

# Discovering Australia – 1

*The Dutch were the first Europeans to record visiting Australia.*

In the late 1500s, the Dutch were buying spices and sugar, which were very rare and valuable at the time, from Indonesia. They wanted to find new countries and peoples to trade with. In 1606, the Dutch East India Company sent Willem Janszoon on the ship *Duyfken* (which means 'Little Dove') to find new places to trade with. Janszoon (sometimes called Jansz for short) sailed through Indonesia and down into the Gulf of Carpentaria (in modern day Queensland), believing it to be part of New Guinea. Janszoon and his crew were the first Europeans to explore Australia.



Almost 40 years later, in 1642, another Dutchman, Abel Tasman, commanded a voyage to Australia. He was sent with two ships to find and map Australia, which the Dutch called 'New Holland'. Bad weather and strong winds forced him across the Indian Ocean to the south, and he sighted what we now call Tasmania. He called this land Van Diemen's Land, and charted it, before going on to chart New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji. He met Maoris in New Zealand who fought with his crew and killed four of them. A year later he returned and mapped the north coast of Australia from east to west, but as he discovered no new trading partnerships or treasures, the trip was considered a failure.

