

COATS OF ARMS & EMBLEMS

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Introduction

The first official coat of arms of Australia was granted by a Royal Warrant of King Edward VII in 1908. Long after it became officially obsolete, this Coat of Arms continued to be used on some Australian coins. It appeared on the sixpenny piece until 1966.

The present Coat of Arms was granted by King George V in 1912. It consists of a shield containing the badges of the six States of Australia, enclosed by an ermine border signifying Federation. The crest is a seven-pointed gold star on a blue and gold wreath.

The supporters are native Australian fauna: a kangaroo and an emu. Usually the Arms is depicted with an adornment of wattle, and a scroll bearing the word 'Australia' under the Arms. The wattle and scroll, however, do not constitute part of the Arms.

The Australian Government uses the Coat of Arms to authenticate documents and for other official purposes.

Despite popular tradition, Australia has never adopted any official motto or floral, faunal or bird emblem. By tradition the golden wattle, kangaroo and emu are widely accepted as national floral, faunal and bird emblems.

For many years, the motto 'Advance Australia' appeared on unofficial Coats of Arms, even before the Federation of the States in 1901. It was included in the 1908 Arms, and was popularly accepted in association with the 19th century patriotic song Advance Australia Fair. A revised version of this song officially became Australia's national anthem on April 19, 1984.

On that same day, Australia also officially adopted green and gold as its national colours. Until then, the nation had no official national colours, although the use of green and gold by Australia's international sporting teams had become a tradition and had been associated with its Olympic teams since the 1920s.

New South Wales

King Edward VII granted a Coat of Arms to the State of New South Wales in 1906. The description of the Arms embodies the motto, *Orta Recens Quam Pura Nites* (Newly Risen, How Bright Thou Shonest). The State's floral emblem is the waratah (*Telopea speciosissima*), proclaimed in 1962. The bird emblem, the kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*), and the faunal emblem, the platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), were both proclaimed in 1971. There are no official State colours, but sporting teams traditionally wear blue, the colour of the field on the State badge.

Victoria

In 1910 King George V granted a Coat of Arms to the State of Victoria which was named after his grandmother. In 1973 certain additions were made to the Coat of Arms and a Royal Warrant was issued by Queen Elizabeth II. The description of the Arms embodies the motto: "Peace and Prosperity". The State's floral emblem is the pink heath (*Epacris Impressa Labill*), proclaimed in 1958. The bird emblem is the helmeted honeyeater (*Meliphaga cassidix*), also called the yellow tufted honeyeater; and the faunal emblem is Leadbeater's possum (*Gymnobelideus leadbeateri*) which were both proclaimed in 1971.

The official colours of the State are azure and argent (blue and silver).

Queensland

Queen Victoria granted a Coat of Arms to the then colony of Queensland in 1893. The supporters, a red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and a brolga (*Grus rubicunda*), were assigned in 1977 by Queen Elizabeth II. The motto of Queensland, *Audax et Fidelis* (Bold, Aye, and Faithful Too) is embodied in the description of the Coat of Arms.

The State's floral emblem is the Cooktown orchid (*Dendrobium bigibbum*), proclaimed in 1959, and its faunal emblem is the koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), proclaimed in 1971. The State has no official bird emblem and no proclaimed colours; but sporting teams traditionally use the colour maroon for uniforms and pennants.

Western Australia

Western Australia's Coat of Arms had its origins in 1829 when British settlers established the Swan River colony. Their successors adopted an unofficial emblem which featured the black swan and the motto, a Latin pun, *Cygnis Insignis* (Distinguished for Swans). The Coat of Arms, which now carries no motto, was given official sanction when Queen Elizabeth II granted Arms to the State in 1969. The State's floral emblem is the kangaroo paw (*Anigosanthus manglesii*), proclaimed in 1960. The bird emblem, the black swan (*Cygnus atratus*), and the faunal emblem, the numbat or banded anteater (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*), were both proclaimed in 1973. The State has no official colours,

but sporting teams traditionally wear black and gold.

South Australia

The State's Coat of Arms was granted by Queen Elizabeth II on April 19, 1984. The shield contains the State badge, comprising the piping shrike, or whitebacked magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen leuconota*), standing on a staff of gum tree, against a gold orb representing the sun. The crest is the State's floral emblem, Sturt's desert pea (*Clianthus formosus*), above a collar of the State's colours, red, blue and gold. The present Coat of Arms replaced the Arms granted by King George V in 1936.

The floral emblem was proclaimed in 1961 and the State badge in 1904. The faunal emblem, the hairy-nosed or plains wombat (*Lasiorhinus latitrons*), was proclaimed in 1970. The State's official colours are red, blue and gold.

The Northern Territory

Until the Northern Territory was granted self-government on July 1, 1978, it was administered by the Federal Government, and used the national Coat of Arms.

The territory's own Coat of Arms was granted in 1978. The shield contains Aboriginal motifs associated with Arnhem Land. The supporters are two red kangaroos and the crest is a wedge-tailed eagle. The territory's floral emblem is Sturt's desert rose (*Gossypium sturtianum*), proclaimed in 1964. The bird emblem, the wedge-tailed eagle (*Aquila audax*), and the faunal emblem, the red kangaroo (*Macropus rutilus*), were both proclaimed in 1975. The territory

colours widely accepted are those of the flag - black, white and ochre - which are the basic colours used in Aboriginal painting.

Tasmania

The Coat of Arms of the island State was granted by King George V in 1917 and the description of the Arms embodies the motto, *Ubertas et Fidelitas* (Fertility and Faithfulness). The supporters in the Arms are two Tasmanian tigers (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*), which in modern times have been found only in Tasmania and are now possibly extinct.

The floral emblem of the State is the Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), proclaimed in 1962. There are no bird or faunal emblems or proclaimed colours. Representative sporting teams wear green and gold.

The Australian Capital Territory

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has no Coat of Arms. However, a Coat of Arms for the city of Canberra, the national capital of Australia, was granted by King George V in 1928.

The motto embodied in the Coat of Arms is "For the Queen, the Law and the People". The supporters are a black swan and white swan, symbolising the Aboriginal and European races.

The ACT's floral emblem, the royal bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gloriosa*), was proclaimed in 1982. It has no bird or faunal emblem and no official colours. The colours worn by the majority of sporting teams are blue and gold.

Source: DFAT