

Will the Real Tasmanian Devil Please Stand Up?

Have you heard of a Tasmanian devil? Does the name make you think of a cartoon? Do you know that there really is a Tasmanian devil? It comes from Tasmania, in Australia.

The Tasmanian devil is an animal about the size of a large dog. It can grow to be about 30 inches, or 0.8 meters, long. It can weigh up to 22 pounds, or 10 kilograms. A female is smaller than a male. Some people say a Tasmanian devil looks like a bear. It has dark fur. Its jaws are large. Its teeth are strong.

Its name comes from the devilish look on its face. It has a hoarse snarl and a bad temper. You might think it would be a good hunter, but the Tasmanian devil is actually quite lazy. Rather than hunt for food itself, it lets others hunt. It eats their scraps. It eats bones, fur, and all.

Before Reading

- What is a Tasmanian devil?
- How do you think the Tasmanian devil got its name?

During Reading

- Where is Australia?
- Are Tasmanian devils easy to find?

After Reading

- What other kinds of animals live in Australia?
- How many Tasmanian devils exist?

Tasmanian devils sleep during the day. They're nocturnal, or awake at night. They're easy to hear at night because they are noisy eaters.

At one time, Tasmanian devils were almost extinct. They were killed off by dingoes, or wild dogs from Australia. They are now a protected species, so their numbers are increasing again.



A Tasmanian devil is usually active during the night.

Vocabulary

hoarse: sounding rough and deep

extinct: no longer living

species: a set of related living things that share certain characteristics



Ask Questions

As you read the story, you may have asked yourself questions like the ones below. Look for answers to the questions in the article. Write the answers on the lines.

1. Where is Tasmania?

2. How big is the Tasmanian devil?

3. What other animal do you think the Tasmanian devil looks like? Why?

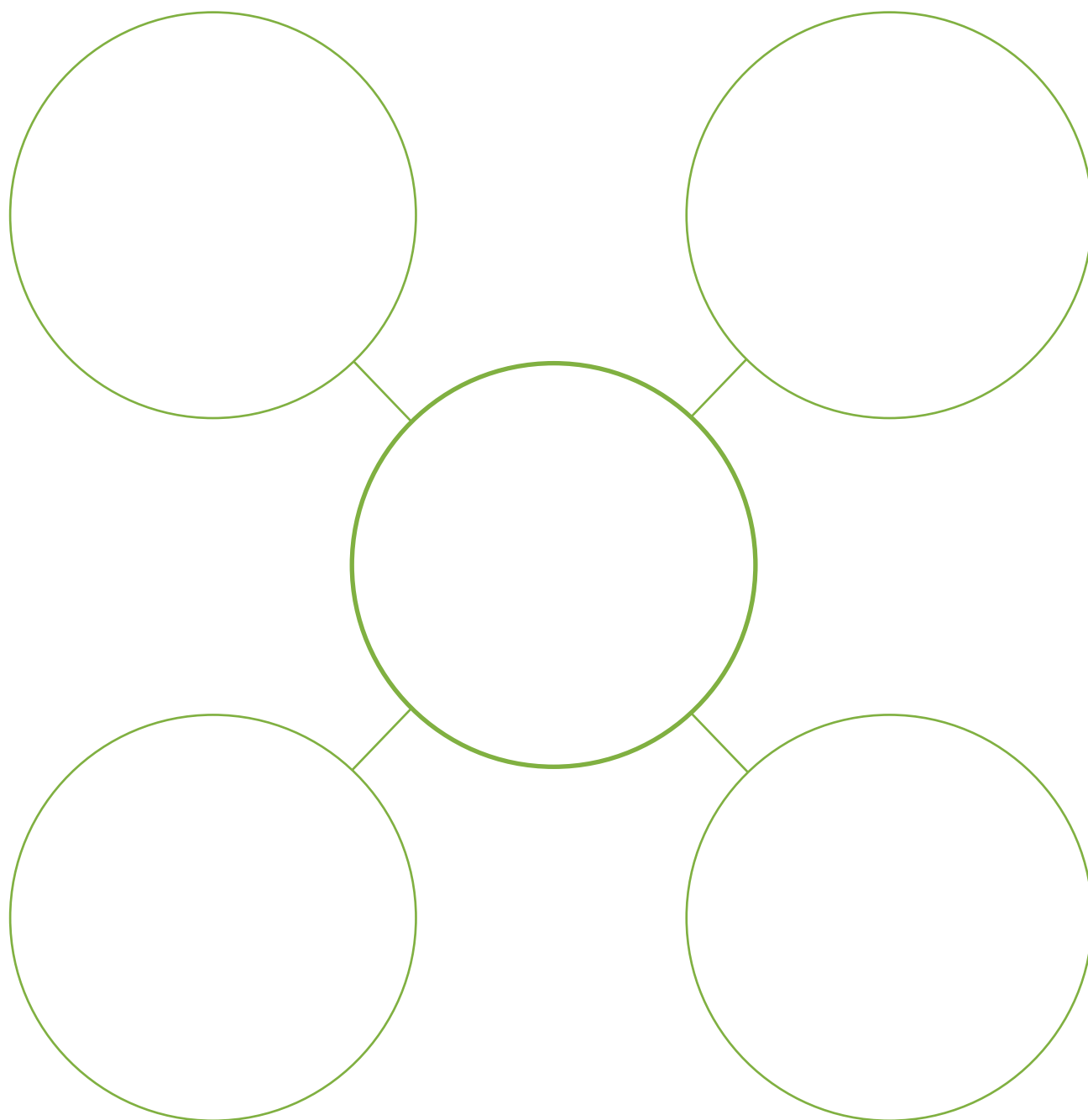
4. How did the Tasmanian devil get its name?

5. What does the Tasmanian devil eat?

6. Why are Tasmanian devils a protected species?

Identify Main Idea and Supporting Details

Fill out the web below. Write the main idea of "Will the Real Tasmanian Devil Please Stand Up?" in the center oval and the supporting details in the outer ovals.





Comprehension Practice

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Where do Tasmanian devils come from?
 - A. Canada
 - B. the United States
 - C. Australia
 - D. Spain
2. How did the Tasmanian devil get its name?
 - A. It has a devilish look and a mean temper.
 - B. It has little horns on its head.
 - C. It looks like a bear.
 - D. It makes noise when it eats.
3. To get food, the Tasmanian devil _____.
 - A. hunts all night
 - B. eats scraps left by other animals
 - C. gathers nuts
 - D. attacks other Tasmanian devils
4. What does the word **nocturnal** mean?
 - A. noisy eater
 - B. protected species
 - C. large
 - D. active at night
5. Why are Tasmanian devils being protected?
 - A. People were hunting them for their fur.
 - B. They almost became extinct.
 - C. They help control the number of dingoes.
 - D. They are the national animal of Australia.