

Australia: Climate, Natural Vegetation, Wildlife; Forest and Minerals

DISCUSS

Discuss the role of the Eastern Highlands in the climate of Australia.

Answer:

Eastern Highlands block the rain-bearing winds ; as a result, most of Western Australia is a desert.

THINK AND ANSWER

Why do we not find marsupials like kangaroo and wombat in other parts of the world ?

Answer:

Marsupials like kangaroo and wombat are not found because the continent separated from the main land mass about 200 million years ago. As a result, its animal life evolved quite differently from that of the rest of the world.

EXERCISES

A. Match the columns

A	B
1. acacia	(i) dangerous reptile
2. joey	(ii) monotreme
3. death adder	(iii) baby kangaroo
4. echidna	(iv) laughing jackass
5. kookaburra	(v) wattle

Answer:

A	B
1. acacia	(v) wattle
2. joey	(iii) baby kangaroo

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 3. death adder | (i) dangerous reptile |
| 4. echidna | (ii) monotreme |
| 5. kookaburra | (iv) laughing jackass |

B. Identify who I am.

Question 1.

I am an animal that lives entirely on the juicy leaves of the gum tree.

Answer:

Koala

Question 2.

I am a wild dog found in Australia.

Answer:

Dingo

Question 3.

I am a mammal that lays eggs.

Answer:

Platypus

Question 4.

I am a big Australian bird but I cannot fly.

Answer:

Emu

Question 5.

I have a beautiful fan-tail and I can mimic very well.

Answer:

Cassowary

Question 6.

I am a male bird who likes to attract female birds by building intricate and decorative nests.

Answer:

Bower

Question 7.

I am popularly called the 'laughing jackass'.

Answer:

Kookaburra

C. Answer the following questions in brief.

Question 1.

Name the winds that bring rainfall to Australia.

Answer:

The South-East Trade Winds blow onshore and bring heavy rainfall to the east coast. The Westerlies bring rainfall in winter to south-west and south-east Australia. The north-west monsoon winds cause rainfall over northern Australia.

Question 2.

What is the name of the temperate grassland in Australia?

Answer:

The temperate grasslands of Australia are called the downs.

Question 3.

What kind of natural vegetation can be seen in the desert regions of Australia ?

Answer:

Natural vegetation in the desert are cactus, spinifex, and acacia (locally called wattle).

Question 4.

Why is the wildlife of Australia considered unique in comparison to other countries ?

Answer:

The wildlife of Australia is unique. The continent separated from the main land mass about 200 million years ago. As a result, its animal life evolved quite differently from that of the rest of the world.

Among the unique animals found here are marsupials are— mammals that carry their young ones in a pouch formed by a fold of skin near the stomach. The pouches contain the mammary glands.

Question 5.

The platypus is considered a strange animal. Why ?

Answer:

The platypus is considered a strange animal because they lay eggs but suckle their young ones. The platypus is an aquatic, furred mammal with a bill like that of a duck and poisonous spurs on its hindlegs.

D. Answer the following questions in one or two paragraphs.

Question 1.

Name the factors that influence the climate of Australia. Elaborate any two.

Answer:

The factors that influence the climate of Australia are its location, land features, direction of mountain ranges, winds and distance from the sea.

Location — The northern part lies in the tropics, so it is either warm or hot all the year round. The rest of the continent lies south of the Tropic of Capricorn and, as a result, has warm summers and mild or cool winters.

Land Features — The east coast gets heavy rainfall from the South-east Trade Winds, which steadily decreases westward, owing to the presence of the Eastern Highlands that form a barrier for the rain-bearing winds.

Direction of Mountain Ranges — If the Great Dividing Range did not lie in a north-south direction, Western Australia would not have been a desert.

Winds — The South-East Trade Winds blow onshore and bring heavy rainfall to the east coast. The Westerlies bring rainfall in winter to south-west and south-east Australia. The north-west monsoon winds cause rainfall over northern Australia.

Question 2.

The Western Plateau region of Australia is mainly a desert. Why ?

Answer:

The presence of the Eastern Highlands causes heavy rains along the eastern coast and rainfall decreases westwards, away from the coast. So, most of central and western Australia has high temperatures and very little rainfall resulting in the formation of a desert.

Question 3.

Briefly describe the climate and vegetation of the south-eastern and south-western coasts of Australia.

Answer:

The presence of the Eastern Highlands causes heavy rains along the eastern coast and rainfall decreases westwards, away from the coast. So, most of central and western Australia has high temperatures and very little rainfall resulting in the formation of a desert.

South-eastern and south-western parts which experience rain in winter from the onshore Westerlies. Winter condition prevail from April to September in this region. The temperate forests are found in the south-eastern and south-western parts of Australia and in Tasmania. Eucalyptus (locally called eucalypt or gum tree) is the main tree of these forests. There are over 900 species of eucalyptus tree found in Australia. This tree does not shed its leaves, but the bark peels off and is replaced by new white or light coloured bark. Eucalyptus trees dominate the landscape of Australia.

Question 4.

What are marsupials ? Describe any one marsupial.

Answer:

Marsupials are — mammals that carry their young ones in a pouch formed by a fold of skin near the stomach. The pouches contain the mammary glands. Australia has about 150 species of marsupials that vary in size, from the giant kangaroo over two metres in height to the tiny insect-eating bandicoot. The wallaby, wombat, and koala are other examples of marsupials found in Australia.

Question 5.

What are monotremes ? Give examples.

Answer:

The platypus and echidna are the only living monotremes, i.e., they lay eggs but suckle their young ones. The platypus is an aquatic, furred mammal with a bill like that of a duck and poisonous spurs on its hindlegs. The echidna is also known as the spiny anteater.

E. Map work

Study the map given here and answer the questions (lines indicate the different climatic regions) : (On Textbook page 149)

Question 1.

Describe the vegetation of region C.

Answer:

Temperate Grassland

Question 2.

What are the most outstanding characteristics of the climate of region B ?

Answer:

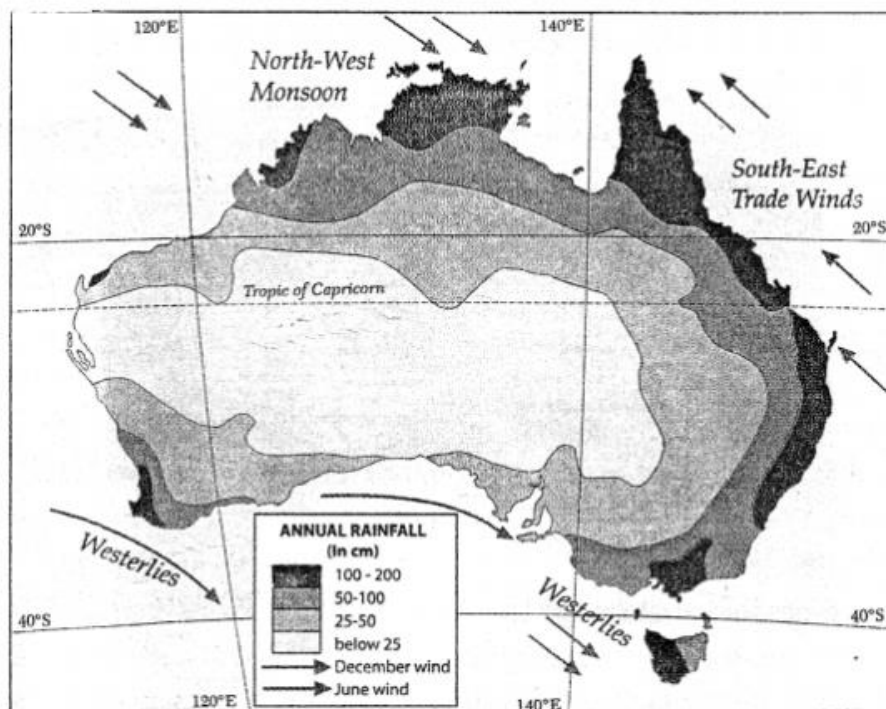
Tropical Monsoon

Question 3.

On the map, draw the South-East Trade Winds with red

Answer:

arrows.



Question 4.

By what name are the temperate grasslands known in the Murray-Darling Basin ?
Write the name in the appropriate place on the map.

Answer:

The temperate grasslands of Australia are called the downs.

F. Picture study

This is a photograph of an eucalyptus tree, a common tree found in Australia. There are over 900 species of this tree in Australia.



Question 1.

What is the local name of this tree?

Answer:

Eucalypt

Question 2.

Which animal survives by eating the leaves of this tree?

Answer:

The koala is the most popular Australian animal. This tree dweller is only about 76 cm high and lives entirely on the juicy leaves of the eucalyptus tree.