

Spaceship splashdown near Christmas Island; baby whale shark nursery revealed; a zero-gravity fake; and why otters love to watch.

Hello and welcome to Squiz kids today, your fresh take on what's happening in the world around you. I'm Bryce Corbett. It's Thursday, August 20.

In Squiz Kids Today... Spaceship splashdown near Christmas Island; baby whale shark nursery revealed; a zero-gravity fake; and why otters love to watch. That's what's making news kids style.

The lowdown.

It's the size of an Olympic swimming pool. It fell from the sky and yesterday it was being towed across the Indian Ocean towards the tiny Australian outpost of Christmas Island. I'm talking about a large section of a SpaceX rocket, which blasted off from Starbase in Texas in the United States about a month ago and came crashing back down to earth soon after.

It's been floating for about a month in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Western Australia, with SpaceX engineers slowly dragging it back towards land. In this case, the tiny Aussie territory of Christmas Island. This is the same Christmas Island... great name, by the way... which is home to one of my favourite nature spectacles of the year, the March of the Red crabs, which sees millions of crustaceans march across the island to the sea. But I digress.

The locals of Christmas Island were out in their boats yesterday to get a close up look at a real-life rocket ship part that had been to space and back, with many of them marvelling at how enormous it was. The SpaceX rocket has been designed so that the huge Olympic pool length rocket booster returns to earth to be reused.

I've stuck a link to video in today's show notes of the booster executing a controlled splashdown in the Indian Ocean. It's quite something to think that scientists can now send a spaceship into space, and have then worked out a way for it to gently land back on earth.

Spin the globe.

Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a new story from wherever it stops. And today, we've landed in Indonesia, not far from Christmas Island, as it happens, where scientists are excited that they may have solved a mystery on the origins of whale sharks. Whale sharks are those majestic sea creatures

that look part shark, part whale. They weigh as much as six elephants. Imagine that, when they're fully grown and they are the world's largest species of fish. They're often called the gentle giants of the shark world, because they tend to just cruise along in the shallows of deep oceans, opening their huge mouths to filter and eat tiny sea creatures like krill and small fish.

It's always been something of a mystery about where whale sharks are born. But fishermen off the coast of Indonesia recently came across a couple of baby whale sharks whilst fishing in a deep, perfectly protected cove. Scientists are now working on the theory that this particular cove is used by mum and dad whale sharks as a sort of nursery for their baby whale sharks, because it's protected from predators and it has an abundance of tiny marine life, like krill. Abundance is a fancy word for lots and lots.

And get this the two baby whale sharks that were seen could now live up until the year two thousand one hundred and fifty. Just amazing.

Animal kingdom.

Speaking of amazing, that's what otters apparently think humans are. According to a study released this week by scientists studying their behaviour at Adelaide Zoo, for the longest time, it was thought that having humans gawking at them all day, every day could be a stressful experience for the otters at the zoo. But scientists have studied otter behaviour and found that, to the contrary, they seemed to quite enjoy being the centre of attention.

The otters at Adelaide Zoo became more playful and made more otter noises when they had an audience, with researchers observing that as much as people liked to watch otters in an enclosure, otters seemed to enjoy watching humans watching them. I mean, we are pretty weird, I suppose when you think about it, you can kind of understand why otters would be staring out of their enclosures, fascinated at the way we behave.

Newshounds

Every Thursday. Squiz-E the Newshounds sticks his snout into Squiz Kids HQ to report back on fishy things he's sniffed out on the internet, and today he's rolling around the floor, laughing at the number of people who fell for yet another internet hoax.

A few weeks back, multiple posts were being shared on social media, including on Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, that the world was going to experience an unusual loss of gravity for a whole seven seconds during the solar eclipse that happened a week ago. People and objects would suddenly fly up into the air before falling back to earth, according to the hysterical posts which were sent by an anonymous user, were completely unsourced, and they alleged that NASA, the US space agency, knew about the catastrophe about to unfold, but wasn't telling people.

This is what's called a conspiracy theory, my friends. And unfortunately, there are lots of them on the internet. Wild claims made by random people that others see are often shocked by, and then reshare to their followers, their families and friends. It's what we Newshounds call misinformation. Information that people share before they do what Squiz-E always tells us to do. Say it with me. And that is to Stop, Think, and Check, before you share a piece of information or a piece of online content.

Think about who has created this content. Do a little bit of internet detective work to see if the source of the information is reliable, and then make sure you don't get fooled. Thanks, Squiz-E. What would we do without you?

The S'Quiz.

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening.

1. What is the festive name of the island to which a part of a SpaceX rocket was being towed yesterday?
2. What sort of cute, water loving critters have scientists discovered like to be watched?
3. Marine scientists are excited because they think they may have found a nursery close to the birthplace. Of what giants of the sea?

Shout outs.

It's Thursday, August 20. Today is Daffodil Day in Australia raising funds for cancer research. It's also World Mosquito Day. Mozzies are the worst. Marking the day that it was discovered Mozzies were largely responsible for spreading a disease called malaria. Those little pests.

In happier news, it's also a special day today for these Squiz kids celebrating a birthday. Yi Jun from Vermont South. Connor from Kurri Kurri. Twins Bella and Jazzy from Peregian on the beautiful sunny coast of Queensland. And Leah from Mount Riverview.

And a belated birthday shout out goes to Ronan from Eastwood

Classroom shout outs today go to class five six and their teacher, Mrs. Hutt at Exeter Public School. Hello Mrs. Hutt. Class 4KC at Pymble Ladies College in Sydney and class 5Y and their teacher, Mrs. Leary at Lakes Grammar School at Warnervale.

Don't forget, if you've got a birthday coming up and you'd like a shout out, or if you're after a classroom, shout out or parents. If you'd like to shout out a class or a wonderful teacher. Drop us a line at Squiz kids at the [squiz dot com dot au](http://squiz.com.au) or fill out the form on our website. Well, that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz kids today. We'll be back again tomorrow. In the meantime, get out there and have a most excellent day. Over and out.

S'Quiz Answers

1. Christmas Island.
2. Otters
3. Whale Sharks