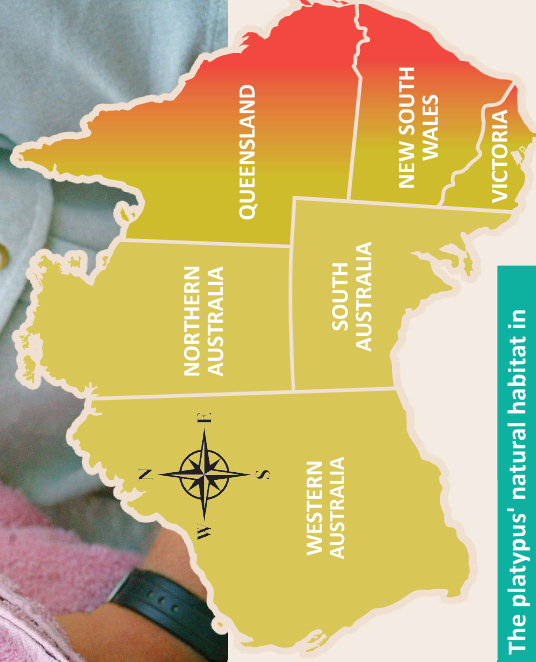


BIG NEWS

PLATYPUS IN PERIL



A zookeeper holds a baby platypus. The platypus has been around since the time of the dinosaurs and is one of only five types of mammal that lays eggs.



The platypus' natural habitat in eastern Australia is under threat

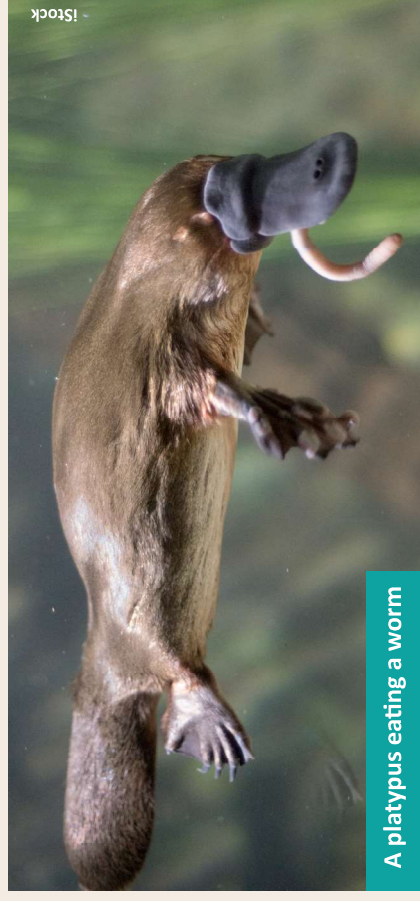
SCIENTISTS have warned that the platypus could become extinct if Australia's government doesn't take action.

The strange-looking river animal is one of the many creatures that are unique to Australia. A new study says that there are three main things putting the platypus in danger:

- habitat destruction (destroying the places the animals live)
- pollution
- drought (lack of rain)

Australia has been suffering from increasingly severe droughts in recent years, but more water is also being used for farming and more dams are being built. All of this means that more and more platypus habitat is being destroyed or drying up. Pollution also means that the places platypuses live are becoming toxic, and animals such as foxes and cats are being blamed for some platypus deaths.

"We should learn from the peril facing the koala to understand what happens when we ignore the warning signs," said Professor Brendan Wintle, one of the study's authors.



A platypus eating a worm

Questions on: 'Platypus in peril'

1) What does the word **peril** mean?

2) Which country is the platypus from?

3) Which **two** animals are being blamed for some platypus deaths?

☐

foxes

☐

koalas

☐

dogs

☐

cats

The platypus is one of only _____ types of mammal that lays eggs. A new study says that there are _____ things putting the platypus in danger.

4) What type of animal is a platypus?

5) What **three** things are putting the platypuses in danger?

6) Fill in the missing numbers:

7) Can you describe a platypus in your own words?

8) Do you think it is important to protect animals that are in danger of becoming extinct? Explain why/why not.