

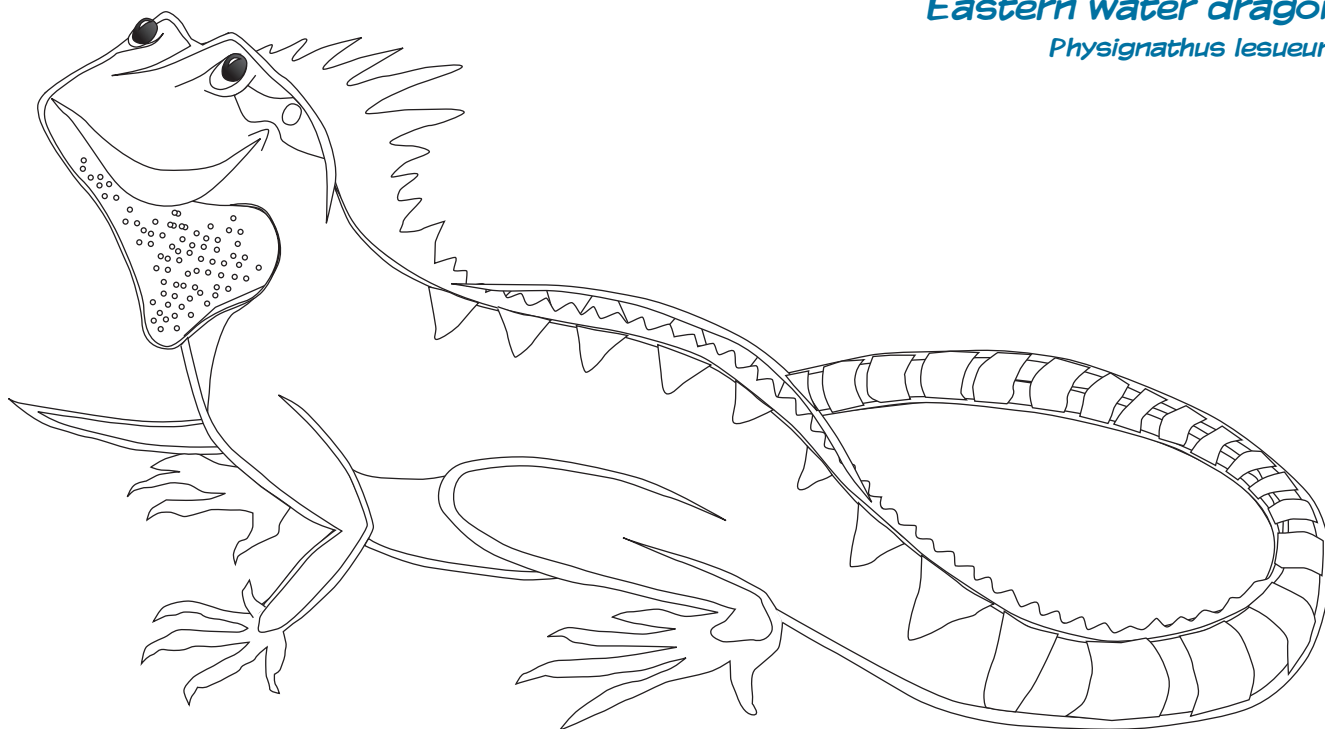


Australian Government



COLOURING-IN REPTILES OF THE BASIN

Eastern water dragon
Physignathus lesueurii



APPEARANCE:

My body is mostly grey-brown in colour with black bands on my back and tail. I have a black stripe on the side of my head and a creamy-coloured belly and chest. If I am male I may have a splash of red on my chest.

FACTS:

Habitat

- I am found in the waterways in the south-eastern part of the Basin.
- I live around the water of rivers and wetlands and am a good tree climber.

Biology

- I usually grow to around 80-90 cm long.
- My crest and spiny back are made from enlarged scales.
- I have long and strong legs.
- My tail is slightly flattened sideways to help me swim.

Behaviour

- I like to eat small reptiles, frogs, worms, insects, vegetation, fruit, small mammals and molluscs.
- I spend a lot of time in branches of trees, on rocks and along river banks.
- I will dive into the water if I am disturbed or afraid of something and can stay underwater for up to an hour!
- If I am male I will fight other males for my territory.





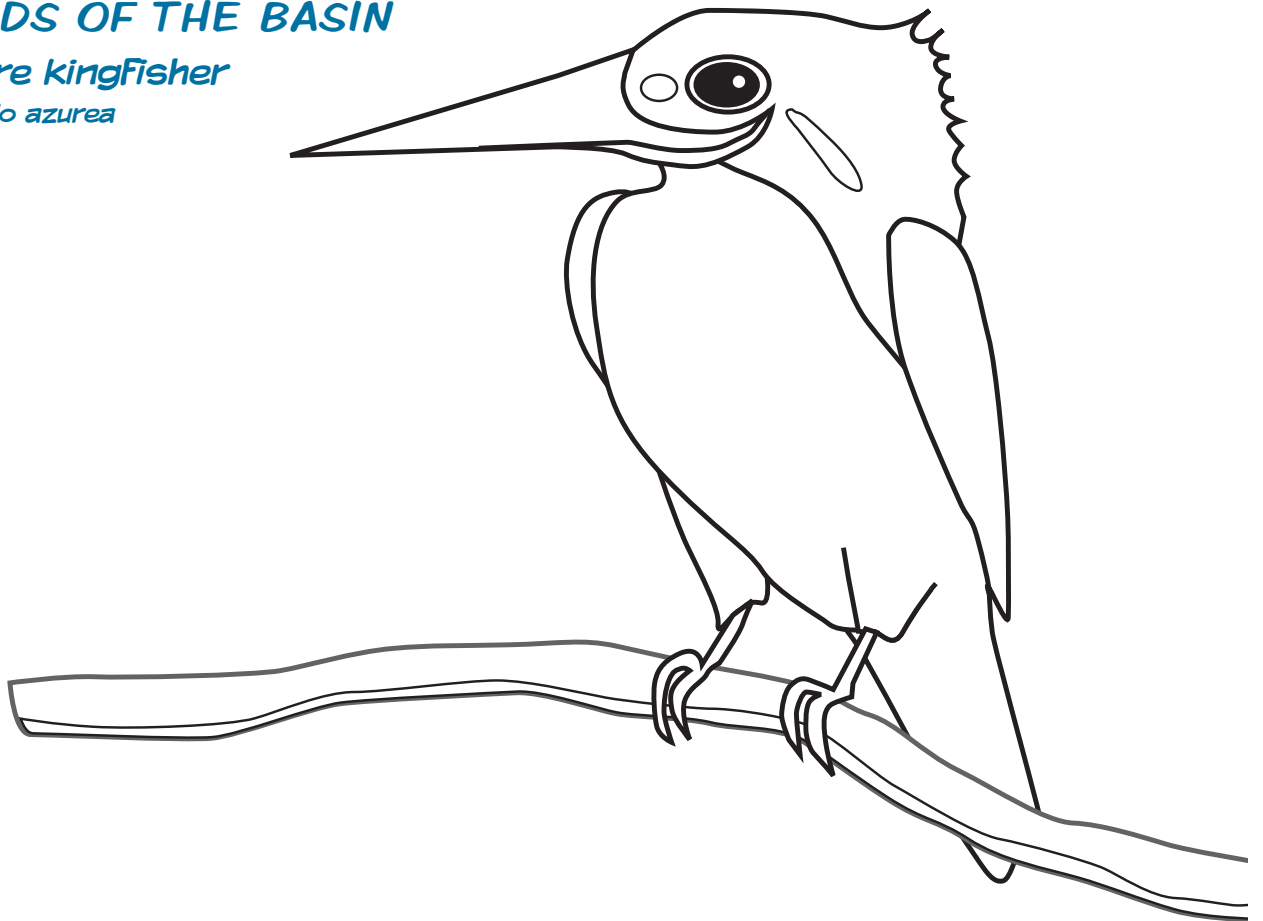
Australian Government



COLOURING-IN BIRDS OF THE BASIN

Azure kingfisher

Alcedo azurea



APPEARANCE:

- Most of my body, head, neck, back and tail is an azure blue, with a violet sheen.
- My throat and chest feathers are pale orange, often becoming darker further down my belly and under my tail.
- I have an orange stripe on my neck and an orange spot in front of each eye.
- My legs and feet are red and my long, slender beak is black.

FACTS:

Distribution and Habitat

- I can be found around freshwater lakes, billabongs, marshes and wetlands in the south-eastern part of the Murray-Darling Basin.
- I am never far from water where I am usually perched on a branch looking out for food, mostly fish.

Behaviour

- I sit on branches waiting for prey and will dive into the water to retrieve it.
- I am very fast at diving and retrieving my food – as fast as 1.16 seconds to get to the water and back.





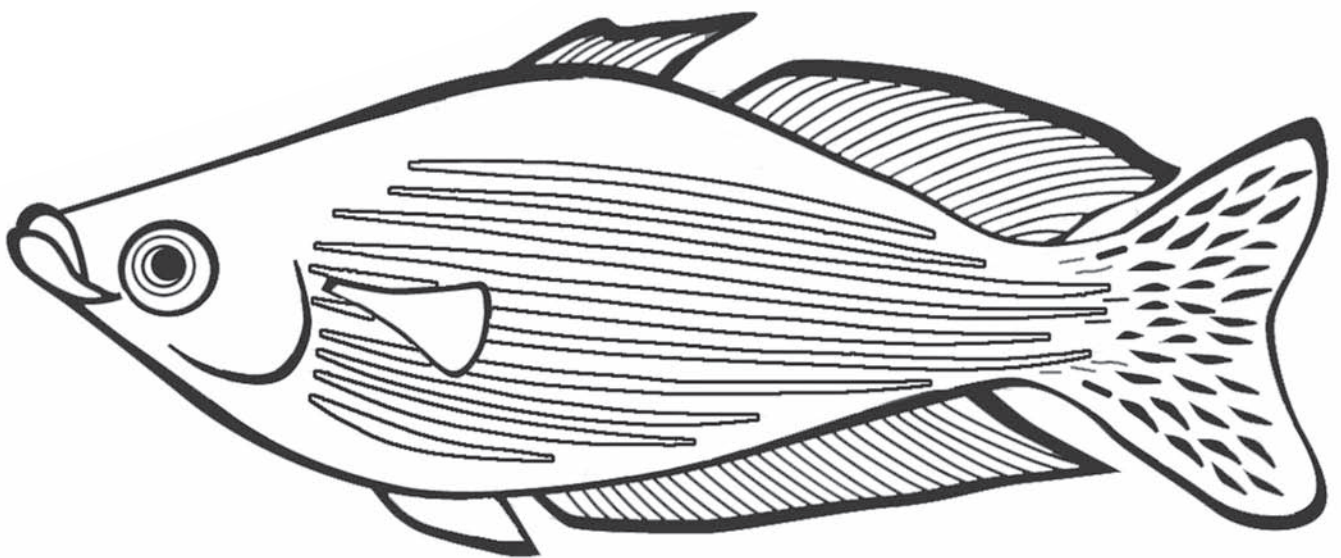
Australian Government



COLOURING-IN FISHES OF THE BASIN

Desert Rainbowfish

Melanotaenia splendida tatei



APPEARANCE:

My body is silvery green with pale stripes along my sides. I have yellow-green checked patterns on my fins.

FACTS:

Habitat

- I live in the waterways in the arid (dry) north-western part of the Basin, only in the Paroo and Warrego Rivers.
- I like slow-moving or still water, such as lakes, waterholes and dams. Often the water is turbid (murky).

Biology

- I am a small fish, around 90 mm long.
- I have large eyes and an upturned mouth.
- I have 2 dorsal fins (on my back) - one long and one short.

Behaviour

- I swim in schools and tend to swim just below the surface of the water.
- Males perform courtship displays among aquatic vegetation and eggs are laid on the aquatic plants.





Australian Government



COLOURING-IN BIRDS OF THE BASIN

Royal Spoonbill

Platalea regia

Colour in the Royal Spoonbill and its wetland home.

APPEARANCE:

I have a black spoon-shaped bill and black face.

My body is covered in white feathers.

I grow a plume of long feathers (up to 20 cm in males) on the back of my head during breeding season.

I have creamy-yellow feathers on my chest during breeding season.

I have yellow eyelids and long black legs for wading in shallow water.



FACTS:

Habitat

- I can be found in many estuaries, lakes, billabongs, marshes and wetlands of the Murray-Darling Basin, particularly the Macquarie Marshes, Lake Alexandrina and the Coorong.
- I like slow-moving or still water, so I can wade through it looking for food, filtering it out with my 'spoon'.

Behaviour

- I wade in shallow water – up to 40 centimetres deep – looking for food. This might be freshwater and sea water, or permanent or temporary water.

- I feed mainly on fish in freshwater and shrimps in estuary/tidal flat areas. I sweep my 'spoon' from side-to-side to collect the food.
- I build my nest out of sticks that looks like a platform in open tree branches.

