



## WILDLIFE OF AUSTRALIA

Louise Egerton and Jiri Lochman

**An authoritative compendium featuring the enormous diversity of Australia's wildlife and highlighting the need for conservation.**

The Australian continent, with its ancient Gondwanan origins and over 35 million years of isolation from other landmasses, has been the stage upon which some unique and wonderful animals have evolved.



With the help of over 70 zoologists, Egerton and Lochman have produced a magnificent work of reference featuring Australia's mammals, birds, reptiles, frogs, freshwater fishes and a cornucopia of invertebrate creatures. With over 550 colour photographs, the book provides considerable detail and insight into how these animals live.

### DISCUSSION TOPICS:

**History:** A fascinating story of animal evolution on the Australian continent, including the remarkable ways in which species have developed in order to survive in such an inhospitable land. Because of Australia's long isolation, many of its animals are endemic; that is, they live nowhere else on Earth.

**The changing landscape:** Climate change, drought and bushfires are changing the Australian landscape. Some Australian animals are on the brink of extinction due to the introduction of exotic pest species and as human development and spread of the built environment impede the lifestyles, genetic diversity and natural migration of many species.



**Conservation:** The biggest threat to the future survival of Australia's animals is ignorance of what is out there, the idea that "we won't care if we aren't aware". This book introduces readers of all ages to the links and interactions between animal groups in the environment, and it brings home the importance of protecting these webs of inter-dependency through conservation projects and improved environmental policies.



**SEPTEMBER CELEBRATES BIODIVERSITY MONTH IN AUSTRALIA.** For more details visit <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/month.html>



**PLEASE SEE OVER PAGE FOR FULL AUTHOR PROFILES ON LOUISE EGERTON AND JIRI LOCHMAN, ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOME INTERESTING FACTS.**



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### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**LOUISE EGERTON** arrived in Australia from England in 1986 and instantly fell in love with the country's natural world. She enrolled at the University of New England and, while working full time as an editor for the natural history publisher, Reed Books, she completed her degree in zoology and botany and went on to write her first book, *Know Your Birds*, which won a Whitley's Book Award. As series editor, she also received a Whitley's Award for the *Green Guides* collection of wildlife guides. Louise currently researches, edits, writes and publishes books that specialise in the life sciences, working closely with scientific authors to transform their specialist knowledge into accessible books. She lives on the northern beaches of Sydney.



**JIRI LOCHMAN** has a well-deserved reputation as one of Australia's most versatile and experienced wildlife photographers. Originally from Czechoslovakia where he studied zoology and worked in Liberec Zoo, he came to Australia in 1978 and settled in Western Australia working for a short time at Perth Zoo. Soon after, he and his wife Marie set up a photographic agency, Lochman Transparencies, which they continue to run in between photographic assignments. Jiri and Marie are recipients of the coveted Australian Geographic Award for Excellence in Photography. Jiri is also author and co-author of several books, among them *Australia's Unique Wildlife* and *Wildflowers of Western Australia*. He is a dedicated wildlife photographer, well known for taking pictures of animals behaving naturally and without causing stress, as if the photographer wasn't there.

### NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS BY JIRI LOCHMAN

- ▶ In 1985 he was the first person to photograph a little rock wallaby now known by its Aboriginal name of Monjon. This was the last known unphotographed macropod and it led to a major article in *GEO Magazine*.
- ▶ In 1992 he discovered a new species of freshwater turtle.
- ▶ In 2004 his find of a Thylacine jawbone in the Kimberley was reported in *The Australian*.

### ON THE PHOTOGRAPHY

An important aspect of Jiri Lochman's wildlife photography is the amount of time he spends in the bush, searching for and observing creatures that he wants to photograph. Sometimes he spends a week sitting every night at the same spot until the animal he hopes to photograph accepts him as part of its environment. 'That can lead to some interesting situations. When I was working on photographing Eastern Pygmy Possums (see p 47) after three nights staring into darkness, I just could not hold anymore, so I decided around 2 am to have a little nap. When I returned to my hide at 4 am I could not get my equipment to work. To my dismay I discovered that while I was napping a Bush Rat had chewed through all the wire connections between the camera and flashes.'

**FOREWORD BY PROFESSOR MICHAEL ARCHER**, former Director at the Australian Museum, now Dean of Science at the University of New South Wales.



### SOME INTERESTING FACTS

- ▶ Australia hosts the top 10 most venomous snakes in the world.
- ▶ As a rule, mammals can not breathe through their skin but scientists have discovered that babies of the rare carnivorous marsupial, Julia Creek Dunnart, can, when no bigger than a grain of rice.
- ▶ Sea Turtles travel the world for years but always return to the beach they were born on to lay their eggs.
- ▶ A bat's sperm can remain alive and healthy over an entire winter.
- ▶ Families of White-winged Choughs sometimes kidnap juvenile birds from neighbouring families and use them as helpers in raising their own chicks.



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