



FAUNA RESCUE
WHITSUNDAYS

Wildlife activity book

*Fun facts, ideas and activities
for young wildlife warriors*



(07) 4947 3389 | www.frw.org.au



FAUNA RESCUE

W H I T S U N D A Y S

FRW is a non-profit, voluntary group who care for and rehabilitate sick, injured and orphaned native animals.

- We rescue, rehabilitate and release sick, injured or orphaned wildlife as appropriate and in accordance with the Carer's Code of Practice requirements.
- We promote and support endangered wildlife.
- We encourage and support efforts to protect the natural environment and its inhabitants.
- We work with other animal rescue groups, vets, QPWS, Council and other environmental protection groups.
- We encourage the valuable participation of members of our community in all of our aims and activities.
- Through our school and community education project we give informative talks and displays to local schools and any other interested community organisations.
- We provide a 24 hour wildlife hotline service. This service is manned by our volunteers on a roster system and is a valuable community aid as well as being instrumental in animals receiving timely and appropriate care.

Australia is one of the most important countries in the world for biodiversity, it is home to more species than any other developed country.

Our wildlife is extremely precious, most is found nowhere else in the world, for this reason it is very important that we conserve and protect our animals and their habitat.

Sadly, Australia is facing an extinction crisis. Since European settlement, Australia has the worst mammal extinction rate in the world. One out of three mammal extinctions in the last 400 years have occurred in Australia.

We can all play a part in helping to protect our wildlife – we can learn about our native animals, understand that each and every one plays an important role in our environment. We can help protect their habitat and food sources and – if you ever see a native animal who needs a helping hand – call the Fauna Rescue Whitsundays Hotline on 4947 3389 for advice on how to help.

Fauna Rescue Whitsundays Association Inc
PO Box 806 Cannonvale 4802

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This booklet contains information obtained from a number of kind sources - FRW members, members of Long Grass Nature Refuge, Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers, Queensland Government; Land Protection; Department of Natural Resources and Mines, members of other groups, independent advice and research.





What do our native animals look like?

Australian native animals all look very different. Each species has evolved to live in different environments and eat different foods. They have adapted to where they live and have developed special features to help them find food and shelter and raise their young.



This is an echidna. It has developed these special features:

- Sharp spines to protect it against predators.
- A long nose and sticky tongue to catch ants for dinner.
- Sharp claws to break apart rotting wood and ant nests.
- Strong arms to dig down into the ground when frightened.

DID YOU KNOW?

The baby 'puggle' hatches from an egg. It's then carried in the mother's pouch for about three months!

This is a black flying fox. It has developed these special features:

- Strong wings to fly up into the trees to eat fruit and nectar, they also use their wings as fans to cool themselves.
- Good eyesight and a strong sense of smell to find their food.
- Sharp claws to hang from the branches.



Now it's your turn... what special features do these animals have?









What class of animal is it?

There are many different animal classes. The five most well known classes of vertebrates – that's animals with backbones – are mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals – Humans, dogs, cats, horses, and whales. If an animal drinks milk when it is a baby, it belongs to the mammal class. *Can you think of another mammal?*

Birds – Birds are warm-blooded, egg-laying, vertebrate animals. They are covered in feathers and they have wings.

Fish – Fish are vertebrates that live in water and have gills, scales and fins.

Reptiles – They have scaly skin. They are cold blooded and are born on land. Snakes, crocodiles and turtles all belong to the reptile class. *Can you think of another reptile?*

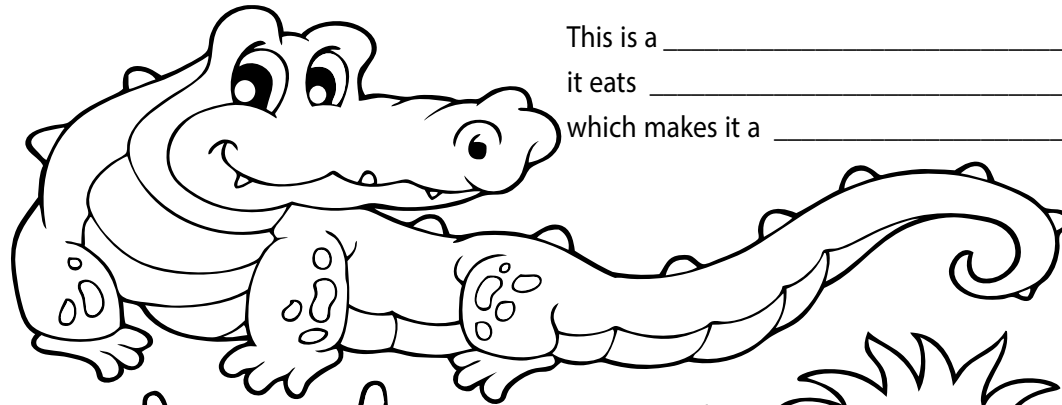
Amphibians – Amphibians are born in the water. When they are born, they breath with gills like a fish. But when they grow up, they develop lungs and can live on land. *Can you think of an amphibian?*

There are also a lot of animals without backbones. These are called **invertebrates**. Two of the most commonly known are arachnids (*spiders*) and insects.

What do our native animals eat?

Like us, all animals need a balanced and healthy diet. Some animals eat only plants and nectar (*herbivores*); some only eat meat (*carnivores*); some animals eat both (*omnivores*).

COLORING BOOK



This is a _____
it eats _____
which makes it a _____

DID YOU KNOW?
Emus are Australia's largest bird and they can live for up to 20 years in the wild! Oh... and they're the only bird with calf muscles!



This is a _____
it eats _____
which makes it a _____

This is a _____
it eats _____
which makes it a _____

This is a _____
it eats _____
which makes it a _____

Great! Here's some more to test your knowledge:

Proserpine rock wallaby: It eats _____ which makes it a _____

Pheasant coucal: It eats _____ which makes it a _____

Koala: It eats _____ which makes it a _____



Many of us are familiar with the laughing kookaburra's call at dusk and dawn, but just what exactly are they laughing at?

Well, as it turns out, they're not laughing. This family-oriented bird does its communal call to establish the territory of the family unit and warn off other kookaburras. The family may vocalise together like a chorus claim to their territory.

If any rival families are within earshot they too may respond.

Researchers have found that members of a family unit laugh in a similar manner.



DID YOU KNOW?
Saltwater crocodiles are the largest reptile in the world with males growing up to 6m!

AWESOME JOB
Keep up the great work!

DID YOU KNOW?
A bee's wings beat 190 times a second, that's 11,400 times a minute!



Critter quiz

1. What am I?



2. What do I eat?

3. Where do I live?

4. What are my main threats?

5. What should rescuers do if they find me injured?

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What are baby animals called?

Match the adult names to the babies names by drawing a line between the two.

TURTLE

TADPOLE

HATCHLING

JOEY

KOALA

PUGGLE

FROG

EAGLET

KANGAROO

CROCODILE

ECHIDNA

JOEY

HATCHLING

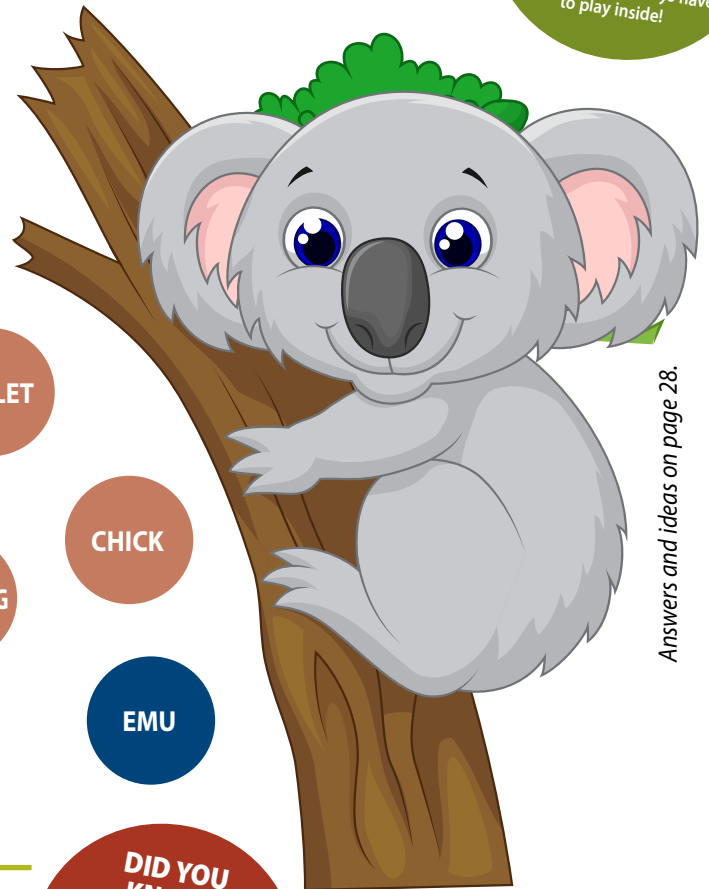
EAGLE

HATCHLING

GOANNA

CHICK

EMU



Answers and ideas on page 28.

RIDDLE
Q. Why do kangaroo mums hate bad weather?
A. Because their joeys have to play inside!

Who am I?

Mystery One:

- ☐ I am the world's largest living reptile
- ☐ I feed on fish, crabs, mammals and birds, preferring to hunt at night
- ☐ I have the strongest bite force of any animal and have lots of teeth

I am _____

Mystery Two:

- ☐ I am a very colourful Australian parrot
- ☐ I eat seeds, insects and flowers
- ☐ I eat and roost in trees in a noisy group

I am _____

Mystery Three:

- ☐ I am an egg-laying mammal
- ☐ I live in fresh water
- ☐ My bill looks like a duck's bill and can detect electric fields

I am _____



DID YOU KNOW?
Geckos live on every continent except for Antarctica. They are mostly found in warm climates.



Mystery Four:

- ☐ I am an egg-laying land mammal
- ☐ I use a long beak and sticky tongue to slurp up my favourite food: ants!
- ☐ I have spikes to protect myself

I am _____

Mystery Five:

- ☐ At 2 metres high I am Australia's largest bird
- ☐ I can't fly but can run really fast!
- ☐ Mum lays the eggs and dad takes care of the chicks

I am _____

Bats are beeeeeeautiful!

The world's only flying mammal, bats are classified into two major groups: Flying foxes (or megabats) and microbats. They are very smart and both share similarities with us: they are warm-blooded, give birth and suckle their young, are caring mums and even leave their children (called pups) at 'creche' when they go in search of food!

Some species of Australian plants rely solely on bats for their survival!

Flying foxes play an important role in our local Whitsundays ecology. Almost all hardwood trees need flying foxes to pollinate them. Hardwood flowers can only be pollinated at night, so the daytime activity of birds and bees does not fertilise the flowers.

Flying foxes fly further than bees and most birds, so are able to cross-fertilise bushland over great distances each night. It has also been estimated that a single flying fox can disperse up to 3000 seeds a night!

With major habitat loss, more barbed wire, power lines, domestic animals, cars and roads, and increasing heat events, flying fox populations are declining at an alarming rate. Losing these wonderful animals will have terrible consequences for many of our other native animals.



1. What are some dangers for flying foxes?

2. What will happen to our forests if flying foxes die?

Colour-in these four bats that we find in the Whitsundays region.

COLORING BOOK



If you see an injured bat
DON'T TOUCH!
Call FRW and we
will send a
rescuer.

Black Flying Fox

This flying fox has black fur and large brown/red eyes. She loves blossoms from eucalypts, melaleucas and a variety of native and introduced species. She also loves fleshy fruits.

RIDDLE
Q. Why don't bats live alone?
A: They like to hang out with their friends.

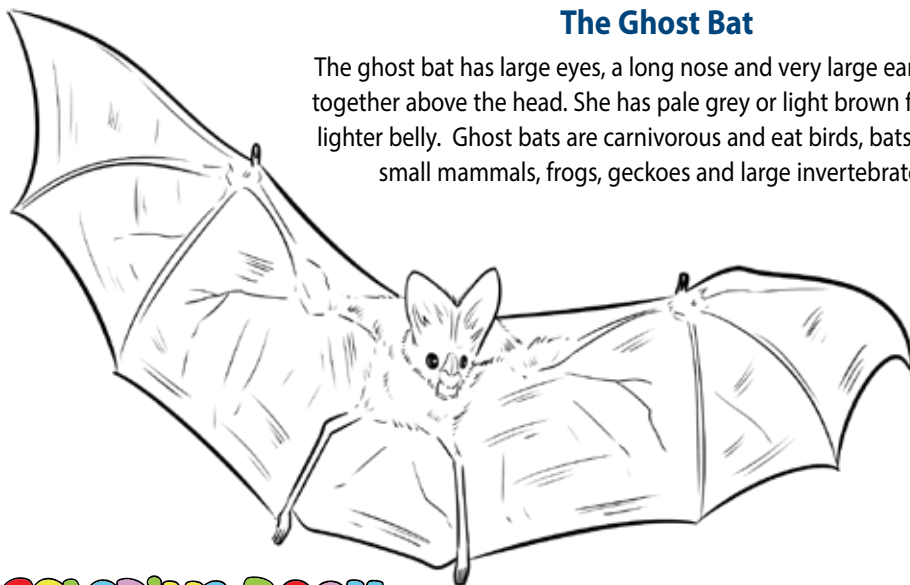
3. If we lose our flying foxes and forests, how would this affect other creatures?



The Ghost Bat

The ghost bat has large eyes, a long nose and very large ears, joined together above the head. She has pale grey or light brown fur with a lighter belly. Ghost bats are carnivorous and eat birds, bats, insects, small mammals, frogs, geckoes and large invertebrates.

A microbat can eat a third of its body weight in insects each night – up to 1200 insects per hour!



4. What might happen to the bat if it ate a mouse that had eaten rodent poison?

COLORING BOOK

Queensland Blossom Bat

This bat has golden coloured fur, grey wings and large brown/red eyes. She has a long brush-like tongue to sweep up sweet nectar from blossoms.



5. Why is it important to protect large areas of native forests?

Tube-Nosed Fruit Bat

The tube-nosed fruit megabat has grey fur and its wings and ears are brown/grey with yellow spots. She eats range of native and exotic fruits, nectar, flowers and pollen, and is an important seed disperser and pollinator.



6. As plant pollinators, why are fruit bats important for our trees?

This eats this and that eats that!

A **FOOD CHAIN** is when plants and animals are dependent upon each other as a source of food. For example:



Tree leaves

are eaten by



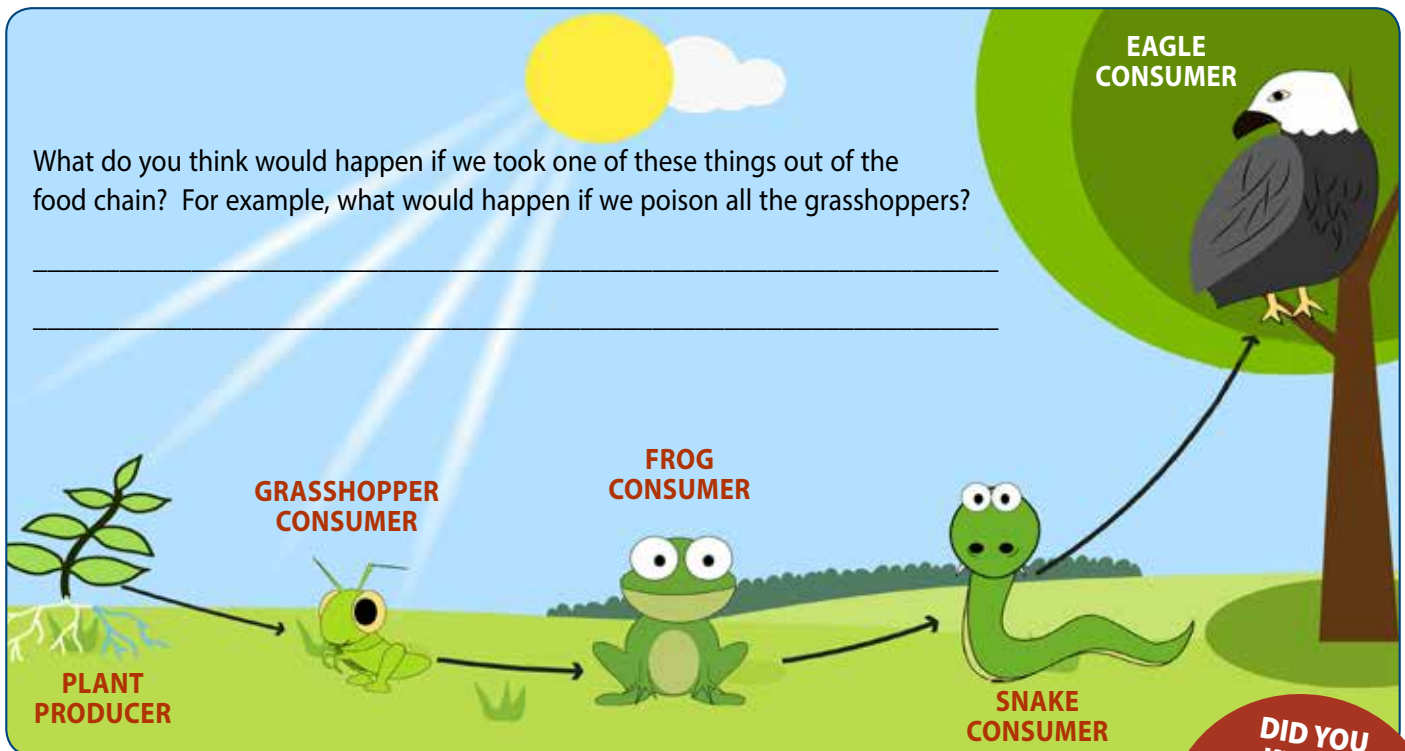
Grasshoppers

are eaten by



Kookaburras

What do you think would happen if we took one of these things out of the food chain? For example, what would happen if we poison all the grasshoppers?



DID YOU KNOW?
The platypus is one of the few living mammals to produce venom.





What sort of baby bird is it?

ALTRICIAL young at hatching are completely helpless, usually naked, have their eyes closed and are totally dependent on their parents for food and care.

They are hatched in nests built by their parents, usually in trees, bushes or shrubs, and are called nestlings. Nestlings grow quickly, become feathered and, depending on their species, leave the nest in two to four weeks.

When they leave the nest, the young are called fledglings. Most fledglings are still fed by their parents (even on the ground) for a short period of time until they become independent.

Name one other altricial bird _____

Magpies,
wrens,
honeyeaters,
doves, eagles,
owls, and
lorikeets.

PRECOCIAL young are much more developed at hatching than altricial chicks.

They are covered with down feathers, have their eyes open, and are able to run about (or swim) soon after hatching, and can feed themselves at an early stage. Precocial birds grow much more slowly than their altricial cousins (*which tends to make them look cute and helpless*).

Precocial chicks are usually hatched in nests on the ground and remain with their parents until self sufficient.

Name one other precocial bird _____

Emus,
brush turkeys,
and many
wading
shorebirds.

Stages of bird development



HATCHLING (0-14 days) 1

Hatchlings have mostly exposed skin, and either no feathers, or a light downy coat, and may have small developing pin feathers on their wings and tail. They are unable to perch.



NESTLING (10-28 days) 2

Partially feathered young have still got some exposed skin, particularly on the belly. They may still have a mixture of down and pin feathers, but will also have a covering of true feathers. Depending on age, they may be able to perch.



FLEDGLING (21-56 days) 3

Fully feathered all over, and no exposed skin. They are fully able to perch and will be experimenting with flight. If the baby bird is fully feathered and hopping around, it will usually be no more than 2-5 days away from flying. At this age, birds often jump or tumble out of the nest.



DID YOU KNOW?
Magpies occupy the same territory for their entire life. Once they find a suitable patch, they will stay there for life - up to 20 years.



This baby bird has some feathers

Number each of these three pictures and their stage of growth (hatchling, nestling or fledgling)

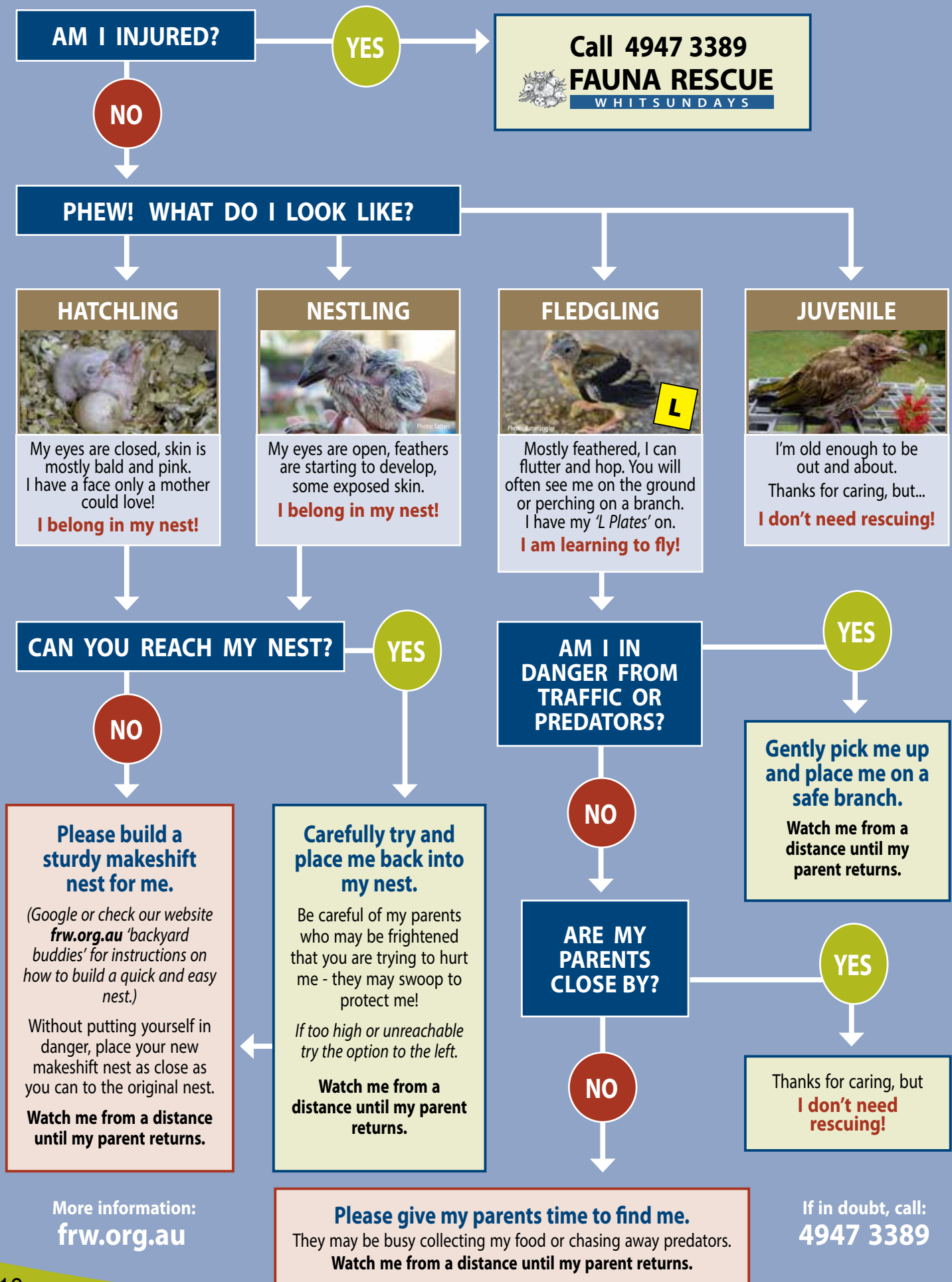


This baby bird has no feathers



This baby bird has feathers

What to do if you find a baby bird





Your turn now ... do you know what to do if you find a baby bird?

Draw lines connecting each step to the next step to find out what you should do to help a baby bird if you find one on the ground.

What should you do? Follow the steps...

Let's suppose:

1

- you find a bird fluttering on the ground - it doesn't appear to be injured, but it's unable to get off the ground...
- it seems like a baby, but is mostly feathered... *which means it's a fledgling*
- you can see a cat closeby... which you are able to put inside, away from the bird...
- you can hear it's mum in the tree nearby



Answer 'yes' or 'no' to the blue questions and draw lines connecting the steps:

IS IT IN DANGER?

NO

ARE THE PARENTS CLOSE BY?

NO

Give the parents time to return to their fledgling.

Watch from a distance to make sure it stays safe from predators whilst it learns to fly.

YES

Gently pick it up and place it on a safe branch.

YES

Thanks for caring, but it doesn't need rescuing!

It's safely learning to fly.

Why do you think this baby bird was on the ground?

Let's suppose:

2

- you find a bird fluttering on the ground - it doesn't appear to be injured, but it's unable to get off the ground...
- it has a few little feathers but has quite a few bald spots *which means it's a nestling - It belongs in the nest*
- you can see the nest but it's too high to get to



Draw a line connecting the right course of action:

CAN YOU REACH THE NEST?

NO

Build a sturdy makeshift nest.

Google or check our website frw.org.au 'backyard buddies' for instructions on how to build a quick and easy nest.

Without putting yourself in danger, place it as close as you can to the original nest.

Watch from a distance until a parent returns.

YES

Carefully try and place me back into my nest.

Be careful of the parents may swoop to protect it!

Watch from a distance until a parent returns.

Why do you think this baby bird belongs in the nest?

DID YOU KNOW?
Tawny frogmouths can slow down their heart rate and metabolism for a few hours a day during winter when food is scarce?

Stop, hop and check!

**What to do if you find dead or injured wildlife.
Stop the car! Hop out and check the pouch!**

DID YOU KNOW?
Kangaroos are the largest living marsupials in the world!

1

THINK SAFE AND STOP!

Before stopping and checking dead or injured wildlife always ask mum or dad to make sure it is safe. Never put yourself or others in danger!

2

HOP OUT BUT DON'T TOUCH

Never handle injured wildlife yourself. Ask an adult to help, they should wear gloves. (If an animal is hurt they may bite and scratch, they don't understand that you want to help them).

3

MOVE THE ANIMAL OFF THE ROAD

Ask an adult to move the animal off the road if it is safe to. This will stop it getting run over and will also prevent other wildlife (such as birds of prey – hawks, eagles etc) from getting hit by cars.

4

CHECK THE POUCH

If there is a baby in the pouch:

- If it is attached to a teat – Don't disconnect the baby from the teat, leave the baby inside the pouch, as is.
- If it is not attached to a teat – Remove the baby from the pouch and put it into something warm like a jumper or towel, keep calm and quiet and be gentle. Remember it is very scared and may be injured.

5

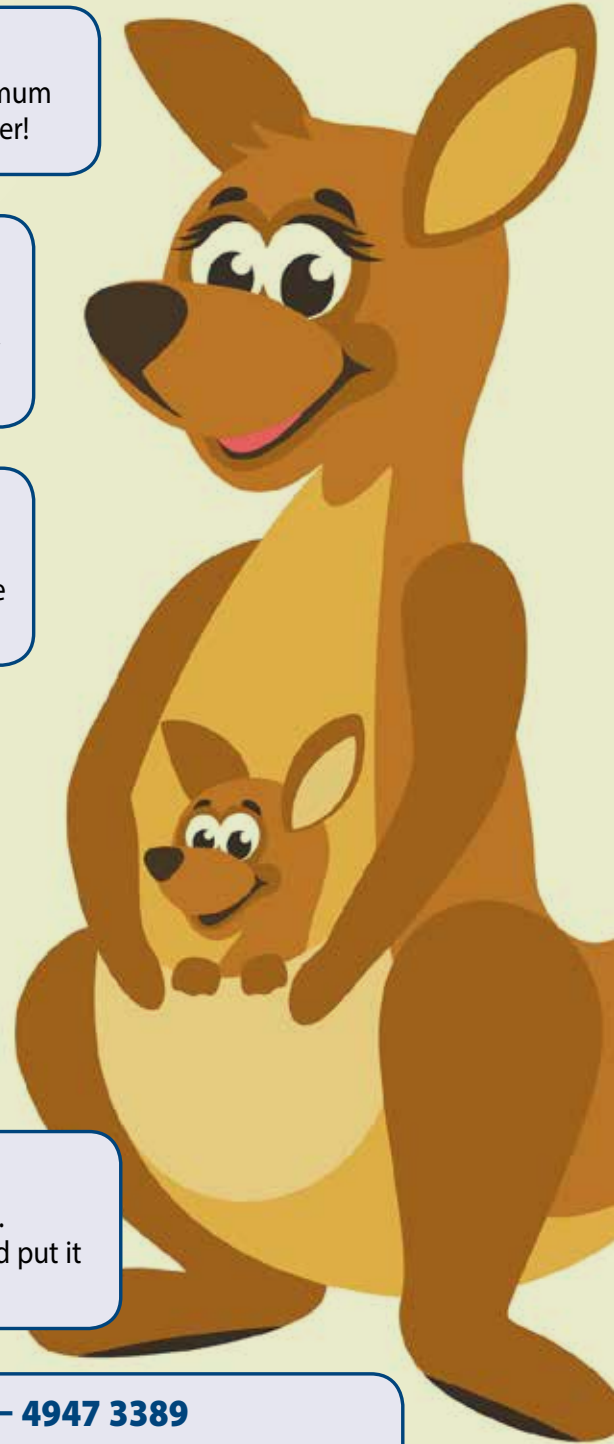
CHECK THE SURROUNDING AREA

Look to see if there is a dependent joey hiding in the bush closeby. If so, ask an adult to very gently cover it with a jumper or towel and put it somewhere quiet until it can be taken to a FRW carer.

6

CALL FAUNA RESCUE WHITSUNDAYS – 4947 3389

The volunteer hotline operator will ask about the animal and also where it was found – if injuries require urgent treatment they may ask that you to take it directly to a nearby vet. Alternatively, FRW can organise that the animal be given to an expert carer. DO NOT give food or drink until you consult the FRW hotline.



Remember! These animals are very important to us – they are our future and we need to care for them so they don't become extinct.



Cats are catastrophic for our native wildlife

Cats are a huge problem for our wildlife. They eat small mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. It is estimated that cats (feral and household) kill more than 20 billion native animals a year!

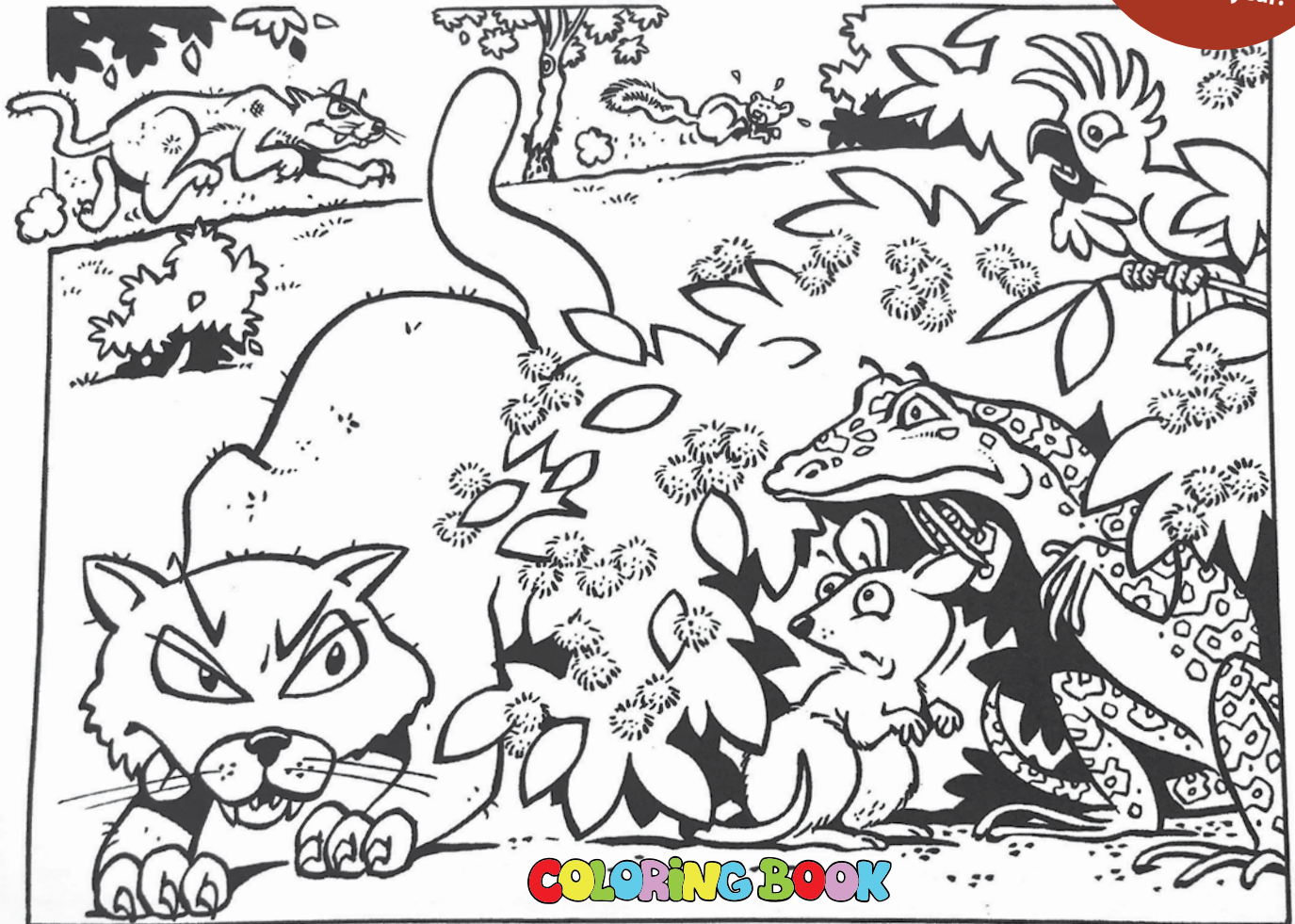
If you have a cat – where is it right now? Is it roaming in your neighbour's yard? Do you keep it inside – especially at night? Is your cat wearing a bell so that wildlife can hear it coming?

Please make sure you desex your cat to protect our wildlife.

Colour-in the drawing of our native wildlife hiding from a cat.

DID YOU KNOW?

On average a pet cat kills 16 mammals, eight birds and eight reptiles a year!



This drawing reproduced with acknowledgement to the work of Paul Lennon, Queensland Government; Land Protection; Department of Natural Resources and Mines (Pest Patrol Activity Book)

YOUR DOG CAN BE DEADLY!!



Myopathy in wallabies and kangaroos happens when the animal is under stress, such as being attacked or chased by a dog.

She does not have to be directly injured or caught by your dog for her to suffer myopathy. She will slowly become paralysed and can die up to two weeks later.

We think that if our pet did not actually attack the wallaby, all is well, our dog has had exercise, the wallaby got away. Not true!

Now you know – the wallaby may have 'gotten away,' but it did not necessarily escape a painful and slow death.

Be responsible and restrain your dog.
Never let your dog chase wildlife – ever!



Photo: Michael Zimmer

Spot the dangers to our wildlife

Our wildlife face many dangers in different forms. Sometimes they are unavoidable, but often there are simple things that we can all do to make our community a safer place for wildlife!

What dangers lurk in the photos and what can we do to make it safer for our wildlife?



Can you spot the danger in the picture?

Which animals could be affected?

Is there anything we can do to make it safer for wildlife?

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You can be a Wildlife Hero at home!

There are loads of things you as a Wildlife Hero can do around your home to protect animals and the environment. Being a good pet owner means taking good care of your pets.

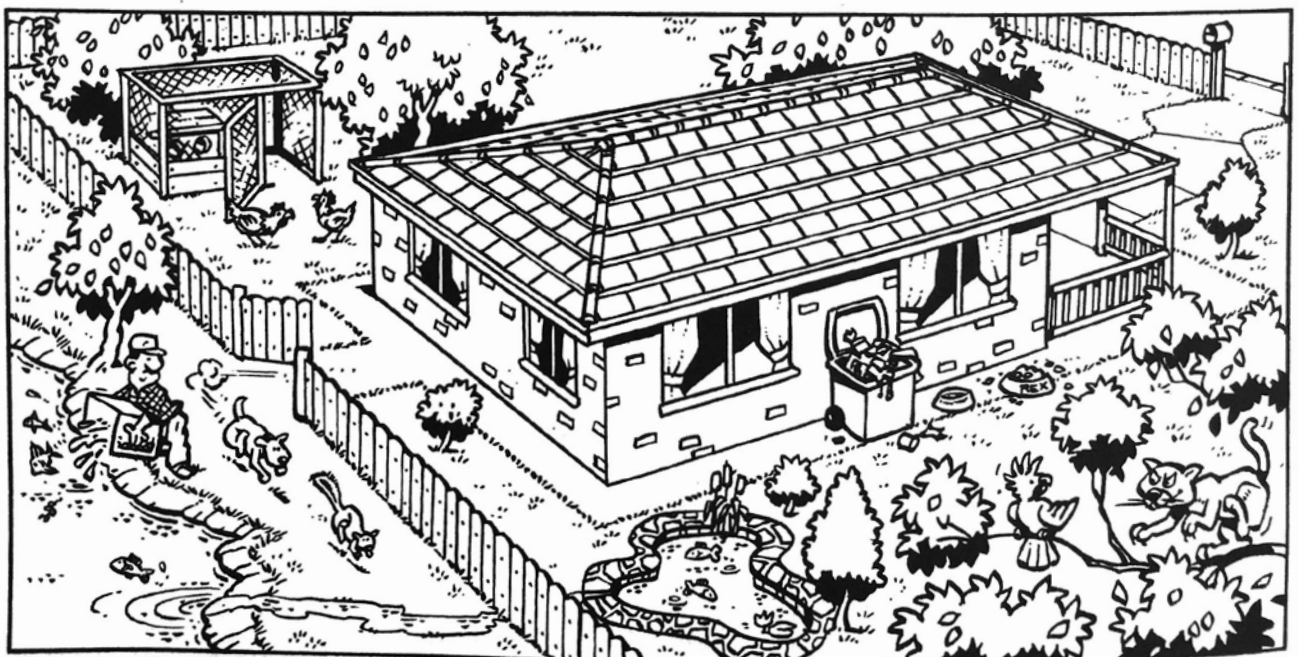
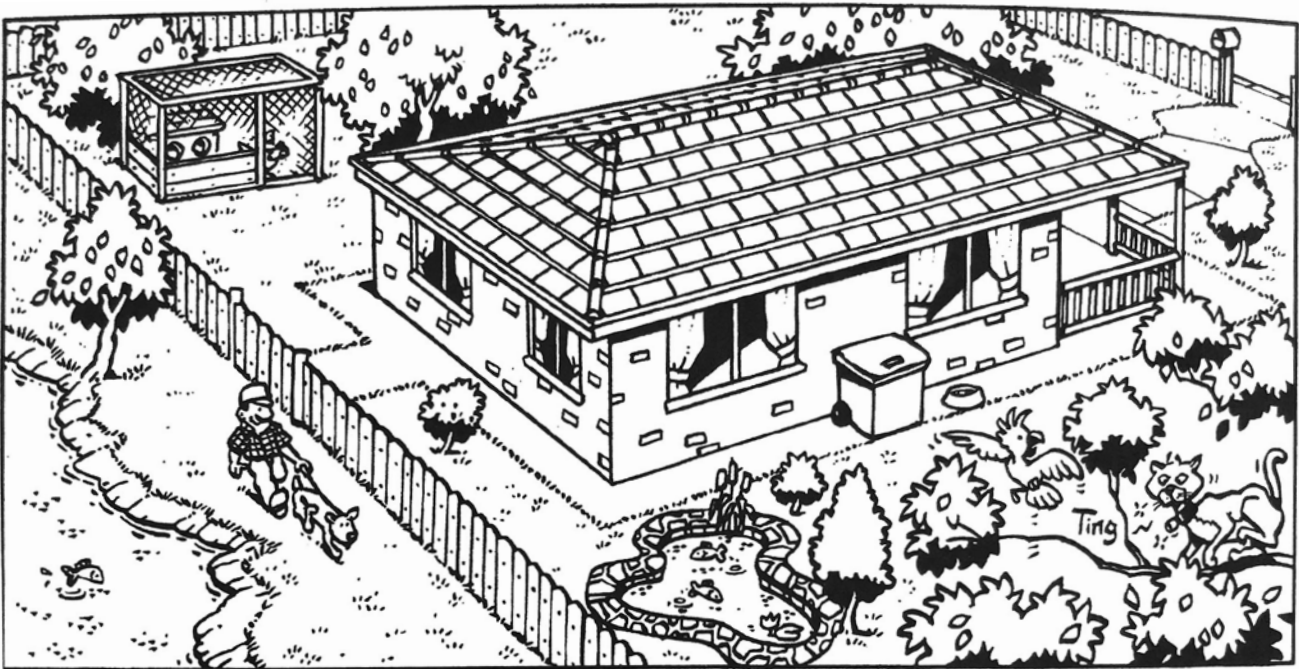
- Always walk your dog on a lead – don't let them chase wildlife.
- Never let your cat outdoors to hunt – is it wearing a warning bell?
- Keep your yard clean and rubbish contained.
- Never release pet fish or turtles into local creeks.

SPOT THE
8
DIFFERENCES

Can you spot the eight differences between the two homes below?

They are all things that people should do to protect wildlife and their pets.

Circle all the things that should NOT be happening in the second picture.



This drawing reproduced with acknowledgement to the work of Paul Lennon, Queensland Government; Land Protection; Department of Natural Resources and Mines (Pest Patrol Activity Book)



**Draw a picture of your
favourite native animal**

Type of native animal:

What makes this animal special to you?:

Buddies in the backyard!

When you cultivate native plants you attract more creatures into your backyard and, as well as providing food, these plants also provide shelter and breeding sites.

Plants don't necessarily have to provide food directly – they may attract insects which in turn provide food for some species (it's all part of the food chain). Smaller creatures like bugs, butterflies, wrens, micro-bats and lizards need small places to hide and nest in, like shrubs, logs and rock piles. Adding some more natural areas to our gardens can help them live happily alongside the big guys and can mean even less garden maintenance too!

Do not use chemicals for pest and weed control.

Explain why you think it's not a good idea to use poisons on your property.



What can you do instead to control pests and weeds?

Water for wildlife. Place a pond or a shallow bird bath in a sheltered spot.

Why do you think having a source of clean water would benefit our wildlife?



Make sure it's safe from cats and remember to put in some twigs and 'ramps' so creatures don't drown!

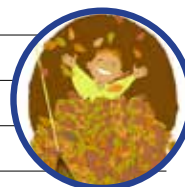
Grow native plants. There are many Australian natives that you can choose from such as eucalyptus and lemon-scented gums that provide nectar and pollen for insects and animals.

What other creatures benefit from growing Australian native plants?



Plant five or more shrubs close together to form dense, protective thickets, great habitat for small birds. Grow rambling, light climbers in amongst medium to tall shrubs and trees to give extra shelter and possible nesting sites.

Love litter! Leave leaf litter in your garden to attract insects and lizards and leave safe dead trees and hollowed limbs of live trees in your garden as nesting sites for birds and small animals. *How does garden litter attract wildlife into your garden?*



Allow mulch to build up as this will decrease the need to water your garden.



Provide wildlife motels. As our urban areas lose more trees there are less places for our wildlife to find homes. With the help of an adult, you can make your own nesting box for birds, possums or bats.
What do you think might happen to an animal if it can't find a place to nest?

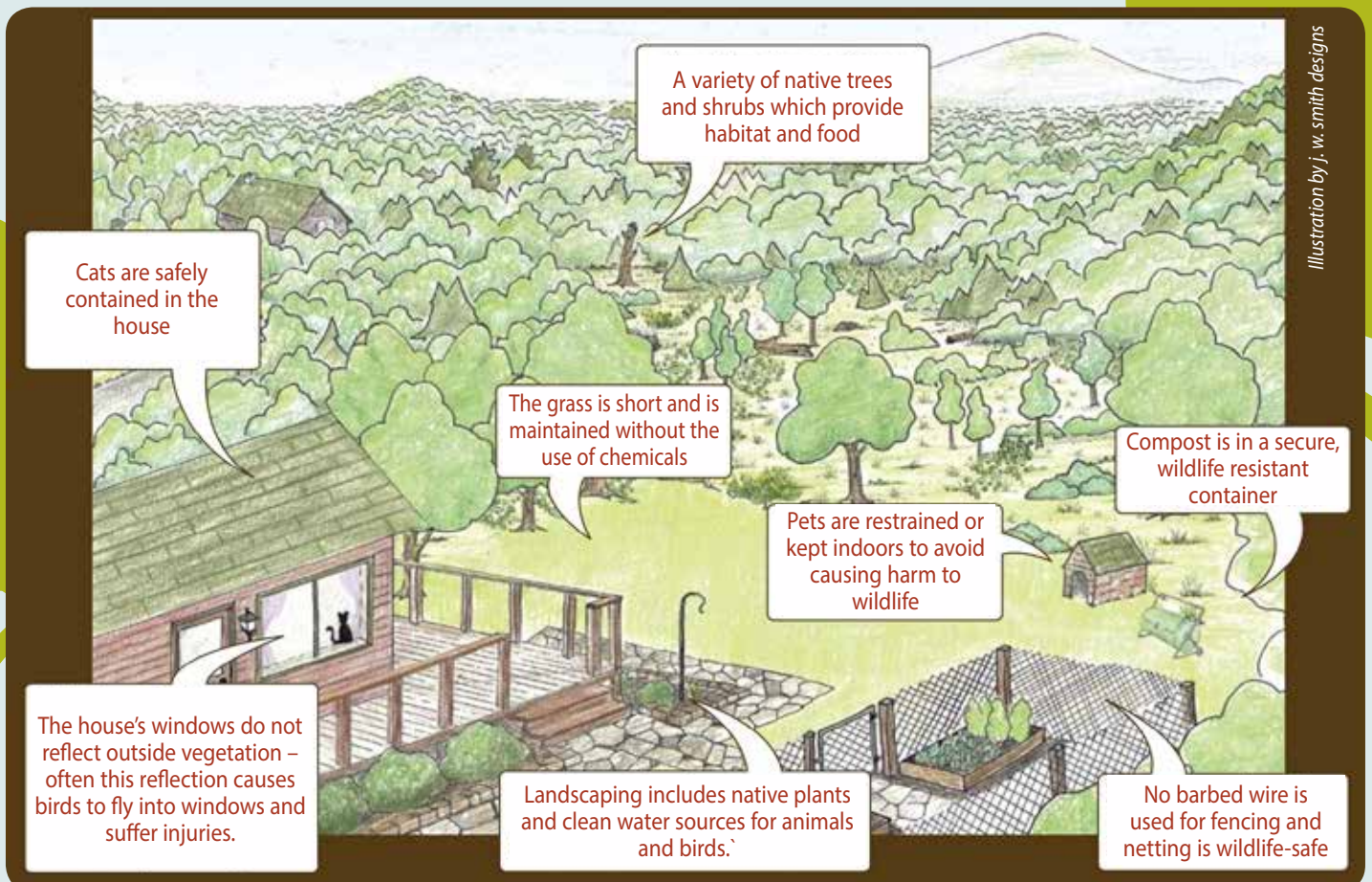
What are some things to think about whilst choosing the best place to install a nesting box?

You can get more info about nesting boxes here: www.frw.org.au click 'buddies in the backyard'



Contain your pets. Make sure your pets do not chase wildlife and keep cats inside, especially at night.
Why do you think it's important that our pets are not chasing wildlife?

What are some ways to keep wildlife safe from our pets?





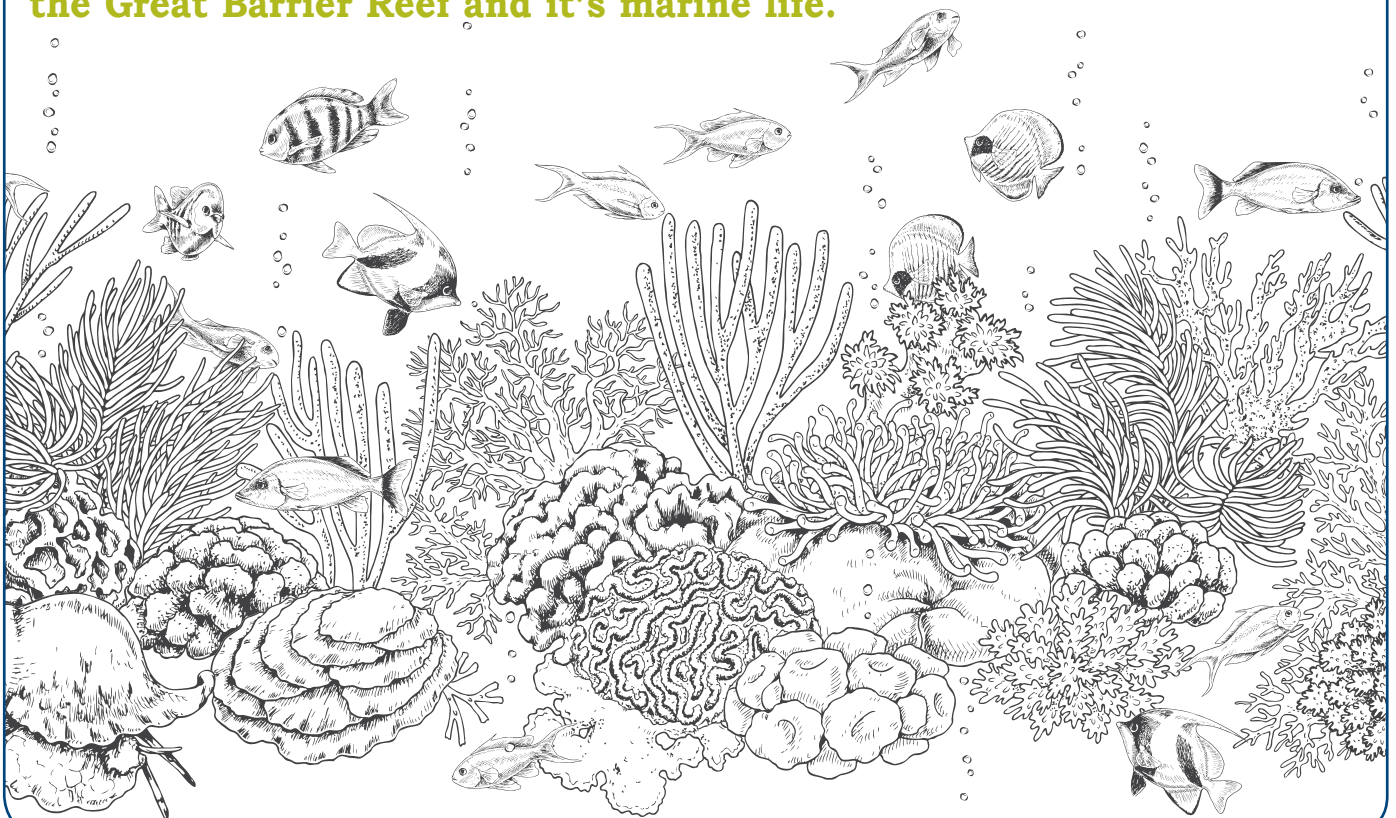
FIND
6
DIFFERENCES

RIDDLE

Q. What do you get
when you cross a
kangaroo with
a sheep?

A: A woolly jumper!

Colour-in the coral reef and discuss ways in which we can all help
the Great Barrier Reef and it's marine life.





A head only a mother could love!

by Col Forster

// 'No Name' was a friar bird and a delight to raise; not presenting any problems, a real character!

When his release time came Di was on tenterhooks (the last bird she released flew out and 'whoosh' it was taken by a bird of prey – all that work – poor bird – poor Di, she was devastated!).

Release day dawned for little 'No Name' and off he went. But after two hours he had hardly moved away at all! Di and I kept an eye on him to make sure he was safe from predators. The stress got too much for us and after a while we recaptured him to keep him safe for the night. He wasn't ready to go yet!

The following day he was released and monitored again. He came back at dusk. We recaptured him again to keep him safe for the night.

The next day he was released again and he stayed out overnight – a big step forward!

This coming and going continued for several days and then it rained one night at dusk (dusk is roosting time if you're a bird). It was proper tropical rain and a lot of it. It was dark when we heard activity on the balcony and there was our agitated friar bird 'No Name' – he'd come back as he didn't want to roost in the rain!

We wanted to make sure he was safe for the night so we caught him again and put him in a cage.
- He simply wasn't ready to be out and about. Once in the cage he immediately settled for the night.

During this release time Di had some fig birds in a cage on the balcony that she was rehabilitating and No Name would come in and help himself to their food at feeding times. We had other ideas - we wanted No Name to find his own food - otherwise he'd never be able to stand on his own two feet!

We decided to feed the fig birds inside to deny No Name a morning feed but by mid morning he was demanding food! The situation got worse – when visitors arrived 'No Name' would fly in and land on them – we had to stop using the balcony! Instead of becoming more self-reliant he was becoming even more imprinted (food comes from humans).

After a month we were becoming concerned that this bird would never find his place in nature. Then one day he just didn't come in for a morning feed – stress, snake, bird of prey? Whew! We were relieved to see him in the afternoon. He had realised that he can visit but he needs to find his own food and not rely on us! **His visits then became less frequent and eventually he stopped coming for food – we were very pleased – it is as it should be. //**



DID YOU KNOW?
Friarbirds form long-term pairs, with both parents defending the nest.

Birds recover more quickly and are more likely to succeed in the wild after release if they have a mate.

Why do you think birds are more likely to recover if they have a mate?

Why do you think Col and Di were happy that No Name eventually stopped visiting?

It's a quoll! by Lola Mudie

These marsupials are threatened by the toxic cane toad.

// This day was my rostered volunteer day to man the Fauna Rescue Hotline. The day started off with a couple of calls for assistance and even a call from someone wanting to know what echidna droppings look like! I thought it wouldn't be an outstanding day, but I was soon to be proved wrong!

Cafe owner Megan from Proserpine called to say that an animal had run behind her cafe's fridge.

After getting some details from Megan, I rang a rescuer (Miranda) who, on seeing it, identified the animal as a quoll.

A plan to catch the quoll was put into place. No attempt could be made until after closing time, when the doors could be shut down to close all avenues of escape.

Miranda suggested that we needed an animal carrier and some more people to aid in the rescue. I contacted another Fauna Rescue Whitsundays volunteer, Leigh to see if she could meet Miranda and myself there.

Our rescue party arrived at the cafe – Leigh with a pet carrier, a cardboard roll, a pair of welding gloves, and a couple of pairs of heavy duty protection gloves; myself with a towel and a empty beer carton.

With the cafe closed and the doors shut, we moved the fridges from the wall a little. Leigh tried to encourage the quoll with the cardboard roll to run into the eatery area, as it would be easier to contain there. After several attempts it did run into the eatery and we quickly closed the doors - three people inside, plus cage, gloves and towel.

The little guy was very scared. It ran around the room jumping from chairs and table with Miranda and towel in pursuit. Finally Miranda was able to gently place the towel over it and she placed it into the cage.

I delivered the captured quoll to another volunteer's house who declared it to be a young 'northern quoll' in good health - albeit, strongly objecting to being in captivity.

After a thorough health check the quoll was released onto a golf course the next day. //



Male quolls live for about one year, while the maximum recorded for a wild female was about three years. In rocky habitats, the lifespan of both sexes appears to be increased to two or three years, and individuals are larger than those living in savanna habitats, possibly due to better habitat and reduced predation.

What do you think would have happened to the quoll if it hadn't been rescued from the shop?

Why do you think Miranda placed the towel over the quoll's head when she captured it?



“Oops, I shouldn’t have eaten that!”

by Linden Baker

// I bet that’s what this brown tree snake would have been thinking! It looked like an egg and smelled like an egg and probably tasted a bit chooky! So he ate it!! Unfortunately it was plastic. You know how you put a plastic egg in a chook box to encourage chooks to lay? – IT’S NOT A GOOD IDEA!

The poor snake ended up with a big pain in the belly, with the egg lodged at the end of it’s long stomach. Normally by the time an egg reaches that part of the anatomy it is soft and squishy. Luckily he was discovered by nature-loving people who rang Fauna Rescue Whitsundays. Volunteer Kylee collected him from a kind member of the public and brought him to me where we set about figuring out how to remove the egg stuck in his belly.

We had three options:

- 1 - operate, but snakes often die from infection;
- 2 - knock him out and attempt to push the egg back through the mouth; or
- 3 - syringe paraffin oil into the stomach and make the snake regurgitate.

We thought we would try the paraffin oil first, so armed with syringe, long tube and oil, Kylee held the snake and I inserted the tube into the stomach and syringed. Then we put him back into the cage and crossed our fingers!

Next day it was still in his belly so we took him to the vet who was willing to try to push the egg back through the mouth. He tried moving the egg without anesthetic first (as using anesthetic is dangerous for snakes) - it took a while, but finally it started to move.

With gentle pressure the egg was on it’s way and a minute later it was out! Amazing!

We were a bit concerned that the neck muscles were damaged, they seemed a little loose, but armed with antibiotics and crossed fingers we headed home.

Three weeks later all was well and he was released back to his home! //



What do you think is the usual diet of a brown tree snake?

Why do you think it is important to be kind to our wildlife and help them if they need assistance?

A helping hand! by Linden Baker

// A large baby owl was found on the ground. It was a rufous owl which is a vulnerable species. Kookaburras and cockatoos were giving him a really hard time. I was called in to assist.

There was a large gum tree close by with two hollows large enough for owls to nest so that was where we suspected he lived. I have had three baby rufous owls over the years, the first one was the same age as this one, the second was a couple of weeks older. Both of those came from the same hollow in Cannonvale.

I really wanted to avoid hand raising another one, it is a very big job and the parents are the best to teach all the skills they need. I had a few difficulties with my hand raised one visiting my neighbours for food after he was released, asking for food impolitely. All turned out well in the end after I asked the neighbours to throw towels at him to teach him that people are scary.

The second hand raised bird was successfully put back into a tree close to the nesting hollow. The people who found him lived close by and kept an eye on him and saw the parents feeding him. After two days he was back in the nesting tree and was sitting with the parents.

With these two previous rescues in mind, I was hoping I could do the same with this one. This one though, being a lot younger, I wasn't sure it would be successful – but worth a try. I went to where he was found and put him in the cage on the ground under a tree and stood back and waited.

He started calling out loudly and I waited to see what would happen. I wanted to confirm that the parents were around. No such luck. They are a very quiet bird when mature and even though baby was screeching I could see no parents. He started getting really restless and I could see he wanted to get out so I opened the lid and he flew about 20m long and about 4m high into a tree. Good sign. He kept calling and making his way higher into the tree but even though I waited an hour there was still no sign of parents.

First light the next day I was back checking on him. He was easy to find as he was still screeching! He had found a good hiding spot under thick cover so as long as the other birds didn't discover him and force him out of the tree I expected him to stay put for the day.

This is where our network of Fauna Rescue Whitsundays volunteers came into play. A quick email about the situation and his location and we had at least 10 members who dropped by throughout the day to check all was well. He stayed put all day and I went back to see what would happen at dark.

He started calling again then flying clumsily from tree to tree making his way finally high up the gum where the nesting hollow was. After another hour I gave up waiting for parents and went home.

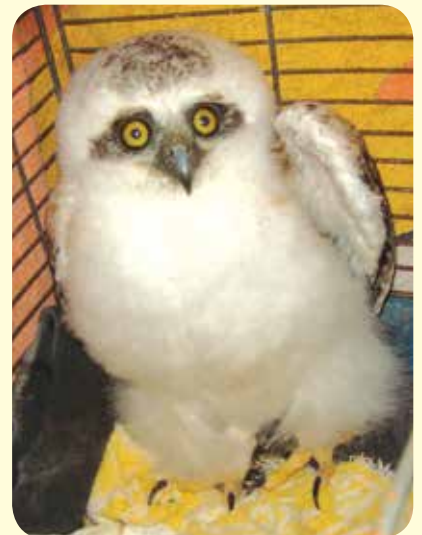
I was back at first light again and he was easy to find as he was still screeching. I was beginning to wonder if the parents were still around and feeding him.

Then in a tree close by, I saw one of the parents watching. It was only about four metres above ground but watching me and baby intently.

What a relief. He was ok! I knew that he could fly and that he was being looked after. //

Why do you think Linden didn't remove the baby owl from the area?

Why did people keep checking on the owl? How did they know that he was ok?





Green turtle rescue! by Linden Baker

// A sick turtle was found on the mud flats at Cannonvale Beach. Barb and I took a large strong doona cover to carry it. It was way out at the low tide mark, slumped in the mud. It was very weak and made no attempt to move at all... Not a good sign.

We examined him and found no external wounds. He was covered in barnacles: back, flippers underneath, face, everywhere. I wanted to see what would happen when we placed him in shallow water – nothing, so it was out of there and onto the cover which we used as a sling and between the three of us took him to shore.

Not knowing what turtle requirements were I had brought along a couple of 20 litre containers which we filled with salt water to take home with us. Luckily he fit on the floor in the passenger side of my car on a blanket and lay quietly on the trip home. I decided the best place to put him was in my bath. So in he went with a bit of salt water under his backend but not up to his head.

I was advised by the vet to empty the bath because of the risk of drowning and so that he didn't get cold. I then placed dry towels underneath him and covered him with another towel, leaving his head out so he could see.

The next day we took him to the vet who could see at a glance it was a very sick turtle. It was underweight – we could see from the concaved shell underneath. It made no attempt to move unless it was picked up, then it flapped its flippers like mad. The barnacles, the vet explained, were like the fleas on a dog. He had large barnacles around his mouth which restricted his ability to reach food as they extended past the length of his beak and the ones on his back would affect his streamlined body as he swam – making it more of an effort. His eyes were good and he showed no sign of other diseases.

He stayed at the vets to receive the best treatment possible. It consisted of antibiotic and vitamin injections, x-rays and also fluids.

The next day there was no visible improvement, but then the following day the turtle moved and changed position a few times. Seven days later, The Department of Environment decided there was enough improvement to try putting him into shallow water at the beach.

With much excitement, the turtle was put in at the water's edge and.... **he took off like a rocket! We still have no idea what was wrong, but rest and medical care seemed to do the trick! //**



DID YOU KNOW?
We now have a special turtle hospital in the Whitsundays!

Unlike most sea turtles green turtles are herbivorous and eat sea grasses and algae although the juvenile turtles can also eat things such as crabs, jellyfish and sponges.

Why do you think some turtles confuse plastic bags floating in the ocean with their natural food?

Why do you think the barnacles on his body were a problem?



A rescue at sea by Lesley Knight

// I was spending a night on a yacht in Saba Bay on the Northern side of Hook Island.

There were other boats in the bay and some of us had watched an eagle dive for fish and become tangled in fishing line! We were concerned it would drown.

Instantly we grabbed a couple of towels and thick gloves and headed in our dinghy towards the bird.

By the time we reached it, other rescuers were attempting to free the bird from the line. Trevor and I assisted and brought the eagle into our dinghy.

I wrapped it in towels and held the huge bird, which had a wing span of around 1.8m, and we headed to shore so it could dry its wings. We placed the bird on the high water mark and straight away it attempted to fly across the water, back to where it had come from, but it landed in the water as it's drenched wings could not sustain flight.

We waded into the sea and rounded it into the shore again onto some low rocks. Here it spread it's huge wings and attempted to dry them in the breeze. It was dusk so there was little warmth left in the sun to help with the drying. Then disaster struck again! It attempted to fly, but this time it flew a lot further out into the bay and pretty well back where we had rescued it from!

The tide was going out and we needed to carry the dinghy back into the water to get back out to the bird. Again, I feared it was going to drown – it started swimming in the closest stroke a bird could do to butterfly. We decided not to attempt getting the bird out of the water again (as it was clearly stressed) but instead, we followed from a distance, close enough to assist if it got into trouble.

Interestingly, during the rescue it's mate had been circling above, watching.

The eagle swam 150m to the rocks on the other side of the bay. It dragged itself onto the rocks and again started drying it's wings. Light was starting to fade and it's mate headed off for home on the other side of the bay. We sat in the dinghy watching for half an hour. As the bird dried it moved further up the rocks until it attempted to fly again. This time it took off and circled the tree tops a couple of times. We didn't see it again that evening.

The next morning we saw the eagle fly from one side of the bay to the other – going home, success!

The sad part is not just the anguish and discomfort the eagle had to endure, it was the fact that it was preventable: **people had set a float and fishing line with meat attached to it and left it for the night. Little did they know what the consequences would be. //**

The sea eagle that Lesley and Trevor rescued was a juvenile white bellied sea eagle. Juveniles do not have white markings and can be as old as 5 or 6 years before they develop them. Like other eagle species white bellied sea eagles mate for life.



How could this situation have been avoided for the bird?

What would have happened to the sea eagle if those kind rescuers were not there to rescue it?



DID YOU KNOW?
The top speed of the average wallaby is about 48km per hour!

Amber the Wallaby tells her story

// My name is Amber the Wallaby and I'd like to tell you how Fauna Rescue Whitsundays helped me.

It was a beautiful day, winter sunlight filtered through the leaves warming my back. I was bored. Mum was dozing and keeping an eye on her I quietly slipped away – I wouldn't go too far and I would be back before she woke up.

Ever noticed how time seems to fly when you are having a good time? It did for me that afternoon, the sun's rays were starting to slip below the horizon by the time I returned. But, oh no! She wasn't there! I was going to be in big trouble now! I called out tentatively but there was no response. Where was she? She must be looking for me. I didn't know what to do. After a while I decided to head towards home – she must be there.

It was getting very late now and things that had seemed fun and exciting during the day were now dark and scary – I'd never been out this late by myself before and my nose was bleeding where a branch had scratched it. I was halfway home when I caught the briefest hint of a smell in the wind. It was Mum! I hurried towards her, calling out. She was asleep again beside the road – strange! She always said we shouldn't stay near roads. I was so relieved that I just hopped into her pouch, falling asleep instantly.

I woke to the sound of a truck barrelling past – there was something wrong – Mum was cold and there were noises near us. I curled even tighter and tried to go back to sleep but I was too cold. I poked my head out of mum's pouch. Last night's full moon still hung in the sky as the first rays of sunlight peeped over the horizon. There was a car next to us with the door open. A lady was walking towards us. Normally Mum would have run away – she had always told me to stay away from humans.

As the crunching of the gravel came closer I dove to the bottom of Mum's pouch and closed my eyes. The cold morning air made me shiver as warm hands reached in and gently pulled me out. The human wrapped me in a towel and put me in the car. The chilly air was replaced by the warmth of car heaters. I tried to stay awake but it was warm and cosy and I was still tired.

The lady who found me rang the Fauna Rescue Hotline and arranged for them to pick me up.

A lady called Sandy took me to her house and looked after me for a while and now I live with another lady named Barb and two other joeys. When we get bigger and can look after ourselves we will be released back 'home'. //



Why do you think it's important to check the pouch of a recent roadkill?

How can we lessen the chance of hitting an animal on the road?

If you see a dead marsupial on the road, please ask mum or dad to stop and check the pouch for a joey and also search the immediate surrounding area for a joey.

Answers and ideas

PAGE 1 What do our native animals and birds look like?

Ringtail possum: Strong tail to hang onto branches; Strong arms and legs to climb; Big eyes to see in the dark; Tolerant of many plant toxins and will eat trees that other animals find poisonous. They have hands to help them eat and climb.

Koala: Strong arms and claws to climb trees; Eat only eucalyptus leaves; Rarely drink water – they get the water they need from gum leaves; They have a very slow metabolism and can sleep 18 hours a day.

Green tree frog: Their colour blends into their environment which helps them to hide. The skin secretions of the frog have antibacterial and antiviral properties; They have sticky tongues which they flick out at small prey – for larger dinner items, they pounce then push the prey into their mouth with their hands. Powerful back legs help them to jump and swim.

Loggerhead sea turtle: They have a boney shell for protection; Strong front fins to swim through the water; They are omnivores, feeding mainly on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Its large and powerful jaws help dismantle its prey; They can stay submerged for up to four hours.

What class of animal is it? Mammal: some others are: dolphins, mice, flying foxes, possums. Reptiles: some others are: lizards and alligators. Amphibians: Frogs and toads.

PAGE 2 What do our native animals and birds eat? 1 = Crocodile. They eat meat. In the wild, they feast on fish, birds, frogs and crustaceans. They are carnivores. 2 = Frilled neck lizard. They eat mainly insects, but will consume vegetables and fruits. They are omnivores. 3 = Kangaroo. Most species eat shrubs, grass, and even fungus. They are herbivores. 4 = Kookaburra. They eat mice, snakes, insects, small reptiles, and the young of other birds. They are omnivores.

- Proserpine rock wallaby eats grass, leaves, vines, shrubs, fungi. It is a herbivore.
- Pheasant Coucal feeds on large insects, frogs, lizards, eggs and young of birds and, sometimes, small mammals. It is an omnivore.
- The koala eats eucalyptus leaves. It is a herbivore.

PAGE 4 Critter quizz

Proserpine rock wallaby

- Grasses and plants
- Rocky outcrops, rock piles and ledges in and around Dryander, Conway and Gloucester Island National Parks, the Clarke Range west of Proserpine, parts of the Conway Range and around Airlie Beach.
- Cars, dogs, loss of habitat

What to do if found injured: Don't touch.

- Find an adult to help rescue – ask them to check the pouch of a dead marsupial for a joey. (*Note, if an animal is hurt they may bite and scratch*).
- If the animal is dead, and if it's safe, ask an adult to move the animal from the road. (*Other animals such as eagles and bandicoots who feed on carcasses can get killed.*) Check the pouch and surrounding area for a joey.
- Call Fauna Rescue Whitsundays hotline 4947 3389. Sometimes the hotline may ask you to take the injured animal to a nearby vet to be checked.
- Do not give anything to eat or drink until you consult the FRW hotline (*as it might need surgery*).

Sulphur-crested cockatoo

- Berries, seeds, nuts and roots.
- They are found in a variety of timbered habitats and are common around human settlements. The birds stay in the same area all year round.
- Disease, loss of habitat

What to do if found injured: Don't touch.

- Find an adult to help rescue. (*Note, if a cockatoo is hurt they will bite and scratch, they don't understand that you want to help them*).
- Call Fauna Rescue Whitsundays hotline 4947 3389. Sometimes the hotline may ask you to take the injured bird to a nearby vet to be checked.
- Do not give anything to eat or drink until you consult the FRW hotline (*as it might need surgery*).

Black flying fox / bat

- Pollen and nectar from native eucalyptus, lillypillies, paperbark, and turpentine trees; when native foods are scarce - introduced fruit. They travel up to 50km a night in search of food.
- They roost in mangroves, paperbark swamps, patches of rainforest and bamboo forests, and very rarely in caves or underneath overhangs.
- Loss of foraging and roosting habitat, and mass die-offs caused by extreme temperature events; barbed wire and electricity lines.

What to do if found injured: Very important! Don't touch.

- Find an adult to help you call Fauna Rescue Whitsundays hotline 4947 3389 – they will send out a vaccinated rescuer.

Bats are very important to our environment as they transport the seeds and help pollinate so many of our rainforest trees.

PAGE 5 Baby animals Turtle = hatchling; Koala = joey; Emu = chick;

Frog = tadpole; Crocodile = hatchling; Kangaroo = joey; Echidna = puggle; Eagle = Eaglet; Goanna = hatchling.

Who are am I? 1 = Crocodile; 2 = Lorikeet; 3 = Platypus; 4 = Echidna; 5 = Emu.

PAGES 6–7 Bats

1. Major habitat loss, barbed wire, power lines, domestic animals, cars and roads, and increasing heat events.
2. Many of our forests will not be pollinated and therefore will die out.
3. Many creatures rely on the forests for food and habitat so they will also die out.
4. A bat that has eaten poisoned food will become sick and die.
5. Because so many creatures rely on our native forests. They need a large area to forage and live.
6. Because fruit bats pollinate plants which makes them fruit and flower and disperse their seeds.

PAGE 8 Food chain

If we kill insects then we affect all other creatures further up the the food chain as they won't have that food source anymore. So if we killed the grasshopper, the frog would starve, if there were no more frogs then the snake and the eagle would also starve.

PAGE 9 What sort of baby bird: ALTRICAL: Herons, hawks, kookaburras, pigeons, sun birds, and parrots. PRECOCIAL: Plovers and ducks and most poultry.

Stages of bird development: Baby bird 1 = Nestling; Baby bird 2 = Hatchling; Baby bird 3 = Fledgling.

PAGE 11 How to rescue a baby bird: 1 = It doesn't need rescuing as it's just learning to fly. It was on the ground as it's still getting used to flying. It won't take long to get the hang of it! 2 = Build a sturdy nest. This baby is too young to be out and about. He's a little way from flying yet so he needs to be in his nest, safe from predators.

PAGE 14 Spot the dangers:

1. **Large hole fruit netting.** Birds, bats, lizards, snakes and possums are the main victims. Animals become tangled in large mesh netting. While struggling to escape, the net cuts ever deeper into the animal. We can use a densely woven net (*one that you cannot poke your finger through*).
2. **Barbed wire fencing.** One of the most dangerous hazards of all for our wildlife. Many creatures such as flying marsupials (flying foxes and gliders) and birds and landbased animals such as possums, kangaroos and wallabies become entangled and suffer terribly. A possible solution is to determine whether it is absolutely necessary to use the barbed wire at all. If so, can it be in an area less inhabited by wildlife - not in a regular flight path, away from wetlands and not in a regular movement area between two food sources.
3. **Road traffic.** One of the most dangerous hazards for all wildlife. Birds, macropods, bats, lizards, snakes and possums are the main road victims. Slow down when driving during the times of most activity (early morning and dusk). Keep an eye on the side of the road as they can often jump out, especially at night, so we need to take extra care and slow down.
4. **Cats (and dogs).** There are more than 2,600,000 domestic cats in Australia and recent findings show that the average domestic cat brings home 16 mammals, eight birds and eight reptiles a year! That's just the domestic cats! Between feral cats and domestic cats it is estimated they kill 20 billion native animals a year. Birds, lizards, small animals most at risk. We can all help lessen the impact. – Firstly desex your cat, keep them confined indoors, put a wildlife warning bell on them, never release them into the wild.
5. **Land Clearing.** All of our wildlife is affected by land clearing. When diverse, natural vegetation is cleared to make way for mono-crops or housing it results in the immediate death and/or displacement of native flora and fauna and the modified landscape is unable to support the previous fauna who lived there. We can protect and value our diverse environments and ensure that we look after the few remaining natural areas.
6. **Abandoned fishing equipment.** Fishing nets, hooks, lines cause death and suffering to turtles, seals, sea birds, dolphins, dugongs and whales. Make sure we never abandon our fishing equipment in the ocean, pick up any that you see - keep our oceans clean and safe!

PAGE 16 Spot the differences: 1. Bin left open; 2. Chicken coop gate left open; 3. Dog bowl full of food still on the ground; 4. Person is emptying fish tank into the local creek; 5. Cat isn't wearing a bell; 6. Overflow from backyard pond draining into the creek; 7. Gate is left open; 8. Dog is off the lead, chasing wildlife.

PAGE 20

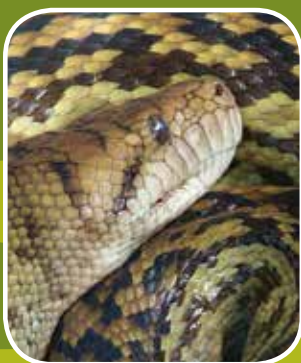


DID YOU KNOW?
The population of koalas has dropped by 90% in less than a decade.



RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Be a responsible pet owner and desex your pets.
- Don't let your pets chase wildlife.
- Don't use poisons on your property.
- Plant local flowering native grasses, shrubs and trees.
- Supply fresh drinking / bathing water. Change the water daily, particularly in dry months. Make sure it is away from cats and predators.
- Ask adults to drive slowly and carefully, especially at dusk, dawn and at night.
- If you find an injured animal please ask the driver to stop to help if safe to do so.
- Never relocate an animal out of it's natural area.
- Keep pets away from a sick, injured or orphaned animal or bird.



**If you need assistance with injured or orphaned native wildlife
call (07) 4947 3389**

www.frw.org.au



Fauna Rescue Whitsundays Association Inc – PO Box 806 Cannonvale 4802

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