

Sydney's Wild World

Question. What has over 24,000 legs, has nine natural habitats, two storeys high, is wild and uniquely Australian?

AnsWER. Sydney Wildlife World, Australia's newest and wildest attraction.

By Lisa Treen with photography by Animax

Situated in the heart of Sydney's Darling Harbour, Wildlife World is home to the largest variety of Australian flora and fauna under one roof. It's a great location to meet our unique native neighbours as you walk through nine natural habitats and ecosystems.

The Butterfly Habitat is the first attraction visitors will encounter. Here you can sit in awe as these elegant and colourful creatures flutter and feed. The habitat has a variety of feeding stations that look like Chinese checker boards that contain various nectars. The butterflies are attracted to the same colours they would find in their natural habitat.

Did you know?

- Over 95% of all animals on the earth are invertebrates, and Australia has more invertebrates than any other country.
- The Sydney funnel-web is the most dangerous spider in the world, but only males are lethal, and their venom only affects people, not dogs or cats.
- Insects and spiders usually have at least six legs, twelve knees and elbows, possibly even four wings; they may have five hearts, but no lungs
- They usually have five or more eyes, and two of these may even be on the back of the head to see who is sneaking up on them.

Did you know?

- Butterflies have taste buds on their feet and they only eat nectar, which is sucked up from flowers through a long, coiled drinking straw called a proboscis instead of a mouth.
- In order to find the right flowers they are able to see colours and light that are not visible to humans and the taste buds on their feet allow them to test their food as soon as they land.
- Australia is home to approximately 416 species of butterflies.
- The Cairns Birdwing is the largest Australian butterfly with a wingspan of over 16 centimeters.
- Some butterflies have camouflaged underwings, so once they land and close their wings they become almost impossible to detect. Others do the opposite and advertise their presence with outrageously bright colours, but these colours also serve as a warning of their poisonous flesh.

Wildlife World also has a breeding laboratory where the metamorphoses of unattractive caterpillars make the transition to elegant butterflies. An adult butterfly only lives a few weeks and so they have a constant source of caterpillars waiting in the wings to make their stylish entrance. The Butterfly habitat features the Ulysses butterfly, the Moonlight Jewel, the Australian Lurcher butterfly, and the Cairns Birdwing.

Just around the corner you'll come across all things creepy and crawly—Invertebrates From large spiders and scorpions, cockroaches and crickets plus bees and bugs. All these little critters have one thing in common—they all lack backbone.

Australia is home to some delightfully weird and wonderful spiders and insects and this is a safe place to get up close to some quite dangerous creatures like the Sydney Funnel Web and the Red Back Spider.

Australia is home to the greatest number of reptiles on the planet and at last count we recorded a whopping 840 known species. We don't just win the prize for the largest amount of slippery and slithery creatures, as approximately 90% of our reptiles are found nowhere else on Earth.

Not surprisingly, Australia is home to the most venomous species of snake and we're the only continent where our deadly snakes outnumber the harmless ones.

Spread over two levels is the colourful Flight Canyon which is home to some of Australia's finest native birds like the Rainbow Lorikeet, King Parrot and Regent Bowerbird. This delightful habitat ensures you get a bird's eye view of over 20 unique species.

Did you know?

- Australia is the only continent on earth where the number of nocturnal animals is greater than the number of animals active during the day!
- The bilby is well equipped for nightlife as they have big dark eyes for seeing in the dark.
- Many nocturnal animals have loud voices to attract mates or warn off predators.
- Sugar Gliders get their name from their love of all things sweet like sap.



Flight Canyon also has an interactive bird show that is designed to educate and create awareness for conservation. Shows run twice daily and are free with entry.

Nighttime is when some of Australia's more interesting animals come out to hunt and play. If you've never seen a quoll or bilby, then Wildlife World will open up a completely new world for you. Their Nocturnal habitat has reverse lighting so it's dark during the day and light at night.

Most people think of Australian landscape as being a hot, dry and barren and that's very true when you realize that over 80% of Australia is considered arid or semi-arid. The Semi-arid Grassland Habitat is home to an interesting array of inhabitants like the Bridled Nailtail Wallaby and the Echidna and is modeled on the dry inlands of Australia.

For something completely different, the Rainforest Habitat has dense vegetation, emulating the rainforests found along the North Queensland coast. The habitat features Australia's largest (and some would say fiercest) bird, the Southern Cassowary. It's a large flightless bird that reaches two metres tall and comes from the same family as the Emu and Ostrich.

Did you know?

- Birds breathe faster, their hearts beat quicker and their body temperature is higher than any other animal.
- Most birds can see behind them as they can twist their heads right around.
- Birds evolved from dinosaurs and have scaly feet and their feathers are evolved scales.
- Hollow bones make birds' feather light
- Australia is home to over 770 species of birds and 50% of those are uniquely Australian.



No Australian wildlife environment would be complete without our most famous icon, the Koala. This habitat replicates a temperate, forest environment where these fascinating and cuddly creatures snack on their preferred food, the leaves of the eucalyptus tree.

Your final destination on this amazing tour of the nine habitats ends with the Wallaby Cliffs. Here you see a recreation of the habitat found around the Flinders Ranges. This high and dry habitat is home to the sweetest looking member of the kangaroo family, the Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby. As their name would suggest, these amazing and athletic marsupials have large, sturdy feet that have a yellowish tinge to them.

As Sydney Wildlife World is all under one roof, it makes for an ideal location whatever the weather. It's a truly unique experience that caters to time poor tourists.



Did you know?

- The Echidna is only one of three egg laying mammals in the world.
- The Nailtail Wallaby is so named as it has a nail like spur on the tip of its tail.
- The Echidna's tongue is covered in a sticky layer of mucous so it can easily access its food.
- If under threat, an Echidna will roll up in a ball to protect its soft belly, thus protecting itself with its spiky quills.
- Some mammals are equipped with extremely large ears to assist them to get rid of excessive heat during the day.

More importantly it delivers a clear message of conservation and protecting our unique flora and fauna. This exceptional location is committed to the care and conservation of the Australian environment and for this reason has joined forces with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC), through which the Sydney Wildlife World Conservation Foundation has been established to raise funds to help safeguard Australia's threatened wildlife and ecosystems.

Sydney Wildlife World
 Aquarium Pier, Darling Harbour
 Sydney NSW 2000
 Phone: 9333 9288 Fax: 9262 2385
 Open every day from 9am – 10pm

Did you know?

- The Koala is closely related to the wombat.
- A Koala's pouch points backwards to prevent its babies falling out.
- Rock Wallabies have a deep tread on their feet for excellent traction.
- Wombats have powerful front claws that they use to create complex burrows systems.