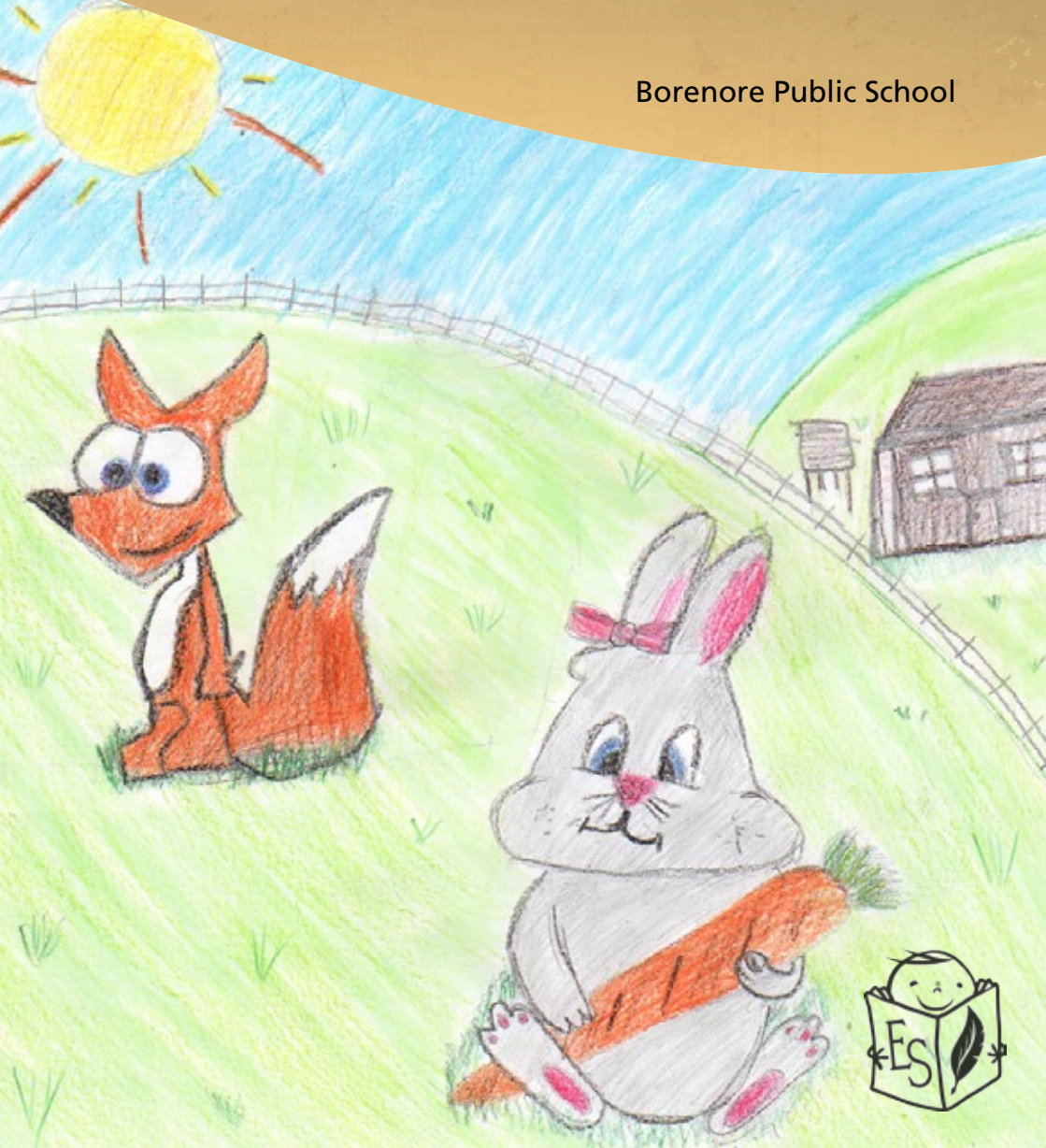


# Silly, Silly Fox

Borenore Public 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 Central Tablelands Local Land Services.

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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)**

# Silly, Silly Fox

Author: Borenore Public School

Teacher: Carol Smithers

School: Borenore Public School

This book was prepared by students from Borenore Public School with support from the Invasive Animals CRC and the Central Tablelands Local Land Services.

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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At Billabong farm near Borenore, a family of rabbits had built a warren. It was under Farmer Steve's house near the vegetable garden. What a feast they enjoyed with easy access to all those lovely veggies. But now there was nothing left.

One spring day, young Rosie Rabbit peeped outside feeling hungry. She knew she would have to leave the safety of her warren in search of food.

### **Did you know?**

Rabbits were first brought to Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet. They were used for meat and later, wild rabbits were used for hunting.





She hopped along in the sunshine towards the yellow canola paddock. On the way, Rosie visited her cousin Bob's warren. She found him deep inside.

"My family have all been poisoned by Farmer Steve", Bob sobbed. "He caught us eating his crops and now they are all dead".

### Did you know?

Rabbits are small mammals. They are herbivores that eat grass, leafy weeds, wild flowers, tree roots and bark. Rabbits live in groups called a colony (or warren) and are most active at dawn and dusk.







Trying to forget what happened, Rosie and Bob went in search of food. They set off towards the blackberries in the sheep paddock. When they reached the paddock the sheep stopped and stared.

“Baaaa!” said the leader of the sheep. “Leave this paddock and don’t return!”

### **Did you know?**

Rabbits are a feral animal that have caused many problems throughout Australia for both agriculture and our native environment. They compete with native and domestic animals for food; cause loss of plant biodiversity and reduce crops; spread invasive weeds and build warrens causing soil erosion.





They turned and fled from the angry ram.

Rosie and Bob stopped suddenly when they heard a rustling in the bushes. Slowly, a long nose poked out. The nose was soon followed by the eyes, ears and then a whole head.

“OMG! IT IS A BIG RED FOX!” screamed Rosie.

### **Did you know?**

Some of the ways we try to control and eradicate rabbits include: shooting, trapping, ferreting, poisoning and fumigation of warrens, destruction of warrens using heavy machinery, removal of habitat including timber and woody weeds like blackberries and introduction of viruses like myxomatosis and calicivirus.





There he was, a big red fox standing, staring at them. The two rabbits stood, frozen stiff.

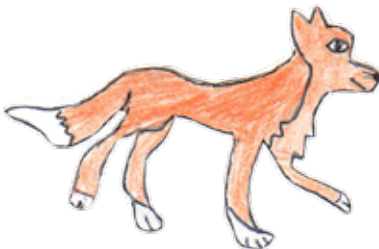
Unexpectedly the big red fox casually introduced himself, "Hi! My name is Fred."

The rabbits didn't know what to say. The fox was waiting for a response. "Er, I'm Rosie and this is Bob," stammered Rosie.

"Are you two okay? You look like you have seen a ghost," said Fred the fox. "I'm looking for food, but I am only a young fox and I don't know what to eat."

### Did you know?

Early English settlers brought foxes to Australia around the 1850's to hunt for sport. They soon spread and have become a big problem right throughout Australia.



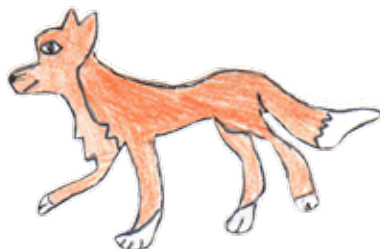


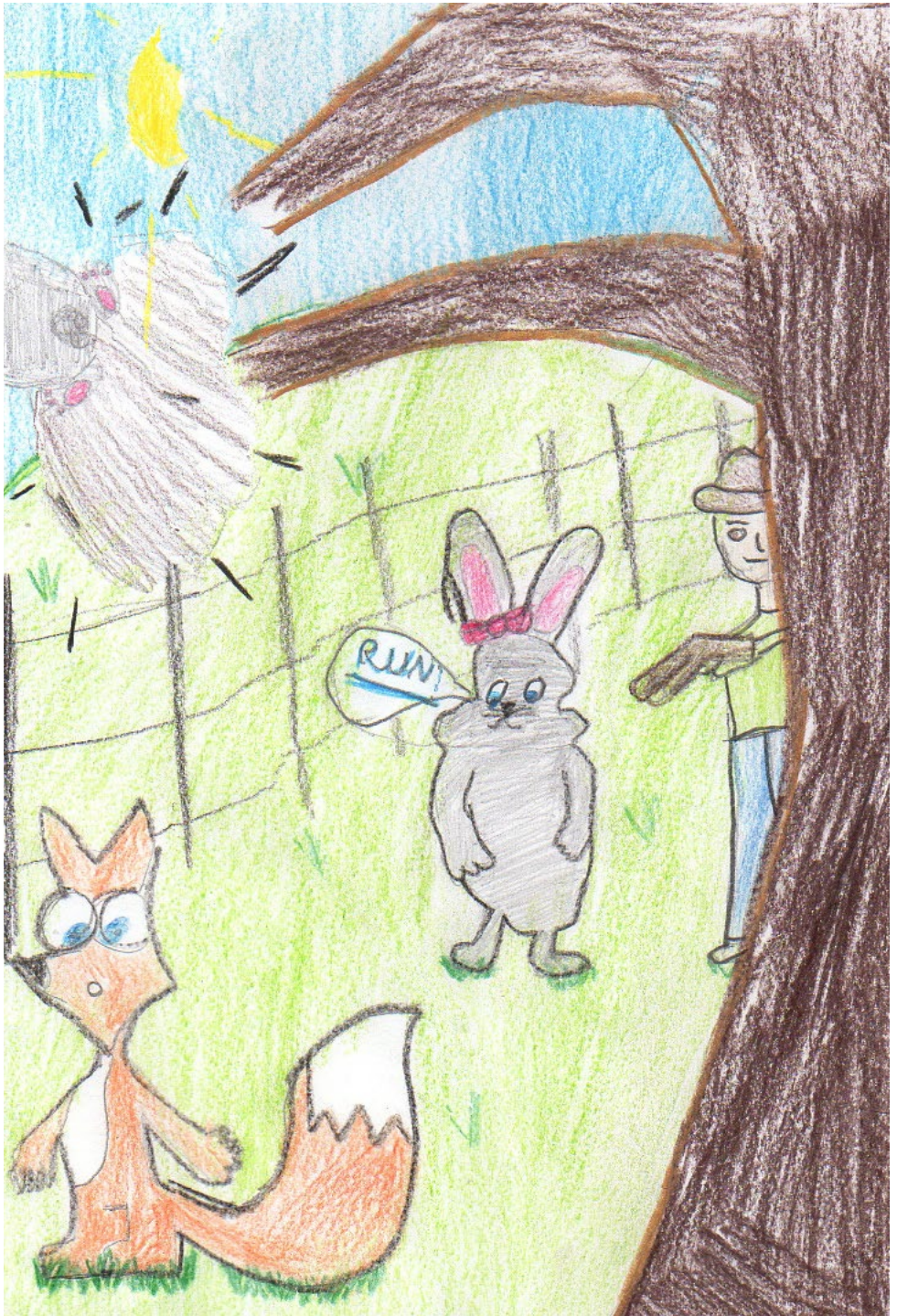
The rabbits finally understood why Fred hadn't chased or tried to eat them. He didn't know that foxes ate rabbit. Rosie saw a chance to trick the fox and make him prey on anything but them.

"You should eat one of the farm animals like a tasty lamb, kid or even a chicken," she said. "Or maybe you would like to eat a native animal they would have a nice gamey flavour. There are lots of those around, such as possums, blue tongue lizards, birds and other small creatures."

### Did you know?

The foxes that we find in Australia are the European Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). They are a reddish-brown mammal that are omnivores (they eat both plants and animals). Foxes usually live on their own or in pairs and eat mainly invertebrates, small mammals, reptiles and birds.







Rosie and Bob decided this was a good time to get away from the fox because he would be distracted looking at all the food on the farm. But Fred decided these rabbits were clever so he would tag along with them.

Meanwhile, Farmer Steve had taken his gun and was searching for feral foxes and rabbits. Bob saw the farmer's hat and a barrel of a gun.

"RUN," Rosie yelled knowing that farmers hated pests on their property. Rosie, Bob and Fred ran through the bushes and hid over by the fence.

### Did you know?

Foxes are a feral animal that have caused many problems throughout Australia for both agriculture and our native environment. They prey on both domestic animals and our native wildlife. Foxes can also transmit diseases like distemper, parvo virus and mange.





They noticed Slither, the brown snake, beside them. He was peacefully sun-baking on a rock.

Rosie thought that this might be a way to get rid of this fox once and for all. She mischievously told Fred, "Wow a snake! I think you would find one of those mouth-wateringly tasty."

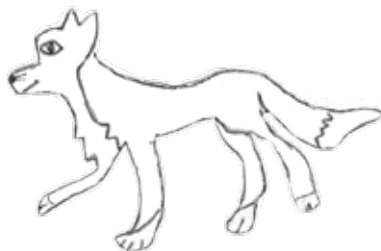
Fred went to investigate the snake.

"If you come near me I will bite and poison you!" Slither said as he lifted his head threateningly. "You Silly, Silly Fox! Don't you know that a foxes favourite food is rabbit."

When Fred turned, the rabbits were already gone!

### **Did you know?**

Some of the ways we use to try to control and eradicate foxes include: shooting, trapping, poisoning, electric fences and den fumigation.





Borenore Public School, Year 3-6 2014



**Invasive Animals CRC**



**Local Land  
Services**  
Central Tablelands