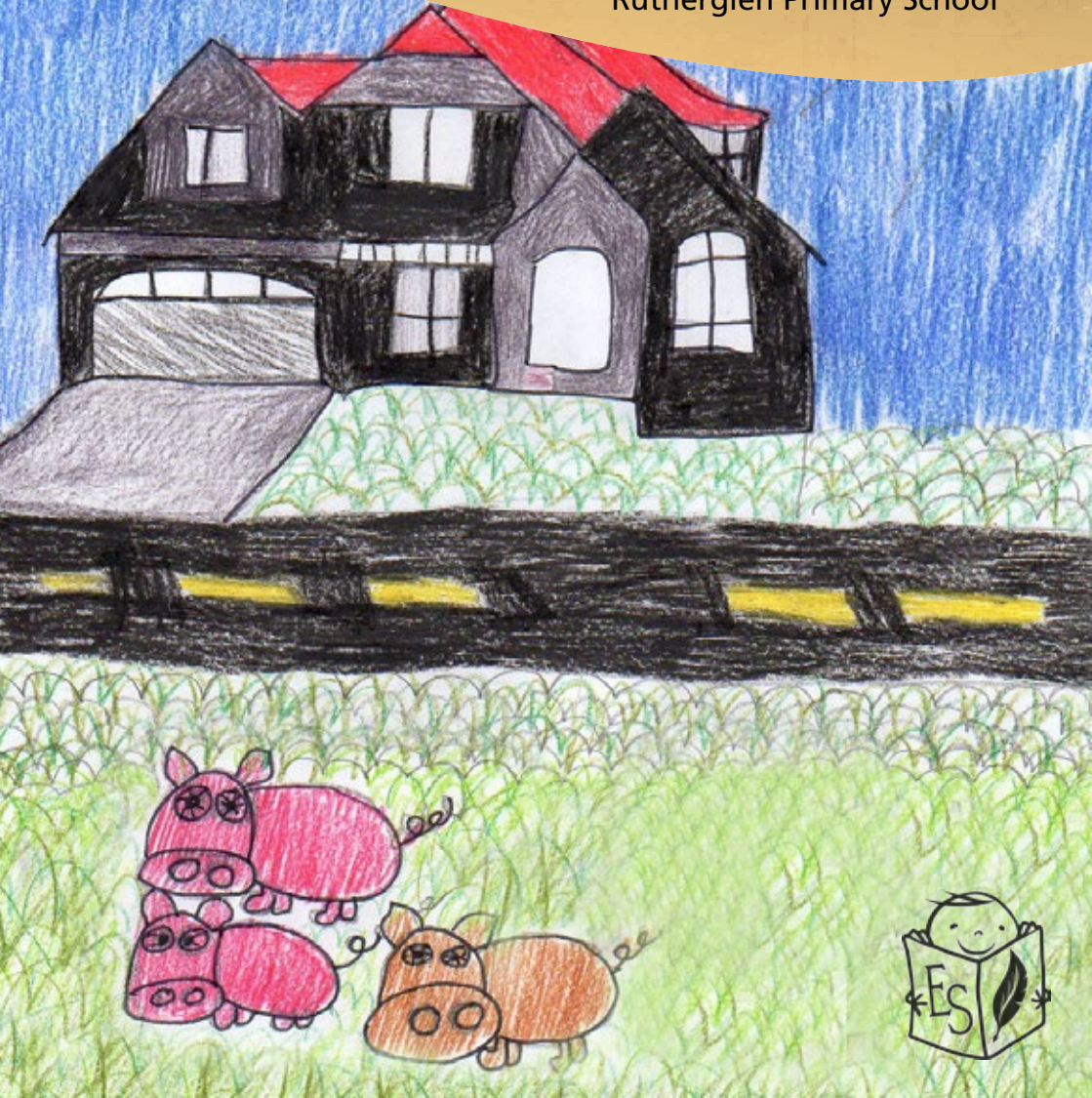


# Sad Little Town

Mia Collier

Rutherglen Primary School





Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

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

In 2014, the “Feral Animals” Enviro-Stories program provided kids from five targeted schools around Australia with the opportunity to write and illustrate stories about feral animals and their impacts on both biodiversity and agriculture. This program was sponsored by the Invasive Animals CRC with support from the School Environment Education Directory North East Victoria.

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## **Invasive Animals CRC**

The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) is Australia’s largest integrated invasive animal research program. The Invasive Animals CRC creates new technologies and integrated strategies to reduce the impact of invasive animals on Australia’s economy, environment and people.

**[www.invasiveanimals.com](http://www.invasiveanimals.com)**

The Enviro-Stories ‘Feral Animals’ initiative has been initiated and supported by Jessica Marsh, the Invasive Animals CRC’s National NRM (Natural Resource Management) Facilitator. The initiative focuses on:

- Raising awareness in communities of the impacts pest animals have on the environment. Targeting kids in schools reaches not only the kids themselves, but their teachers, school staff, parents and other community members,
- Developing a refreshed primary education information pack that will value-add to the existing Invasive Animals CRC Pest Tales resource while incorporating PestSmart resources,
- Establishing stronger partnerships with NRM, Landcare, school communities, educators and regional groups to allow for future collaboration and information transfer to occur more effectively, and
- Promoting and implementing best practice management into key areas and helping to address key pest animal issues impacting on biodiversity and agricultural production.

**[www.pestsmart.org.au](http://www.pestsmart.org.au)**

# Sad Little Town

Author: Mia Collier

Teacher: Di Fiedler

School: Rutherglen Primary School

This book was prepared by students from Rutherglen Primary School with support from the Invasive Animals CRC and the School Environment Education Directory North East Victoria.

The “Feral Animals” Enviro-Stories collection consists of the following books:

- Qweerk and the Feral Fox, Western Australia
- Sad Little Town, Victoria
- Silly, Silly Fox, New South Wales
- The Indian Myna Bird: Major Pest, Queensland
- Carl the Pesky Camel, South Australia

Enviro-Stories is a PeeKdesigns initiative.

Design: PeeKdesigns, [www.peekdesigns.com.au](http://www.peekdesigns.com.au)

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Look at this sad, unloved town! This little country town used to have a warm, welcoming ambience that made people want to live here...  
...but not anymore!

A pest species, known as the *feral pig*, invaded the area and caused enormous damage forcing everyone to leave. Read more to find out what happened.



The feral pig is a terrible, invasive animal that causes enormous damage to the environment across our country areas. They damage crops, orchards and pastures by digging up large areas of the ground searching for food. They spread weeds, wallow in and foul up water sources and trample and eat native vegetation. Feral pigs also prey on and compete for food with livestock.





Hundreds of pigs have caused the damage in this sad little town.

Imagine how much damage 23 million pigs would cause. This is how many feral pigs have been estimated to be in Australia to this current date.

The feral pigs swept through the region surrounding the town. They destroyed farmland and native habitats and made it impossible for the locals to make a living.

Finally, the remaining townspeople agreed, "It's time to put a stop to this." The council called a community conference to discuss the matter.



The community came together to talk about the feral pigs.

“It’s about time we did something about this terrible destruction,” exclaimed Sandy the farmer. “There is no way we can keep ignoring the problem.”

“Yes you are right Sandy. We must turn this town’s fortunes around. But how?” replied councilor Patrick.

Barry, the frustrated town mayor, shouted, “We should just simply kill them. It doesn’t matter how just kill them all!”

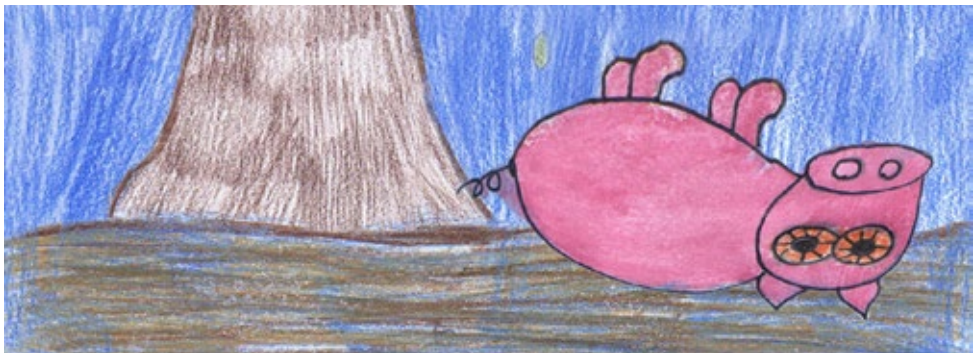
“No!” said Julia the local agricultural scientist. “We can’t just resort to killing them straight away! We need to discuss our options and make a management plan. This is the only way we will get rid of them for good.”







Someone suggested to get rid of all the places pigs like to live and where they got their food and water. It was pointed out that they did not think this plan through, as all of the other animals also need food and water to live too. It was agreed that they needed a plan to get rid of feral pigs without affecting the area's biodiversity and environment.



Julia presented the facts, “Just getting rid of crops of fruit and grain doesn’t stop these opportunistic omnivores. They would soon adapt to eating fish, native reptiles, birds and small mammals. We need a plan that will enable the town to prosper and protect the natural habitats. One of the most important things to prevent them coming back is to monitor and report any pig sightings”

The community agreed that they needed to think of a plan, and fast!



After many hours of discussion, the council finally came to the decision to use lots of different ways to keep the pigs away.

“This plan will help us lower our current feral pig population. We will have a monitoring and reporting system to help keep their numbers low in the future too,” said Julia.

So the town hired some professionals to work with the farmers and townspeople to trap, bait and shoot the feral pigs. After a few months of hard work, they had eradicated most of the feral pigs in their area.

The community got right behind the monitoring and reporting to try and get rid of the last remaining pigs.





One morning Councilor Patrick went outside to check his mailbox in the front yard. He noticed something weird about this morning. Something incredibly weird that the town wasn't used to it.

He noticed his farm, which had previously been left in a wrecked state from the feral pigs, was starting to look much better. Patrick decided to walk into town to see if these changes were occurring everywhere.

The entire neighborhood was looking much healthier. His Aunt Bessie had a healthy looking garden, which was vibrant green in colour with splashes of red from the tomatoes. All the lawns were growing at a rapid rate as they weren't flattened or dug up like usual.

Children were playing, birds were chirping and the sun gleamed on the townspeople who were out enjoying the day.

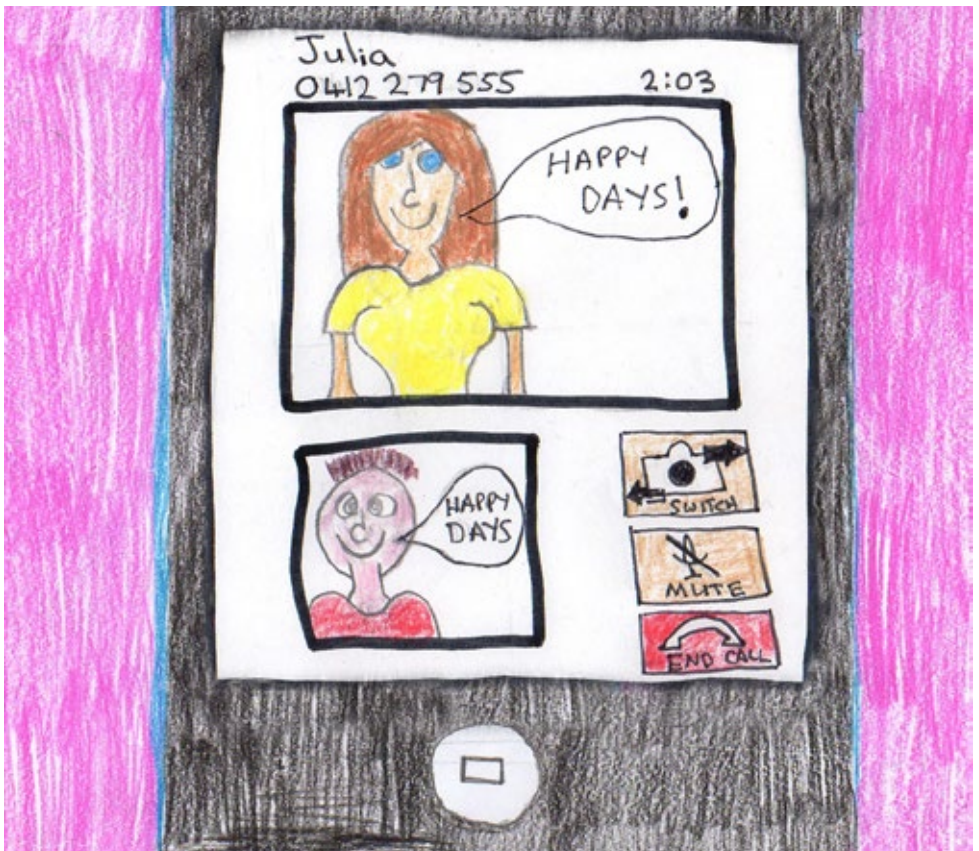
"This town, that was once sad and abandoned, is now a happy community for friends and family to enjoy," Patrick said when he phoned Julia.



“Happy days,” agreed Julia. “Now that most of the feral pigs are gone we can stop stressing about all the damage they were doing.”

“Yes, we all did a great job and have the feral pigs under control. Now we have a prosperous town again!” replied Patrick.

“Happy town, happy farms, happy people and a happy community. It couldn’t get any better?” Julia said with a huge grin.







The whole community lived happily ever after. They learned that if they worked together as a community then they could solve any problems. Now people from all over want to move to this...

**"HAPPY LITTLE TOWN!"**



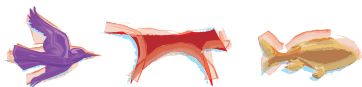
Everything ended well for this fictional little town but can we make it end well for Australia too?

Australia is suffering from the destruction these pests cause. We need to work together to try and control the spread of feral animals. Imagine the benefits if we do. We could make the whole of rural Australia a profitable and happy place to be.





Mia Collier  
Rutherglen Primary School, Year 6 2014



**Invasive Animals CRC**

