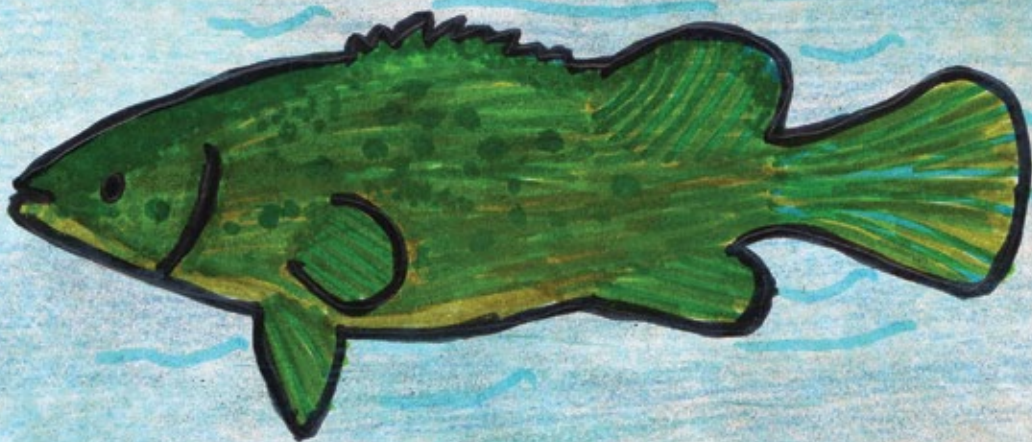


# Connor the Murray Cod



Henry Arthur  
Boomi 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](http://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 2013, the “Save Our Species” Enviro-Stories Education Program provided local kids with the opportunity to write and illustrate stories about threatened species. This program was sponsored by the Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Cotton Australia and the Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority.

## **Cotton Research & Development Corporation**

Cotton Research & Development Corporation (CRDC) is a partnership between the Australian Government and the Australian cotton industry.

CRDC invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and extension projects that seek to enhance the environmental, social and economic values associated with cotton production systems for the benefit of cotton industry participants, regional communities and the Australian people.

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

## **Cotton Australia**

Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia’s cotton growing industry, supporting over 1500 cotton farming families in NSW and Queensland.

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

## **Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority**

The Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA is helping people in our communities look after the land for future generations. The catchment is located in northern NSW, just west of the Great Dividing Range. The Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA will become Local Land Services in January 2014.

**[www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au)**

# Connor the Murray Cod

Author: Henry Arthur

Teacher: Mick Collins

School: Boomi Public School

This “Save Our Species” Enviro-Stories Education Program sponsored by the Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Cotton Australia and Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority consists of the following books:

- Connor the Murray Cod
- Brave Bronte Brolga
- Kipper the Koala finds his home
- Sophie the Bandicoot
- Vanishing Birds
- Bonnie and Basil’s Baby Chicks
- The Journey to Safety

ISBN: 978-0-9923758-2-9

The Enviro-Stories Education Program is a PeekKdesigns initiative.

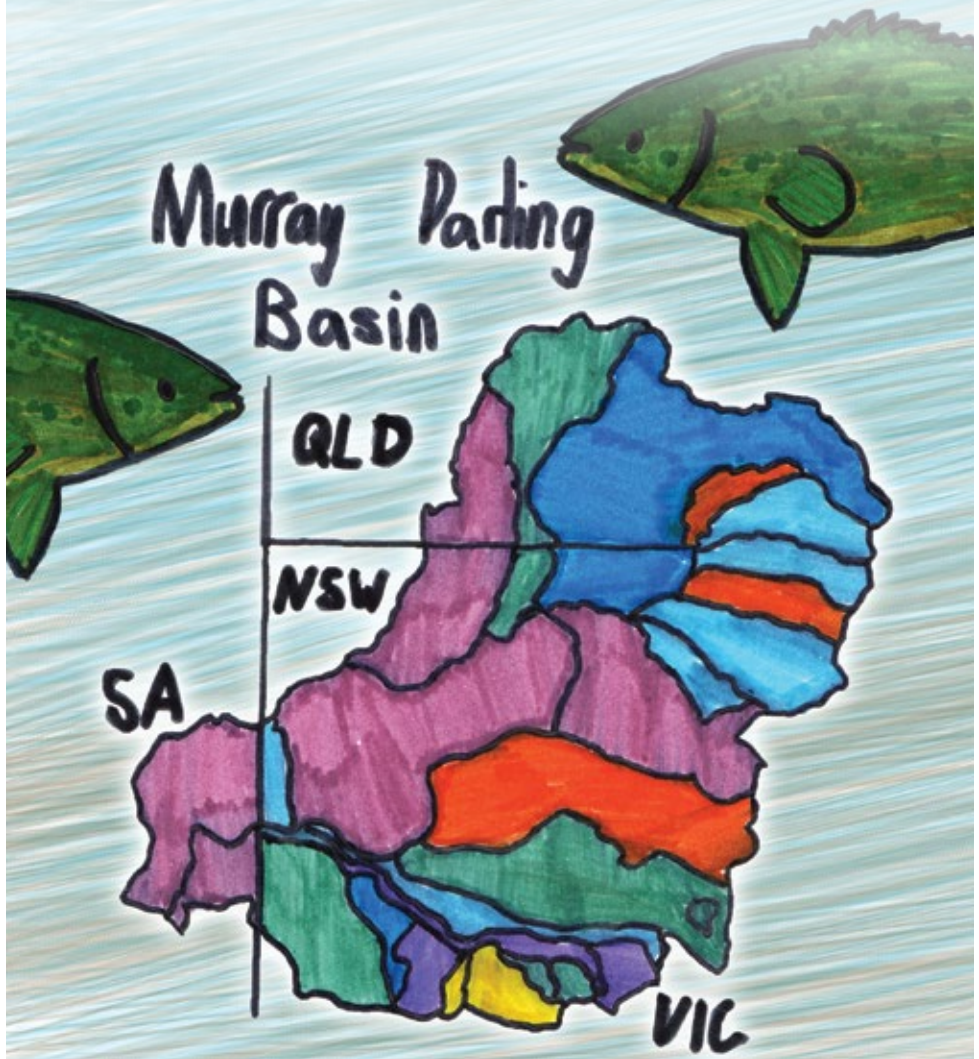
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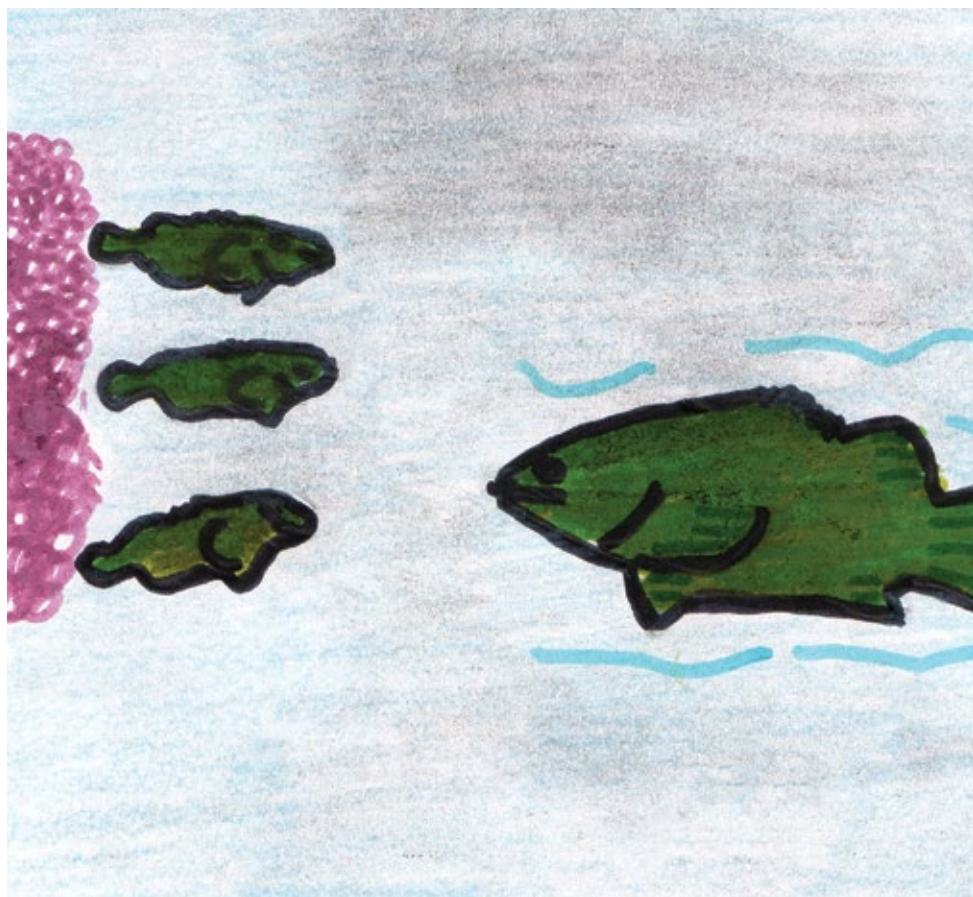
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My name is Connor and I am a Murray Cod. I am a threatened species. I live in the Murray-Darling Basin which spreads through Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

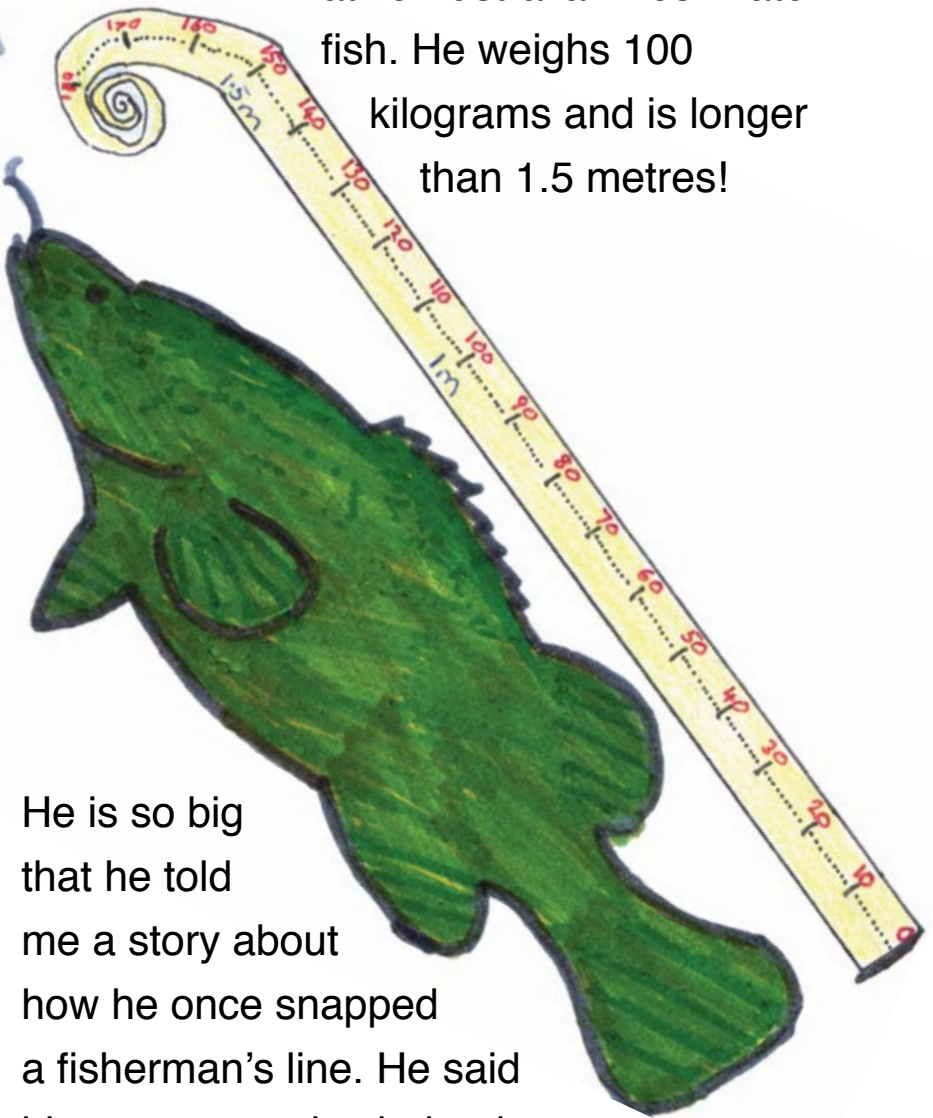






I started my life hatching from one of my mother's eggs. I had lots of siblings and we all wondered if we would grow up to look like our Mum and Dad. We asked Mum why we looked different to her. She told us that we would grow to have a creamy white belly, with green patches on our body and heads just like her.

My dad is one of the largest  
native Australian freshwater  
fish. He weighs 100  
kilograms and is longer  
than 1.5 metres!



He is so big  
that he told  
me a story about  
how he once snapped  
a fisherman's line. He said  
his enormous size helped  
him win that battle.



My family and friends live in the Murray-Darling Basin and are vulnerable for many reasons.

Some of these reasons are:

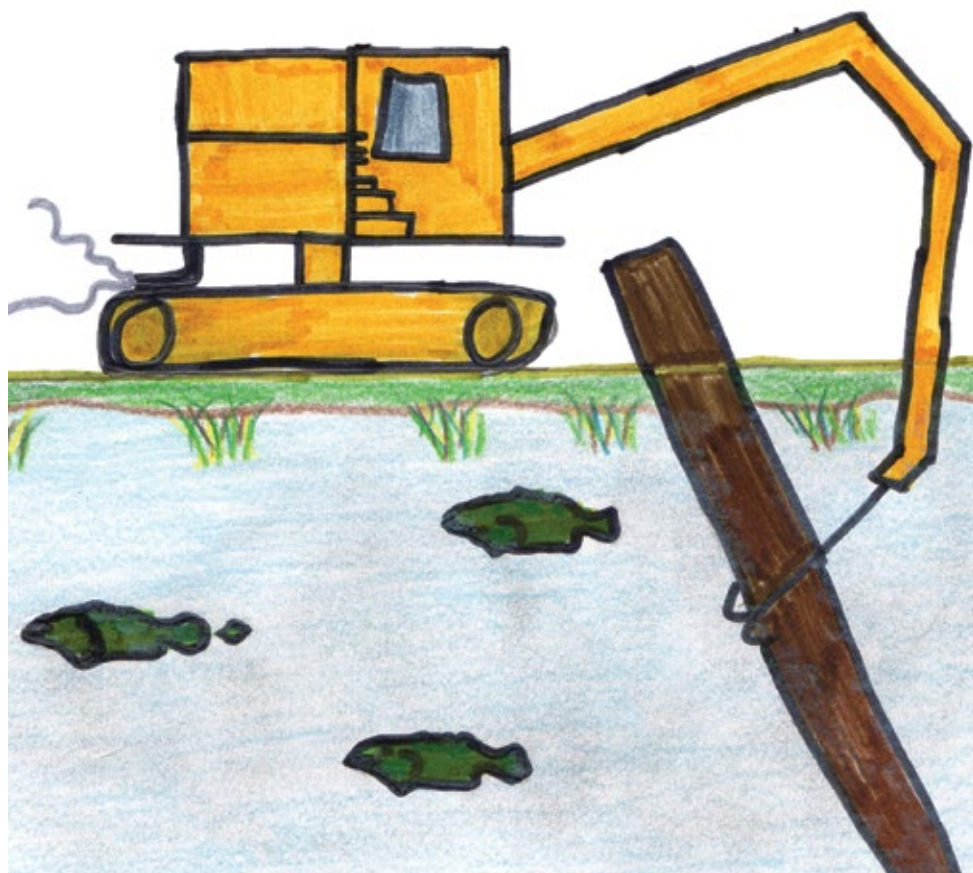
- over fishing,
- removal of dead trees,
- loss of vegetation and
- the building of dams and weirs.

I love my life as a fish but I am very scared of humans. They keep catching my family and friends, taking them away never to be seen again.



The humans use bait on lines to catch us. They take us out of the water where we can't breathe and put us in big boxes. Sometimes they take heaps more of us than they need. This puts lots of pressure on the number of Murray Cod left in the creeks, rivers, lakes and dams.





My family and I hate when people take away dead trees in the water. It means the big females, like my Mum, have no place to lay their eggs.

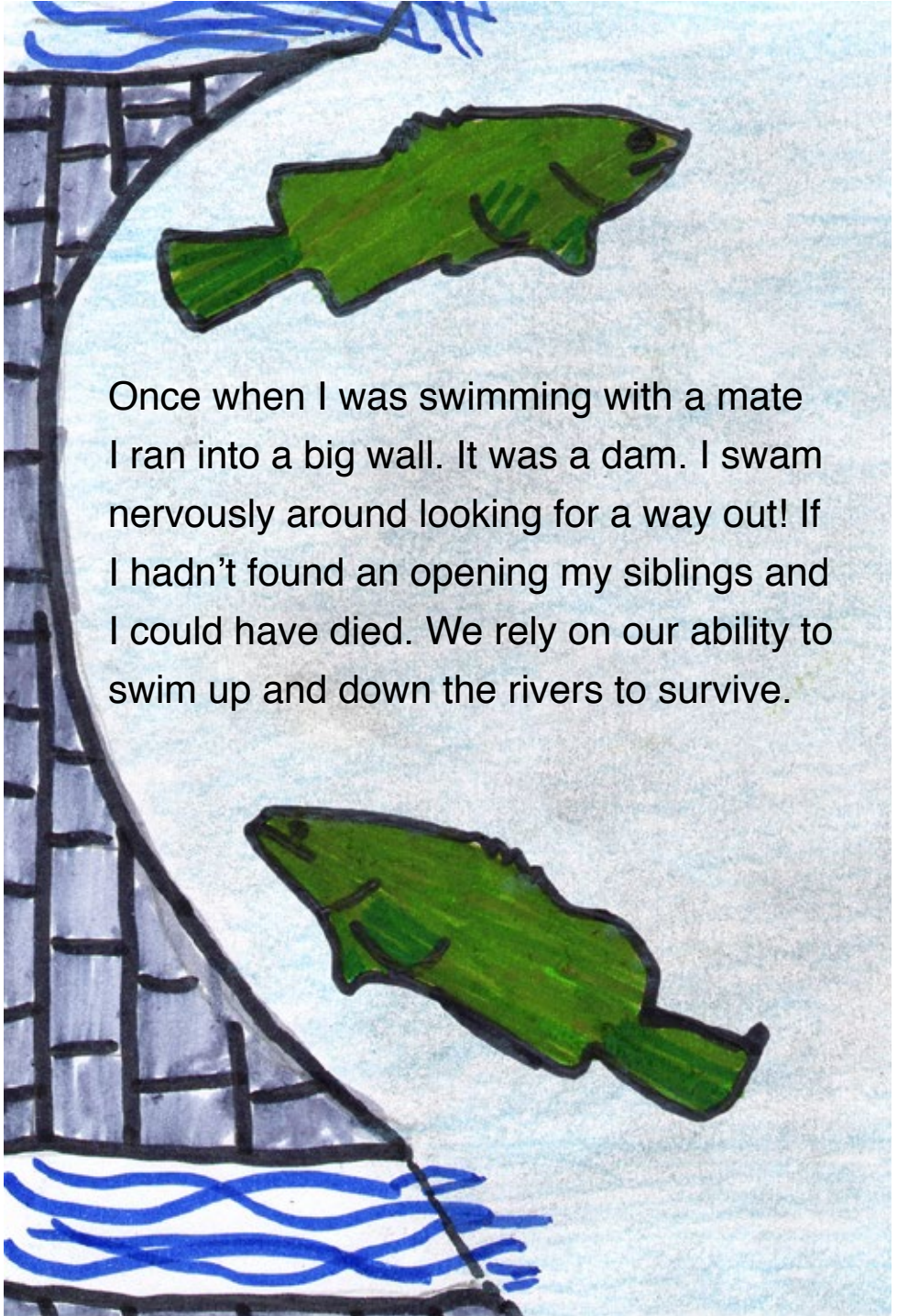
Removing dead trees in the water also means there is no place for me to shelter and hide when something is trying to eat me.

I eat lots of different things like yabbies, crayfish, shrimp, mussels, frogs, tortoises and other small reptiles.

I like to hunt my food around vegetation, especially the grasses on the banks that hang over into the water. The vegetation along the banks of waterways is vanishing. Cattle and people often stomp all over it, kill it or pull it out which leaves no homes for all the creatures in the water that I eat. If there

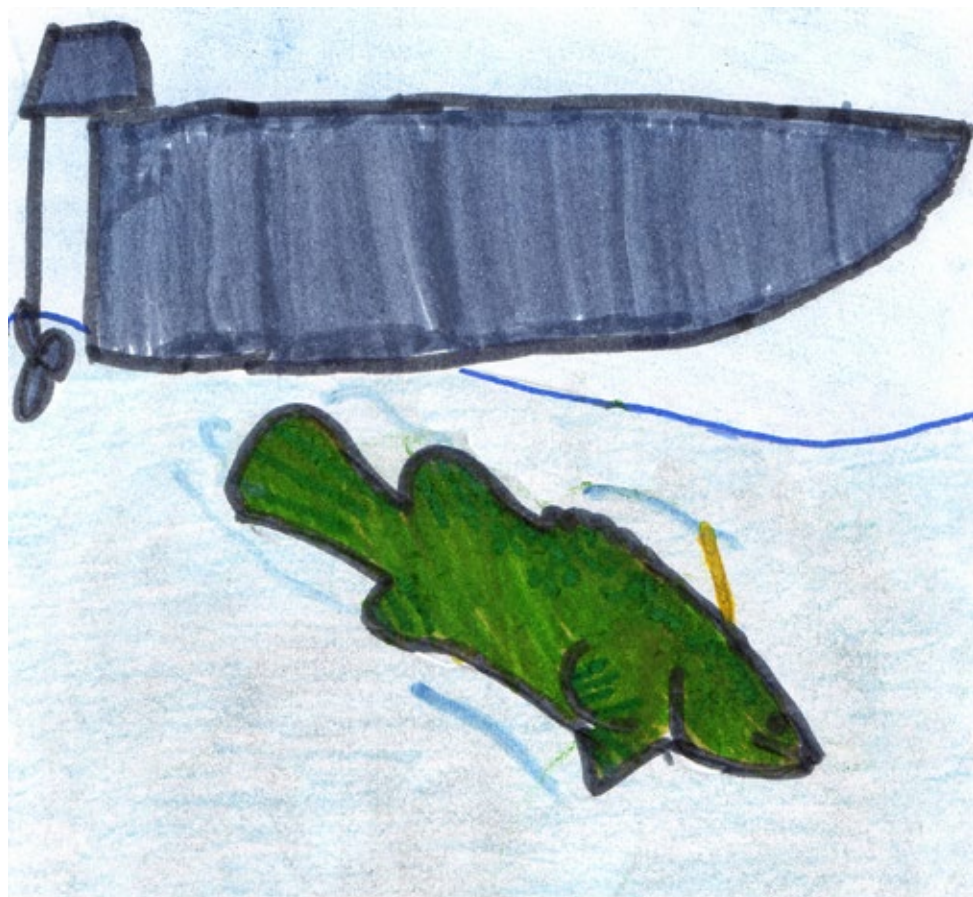
is no vegetation I do not have any food!





Once when I was swimming with a mate  
I ran into a big wall. It was a dam. I swam  
nervously around looking for a way out! If  
I hadn't found an opening my siblings and  
I could have died. We rely on our ability to  
swim up and down the rivers to survive.



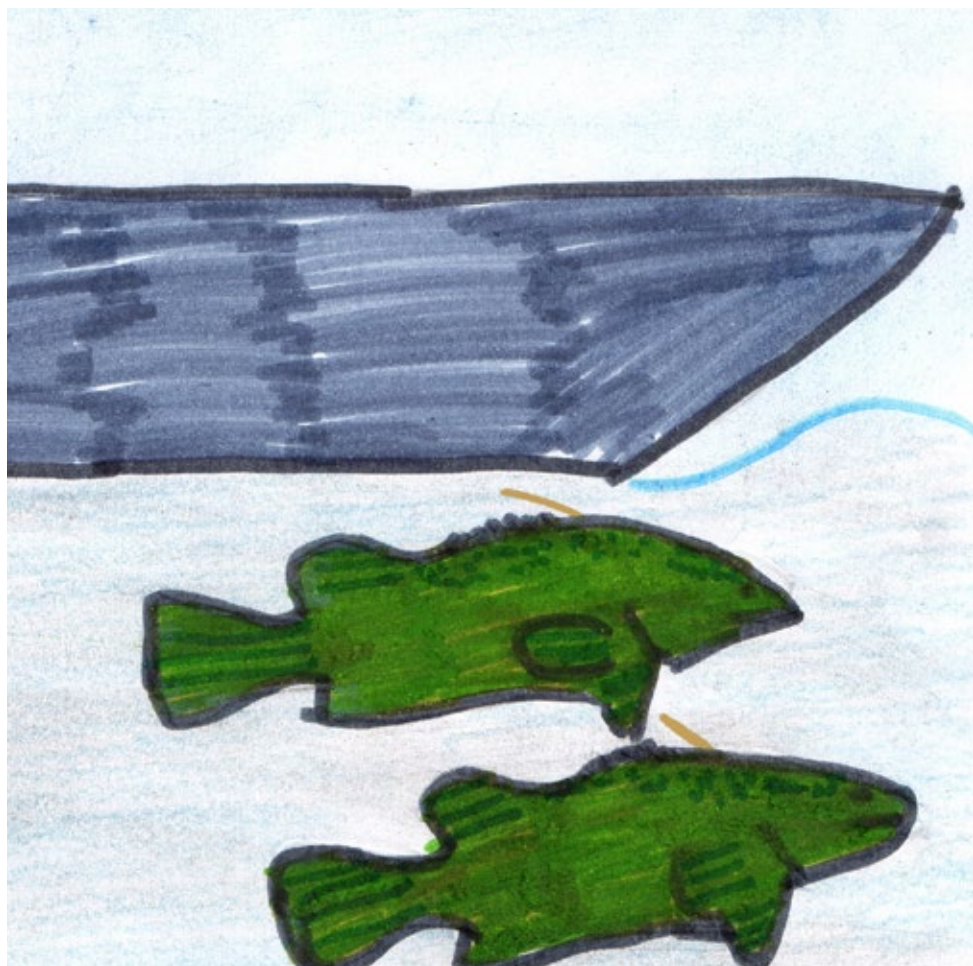


One day when I was playing a game with my friend Sam a big boat appeared on the surface. We were very curious when it stopped. The humans didn't throw a fishing line in but caught us in nets. We thought we were going to be eaten. Luckily all they did was put a funny yellow tag on us and drop us back into the water.



After that day Sam and I were very quiet. We wondered about the yellow tags but were too embarrassed to talk about it to our families.

That afternoon my Mum and Dad went for a swim and disappeared. I was scared I thought I was parentless.



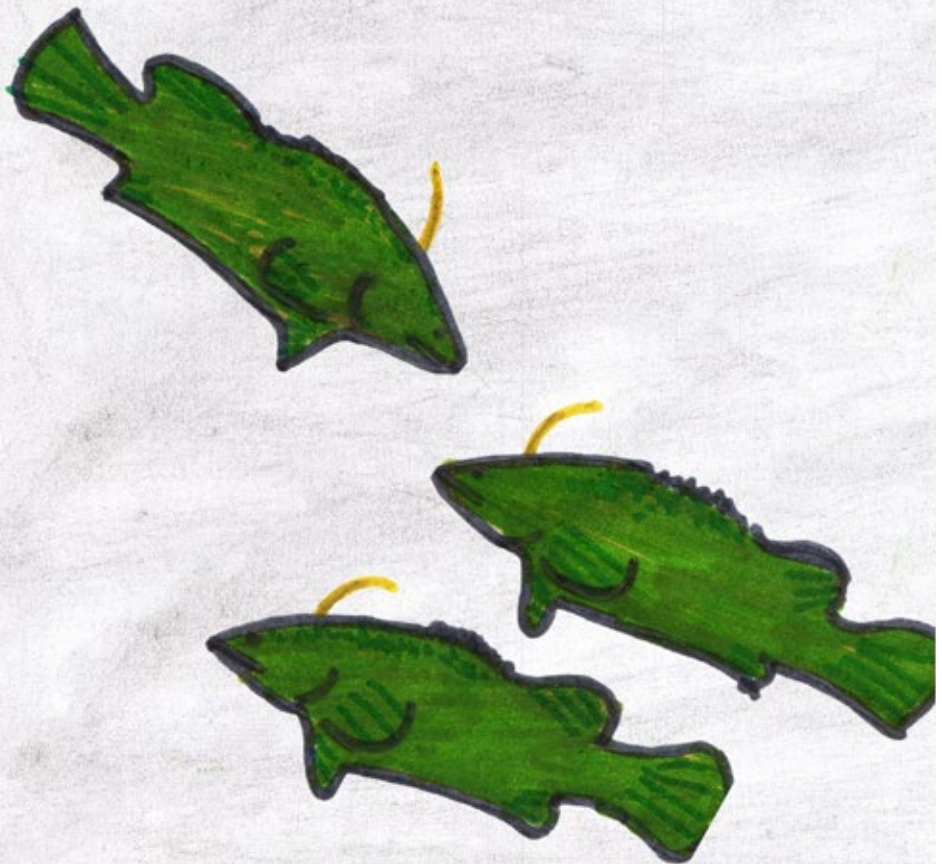


I hid in my home amongst the dead snags.  
As time passed I wondered how I would live  
without my parents.

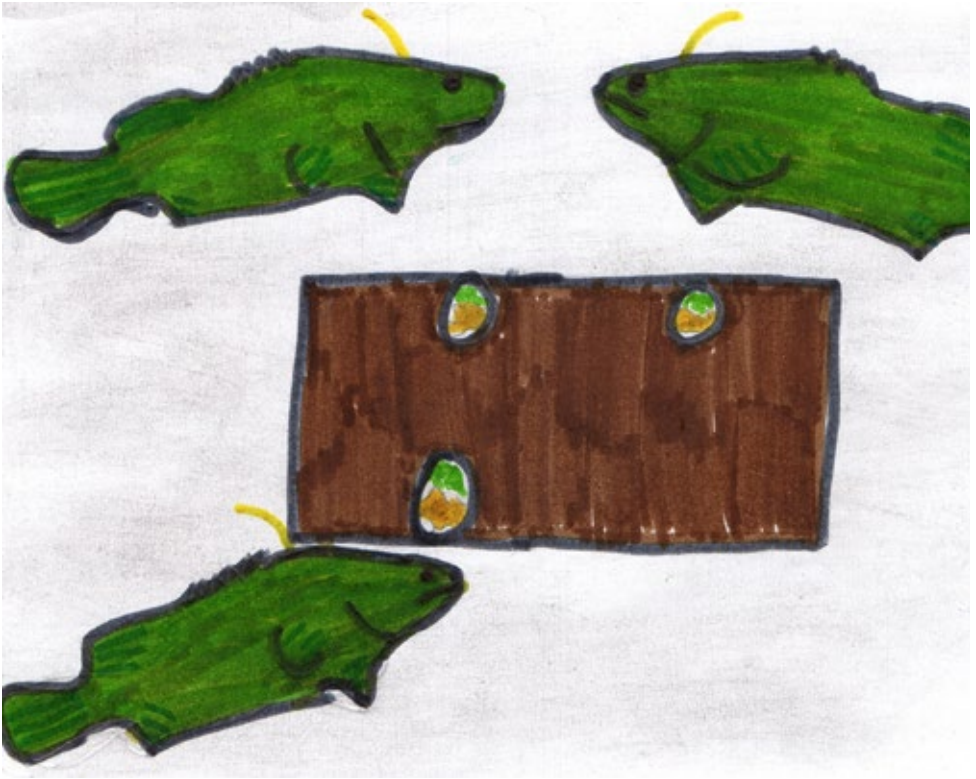
I remembered hearing a boat zoom past but  
I was too scared and tired to see what it was  
doing. All of a sudden I heard a loud knock  
on my door. I was very excited when my  
parents swam in.

After having a good look at them I realised they now had strange yellow tags too. I told them the story about Sam and I being tagged.

They gave me a hug and told me I was very brave.





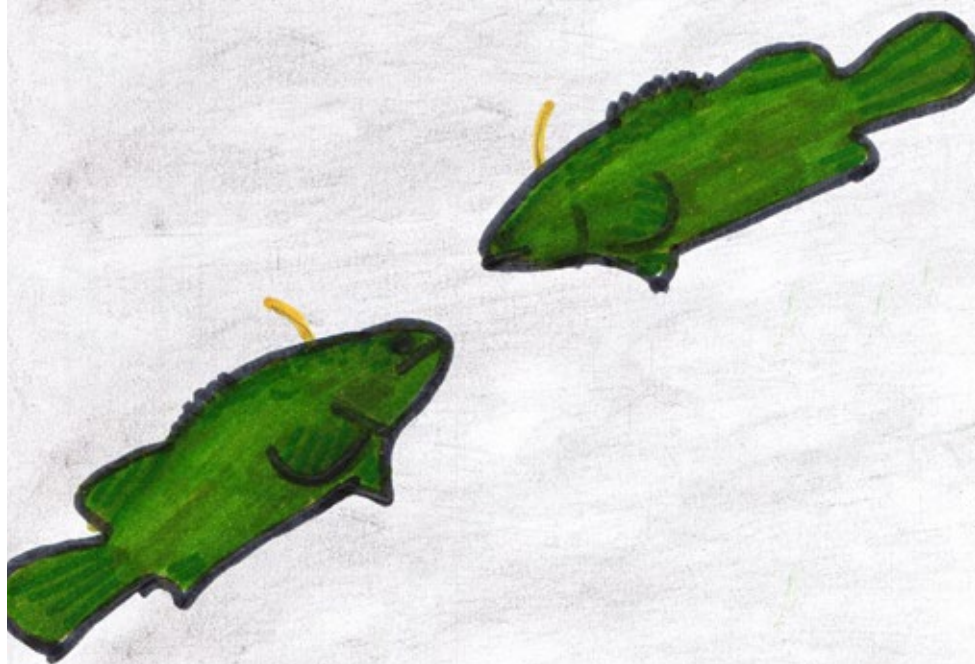


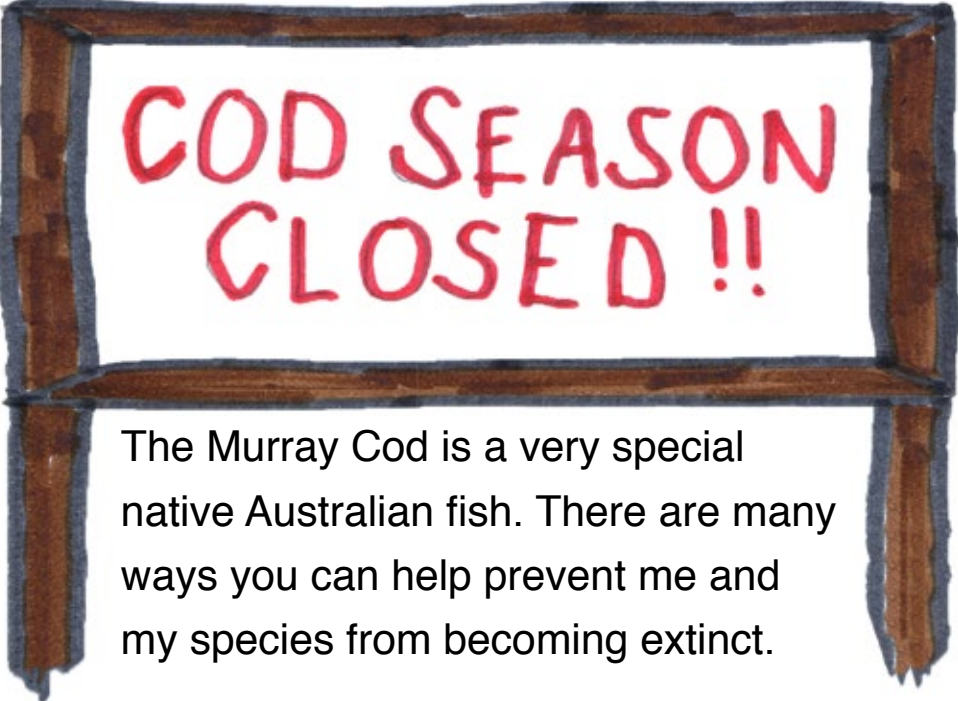
The next morning my family fed on a nice breakfast of yabbies with a side of bank grass. I was starving.

My parents explained how some people were working to try and help Murray Cod populations. Funny humans, called scientists, were putting tracer tags on us to gather information to use to save our species.



I went over to Sam's place and I told him about what the tags were for. He was very excited. Just before I left Sam's, his parents told me that they had also been tagged.





# COD SEASON CLOSED !!

The Murray Cod is a very special native Australian fish. There are many ways you can help prevent me and my species from becoming extinct.

- Never take too many cod when fishing.
- Never fish for cod when cod season is closed.
- Do not damage the banks of rivers, creeks, lakes and dams.
- Always take your rubbish with you
- Don't use chemicals like detergents near the water.
- Leave dead trees and snags in the water so we have places to live.





Henry Arthur  
Boomi Public School, Grade 6 2013



**Australian Government**  
**Cotton Research and  
Development Corporation**



**Catchment Management  
Authority**  
Border Rivers-Gwydir

