

THREATENED SPECIES
**ART &
WRITING**
COMPETITION

TEACHER RESOURCE KIT



Olivia B. - Gang-Gang Cockatoo



Jorja H. - Cumberland Plain Land Snail

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Ayla H. - Yellow Bellied Glider

The Macarthur region, our backyard, is home to a wide diversity of native plants and animals. Many of these plants and animals are affected by a range of impacts such as habitat loss, competition and predation from non-native species and foreign diseases. There are a range of species occurring within the local region that are at risk of extinction and have been listed as 'Threatened Species.'

The Threatened Species Art and Writing Competition (TSAC) is a regional environmental education program, involving Campbelltown City Council, Camden Council and Wollondilly Shire Council. The competition also raises awareness for Biodiversity Month (*September*) and Threatened Species Day on 7 September.

The competition targets all stages of primary school, and is open to young people aged 5-18. TSAC encourages students to learn about a local threatened species and represent it in an artwork or creative writing piece.

The competition is now in its 18th year and through its cross-curricula nature has been successfully engaging primary schools in Geography, Science, Visual Arts and English throughout the Macarthur region.

HOW DO SCHOOLS ENTER THEIR ARTWORK?

The competition raises awareness of Biodiversity Month, the TSAC encourages schools to engage and enter as many students as possible. Schools have the opportunity to win prizes and students can also win individual prizes based on their age category.

We want the students to create an artwork that celebrates the beauty and uniqueness of our threatened plants, animals and pollinators.

Entering the competition is easy:

- 1) Children can individually enter their artwork online; please ensure they enter their school's details.
- 2) Alternatively, the teacher of each classroom can ensure each artwork clearly identifies the student's name, class and age on the back of the artwork, and the teacher can complete a single-entry form for the class indicating the teacher/class/school's details instead of a child's name. The school can gather their classes submissions and deliver as a collection to their local Council or send via the post. For any collages or fragile items, please place the student's artwork into a supporting box (or similar). Please provide the key contact for the school and the total number of submissions, with the delivery.

- **Campbelltown City Council Civic Centre**

Customer Service Desk,
Cnr Queen and Broughton Streets,
Campbelltown

- **Camden Council Administration Building**

Customer Service Desk
70 Central Avenue, Oran Park

- **Wollondilly Council Administration Building**

Customer Service Desk,
62-64 Menangle Street, Picton

By post:

Campbelltown City Council

Threatened Species Competition
PO Box 57
Campbelltown NSW 2560

Camden Council

PO BOX 183
Camden NSW 2570

Wollondilly Council

PO Box 21
Picton NSW 2571

Enter online

Camden Council - <https://bit.ly/TSAC-2025>
Wollondilly Council - [wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](https://www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au)
Campbelltown City Council - [campbelltown.nsw.gov.au](https://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au)

Things to remember:

- A4 Artwork Entries will be judged in the following age groups:
 - 5 to 6 years
 - 7 to 9 years
 - 10 to 12 years
 - 13 to 16 years
- Get as creative as you like with your artwork, use any mediums such as paint, pen, pencil, charcoal, textiles, digital, recycled items.
- If you choose to enter your class under one entry form, Council asks that you label the back of each artwork with:
 - Student name
 - Class
 - Age

HOW DO SCHOOLS ENTER THEIR CREATIVE WRITING STORIES?

We encourage students to write a short story that celebrates the beauty and uniqueness of our threatened plants, animals and pollinators. The childrens' stories can be as creative as they like, but the stories should include one or more of the following facts:

- Where does the plant, animal or pollinator live?
- For animals or pollinators, what do they eat?
- What threats do they face?
- What can people do to help save them from extinction?

Entry is open to writers aged 8 to 18 years. We ask that:

- The stories be written so that they can be read to 5-6 years olds; and
- the stories must be restricted to one A4 page (one side only).

Creative writing criteria:

- 30% for three or more accurate facts about the chosen species
- 20% ability to connect the audience with the subject matter (impact)
- 20% creativity
- 15% grammar
- 15% structure (beginning, middle and end)

Entering the competition is easy:

- 1) Children can individually enter their work online; please ensure they enter their school's details.
- 2) Alternatively, the teacher of each classroom can ensure each piece clearly identifies the student's name, class and age on the back, and the teacher can complete a single-entry form for the class indicating the teacher/class/school's details instead of a child's name. The school can gather their classes submissions and deliver as a collection to their local Council or send via the post. Please provide the key contact for the school and the total number of submissions, with the delivery.

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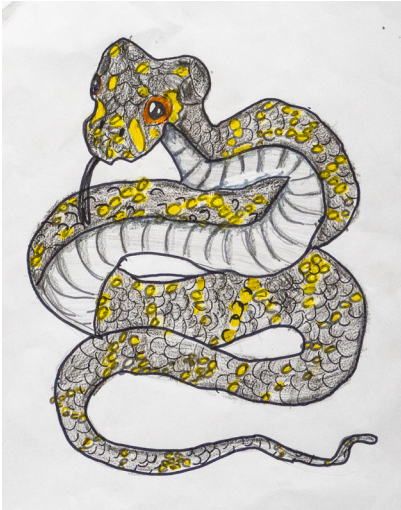
Wollondilly Council

PO Box 21
Picton NSW 2571

SOME OF THE ARTWORKS FROM 2024



Alexander G. - Broad-headed Snake



Lucas D. - Broad-headed Snake



Lana H. - Rainbow Bee-eater



Ella B. - Barking Owl



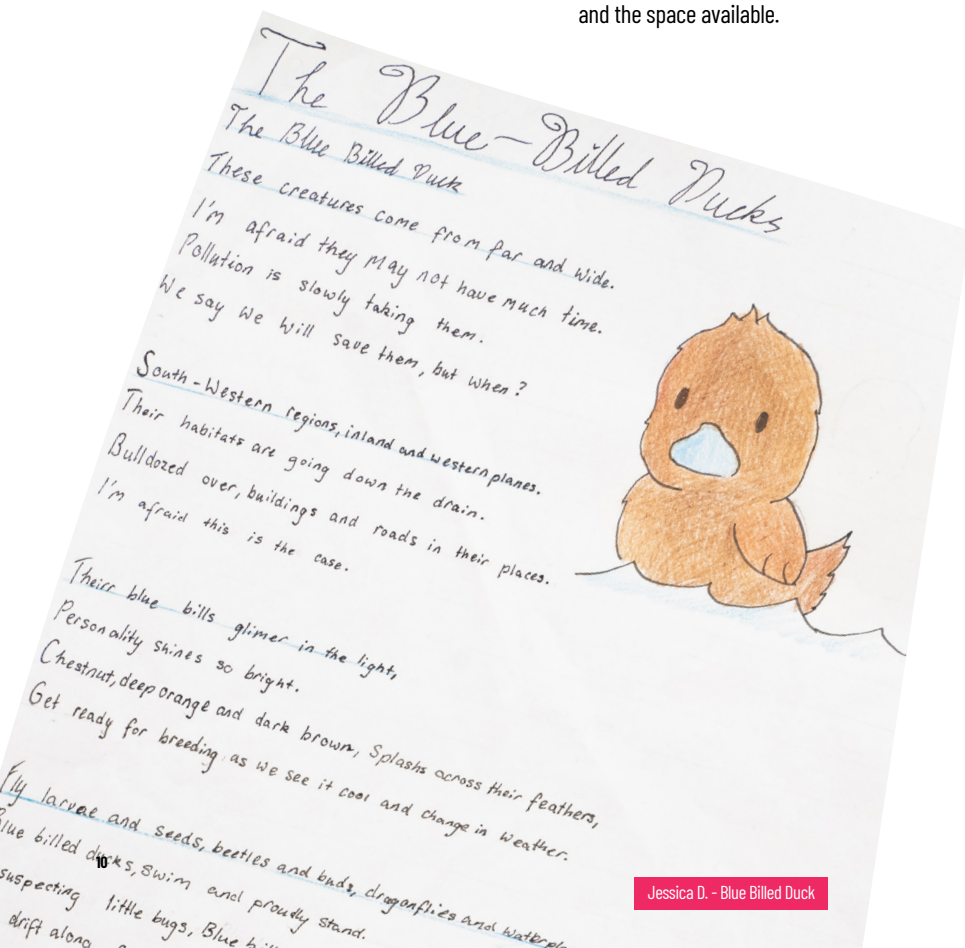
Ruixi H. - Bush Stone-curlew

PRIZE FOR WINNING SCHOOL

Within each Local Government Area, there are two prizes available:

- 1) The school that has the highest percentage of students (art or creative writing pieces) entered into the competition will win the TSAC School Prize.
- 2) The school that has demonstrated the highest level of initiative through their students' entries (but not the highest percentage of students) will win the TSAC Highly Commended School Prize.

The TSAC School Prize and the Highly Commended School Prize are designed to support the winning schools to continue biodiversity education following the conclusion of the competition. In recognition that each school has different opportunities for supporting biodiversity on their site, Council's Officer will liaise with the winning school to identify suitable resources for that school. As an example, Council may organise an incursion with a biodiversity expert to speak at assembly or similar, a plant package, or habitat resources suited to the plant community type and the space available.



AWARD CEREMONY

The competition will once again have an awards ceremony to celebrate winning individuals, placeholders and winning schools.

The awards ceremony will take place on **Wednesday 15 October**, and will be hosted by Wollondilly Council at the Wollondilly Performing Arts Centre.

Refreshments will be served on arrival. There will be an opportunity to view the winning entries on display, and entrants whose art or creative writing submissions has been shortlisted will be notified once judging has been completed.

Schools in the running to receive the School Prize and the Highly Commended School Prize will be invited to send two staff members to attend the Award Ceremony.



Abigail W. - Swift Parrot

CLASSROOM LEARNING EARLY

The cross-curricular nature of the TSAC allows for many different educational activities that can link into HSIE, Science and Visual Arts. See Extension Activities for practical educational examples.

Curriculum outcome links

Stage 1	Geography	GE1-1, GE1-2
	Science	ST1-1WS-S, ST1-7PW
	Visual Arts	VAS1.1, VAS1.3
	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN1-1A: Communicates with a wide range of people in a variety of ways. EN1-2A: Plans, composes and reviews a small range of simple texts for a variety of purposes. EN1-7B: Identifies how language use in their own writing differs according to purpose, audience and subject.
Stage 2	Geography	GE2-1, GE2-2
	Science	ST2-4LW-S, ST2-5WT
	Visual Arts	VAS2.1, VAS2.4
	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN2-2A: Plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language. EN2-7B: Identifies and uses language forms and features in their own writing appropriate to purpose and audience.
Stage 3	Geography	GE3-1, GE3-2
	Science	ST3-1WS-S, ST3-14BE
	Visual Arts	VAS3.1, VAS3.4
	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN3-2A: Composes, edits and presents well-structured and coherent texts. EN3-7C: Thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts.
Stage 4	Geography	GE4-1 to GE4-8
	Science	SC4-4WS, SC4-13ES
	Visual Arts	VA4-1 to VA4-4
	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN4-4B: Makes effective language choices to creatively shape meaning with accuracy, clarity and coherence. EN4-7D: Demonstrates understanding of how texts can express aspects of their broadening world and their relationships within it.
Stage 5	Geography	GE5-1 to GE5-8
	Science	SC5-7WS, SC5-14LW
	Visual Arts	VA5-1 to VA5-4
	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN5-4B: Effectively transfers knowledge, skills and understanding of language concepts into new and different contexts. EN5-7D: Understands and evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds.
Stage 6	Geography	P1-P12 (Prelim), H1-H10 (HSC)
	Science	BI01/12-, CHE11/12-, PHY11/12-, EES11/12-, IS11/12- (e.g. BI011-1, CHE12-6)
	Visual Arts	VAS6-1 to VAS6-4
	English	English Standard and Advanced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAT1-1 / ES11-1: Responds to and composes increasingly complex texts for understanding, interpretation, analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure. EAT2-4 / ES12-4: Composes imaginative texts that use a variety of language forms, features and structures.

ARTWORK INSPIRATION

There are many different mediums that children can use to create their artwork.

Here are some options:

- hand or finger painting
- felt pens
- textiles
- digital
- clay
- fabric
- recycled materials
- natural materials (leaves ect)
- waste to art



Tariq M. - Broad-headed Snake

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The following are a list of activities that can be done in and outside the classroom prior to, during, or as extension activities for the TSAC:

- **Museum exhibition**

Imagine your artwork is going to be displayed as part of a museum exhibition. Create some signs and additional artefacts that will teach others about the threatened species. You might like to include information such as its scientific name, distribution, life cycle, interesting features and common threats.

- **Nature rubbings**

Walk around outdoors to collect various textured objects. These could include leaves, tree bark, rocks etc. To make a rubbing, place a piece of paper on top of the object. Rub the paper gently with crayons until textures appear. The object and its texture will be 'imprinted' on the paper. You might like to use the rubbings or collage of rubbings in your competition artwork.

- **Native plant seed bank**

Watch the video clip to learn about the Australian PlantBank seed collection.

<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/science/seed-bank-saving-australias-rare-native-plants-from-bushfire-threat/news-story/8e6f4b4789ff5b9d6da0103b7c4d4f93>

Research a local threatened plant species and find out where it is found, threats it faces and what is being done to conserve it.

- **Nature charades**

What is it like to be a tree? How does a baby animal feel? Get an understanding of different parts of the environment by pretending that you are those parts. Natural objects: a plant or rock. Animal: baby bird, flying fox, squirrel glider. Present event: wind blowing through the trees, land clearing.

- **Make a difference**

Research some environmental groups that help protect and conserve Australian biodiversity. Locate a local group and learn how they are helping protect threatened species. Groups might include Bushcare, Macarthur National Parks Association or the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living. From this, you might be inspired to join local events or possibly to start your own environmental group.

- **Native garden**

Design a native garden for home or school. Identify some local plant species that could be planted to attract wildlife.

- **Weed warriors**

Investigate a local invasive species that threatens native habitat. Create a poster to educate others about the problems caused by this weed and alternatives that can be planted in the garden.

- **Aboriginal significance**

Research local plant species and identify a plant that is culturally significant to local Aboriginal people. Draw a detailed diagram of the plant and identify its parts and how they are used. As an extension effort, encourage the students to add the wildlife or pollinators that use the plant.

To have help with this, you can contact the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). The LALC work with the Campbelltown, Wollondilly, Camden and Liverpool communities, empowering both indigenous and non-indigenous people in traditional ecological knowledge.

If you like getting outdoors and learning about our native plants, animals and pollinators, and being in a team of people that helps to protect these species and improve their habitat, contact your Council's Environment team to see how you can get involved!



HOW CAN YOUR SCHOOL BECOME A HAVEN FOR NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA?

How can your school become a haven for native flora and fauna?

- **Design a native garden for home or school**
Identify some local plant species that could be planted to attract wildlife. Did you know that your Council supplies each school with free native plant species as part of National Tree Day. Contact your local Council for more information about how to receive the plants.
- **Leave dead wood and rocks in the bush**
Although dead wood and rocks might not seem like much to us, plants and animals use these things as shelter and a source of food. This is why it is important that we leave these things where they lie.
- **Join a community group, such as a local Bushcare group**
If you like to get outdoors and spend time in the bush or other natural environments you can contact Council to see what fun activities you could get involved in with your family and friends on the weekend.
- **Set up your own eco-warrior team at school**
Together, you and your team could become the eco-champions of your school. Through posters, group discussions and assembly announcements you can ensure that the whole school is aware of the threatened plant, animals and pollinators that call your school home.
- **Remove known weed species from your garden and replace them with local native plants**
Sometimes our gardens are full of plants that are not native to our country, and they prevent our native plants from growing. We call these plants weeds. By removing weeds and planting native plants you are helping not only the plants but the native animals and pollinators that need these plants to survive.
- **Visit a local national park or nature reserve**
Getting outdoors and visiting our local protected areas to recreate and grow environmental appreciation. These areas are important places to protect for the community.

The Macarthur region has some beautiful natural areas to visit. To find out all about the areas you can visit each Council's website, or contact them and they can give you all the information you need to get out there and enjoy the natural environment.

Register your school in the Land for Wildlife or Backyard Habitat program

These programs are delivered across the region. They are designed to provide landholders with support to protect and enhance biodiversity on their properties.

Broad-Headed Snake

Warm sandstone rocks are their throne
Through forest and bushland they roam
Their sacred gumtree home

When the bottlebrush sways
They play all day
Heated by the sun's gentle rays

Large black eyes
Of unusual size
They spot their prize
They hiss with delight as the gecko dies

Sunshine gold flowing through the trees
Our snake can finally rest at ease

Until the gums begin to shake
Their home is gone after the quake

All that's left are urban homes
All of which replace their gums
All of which spawn fatal fumes
All of which are dooming them

When will we save our scaled friends?

Maeve S. - Broad-Headed Snake

A LOCAL TREASURE!

Cumberland Plain Woodland - A Critically Endangered Ecological Community

Prior to European settlement, much of Western Sydney, including the Macarthur region, would have been draped in the unique Cumberland Plain Woodland Community, consisting of a mix of large gum trees, patchy shrubs and grasses.

This rare woodland community provides habitat to a wide range of native plants and animals, forming vital areas of habitat within a wildlife corridor that has the potential to connect the bushland between the Georges and Nepean Rivers.

Due to land clearing for farming and houses it is estimated that only around 6% of the original bushland remains in small patches scattered across the Cumberland Plain. Along with clearing, weeds are one of the biggest threats facing these patches of bush.

The Cumberland Plain Woodland Community provides habitat for a range of threatened plant and animal species including:

- Koala
- Grey-headed Flying Fox
- Cumberland Plain Land Snail
- Diamond Firetail Finch
- Spiked Rice flower

Many parks and reserves in the Macarthur region contain Cumberland Plain Woodland communities. You may like to visit one of these areas:

- Ingleburn Reserve, Ingleburn
- Noorumba Reserve, Rosemeadow
- Australian Botanic Garden Mt Annan
- John Oxley Reserve
- Narellan Vale / Spring Farm Biobank Reserve

Did you know?

It's not only dogs that can play dead. Many of the ground species of the Cumberland Plain Woodland have thick rootstocks, in the form of taproot systems, underground tubers and the like.

This allows the plant to survive even if it looks dead after severe weather conditions such as drought or fire.

BECOME AN ECO-SCHOOL!

Eco-Schools is an international program of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), and aims to empower students to be the change our sustainable world needs by engaging them in fun, action-orientated learning. Australia is the 55th country to launch this program and it gives Australian schools the opportunity to develop and improve the environmental management of the school, underpinned by curriculum development and community engagement in environment and sustainability themes.

Eco-schools Australia schools will have access to the following...

1. Gain full access to Eco-Schools Australia website
2. Eco-Schools 7-Step framework guidelines and resource templates
3. Practical case studies written by Australian Eco-Schools – the who, what, how, where and when of being an Eco-School
4. Action project and lesson ideas, organised by sustainability themes
5. Eco-Schools Awards applications and the ability to apply for Eco-Schools Awards
6. Teaching resource sharing forum
7. Eco-Schools Profile Page to store Eco-Schools data and awards submissions
8. School Search – connect with other Eco-Schools in Australia and view their environmental education initiatives.

To register to become an Eco-School, there is a \$350 (*incl. GST*) registration fee every two years. This fee gives you access to everything listed above.

The Macarthur region has been the first in Australia to take on board the Eco-School program. It is now in over 100 schools throughout Australia. To know more about the Eco-School program visit eco-schools.org.au

Sustainability and Environmental Educators Network SEED

Are you passionate about sustainability and the environment in your school? Interested in receiving more information about the environmental education workshops and programs we offer?

Please do not hesitate to register your interest in the local Sustainability and Environmental Educators Networks!

For Campbelltown City Council: open.space@campbelltown.nsw.gov.au

For Camden Council: sustainability@camden.nsw.gov.au



WHAT IF

In a small country town in Sydney, there was a large pond. The pond was full of rubbish and most animals stayed away from it. Except one family of Blue Billed Ducks. This family had lived in the pond for a long time and it was well known by the town that they weren't safe there. At the pond they barely found any food and were often attacked by nearby foxes.

The people of the town had been watching them for months and even gave the oldest ducks names. They named the boy Billy, after they found out his bill turned blue in the summer. The girl, they named Barbera. As the five ducks swam around, they watched from afar as a car approached the pond. Two people got out and slowly crept towards them. It wasn't until they got closer and a big net was used to scoop them up that they realised what was happening.

The ducks were driven to a new pond that looked much, much cleaner. There were lots of animals that lived there and many plants and insects they could eat. The ducks were much safer here.

But what if the pond hadn't been polluted in the first place?



Cassidy G. - Blue Billed Duck

REFERENCES

Australian Museum

Biodiversity information and the work of the museum

australianmuseum.net.au/biodiversity

American Museum of Natural History

Interactive games, video and resources for kids about biodiversity

amnh.org/explore/ology/biodiversity

Arkive

A gallery of images and information on threatened species.

A number of lesson plans and student activities are also available

arkive.org

Backyard Buddies

Foundation of National Parks & Wildlife program to promote the protection of native animals in suburban areas

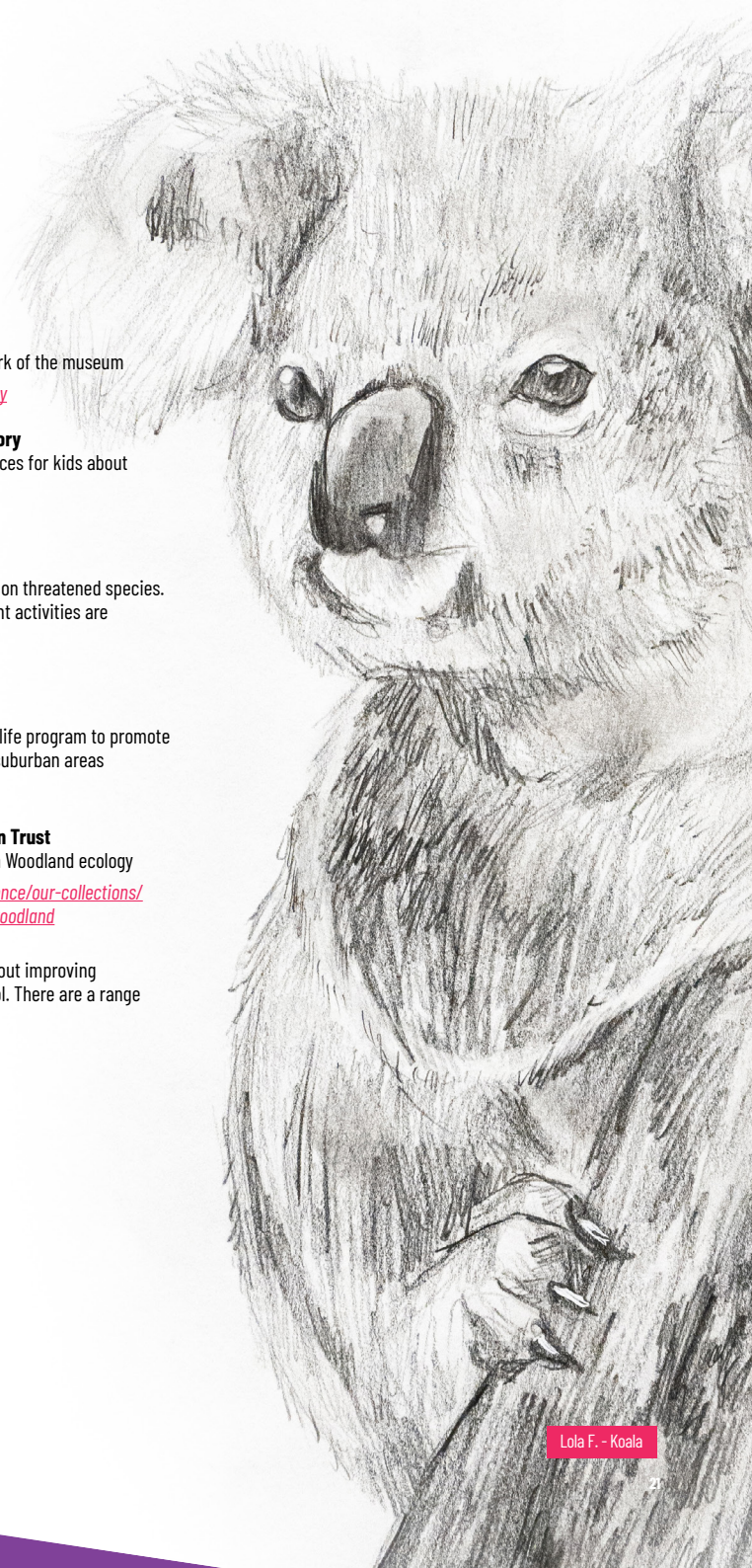
backyardbuddies.org.au

Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust

Information about Cumberland Plain Woodland ecology

www.botanicgardens.org.au/our-science/our-collections/living-collection/cumberland-plain-woodland

Contact your local Council to ask about improving biodiversity outcomes at your school. There are a range of programs and support available.





Neil B. - Squirrel Glider



Camden Council
 P 13 22 63
 W camden.nsw.gov.au



Wollondilly Shire Council
 P 4677 1122
 W wollondilly.nsw.gov.au



Campbelltown City Council
 P 4645 4000
 W campbelltown.nsw.gov.au