

# DANGEROUS ANIMALS



Despite the wide array of dangerous animals in Australia, including many of the world's deadliest snakes and spiders, sharks, crocs and much, much more, one of the deadliest creatures in the country is the humble Honey Bee.

For people that are allergic, bee stings can cause *anaphylaxis* which can include itchy rash, throat or tongue swelling, shortness of breath and vomiting.



## STONEFISH

Although there have been no deaths recorded in Australia since the arrival of Europeans, the Stonefish is the most venomous fish in the world that lies hidden in Aussie waters. With their excellent camouflage capabilities, they are rather difficult to notice until they are stepped on. Their venom is released by their 13 spines when pressure is applied to their spine, and can cause severe pain, heart failure and, if untreated, death. Known to be naturally slow swimmers, their attacks can be as quick as 0.015 seconds. Although many people suffer their sting—due to unintentionally stepping on them—an anti-venom was invented in the late 1950s to prevent the dire from occurring.



Saltwater Crocodiles are famous for their 'death roll'. Salties will capture larger prey in their powerful jaws, dragging it underwater where the croc will wildly spin, literally tearing the prey apart.



## CASSOWARY

The heaviest bird in Australia, standing between 1.5 and two metres in height is the cassowary. Although they are frugivores (fruit eaters) and will not attack randomly, they are very territorial birds. Most attacks on humans—resulting in people being kicked, pushed, pecked, charged at, jumped on and head butted—are due to the human wanting to feed the bird. If you need more of a reason to not feed them, their middle claw is 12cm in length and acts as a dagger that could result in serious damage. Descended from dinosaurs, this bird has been classified as the 'most dangerous bird on Earth', however, the last recorded death was in 1926. Just remember they are shy, flightless birds who would much rather avoid confrontation.



The Eastern Brown Snake is Australia's deadliest snake, it is responsible for about 60% of snake-bite deaths in Australia.

## STINGRAY

Since 2006, stingrays have gained a bad reputation due to the death of Steve Irwin, however, what many people fail to realise is that although they are cousins of sharks, they are very rarely a threat to humans. Throughout both freshwaters and oceans, there are around 200 species of stingrays ranging from the Smooth Stingray (known to reach over 4m in length) to the Blue Spotted Ray (as small as 70cm in length). This deadly perspective of stingrays is seen as bit of a myth, as they are not naturally aggressive, rather they are curious and playful creatures. On the entire record of stingray killings, other than Steve Irwin, there is only one other reported fatality from a stingray.

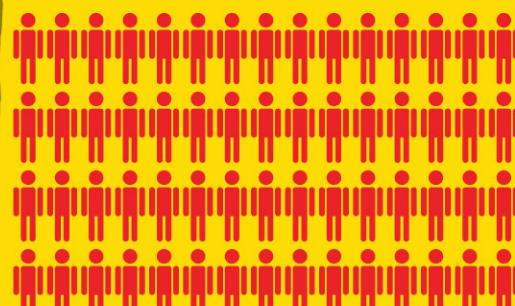


The Bull Shark is the most dangerous shark in Australia, although much smaller than other sharks like the Great White and Tiger, the Bull is very aggressive and is known to travel in fresh water river systems.



## TEXTILE CONE SNAIL

Collecting shells on beaches is actually illegal and as it turns out, there are some shells you definitely don't want to accidentally collect! These textile cone snails have a glossy shell with a pattern of brown and yellow markings, and they are one of the most venomous species of cone snails living in Australia as well as in the Indian Ocean from Hawaii to Africa. This snail, also known as the 'cloth of gold', uses conotoxin to kill their prey, where their harpoon-like tooth injects the venom into its prey through its microscopic needles that are powerful enough to not only penetrate human skin, but further, gloves and wetsuits.



A Textile Cone contains enough venom to kill 60 adults.



## SYDNEY FUNNEL-WEB

The highly toxic funnel-web spider is the deadliest spider in Australia, and quite possibly the world. When they feel threatened, Funnel-webs will become aggressive, rearing up on their hind legs and displaying their fangs. There have been no recorded deaths from Funnel-web bites since the antivenom was made available in 1981.

The fangs of a Sydney Funnel-web Spider are larger than those of an Eastern Brown Snake!

A 2005 study by the University of Melbourne found that goannas and other species of monitor lizard are venomous and have oral toxin-producing glands.



Although its venom is not lethal to humans, Platypus venom is known to cause excruciating pain that can persist for months. People who have been stung have reported that they still feel some pain 15 years later!

## BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS

The blue-ringed octopus has enough venom to kill twenty-six adult humans within minutes. These bites are often painless and many victims may not realise that they have been bitten until breathing problems and paralysis set in. Most Blue-ringed octopus encounters with humans happens when people find and handle the creature in rock-pools. When treated, the octopuses blue rings will glow.

