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The big job of the dung beetle: Page 2

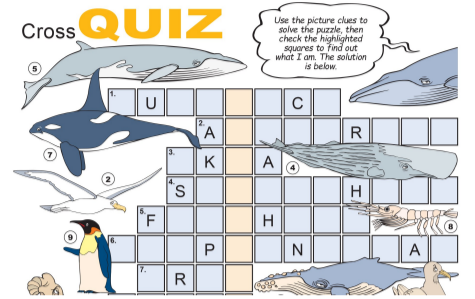


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Solve the marine animal quiz: Page 2

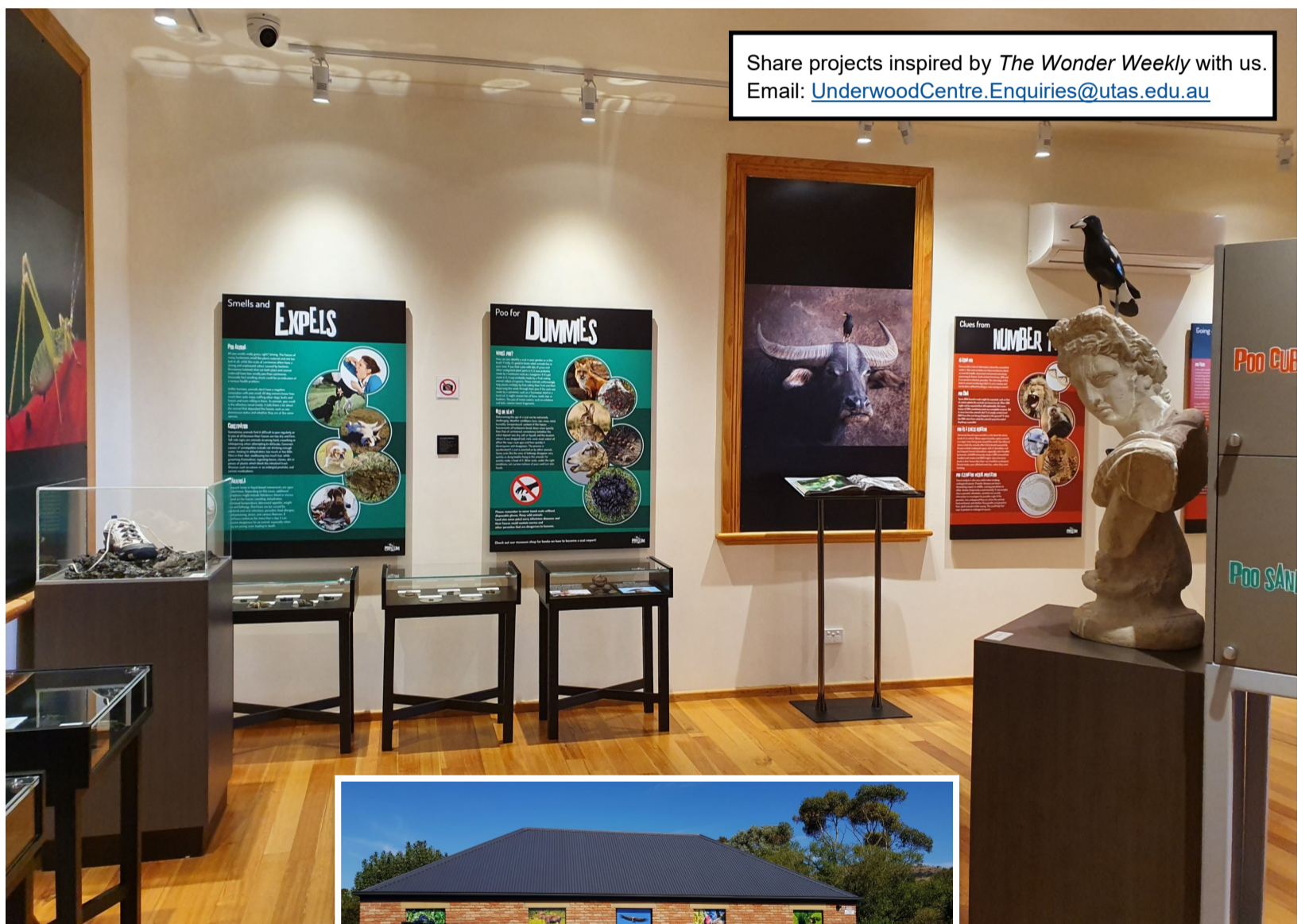


# POO FACTS

## PART TWO

We hope you enjoyed Part One of our series on the fascinating subject of poo. But too much information about poo is barely enough. A visit to the Pooseum at Richmond, in southern Tasmania, has inspired Part Two.

AT the Pooseum talking about poo is not taboo. In fact it is highly encouraged. Have you ever looked into a bird's nest after the chicks have departed and wondered why they are spotlessly clean? Where does the poo go? Did you know bears don't poo during hibernation? Instead they produce a dry, hard mass in their colon which acts as a plug. Did you know some animals can eject their poos very long distances? Did you know a certain type of bird poo is used as a beauty treatment for the face? You can find out about these little known facts, and much more, at the Pooseum. Located in the main street of Richmond, near Hobart, it was established in July, 2018.



Share projects inspired by *The Wonder Weekly* with us. Email: [UnderwoodCentre.Enquiries@utas.edu.au](mailto:UnderwoodCentre.Enquiries@utas.edu.au)

It is fair to say the Pooseum is filled to the brim with information panels, videos on touch screens and other interactive displays, such as the 'Digestion Room'.

It is all designed to educate and entertain, and the Pooseum achieves both aims.

The great news for Children's University Tasmania members is the Pooseum has signed on as a Learning Destination.

Members can earn up to two hours in their Passports to Learning for visiting the Pooseum.

You will learn:

- Why not every poo smells nasty.
- How dung from farms and zoos is used to produce electricity.

- Why a dog in Queensland tracks koala poo.
- How Canadian owls use poo to catch their dinner.
- Why looking like bird poo is life-saving.
- How bats avoid soiling themselves.
- Why you shouldn't walk barefoot on a tropical beach.
- Why South Africans put antelope droppings in their mouth.
- How some insect larvae



- kill termites with flatulence.
- Why Amazon in India sells cowpats online.
- How driverless cars can become disabled by bird poo.
- Why a table in an English museum is made from
- How long it takes an elephant to do a poo.
- Why some beetle larvae have a telescopic anus.

Your challenge is to research the answers to some of these puzzlers.

You can pick out one or two from the list above, or research as

many as you like. Alternatively, try coming up with some poo facts of your own by searching online or at your local library.

Perhaps if you have taken on last week's challenge of looking for native animal scats in your area, you have uncovered some interesting information already.

Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passports for this challenge at the discretion of their school coordinators.

Find out more: [pooseum.com.au](http://pooseum.com.au)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Pooseum](http://www.facebook.com/Pooseum)



Picture: iStock/ CreativeNature\_nl

# Rollers having a ball

DUNG beetles, as their name suggests, eat poo.

You probably knew that, and you have also, most likely, seen pictures like the one above which show dung beetles rolling poo into large balls.

But not all dung beetles are *rollers*.

Some, the *tunnellers*, bury the dung wherever they find it, while others, the *dwellers*, just live in manure.

In fact there are many thousands of different species of dung beetles.

Australia alone has about 500 species of native dung beetles and 23 introduced species.

You might be wondering why anyone would want to introduce a dung beetle to a country with 500 species of its own?

The reason is that most of the natives have evolved to eat marsupial poo, but are not as effective in processing the moist poo of domestic farm animals.

The Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, at the University of Tasmania, do a lot of research into the use of introduced dung beetles on Tasmanian dairy farms.

The beetles provide a number of benefits.

For one thing, they move most of the

dung from the pasture, which cows eat, to the soil.

This in turn provides the soil with valuable nutrients, which improves plant growth.

It also reduces the number of flies and parasites in the paddock.

Dung beetle tunnels also allow water to penetrate the soil, reducing run-off after heavy rainfall.

But back to those curious *rollers*.

The rolling dung beetle has an acute sense of smell for finding poo.

The males select a piece of dung and roll into a ball, partly it seems to impress

females, who attach themselves to the dung ball as the male rolls it away.

The male uses the position of the sun, the moon and the Milky Way to navigate.

When they finally arrive at their chosen destination, the couple dig a hole and bury the dung ball, and the female lays eggs inside it.

Once hatched, the babies eat their way out.

Often the male has to battle other males who seek to steal their dung ball, and the fight can last for hours.

It's not an easy life.

## Cross QUIZ

Use the picture clues to solve the puzzle, then check the highlighted squares to find out what I am. The solution is below.

ARTWORK: www.johnpolivyfarmer.com.au/

1. U C  
2. A R  
3. K A  
4. S H  
5. F H  
6. P N A  
7. R  
8. K L  
9. N I

SOLUTION: 1. Humpback, 2. Albatross, 3. Skua, 4. Sperm whale, 5. Fin whale, 6. Elephant seal, 7. Orca, 8. Krill, 9. Penguin, MYSTERY ANIMAL: Blue whale

## Sport quiz

- Which Tasmanian cyclist finished third in the 2020 Tour de France?
- Who is the captain of the Australian men's Test cricket team?
- Cathy Freeman won the Olympic gold medal in the women's 400 metres in which year?
- How many points is a foul shot worth in basketball?
- Tayla Harris is a star of which ball sport?
- In which sport might you score a birdie?
- Which team finished on top of the AFL ladder at the end of the 2020 home-and-away season?
- How many swimmers make up a relay team in swimming?
- In which Tasmanian town is the famous oval known as "The Gravel"?
- In which sport is their a participant known as a coxswain, or cox?

Answers: 1. Richie Porte; 2. Tim Paine; 3. 2000; 4. One; 5. Australian Rules football (AFL); 6. Golf; 7. Port Adelaide; 8. Four; 9. Queenstown; 10. Rowing.