

# The Bush

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## 5 remarkable facts about Australian fauna

- Emus' stomachs have been found to contain stones, shards of glass, nails and car keys: anything small and hard enough to grind their food and help digestion.
- Murray cod are great carnivores, making meals of other fish, crustaceans, ducks, mice, snakes and turtles. They grow up 2 metres long and more than 110 kilograms, and can live for seventy years, an evolutionary trait developed to ensure that adults participate in at least one La Niña breeding season.
- Malleefowl are on the dour side, obsessive and slightly comic, but they are above all industrious mound builders. At first sight, settlers sometimes took their constructions for Aboriginal burial mounds or earth ovens, although the birds themselves are not much bigger than a domestic fowl.
- Black snakes are some 2 metres long and thick as an adult's ankle. They are shy, and while venomous, in the entire history of European civilisation in Australia there seems to be no recorded instance of a human dying from a black snake's bite.
- The kangaroo's efficiency of locomotion derives from the geometry of its legs and the elasticity of its tendons: the faster it hops, the harder it lands; the harder it lands, the more energy is stored and released in the next hop.
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