

Pilliga Scrubs Dark November



Author: Jenna Sunderland
School: Narrabri Public School

Enviro-Stories Education Program

Enviro-Stories is a competition based education program for Primary Schools that was developed by PeeKdesigns.

www.envirostories.com.au



This program provides an education experience for kids through learning about the environment. The final product is a published story written about local issues, by local kids, for local kids and future generations.

In 2011, the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC, in partnership with the Central West Catchment Management Authority, provided local kids with the opportunity to join in on this exciting and innovative competition.

Cotton Catchment Communities CRC

The Cotton Catchment Communities CRC is an industry partnership leading research, education and commercialisation in the Australian cotton industry. The Cotton CRC aims to provide innovative knowledge to stimulate economic, social and environmental outcomes at farm, regional and national levels.

www.cottoncrc.org.au

Central West Catchment Management Authority

The Central West Catchment is committed to work with the community to conserve, improve and manage natural and cultural resources. The catchment is located in central western New South Wales, flanked by the Barwon and Darling Catchments to the north and west, Lachlan to the south and the Sydney/Shoalhaven Basin to the east.

www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au

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The Cotton Catchment Communities CRC 2011 “An Aussie Bush Tale” Enviro-Stories Competition consists of the following books:

- Larry the Kingfisher
- Pilliga Scrubs Dark November
- The Dilemma
- Information on Australian Animals
- The Monster in the Garden
- Noises in the Night
- Pigs in the Dam
- Where am I?
- The Little Village

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Let me introduce myself. I am Kool, a glossy black cockatoo and I'm king of the 'Piliga Scrub'.

My land covers 3000 square kilometres which I rule with my two best mates Gunny and Al. We were the kings of the Piliga Scrub until...





...November 1997. I woke in the hollow of my dead eucalyptus tree, shook my beak and called out to my mates, “Rise and shine, it’s she-oak cone time.”



Gunny and Al made their way out of their hollows. Al with a cheeky grin mumbled about the jokes and laughs we got from the galahs the night before. They were certainly the scrub clowns.

We made our way to visit to those hilarious birds and to eat more delicious she-oak cones.

We heard a strange crackling sound in the distance. Then suddenly the trees were alight; like someone had lit a candle. The steaming blaze ate up its surrounds, furiously growing fatter till it was opening its mouth to gobble down Al, Gunny and I.





We started our escape flying high into the sky. Higher and higher we rose, flapping madly, until the sky enveloped me into its cool atmosphere.

I looked back but could only see Gunny and the angry black swirl of smoke rising beneath us.

My eyes started to overflow as I realised Al must be lying in the angry stomach pit of the monster underneath.

I eventually had to crash land as my glossy feathers couldn't carry me any further. I could see that Gunny managed to follow.

We fell into the soft dirt and laid there gasping for air. My ears hurt with the awful screech of a siren. All I could see were the bright red flashing lights of several trucks as they zoomed past.

Exhausted, I collapsed and fell to sleep.

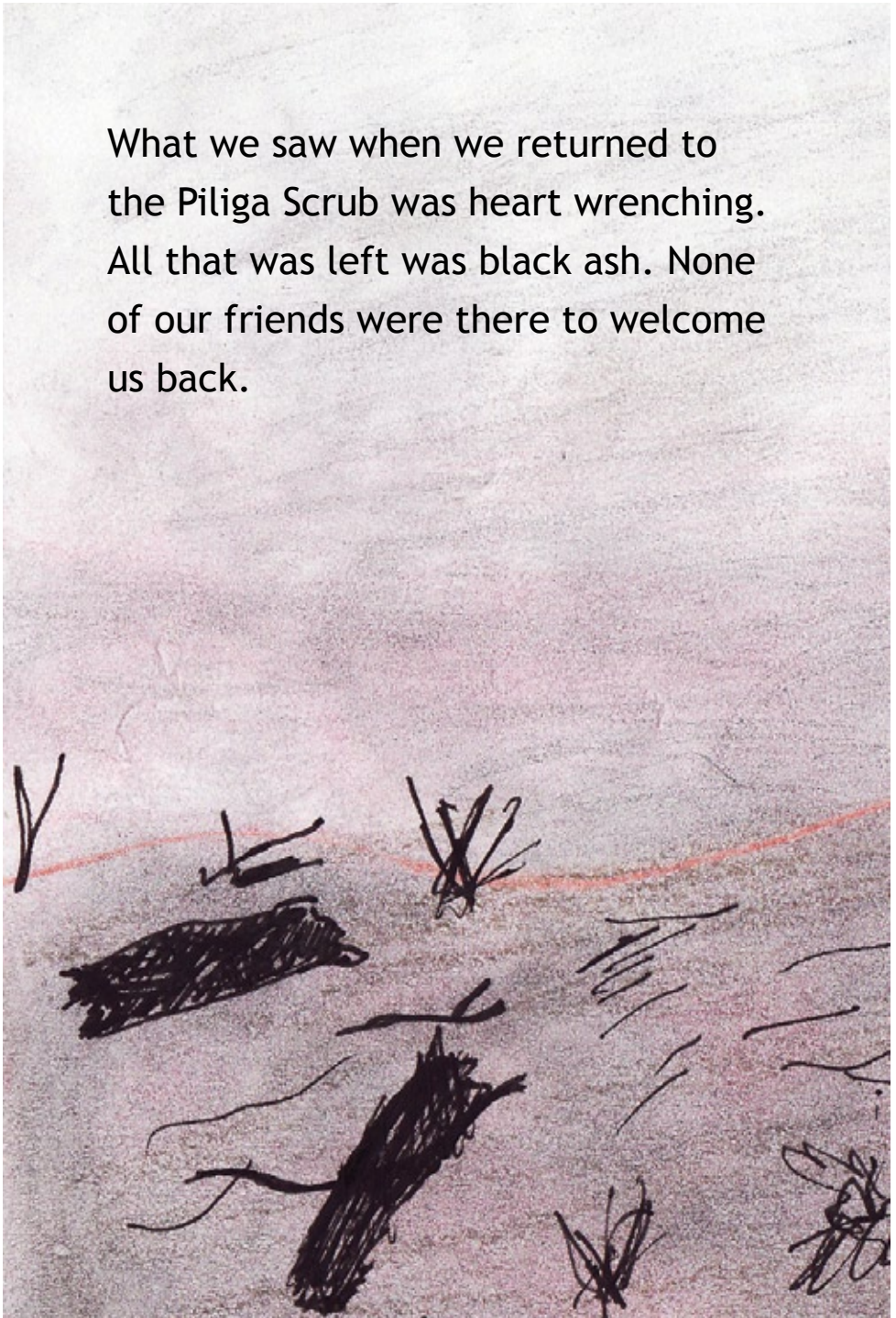




Wearily I woke, realising the horrid events of the night before. Most of it was a blur but other moments were extremely vivid.

I replayed the events in my mind until I started to cry. As I wept, I thought of what Gunny and I should do next.

What we saw when we returned to the Piliga Scrub was heart wrenching. All that was left was black ash. None of our friends were there to welcome us back.





A spark of hope ignited. I am Kool the ruler of the Piliga Scrub and I will work to get my land and my home back.

Gunny wasn't the slightest bit hesitant to suggest we start with finding casuarina tree seeds to plant and rebuild our food source. Even the humans came to help us rebuild our land.





As we watched the scrub start to revive we couldn't help feel that Al was looking down with his cheeky grin.

We decided to call our new ecosystem "Al's Place".





Jenna Sunderland
Narrabri Public School, Grade 6 2011

