

# Charlie, the Corroboree Frog

Securing  
Our Region



Lara Diffey, William Flahive,  
Rory Hamilton and Olivia Maguire

The Scots School Albury



## **Creative Catchment Kids**

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## **Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre**

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

**[www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)**

## **Enviro-Stories**

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeekKdesigns, 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)**

# Charlie, the Corroboree Frog

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have been supplied by Stephen Mahoney .

## Local Land Heroes - Securing Our Region

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeekDesigns education program.



**Local Land  
Services**



**Australian Government**



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"Come on Grandma Charlie, please tell us your story! Pleeeease!" croaked the froglets.

"Okay, settle down," replied Grandma. "There is a place in Australia, a very special place indeed, called Kosciuszko National Park, where we Corroboree frogs were very few."

"What are Corroboree frogs, Grandma?" puzzled the froglets.

"Why, you are all Corroboree frogs," replied Grandma.



"Look at your spectacular skin of yellow with black stripes on your backs and the spots on your bellies. Have you noticed that your feet are not webbed like most other frogs? We have fingers and toes so we can easily walk through the sphagnum moss," Grandma Charlie told them.

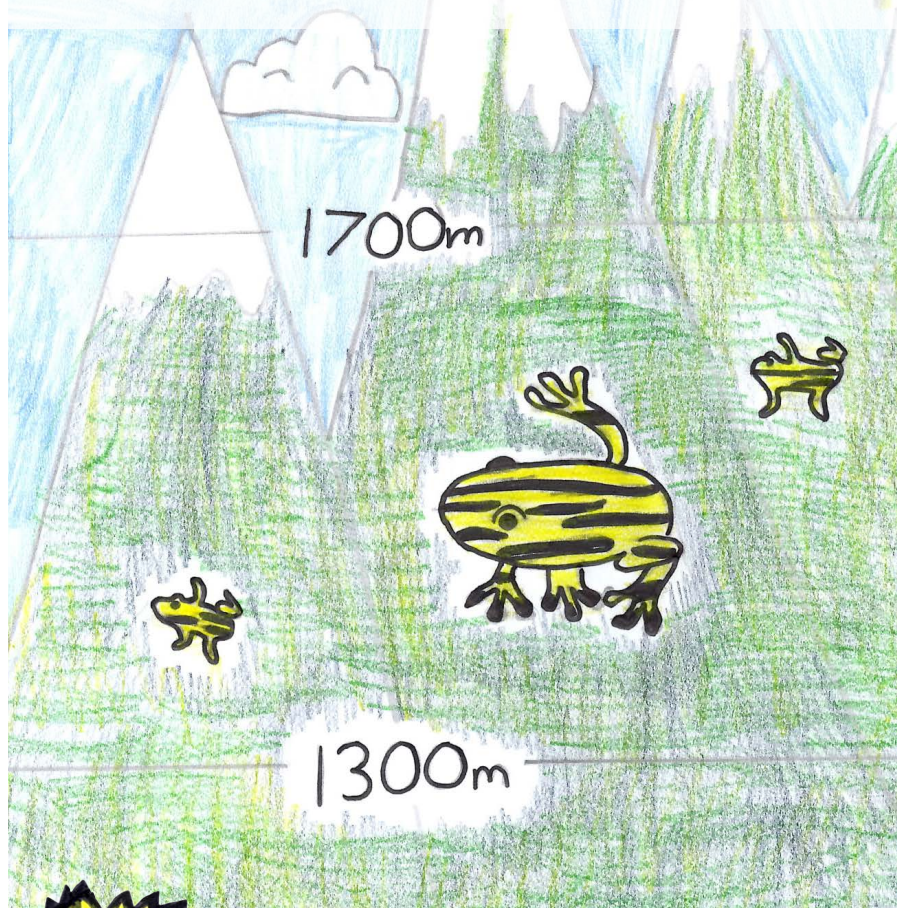
### **FROGGY FACT**

Corroboree frogs have poisonous toxins in their skin from eating black ants.





"You know how much you love sphagnum moss?" Grandma asked. "Well, this is only found in alpine areas where there is a nice cold climate. Our favourite place of all to live is around the Mount Jagungal wilderness area, which is between 1300 to 1700 metres above sea level."



#### FROGGY FACT

In 2003, a bushfire destroyed part of Kosciuszko National Park, killing some of the sphagnum moss.

"But Grandma, tell us about when you were lonely."

"Well, sadly, the Southern Corroboree frogs are critically endangered. Back in 2015, there were only about 40 of us left in the wild and only four of these were males. Life was very difficult," said Grandma.







"I was one of the Corroborees left at that time. Most of the frogs had died from a fungal disease called chytrid fungus, which was brought into Australia by the African clawed frog. Chytrid fungus is a water born fungus that attacks our skin," Grandma reminisced.



#### **FROGGY FACT**

The African clawed frog was imported into Australia by pharmaceutical companies between 1930-1960.





"Is that how Grandpa died?" asked the froglets.

"Yes, my little ones. Grandpa sat on three clutches of eggs in his nest until the Autumn rain arrived and sadly he died from the chytrid fungus. Luckily, your mother made it into the sphagnum bog, where she dropped her tail and grew her legs."

### FROGGY FACT

When a tadpole turns into a frog it drops its tail and grows its legs. This is called metamorphosis.





Grandma continued, "Your mother survived the next four years feeding on black ants until she reached breeding age. It was then that she answered your father's call and laid 10 to 40 eggs in his nest."



#### **FROGGY FACT**

Males can have up to three different females clutches of eggs in their nests.



"It was a very uncertain time for our species. Fortunately, there were some scientists who wanted to help us. They came along and took ten of your mother's eggs. They took the eggs to the Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre to breed them in captivity and to make future generations immune to the deadly fungus."



### FROGGY FACT

A scientist named the Corroboree frog as it reminded him of an Aboriginal dance where men were painted in stripes and women with spots in preparation for their corroboree.



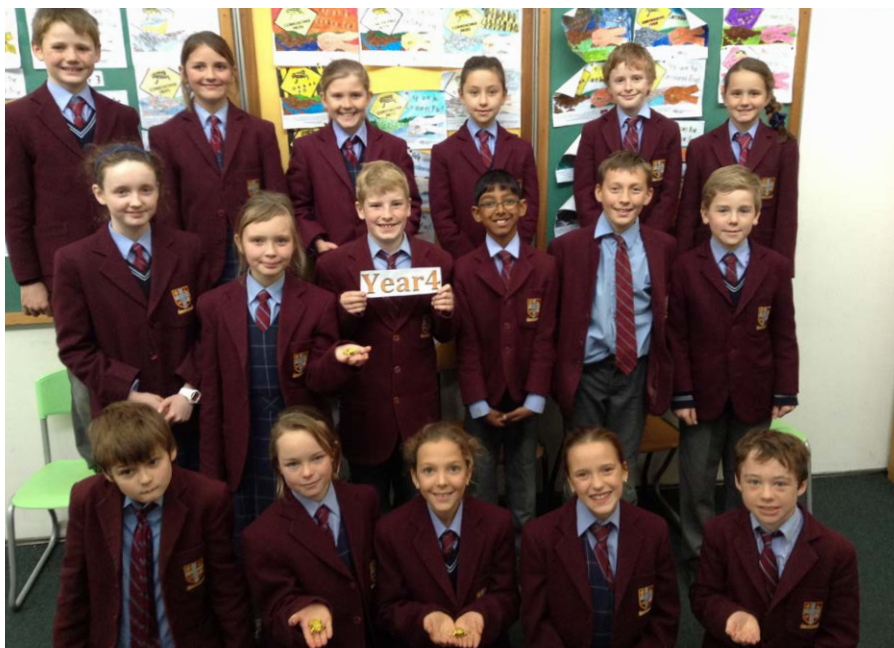


"That's great Grandma. So, are the Corroboree frogs that live in the quarantine area our brothers and sisters? And they won't catch the skin fungus?" asked the froglets.





"That's right little ones," replied Grandma Charlie.  
"Many people have donated money to breeding centres at Taronga Zoo, Wirraminna, and the Tumut and Jindabyne National Parks Offices .  
This means our family history will continue, and children everywhere can learn about us."



"Now eat up your black ants quickly, as winter is approaching and we need to bury ourselves under the snow so we can go into dormancy\*."

"Thanks Grandma for sharing your story!" croaked the froglets lovingly as they buried a metre down underground.



#### **FROGGY FACT**

Corroboree frogs burrow under the snow in winter. This is called dormancy.





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2015 Year 4, The Scots School Albury

## CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the 2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



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