



# Buddy and Cocky Save Pippy the Pygmy Perch

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Enviro-Stories is an environmental education program that has been developed by PeeKdesigns.



**[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

This program provides an education and learning experience for kids through their active engagement with natural resource and catchment management issues. The final product is a published story written about local issues, by local kids, for local kids and future generations.

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## “Biodiversity of the Murray Catchment” Enviro-Stories Education Program

In 2012, the Creative Catchment Kids program delivered the “Biodiversity of the Murray Catchment” Enviro-Stories Education Program. The project was initiated by the Murray Darling Association and Burrumbuttock Public School. It was generously funded by the Murray and Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authorities, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and Teys Australia, Wagga. Additional support came from the Wirraminna and Riverina Environmental Education Centres.



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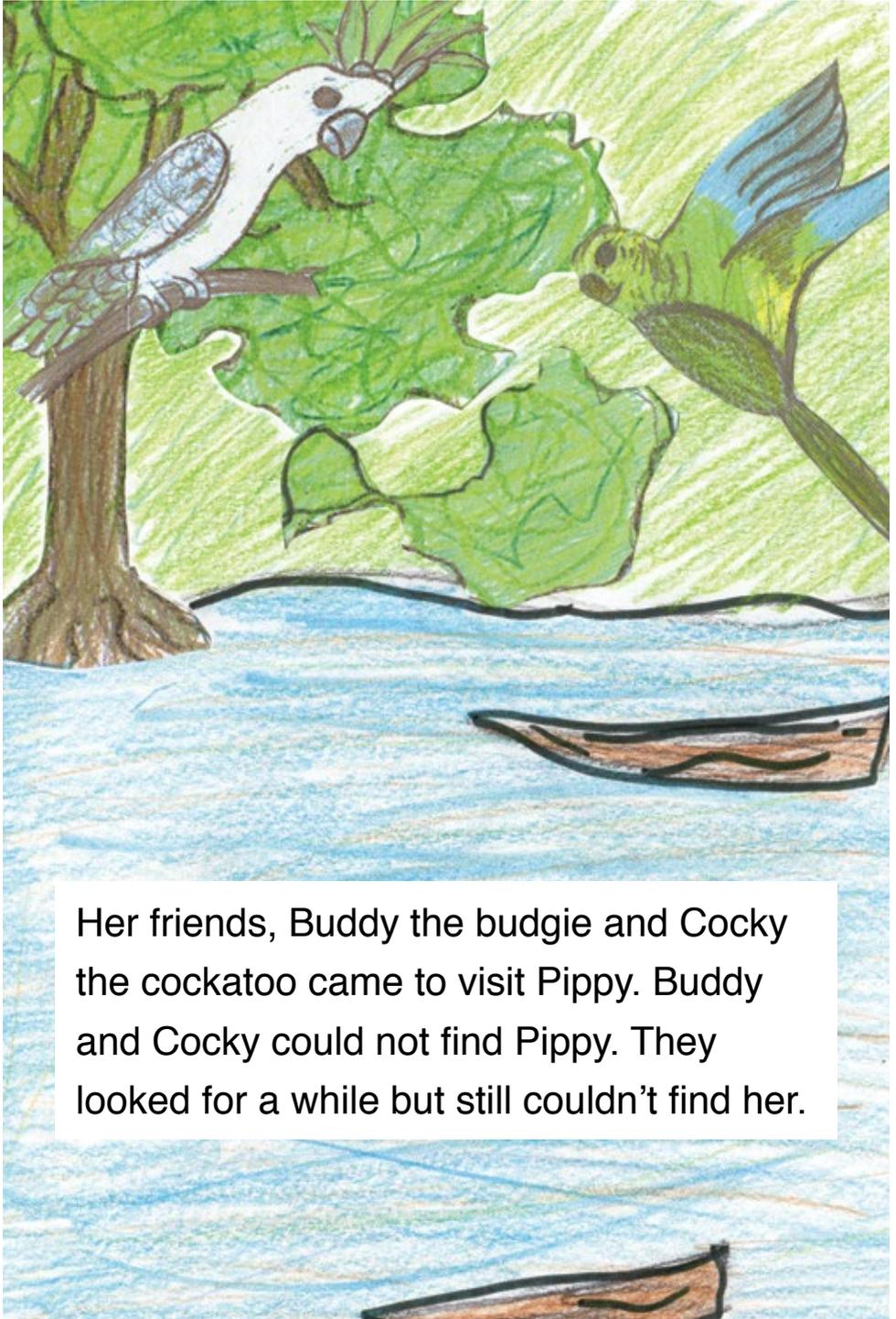
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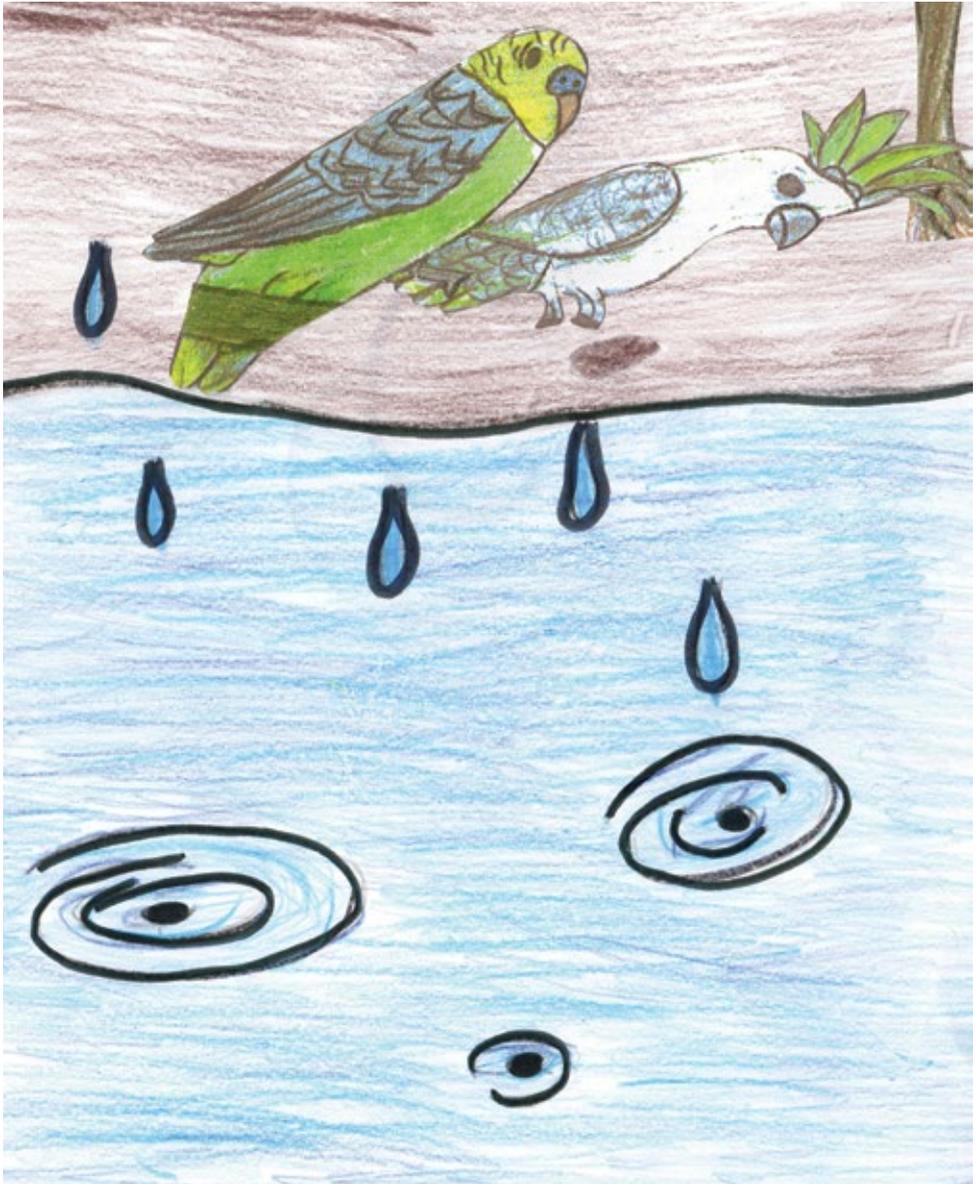
One wet and cloudy day a storm was building across the dark sky. Pippy the Pygmy perch fish could feel something bad coming. So she tried to swim home to safety, but the current took her further away.





Her friends, Buddy the budgie and Cocky the cockatoo came to visit Pippy. Buddy and Cocky could not find Pippy. They looked for a while but still couldn't find her.

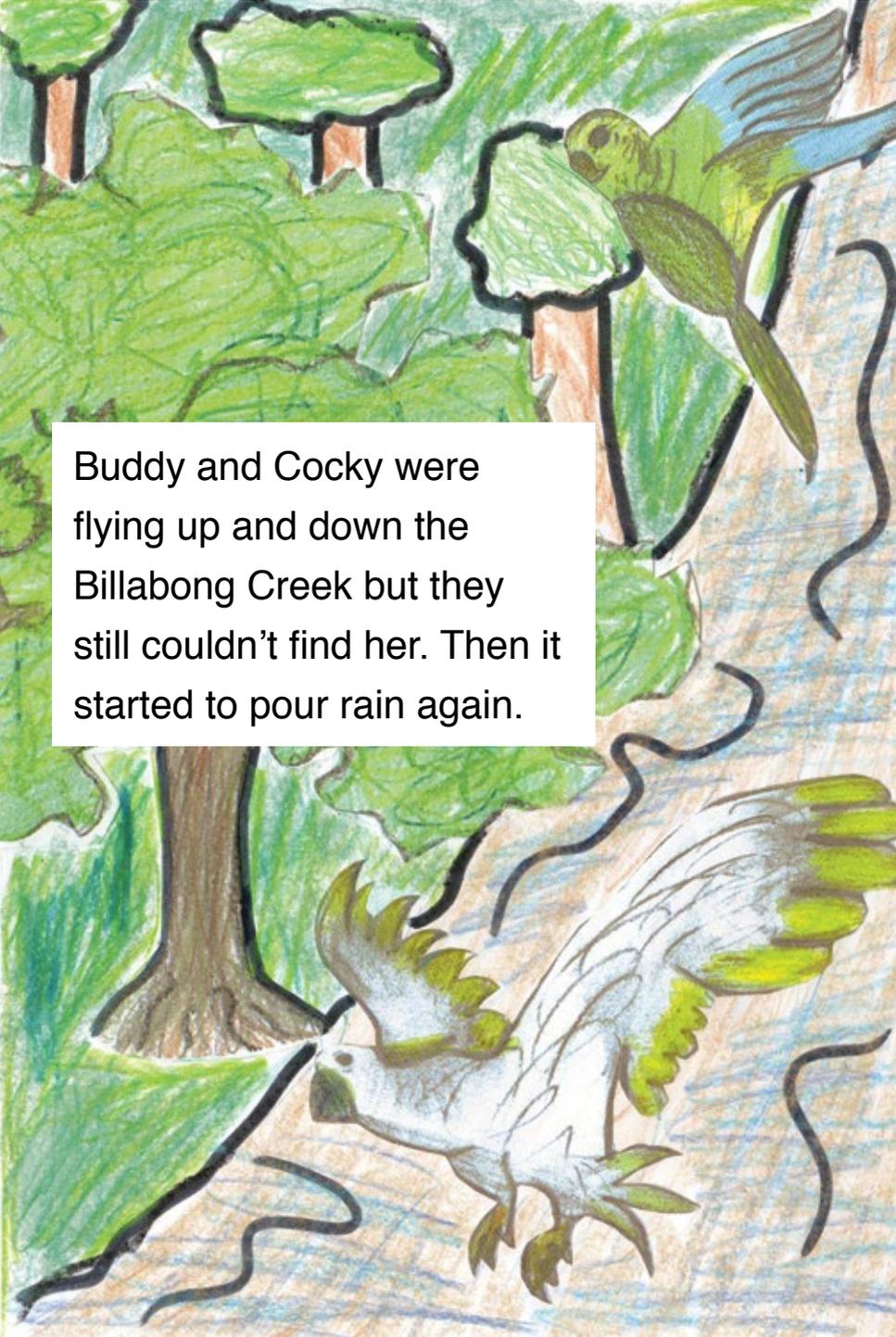
Buddy and Cocky heard the water splash.  
They thought it was Pippy, but it was a rain  
drop. All of a sudden it started to pour down  
rain.



Buddy and Cocky were getting wet so they decided to go back to their nest in the tree. The rain did not stop.

After a while the rain started to get lighter and lighter. Then Buddy and Cocky went to look for Pippy again.





Buddy and Cocky were flying up and down the Billabong Creek but they still couldn't find her. Then it started to pour rain again.

The two birds, Buddy and Cocky, went up into their tree and looked down at the Billabong Creek once more. They noticed that the creek was rising.

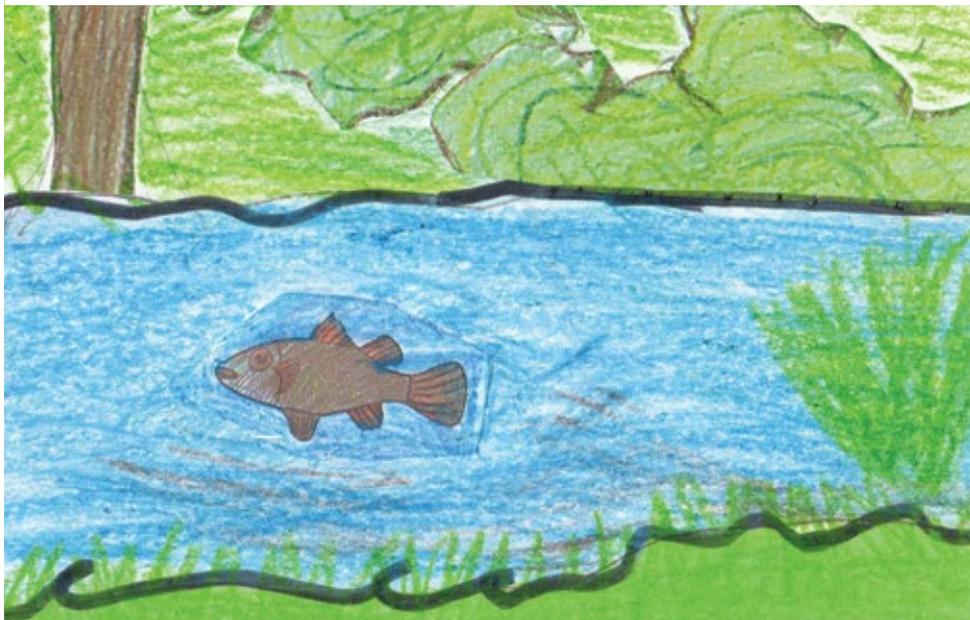
Buddy said to Cocky, “Was the water that high before?”

And Cocky said “No, I don’t think so.”





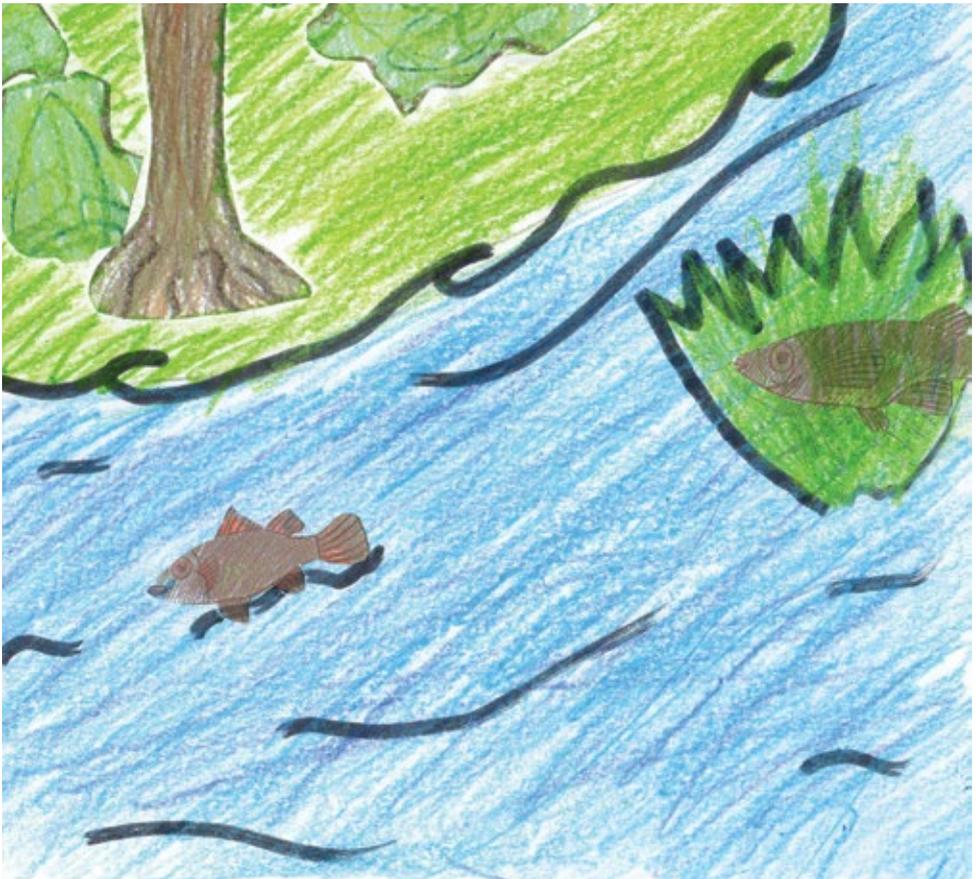
The water rose higher and higher. It was higher than it had ever been before. The Pygmy perch was swimming fast when she saw a glimpse of Garry the Gambusia. Garry was a nasty fish. Pippy was frightened of him. Pippy knew that Gambusia could take over the creek and eat the food of native fish.

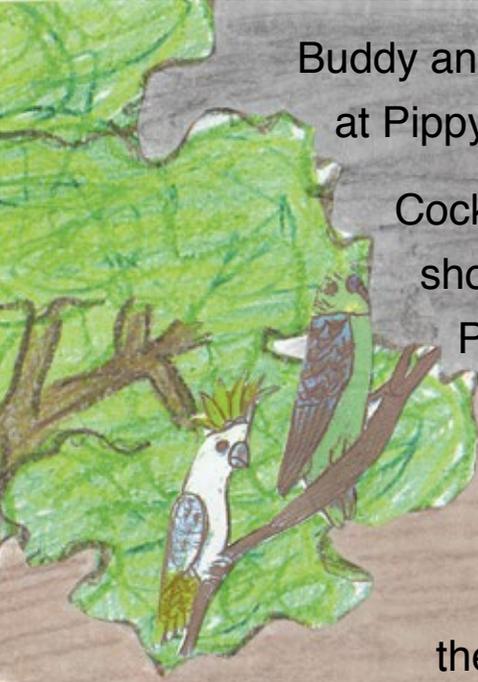


When Pippy saw Garry the Gambusia she started swimming very, very fast. Suddenly the current started to take her downstream.



Pippy saw a reed where other fish were hiding and noticed that it was the home of the gambusia. So she swam really, really fast to escape. Suddenly she saw a hole in the creek. Pippy swam into the hole as fast as she could.



An illustration of two cockatoos perched on a brown tree branch. The cockatoo in the foreground is white with a prominent yellow crest and blue wings. The second cockatoo is green and blue. The background shows green foliage and a grey sky.

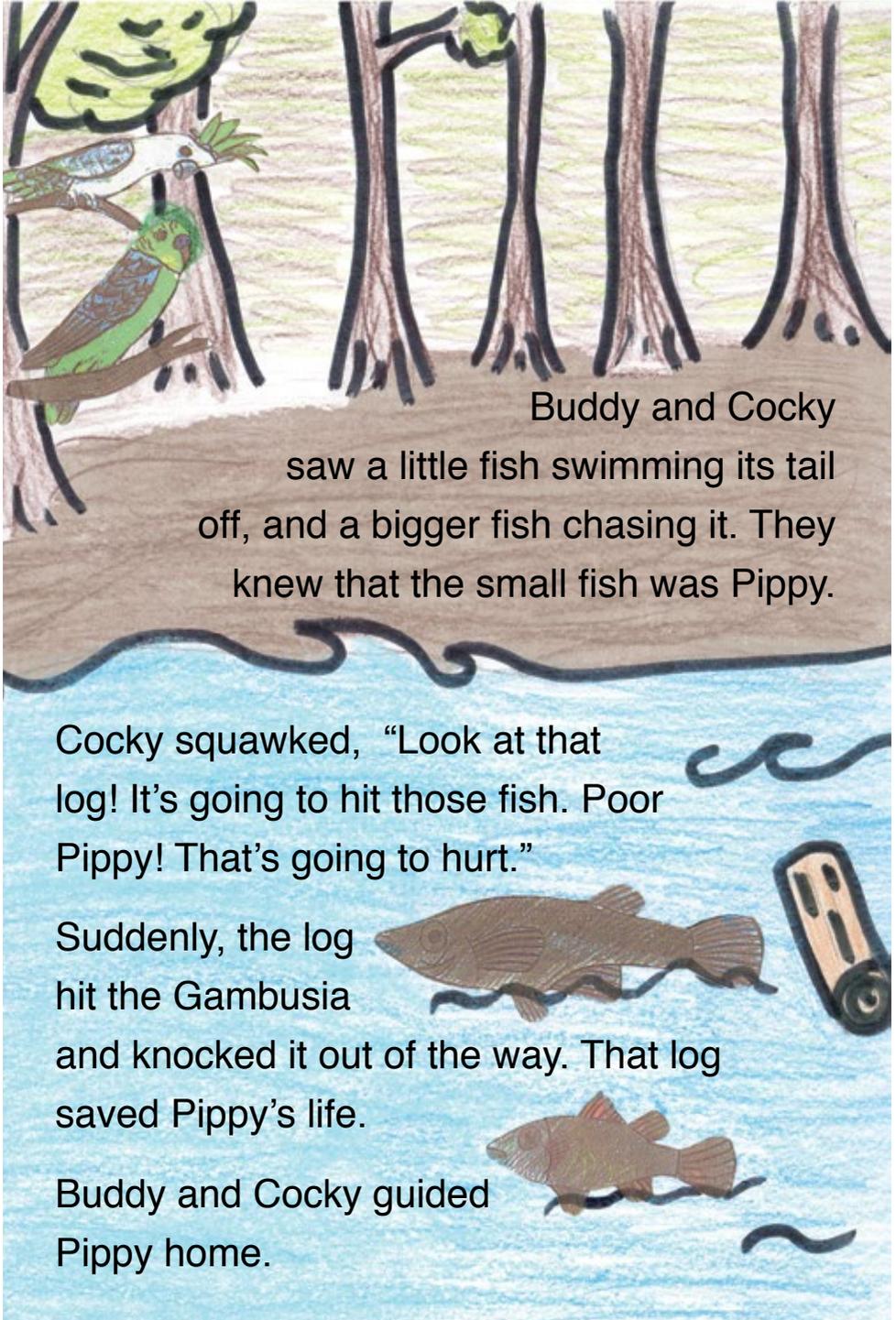
Buddy and Cocky were waiting  
at Pippy's old home.

Cocky said to Buddy, "We  
should go to look for  
Pippy."

And Buddy said, "OK  
let's go."

So they went along  
the Billabong Creek to  
try to find Pippy.

An illustration of a creek. The water is blue with black wavy lines representing ripples. A green bush with dark green leaves is in the center of the creek. The background is a light brownish-grey color.

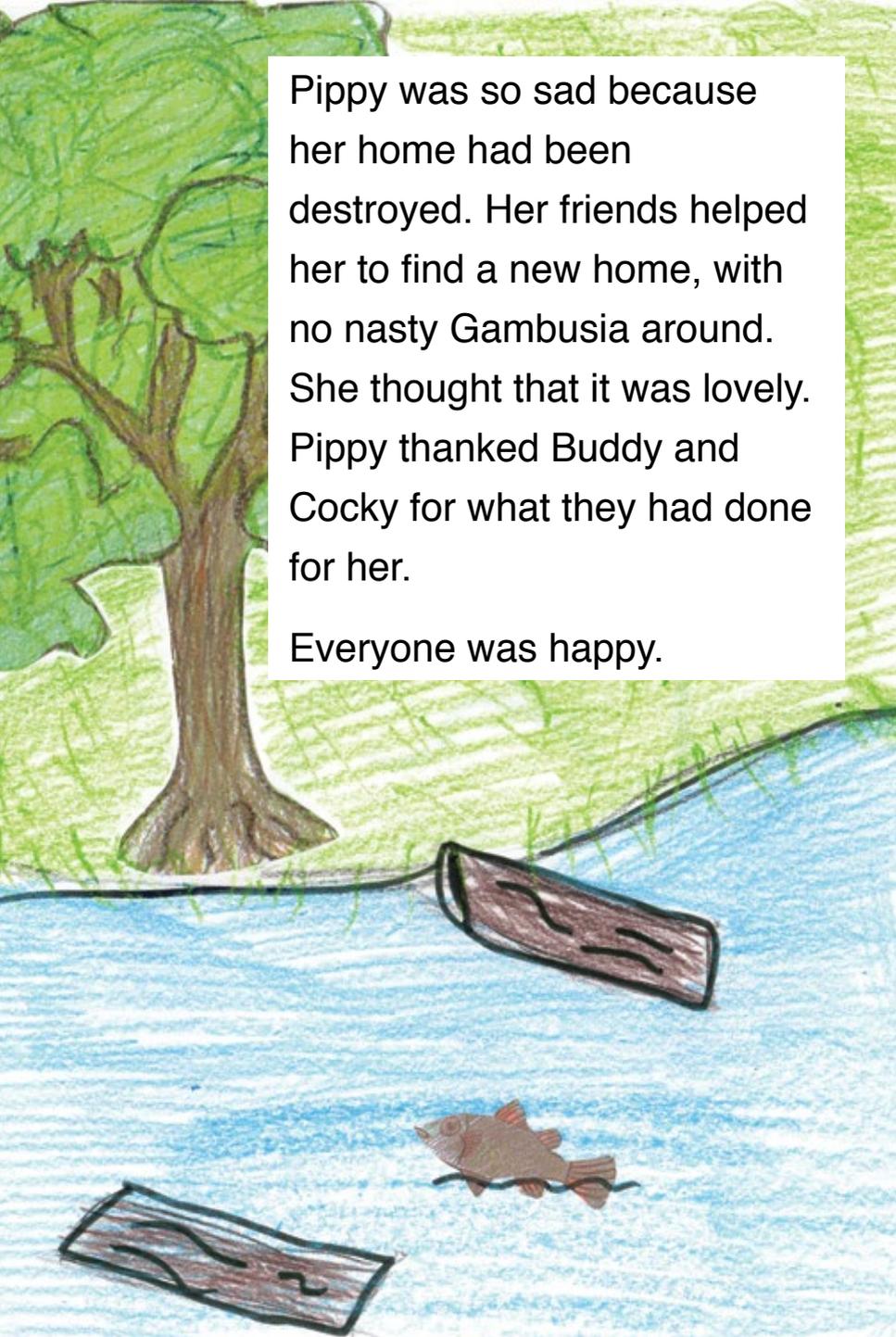


Buddy and Cocky saw a little fish swimming its tail off, and a bigger fish chasing it. They knew that the small fish was Pippy.

Cocky squawked, “Look at that log! It’s going to hit those fish. Poor Pippy! That’s going to hurt.”

Suddenly, the log hit the Gambusia and knocked it out of the way. That log saved Pippy’s life.

Buddy and Cocky guided Pippy home.



Pippy was so sad because her home had been destroyed. Her friends helped her to find a new home, with no nasty Gambusia around. She thought that it was lovely. Pippy thanked Buddy and Cocky for what they had done for her.

Everyone was happy.

# WILD FACTS

## Budgies

- Budgies live up to 12-15 years
- They breed all year round.
- They can be blue, yellow, white, green, grey and violet.
- They poo every 12-15 minutes.
- They see in colour.
- They have between 4-6 average eggs every round.
- When tamed, they can be smart.
- The babies stay in the breeding box for about 6 weeks.

## Cockatoos

- They are white
- They can be pink and black.
- They eat sunflower seeds.
- They can have red, yellow, white crests.
- They can live up to 100 years.
- They live in NSW, QLD, TAS, NT and a little bit in WA.
- They have been introduced to Perth.
- They are 44-55 cm in length.

## Pygmy Perch

- They live in slow flowing or still water.
- They are 65-85 mm long.
- They live in the Billabong Creek.
- They produce 100-4200 eggs.
- The eggs hatch between 2-4 days.
- They are carnivorous, which means they eat meat.
- ***This species is threatened.***
- Gambusia are their main threat.



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