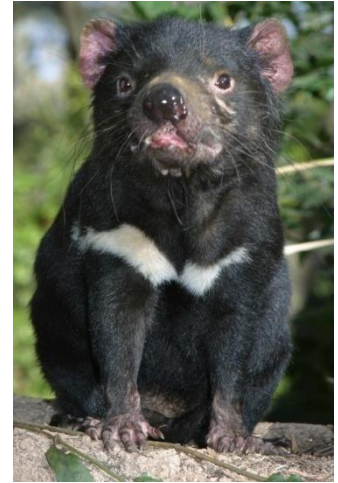


## TASMANIAN DEVIL (Map Ref 34)



LP, UP, LS, US



The Tasmanian Devil is the largest marsupial carnivore in Australia; it scavenges on animal carcasses and uses its powerful jaws to consume the entire body including the bones. It has jaws with up to ten times more pressure than a large size dog which is equivalent to the bite of a Great White Shark. Tasmanian Devils will not leave a food source until it has eaten everything so it may camp away from its den for several days. Devils can consume 1/4 of their body-weight in one meal. They do not eat any form of vegetable matter.

Tasmanian Devils live in the forests of Tasmania, it was once found on the mainland of Australia but was out-competed for food by Tasmanian Tigers and Dingoes and also was greatly affected by disease. Primarily a nocturnal animal, its dark coat assists it to camouflage in the dark forest surrounds. They generally live in dens and are quite a common sight in Tasmania.

Tasmanian Devils have a rearward facing pouch and can produce up to 40 young at a time but are only able to care for 4 in the pouch. They will remain in the pouch for approximately 15 weeks and after this time they are left in the den while the mother seeks food. As they become older they start to join the mother on these trips before becoming totally independent at 10 months of age.

Tasmanian Devils are known for their extremely aggressive natures and make a unique yelling, screaming noise. It is believed that this sound is the reason behind its name as early European settlers could hear the noise at night and did not believe it could be produced by any animal. Hence it earned its name of Tasmanian Devil due to its geographic location and eerie yelling sound.

Tasmanian Devils are not a critically endangered species, and are suffering from a deadly disease known as 'Facial Tumour Disease'. This disease is a cancer that at this stage has no cure. Over 80% of the wild population is thought to have contracted this fatal disease and because of this a few years ago an insurance population was taken from the wild and given to selected wildlife centres around the country.

Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary was chosen as one of these zoos and we have been very successful in breeding healthy Tasmanian Devils in the hope that one day they may be released into the wild.

Q1

Why do you think Tasmanian Devils have such powerful jaws?

BECAUSE THEY EAT ENTIRE CARCASSES - BONES AND ALL!

Q2

Why do you think Tasmanian Devils have a rearward facing pouch?  
TO PROTECT THEIR YOUNG FROM STICKS AND OTHER SHARP OBJECTS AS THEY MOVE THROUGH THE UNDERGROWTH IN HEAVILY WOODED AREAS.

Q3

Can you suggest benefits of the following characteristics of the Tasmanian Devil?

- Black and white markings  
RESEMBLES DAPPLED SUNLIGHT IN A FOREST - CAMOUFLAGE.
- Powerful forelegs  
ADDED STRENGTH FOR TEARING CARCASSES APART. THEY ALSO USE THEIR FORELEGS FOR DIGGING AND MANIPULATING THEIR ENVIRONMENT.