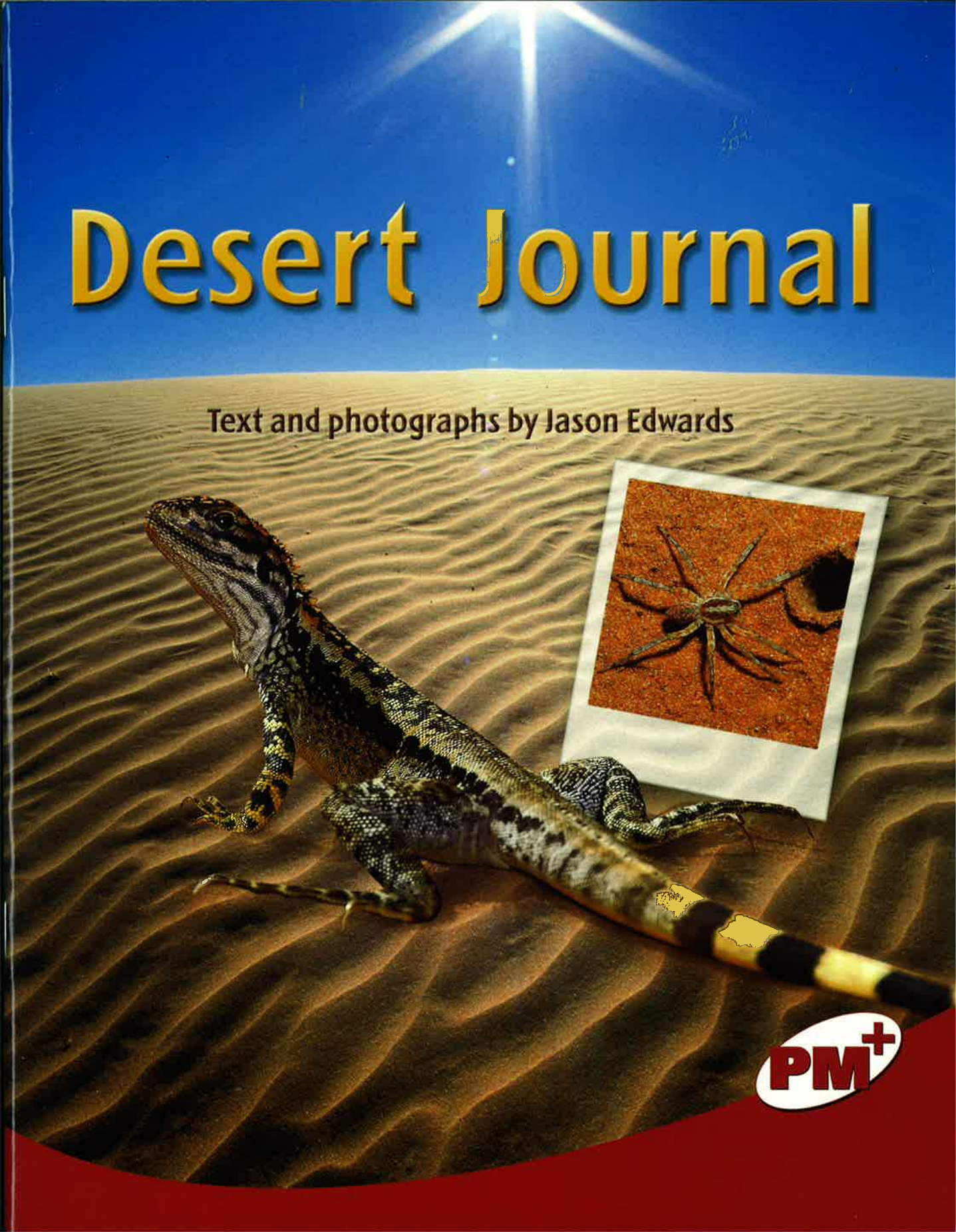
Desert Journal

Text and photographs by Jason Edwards



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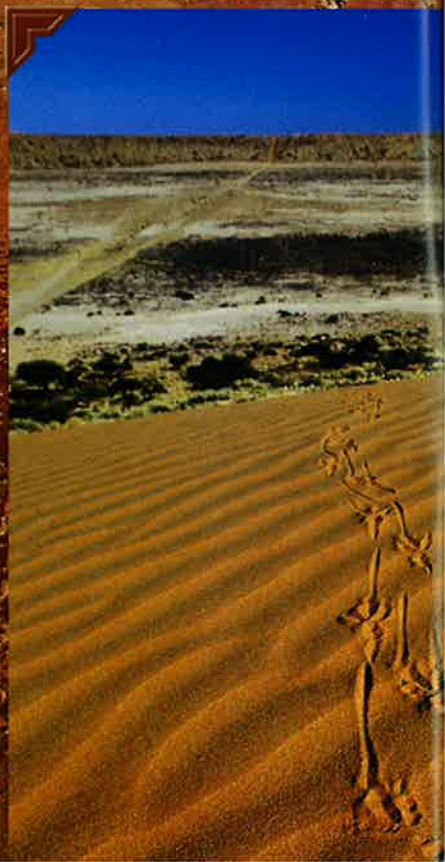
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Desert Discoveries

Last night I had an amazing dream about deserts. Deserts have always interested me, and now I've decided to learn about them and keep a journal of my findings. My first goal? To find out exactly what a desert is!





Desert sand dunes.



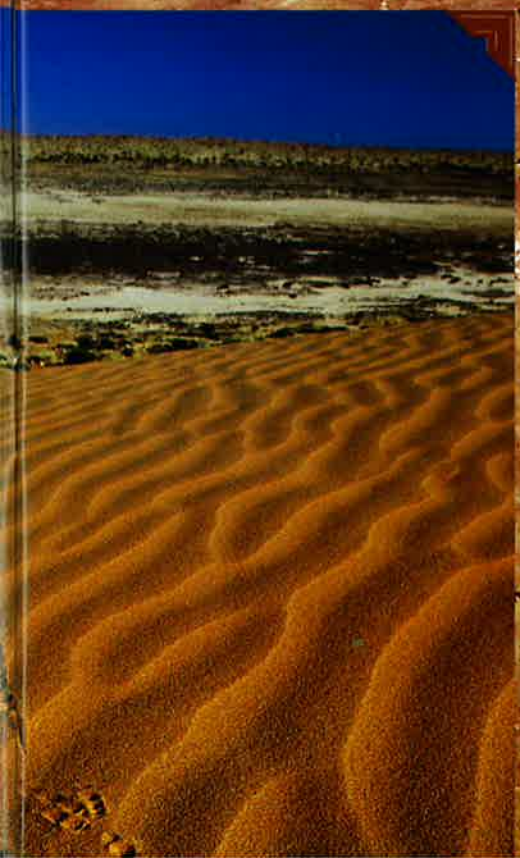
A desert flower.

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I discovered that a desert is a region with little or no water, inhabited by plants, animals and sometimes people. Deserts receive only a small amount of rain in a year. Most cities receive more rain in only a few days!

A polar desert.





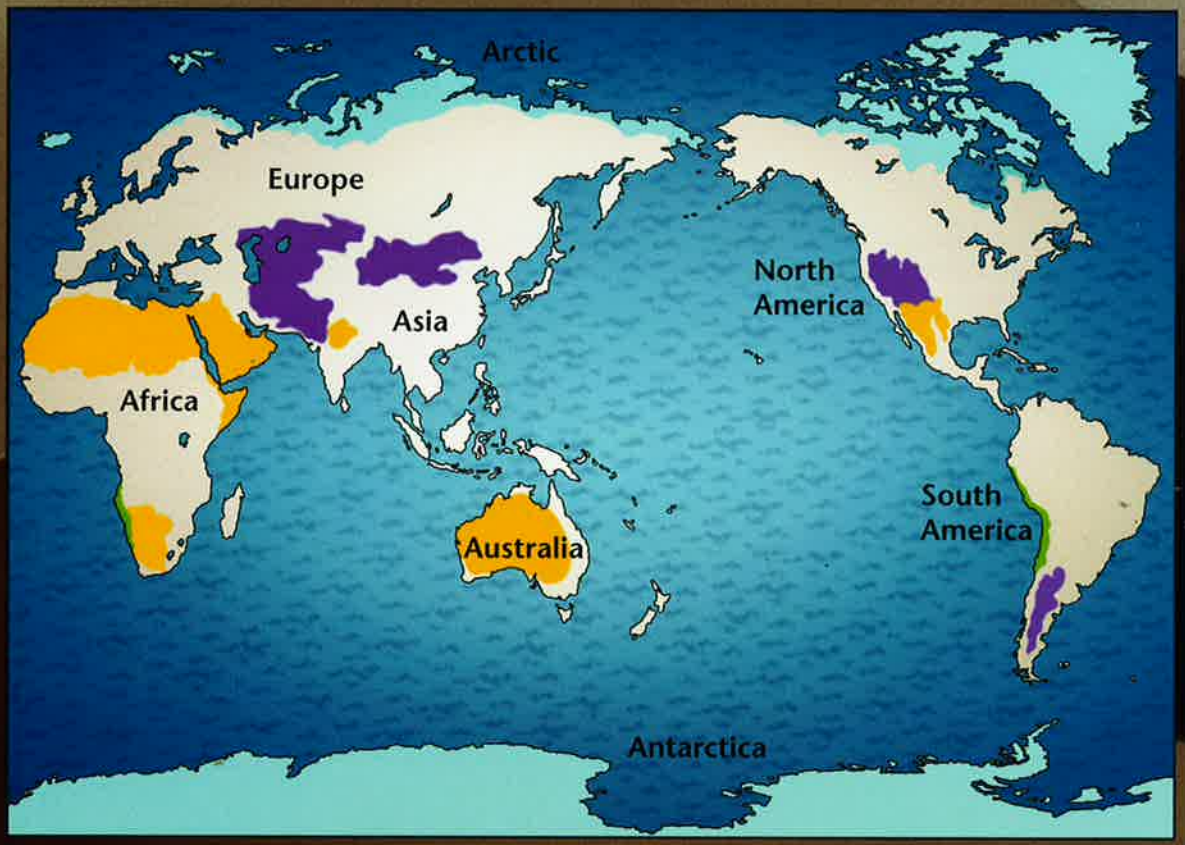
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Where to Find a Desert

Deserts cover nearly one third of the land surface of the Earth and are found on all seven continents. If you joined all of the deserts together like a giant jigsaw puzzle, they would be large enough to cover the entire surface of the moon!

Many deserts lie around the equator, but there are also deserts at the north and south of the planet, and even in the huge mountain ranges of Asia and South America. There are four types of deserts:

- polar
- cold-winter
- sub-tropical
- cool-coastal



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Who Lives in the Desert?

When I began my research, I thought that not many plants or animals lived in deserts, but I was wrong! There are many plant and animal species that do live in deserts. Every year, scientists discover new species, and study the ways in which they survive in harsh, desert environments.



A wolf spider.



Meerkats.

Howling winds can whip sand into giant dunes.



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Everything that lives in a desert has special ways of surviving the harsh conditions. These are called adaptations. An adaptation helps a plant or animal survive.

I've learnt that some adaptations are easy to see – like a lizard's long toes to keep its belly off the baking sand. But others, like the anti-freeze chemical inside arctic plants, are so small we need a microscope to see them.



Dingoes live in the Australian outback. They have adapted to their harsh environment in order to survive.



The crested bicycle-dragon has long toes that help it hold its belly off the baking sand.