



Just Me and My Tree

A COMPILATION OF CHILDREN'S SHORT STORIES AND ARTWORKS

Part of Willoughby City Council's Wildlife Storybook Series

© 2024 Willoughby City Council

ISBN 978-0-9944641-4-9

Front Cover, Ella Wong, Castle Cove Public School

Back Cover, Micaela Geronimo, Our Lady of Dolours Primary School

Special thanks to iNaturalist citizen scientists for nature photography:
(www.inaturalist.org)

Gregtasney, ambrosia1, ian_mcallan, mikew65, thebeachcomber (Thomas Mesaglio), cynthia_c, amaunder, sfrank1002 (Solomon Frank), zak1, meygels, martinhenry, superbum2, tpyne, nicklambert, peter12381, margeretjb, ozbeachandy, jeff1159, tarredandfeathered, sitsci, twan3253 (Tim Wang), writerslink, Thaliabroughton (Darren & Thalia Broughton), bobijones, paulhaynesemail, haven113, tracie65, douch, possumpete, ratite (Jack Morgan) and nicolai_yu.

All rights reserved.

Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the copyright act, no part of this book may be reproduced without written permission.

Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction rights should be directed to Willoughby City Council's Wildlife Officer, PO Box 57, Chatswood NSW 2057.

Further information about Willoughby's local bushland reserves and their wildlife is available from Willoughby City Council:
31 Victor Street, Chatswood NSW 2067
02 9777 1000 or www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Printed on 100% recycled paper.

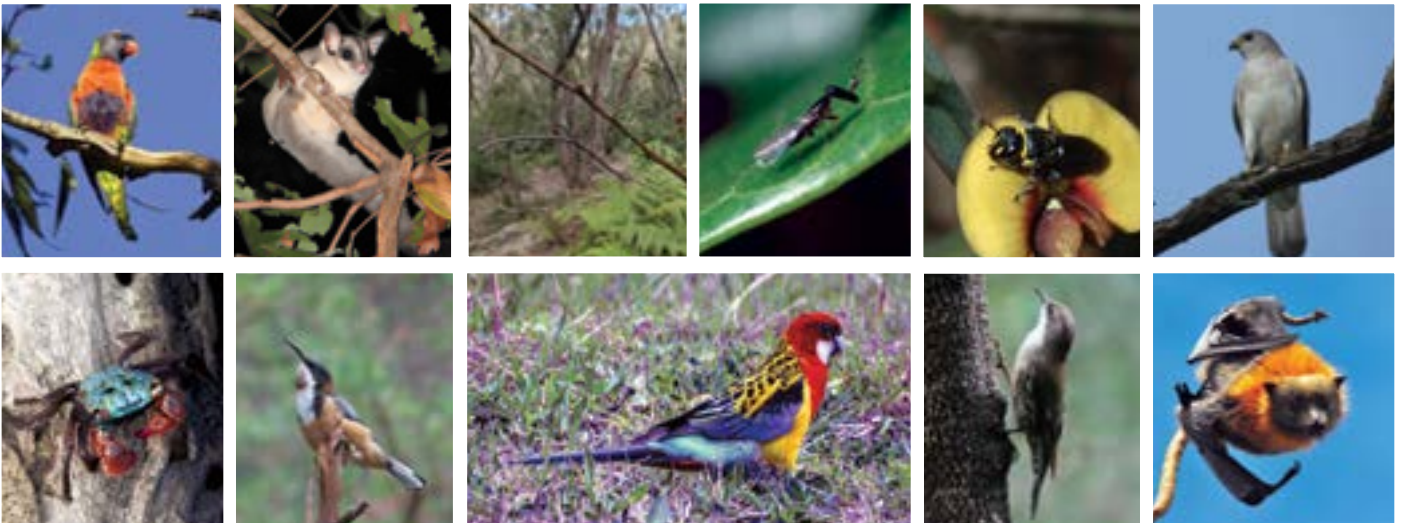
Willoughby's Wildlife Storybook Series

This book of short stories and artwork is part of an educational project designed to facilitate 'kids teaching kids' about the local wildlife in the Willoughby area. Year 5 students at each primary school were asked to research, then write and draw creatively about a local tree and animal species chosen for their school.

An educational presentation was delivered to students at each school, communicating the key external features and unique behaviours and habitats of their chosen animal. Students also learnt about the many challenges their chosen animal face in an urbanised environment. This provides an opportunity for Council to communicate how our natural areas are managed and why.

This year's theme is all about trees and the special connections our local wildlife shares with trees. Trees are an essential part of our bushland. They provide food, shelter and protection for creatures big and small. From the significance of tree hollows as nesting sites for countless species, to the clean air and cooling effects they provide in our urban cities, trees are vital to the health of our ecosystems. More important than ever, we need trees. We hope the stories in this book will inspire a greater appreciation for our trees so we can better advocate for their preservation.

This storybook project is part of Willoughby City Council's wider Bushland Interpretive Program. The program offers guided bushwalks, talks and workshops for community and school groups with the aim of fostering positive connections between local communities and the natural environments, encouraging sustainable living, and developing a sense of ownership in the preservation of nature.



The Duel of Crabs

by Pranav Premkumar from Mowbray Public School



Read the Full Collection

2023



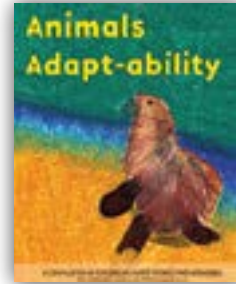
2022



2021



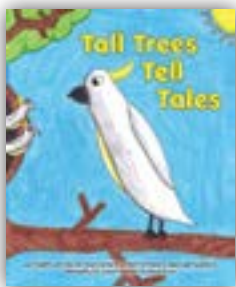
2020



2019



2018



2017



2016



2015



2014



2013



2012



2011



Borrow the books from your local Willoughby City Council library or read them online on Council's website:
www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Wildlife-Storybook

Contents

Front Cover artwork

by Ella Wong, Castle Cove Public School

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Comic – The Duel of Crabs | 2 |
| by Pranav Premkumar, Mowbray Public School | |
| Full Collection of Willoughby's Wildlife Storybooks | 3 |
| Love Your Trees - featured tree species | 8 |
| Artarmon Public School – Sugar Glider & the Red Bloodwood | 10 |
| Artwork by Ploen Sutthikanchanasophon | |
| Artwork by Alexander Nowicki | |
| <i>Ziggy the Naughty Sugar Glider</i> by Aiden Li, artwork by Heidi Ho | |
| <i>The Great Chase</i> by Lilia Melkumyan | |
| Castle Cove Public School – Eastern Spinebill & the Coastal Banksia | 16 |
| Artwork by Mavis Li | |
| Artwork by Harrison Pong | |
| <i>Diary of a Coastal Banksia</i> by Natalie Kam | |
| <i>What an Adventure!</i> by Olivia Lau | |
| Artwork by Darcy Cornwel-Smith | |
| Chatswood Public School – Rosella species & the She-oak | 22 |
| Artwork by Naya Kelly | |
| Artwork by Hoang Ngan (Alice) Vo | |
| <i>The She Oak's Harmony</i> by Nikita Chan, artwork by Nikita & Natasha Chan | |
| <i>The Rosella's Nesting Place</i> by Richard Li | |
| Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School – Grey Goshawk & the Sydney Peppermint | 28 |
| Artwork by Henry Schweitzer | |
| Artwork by Austin Xue | |
| <i>Grey Goshawk</i> by Otis Hendry Briault, artwork by Jalen Wong | |
| <i>The Grey Goshawk</i> by Roslyn Zhang | |
| Mowbray Public School – Red-fingered Marsh Crab & the Grey Mangrove | 34 |
| Artwork by Stella Wade | |
| Artwork by Ema Low | |
| <i>Ibis Attack!</i> by Joshua Connolly | |
| <i>The Crabs and the Storm</i> by Ishara Hardman | |
| Northbridge Public School – Grey-headed Flying Fox & the Turpentine | 40 |
| Artwork by Felicia Sandoval-Lopez | |
| Artwork by Albert Sesselmann | |
| <i>The Perfect Friend</i> by Tina Henke | |
| <i>The Adventures of Max the Grey-headed Flying Fox</i> by Simon Huang & artwork by Emma Argyropoulos | |



| | |
|---|-----------|
| Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School – Masked Bee & the Sydney Red Gum | 46 |
| <i>Artwork by Gianna Leung</i> | |
| <i>Artwork by Sophie Kwan</i> | |
| <i>The Resin Bee by Rui Karasawa</i> | |
| <i>The Red, the Yellow and the Black by Chloe Kim</i> | |
| St Philip Neri Catholic Primary School – White-throated Treecreeper & the Blackbutt..... | 52 |
| <i>Artworks by Clementine McGeachie</i> | |
| <i>The White-throated Treecreeper and the Blackbutt Tree by Ayuna Terasawa</i> | |
| <i>White-throated Treecreeper by Yuina Terasawa & Carly Woodward</i> | |
| St Pius X College – Margin-winged Stick Insect & the Sydney Blue Gum | 58 |
| <i>Artwork by Max Karcher</i> | |
| <i>Artwork by Vincenzo Abbattista</i> | |
| <i>The Margin-winged Stick Insect by Cristian Guerra</i> | |
| <i>The Stick Insects Sticky and Twiggly by Jacob Wilson</i> | |
| St Thomas Catholic Primary School – Fig Wasp & the Fig Tree..... | 64 |
| <i>Artwork by Charlotte Addley-Sloane</i> | |
| <i>Artwork by Sienna Maconachie</i> | |
| <i>Nature Working Together by Sophie Arblaster</i> | |
| <i>The Life of a Fig Wasp by Elea Cozens</i> | |
| Willoughby Public School – Rainbow Lorikeet & the Paperbark..... | 70 |
| <i>Artwork by Eve Prowse</i> | |
| <i>Artwork by Yue Teng Soon</i> | |
| <i>Loti the Rainbow Lorikeet by Dahyoon Kim, artwork by Addison James</i> | |
| <i>The Lorikeet’s Feathers by James Wong, artwork by Christine Neupert</i> | |
| Map of Tree Canopy Cover in the Willoughby Local Government Area | 76 |
| Comic..... | 78 |
| <i>Bee Escapes by Sophie Kwan, Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School</i> | |
| Back Cover artwork | |
| <i>A Bee Love Story by Micaela Geronimo, Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School</i> | |



Spot the difference

Use your nature observation skills.
Can you spot all 11 differences?



Follow the path

Find the perfect tree for all the animals in this book.

Animals and their needs (Left Column):

- Rainbow Lorikeets feed on
- Fig Wasps need
- Margin-winged Stick Insects hide in
- White-throated Treecreepers love
- Masked bees collect nectar from
- Grey-headed Flying Foxes love
- Red-fingered Marsh Crabs live amongst
- Grey Goshawks nest in
- Eastern Rosellas feast on the seeds of
- Eastern Spinebills sip nectar from
- Sugar Gliders feed on the sugary sap of

Trees and their features (Right Column):

- Grey Mangroves
- Sydney Peppermint
- She-oaks
- Coastal Banksia
- Red Bloodwood
- Paperbark flowers
- Fig trees
- Sydney Blue Gums
- Insects on Blackbutt trees
- Sydney Red Gum
- Nectar from Turpentine

Connections (Lines):

- Rainbow Lorikeets feed on → Grey Mangroves
- Fig Wasps need → Fig trees
- Margin-winged Stick Insects hide in → Paperbark flowers
- White-throated Treecreepers love → Sydney Blue Gums
- Masked bees collect nectar from → Sydney Red Gum
- Grey-headed Flying Foxes love → Nectar from Turpentine
- Red-fingered Marsh Crabs live amongst → She-oaks
- Grey Goshawks nest in → Sydney Peppermint
- Eastern Rosellas feast on the seeds of → Red Bloodwood
- Eastern Spinebills sip nectar from → Coastal Banksia
- Sugar Gliders feed on the sugary sap of → Insects on Blackbutt trees

Have you seen these trees?



Red Bloodwood (*Corymbia gummifera*)



Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*)



She-Oak Trees (*Casuarina & Allocasuarina* species)



Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*)



Grey Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*)



Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*)



Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata*)



Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*)



Sydney Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*)



Fig Trees (*Ficus species*)



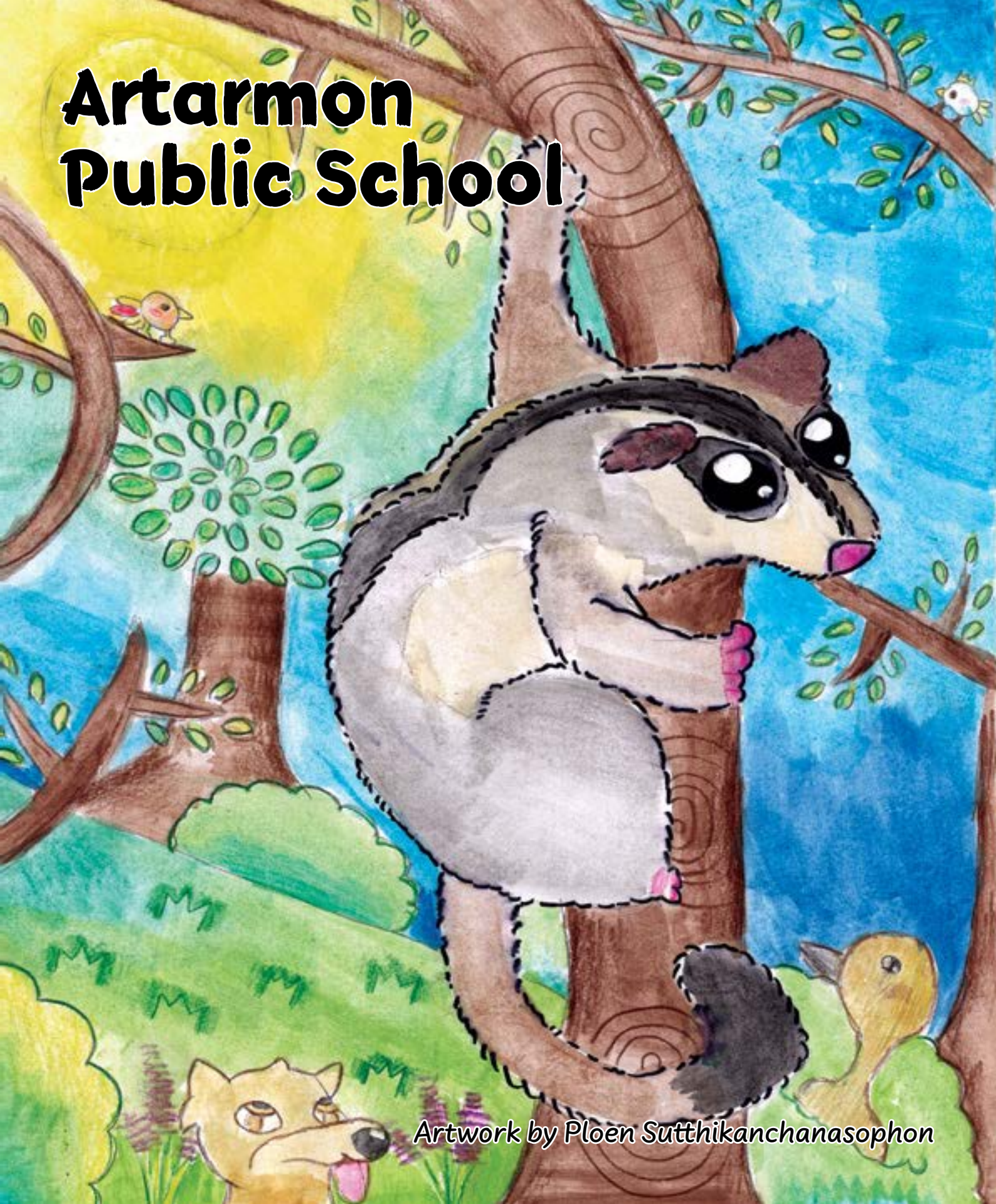
Paperbark Trees (*Melaleuca species*)



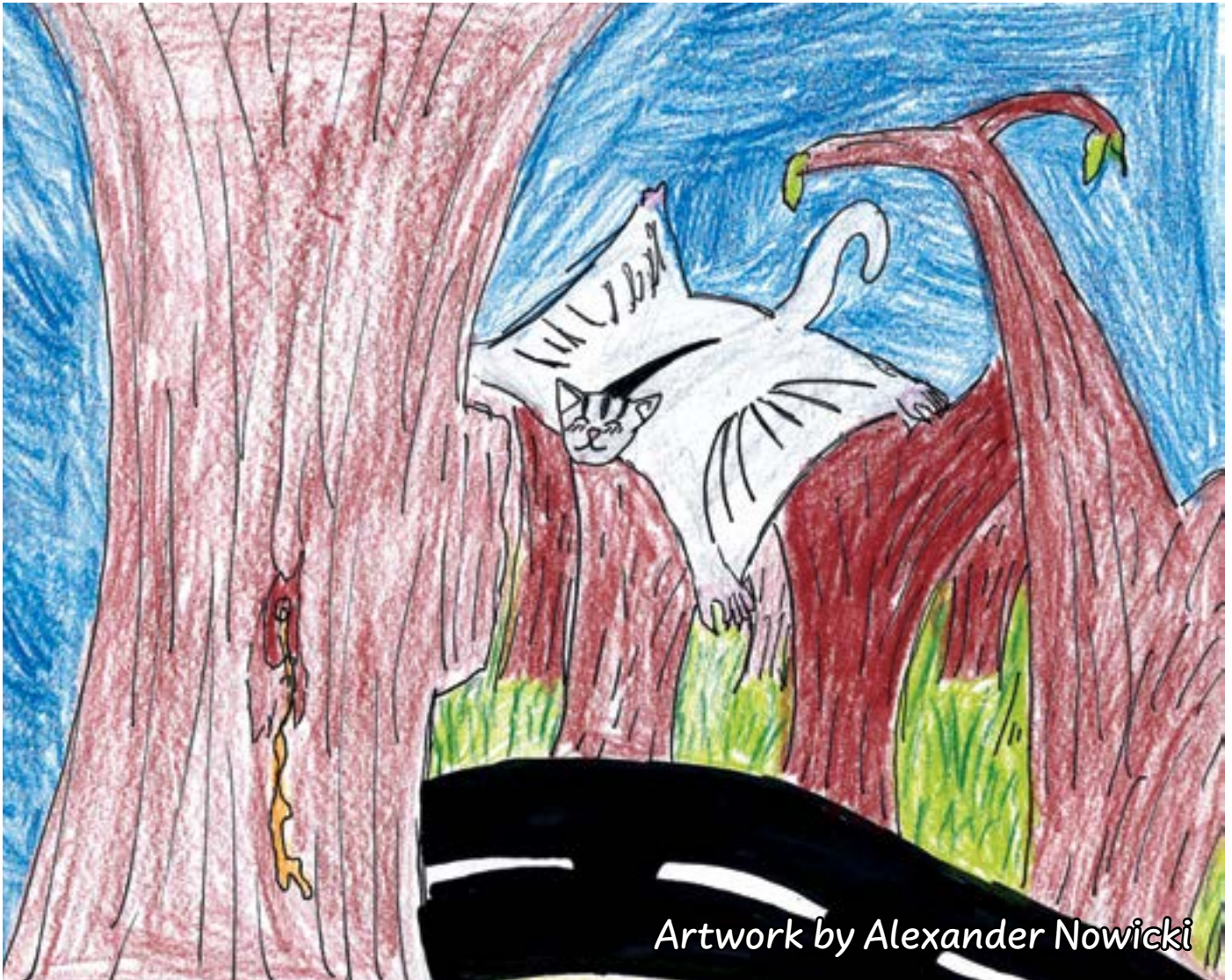
The trees featured in this book make our local area very attractive! Not only are they beautiful and feature distinctive bark, leaves, flowers and fruit. These trees clean the air, keep us cool on hot days, and prevent soil and rain water from washing away. Try to identify some of these tree species and observe how they provide essential food and shelter for wildlife.

www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Love-Your-Trees

Artarmon Public School



Artwork by Ploen Sutthikanchanasophon



Sugar Glider (*Petaurus breviceps*) & the **Red Bloodwood** (*Corymbia gummifera*)

The Sugar Glider is a small and agile marsupial known for its ability to glide between trees. With a special "wing" of skin between its legs called the patagium, it can swoosh through the air with ease, covering up to 50 meters in one jump! It feeds on a wide variety of food, including tree sap, nectar, pollen and flowers. Very often, horizontal markings are left behind on the trunks of Red Bloodwood Trees as the Sugar Gliders gouge out the bark with their sharp teeth in order to feed on the tree sap. Their thick coat of fur makes for an excellent trap for pollen, making them an important pollinator, especially for many of our native Banksia species.

Ziggy the Naughty Sugar Glider

by Aiden Li, artwork by Heidi Ho

Once upon a moonlit night in the heart of Artarmon bushland, there lived a tiny Sugar Glider named Ziggy. Ziggy was no ordinary glider; he was the fastest and most mischievous of them all. His fur was as soft as a cloud, and his eyes sparkled like dewdrops on a leaf.

Ziggy loved to explore the treetops, leaping from branch to branch with grace. But his favourite pastime was raiding the food stash. You see, Sugar Gliders are nocturnal creatures and when the moon rose high, Ziggy would venture out in search of sweet treats.

His best friend was a wise old owl named Mr Hoot. Every night, Ziggy would race to the ripest fruits, the juiciest nectar and the stickiest honey. But one night, Ziggy crept into the Artarmon Community Garden and reached for a plump mango, he heard a rustle in the leaves. It was Mr Hoot, with wings spread wide and big eyes gleaming.

“Ziggy,” Mr Hoot hooted, “Why do you rush so much? There’s more to life than feasting.”

“But the sweetness, Mr Hoot!” Ziggy protested. “It’s irresistible!”

Mr Hoot tilted his head. “True, my little glider, but there’s wisdom in moderation. Share your bounty with others, and you’ll find joy beyond the taste.”

Ziggy pondered this. The next night, instead of gobbling up all the honey, he left a sticky trail for the ants. He shared his mango with a hungry brushtail possum and offered a sip of nectar to a sleepy flying fox.

As the seasons changed, Ziggy learned that kindness was sweeter than any treat. He became the bushland’s secret giver, leaving surprises for his friends - a ripe fig here, a fragrant flower there.

And so, Ziggy the Sugar Glider discovered that the true magic of the night lay not in stolen sweets but in the bonds he forged. From then on, whenever the moon graced the sky, Ziggy would glide silently, leaving behind a trail of joy.

And if you listen closely on a moonlit night, you might hear the faintest whisper.

“Thank you, Ziggy.”



The Great Chase

by Lilia Melkumyan

My tummy rumbled.

That was my cue to scavenge for food.

The sun set, and I woke up. The wonderful thing about living in Willoughby is that there are plenty of Red Bloodwood trees filled with sweet, sugary sap. My favourite!

Time is ticking.

I peeked out of my tree hollow and scanned the area for any dangers.

I crouched down, using my patagium as a parachute, and leapt.

The wind below rushed to catch me, puffing up my fur.

Suddenly, I heard a noise of dread.

“Hoot, hoot.”

Curious yellow eyes glowed in the dark. An owl is aware of where I am!

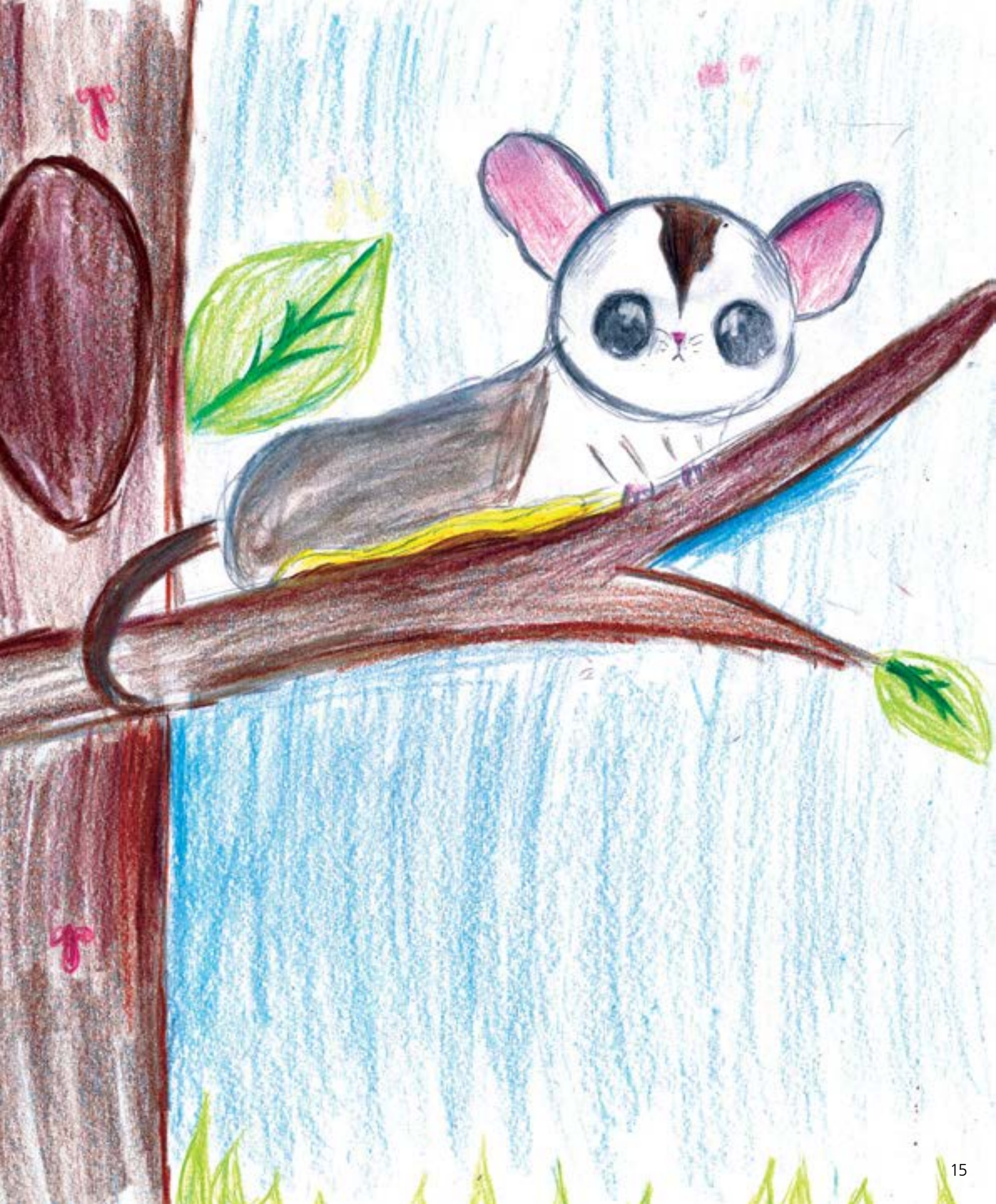
The race is on, the race for survival.

I am threatened by many things, both natural and man-made: cats, foxes, kookaburras, cars, barbed wire fences and deforestation, just to name a few.

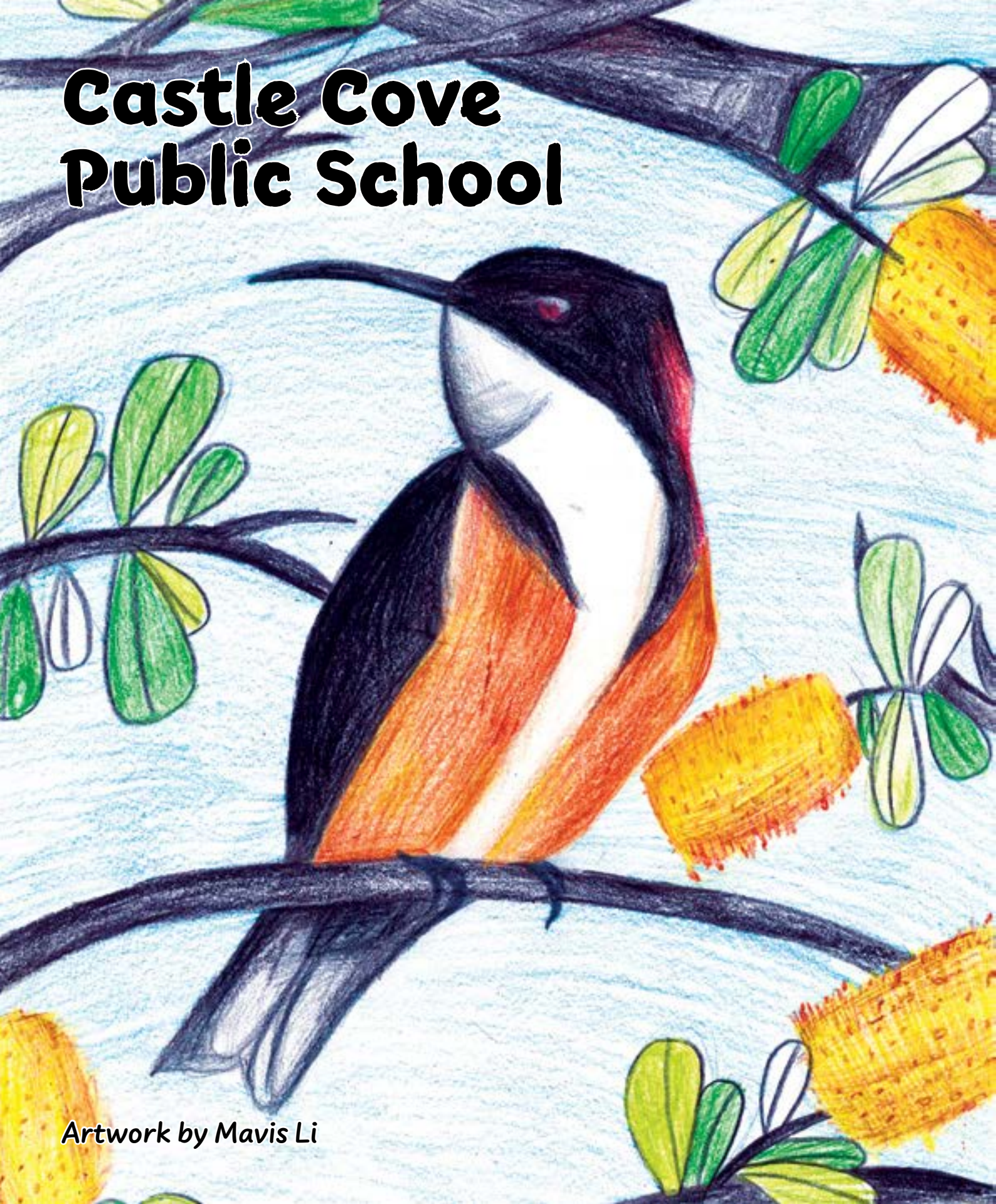
Owls are definitely on that list! The sap can wait.

Using my patagium, I ran and glided from tree to tree. I didn't stop until I was safely back in my hollow.

Dinner must wait. I'm just glad I survived the night!



Castle Cove Public School



Artwork by Mavis Li



Eastern spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) & the
Coastal Banksia (*Banksia intergrifolia*)

The Eastern Spinebill is a small, energetic honeyeater found in southeastern Australia and is known for its sleek, curved bill perfect for sipping nectar from tubular flowers. They are important pollinators, transferring pollen as they feed on the nectar of various plants, including the colorful grevilleas and banksias, such as the Coastal Banksia. With a rapid, buzzing flight and a high-pitched call, these birds are always on the move, adding life and color to their surroundings. Their adaptability to both natural and urban environments make them a delightful sight in the bush and in our gardens.

Diary of a Coastal Banksia

by Natalie Kam

Forest Fire!
Heat starts to rise.
One of the elements I admire
My seed pods open in front of my eyes.

Thunderstorm comes,
Extinguishes the blaze.
Thunder roars like a drum,
This is where I'll stay for the rest of my days.

Pushing through dirt,
Absorb the sun's light.
Standing tall, with thanks to the earth,
Aim for 25 metres in height.

A common customer!
A dull, female Eastern Spinebill.
Taking a break, she probably doesn't have much stamina.
Darting again, with lots of skill.

Her beak tickles
As she laps up my nectar.
My hundred flowers are bendy icicles.
Spinebills are great pollinators.

Another bird with a red iris appears!
He must be her mate, it's breeding season!
They've swept my branches, now they are cleared.
I don't know why, but they must have a reason.

A nest!
Future mother incubates,
Only using materials that are the best.
Stick, hair and cobwebs are found by the mates.

Eggs are hatching
Before it's summer.
Chicks trying to fly, end up needing catching.
Little one's feathers are slowly turning a dark umber.

I have provided a home,
I have provided a shelter.
They ate my food, my sweet honeycomb.
My experience with Eastern Spinebills was stellar.

Wait, what's this?
The forest is about to be scorched.
Releasing my seeds, how I'm bliss.
Seed pods open, after they've been torched.

Seeds tumble through the sky.
This is a new beginning, not time to say goodbye.



What an Adventure!

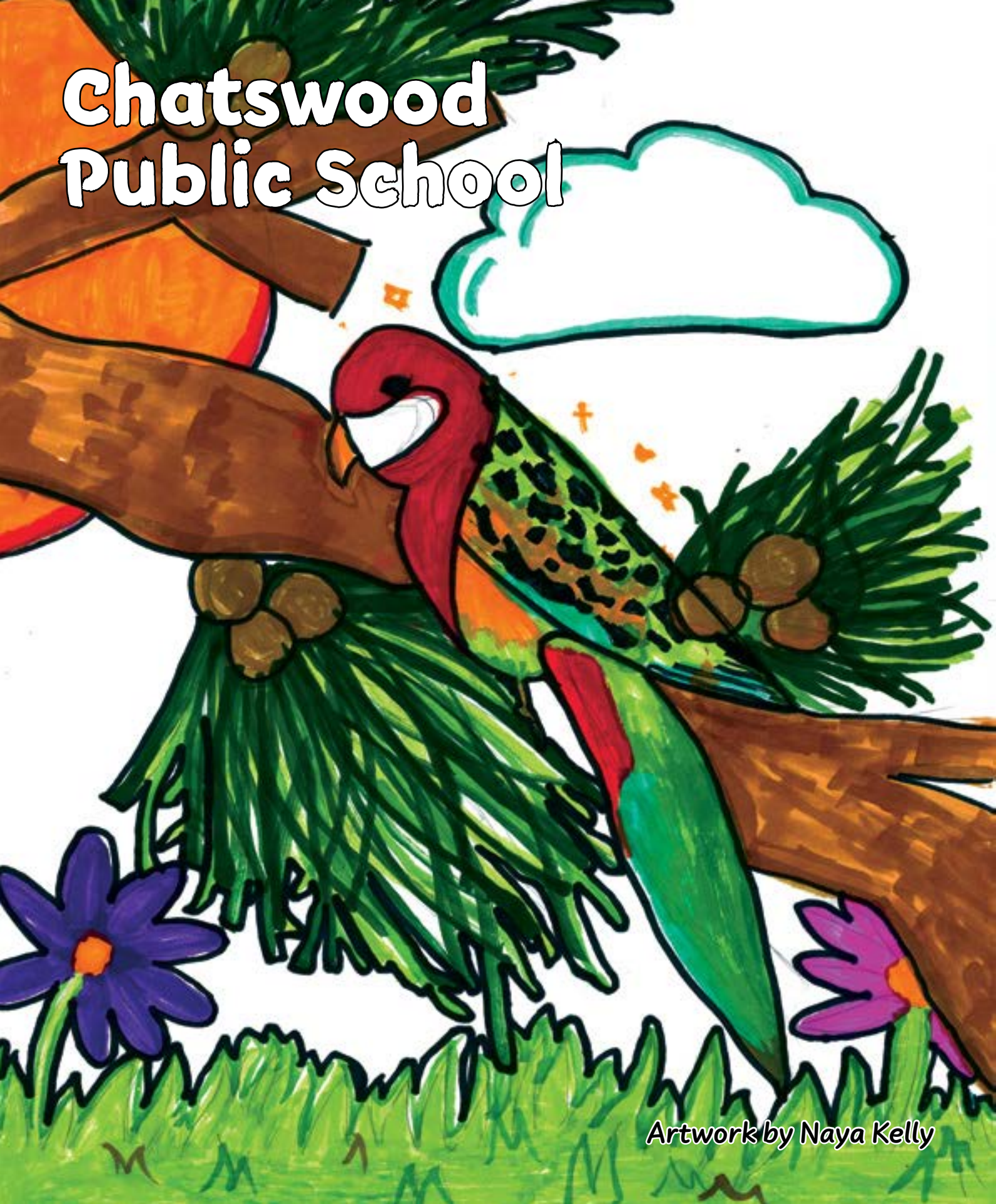
by Olivia Lau





Artwork by Darcy Cornwel-Smith

Chatswood Public School



Artwork by Naya Kelly



Artwork by Hoang Ngan (Alice) Vo

Rosella species (*Platycercus sp*) & the **She-oak** (*Casuarina and Allocasurina species*)

Rosella parrots, including the Crimson Rosella and the Eastern Rosella, are known for their brilliant plumage and playful personalities. These parrots are often seen in pairs or small flocks, flitting through forests, woodlands, and gardens, where they love to feed on seeds, fruits, and nectar. The Crimson and Eastern Rosellas have a special fondness for She-oak trees, they feast on seeds and find shelter among the branches. Their bright red, blue, and green feathers make them a spectacular sight, especially when contrasted against the rugged bark and delicate needles of the She-oak. Rosellas are important members of the ecosystem as they help in seed dispersal, playing a crucial role in maintaining the healthy growth of their forest habitats.

The She-oak's Harmony

by Nikita Chan, artwork by Nikita & Natasha Chan

Bare branches sway in winter's bite,
I stand in silence, hoping for light.
My needle-leaves drift and fall,
Awaiting spring's reviving call.

The sun shines warm, my buds unfold,
A lush new green, a joy behold.
My cone-like fruits are eager to greet,
I dance with joy, to their sweet tweet.

Rosella, my friend, returns in spring,
I stand in wonder as they softly sing.
To recount the tales of winter's flight,
Of wondrous travels and adventures bright.

With chirps and coos, the Rosella nest,
Gather twigs for their family's best.
Their brilliant plumes shine all the way,
Build a lovely home where nestlings play.

Tiny beaks emerge, a joyous sight,
A timeless beat, an eternal delight.
Soon their young will learn to soar,
This endless cycle spins evermore.



The Rosella's Nesting Place

by Richard Li

Beneath the She-oak's waving arms,
A shady spot for birds to rest
It's branches act as mystic charms,
Attracting birds to come and nest.

Rosellas lie in a tree hollow
Two tiny beaks peek out,
Before they ravenously swallow
The seeds in Ma bird's beak, after the bout.

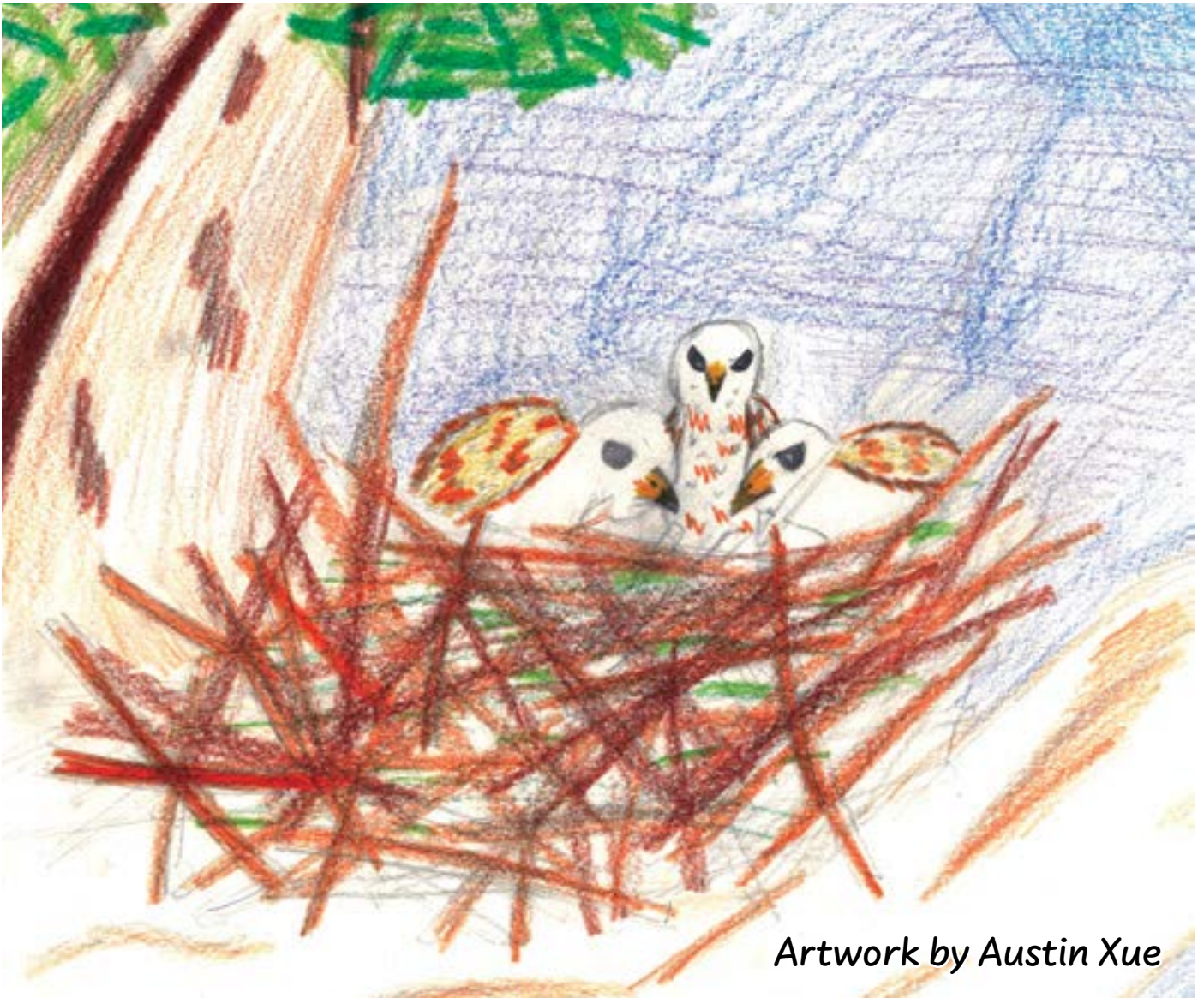
Rosella's morning singing
Lights up the fresh new day
Bright whistles mixed with ringing,
Like notes of flutes, the birds sing everyday
The She-oak's shade, the Rosella's singing,
Much joy and peace they are bringing!



**Glennaeon
Rudolf
Steiner
School**



Artwork by Henry Schweitzer



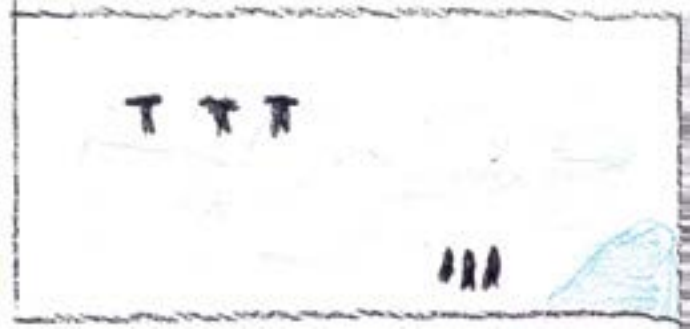
Grey Goshawk (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) & the
Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*)

The Grey Goshawk is a striking and agile raptor that is often seen soaring above woodlands and forests, where it hunts small mammals, birds, and insects. They have a strong affinity for Eucalyptus trees such as the Sydney Peppermint, using their tall branches as vantage points to spot prey and as nesting sites to raise their young. The dense foliage of these trees offers perfect cover for their nests, ensuring safety from potential threats. With its sharp talons and keen eyesight, the Grey Goshawk is a master of stealth, blending seamlessly into the canopy while maintaining a crucial role in the balance of its ecosystem as a bird of prey.

Grey Goshawks

by Otis Hendry Briault, artwork by Jalen Wong





The Grey Goshawk

by Roslyn Zhang

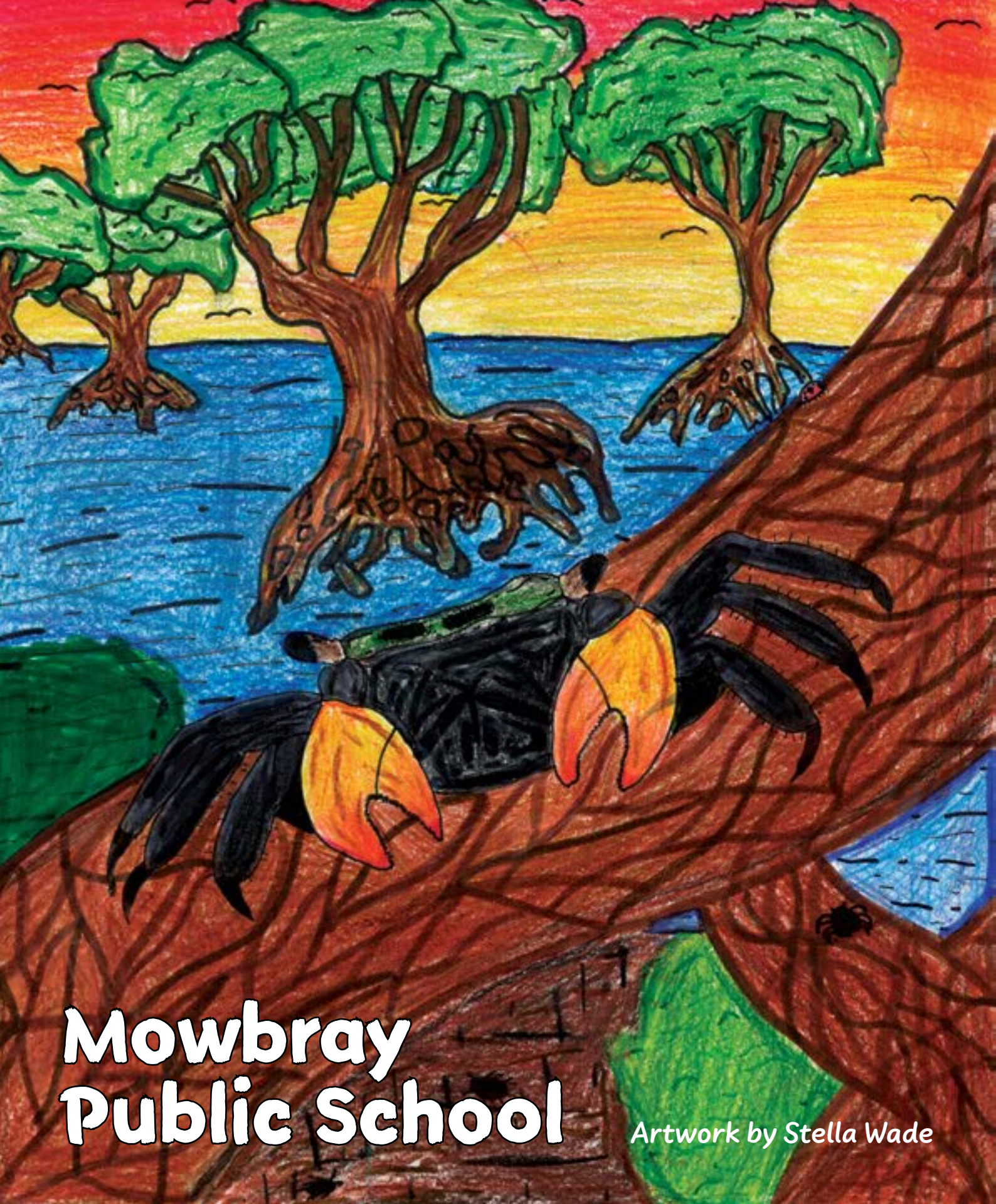
Swooping from branch to branch,
Flying freely, a second chance.
The sky, clear as a crystal lagoon,
It lands on the edge of an ebony plateau.

A ruffle of feathers, a twitch of the head,
A small chick wakes from its soft, feathery bed.
Suddenly a snake lashes out,
And the Goshawk's feathers flutter all about.

With a screech and a flap of the wings,
The Goshawk pins the snake down.
Against the ground, it struggles and pounds,
Then the snake limps with its slim body.

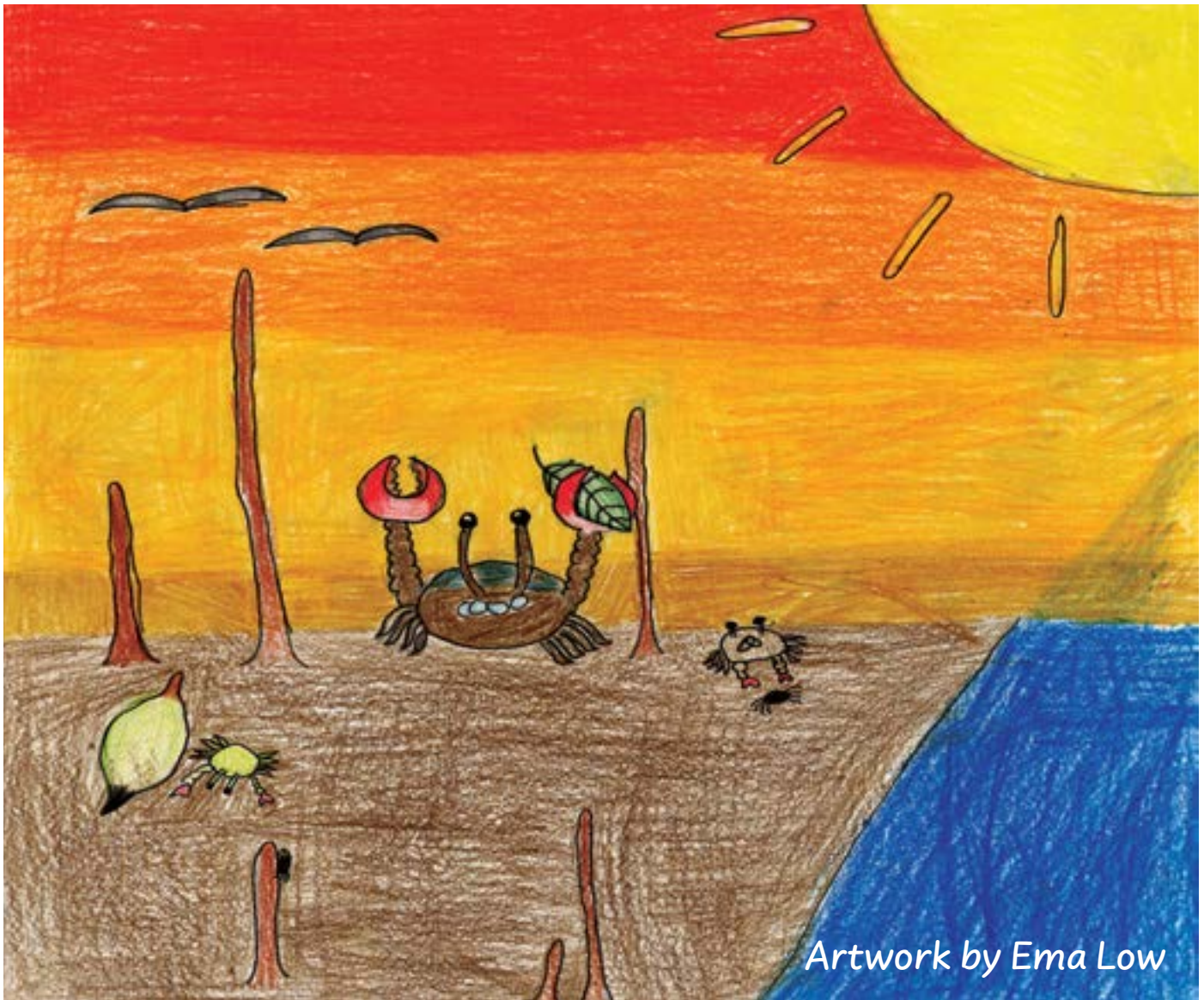
Its struggle gone,
And it gives in to fate.
The pouting chick's tone becomes a happy chirp,
Under the Sydney Peppermint tree, this occurred.





**Mowbray
Public School**

Artwork by Stella Wade



Red-fingered Marsh Crab (*Parasesarma erythroactyla*) & the **Grey Mangrove** (*Avicennia marina*)

The Red-fingered Marsh Crab is a small but vibrant crustacean, easily recognized by its red-tipped claws and quick, scuttling movements. This lively crab is commonly found in the muddy banks and tidal zones of our mangrove forests, including the Grey Mangroves found along the Lane Cove River. The Red-fingered Marsh Crab feeds on leaf litter and detritus, particularly from mangrove trees, helping to break down organic matter and recycle nutrients. In return, mangrove roots provide these crabs with essential shelter and breeding grounds, protecting them from predators and harsh environmental conditions.

Ibis Attack!

by Joshua Connolly



On the muddy end of the water, stood a proud, Red-fingered Marsh Crab



Peeking around she could see no other crabs like her. All the other crabs were hidden away under the horizon.



Hi, my name is Shelly, and I love ... ahh!



What is that? Oh, I know it's an Ibis!



The monstrous beast sharpens its vision and glares directly into my eyes.



Questions are running through my mind, it's like they are running a marathon in my head.



Splash, splish, splosh.
The Ibis creeps toward me.



"Scutter" my mind yells.



The Ibis is too fast for me
and scoops me up.



The Ibis brings me to the water
to brush the mud off.



Splash! A giant fish jumps out
of the water and swallows the
Ibis whole..



With me in the
Ibis's beak.



Everything is dark for a moment
until I feel something slimy
drooling around my claws.



I sprint to a gloomy shard of light.
A tongue! I scream! "I'm gonna tickle it."
I think to myself.



The fish grumbles and a force pushes
me out. I have survived!



That was the most terrifying thing to ever
happen in my life! I can't wait to go back
and eat some mangrove leaves.

The Crabs and the Storm

by Ishara Hardman

In the heart of Willoughby, a quiet Marsh Crab thrived under the shade of ancient Grey Mangroves. The crab was home to a community of Red-fingered Marsh Crabs, tiny creatures with vibrant crimson claws that contrasted sharply against the mud.

Every morning, as the tide ebbed, the crabs scuttled out from their burrows, their red fingers waving like tiny flags. The mangroves, with their gnarled grey trunks and sprawling roots, provided shelter and protection. The crabs nibbled on detritus, their movements a ballet of persistence and agility.

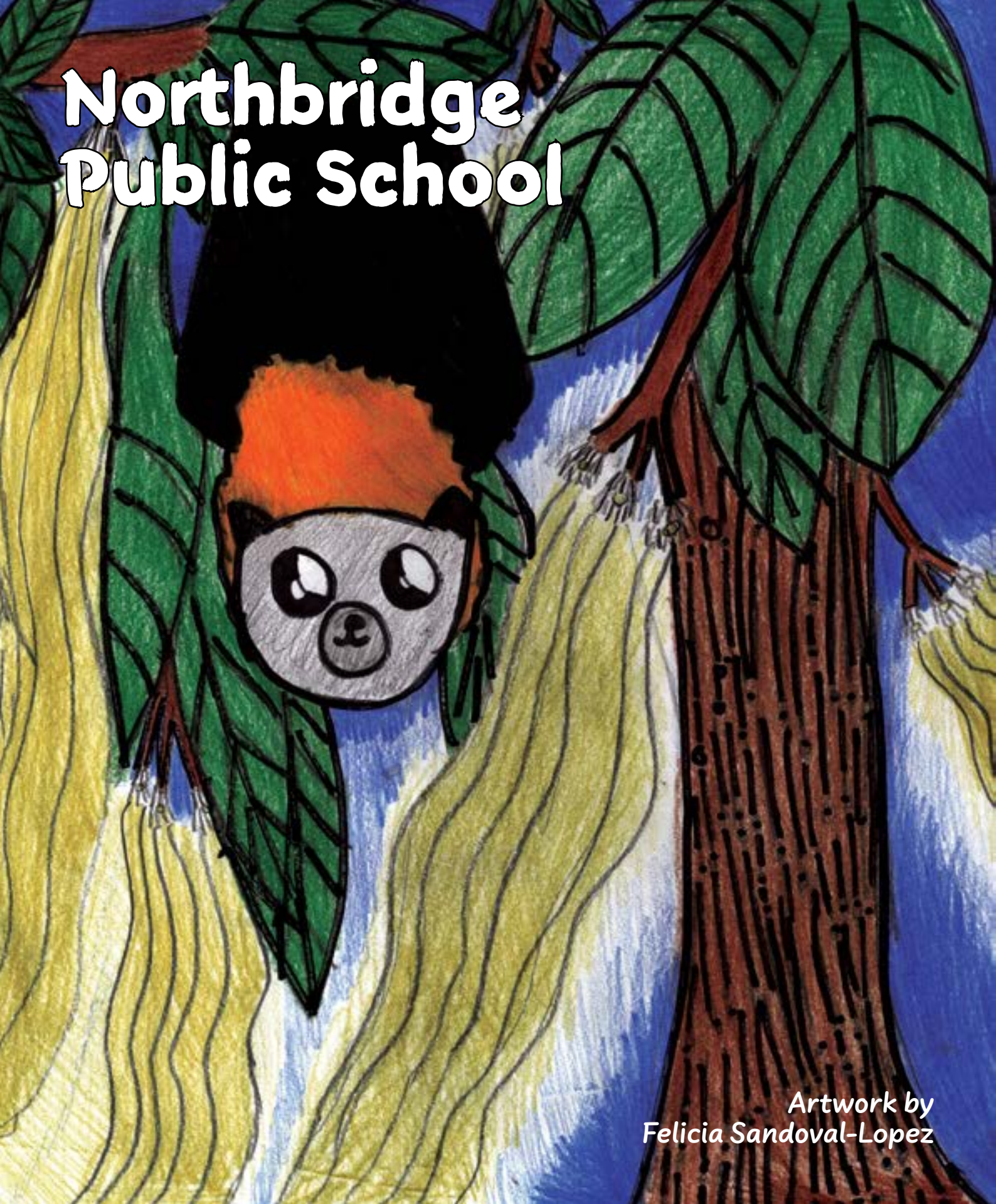
One day, a heavy storm rolled in, lashing the marsh crab with wind and rain. The tide surged higher than usual, threatening to inundate the crabs' burrows. The mangroves swayed violently, their roots creaking and groaning. As the water rose, the crabs hurriedly retreated into their burrows, clinging to the safety of the mud.

The storm raged through the night, but the mangroves stood firm, their tangled roots holding the soil together. When dawn broke, the quiet marsh crab emerged, drenched but largely intact. The crabs slowly emerged from their burrows, their red fingers gleaming with wetness.

Grateful for the mangroves' protection, the crabs resumed their daily foraging, their tiny world restored. In the interplay of storm and calm, the bond between the Red-fingered Marsh Crabs and the Grey Mangroves grew stronger, a testament to nature's resilience in tranquil Willoughby.



Northbridge Public School



Artwork by
Felicia Sandoval-Lopez



Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) & the **Turpentine** (*Syncarpia glomulifera*)

The Grey-headed Flying-fox is the largest bat species in Australia, with an impressive wingspan reaching up to a meter. They thrive in diverse habitats, from rainforests and woodlands to urban parks, where they roost in large, noisy colonies, called camps. These flying-foxes are nature's gardeners, pollinating flowers and spreading seeds as they feast on nectar and fruits. One of their favourite meals is the sugary nectar and pollen of flowering Turpentine. Despite their important ecological role, their numbers are dwindling due to habitat loss and extreme weather events. The Grey-headed Flying-foxes are a vital part of Australia's ecosystem, often spotted soaring through the evening sky in search of their next meal.

The Perfect Friend

by Tina Henke

There was a forest which blossomed with beauty. Life there flourished, along with a Grey-headed Flying Fox whose home was also a friend.

For many years he had lived in a Turpentine tree with thick long branches, and brown, spongy bark. He'd talk to it every day hoping it would answer and stay as close to it as possible. This tree was his one and only friend. But one day he heard news that broke his heart.

One evening he flew out to find some fruits and overheard some workers talking about cutting down his pal. He was devastated. He slowly ascended into the sky to spend his last moments with the tree. He hung upside down and wrapped his cloak like wings around his orange coat of fur. But then it hit him... a plan!

The next day he decided to tell his camp about the news. But instead of helping, the camp laughed. They cackled and screeched while he stood in sorrow. He soared through the sky and stared down and thought to himself. "None of these trees will ever be perfect like my Turpentine tree!"

The next day came, and he was afraid. He never thought he would be saying goodbye to his tree. Suddenly he heard a faint screeching sound, which eventually grew louder and louder! Finally, he realised, it was his camp! Together they scared the people away, and the Turpentine tree lived peacefully for another 100 years.



The Adventures of Max the Grey-headed Flying-fox

by Simon Huang, artwork by Emma Argyropoulos

In the Aussie bush, where the sun shines bright,
Lives Max, the Grey-headed Flying-fox, taking flight at night.
His wings spread wide as he soars through the sky,
In search of sweet nectar, way up high.

One night, as he flew, he spotted a tree,
A Turpentine tree, standing tall and free.
Its branches reaching out like arms to the sky,
Inviting Max to rest, up high.

He landed softly on a sturdy branch;
The Turpentine tree gave him a chance
To rest his wings and take a break,
In the cool night air, he stayed awake.

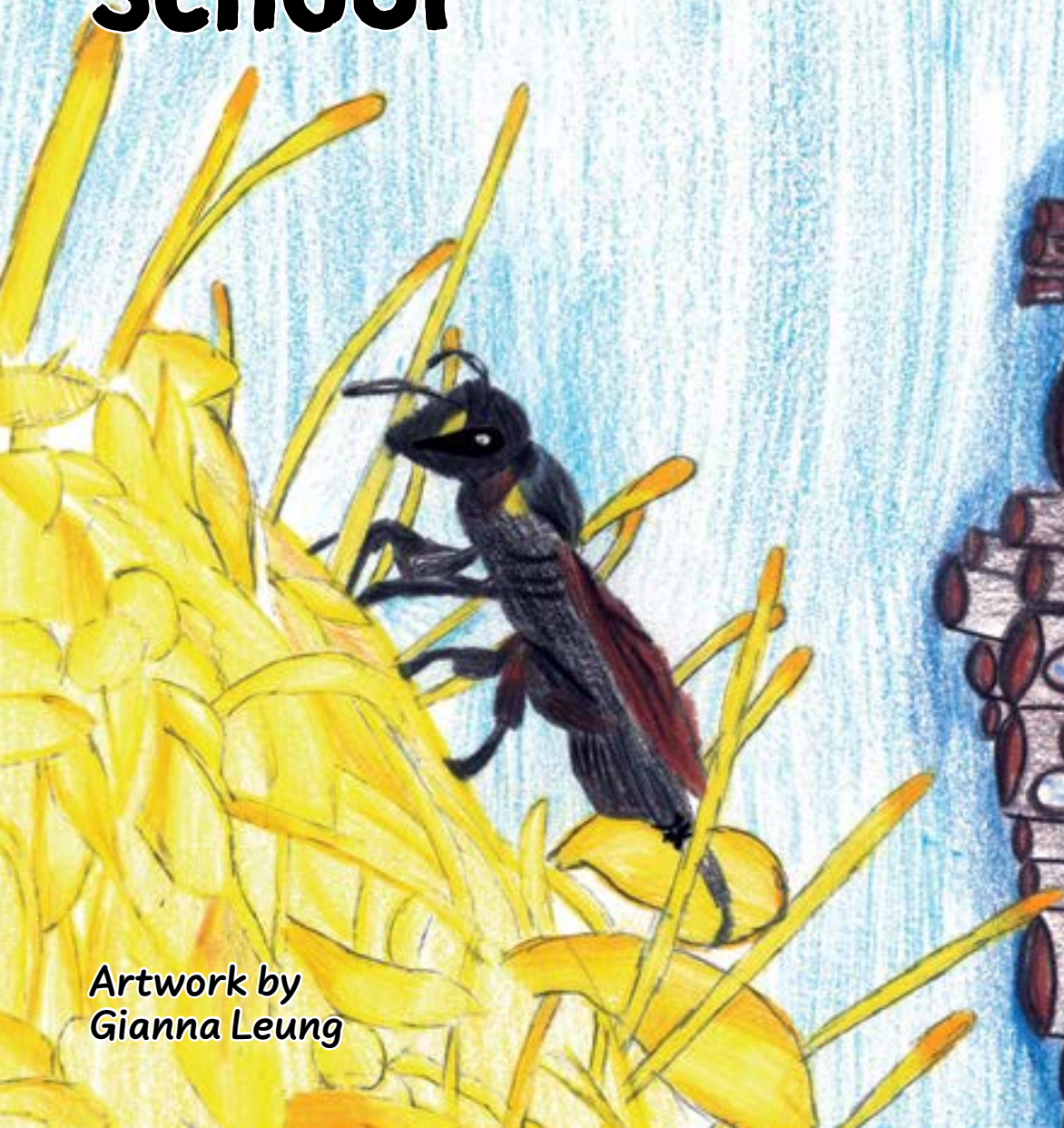
The tree whispered softly in the gentle breeze,
Words of wisdom to put Max at ease:
“Fly high and free, like the stars above,
Spread your wings with courage and love.”

Max listened closely to the tree’s wise words.
He felt a sense of peace, like singing birds.
With renewed strength, he took to the sky,
Grateful for the tree that stood so high.

So remember, like Max and the Turpentine tree,
To spread your wings and always be free.
Listen to nature and let it guide your way.
Just like Max, you’ll find your path, come what may.



Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School



Artwork by
Gianna Leung



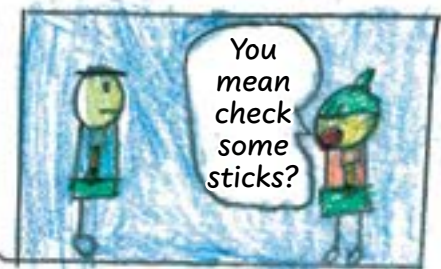
Masked Bee (*Genus Hylaeus*) & the **Sydney Red Gum** (*Angophora costata*)

Masked bees get their name from the distinctive yellow or white markings on their face that resemble a superhero mask. These tiny bees buzz from flower to flower to collect pollen to feed their young. They often occur in large numbers around flowering eucalypts and Angophora trees, such as the iconic Sydney Red Gum. Unlike many bees, masked bees are solitary and build tunnel-like nests within plant stems, twigs and reeds, where the females raise their young. Building a bee hotel in the backyard is a great way to provide much needed and safe habitats for these creatures, especially in our urban environment.

The Resin Bee

by Rui Karasawa





The Red, the Yellow and the Black

by Chloe Kim

The rain was mesmerising.

The constant drops splashing within seconds were unlike anything Minjun had ever seen in Korea. Back then, it was only dust consuming the sky. Luckily, the rain weighed down the dust, but it looked horrendous.

He stared in marvel.

The tour guide frowned in disappointment as the rain continued and the group of people all cramped inside a tiny tin shed.

However, Minjun didn't mind it because the pitter-pattering of the rain was beautiful. It washed away the red from the Sydney Red Gum. Soon, the rain came to a stop and the tourists, followed by the tour guide, emerged outside. The sky was now a bright blue, embedded deep within the drab clouds that had recently disappeared.

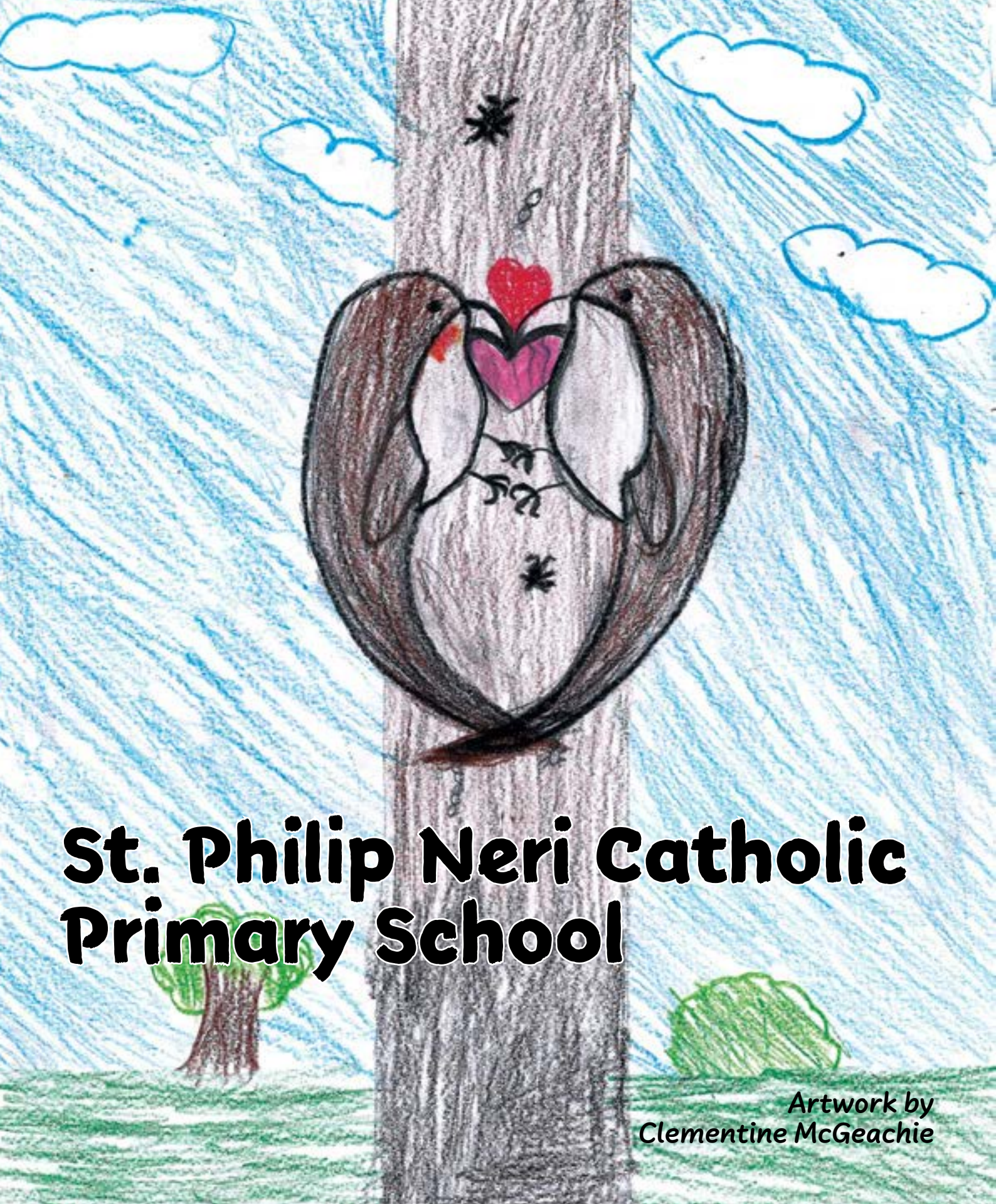
Holding his mum's hand, which seemed enormous compared to his petite one, Minjun looked in awe. There was a faint buzzing near the tour guide's hand. A magnificent black and yellow creature stood proudly on the tour guide's shirt.

"It's called a Common Masked Bee," the tour guide explained. He gently placed the bee back into its hollow, which it had dug in the Sydney Red Gum, a beautiful red tree.

He stayed behind with his mum, just staring at the marvelous tree. He listened attentively to the buzzing and stood there in amazement.

Not knowing if he would return, Minjun stood there hoping he would remember this as a memory he would forever cherish.





St. Philip Neri Catholic Primary School

Artwork by
Clementine McGeachie



Artwork by Clementine McGeachie

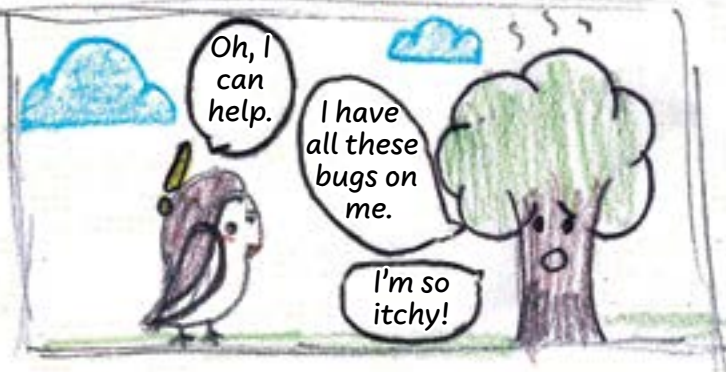
White-throated Treecreeper (*Cormobates leucophaea*) & the **Blackbutt** (*Eucalyptus pilularis*)

The White-throated Treecreeper is a small bird found only in eastern Australia, notable for its white throat and special talent for climbing trees. It loves foraging on the trunks and branches of trees, picking off insects and other invertebrates hidden beneath the rough bark. The Blackbutt tree, with its rough, fibrous bark on the lower trunk, is one of its favorite trees to feed on. Using its strong, curved claws and stiff tail feathers, it can climb trees with ease and grace. Females build nests in natural tree hollows, while both parents take turns caring for the chicks. By feeding on insects, they serve as excellent pest controllers and help prevent damage to trees.

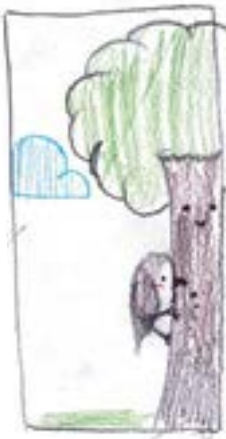
The White-throated Treecreeper and the Blackbutt Tree

by Ayuna Terasawa





AND SO



So, the Treecreeper visited the Blackbutt tree almost every day and the tree was never itchy again.

White-throated Treecreeper

by Yuina Terasawa and Carly Woodward

This poem is about a White-throated Treecreeper

The Treecreeper is like a goal keeper

It eats insects, but it likes ants more

When it finds a great one, it goes SCORE!

When it is not breeding season, it flies solo

Climbing up the tree vertically

Flying straight through the sky

When the Treecreeper finds uninvited visitors

It makes them its prisoners

The female has blush on her cheeks

The male has no blush but can still speak

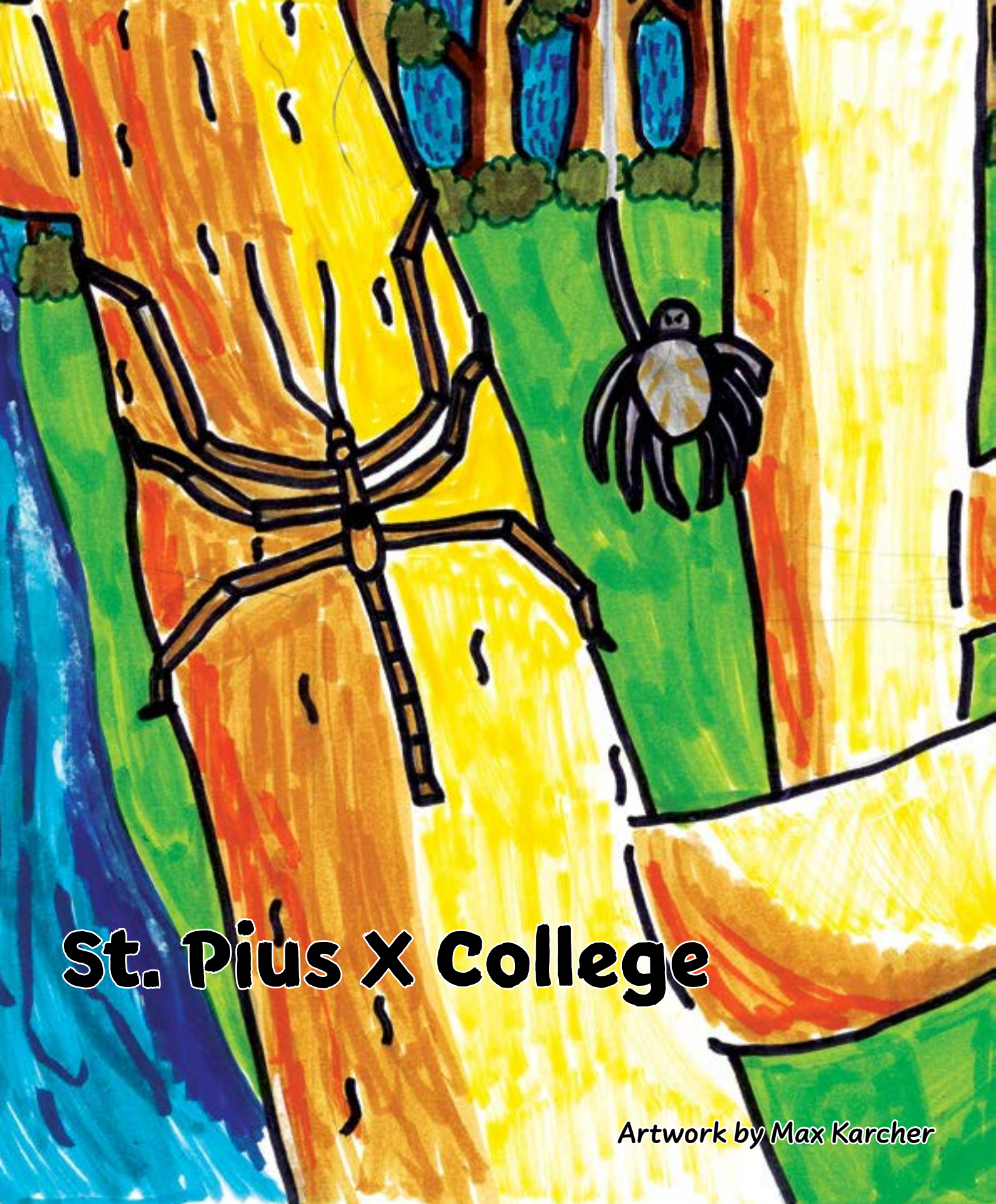
The White-throated Treecreeper is very small

But it is still mighty, small or tall

The Treecreeper lives on the Blackbutt Tree

It is wildly free!





St. Pius X College

Artwork by Max Karcher



Artwork by Vincenzo Abbattista

Margin-winged Stick Insect (*Ctenomorpha marginipennis*) & the **Sydney Blue Gum** (*Eucalyptus saligna*)

The Margin-winged Stick Insect is a large stick insect with a unique appearance that resembles a Eucalyptus twig. They are truly masters of camouflage, possessing many incredible adaptations to avoid predators. Not only do they look like tree branches and sticks, but they also sway slightly when walking to mimic a twig caught in a breeze. Females also lay eggs that resemble seeds to further camouflage and enhance survival in the wild. Eucalyptus trees such as the Sydney Blue Gum are crucial for these insects as they provide both food and shelter.

The Margin-winged Stick Insect

by Cristian Guerra

A male Margin-winged Stick Insect
climbs on a big green leaf,
but as he climbs,
he finds a female shedding her grief.

To reach her, he must find
a way to leave this leaf behind.
He could get to her by flying high,
nearly as graceful as a butterfly.

But instead, he sees a bird above,
and now he looks at the fat white dove.
As it swoops down towards him,
the world around him goes very dim.
Looking back up at the girl,
he realises she is just a twig.

Then another stick insect flies away from the bird,
the bird thinks all insects are just absurd.
When he then opened his eyes,
He never saw another sunrise.

Instead, he saw a big beak
as he was swallowed up by a huge freak.
As the dove flew off with the insect within,
the dove looked back with an untoothed grin.



The Stick Insects Sticky and Twiggy

by Jacob Wilson

“Tsk!”

Out of the shadow of the tree came a large, hairy spider the size of a TANK! (This is in insect scale by the way, really spiders are pretty small).

Sticky sprinted behind a branch and came up with a plan.

The spider slowly lumbered over to his mate Twiggy and bared his pincers.

When the spider was just about to pick up Twiggy and swallow him whole. Sticky came out from behind the branch and charged at the spider. He hit the spider with all his might and sent it tumbling down onto the grass.

Sticky came over to Twiggy and helped take all the spider web off him.

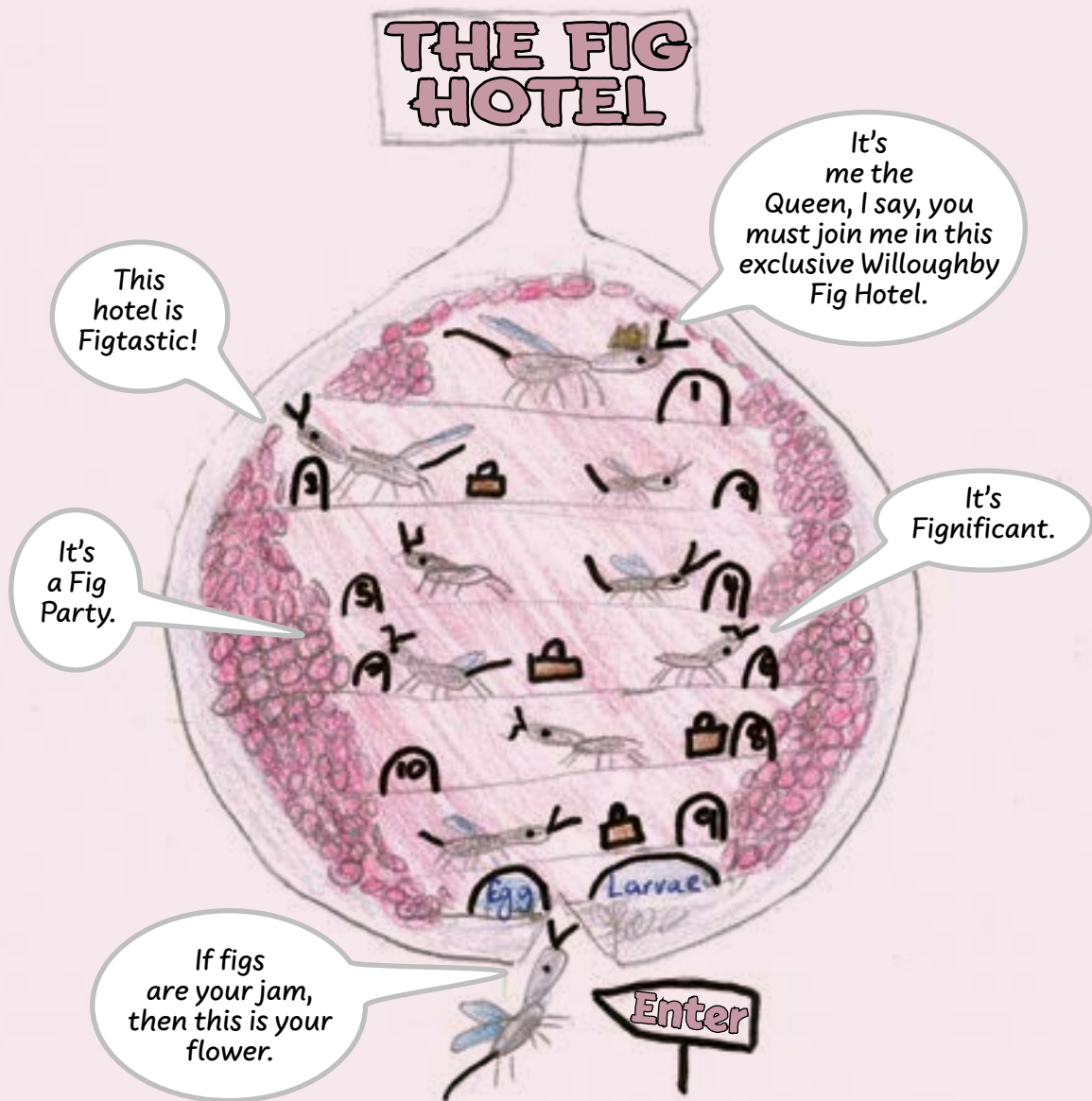
“Thanks back there!” said a still frightened Twiggy.

“I’ve always got your back” replied Sticky.

Sticky and Twiggy stood there, still shocked and tired from what had happened. When they had finally caught their breath, they started flying up to the safety of their big Blue Gum tree home.



St. Thomas Catholic Primary School



Artwork by Charlotte Addley-Sloane



Artwork by Sienna Maconachie

Fig Wasp (*Superfamily: Chalcidoidea*) & the **Fig tree** (*Ficus species*)

The Fig Wasp is a tiny but mighty insect that has a unique symbiotic relationship with fig trees. With over 750 species all around the world, the Fig Wasps are the only pollinators of Fig trees. Female Fig Wasps enter the figs and lay their eggs and in the process, spread pollen from one fig to another. As the wasp larvae develop inside, the fig ripens, providing a safe haven and food source for the young wasps. Once they mature, new wasps emerge and carry fig pollen to another tree, continuing the cycle. This intricate partnership has evolved over millions of years, making the Fig Wasps and the Fig Trees one of nature's most fascinating mutualistic duos.

Nature Working Together

by Sophie Arblaster

I live in a Fig tree
Both genders, one tree!
It's hard to see me;
I'm 1.5 mm, but under a microscope, you can.
Who am I?

I start with no mother,
Just an amazing brother.
He digs a hole in the fruit,
Just so I can get out.
Then he passes me in his big, bright yellow suit.
Who am I?

After that, he dies,
For he has no wings.
I guess he'll have a funeral,
Just him and the flies.
Now I am free and hear how nature sings.
Who am I?

I have two days,
Two days to decide,
Which fruits shall I put
My babies inside?
Who am I?

Now I have chosen.
I crept through the hole
And have lost my wings.
Again it will happen to my poor little soul.
Who am I?

I have passed, and now I reveal,
I am the Fig Wasp with a great business deal.
You see, Fig and I are the cycle of life,
Although Fig will end up at the edge of a knife.

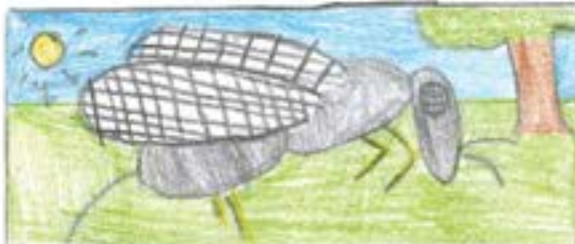
He helps me give birth,
I pollinate him.
It goes on and on,
Until he gets a nice little trim.

It really is good,
Nature at play.
I hope you have enjoyed
Learning about the Fig Wasp and the tree today.



The Life of a Fig Wasp

by Elea Cozens



The female fig wasp was flying around looking for the perfect fig.



Great! She found a good tree, now to find a good fig.



Wow! Look at all these figs!



I'm gonna choose this one!



When the fig wasp enters the fig, her wings come off.



Now that she is inside the fig, she is going to lay her eggs.

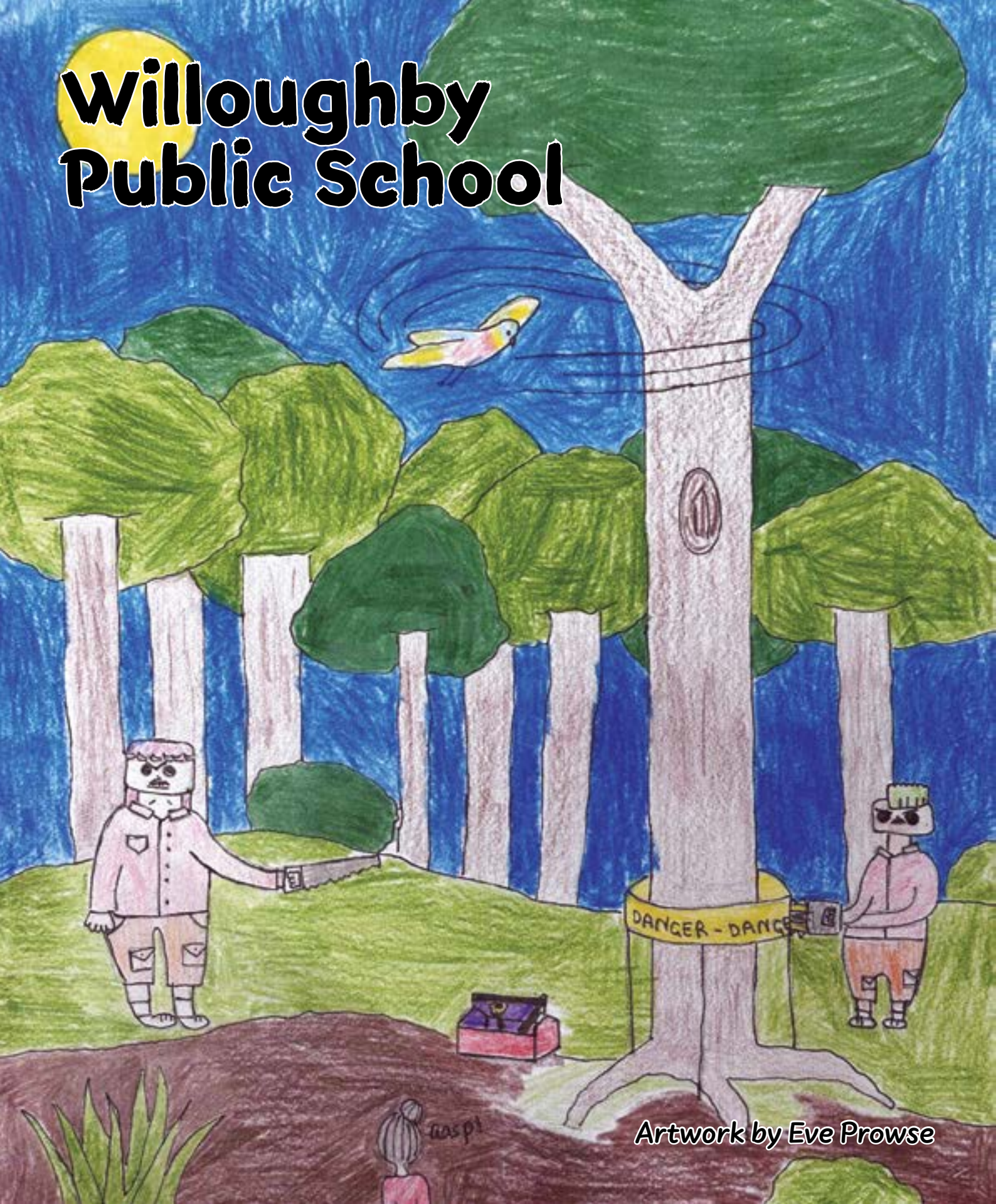


The male fig wasps (no wings) make a hole through the fig so the female wasps can get out.





Willoughby Public School



Artwork by Eve Prowse



Artwork by Yue Teng Soon

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) & the **Paperbark** (*Melaleuca species*)

The Rainbow Lorikeet is a colorful parrot commonly found on the Eastern seaboard of Australia. Its feathers are a mix of vibrant green, blue, red, and yellow, making it look like a living rainbow! These birds thrive in forested habitats, where they nest in tree hollows and feed on nectar, pollen, and fruits. Their special brush-tipped tongues help them collect nectar from flowers. The Paperbark Tree with its distinctive peeling bark and clusters of sweet, nectar-rich flowers, is a favourite feeding spot for these birds. Rainbow Lorikeets are highly social birds and often travel in noisy flocks, playing a key role in pollination as they move from tree to tree.

Loti The Rainbow Lorikeet

by Dahyoon Kim, artwork by Addison James

Loti is a sweet but shy Rainbow Lorikeet with faint rainbow feathers. She lives inside a Eucalyptus tree in a nest of chewed wood in Willoughby Park. Paige is a friendly and confident Paperbark tree that lives in the peaceful depths of Beauchamp Park.

Loti often visits Paige with other Rainbow Lorikeets to feed on the nectar from her best flowers. They would always say hi to each other, but apart from that, they didn't really know one another. Until one day...

On a fine sunny morning, Loti and the other Rainbow Lorikeets were heading to Beauchamp Park to collect some nectar from Paige. Loti flew close to the other Rainbow Lorikeets, as they always did when traveling. She flew next to her friends Crimson, Indigo, and Jade. Among the group was also Maize, a Rainbow Lorikeet who only thought about herself and always wanted to be the best at everything. "Let's see who can fly the fastest to the rainbow!" Maize shouted, pointing at the rainbow that had appeared over Willoughby Park after the rain.

Loti zoomed toward the rainbow as fast as any Rainbow Lorikeet could. But when she reached the rainbow, she felt a sudden push from behind. Maize had tricked her! She couldn't recover from the shock and began to fall, slowly descending through the rainbow.

Paige watched from above and knew she had to rescue her. "Hey! Can you guys please help me catch the Rainbow Lorikeet that's falling right now?" Paige asked the other Paperbark trees desperately. The other Paperbark trees agreed. And so, Paige and the other Paperbark trees gathered their leaves and branches to catch her. Paige tried to catch Loti but just missed! Luckily, Loti landed safely on a small Paperbark tree nearby.

After a while, Loti woke up to a crowd of murmurs and whispers of awe. She opened her eyes and found all the animals of Beauchamp Park staring at her. She realised she was now covered in bright, bold feathers. She flew over to Paige and drank some of her nectar to regain energy from the long fall. As she sat down on Paige's tree trunk, Paige whispered, "I'm glad you're okay. But how did you get your bold feathers?" Loti replied, "It was because I fell through the rainbow. So, thank you to Maize! And thanks for trying to save me!" From that day on, Loti and Paige became best friends.



The Lorikeet's Feathers

by James Wong, artwork by Christine Neupert

Warin, the Rainbow Lorikeet, loves his home in Flat Rock Gully. He adores the paperbark tree he lives in, with its soft, thick bark and smooth, thin leaves. He especially loves the blossoms that bloom in spring and enjoys slurping up their sweet nectar.

He likes spending time with his friends, Mr Magpie and his son Gunther. They play around the creek bed of the gully. Warin loves his friends; they are fun, funny and love to play with him. But Warin worries, because he has feathers in all the colors of the rainbow, while his friends are only black and white and blend in with the bush. He feels different, like he stands out like a sore claw.

His friends always tried to reassure him, saying they are all the same, but Warin never felt sure. He felt sad and dejected.

One day, while Warin was playing in his tree, Mr Magpie flew up to him and squawked, "Her baby, Gunther is missing! We were searching for food when I lost track of him!" "Let's find him!" Warin said. The two birds flew off to search for Gunther. They searched for hours but couldn't find him.

As they were returning home, a scared voice warbled. "Help me! I'm stuck in a bit of old plastic." Warin dove toward Gunther and untangled his claw. Gunther explained that when he saw Warin's bright feathers, he knew he was saved. Mr Magpie said, "You're a hero, Warin."

From that day forward, Warin wore his colorful coat of feathers with pride.

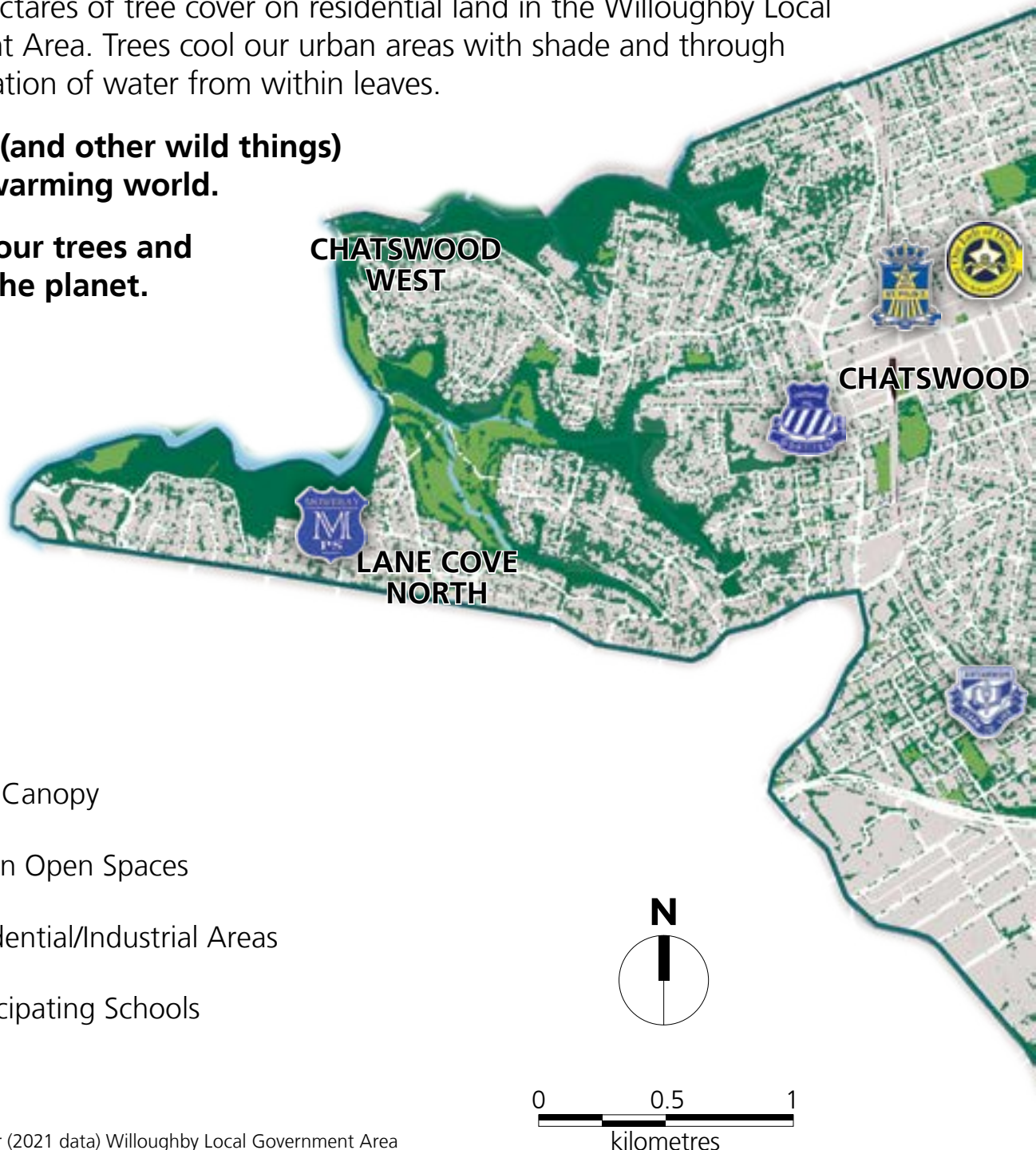


Canopy Cover in the local area

How cool is your school? Since 2011 aerial photography shows a loss of 12.61 hectares of tree cover on residential land in the Willoughby Local Government Area. Trees cool our urban areas with shade and through the evaporation of water from within leaves.

Keep kids (and other wild things) cool in a warming world.

Care for your trees and plant for the planet.



-  Tree Canopy
-  Green Open Spaces
-  Residential/Industrial Areas
-  Participating Schools

Tree Canopy Cover (2021 data) Willoughby Local Government Area

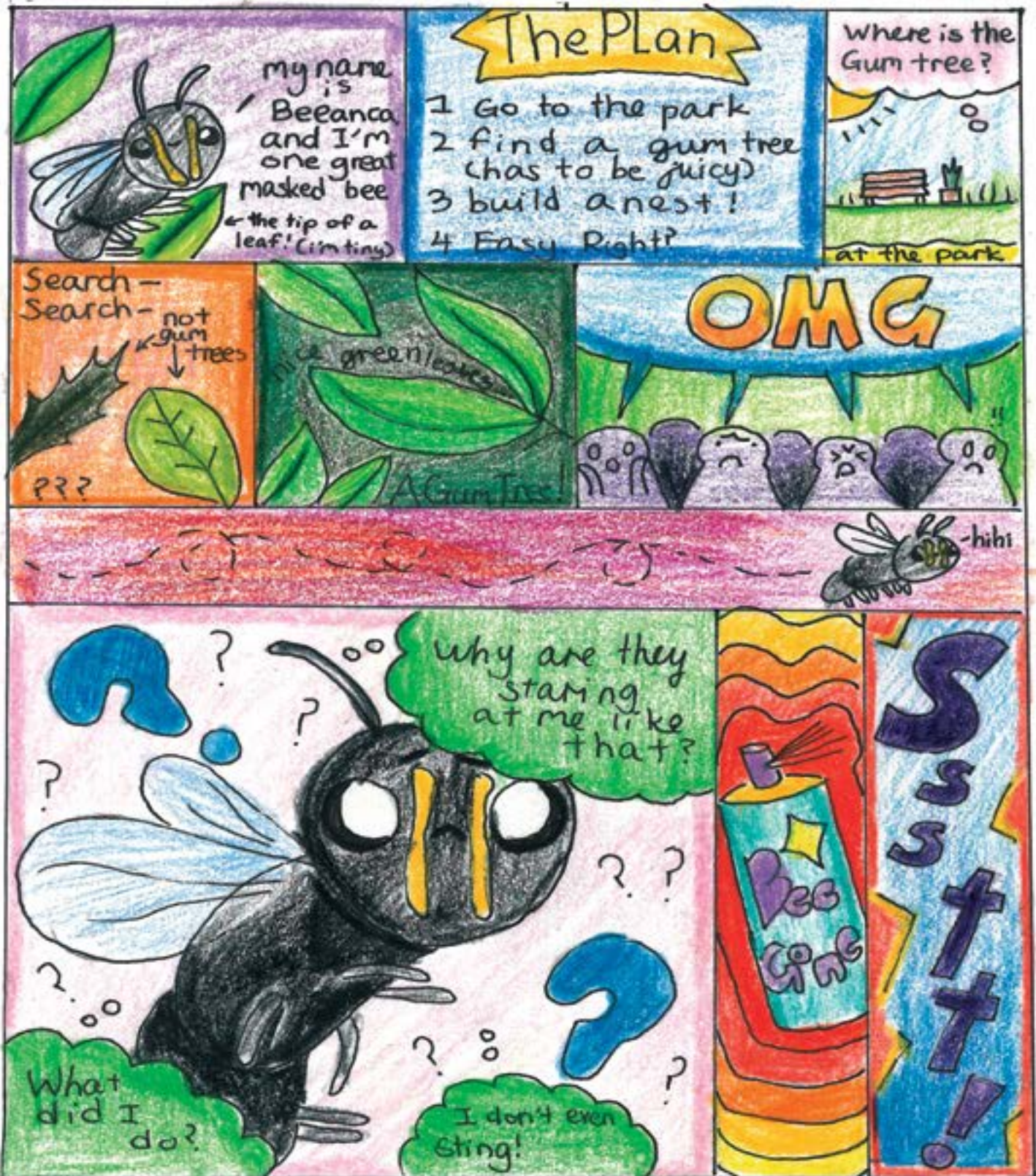


www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Love-Your-Trees



Bee Escapes

by Sophie Kwan from Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School



Aaack! Let's Leave...

* At Bunnings *

outside... Looks nice

Whoohoo!

Let's go explore inside

zoom-

uh oh! better dash now!

half price! buy now!

heh heh heh

rab rab

is this real?

No Bug

Go away!

Sssttt!!!

Ahhhh

Oh no! I should've stayed out!

Departure!!!

EXIT

zoom

hmmm... Let's test this house out!

A Bug Hotel?! My lucky day!

In the backyard

Mr. Butty

Yay!

Phew! What a day!

and so, Beelzebub found a home

This book was created by Willoughby's

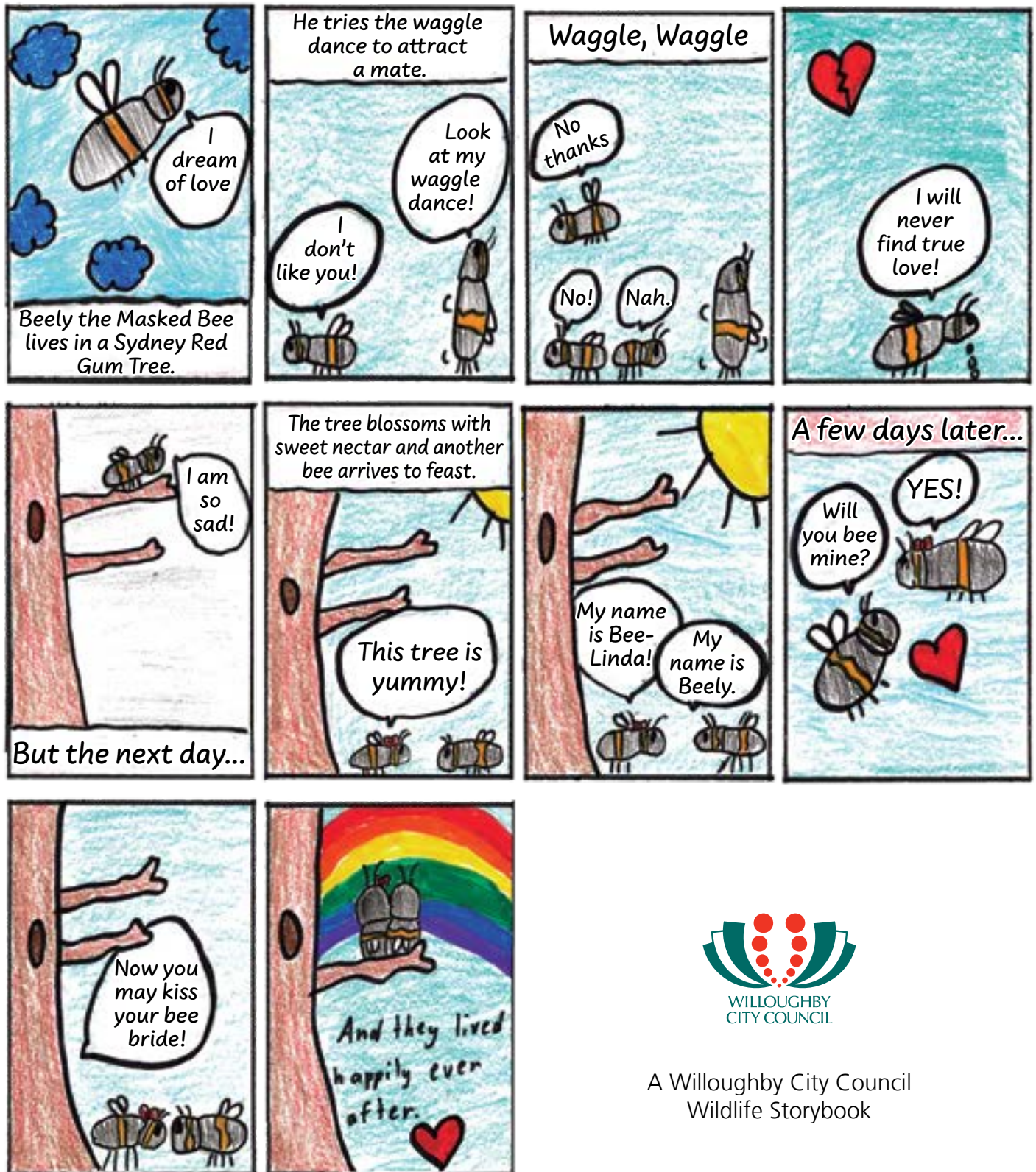


kids and is dedicated to our local wildlife.



A Bee Love Story

by Micaela Geronimo from Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School



A Willoughby City Council
Wildlife Storybook