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LESSON 4: Marsupials

 *The World of Animals* (pp. 194-195) & *What is a Mammal?* (pp. 12-13)

1. Where does the name marsupial originate? _____
Marsupials are pouched mammals; the pouch is also known as the marsupium.
2. What are some animals in this group? _____
There are over 250 species of marsupials. Some common marsupials are koalas, wallabies, wombats, kangaroos, and opossums*.
3. Where do these animals live? _____
Marsupials are primarily found in Australia, New Guinea, South America, and Central America. One species of opossum has spread through southern North America.

*Note: *possum* is also a widely used alternate term for *opossum*.

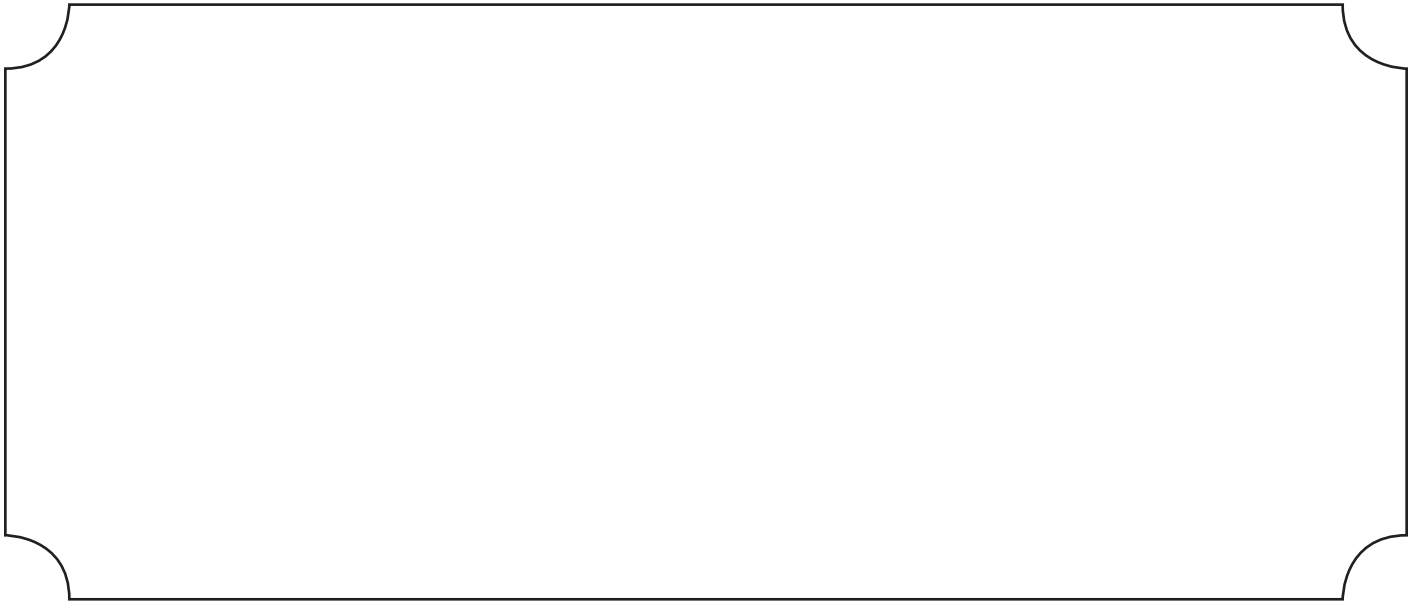
Marsupial Pouches

4. What is the purpose of the pouch on marsupials?
Marsupial babies are born at a very early stage of development. The marsupial's pouch is where their babies crawl after birth to get milk and continue developing.
5. How long do the babies stay in the pouches? _____
Marsupial babies live in their mothers' pouches for several months.
6. How do the pouches vary? _____
Some marsupial pouches open toward the head, like in kangaroos and opossums, whereas some pouches open toward the rear, like in wombats and koalas.

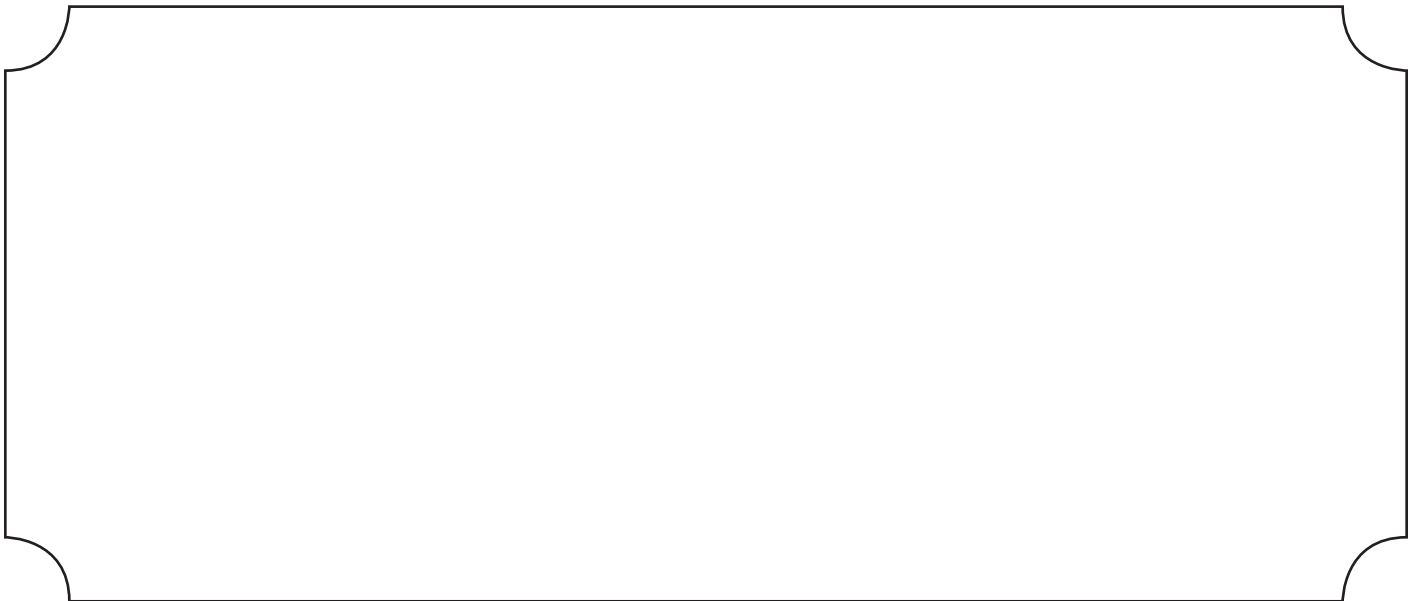
Different Marsupials

7. Where do koalas live? _____
Koalas spend most of their lives in eucalyptus trees, either sleeping or eating.
8. What are some familiar animals that have marsupial versions?
There are marsupial versions of mice, cats, shrews, rats, rabbits, and moles.
9. How do kangaroo pouches get crowded? _____
Kangaroos will have a new baby growing in their pouch while an older joey still climbs in and out for milk and safety.

Draw a koala.



Draw a kangaroo.



REVIEW:

- Marsupials are mammals with pouches.
- There are over 250 species of marsupials.
- Some common marsupials are koalas, wallabies, wombats, kangaroos, and opossums.
- The marsupial's pouch is where their babies crawl after birth to get milk and continue developing.
- Review the characteristics of mammals.

FOR FURTHER INTEREST: Read *What Is a Marsupial?*