

# The English Corner Shop

## Reading Comprehension

### ***ECHIDNA***

The text is about the echidna, a strange mammal that can be found only in Australia and New Guinea.

- **Before reading the text check the meaning of the words.**

*range (in colour, size, etc.); sense (of humour, smell, etc.); cover; weigh; anteater; pouch; snout; breeding; mammal; locate; spine; disturb; jelly bean; termite*



The echidna is a strange animal that can be found only in Australia and New Guinea. It looks like a hedgehog because of sharp spines that cover the back of its body. Echidnas can range in colour from light brown to black. It has a long snout that helps it to search for food.

The adult echidna may be from 35 to 53 cm long and weigh from 4.5 to 6 kg.

The echidna is usually found among rocks, in hollow logs and in holes among tree roots. The echidna is a very shy animal and would rather hide than fight if disturbed. Echidnas have a fine sense of smell that helps them to locate one another during the breeding season. Termites are the preferred food of the echidna this is why it is often called 'spiny anteater' and it eats about 2 kg of termites in one meal.

The echidna and platypus are the world's only egg laying mammals. The echidna lays a single egg and in ten days a baby-echidna is born. It weighs only 380 mg and is 1.45 cm long - the size of a jelly bean. The baby leaves the pouch only when it is several months old.

- **Find the answers to the following questions:**

1. What does it look like?
2. How big and heavy is the echidna?
3. What does it eat?
4. How does it reproduce?
5. What does it have in common with the kangaroo?

Acknowledgment of Source:  
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NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service