



Decorated Skull of a Long Nosed Spiny Echidna

The embellished skull of a long nosed spiny echidna originally worn as a hunting or war charm by a warrior. The skull is beautifully patinated from long usage and handling. There are extensive traces of original tribal pigments used to paint the skull. Central Highlands Area, PNG, Melanesia. Skull of a Barton's echidna (*Zaglossus bartoni*) and pigments. 17 cm. 19th/20th century.

Literature:

The western long-beaked echidna is an egg-laying mammal. Unlike the short-beaked echidna, which eats ants and termites, the long-beaked species eats earthworms. The long-beaked echidna is also larger than the short-beaked species, reaching up to 16.5 kilograms; the snout is longer and turns downward; and the spines are almost indistinguishable from the long fur. It is distinguished from the other *Zaglossus* species by the number of claws on the fore and hind feet: three (rarely four). It is the largest extant monotreme.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_long-beaked_echidna

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