

## Source #2

You have found an article from *Appleseeds* magazine that describes how some animals build their homes.

### Animal Architects

By Donna Henes

#### Everybody Needs a Home

Homes protect us from weather and keep us safe and comfortable. Animals are no exception.

Humans live in a wide variety of structures. Around the world, people have designed and built their homes to suit their particular needs and ways of life. Animals do the same.

In addition to making living places, people and animals both build other structures: bridges, dams, traps, and storage areas. These structures help people and animals survive.

People and animals both use different materials and methods for their constructions. They build with wood, weave with fibers and vines, dig into the earth, and mold out of mud.

From sky-high nests to elaborate [or fancy] tunnels, the amazing works of animal architects [or building designers] rival those of the greatest human engineers. Let's take a look at some.

Beavers build lodges along the banks of lakes and ponds. Using branches they chewed apart themselves, beavers begin building a cone-shaped frame. Then they fill in the gaps with mud and leaves. The entrance to the lodge is always at the bottom, underwater, so beavers can come and go without being seen by predators.

In addition to their lodges, beavers build dams. Water builds up behind the dams, creating flooded areas that are ideal places for beavers to find food. The flooded areas also provide pools for other wildlife.

Termites build 20-foot-high mounds out of dirt and their own saliva. These giant structures are like small apartment buildings. Besides living areas, these towers have food storage areas, nurseries for "baby" termites, a special chamber for the king and queen, and even gardens. (A chamber is like a room.)...



Figure 1 An inside view of a termite mound

Wombats dig huge underground burrows that can be 100 feet long. Wombat tunnels are elaborate, with many entrances, side tunnels, and resting chambers. Inside the burrow, sleeping nests are built on raised “platforms” to keep them dry in case of flooding. Often, several burrows are connected, creating structures so huge they can actually be seen from space! ...



Figure 2 A wombat coming out of its burrow

Bald eagles build massive nests, 4 to 5 feet across and 3 to 6 feet deep, high in tall trees. They use their beaks and amazingly strong talons [or claws] to break branches and twigs for nest material. Like beavers, eagles begin by building a stick frame. Then they weave in smaller branches and twigs for added strength and protection. Finally, eagles line their nests with grasses and other soft material to make them comfy...

Take a look around you. [You may] find other examples of amazing animal architecture.

#### Sources Used

Henes, D. (2009). Animal architects. *Appleseeds*, 11(7), 16-18.

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Photograph of wombat in burrow (Image 1889R-38764), copyright by Superstock. Used by permission.