

The Land Down Under



The
Grandeur
of Life



Left: Kangaroo, from John Hawkesworth, An account of the voyages... [of Capt. Cook], 1773.

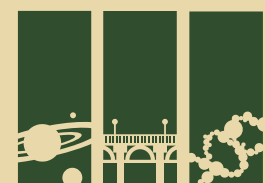
Top Far Left: Lyrebird, from René Lesson, Voyage autour du monde, 1839.

Bottom Far Left: Platypus, from François Péron, Voyage de découvertes aux terres Australes, 1807-16.

Bottom: Numbat, from John Gould, The Mammals of Australia, 1863.



When Captain Cook and the naturalists of the *Endeavour* landed in Australia in 1770, they found a new continent inhabited by a wide range of animals that were unknown elsewhere. Cook and his men observed the kangaroo, and later French voyagers discovered such oddities as the platypus, the lyrebird, and the numbat. Trying to explain why Australia had its own unique set of animals (and plants) was a problem for naturalists. Darwin reasoned that Australia had been isolated from Europe and the Americas before higher mammals evolved.



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