

# Pigs in the Crops



Maggie Carpenter  
Morpeth Public School

ENVIRO

stories

## **NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI)**

NSW DPI works to increase the value of primary industries and economic growth across the state. DPI manages a broad range of programs, including natural resource management, research and development, pest and disease management, food safety, industry engagement, and market access and competition.

The Peri Urban Biosecurity Program, developed in partnership with Greater Sydney Local Land Services, focuses on strengthening collaboration within the region and improving the capacity to respond to, manage and control biosecurity threats. Biosecurity in the Greater Sydney region keeps farmers in business, maintains export markets, keeps the community healthy and protects our environment – and we want to keep it that way.

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/greater-sydney-peri-urban](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/greater-sydney-peri-urban)

## **Hunter Local Land Services**

Hunter Local Land Services works with land managers and the community to improve primary production within healthy landscapes. We help people make better decisions about the land they manage and assist communities and agricultural industries to be productive and sustainable into the future.

The Hunter Local Land Services region covers an area of approximately 33,000 square kilometres, extending from Greater Taree City Council in the north to Lake Macquarie City Council in the south, Upper Hunter Shire Council in the west to the Great Lakes Council in the east.

The landscape ranges from estuarine wetlands and mangroves, rainforests and freshwater wetlands to open grasslands, woodlands, eucalypt forests, lakes and foreshores.

The region has good soils, a subtropical climate and abundant rainfall which support a wide range of industries, including farming, forestry, fishing, oyster farming, tourism and nature-based recreation.

[www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au)

# Pigs in the Crops

Author: Maggie Carpenter

Teacher: Mr. Tom Irwin

School: Morpeth Public School



This book has been published as part of the City Livin' Ferals Enviro-Stories program which was supported by Hunter Local Land Services, Greater Sydney Local Land Services and NSW Department of Primary Industries.

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)

© Peekdesigns 2018

Enviro-Stories is a Peekdesigns initiative, [www.peekdesigns.com.au](http://www.peekdesigns.com.au).

Carpenter, M. 2018. *Pigs in the Crops*. Peekdesigns, Vic.



Maggie and her sister Vivienne lived on a huge farm near Morpeth in New South Wales. On a hot Spring day their friend's daughter Poppy came over to stay the night.

As soon as her mum left, Poppy looked at their paddocks and asked, "Why are your fences so tall and strong?"

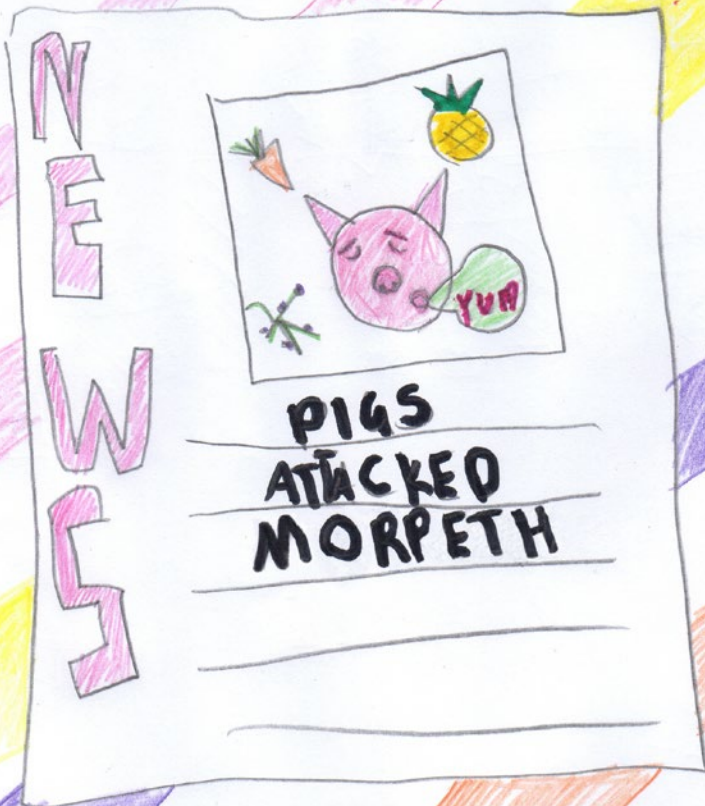
Although she was only very young, Maggie and Vivienne still told her the story of the farm and its amazing fences.



Our great-grandparents Oliver and Ali were only young at the time, it was 1957. Oliver was 27 and Ali was 25 and they ran the same farm we live on today.

One cold winter's day when the rain was belting down, and the wind was howling, Oliver and Ali like everyone else raced to "The Andersons Farm Shop" for supplies.

The shop had serviced the community for around a hundred years. But on that day people in the shop were really petrified as they read the news in the paper which said, “Feral pigs have attacked farms around Morpeth.”





The shop was hectic as everyone grabbed what they could off the shelves. They knew that if pigs stormed through the region, they would destroy the crops and make an enormous mess.

Everyone started complaining to the farm shop and asking, “If there are no crops will you have to shut down?” They started getting frustrated because there were not many shops in their suburb at the time.

After a bit, they all left one by one. The shop looked like it had been destroyed and there was not much left on the shelves.

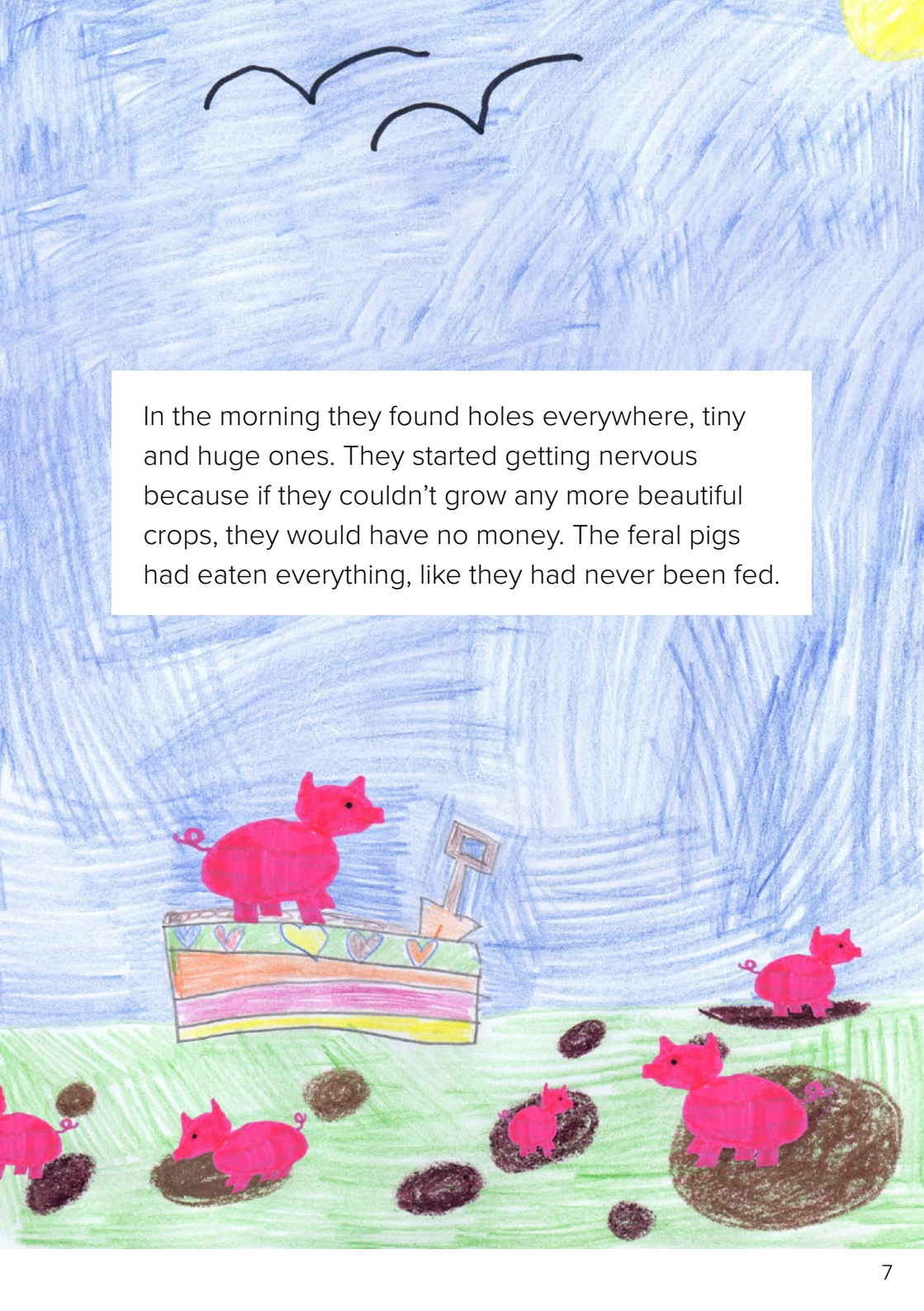


When Oliver and Ali got home, they were very tired and went and collapsed in their bed.

Suddenly, there was lots of racket outside. The storm of pigs had hit their farm. The crops got eaten and their garden destroyed.

There was no more food left!



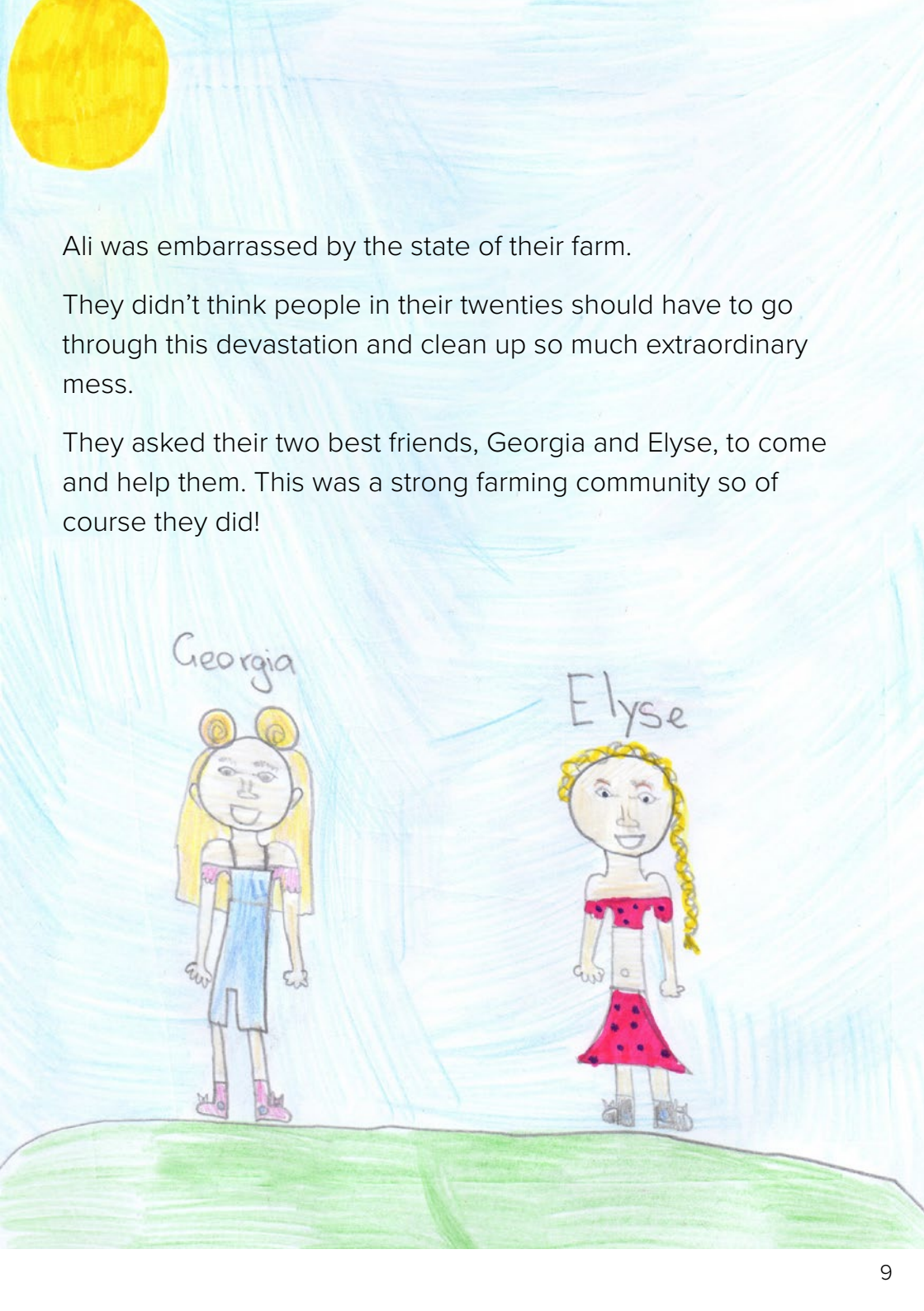


In the morning they found holes everywhere, tiny and huge ones. They started getting nervous because if they couldn't grow any more beautiful crops, they would have no money. The feral pigs had eaten everything, like they had never been fed.

Oliver and Ali also didn't want anyone getting hurt in the holes.

They were mostly scared for their two Labradoodles, Nicky and Mickey. Mickey and Nicky were young, they had just turned two, but were already the best two little working dogs they had ever trained.





Ali was embarrassed by the state of their farm.

They didn't think people in their twenties should have to go through this devastation and clean up so much extraordinary mess.

They asked their two best friends, Georgia and Elyse, to come and help them. This was a strong farming community so of course they did!

Georgia



Elyse





They were all off to work collecting dirt and soil to fill in the holes. Everyone got annoyed and a bit bummed out because it rained the night before, so they had to walk through mud that whole day.

Ali spent weeks planting new crops while Oliver was spending his hours building new garden beds and repairing other damage.



The next spring day the blue birds were chirping, and the sun was shimmering down. After several weeks of mess, the whole place was spick and span and looking good again.

Later, when they were having a meal of veggies and steak, they heard a horrid noise. The feral pigs were back again and snorting their heads off!

In the morning, they woke up and there were more holes everywhere and their crops were destroyed again!



The pigs kept returning night after night, digging holes and destroying the farm. Each day Oliver and Ali would try to refill them but had to repeat this task again and again and again.

Ali told Oliver that she thought, “this is the hardest and most painful 14 weeks of my life!”



Everyone in the farming community was facing the same battle. They were going broke and the town was being destroyed. So that small town on the coast started to starve and starve.



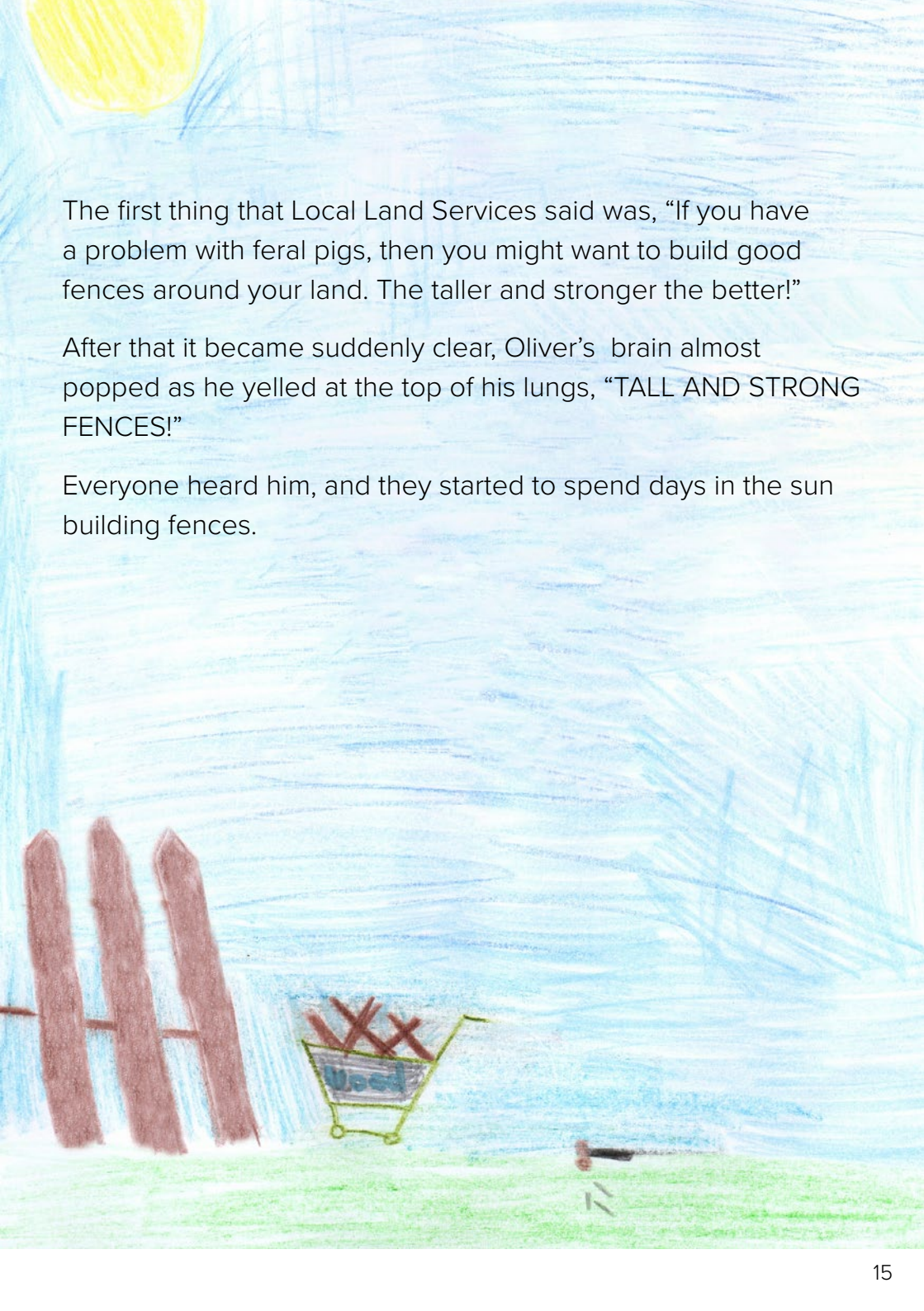


They knew that they had to get their heads together and think of a wonderful plan or all would be lost.

The plan was to call, 'Local Land Services' and find out advice on the best way to protect their farms. The next day they were on to the phones about the pigs in their crops.







The first thing that Local Land Services said was, “If you have a problem with feral pigs, then you might want to build good fences around your land. The taller and stronger the better!”

After that it became suddenly clear, Oliver’s brain almost popped as he yelled at the top of his lungs, “TALL AND STRONG FENCES!”

Everyone heard him, and they started to spend days in the sun building fences.



After that the days were pig free and everyone was beaming with happiness. The nights were noise free and the farm has grown excellent crops ever since. The town recovered, and the farm shop opened again and is still there today.

Maggie and Vivienne finished telling the story by saying, "And that is why our fences are so tall and strong and we have never seen a pig since."

Poppy thanked them very much for the wonderful story and they all went inside to eat a scrumptious dinner!





Thank you for the fantastic work from the students in Year 4/5 I from Morpeth Primary School 2018 who all wrote books as part of the City Livin' Ferals program.

Congratulations to our new author, Maggie Carpenter, whose story was chosen to be published as part of Enviro-Stories.



*Who's living in your backyard?*



**ENVIRO-stories**

Sharing stories about the world around us



Local Land Services



Department of Primary Industries