ANIMAL LEARNING CENTER · NOT CURRENTLY AT THE ZOO

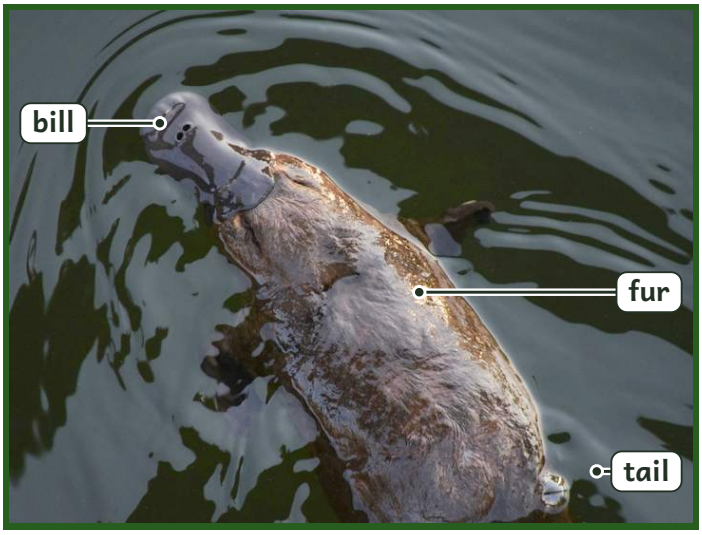
PLATYPUS

Ornithorhynchus anatinus

GRADES K–2

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
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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

K-LS1-1

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

Its babies (life cycle)

1-LS1-2

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

K-LS1-1 1-LS1-2

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) › Its food · Talk 1 · **1-LS1-2** (3.1.1.B) › Its babies · Talk 3
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PLATYPUS

Before and after you read

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PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

GRADES K–2

Name _____ **Date** _____

Before you read · 5 minutes

K-LS1-1

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

1. A platypus has feathers. **YES** **NO**
2. A platypus lays eggs. **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 no, 2 yes, 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 standards (NGSS · PA STEELS): K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A) › Before 3, 4 · **1-LS1-2** (3.1.1.B) › page 1
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
Reading, grade 2: Maryland and Delaware: RI.2.1 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.2.B
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