



## Pest animals in Central Australia

**Objective:** To introduce the concept of a 'pest' animal and define the information that we will need in order to identify them and their preferred habitat and activities, using observation and background research.

### Classroom Activities

#### 1. *Project Journal*

Students begin a Big Headed Ant Project Journal (this could be in a **Practical Book or a stand-alone Project**). This journal can be used to record all the information gathered as part of the project along with ideas and thoughts that the student has as the project progresses. Start the journal with the results of the Internet/Library Search.

#### 2. *What is a Pest? Internet/Library Research Task.*

You may wish to begin this task with a brief discussion about the definition of a 'pest' animal. Is it just an animal that is in the wrong place from a human point of view? Or are there inherent characteristics that make it a pest? Using **internet and library resources** get students to look for information on pest animals in Central Australia. What are they, why are they 'pests' and where are they found? Other useful search terms include: feral animals, introduced, exotic and alien species.

#### 3. *ABC Wildwatch 2 School yard Survey*

*Information on this national survey*

is supplied with these Resources. The survey itself can be completed as a single exercise (available on-line or in printable format between September 18th - October 22nd 2004), or in combination with the other suggested activities. Big-Headed Ants are not specifically listed (although we have requested that they be included) however they could be pointed out if seen during the survey. Don't forget to take **photos and drawings** to include in student project journals, along with class results.

#### 4. *Class Discussion on Pest Animals in Alice Springs*

Following the survey discuss with class the 'pest' species surveyed (including signs of them) and any impacts they appear to be having. What about impacts (e.g. on other species) that are not so obvious? Are there any reasons why Alice Springs might have more / fewer pest species than elsewhere (location, isolation, climate)? Are there any reasons why they might do more damage here? How might this affect management of pest animals in Alice Springs? What do we need to know about a pest animal in order to manage it better? Ask students to record their ideas in their Project Journals.



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