



# Classroom Activity

## 10 Big Question: How will we conserve species diversity?

### Locating wombat warrens from space

Finding wombat warrens can be challenging, but it can also be pretty easy! In this activity, you can look for wombat warrens using the satellite capability of Google Earth.

For this activity, you will need a device connected to the internet with Google Earth installed. If you do not already have it, visit the Google Earth website to download the browser plug-in or the desktop or mobile application to suit your device: [www.google.com/earth/](http://www.google.com/earth/)

1. Go to Google Earth and search for the town of Blanchetown on the Murray River in South Australia. Once you have located it, follow the Sturt Highway to the west of the town for about 1 kilometre towards Brookfield Conservation Park.
2. Zoom in until you see spots starting to appear in the paddocks to the north side of the highway. Centre the map on one of those spots, and zoom in until you are as close as possible and smaller spots start to appear and the image is still clear.
3. These are wombat warrens. Move the image around and look at some more of the spots.

How many small and large warrens can you find in the vicinity? How many burrows can you count in some of the larger warrens? Did you notice the farmhouse nearby? What do you think the farmer who owns these paddocks thinks about wombats?

You can do the same thing in some other regions where wombats are located. For example, find the township of Coorabie in South Australia's west and look in the paddocks to the north-east of the town. Why do you think there are lots of wombat warrens here, but across the road there are hardly any? (This will require further research. Hint – it is related to who owns the land to the north-east of town - and no, it's not 'a wombat loving farmer'!)

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**Answer**

The reason why there are lots of wombat burrows to the north-east of the town is that this land is owned by the Yalata Aboriginal Community, and the Indigenous owners manage the land using traditional methods rather than for farming or grazing. wombats are an important cultural symbol for the Yalata people and a source of food. There is even a 'big wombat' outside the nearby town of Penong which is managed by the Wirangu Aboriginal people.

To learn more about the Yalata people and the 'big wombat', click the links below:

[www.yalata.com/default.htm](http://www.yalata.com/default.htm)

[www.scotdesco.com/default.htm](http://www.scotdesco.com/default.htm)