

## Discovering Tasmania's Wildlife

### Reading List

#### **A History of Tasmania**

by Henry Reynolds

This captivating work charts the history of Tasmania from the arrival of European maritime expeditions in the late eighteenth century, through to the modern day. By presenting the perspectives of both Indigenous Tasmanians and British settlers, author Henry Reynolds provides an original and engaging exploration of these first fraught encounters. Utilising key themes to bind his narrative, Reynolds explores how geography created a unique economic and migratory history for Tasmania, quite separate from the mainland experience. He offers an astute analysis of the island's economic and demographic reality, by noting that this facilitated the survival of a rich heritage of colonial architecture unique in Australia, and allowed the resident population to foster a powerful web of kinship. Reynolds' remarkable capacity to empathise with the characters of his chronicle makes this a powerful, engaging and moving account of Tasmania's unique position within Australian history.

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#### **A Handbook of the Birds of Tasmania and Its Dependencies**

by Frank Mervyn Littler

This wonderful book on the birds of Tasmania, by Frank Mervyn Littler, was originally published in 1910. Illustrated with numerous photographs, this work details the many varieties of bird to be found on the Antipodeans island. It has chapters on 'Birds of Prey', 'Perching Birds', 'Parrots', and much more, giving notes on both the physical characteristics of the genera as well as observations on their behaviour. This is a fantastic companion for bird-watching, or for anyone with an interest in the study of avifauna. A specially commissioned new introduction has also been added to the republication of this work to help place it in its historical context.

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#### **Saving the Tasmanian Devil: How Science is Helping the World's Largest Marsupial Carnivore** by DOROTHY HINSHAW PATENT

In this addition to the critically acclaimed Scientist in the Field series, Dorothy Patent follows the scientists trying to put a stop to a gruesome disease before it's too late. Tasmanian devils are dying

at an alarming rate from a type of tumor that appears to be contagious. What scientists are learning while researching the Tasmanian devil has potential to affect all animals, and even humans, as they learn more about how to prevent and hopefully eradicate certain genetic diseases. In the late 1990s, a fatal disease called Devil facial tumor disease began wiping out the Tasmanian devil population, killing nearly 90 per cent of the devils over the past 20 years. Why was the entire population getting the same disease? Was it contagious? Then geneticist Jenny Graves made a discovery that was hard to believe, but true: the tumors were cloning and multiplying between animals. If researchers cannot get to the bottom of this mystery, this fascinating mammal will soon be gone. Dorothy Hinshaw Patent takes readers on an unforgettable tour of the Tasmania to meet the scientists working to save the devil before it's too late. AGES: 10 to 12 AUTHOR: Dorothy Hinshaw Patent holds a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of California, Berkeley. SELLING POINTS: • The well-known Tasmanian devil appeals to kids from its cartoon counterpart. Despite its notoriety as a crazy mammal with big teeth who wreaks havoc, real Tasmanian devils are actually more docile, not vicious, and family oriented. They are Australia's largest native predator still remaining. • Dorothy Patent has written the story as a science and travel journal, as she journeys from Australia to Tasmania and back again, sharing the places she visits and other animals she encounters along the way. • Numerous female scientists at the helm here, especially in the field of medicine/disease and genetics. • It's appealing to see epidemiology, genetics, and animal behavior come together in one story – and inside the "science presenting a mystery that needs to be solved" framework that works so well in the Scientist in the Field books.

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### **The Tasmanian Tiger: Extinct or Extant?**

by Michael Williams

Does the Tasmanian Tiger still roam the island state, parts of the Australian mainland, and the northern land mass of Irian Jaya-Papua New Guinea? Despite being hunted to extinction in the early part of the 20th century, the Tasmanian Tiger continues to stalk the imaginations of people the world over. What's more, hundreds of reports of the striped dog-like marsupial with the fearsome gaping jaw are made each year in Australia. In *The Tasmanian Tiger: Extinct or Extant?*, biologists, geneticists, naturalists, and academics explore the evidence for and against the continuing existence of *Thylacinus cynocephalus*.

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### **Nature in Tasmania: Three Nature Study Stories - Blue Wren, Skinks, Native Hens**

by Jan Frost

Three nature stories depicting the life cycle of the brilliantly coloured Superb Fairy Wren, common garden Skinks and flightless Native Hens. All the fauna live in the natural habitat of the Tamar Valley of Northern Tasmania. At the time of publication their habitat is not endangered.

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### **Into the Heart of Tasmania: A Search For Human Antiquity**

by Rebe Taylor

In 1908 English gentleman Ernest Westlake packed a tent, a bicycle and forty tins of food and sailed to Tasmania. On mountains, beaches and in sheep paddocks he collected over 13,000 Aboriginal stone tools. Westlake believed he had found the remnants of an extinct race whose culture was akin to the most ancient Stone Age Europeans. But Westlake encountered living Indigenous communities and unwittingly documented what he could not perceive: an Aboriginal people with a complex culture and a deep past.

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### **The Ship That Never Was: The Greatest Escape Story Of Australian Colonial History**

by Adam Courtenay

#### **The greatest escape story of Australian colonial history by the son of Australia's best-loved storyteller**

In 1823, cockney sailor and chancer James Porter was convicted of stealing a stack of beaver furs and transported halfway around the world to Van Diemen's Land. After several escape attempts from the notorious penal colony, Porter, who told authorities he was a 'beer-machine maker', was sent to Macquarie Harbour, known in Van Diemen's Land as hell on earth.

Many had tried to escape Macquarie Harbour; few had succeeded. But when Governor George Arthur announced that the place would be closed and its prisoners moved to the new penal station of Port Arthur, Porter, along with a motley crew of other prisoners, pulled off an audacious escape. Wrestling control of the ship they'd been building to transport them to their fresh hell, the escapees instead sailed all the way to Chile. What happened next is stranger than fiction, a fitting outcome for this true-life picaresque tale.

*The Ship That Never Was* is the entertaining and rollicking story of what is surely the greatest escape in Australian colonial history. James Porter, whose memoirs were the inspiration for Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of his Natural Life*, is an original Australian larrikin whose ingenuity, gift of the gab and refusal to buckle under authority make him an irresistible anti-hero who deserves a place in our history.

