventures. So much FUN for the whole family!

When: Friday 15th August 2025

Book online now!

October: Nature Festival

Theme for 2025 is 'Flow.'

When: 26th September – 12th October 2025

Hope to see you there!

'Coprophagy' is the act of eating poo. Dung beetles do this, and it plays a vital role in our environment by clearing waste!



**Manure piles
at Cleland
Wildlife Park**



Manure Pile

How do animals flush the toilet? Simple... they don't! So, what happens to their waste?

Some animals will use their droppings to protect their territory or attract a mate, so they will leave it out for the world to see.

Other animals bury their poo, as it can be dangerous for them if a predator smells or sees it. That way, no one knows they've been there.

Some animals (like rabbits) have special poo areas where they'll all go, away from where they eat or sleep of course!

At Cleland Wildlife Park, we collect all of the poo from animals and put it in a big pile. The tiny microbes in the poos turn the poo piles into rich fertilizer called 'manure.' It's added into the soil and around plants to help them grow.

Look Up!

If you're ever walking around and see little dark green poo pellets on the ground, remember to look up – you might just see a koala in a tree!