

What does a Platypus Eat?

WATERBUGS
ARE KEY TO
PLATYPUS
SURVIVAL



WHY WATERBUGS MATTER

Waterbugs are essential workers in freshwater ecosystems. They break down organic matter, keep the water clean, and cycle nutrients and energy in the ecosystem.

By supporting the food chain, they provide the energy platypus need to survive.

A diversity and abundance of waterbugs reflects a healthy stream habitat with unpolluted water, which is hugely important for platypus survival.

HOW PLATYPUS HUNT

Platypus are expert hunters, well adapted to their habitat. Structural features such as special sensors in their bills enable them to detect tiny electric signals of moving prey.

With eyes, ears, and nostrils closed underwater, they sweep the riverbed, feeling their way to snails, insects, and worms hidden in the mud.

A PLATYPUS CAN EAT MORE THAN 40,000 ORGANISMS EVERY DAY!

Platypus need to consume one third of their body weight in waterbugs daily. That's like you needing to eat 25 pizzas a day!

We don't know exactly what a platypus eats each day—but we do know how much it needs to survive. This chart shows the staggering number of freshwater waterbugs likely needed to fuel just one platypus for one day.

158 WORMS

281 MOLUSCS

1,480 ADULT INSECTS

14,660 INSECT LARVAE & NYMPHS

22,000 ARACHNIDS & CRUSTACEANS

THAT'S
OFF THE
CHARTS!!

Help protect the bugs that fuel the platypus.
Join a Waterwatch waterbug survey and uncover
the tiny animals that keep our waterways healthy.

Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch is supported by the ACT Government

To learn more about our
wonderful waterways visit
www.act.waterwatch.org.au



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