

ADOPT A BUSHLAND

YEAR FOUR TO SIX

ADAPTATIONS – TEACHER INFORMATION



Definitions

- An **adaptation** is a structure or behaviour or a function that helps an organism survive in its environment.
- A **structural** adaptation relates to the physical features of plants or animals, for example a kangaroo's hind legs are large to help them hop fast. A Eucalypt leaf is covered in a waxy coating to help prevent water loss.
- A **behavioural** adaptation is one where the plant or animal does something to help it survive, for example a kangaroo will lay down in the shade in the middle of the day when it is hottest, helping to conserve its water.
- A **functional** adaptation (also known as physiological) is the way a plant or animal functions, for example a female Kangaroo can suspend embryo development if there is not enough feed or water available to meet her nutritional needs.
 - Note: Year 5's do not need to know about functional adaptations.

Fauna (animal)	Adaptation	Type	How it helps the animal survive
Kangaroo	large strong hind legs	structural	travel large distances at high speed using little energy
	resting during heat of the day	behavioural	conserves energy and water
	long, strong tail	structural	balance
Quenda	backward opening pouch	structural	prevents pouch being filled with sand when digging
	strong foreclaws	structural	for digging in soil
Turtle Frog	moist skin	structural	helps frog to absorb oxygen and water
	burrows into soil during dry and hot weather	behavioural	conserves energy and water until better weather arrives
Honeyeater	longer thin beak	structural	for putting into flowers to retrieve nectar
Galah/Cockatoo	sharp, downward pointing beak	structural	made for cracking open hard seed pods e.g. banksia cones or gum nuts.
	screeching noises when predators are near	behavioural	warning for other birds, dissuades predator
	nests in tree hollow	behavioural	protection of eggs and chicks



Fauna (animal)	Adaptation	Type	How it helps the animal survive
Butcher Bird	sharp pincer beak	structural	used to stab at prey and break it apart
Gould's Wattled Bat	echolocation	functional	used to navigate at night and locate insects by sending out a high frequency sound which bounces back when it hits a solid object
	sharp teeth	structural	for crushing insects
	nocturnal	behavioural	to avoid predators, increased amount of food as more insect activity at night
	wing structure-elongated finger bones, webbing between fingers that extends down to toes	structural	allows for increased manoeuvrability, essential for catching flying insects and moving amongst trees
	hibernation in cooler climates	functional	requires less energy - in cooler months there are fewer insects to eat
Flora (plant)	Adaptation	Type	How it helps the plant survive
Eucalypt Trees	waxy leaves	structural	conserves water
	leaves hang downwards	structural	less direct sunlight on the leaves which conserves water
	fragrant scent	functional	attracts insects and birds to flowers which pollinates the flowers
Hakea	prickly stems or leaves	structural	animals don't like to eat it
Tuart Trees	thick rough bark	structural	offers protection, e.g. from fire or insects, and limits moisture evaporation
Balga Tree (Grass Tree)	trunk made of fire resistant segments arranged in a circle	structural	protection from fire
Zamia Palm	brightly coloured semi-fleshy seed pods	structural	attracts animals to eat them which helps to distribute the seeds

References

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