



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

# Help EchidnaCSI learn about echidnas

Echidnas are iconic native Australian animals. But we know very little about their wild populations as they are extremely hard to find.

## How can you help?

Many of you have seen wild echidnas (sometimes even in your own backyard!) and taken photos or videos of them.

The next time you spot an echidna take a photo of it using our app! And we can start filling in the knowledge gaps about our beautiful echidnas.

## Poo... really?

Don't just look for echidnas... keep an eye out for their poo too! And send it to us!

Why? There's a lot of cool stuff in echidna poo:

- DNA from the echidna itself
- DNA from plants in its environment
- DNA from food it's eaten (e.g. ants)
- Hormones that indicate stress
- Hormones that indicate pregnancy



Short-beaked echidna scat



Echidna scat

## How to spot echidna poo

Echidna poo is very distinctive compared to other native animals. It's long and cylinder in shape and quite large too, about the thickness of a 5-cent coin.

## What do we do?

We store the poo in a large -80°C freezer to keep the DNA and hormones stable.

We use liquid nitrogen to crush up our samples – releasing the DNA and hormones – keeping it cold so the molecules don't break down.

Analysing the different DNA and hormones from the poo will tell us about the echidna's life, who it is, what it's eating, where it's been, and if it's healthy!



## What can you do?

- Download our app by searching for 'Echidna CSI' on the App Store or on Google Play

## Further enquiries

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