

## Australia's Amazing Ecosystems

Middle Primary Advance Science

Read the passage. Answer the questions below.



An ecosystem is a special place where plants, animals, and other living things share a home and help each other survive by eating, growing, and making food. Australia has many different ecosystems because of its ancient rocks, hot sun, and wet rains in some spots. Big deserts cover most of the land. They have red sand hills, tough spinifex grass, and trees like acacias that hold water inside. Animals live there too, like the thorny devil lizard that drinks water from its bumpy skin, and the bilby that digs holes and comes out at night to eat.

In the east and south, there are eucalyptus woodlands. Tall gum trees drop their bark and leaves to save water when it's dry. Koalas eat only these leaves, even though they taste bad to others. Kangaroos jump around, and kookaburras laugh from the trees.

Up north in places like the Daintree rainforest, it's always wet and green. Big trees covered in vines grow tall. Cassowaries are huge birds that eat fruits and drop seeds far away. Tree kangaroos hop from branch to branch. In cooler areas, platypuses swim in rivers, and lyrebirds copy sounds like people talking.

Along the beaches, mangroves grow in salty water with crabs and fish. Under the sea, the Great Barrier Reef is the biggest coral home in the world. Colourful corals, fish, turtles, and sharks live there. In the south, kelp forests look like wavy trees underwater for sea dragons and big whales.



All these ecosystems work together. Plants make food from the sun. Animals eat plants or other animals. Things like beetles break down dead stuff to make soil rich again. But dangers hurt them, like big fires, invasive animals from other places, and hot weather changes. People help by making parks like Kakadu to keep them safe.



Adapted from: [sciencedirect](http://sciencedirect.com)

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Read the passage. Answer the questions below.

## **Circle the correct true or false response:**

- 1** An ecosystem is a place where plants and animals live and help each other survive. **T / F**
- 2** Koalas eat only eucalyptus leaves, even though they taste bad to other animals. **T / F**
- 3** The Great Barrier Reef is found in the northern deserts of Australia. **T / F**

## **Fill in the Blanks**

- 4** Big deserts cover most of Australia's land and have red sand hills and tough \_\_\_\_\_ grass.
- 5** Thorny devil lizards drink water from rain using their bumpy \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Questions**

- 6** Name one animal that lives in the Daintree rainforest and what it does there.

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- 7** How do plants help animals in an ecosystem? Give one way.

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- 8** Name one threat to Australian ecosystems and how people can help stop it. Try to write in your own words.

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**Cassowary eats fruits and drops seeds far away. (Or tree kangaroo hops in trees.)**

- 7 How do plants help animals in an ecosystem? Give one way.

**Plants make food from the sun that animals eat. (Or give oxygen/shade.)**

- 8 Name one threat to Australian ecosystems and how people can help stop it. Try to write in your own words.

**Big fires; people help by making parks or stopping invasive animals.**

**Invasive animals are foreign creatures in Australia that spread fast, eat**

**local food, and hurt native wildlife like the cane toad does to frogs.**