



Quoll

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Teachers' notes

Quoll is a fictional story about the real threat from cane toads faced by Northern Quolls and the program that has relocated them in order to ensure their survival.

Before reading:

- Who knows what a Quoll is?
- Where do they live?
- What do they eat?
- What threatens their environment?

After reading:

- What are Cane Toads?
- Are they native, where did they come from?
- Why did Quoll need to move away?
- Why do you think the author has used fiction to tell this story?
- What message do you think the author was trying to get across in this book?
- What other ways may she have been able to get this message across?
- Why do you think the author used the Thylacine spirit to warn the Quoll?

Quolls

As a class do some research in to Quolls. There are four species of Quoll in Australia. The Northern Quoll, The Western Quoll, The eastern Quoll and the Spotted-tail Quoll.

Some Quolls are regarded as endangered, why?

What types of things threaten the population of Quolls and other animals like them?

How can we protect Quolls and other animals like them?

More information on the Island Ark project can be found at:

<http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/wildlife/programs/quoll>

Are there any other programs like this for other endangered animals in Australia?

You could read *The Shy Mala* by Lilianna Stafford in conjunction with this book as it looks at a similar program in Western Australia with Mala's (another marsupial)

Cane Toads

Why were Cane Toads brought in to Australia?

What affect have they had on native flora and fauna?

What are some of the other examples of introduced species and how have they affected their environment?

More information on Cane Toads can be found at www.frogwatch.org.au

Some notes from the illustrator:

The animals portrayed in these illustrations are co-inhabitants with Quoll in her Top End home. Some of them are also badly impacted by the toad invasion.

Goannas and Monitors, like Quolls, experience massive population decrease once toads move in.

Various animals experience different effects from toad contact. Adult Freshwater Crocodiles can die from eating toads. Toads are toxic at all stages of their life cycle (even after they die). Keelback snakes however are able to eat toadlets.

Some bird species, such as certain herons and crows, avoid toxins by flipping the toad on its back and eating the stomach and leg muscles.

“I have used a Thylacine sprit in the story as a metaphor for the threat of extinction. When the Thylacine says he lives in memory this is a reference to rock paintings still existing on Arnhem Land depicting Thylacines. While they disappeared from the mainland thousands of years ago the disappearance of the Thylacine in Tasmania can be attributed to human misjudgement and ignorance, just like the introduction of the Cane Toad”

- Sandra Kendell

