



Wet and Wild



2021, Week 1 - Clues A Wet & Wild Birthday Bash

Wetlands are amazing and diverse ecosystems. The year 2021 commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Each week our clues will take you on an expedition to wetlands in Australia. You must find the plants and animals that live there. Solve 24 clues each week and discover the four Australian organisms they belong to.

1. I have woolly, dark brown fur with golden tips which is how I got my common name.
2. I'm found in the Murray-Darling River system and listed as Vulnerable in Victoria.
3. Spawning occurs in flooded backwaters at night after spring and summer rains.
4. I'm a rare bird of southern Cape York Peninsula, in Queensland.
5. I'm a tree that grows very quickly reaching 7–10 m in about five years.
6. I have phyllodes rather than true leaves, up to 15 centimetres long, three centimetres wide.
7. My broad wings and large tail membrane allow me to hover and manoeuvre precisely.
8. Wild populations have declined due to dams and weirs blocking migration, regulating flows, and releasing unnaturally cold water ("thermal pollution").
9. I'm a small parrot related to the common Red-rumped parrot and the Hooded parrot.
10. Adult females are mainly dull greenish-yellow, and the male is mainly blue and yellow over the shoulder. He has a black cap and pale yellow frontal band and dark salmon pink lower belly.
11. I have small, round blooms of golden yellow flowers between July to November.
12. I'm a spider catching specialist (particularly orb-weaver spiders). Yum!
13. I weigh about 6 grams and have a wingspan of about the size of a school ruler.
14. I vary in colour depending on my habitat - from dark brown and green, almost black, to golden, with another common name being "yellowbelly".
15. I live in open forested grassland with terrestrial termites and I nest in these mounds.
16. I'm listed as endangered with a wild population of about 2,000 birds and around 300 breeding pairs.
17. In 1988 I was formally adopted as the floral emblem of Australia.
18. I travel up to 2 km from my roost in abandoned nests of birds or tree hollows while feeding at night.
19. We are carnivores, feeding on smaller fish and crustaceans.
20. At times of the year I'm almost entirely dependent on the small but plentiful seed of firegrass.
21. I have been grown in temperate regions around the world for the tannin in my bark.
22. Parrots enjoy my seeds and pods, and wood-boring insects are attracted to the older, woody plants.
23. I have a pointed snout, a large mouth and a protruding lower jaw in larger fish.
24. I live on the east coast in rainforest, tall open sclerophyll and *Melaleuca* forest.