

ENRICHMENT DESIGN

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- 1x Enrichment resource information, printed or displayed digitally
- 1x Recycled materials for building such as egg cartons, craft supplies, toilet rolls and /or natural materials (sticks, bark etc)
- 1x Printed copy of the student worksheet for each student or group

LESSON GUIDE:

- Watch the lesson presented by Taronga's Education Team, all about echidnas. This lesson will help students gain an understanding of what and how echidnas eat, as well as provide some examples of enrichment feeders used at Taronga Zoo.
- Allow students time to plan their design in their student workbooks.
- Provide students with the building materials listed above and let them build the prototype they have designed in their workbooks.
- Have students present their design to the class and discuss how it will work and what natural feeding behaviour it will encourage in the echidna.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

[Echidna Keeper Talk on Enrichment](#)

[Learn more about enrichment](#)

[Taronga TV Echidna enrichment video](#)

WHAT IS ENRICHMENT?

Enrichment is an important aspect of animal husbandry in zoos.

Enrichment tries to make life at the zoo as natural and stimulating as possible.

The purpose is to induce as near to natural behaviour as possible and promote mental and physical activity.

Use some of the recycled materials to build an enrichment feeding device for an echidna. Don't forget to read the information about what and how echidnas eat!



WHAT DO ECHIDNAS EAT?

The echidnas' preferred diet is termites, but they will also eat ants, beetles, worms and other invertebrates. Swarming ants will attack an echidna, so they prefer termites, seeking out the succulent nymphs and queens. Echidnas obtain most of their water needs from the animals they eat, but they will also occasionally drink from pools or lick droplets of water from plants moistened by dew or rain.



<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/factsheet36echidna.pdf>



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HOW DO ECHIDNAS EAT?

Echidnas forage through rotting logs, stumps and leaf litter in search of termites and other invertebrates.

An echidna will use its fine sense of smell to find food and has a beak that is highly sensitive to electrical stimuli. It tracks down its prey and catches it with its long, sticky tongue. Echidnas do not have teeth and they grind their food between the tongue and the bottom of the mouth.



<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/factsheet3Echidnas.pdf>



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STUDENT BOOKLET

When designing enrichment items for zoo animals, the enrichment design team follows a detailed checklist to ensure their prototype is safe and suitable for the animal. Below is a scaled-back version of this checklist. When you are designing your enrichment feeder, use this checklist to make sure your design is suitable.

SAFETY

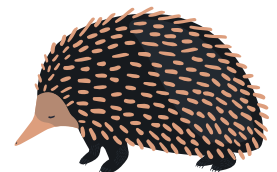
- ☐ The device (including fixings/attachments) will prevent animals from becoming entrapped or entangled.
- ☐ The items holes will not entrap body parts.
- ☐ The enrichment can be removed quickly and easily in an emergency.
- ☐ The size of the item is large enough that it cannot be swallowed by the animal.

FOOD

- ☐ The device has the ability for keepers to include food from the animals daily food allowance.

RESPECT

- ☐ The enrichment item maintains Taronga's philosophies in developing animals in a way that celebrates the nature of the species and promotes natural behaviour.
- ☐ The prototype is natural-looking and compliments the exhibit design.



STUDENT BOOKLET

What natural feeding behaviour do you want to encourage with your enrichment feeder?

Keeping in mind your behavioural goal, sketch and label your best idea for an enrichment prototype. Don't forget to use the enrichment standards checklist to help you.

