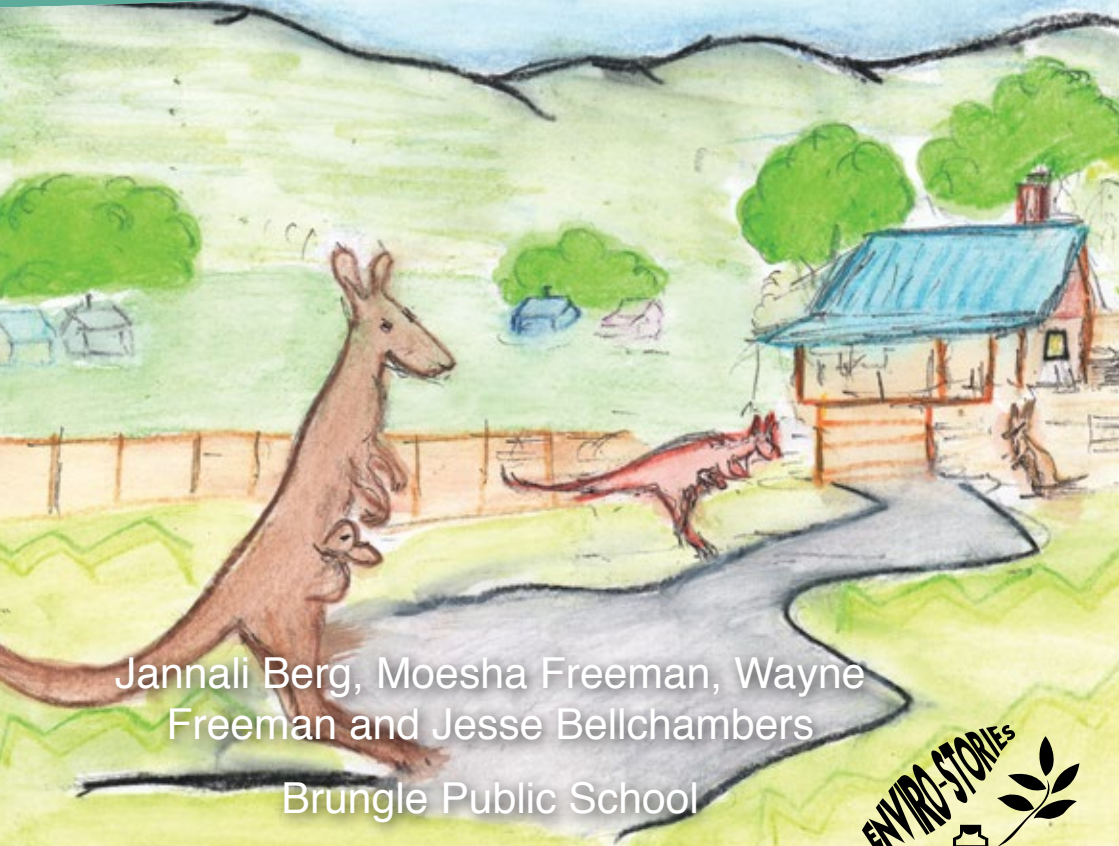


Moving In



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Brungle Public School





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



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.

Moving In

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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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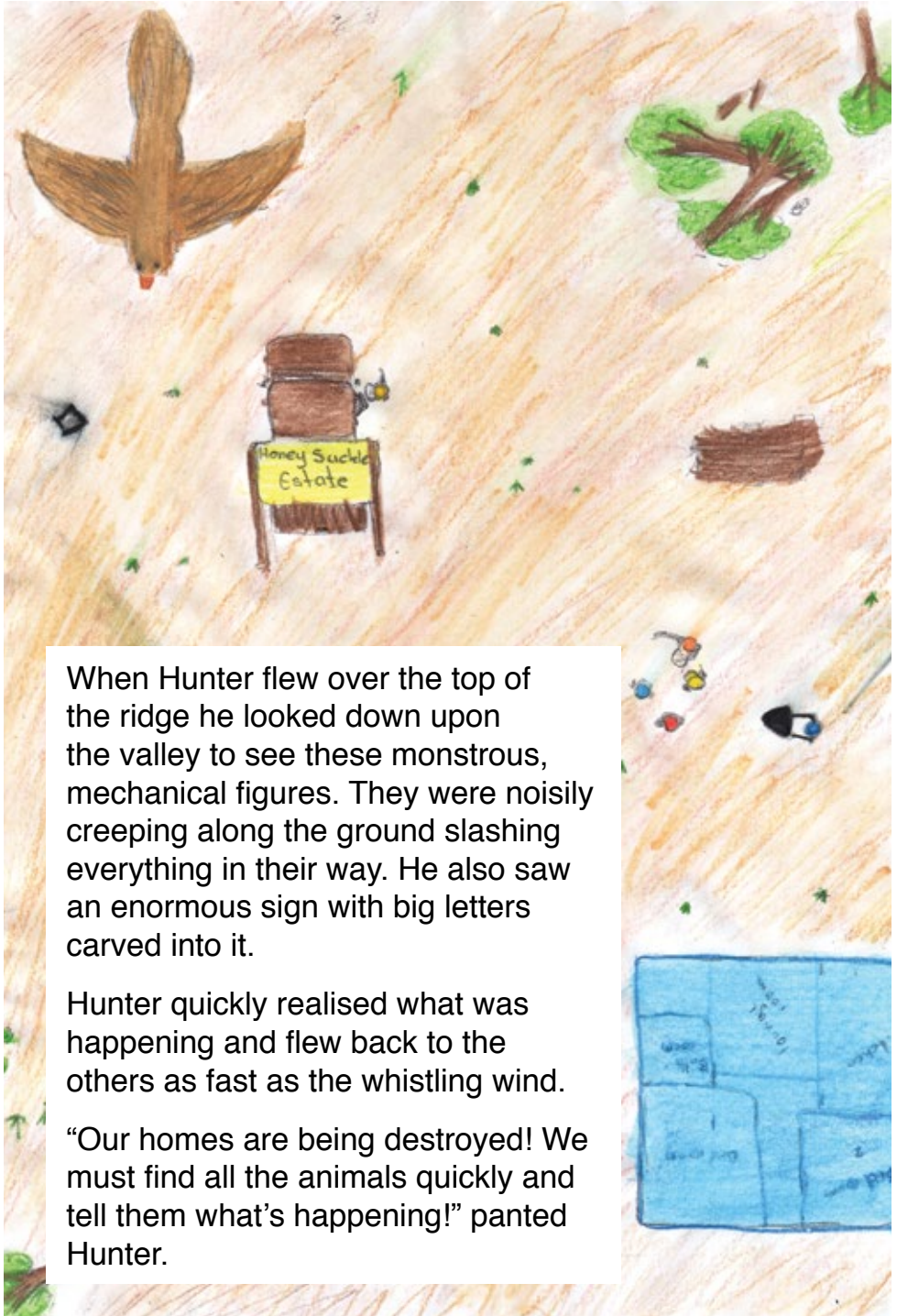
Honeysuckle Creek was quieter than usual except for the sounds of Hunter the Tawny Frogmouth, Cobber the Kangaroo and Bill the Platypus talking.

Suddenly a sound louder than thunder echoed through the bush. Hunter was so frightened he fell backwards out of the gum tree.

“What was that?” stammered Cobber.

“Err, I don’t know but I reckon someone should check it out,” suggested Bill.

Hunter flew off with a flappity flop flap to investigate.



When Hunter flew over the top of the ridge he looked down upon the valley to see these monstrous, mechanical figures. They were noisily creeping along the ground slashing everything in their way. He also saw an enormous sign with big letters carved into it.

Hunter quickly realised what was happening and flew back to the others as fast as the whistling wind.

“Our homes are being destroyed! We must find all the animals quickly and tell them what’s happening!” panted Hunter.



After a couple of weeks, the houses at Honeysuckle Estate were built. The animals were upset because now they had nowhere to live. They organised a meeting to work out what they were going to do.

“They cut down my home and my babies are scared!” cried Cirrus the Squirrel Glider.

“I was hunting for termites and I barely got away. I almost got flattened by those giant yellow machines!” wailed Spike the Echidna.

A great hubbub broke out. Everyone was shouting and yelling all at once, trying to get their story heard.

“QUIET!!” croaked Gulla the Booroolong Frog, “Hunter has an idea!”

“Why don’t we move back to our homes with the people. They have invaded our space and we need our homes back,” suggested Hunter.

Everyone agreed this was a great idea and they left the meeting to prepare to move.

Gulla the Booroolong Frog led all the other frogs to some nice houses with beautiful fishponds and fancy birdbaths out the front. The frogs thought it was just like paradise.

Quickly, they hopped off to find a place to settle down and call their own.





All the echidnas set off in a long train following Eddy and Spike, marching towards the tallest house in the estate.

Suddenly, one of the little puggles called out, “Hey look! It’s Uncle Johnny up there!”

“Hello, can we come up and stay for a while?” asked Eddy.

There was silence, the echidna on the verandah did not answer.

Spike whispered in a low voice, “Perhaps he’s a bit shy?”

“Well, we’ll just come up and join you and make ourselves at home then,” said Eddy.

And they waddled up to the “boot scraper” echidna.

Thud! Thud! Thud! The kangaroos bounded along the road to the nearest house carrying the platypuses in their pouches.

“That house looks all right,” shouted Bill excitedly.

“My whole family could fit in that pond!” cried another platypus.

“And look at the food!” yelled Cobber as they turned into the backyard. “All righty, make yourselves at home!” he laughed.

They all quickly settled into their new homes, happy and satisfied.



Cirrus the Squirrel Glider led the other possums, scampering past houses looking for the best one. Suddenly, right in front of them was a massive house with a gigantic roof.

“This one is perfect!” exclaimed Cirrus. “Look at the roof! It’s big enough for all of us!”

“Righty, let’s go! What are we waiting for?” shouted the smallest baby Brush-tailed possum.

And with that, the possums scurried along the fence, jumped onto a beam, and clambered up onto the roof.

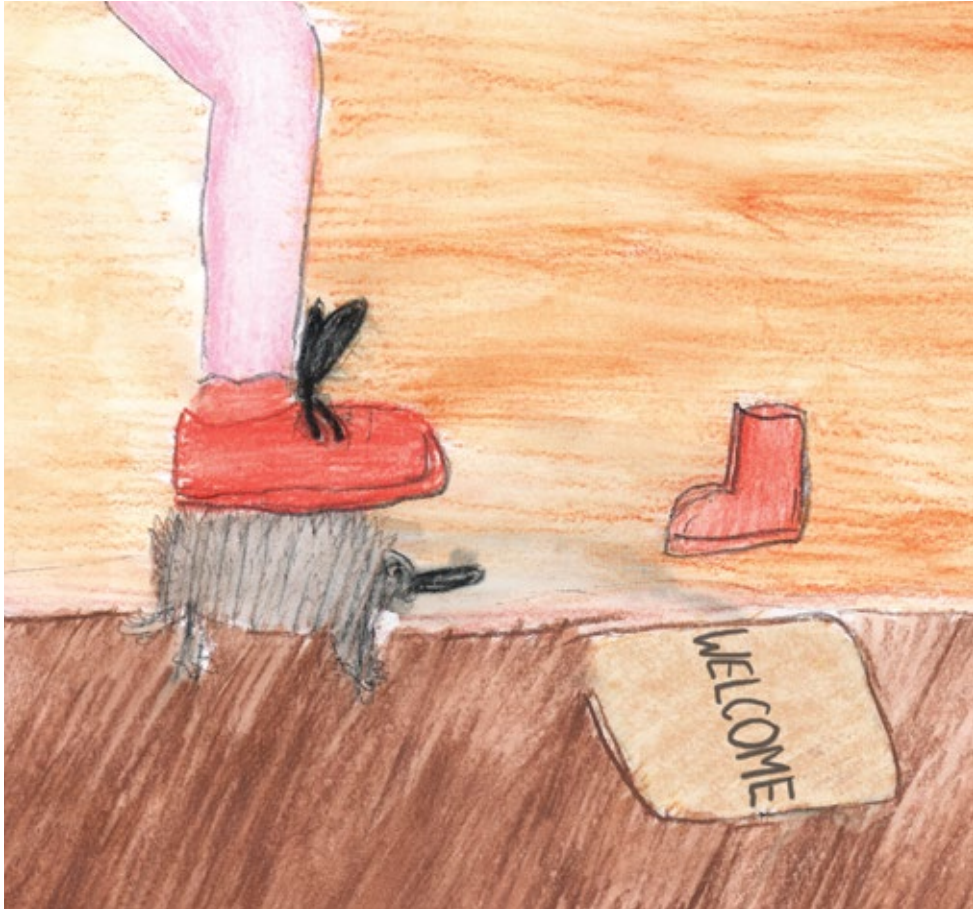




Meanwhile, Hunter, the Tawny Frogmouth, led a gigantic flock of birds towards a cosy looking house.

“Gee, that looks like a good place for a nest!” tweeted a Jenny Wren.

Giggles the Kookaburra let out a mighty laugh as he dived towards an open window. The Magpies, Honeyeaters, Cockatoos and Willy Wagtails all followed and joyously took shelter in cupboards, TV cabinets and drawers.



“Come on Mitch!” laughed Seth as they ran from the bus stop up to their house.

“Don’t forget to wipe your feet before you come inside,” Mum reminded them from the kitchen window.

Mitch put his foot out and scraped his boot along the echidna boot scraper.

Seth went to do the same, except he wasn’t as lucky!

“Yeooowww!!” he screamed in pain. “That’s a real echidna! And it hurts!”



Next door, two little girls were having a tea party.

Hayley called to Prue, “Don’t forget the teapot Prue. We can’t have a tea party without tea.”

Prue ran out of her room. “This teapot’s heavier than usual,” she thought.

As they sat down Prue poured Hayley a small cup of tea, but what a surprise they got. Instead of water, out came slimy, frothy clumps of tiny black and white balls. They opened the lid, and to their surprise they found a big green frog.

“I’m not drinking that!” wailed Hayley.



Later that day Mitch and Seth tried to tell their Mum about the echidna on the doormat.

“Stop exaggerating,” she said. “You probably just stood on a sharp rock.”

Mum opened the pantry door and SWISH! Out swirled two magpies, quickly followed by a Kookaburra and some Jenny Wrens.

“AAAHHHH! What are they doing there?!” she screamed.

“See! That’s what we’re trying to tell you. The animals are taking over our homes!”



All over Honeysuckle Estate strange things kept happening as the animals continued to find new homes. The news travelled like wildfire all around the estate.

“Hey Jenny, guess what happened at our house yesterday? All these echidnas moved onto our verandah and a heap of birds invaded our house!” complained Emma.

“My daughter found frogs in her teapot while she was having a tea party with Hayley,” replied Jenny.

Then Emma said, “I hear there’s going to be a meeting tonight at Honeysuckle Hall to deal with these animals. I’m going, are you?”



Honeysuckle Hall was filled to bursting point with people complaining about the animal problem in their homes.

“It’s not their fault, it’s ours,” said Shane, the National Parks Ranger. “We invaded their space and now they’re invading ours. If we want to live here we have to change the way we do things. We need to give them homes, and that’s exactly what we’re going to do.”

The residents of Honeysuckle Estate listened carefully to Shane’s ideas and the very next day they started working.



“That bird box needs to be a bit higher. A possum box might be better here.”



“The creek’s so much cleaner now that we’ve cleared away all the rubbish. And look, I can see a baby platypus swimming in it!”



“This is fun and the frogs will be happy in their new home.”



“These logs will attract lots of termites for the echidnas to eat.”



The animals at Honeysuckle Creek liked their new homes and were happy once again.

The people in Honeysuckle Estate were also happy because they didn't have any more animals living in their houses.

"It was fun for a while living with the people but I'm happier where I belong in the wild," croaked Gulla the Booroolong frog.

Did You Know?

Many Australian animals are mammals - they feed their babies milk. There are three types of mammals: placental mammals, marsupials and monotremes.

Platypuses and echidnas are monotremes. They are the only mammals that lay eggs. Baby platypuses and echidnas are called puggles.

Kangaroos are marsupial mammals. They give birth to live young that are not fully formed and the babies stay in the mother's pouch. Baby kangaroos are called joeys. Kangaroo's tails are almost pure muscle.

The Booroolong frog is a medium sized tree frog. Males grow to 35 mm and females to 50 mm. They are grey, olive or reddish brown with black markings and a white belly. They are found in eastern NSW and north-eastern Victoria and are endangered.

Many native Australian animals are threatened or endangered due to habitat destruction. This is because human activities (farming, towns, recreation) is disturbing the bush that is their homes.



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