

# The most ridiculous event in history (a worksheet)

## Activity 1

*Look at the photo of an emu.  
What do you know about these birds?*



## Activity 2

*Read the text and choose the best title.*

1. Emu is a symbol of Australia.
2. Emus are big and amazing birds.
3. War with birds.

Emus are birds because they have **feathers** and lay eggs. They are the largest bird in Australia but they cannot fly. Emus have two, long, strong legs and large feet with thick toes. They have a large, oval shaped body, a long, thin neck, a small head and a short, pointy **beak**. Their soft feathers are black, brown and white. The adults can grow up to 2 metres tall and can weigh 60 kilograms or more. Emus are only found in Australia and live mainly in bushland and grassy areas. However, they are very **hardy** birds and can live in most places. Wild emus can live up to 20 years.

They can run very fast with their powerful legs even up to 50 kilometres an hour. They often travel a long way each day looking for food. Emus eat berries, leaves, seeds, flowers, fruit, plants and even insects like grasshoppers. The male emu builds a nest of small sticks and leaves then the hen lays between 6–12 large dark green eggs. Usually, female birds look after the eggs but emus are different. The male sits on the eggs to keep them warm until they **hatch**. This usually takes about 8–10 weeks. The young chicks have brown feathers with white stripes which make it hard for them to be seen in the grass. The male protects the young chicks from enemies such as dingoes and eagles.

Pictures taken from [www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com)

The text adapted from <https://www.slideshare.net/gee0177/emus-fact-sheet-and-activity-worksheet>

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In 1932 Australia became the only country in the history of the world to **declare war** on its faunal emblem: the emu.

Emus have been farmed since about 1970 for their meat, feathers and also for oil which is used for making cosmetics.

## Activity 3

Read the text again. Mark the statements True or false.

- Emu is the second largest bird in Australia.
- Wild emus are known to live between 100 and 200 years.
- On average, emus weigh between 8 and 20 kilograms.
- They're soft feathered flightless birds that have long necks and strong legs.
- They eat both plant and animal based food.
- In 1932 Australia declared war on emus.

## Activity 4

Read the text to guess the meaning of the highlighted words and match them to their definitions.

**beak**   **to hatch**   **hardy**   **feather**   **to declare**

- the hard, pointed part of a bird's mouth
- to announce something clearly, firmly, publicly, or officially
- to (cause an egg to) break in order to allow a young animal to come out
- strong enough to bear extreme conditions or difficult situations
- one of the many soft, light things that cover a bird's body, consisting of a long, thin, central part with material like hairs along each side

## Activity 5






Answer the questions:

1. Have you ever seen emus?
2. Would you like to see one?
3. What is the most amazing fact about these birds for you?
4. Does the fact of The Great Emu War sound ridiculous to you?
5. In your opinion, what was a possible reason for the war against emus?
6. Who do you think won the war?



## Activity 6

Match the words with the pictures which illustrate their meanings.

1. farmland		A. 
2. machine gun		B. 
3. chase		C. 
4. defeat		D. 
5. military		E. 
6. battle		F. 

## Activity 7

Watch the [video](#). Who won the war?



## Activity 8

Watch or listen to the video once again and complete the text with the missing words.

In 1932 Australia went to war with \_\_\_\_\_. Emus are native to Australia. These ridiculous \_\_\_\_\_ birds are surprisingly hard to kill and they basically do whatever they want. Emu became a problem in Australia's Campion districts where \_\_\_\_\_ of them were destroying \_\_\_\_\_ with their big bird feet. In those days Australia relied heavily on farming. So the government ordered a \_\_\_\_\_ operation against the emu. A small army was sent to gun down the birds with \_\_\_\_\_ rounds of ammunition and so the first \_\_\_\_\_ began. The men opened fire, but the emus somehow ran out of range before any of them were hit. Here's the problem: whenever a mob of emus sense a \_\_\_\_\_ they break into smaller groups and run in different directions. So they just kept escaping when shooting began and those freaks are fast thanks to their \_\_\_\_\_-legs but humans had technology. \_\_\_\_\_ were mounted on trucks to \_\_\_\_\_ down escaping emu people. But still the emu were too fast for the trucks. After multiple battles and thousands rounds of ammunition more than 19000 emu remains and Australia decided to just \_\_\_\_\_. Emu had \_\_\_\_\_ the men in the greatest, most glorious victory of all time. It was a major embarrassment to the government who ordered the operation partly as a PR move even sending a camera crew to \_\_\_\_\_ the whole thing.

## Activity 9

Describe the photos taken during the Great Emu War using the words from the list below.



**machine gun**  
**chase**  
**escape**  
**hardy**  
**to declare war**

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# Homework

Find out more information about a computer game based on the Great Emu War (2 articles) and more details on the event itself (an audio).

- 1) <https://www.kotaku.com.au/2018/11/the-great-emu-war-is-now-a-couch-co-op-game/>
- 2) <https://www.kotaku.com.au/2018/01/bloody-oath-theres-a-vid-eo-game-about-the-great-emu-war/>
- 3) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtmyg-aXvj8>

Write a post (~700 symbols) on any social network titled "Today I discovered..." mentioning some interesting facts you have learned about The Great Emu War.

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