

Porci's Ocean Patrol Activity Sheet



Series 1: Episode 4 – Facts for Students

Protecting Our Beaches

- Our local beaches should 'sparkle with natural beauty', not rubbish. It is everyone's responsibility to keep our beaches clean.
- Take your rubbish with you and recycle it (if possible), or just find a bin! Never leave it on the ground – it will end up in the ocean.
- If you see rubbish, pick it up! Even if you didn't drop it. Always check with an adult first – some rubbish (like broken glass) is sharp and unsafe to touch.
- Around 80% of rubbish and debris found in the ocean comes from land and beach activities. Fishing, oil rigs, sewage and shipping are some other sources.
- You can team up with friends and family to join a beach clean-up crew. There are also environmental groups that you can join to really make a difference.
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle! Bring reusable containers for your snacks and reusable drink bottles. Try not to buy new plastic bottles all the time. By doing these simple things you can become an 'ocean warrior.'
- Say 'no' to single-use plastic! Things like single-use plastic bottles, wrappers and bags are toxic and harmful to marine life. Did you know that one plastic bottle can last for around 450 years before it breaks down?
- We can support eco-friendly brands. Look for products (such as some sunscreens) that are kinder to the environment, especially our oceans.
- Have you ever collected seashells at the beach and taken them home as a souvenir? Did you know that those seashells can be homes for tiny creatures? You can admire the seashells, but please keep them at the beach.
- As well as protecting tiny creatures, shells are very important in other ways. Birds, fish, hermit crabs, algae, sea grass, sponges, microorganisms, and the ocean itself need shells in one way or another.

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- Remember – it is up to all of us to look after our beautiful beaches. Keep enjoying them and only leave your footprints behind!

Stingrays

- The scientific name for stingrays is 'Dasyatis brevicaudata.' Can you pronounce it?
- When mother stingrays give birth to their young, the baby stingrays are born alive.
- Stingrays are gentle and shy creatures. They prefer to swim away when feeling threatened. Stingrays do not attack unless they feel very threatened.
- The Smooth Stingray is the largest of all Australian stingrays. They can grow to 4.3 metres in length, 2 metres wide and weigh up to 350 kilograms!
- Stingrays and Eagle rays have a venomous barb halfway along their tail. This is their trusty weapon to protect themselves from sharks and other big fish if attacked.
- If predators get too close, the stingray will strike with its tail (like a sword).
- Stingrays swim in different ways. Some flap their fins (which makes them look like they are flying under water), and others swim by moving their entire body, propelling it forward.
- Stingrays and eagle rays enjoy relaxing and burying themselves in warm shallow water.
- Stingrays are ancient ocean creatures. They are thought to be even older than the dinosaurs. Amazing!
- Some stingrays can see colours and their mouth is on the underside of their bodies so that they can feed along the sea floor.
- When feeding and resting, stingrays bury their bodies in the sand but leave their barb sticking out to protect themselves from predators.
- If you ever come across a stingray, always treat them with respect. Never try to touch them. Do the 'stingray shuffle', which is to keep your feet on the



- ground and slowly slide away. Rays can feel vibration, and this will give them the chance to swim away.

Aboriginal Culture – Sweet Treats

- 'Sugar Lerps' come from mother nature and are a natural type of sweet. These are nature's version of lollipops!
- Lerps have long been a naturally sweet treat eaten by Aboriginal groups.
- Sugar Lerps are tiny, crystallised drops of honeydew, which are found on leaves from certain eucalyptus and gum trees. They taste like honeysuckle and have a waxy texture when chewed on.
- Psyllid bugs create the Sugar Lerps. The bugs chew on leaves, then excrete a sugary substance, called 'honeydew.' When this honeydew sits on leaves it turns into 'Lerps'.
- Depending on the bug that made them, Lerps can come in all shapes and sizes.
- Other sources of natural sugar come from honey such as from bees and ants.