



EARTH BABIES

KANGAROO ISLAND ECHIDNA

(Tachyglossus aculeatus multiaculeatus)

Karta Pintingga, lands of the Kaurna people.

Kangaroo Island is natural wonderland off the coast of South Australia, known for its beautiful landscapes and unique plants and wildlife.

A Kangaroo Island Echidna lays a single egg and rolls it into her pouch. The egg hatches 10 days after it is laid, and the baby Echidna is known, adorably, as a puggle! It will drink milk from its mother and remain in her pouch for around 50 days, before leaving to snuggle in a burrow. These Echidnas are endangered and are only found on Karta Pintingga.

From underground burrows to rocky nests, earth babies have found ways to keep warm or cool - and most importantly safe - in all different places. Let's look at some other babies that begin life on land!



Antilopine Kangaroo

(*Osphranter antilopinus*)

A mother will be pregnant for 35 days before giving birth to a joey that will climb up into her pouch and stay there, nice and cosy, for 6 months! Once it emerges, the joey will learn to forage for food in the tropical grasslands.



Furry Tailed Prince

(*Anoplognathus flavipennis*)

These Christmas Beetles are found along the east coast of Australia. Their eggs are laid underground. Right before Christmas they emerge as adult beetles with spectacular colours!



Spotted-Tailed Quolls

(*Dasyurus maculatus*)

These endangered marsupials are found on the east coast of Australia. Newborn pups are only the size of a grain of a rice! They will spend weeks latched onto their mother's teat, drinking milk and growing stronger.



Gouldian Finch

(*Erythrura gouldiae*)

Native to northern Australia, these spectacular birds make their nests in tree hollows or termite mounds, sometimes even sharing their home with other Finch families. Tiny nestlings spend around 3 weeks in their nest before fledging.

NESTLING

A few days after a bird hatches, it is called a nestling - and when it starts flying, it is called a fledgling.

SPIDERLING

A baby spider!

Australian Golden Orb-Weaver

(*Nephila edulis*)

Orb-Weavers build big webs that shine gold in the sun. A female will usually produce just 1 egg sac in her life, but it will contain about 300 eggs! Hatched spiderlings stay close for a few days before heading off to make their own webs.



Land Mullet

(*Bellatorias major*)

Found mostly in rainforests, these sun-loving skinks give birth to live babies, with 4 to 8 born per season. The babies stay with their mum for a couple of years and will grow quite big - adults can be over 60 cm!

Long-Nosed Bandicoot

(*Perameles nasuta*)

These small, endangered animals have a gestation period of only 12.5 days - but the joeys spend almost 2 months growing in their mother's pouch!



Quokka

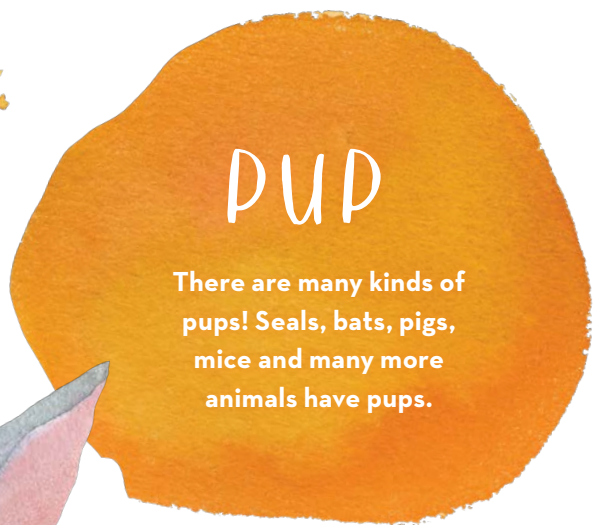
(*Setonix brachyurus*)

Found only in a small part of Western Australia - most famously on Rottnest Island - Quokkas usually give birth to 1 joey at a time, which will stay in its mother's pouch for half a year.



PUP

There are many kinds of pups! Seals, bats, pigs, mice and many more animals have pups.



Lord Howe Island Snail

(Varied species)

Lord Howe Island has a diverse ecosystem. Around 70 snail species are found only here, some so rare they were once thought to be extinct! Snails lay tiny eggs, often in big clutches, and newborn snails develop quickly after hatching.



Greater Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)

These long-eared marsupials live in shrubland, rocky soil and deserts. Greater Bilby mums usually have 2 babies who climb into their backwards-facing pouch and stay there for about 80 days.



Woylie

(*Bettongia penicillata*)

Also known as the Brush-Tailed Bettong, these critically endangered marsupials are found in the low grasses and shrublands of Western Australia. A Woylie joey will spend almost 100 days in its mother's pouch.



Bare-Nosed Wombat

(*Vombatus ursinus*)

A female wombat will carry her joey in her pouch for 5 months. The pouch faces backwards, keeping the joey dirt-free when the wombat digs burrows.



Pouched Frog

(*Assa darlingtoni*)

This tiny, vulnerable rainforest frog will lay eggs on land, usually hidden among leaf litter. Newly hatched babies live in a pouch on their dad until they develop into frogs a few months later.



Thorny Devil

(*Moloch horridus*)

In the arid deserts of Western Australia, female Thorny Devils lay 3 to 10 eggs deep in the hot soil and cover them to keep them safe. After a few months, hatchlings will dig out of their nest. They begin eating ants right away and will eat thousands of ants a day when fully grown!

