

A colorful illustration of a sloth and a hedgehog in a garden. The sloth, on the left, is brown with long, shaggy fur and is looking up with its mouth open. The hedgehog, on the right, is grey with small spines and is looking up at the sloth. They are standing on a patch of grass. In the background, there are green leaves, pink flowers, and red apples hanging from a tree.

HEDGEHOG OR ECHIDNA?

*Animals who are
the same...
but different!*

Ashleigh Barton

Amandine Thomas

TEACHERS RESOURCES

HEDGEHOG OR ECHIDNA?

Ashleigh Barton | Amandine Thomas

Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

Introduction	3
Themes & Curriculum Topics	3
Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS)	
English Language & Literacy	
Visual Literacy	
Creative Arts	
Learning Technologies	
Mathematics	
Further Topics for Discussion and Research	5
Conclusion	5
Author's Notes	6
Illustrator's Notes	6
About the Author	6
About the Illustrator	6
Worksheets	7
Bibliography	12
About the Author of the Notes	14

INTRODUCTION

This is a funny rhyming picture book with bright and engaging illustrations that teaches children about animals who look similar, but have unique differences, from acclaimed author Ashleigh Barton and illustrator Amandine Thomas.

When a hedgehog and an echidna meet and realise they have many similarities, they take a look at other animal pairs around the world who look the same but aren't: crocodiles and alligators, llamas and alpacas, rabbits and hares, and more. Join Echidna and Hedgehog as they meet animals who look similar to one another – and learn to tell the difference between them!

Written by popular children's author Ashleigh Barton, with vibrant and expressive watercolour illustrations by fine artist Amandine Thomas, this is a book that is bound to entertain young readers as it also enhances their knowledge of wildlife.

THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes are covered in this book which might be related to the Australian Curriculum, including:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/hass/>>

ANIMAL SIMILARITIES

Discussion Point: Study any of the pairs (or in some cases, three or more animals that are alike) in this book and make a list of other facts about them that make them similar or different. [See also **Worksheet 3**.]

Activity: A raven, a jackdaw, a magpie, a rook and a crow are all featured on a double page spread. Invite students to create a fact chart listing some of the distinguishing features of each bird. [See **Worksheet 2**.]

Discussion Point: Research other animals that are often mistaken for each other, for example pangolins and armadillos, manatees and dugongs, donkeys and mules, or hornbills and toucans.

ANIMAL CHARACTERISTICS

Discussion Point: In each of the spreads in this book, students will observe various animal characteristics such as beaks, tails, etc, that define the nature of that animal. Discuss the different varieties of physical features that you can identify in any specific animal not identified in this book; for example, armadillos have a leathery armoured shell and long, sharp claws for digging.

Activity: Read other picture books to explore these animal features, for example, Narelle Oliver's *The Best Beak in Boonaroo Bay* (1995) or Darrin Lunde's *Whose Footprint is That?* (2019).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/>

The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following aspects:

Activity: This is a rhyming text, eg. 'I'm bigger and older. I live where it's colder.' Discuss rhyming with students and invite them to practise rhyming a few simple words, coming up with alternative options for each word, for example, fair/lair, more/core, read/head.

Activity: Invite students to write a simple text describing two other animals that are often mistaken for each other. Then employ rhyme to make the text more enticing.

Activity: Test your students' **comprehension** by asking them questions about the various animals featured in the written and visual text. What distinguishes each of the animals from another that is similar?

VISUAL LITERACY

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>

The visual text of a book combines with the written text to tell the story using the various parts of the book's design and illustrations, as explored below:

Activity: The **cover** of this book depicts the hedgehog and echidna frolicking on the back cover, and back to back looking quizzical on the front cover. These amusing images are enticing for a young reader. There is also poetic license used in that the two animals actually live in very different countries and would not generally meet at all! Invite students to look closely at the cover after reading the book, and then to design a new cover.

Activity: The **endpapers** depict the echidna on the front, and the hedgehog on the back, in rows of identical animals. Design your own endpapers featuring another animal pair and work on a similar grid. [See also **Worksheet 5. Q. 8., 9., and 10.** for added comments on the endpapers.]

Discussion Point: The **title page** repeats the cover image of the two animals playing together. Subsequent pages identify different pairs of similar and yet different animals. On nearly every double-page spread the pairs of animals are facing each other. How does the **layout and design of each spread in this storyboard** influence your reading of it?

Activity: These animal characters are given **facial expressions and body language** that indicates a mood or feeling, for example, the Sea Lion looks haughty with nose in the air, and the seven Seals in this picture each have different expressions. The Tuatara looks fierce and the Lizards look playful. Encourage students when drawing an animal to give it a facial expression indicating its feelings.

Activity: The **medium or style** employed is watercolour, in **colours** which are strong and vibrant. See on Amandine Thomas's website: 'My Top Five Drawing Exercises for Inspiration' *Amandine Thomas*

<https://www.amandine-thomas.com/blog/my-top-five-drawing-exercises-for-inspiration> There are lots of other ideas on Amandine's website to share with your students as well. [See also **Illustrator's Notes** below.]

Activity: Invite students to draw, paint, or collage another scene to accompany the short text they wrote above. Create a classroom mural using all the images. [See also **Worksheet 1** below.]

Activity: Create a graphic novel/comic version of a scene in this book. [See **Bibliography.**] [See also **Worksheet 4.**]

CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative activities suggested by this text:

1. **Make a play-doh hedgehog or echidna.** Invite students to mould the shape they want and then use toothpicks as the animal's quills. They could also add plastic eyes if they have them in their craft box.
2. **Create a diorama** of one of the animals in this book in its habitat or environment.
3. **Create an animal mask from a paper plate.** Choose any of the animals featured in this book, and then cut out and glue pieces onto the plate to indicate the face of that animal. Colour in or collage the plate to create a vivid effect. Then add elastic to the sides in order to secure it to your head. For ideas, see: 'Paper Plate Animals' *First Palette* <https://www.firstpalette.com/craft/paper-plate-animals.html>
4. **Create a poster** to advertise this book.
5. **Create a Book Trailer** to promote this book. [See **Bibliography**.]

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

Activity: Research online several animals and the features that distinguish them from each other.

MATHEMATICS

Activity: Have fun counting things in this text. [See **Worksheet 5**.]

FURTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

- Research the work of Ashleigh Barton. Compare this to her other books.
- Research the work of Amandine Thomas. Compare this to her other books.
- Students might research this book in comparison to reading other picture books such as those listed in the **Bibliography**.
- Investigate any other topic not covered in these notes which you consider is suggested by this text.

CONCLUSION

This is a fascinating book that will lead students to researching a range of animals and to discovering what makes seemingly similar animals very different from each other. It will also encourage them to observe animal features more closely, and to recognise the distinctive features of each and every animal.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

This book came about after a debate with my two-year-old regarding an image of an alligator on an alphabet toy. Not yet able to read or understand what letters mean, he insisted that the animal was a crocodile and would not accept that it was, in fact, an alligator despite it representing the letter “A”. This got me thinking about all the different animals around the world that are easily mixed up or are at least appear very similar.

I set out researching similar animals and had so much fun creating rhyming verses that incorporated some of their differences. I chose rhyme, as opposed to prose, to help create a fun and playful tone that played on each animal's indignation and pride of their unique characteristics. Of course, there are many animal pairs or groups that didn't make it into the confines of a picture book but perhaps readers will have fun researching and writing rhyming verses about the missing ones too.

ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTES

Nature and animals are some of my favourite themes to work on, so I was immediately inspired by this book. The evocative and lively text was very fun to work with, and sparked images in my mind as soon as I read it... Which is the starting point of all my illustrations! Once I had an idea for each page, I worked on the overall rhythm of the book: I didn't want the images to feel repetitive, so I made sure to vary the perspective, the colours, and the scale of the illustration.

Each page was created using my favourite technique, watercolour. However, I love to paint on unconventional surfaces, like tracing paper, and use atypical tools, like a sergent major nib, to bring a modern twist to my illustrations! I also paint each element separately, before scanning them and assembling them like a collage in Photoshop, my favourite image-editing software.

The best part of working on this book was giving each character their own personality, while making sure to highlight their unique features (like the shape of their beaks, paws, or scales). I also really enjoyed depicting the playful relationship between Hedgehog and Echidna, from wary strangers to fast friends. I think they are the cutest pair!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ashleigh Barton is a children's author and copywriter. Before writing full time, she pursued her love of books (children's books especially) by working in some of Australia's biggest publishing houses, running marketing and publicity campaigns for globally renowned authors and illustrators. Ashleigh has previously published six successful and highly acclaimed picture books and two junior fiction series and has been recognised on the CBCA Notables and/or Shortlist in 2021, 2022 and 2023. She lives in Sydney with her husband, three children and their dog.

See: <https://www.ashleighbarton.com/>

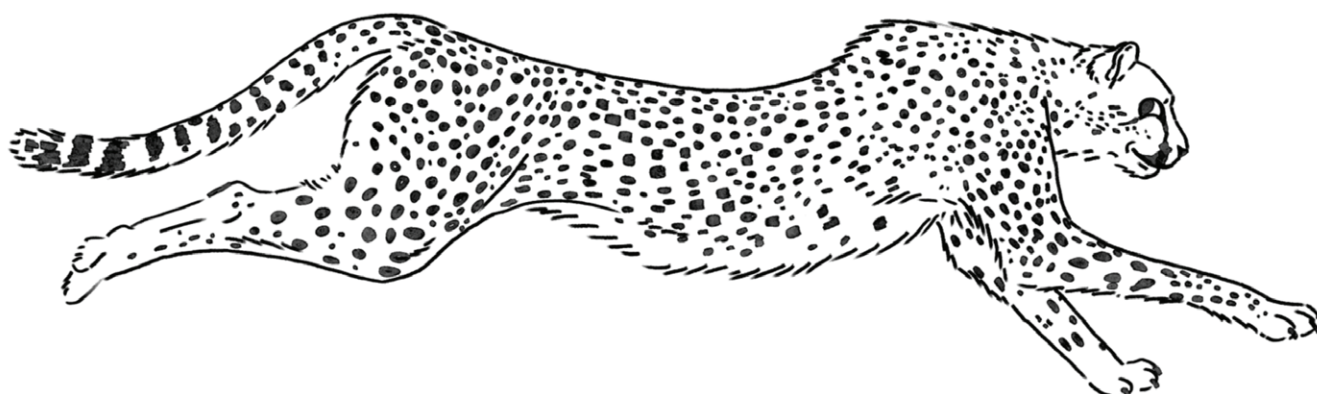
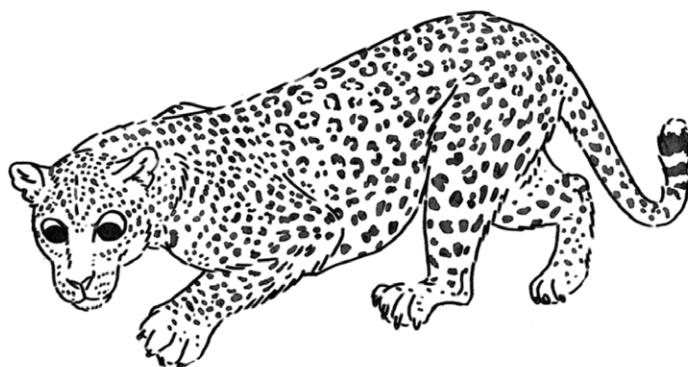
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Amandine Thomas is a French award-winning author and illustrator based in the leafy Dandenong Ranges, near Melbourne. In her stories and illustrations she explores the themes she is passionate about – such as our environment and the many ways it can inspire and amaze us. Her vibrant watercolour illustrations have featured in children's books and magazines around the world.

See: <https://www.amandine-thomas.com/>

WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEET 1. LEOPARD AND CHEETAH COLLAGE

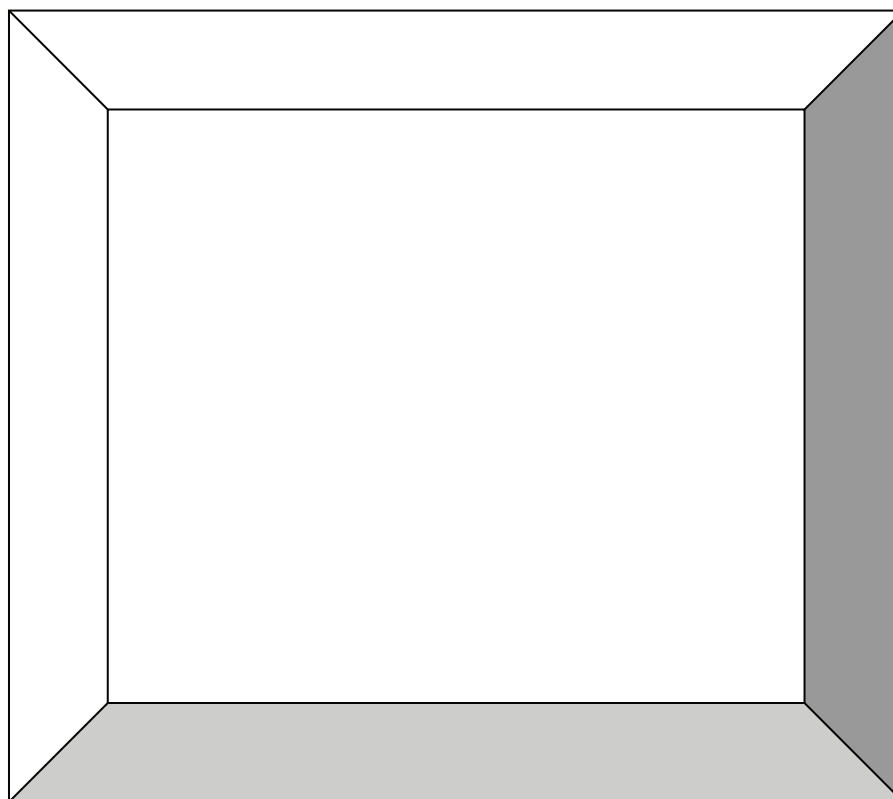


WORKSHEET 2. BIRD RESEARCH

Use the table below to record some of the details you have discovered in your research, about these five similar-looking birds.

Bird	Habitat(s)	Distinguishing Features
Raven		
Jackdaw		
Magpie		
Rook		
Crow		

Draw an image of any of these birds, based on what you have discovered.



WORKSHEET 3. QUIZ SHEET

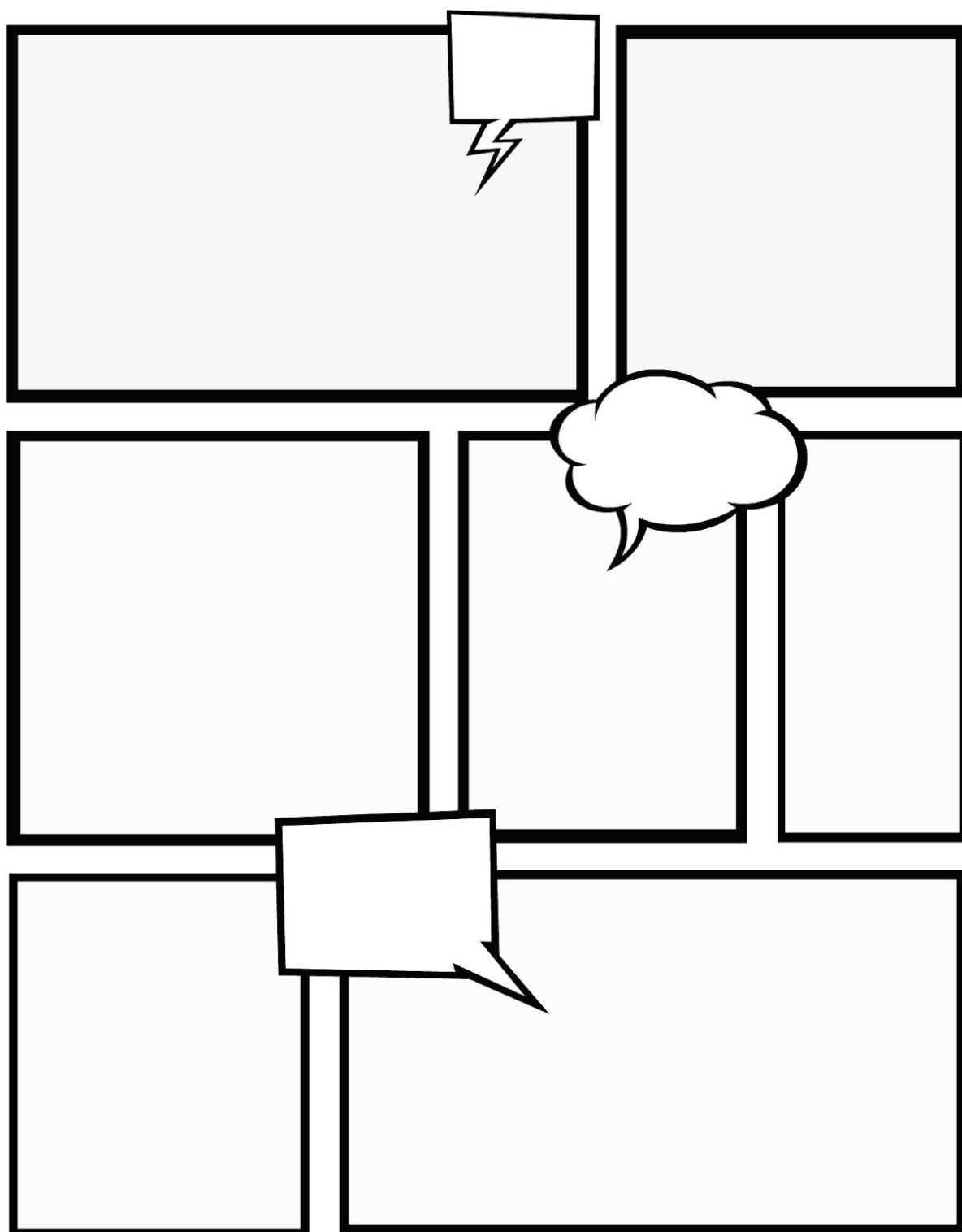
In the table below write the name of the animal confused with the one on the left, in the right hand column.

Animal	Animal
1. Echidna	
2. Alpaca	
3. Alligator	
4. Sea Snake	
5. Rabbit	
6. Sea Lion	
7. Tuatara	
8. Ostrich	
9. Leopard	
10. Crow [Birds are also covered in Worksheet 2.]	

ANSWERS: 1. Hedgehog (and Porcupine). 2. Llama. 3.Crocodile. 4. Eel. 5. Hare. 6. Seal. 7. Lizards. 8. Emu (and Rhea). 9. Cheetah (and Jaguar). 10. Raven (and Jackdaw, Magpie, Rook).

WORKSHEET 4. GRAPHIC STORYTELLING

Create a graphic novel/comic interpretation of one of the scenes in this book. Use the layout below as the storyboard for your comic. Enlarge on a photocopier to give you more space.



Comic Book Template viewed at: <<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/365706432212821426/>>

WORKSHEET 5. MATHS QUIZ

1. How many ants appear on p 7?
2. How many fish can you see on pp 14–15?
3. How many Rabbits appear on pp 16–17?
4. How many Seals appear on pp 18–19?
5. How many Lizards appear with the Tuatara on p 21?
6. On p 23, how many Rhea can you see?
7. How many animals appear on pp 30–31?
8. How many Echidnas appear on the front endpapers?
9. How many Hedgehogs appear on the back endpapers?
10. Did you notice that on both endpapers there is an 'odd one out'? Who is it on the front endpapers? And on the back endpapers?

Answers: 1. Four. 2. Twenty-four. 3. Fourteen. 4. Seven. 5. Four. 6. Four. 7. Twenty-two. 8. Sixty-nine. 9. One hundred and twenty-five. 10. One Hedgehog. One Echidna.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PICTURE BOOKS

- Bancroft, Bronwyn *E is for Echidna: My Australian Word Book* Hardie Grant, 2011.
- Candler, Gillian *Whose Beak Is This?* Ill. by Fraser Williamson. Pottan & Burton, 2015.
- Cosgrove, Matt *Alpacas with Maracas* Koala Books, 2018.
- Cosgrove, Matt *Llamas in Pyjamas* Scholastic, 2021.
- Dann, Kiefer and Dann, Lucy *Loongie the Greedy Crocodile* Ill. by Bronwyn Houston. Magabala Books, 2011.
- Dreise, Gregg *Cunning Crow* Magabala Books, 2019.
- Dreise, Gregg *Mad Magpie* Magabala Books, 2016.
- Dreise, Gregg *Awesome Emu* Magabala Books, 2021.
- Dreise, Gregg *Kookoo Kookaburra* Magabala Books, 2015.
- Geppert, Andy *Backyard Birdies* Hachette, 2021.
- Goonack, Cathy *Scaly-tailed Possum and Echidna*. Ill. by Myron Goonack, Katrina Goonack and Marlene Goonack. Magabala Books, 2010.
- Knowles, Sheena *Edward the Emu* Ill. by Rod Clement. Angus & Robertson, 2023, 1988.
- Knowles, Sheena *Edwina the Emu* Ill. by Rod Clement. Angus & Robertson, 1996.
- Kwaymullina, Ambelin *Crow and the Waterhole* Fremantle Press, 2025.
- Lawrence, Nina *Clever Crow* Ill. by Bronwyn Bancroft. Magabala Books, 2018.
- Lunde, Darrin *Whose Footprint Is That?* Ill. by Kelsey Oseid. Random House US, 2019.
- Milroy, Helen *The Emu Who Ran Through the Sky* Magabala Books, 2021.
- Oliver, Narelle *The Best Beak in Boonaroo Bay* Hachette, 1995.
- Rayner, Catherine *Solomon Crocodile* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.
- Temple, Kate and Jol *Room on our Rock* Ill. by Terri Rose Baynton. Scholastic, 2018.
- Whiting, Sue *The Echidna Near My Place* Ill. by Cate James. Walker Books, 2023.
- See also: '30 Picture Books About Alligators & Crocodiles' *My Mommy Style*
<https://www.mymommystyle.com/books-alligators-crocodiles/>

JUNIOR NON-FICTION

- Chang, Kirsten *Cheetah or Leopard?* Bellwether Media, 2020.
- Davey, Owen *Curious About Crocodiles* Flying Eye Books, 2021.
- Diehl, Judy and Plumb, David *What's the Difference? 10 Animal Look-alikes* Ill. by Vlasta Kampen. Annick Press, 2000.
- Feldman, Thea *Seals* Kingfisher, 2015.
- Furze, Katie *Tuatara, A Living Treasure* Ill. by Ned Barraud. Scholastic, 2023.

Gibbons, Gail *Alligators and Crocodiles* (Explore the World With Gail Gibbons) Holiday House, 2023.

Katz, Susan B. *Is it an Alligator or a Crocodile?* (Look-alike Animals) Pebble Books, 2021.

Kellett, Jenny *Cheetahs: The Ultimate Cheetah Book for Kids* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2022.

Kellett, Jenny *Leopards: The Ultimate Leopard Book for Kids* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2022.

Kellett, Jenny *The Big Book of Big Cats* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2023.

Kellett, Jenny *Llamas & Alpacas: The Ultimate Llama & Alpaca Book* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2023.

Kellett, Jenny *Jaguars: The Ultimate Jaguar Book for Kids* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2022.

Kellett, Jenny *Turtles: The Ultimate Turtles Book* (Animal Books for Kids) Bellanova Books, 2023.

Leaf, Christina *Llama or Alpaca?* Bellwether Media, 2020.

Leaf, Christina *Rabbit or Hare?* Bellwether Media, 2020.

Lesley, John *Echidna* Redback Publishing, 2023.

Lesley, John *Crocodile: Australia's Remarkable Wildlife* Redback Publishing, 2022.

Look -Alike Animals Series Apple Books

Mattern, Joanne *Alligators and Crocodiles: Animal look-alikes* Red Chair Press, 2018.

Mattern, Joanne *Butterflies and Moths: Animal look-alikes* Red Chair Press, 2018.

Mattern, Joanne *Hares and Rabbits: Animal look-alikes* Red Chair Press, 2018.

Mattern, Joanne *Porcupines and Hedgehogs: Animal look-alikes* Red Chair Press, 2018.

Poliquin, Rachel *Eels: The Superpower Field Guide* Ill. by Nicholas John Frith. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2020.

Thorn, Lucy *Tell Us Apart: A who's who of confusing animals* Ill. by Lucy Rose. Laurence King an imprint of Hachette, 2024.

WEBSITES AND VIDEOS – TEACHING RESOURCES

'Emus Vs Ostriches – What is the Difference?' *NGScience*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_v3dzGVsBE

'How To Make a Book Trailer' *Tristan Bancks*
<https://www.tristanbancks.com/2016/03/how-to-make-book-trailer.html>

'Paper Plate Animals' *First Palette*
<https://www.firstpalette.com/craft/paper-plate-animals.html>

'12 Pairs of Commonly Confused Animal Words' *Merriam-Webster*
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/12-pairs-of-commonly-confused-animal-words>

'20 Fantastic Animal Crafts for Kids' *Twinkl*
<https://www.twinkl.com.au/blog/twenty-fantastic-animal-crafts-for-kids>

'28 Commonly Confused Animals' *Treehugger*
<https://www.treehugger.com/commonly-confused-animals-4869334>

'World Wildlife Day: Commonly confused pairs of animals and how to tell them apart' *The Vibes.com*
<https://www.thevibes.com/articles/lifestyles/19410/world-wildlife-day-commonly-confused-pairs-of-animals-and-how-to-tell-the-difference>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, in 2012 the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia.