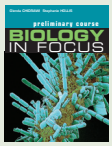
EVOLUTION OF AUSTRALIAN BIOTA

Chapter 2 The evolution of Australian flora and fauna

Comparison of current and extinct Australian life forms



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- ***perform a first-hand investigation, gather information of named Australian fossil samples and use available evidence to identify similarities and differences between current and extinct Australian life forms***

Results

Table 2.4 Comparison between current and extinct Australian organisms

Australian organism (current)	Australian organism (extinct)	When extinct organism lived	Similarities	Differences
Crocodile	Tingamarra swamp crocodile (*Kambara implexidens*): skull found at Riversleigh in north-western Queensland	55 million years ago	■ Diet: small vertebrate animals, small mammals, turtles, snakes and fish ■ Environment: swamp area in Queensland ■ Body structure: reptilian scales, long and strong tail, large snout and sharp carnivorous teeth	Tingamarra swamp crocodile was much smaller than the present-day freshwater and saltwater crocodiles being only 1.5 m in length
Platypus	Riversleigh platypus (*Obdurodon dicksoni*): pieces of skull and other skeleton parts found at Murgon in south-eastern Queensland	23–10 million years ago	■ Diet: insect larvae, yabbies and other crustaceans ■ Environment: freshwater pools surrounded by rainforest ■ Body structure: appears similar ■ Specialist organ: have electric sensors in their bill to find its underwater prey	Riversleigh platypus was larger in size, had a much larger bill, had large teeth (the present-day platypus has no teeth at all)