The WONDER WEEKLY

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Plucky primates are a rare find indeed

IF you have visited Zoodoo you will no doubt have enjoyed observing the cotton-top tamarins.

We love these pint-sized monkeys at *The Wonder Weekly*, and not just because of their distinctive fluffy white crest that makes them look like 1980s rock stars.

Not only do they have the best mullets/ mohawks in the animal world, but cotton-top tamarins also have the capacity to raise their crest when alarmed or excited, to make themselves look bigger or more impressive.

While we are impressed, given cotton-top tamarins only grow to about 20-25cm tall, and weigh less than half a kilogram, we are not sure how successful this tactic is.

Cotton-top tamarins are also impressive communicators.

It is believed they can make 38 different sounds, some too high-pitched to be heard by humans.

Another interesting fact is they mainly give birth to twins.

Today's edition of *The Wonder Weekly* is all about endemic species, or animals that are only found in one part of the world.

In the wild, cotton-top tamarins are only found in the forests of north-western Colombia.

Sadly cotton-top tamarins are one of the most-critically endangered primates in the world.

There are only about 6000 left in the wild, mainly due to habitat loss.

You can find out more about cotton-top tamarins by visiting Zoodoo at Tea Tree.

Children's University Tasmania members can gain free entry to Zoodoo upon presentation of their passports.

Normal entry fees apply for other family members.

Early visitors to the Galápagos Islands did not think much of the resident marine iguanas.

Charles Darwin described them as "clumsy and disgusting".

There are 11 very similar subspecies of marine iguana on the Galápagos Islands, all of which forage in the sea for algae and seaweed.

Scientists believe they emerged from land iguanas that drifted out to sea millions of years ago on logs and other floating debris and landed on the Galapagos Islands.

From that point, they then evolved in various ways to suit their environments, with nearly all the islands of the Galápagos inhabited by marine iguanas of unique size and colour.

IMAGES: iStock/ premkallat/ kjorgen,

HOMEBODIES

TASMANIA is home to many endemic species.

There are our many unique mammal species, with the Tasmanian devil being the most famous.

Others include the Tasmanian pademelon and long-tailed mouse.

These animals have become extinct on mainland Australia, but Tasmania's island status has helped protect them.

Tasmania has fewer introduced predators and a relatively large amount of intact habitat.

There are also 12 species of birds in Tasmania which are found nowhere else on Earth.

Seven species of lizards are endemic to Tasmania.

Of the 11 known species of frogs in Tasmania, three are endemic.

Nearly half of the invertebrate species (animals which do not have a backbone) found within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage area are also found nowhere else.

That's not to mention Tasmania's amazing endemic flora.

Tasmania's endemic species are often featured in *The Wonder Weekly,* and will be again.

This time we have decided to look a little further abroad.

Endemic species are often found on islands and two well known locations are Madagascar and the Galápagos Islands.

Madagascar, off the east coast of Africa is the world's second largest island country.

It includes the island of Madagascar and numerous smaller islands.

The Galápagos Islands are an isolated chain of islands off the west coast of Ecuador, South America.

About 90% of all plant and animal species found in Madagascar are endemic.

They include 103 species and subspecies of lemurs, two-thirds of the world's chameleon species, more than 100 bird species and more than 100 fish species.

While the unusual plant and animal life on the Galápagos Islands - including huge cacti, marine iguanas, giant tortoises and many subspecies of mockingbirds and finches - famously inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution following his visit in 1835.

But why do these island locations have a such as variety of species?

Certainly their isolation from continental land masses plays a major role.

Darwin's theory of natural selection is that living things that have the most helpful traits for their environment have more chance of survival.

These living things pass on their helpful traits to their young.

As a result plants and animal species change over time and adapt to the environments in which they are living.

How much they change depends on how different their environment is from other locations.

The Galápagos Islands are not only isolated but also unique. They were formed by volcanoes, so the landscape includes many mountains, craters and cliffs.

The island receive very little rainfall and the temperatures are fairly low.

Much of the island's wildlife has also been impacted by a dependence on the surrounding sea for food.

Can you identify the endemic animals on Page 2 of today's edition of *The Wonder Weekly?*

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

For an additional challenge, try finding out a fun fact about each of them.

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

Who? What? Where?

Can you match the pictures to the cool animals listed below?

CHALLENGE

Common name:

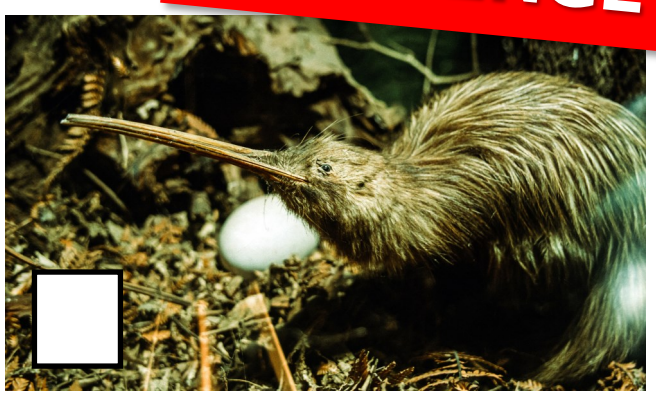
Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:



Common name:

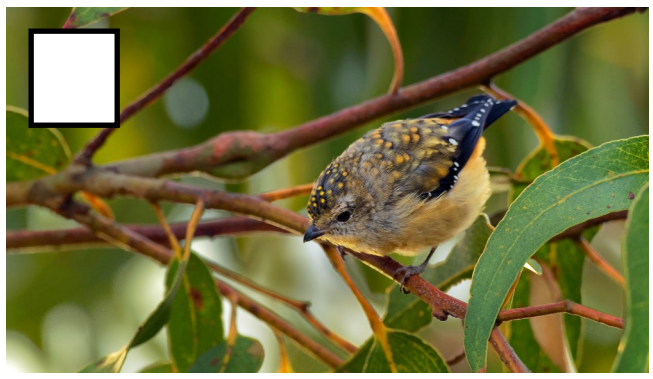
Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:



Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name: Galápagos giant tortoise

Scientific name: *Chelonoidis niger*

Endemic location: The Galápagos Islands (Ecuador)

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

Common name:

Scientific name:

Endemic location:

1. Ptunarra brown butterfly
2. Thorny devil
3. Golden jellyfish
4. Texas blind salamander
5. Galápagos giant tortoise
6. Matschie's tree kangaroo
7. Philippine crocodile
8. Diademed sifaka
9. Nosy Hara leaf chameleon
10. Kiwi
11. Pellucid hawk moth
12. Forty-spotted pardalote