

lonely planet



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# EXTREME PLANET

**EXPLORING THE MOST  
EXTREME STUFF ON EARTH!**





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# EXTREME PLANET

Here at Lonely Planet we decided to make a book all about the fascinating extremes that you can experience in our amazing world. **WARNING:** there's a serious YUCK factor within these pages, so it might best to keep this book well away from MUM and DAD...

Hang on for the ride of your life around the planet's **HOTTEST,** **wettest,** **deepest,** **coldest,** **HIGHEST,** **driest,** **windiest** and all-round **wildest** places.

Meet some of the most strangely different people – as well as the **biggest,** **SMALLEST,** **smelliest,** **slimiest,** **WEIRDEST** and **kookiest** critters that share this strange and wonderful world of ours.

To begin your tour of our **EXTREME PLANET,** just turn the page...



# CONTENTS

- 8 **Animalia**
- 10 **Into the Deep**
- 12 **Jungle Fever**
- 14 **Living in Extremes**
- 16 **Pinkest & Purplest**
- 18 **People Power**
- 20 **Incredible Caves**
- 22 **Making a Splash**
- 24 **Black & White**
- 26 **Trapped in Time**
- 28 **Life's a Beach!**
- 30 **Mighty Amazon**
- 32 **Ocean Wanderers**
- 34 **Monsters of the Deep**
- 36 **Wind Power**
- 38 **Move It!**
- 40 **Need for Speed**
- 42 **Let There Be Light**
- 44 **Messiest**
- 46 **Super-Size**

- 48 **Deserts**
- 50 **Not What It Seems**
- 52 **Costumes On!**
- 54 **Bug's Life**
- 56 **Hot Stuff**
- 58 **Take a Peak**
- 60 **Born to be Wild**
- 62 **Bluest**
- 64 **Extreme Endurance**
- 66 **Reddest**
- 68 **Secrets from Below**
- 70 **Off to School**
- 72 **Wacky Sports**
- 74 **Life in the City**
- 76 **Yellowest**
- 78 **Extreme Ocean**
- 80 **On the Rails**

- 82 **That's Gotta Hurt!**
- 84 **Fishy Business**
- 86 **Congo Crazy**
- 88 **Holey Moley!**
- 90 **Noisiest**
- 92 **Lots of Lovely Lakes**
- 94 **Crazy Contests**
- 96 **Treasure Islands**
- 98 **Big Bucks**
- 100 **Shaky Planet**
- 102 **Slitheriest**
- 104 **Extreme Weather**
- 106 **Greenest**
- 108 **Longest**
- 110 **Bird Brains**
- 112 **Smelliest**
- 114 **High and Mighty**
- 116 **Definitely Deadly**
- 118 **Heaviest**
- 120 **Hop to It**
- 122 **Freaky Foods**
- 124 **Rainforests of the Sea**
- 126 **What's in a Name?**

- 128 **Animal Capers**
- 130 **Holiest**
- 132 **Tallest**
- 134 **Web Sites**
- 136 **Hairy Scary**
- 138 **7 Modern Wonders**
- 140 **Spooky Creepy**
- 142 **Making Sense**
- 144 **Chatty Planet**
- 146 **On the Move**
- 148 **Yuckiest**
- 150 **Animal Abodes**
- 152 **Plant Planet**
- 154 **Food Frenzy**
- 156 **Home Sweet Home**
- 158 **Out of this World**
- 160 **What Rubbish!**
- 162 **Kooky Critters**
- 164 **Speaking Sepik**
- 166 **Oldest**
- 168 **Up in the Air**
- 170 **Perfectly Tiny**
- 172 **Lost Worlds**
- 174 **Wildest Landscapes**
- 176 **What a Whopper!**
- 178 **Animals in Danger**
- 180 **Party Time!**
- 182 **Art Attack**
- 184 **Coldest**
- 186 **Deadest**
- 188 **Index**





**Walk this way.** Millipedes are the **leggiest critters**. They have up to **400 tiny legs**, but can't walk very fast. Centipedes, their close relatives, have between 20 and 300 legs.

**All mixed up.** When scientists first saw an **Australian platypus**, they thought it was a make-believe animal that someone stitched together as a prank. It has a rubbery beak like a **duck**, feet like an **otter** and a tail like a **beaver**. Along with the spiky Australian echidna, it is the **only mammal** in the world that **lays eggs**. It is also one of the world's few **venomous** mammals – the males have a poison-filled **spike** on their back feet.



# ANIMALIA

Some of the biggest and best bits from the animal kingdom.



**African ostriches have the most lethal legs.** With their longest, strongest bird's legs they can run at **72 kmh (45 mph)**! And cover 3–5m (10–16ft) in a single stride. They can **kick you to death** with their long, sharp toe claws.

**Can you clean your eyes and ears with your tongue?** Giraffes can! They have the **longest neck** of any animal, about **1.8m (6ft)**, and the **longest tail** (up to 2.4m/8ft). Why were they once called '**camel-leopards**'? Because their head looks like a **camel head**, they can go a long time without drinking water, and they have spots like a **leopard**!



WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

## THE FACE ONLY A MOTHER COULD LOVE!

**EARS:** Elephants have the **world's biggest ears**. They flap them like fans, to keep themselves cool. **HORNS:** The **wild water buffalo** from south-east Asia has the **longest horns** – up to 2m (79in) from tip to tip. **EYES:** **Colossal squid** have the **world's biggest eyes** – bigger than dinner plates, at about 28cm (11in). These huge deep-sea dwellers need them to see in dark water, as they can live over 2km (6500ft) deep. Bet you didn't know squid and octopus also have three hearts, and blue-green blood! **TEETH:** **Sharks** have the **deadliest teeth**. Not just one row, but several rows that keep growing and moving forward to replace old ones that wear out. They lose about 30,000 teeth in their lifetime. **MOUSTACHE:** The prize for the neatest, nicest moustache goes to the **Emperor tamarind monkey**, from the Amazon.

# INTO THE DEEP

Time for an underwater adventure!

## DEEP DIVERS



Human unassisted free dive  
**100m (328ft)**



Deepest bird  
**565m (1854ft)**



Deepest reptile  
**640m (2100ft)**

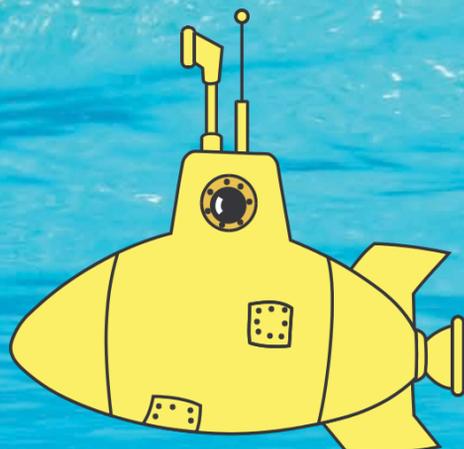


Deepest mammal  
**2500m (8200ft)**

### Deepest ocean voyage

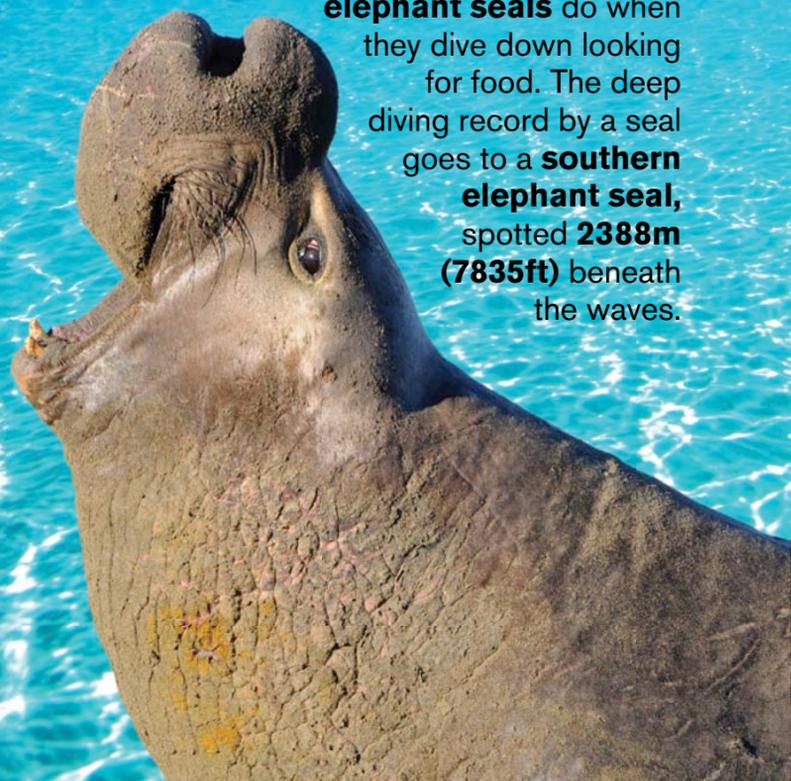
In 1960, an **underwater vehicle** known as a **bathyscaphe** ('deep ship') made it down as deep as people can ever go.

The ship was called the **Trieste**, and in it were Swiss oceanographer **Jacques Piccard** and US Navy Lieutenant **Don Walsh**. They reached the floor of the **Mariana Trench** in the **Pacific Ocean, 10,911m (35,797ft)** below the surface. This trench is the **deepest point in the ocean.**



### Don't breathe out

Can you hold your breath for more than **100 minutes**? That's what **elephant seals** do when they dive down looking for food. The deep diving record by a seal goes to a **southern elephant seal**, spotted **2388m (7835ft)** beneath the waves.



### Mariana Trench

**10,911m (35,797ft)**

The world's biggest ocean trench, the **Mariana Trench**, is so deep that if you stacked **Mt Everest** PLUS the world's tallest building, the **Burj Khalifa** of the United Arab Emirates, PLUS the **Great Pyramid of Giza** of Egypt on top of that, PLUS the world's tallest statue, the **Spring Temple Buddha** in China, on top of that, there would still be almost **1000m (3281ft)** of **water above it!**

Spring Temple Buddha 128m (420ft)  
Great Pyramid of Giza 146m (480ft)  
Burj Khalifa 828m (2717ft)

Mount Everest 8848m (29,029ft)



### Ain't no sunshine

Back in **1977**, scientists in a **deep sea submarine** found holes in the **bottom of the ocean**, spewing out **boiling hot water** from deep within the Earth. They also found **bacteria** living here – just about the **only life on earth** that doesn't depend on the sun. Instead, it lives on the **chemical energy** in the **boiling water**. Other **animals** then feed on the bacteria.



**WHAT DOES THE WORD 'SCUBA' STAND FOR?**  
**Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus**