ANIMAL LEARNING CENTER · NOT CURRENTLY AT THE ZOO

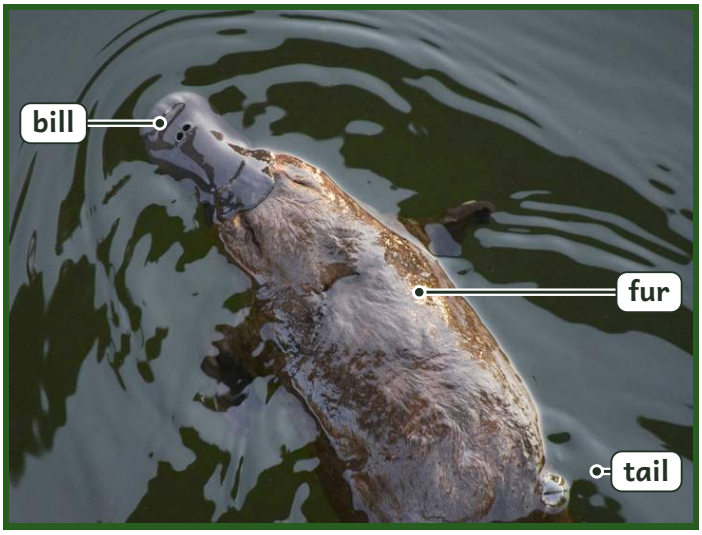
PLATYPUS

Ornithorhynchus anatinus

GRADES K–2

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

Teachers: read this page aloud, one part at a time (about 5 minutes). Children follow along and say the bold words.



A platypus swims in a creek.

Its body

A platypus has a **bill** like a duck.
It has fur and lays eggs!
Its bill can sense food.

Its home (habitat)

It lives in Australia.
It lives in streams and lakes.
It digs a **burrow**.
Laws protect it.



Lives in parts of this area ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

Its food

It eats bugs, shrimp and crayfish.
It shuts its eyes to hunt underwater.

Its babies (life cycle)

A mother lays 1 to 3 eggs.
They hatch in about 10 days.
The babies drink her milk.
Milk comes through her skin!

Fun facts

Its fur glows under special light!

Words to know

bill: the mouth of a platypus
burrow: a hole dug to live in
sense: to feel or notice

Talk about it

1. How does it find food with its eyes shut?
2. What makes a platypus special?
3. How do babies get milk?

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/platypus/ · **Sources:** Australian Museum; UNSW Sydney; Zoos Victoria; Victorian Government; Queensland Government; Australian Platypus Conservancy; Manger & Pettigrew (1996); Fish et al. (2002); Anich et al. (2020).
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A) · 1-LS1-2 (3.1.1.B)
Plumpton Park Zoo · 1416 Telegraph Rd, Rising Sun, MD 21911 · (410) 658-6850 · plumptonparkzoo.org · a 501(c)(3) nonprofit zoo · Photo: Michael Jerrard on Unsplash

PLATYPUS

Before and after you read

 © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
Teachers may copy and share this sheet freely as long as they credit Plumpton Park Zoo.

PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

GRADES K–2

Name _____ **Date** _____

Before you read · 5 minutes

What do you think? Circle **YES** or **NO**.

1. A platypus lays eggs. **YES** **NO**
2. A platypus has feathers. **YES** **NO**
3. Its bill can sense food. **YES** **NO**
4. It hunts with its eyes open. **YES** **NO**

Look closely · with a partner

Look at the photo on page 1. Check each one you see.

- ☐ bill
- ☐ fur
- ☐ tail
- ☐ water

Where does it live? Find the dark part of the map, then circle.

Australia Africa Europe

After you read · 10 minutes

Draw a platypus swimming with its eyes shut.

Draw here

A platypus has _____

I learned that _____

ADJUST IT Kindergarten: read everything aloud; children talk and draw, and an adult writes their words. **Grade 2:** children read page 1 on their own. **Grades 3–5:** use the regular platypus sheet on Teacher Resources. **Second source:** read about this animal in your class database or a library book too, then ask what both said and what was new. **Answers:** 1 yes, 2 no, 3 yes, 4 no. Map answer: Australia.

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/platypus/ · Page 1 of this sheet has the words and picture this page refers to.
Science, grades K–1: Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): K-LS1-1 · 1-LS1-2 · Pennsylvania (STEELS): 3.1.K.A · 3.1.1.B
Reading and writing, grade 1: Maryland and Delaware: RI.1.1 · RI.1.7 · RI.1.9 · W.1.8 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.1.B · CC.1.2.1.G · CC.1.2.1.I · CC.1.4.1.W
Plumpton Park Zoo · 1416 Telegraph Rd, Rising Sun, MD 21911 · (410) 658-6850 · plumptonparkzoo.org · a 501(c)(3) nonprofit zoo