

# Colonial Australia

Based on *Topsy-Turvy world: How Australian animals puzzled early explorers* by Kirsty Murray

The Year 5-7 curriculum includes a study of colonial Australia. Kirsty Murray's *Topsy Turvy World* contains some fascinating historical information linking some well-known historical characters with reported first sightings by Europeans of our unique fauna.

## Parallel time lines

- Characters and Events in colonial history
- Emergence of sightings of unique animals

## Guided Exploration of the book to locate

- Animals spotted by Captain James Cook and his botanist, Sir Joseph Banks in 1770. pp 3, 49
- What was the stuffed animal Joseph Banks sent to English painter George Stubbs? p8
- About how many of these creatures did John Hunter who became Australia's 2nd Governor witness flying over the settlement in early 1791. p50
- What strange creature did sailors on the French vessel, *Recherche* spot in Tasmania whilst they were searching for a French ship that disappeared in 1788? (1792)
- What Tasmanian animal belongs to a family of marsupials called Dasyurids? p31 (1806)
- What was it that John Hunter sent to the famous English naturalist, George Shaw p11. (1810)
- When did Governor John Hunter draw that picture of a kangaroo on p3?
- "Delicious," announced Captain William Bligh, after he'd eaten a mouthful. What was it? p17 (1792)
- Captain Arthur Phillip's main problem in the early years was that there was not enough food for everybody but what feast did he miss while he was exploring the countryside? p55 (1788) (We discover this noted in 1802 by a marine from the First Fleet as he writes of an incident that occurred just weeks after they arrived in 1788.)
- What meat had sailors shipwrecked on the Furneaux Islands been eating before they were rescued by the famous explorer Matthew Flinders? p43 (1798)
- New South Wales' Surveyor General, Thomas Mitchell drew a picture to send to a naturalist in England. What type of bandicoot was it? p33 (1836)

## The Early Years

1770 – Captain James Cook and his botanist Sir Joseph Banks aboard the Endeavour explore Australia's east coast.

1788 -1792 - 1<sup>st</sup> Governor Captain Arthur Phillip

1795 – 1800 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Governor John Hunter

1800 – 1806 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Governor Philip Gidley King

1806 – 1809 - 4<sup>th</sup> Governor William Bligh

1810 – 1821 - 5<sup>th</sup> Governor Lachlan Macquarie

1821 – 1825 - 6<sup>th</sup> Governor Thomas Brisbane

The Answers Sequentially:-

1 **1770** While Captain Cook's ship, the *Endeavour*, was being repaired on the Endeavour River, they saw a bat we now call the grey-headed flying fox p49. On pp 4,5 we about sailors spotting animal that we now call the kangaroo. Did you spot Sir Joseph Banks in the picture on p4?

2 **1788** David Collins, a marine that was with the First Fleet wrote in 1802 that about six weeks after the arrival of the First Fleet (1788) there was much talk about "big leggy birds". One of the birds was shot by the governor's game killer. Officers cooked the bird but Captain Arthur Phillip was away exploring so he wasn't one of the first to taste the meat. David Collins wrote that the meat was "Very well flavoured".

3 **1791** p50 In early 1791, John Hunter who later became the 2<sup>nd</sup> governor was a witness as more than 20 000 flying foxes swooped across the settlement.

3 **1792** p 17 Captain William Bligh had moored his ship off the coast of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and come ashore with his men to explore. They killed, cooked and tasted echidna.

4 **1792** p 23 Whilst sailors on the *Recherche* were off the coast of Tasmania searching for a French ship that disappeared in 1788, they spotted what became known as the thylacine.

5 **1798** p43 Before they were rescued by the famous explorer Matthew Flinders, shipwrecked sailors on the Furneaux Islands had been eating wombat meat.

6 **1836** p33 New South Wales' Surveyor General, Thomas Mitchell drew a picture of the pig-footed bandicoot to send to a naturalist in England. In his picture p34, this bandicoot has no tail but scientists discovered others that had tails and decided Mitchell's bandicoot had lost its tail.