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Level 5 – 26th December 2022

Australia's Christmas beetles are disappearing

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

There is a group of creatures that is synonymous with Christmas - donkeys, reindeer, turkeys and robins. Beetles do not spring to mind when thinking of the holiday season. However, there is a Christmas beetle in Australia. This Christmas it has gone missing. It used to be a sign that Christmas was on its way in the land down under. Its numbers have declined rapidly. An entomologist from the University of Sydney said: "Everybody over the age of 35 remembers there being huge numbers of Christmas beetles when they were kids, but that just doesn't seem to happen any more."

The Christmas beetle is as unique to Australia as koalas. It's a shiny and harmless bug. The entomologist told the BBC that Australia has a "really unique biological event where Christmas is associated with the arrival of these beautiful, glittery, friendly beetles". She said it was "absolutely critical" to find out why there are so few around. She thinks it is because of habitat loss. In 2020, bushfires wiped out huge swathes of forest. Australia has the worst rate of mammal extinction in the world. Scientists fear the Christmas beetle may also soon die out.

Sources: <https://phys.org/news/2022-11-christmas-beetles.html>
<https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/the-curious-case-around-christmas-beetles-20161212-gt94rx.html>
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-08/christmas-beetle-mystery-citizen-science/101744318>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. a group of | a. were kids |
| 2. synonymous | b. under |
| 3. Beetles do not spring | c. happen any more |
| 4. It used to be a sign that Christmas | d. creatures |
| 5. in the land down | e. of Christmas beetles |
| 6. huge numbers | f. was on its way |
| 7. when they | g. with Christmas |
| 8. that just doesn't seem to | h. to mind |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. as unique to | a. also soon die out |
| 2. a really unique biological | b. few around |
| 3. She said it was absolutely | c. Australia as koalas |
| 4. find out why there are so | d. in the world |
| 5. because of habitat | e. critical |
| 6. bushfires wiped out huge | f. loss |
| 7. the worst rate of mammal extinction | g. event |
| 8. the Christmas beetle may | h. swathes of forest |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

There is a group of creatures that (1) _____.
Christmas - donkeys, reindeer, (2) _____. Beetles
do not (3) _____ when thinking of the holiday
season. However, there is a Christmas beetle in Australia. This
Christmas it has gone missing. It used to be a sign that Christmas
was on its way in the (4) _____. Its numbers have
declined rapidly. An entomologist from the University of Sydney
said: "Everybody over the age of 35 remembers
(5) _____ numbers of Christmas beetles when
they were kids, but that just doesn't seem to
(6) _____."

The Christmas beetle is (7) _____ Australia as
koalas. It's a shiny (8) _____. The entomologist
told the BBC that Australia has a "really unique biological event
where Christmas (9) _____ the arrival of these
beautiful, glittery, friendly beetles". She said it was
(10) _____ find out why there are so few around.
She thinks it is because of habitat loss. In 2020, bushfires wiped out
huge swathes of forest. Australia has the worst
(11) _____ extinction in the world. Scientists fear
the Christmas beetle may also (12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

There is a group of creatures that is synonymous with Christmas - donkeys, reindeer, turkeys and robins. Beetles do not spring to mind when thinking of the holiday season. However, there is a Christmas beetle in Australia. This Christmas has gone missing. It used to be a sign that Christmas was on its way in the land down under. Its numbers have declined rapidly. An entomologist from the University of Sydney said: "Everybody over the age of 35 remembers there being huge numbers of Christmas beetles when they were kids, but that just doesn't seem to happen anymore." The Christmas beetle is a unique to Australia as koalas. It's a shiny and harmless bug. The entomologist told the BBC that Australia has a "really unique biological event where Christmas is associated with the arrival of these beautiful, glittery, friendly beetles". She said it was "absolutely critical" to find out why there are so few around. She thinks it is because of habitat loss. In 2020, bush fires wiped out huge swathes of forest. Australia has the worst rate of mammal extinction in the world. Scientists fear the Christmas beetle may also soon die out.

CHRISTMAS ANIMALS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about Christmas animals in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

| | STUDENT 1 _____ | STUDENT 2 _____ | STUDENT 3 _____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. | | | |
| Q.2. | | | |
| Q.3. | | | |
| Q.4. | | | |
| Q.5. | | | |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2212/221226-christmas-beetle-5.html>

Write about **Christmas animals** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.
