



# Wet and Wild



## 2024, Week 1 – Answers Suburban Superstars in the Wet and Wild

### **Welcome Swallow** *Hirundo neoxena*

1. I am seen fluttering, swooping and gliding, catching flying insects in almost any habitat.
8. I often build my mud nests beneath bridges and on the walls of buildings.
12. I'm 15cm long and have a forked tail with a row of white spots on individual feathers.
17. I am metallic blue-black above, light grey below and rust red on my head and upper chest.
21. My nest is an open cup made of mud and grass. It is lined with feathers and fur.
23. My common name comes from my role as 'heralds of spring' as I migrate south in the warmer months.

### **Common or Eastern Ringtail Possum** *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*

2. I'm grey with orange-brown tinges, the size of a cat and often seen in suburban gardens at night.
3. My long prehensile tail has a white tip and is used to climb branches, fences and along powerlines.
6. My forefeet have a gap between the 2nd and 3rd finger which helps me hold on securely.
11. Almost totally tree-dwelling, I live in forests, woodlands, and suburban gardens along the East coast of Australia.
16. During the day I sleep in a spherical 'drey' made from grass and shredded bark, and several individuals may share the one nest.
22. By eating its own faecal pellets, I digest food twice to extract the maximum amount of nutrients.

### **Native Violet** *Viola hederacea, V. banksii*

4. I have violet and white flowers with 5 petals which stand above my foliage from June to March.
7. My flowers are edible and look pretty when decorating sweet cakes and in salads.
10. I can be used as a lawn substitute under trees and look pretty in hanging baskets.
14. I'm often called a ground cover and live in shady moist spots.
15. I provide habitat and food for insects, although small reptiles and frogs will also make use of my protection.
19. My kidney-shaped leaves are 2.5cm wide and one plant can spread over 1m wide.

### **Common Blue Banded Bee** *Amegilla cingulata*

5. I'm 11mm long and I have blue bands of fur across my black abdomen.
9. I dart and hover as I fly and 'buzz' or shake flowers to collect pollen.
13. I live in urban areas, woodlands, and heath all over Australia except Tasmania and NT.
18. I build a solitary nest, often close to others in riverbanks, soft sandstone, mortar or mud brick to burrow in.
20. Researchers are studying my potential value as pollinators of greenhouse tomatoes.
24. Males sleep or roost on plant stems.