The WONDER WEEKLY

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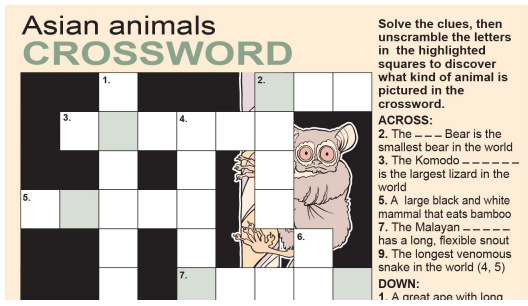


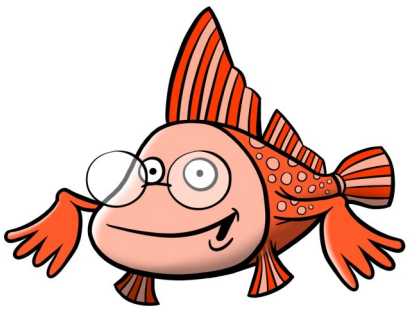
THIS little newspaper, *The Wonder Weekly,* began in March this year, in response to COVID-19 and home schooling.

It proved popular, so the Peter Underwood Centre has continued to provide weekly editions throughout the year.

As you have all headed into your school holidays, *The Wonder Weekly* is having a holiday as well, but is set to be back in February 2021.

We have covered a lot of topics in our 39 editions to date, so we thought our final challenge of 2020 should be a quiz.

All the answers to the questions to follow can be found in past editions of *The Wonder Weekly,*



which be found here: www.utas.edu.au/underwood-centre/publications-and-resources/the-wonder-weekly

As is always the case, Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passports for this challenge, at the discretion of their school coordinator (but not until first term next year.)

Help Professor Finn find the answers

1. What type of fish is Professor Finn (left)?
2. What is the full name of IMAS?
3. Tasmania has 12 endemic species of bird, can you name one?
4. Can you name an "invasive mammal" present in Tasmania?
5. It circles the Earth roughly every 92 minutes and completes 15.5 orbits per day. What is it?
6. Which island is home to the volcano Big Ben?
7. *Prosqualadon davidis* was an ancient what?
8. Which albatross is unique to Tasmania?
9. Which island was home to the Macquarie Harbour Penal Station?
10. Tasmanian world champion swimmer Ariarne Titmus grew up in which city?
11. Which facility is home to a 26-metre former-NASA telescope and a 12m AuScope telescope?
12. What was the name of Matthew Flinders' cat?
13. What is the third closest planet in our solar system to the Sun?
14. Musophobia is a fear of what?
15. What is the name of Australia's new icebreaker?
16. Which expensive coffee is found in the poo of palm civets?
17. What is the special protein found in miracle fruit?
18. Newdegate Cave formed in which type of rock?
19. Melaleuca is the only known breeding site of which endangered bird?
20. What is the world's largest coral reef system?

"Education perhaps more than anything else is a passport to a better life." - Peter Underwood AC

Tassie devils fighting back

SOME great news has emerged from University of Tasmania scientists - Tasmanian devils are likely to survive the devil facial tumour disease (DFTD).

The disease has devastated Tasmanian devils in recent years, but our feisty little carnivores are fighting back and the spread of the disease is slowing.

For the past 20 years, researchers from the University of Tasmania's School of Natural Sciences, including Professor Menna Jones, have led the research into DFTD.

Professor Jones played a major role in discovering the impacts the disease was having on populations around Tasmania, and established a research program in 2004.

This has grown into an international collaboration funded by the US National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health, as well as the Australian Research Council.

"In the early years of the epidemic we were very concerned for the future of the devil, however in the last few years our research has hinted that the devil is evolving resistance to the disease," Professor Jones said.

"We now have strong evidence that the epidemic phase is coming to an end, and that DFTD is becoming an endemic disease.

"That means the devil will live with it as part of its normal life without this disease spelling the end."

A research team led by Washington State University biologist, Professor Andrew Storfer, has been using a special technique called `phylodynamics', which scientists usually use to track viruses such as influenza, to trace DFTD.

"I think we're going to see continued survival of devils,

FRONTLINE RESEARCH: University of Tasmania disease ecologist, Professor Menna Jones, above, has led the fight to save Tasmanian devils. Dr Rodrigo Hamede, right, with a devil in North-West Tasmania. Pictures: Eddie Safarik/ University of Tasmania.

initially at lower numbers and densities than original population sizes, but extinction seems really unlikely even though it was predicted a decade ago," Professor Storfer said.

Since it was first identified in 1996, Tasmanian devil facial tumour disease has reduced populations of the iconic marsupial by 80 per cent.

The devils spread the infection when they fight and bite each other on the face.

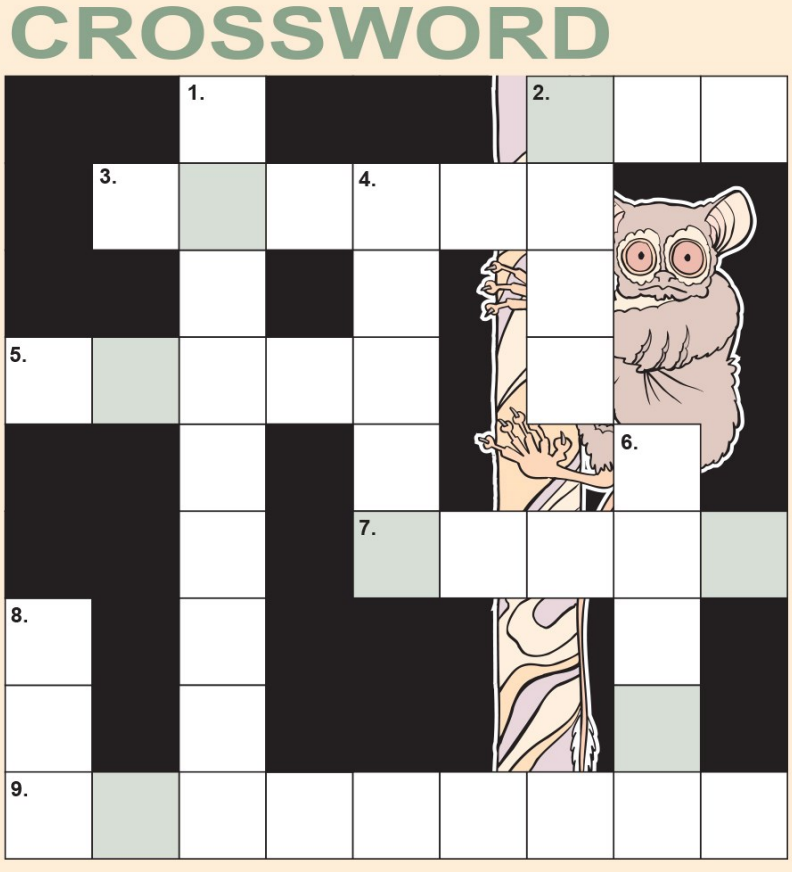
Professor Jones said the study findings were promising for the devil and also for the Tasmanian ecosystem.

"The decline and low populations of devils have led to a rise in populations of invasive predators like feral cats and black rats, which prey on native animals and are causing populations of bandicoots and small mammals like Antechinus and native rats to disappear at an alarming rate," she said.

"Recovery of the devil will reverse these trends and once again make Tasmania an island ark for mammal conservation in Australia."

The new findings might bring an end to the program of releasing devils bred in captivity into the wild.

Asian animals CROSSWORD



Solve the clues, then unscramble the letters in the highlighted squares to discover what kind of animal is pictured in the crossword.

ACROSS:

2. The _ _ _ Bear is the smallest bear in the world
3. The Komodo _ _ _ _ _ _ is the largest lizard in the world
5. A large black and white mammal that eats bamboo
7. The Malayan _ _ _ _ _ has a long, flexible snout
9. The longest venomous snake in the world (4, 5)

DOWN:

1. A great ape with long arms and sparse red hair
2. The _ _ _ _ Leopard lives high in the mountains
4. The _ _ _ _ _ Squirrel glides from tree to tree
6. The largest member of the cat family
8. Shaggy haired relative of cows

SOLUTION: ACROSS: 2. Sun, 3. Dragon, 5. Panda, 7. Tapir, 9. King Cobra.
DOWN: 1. Orangutan, 2. Snow, 4. Giant, 6. Tiger, 8. Yak (Scrambled word: Tarsier)

DID YOU KNOW?

Tarsiers live in Southeast Asia. They hunt at night and use their large eyes to find insects, lizards and other small animals.

Artwork: www.johnpollyfarmer.com.au/