The Australians who lost a war to emus

Do you know what an emu is? *(Yes, it's...)*

Vocabulary

1. mounting 2. causing 3. cull 4. outmaneuvered 5. tough 6. fencing

True Story

In the 1930s, emus were _____ damage to farms in Western Australia. The government sent soldiers with machine guns to _____ the emus. However, the emus were hard to target and could run very fast. The soldiers had trouble killing the emus, and the media started calling it the "Emu War." The soldiers tried mounting machine guns on trucks, but the emus still _____ them.

The operation was eventually called off, and only around 1,000 emus were killed. The emu problem continued until better _____ was used to protect the farms. The Great Emu War of 1932 is now a funny story in Australian history, showing how difficult it can be to control wildlife. As one farmer said at the time, "If our military had birds as _____ as these emus, they could face any army in the world. Emus can survive machine gun fire just like tanks."

Quiz

1. What did the government send to cull the emus?
2. Did the soldiers have trouble killing the emus?

True or False

1. The emus were easy to target. True | False
2. The media called it the "Emu War." True | False
3. Better fencing was used to protect the farms after the operation was called off. True | False

Conversation

A: Why did they send us here again?
B: To cull the emus, remember?
A: Yeah, but these birds are fast!
B: You're telling me. I can barely aim.
A: Look, there's one now! Get it!
B: I'm trying! This thing is like a tank!
A: Ha! Maybe we should surrender to the emus instead.

Discussion

1. Do you think it's funny that the emus were able to outsmart the soldiers?
2. Would you have been scared to face the emus if you were a soldier?
3. Do you think it's important to protect wildlife, even if it causes damage to farms?
4. Have you ever had animals come into your garden, house or apartment?

Copyright © Nick Ramsay