

The
**SCHOOLING
SOCIETY**

SCIENCE

MANATEE

3 STAGE LIFE
CYCLE OF A MAMMAL

Like most mammals, manatees give birth to their young alive. Once the mother is pregnant, she will give birth after about 400 days. They give birth to their babies underwater. Normally, only one baby (calf) is delivered.

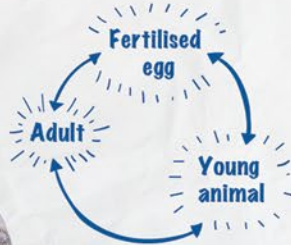
The mother will help her calf take its first breath by pushing them to the water surface. However, the baby manatee will be able to swim on its own after one hour.



These cute creatures normally move around alone or in pairs. They live in the coastal waters and rivers and are submerged in the water all the time. Like most marine mammals, they come to the surface to breathe in air. This is why one would normally see their nostrils peeking out on the surface of the water every few minutes while they swim.



Like the babies of most mammals, the baby manatee will drink its mother's milk but it does so underwater. The calf usually stays with their mother for at least a year. When it becomes older, it will feed on water weeds, grasses and algae in huge quantities.



Did you know that Dugongs look so similar to Manatees that many people think they are the same animal? Both are cousins that belong to the Sirenian family.



PLATYPUS

3 STAGE LIFE CYCLE OF A MAMMAL

The platypus is a unique mammal. Some people think it belongs to the duck family or beaver family due to its most unusual features – its webbed feet, duck-like bill and beaver-like tail.



PLATYPUS ANATOMY

Feet

Its furless paws have webbed toes that act as effective swimming paddles. Under the webbed feet, there is a set of claws that can be used by the platypus for running.

Tail

The broad, flat tail acts as an excellent rudder for swimming. Fat reserves are also stored here.

Eyes

Its eyes are tiny but the platypus relies more on its highly sensitive bill to hunt for food.

Fur

The thick, brown waterproof fur traps air and keeps the platypus warm.

Nostrils

The nostrils have a special flap that forms a watertight cover over the ears and nostrils when diving.

Mouth

The adult platypus does not have teeth. Instead, it has horny plates which is combined with gravel to grind down food.

Bill

Once the platypus has scooped up insect larvae, worms and shellfish, it will store the food in its cheeks like a hamster and continue hunting for more food.



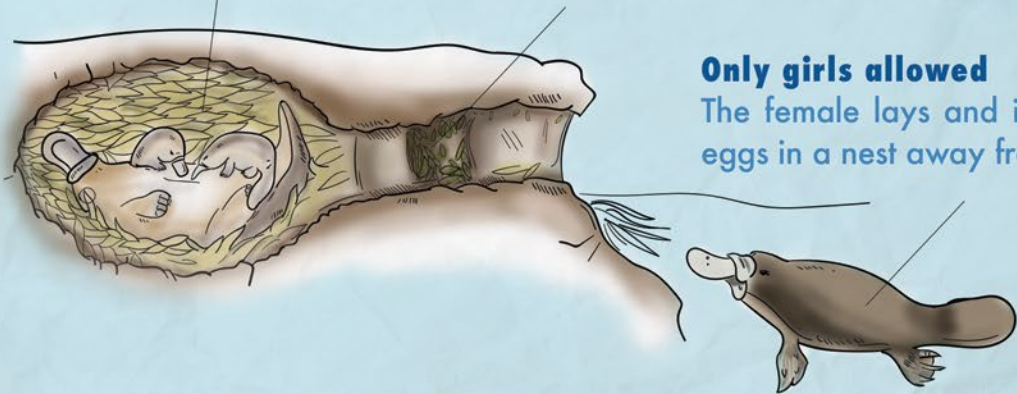


Home sweet home

The female spends 10 days in the nest and makes it cosy by lining it with leaves.

Keep out

To prevent water from flooding the nest, she builds blockages along the tunnel to the nest.



Only girls allowed

The female lays and incubates her eggs in a nest away from the male.

Like most mammals, the platypus has a **3 stage life cycle** but unlike most mammals, it lays eggs instead of giving birth to its young alive. This happens once a year.



After about **10 days**, the eggs will hatch. The young platypus are very tiny and helpless. Their mother will **nurse them for about 3-4 months** before they can swim on their own.



The platypus belongs to a group called monotremes where the mammals lay eggs. The other animal in this group is the Echidna which also known as the spiny anteater

Do you know that the word "Platypus" means 'feet' in Greek?



