


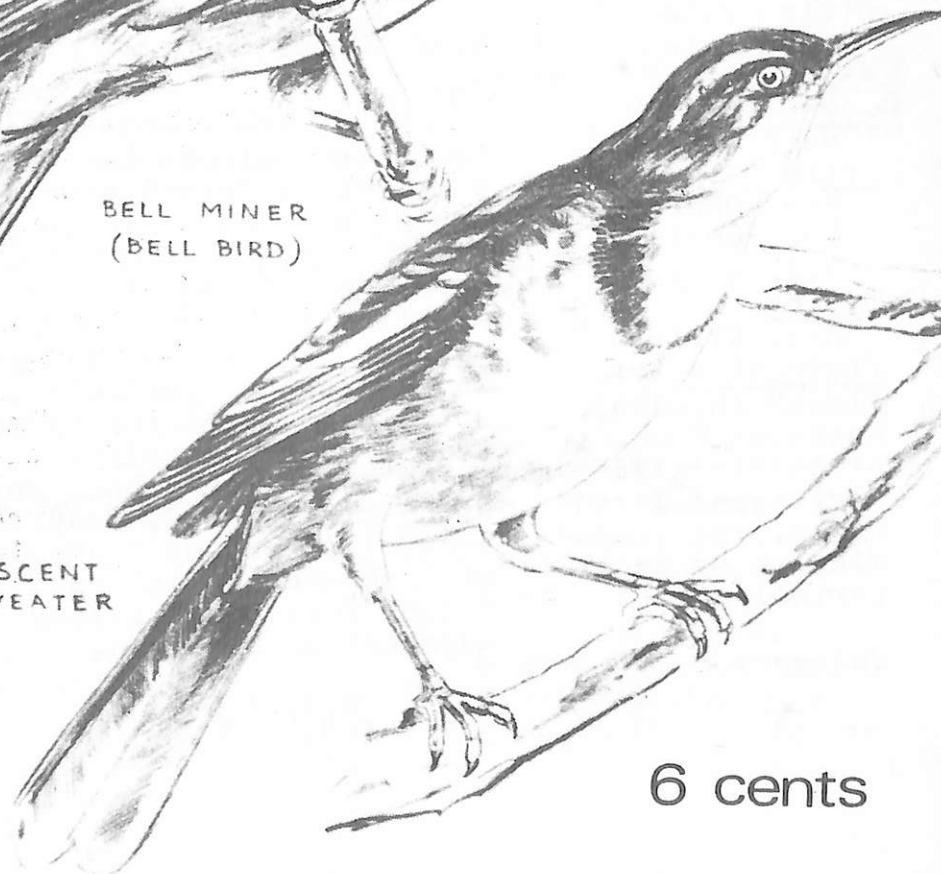
Nature Notes

Volume 9

No.1



BELL MINER
(BELL BIRD)



CRESCENT
HONEYEATER

Sketches by
Jack Truscott

6 cents

CONTENTS

Editorial

Rock Pools.

H.J.Lawry

Letters to the Editor

Crossword

From Here and There

Blackburn Lake
What a beautiful Sight

F Tyrrell
The Overflow

L. Delacca
Stolen View

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Category B

Dear Girls and Boys,

3 SCIENCE, SCIENCE,

6 SCIENCE, I want you to think very seriously about that word.....

7 SCIENCE! What does science mean to you? It would be interesting if all your answers could be

8 recorded and examined, because I am sure there would be many different ones. Strangely, the

10 majority of you would be correct; because the answer you gave

12 probably was a form of scientific investigation, or in other words

15 a BRANCH of the vast study of

Science.

One of your subjects at school is called Science isn't it? What a lot of different studies you are able to do in those periods and what fun they can be. You know, one of the aims of this magazine is to help you in your science studies: to give you new and different approaches, to stimulate your thinking and arouse your curiosity. The articles which follow have been selected with this in mind. Read them carefully because I am sure there will be much of interest to all. I look forward to a long and happy association with you.

H.J. Lawry
(Editor)

ROCK POOLS

A SCIENCE PROJECT FOR ONE OR MANY, AT SCHOOL OR HOME

AIM: To establish our own

ROCK POOL

IMPORTANT EQUIPMENT:

Several flat stones and pieces of slate

Assorted round rocks.

A quantity of black polythene (heavy gauge)
Sand (quantities are dependent on the size of the pool you build)



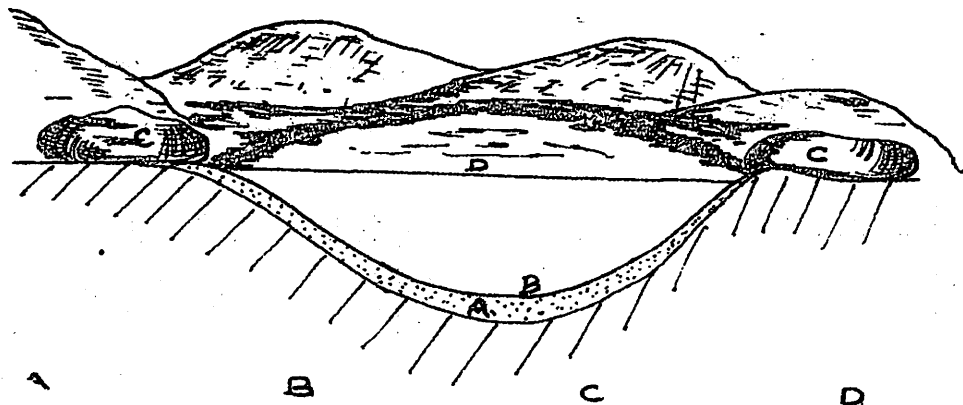
IMPORTANT NOTE: Choose a sunny position and obtain permission to carry out the construction there

Building the Pool

It is not difficult to make a simple rock pool. Not only does a pool add interest and beauty to your garden, it also provides an excellent source of science study material. Once established they are practically maintenance free. If you would like to try your hand at pool building, here is one way

of going about it.

First of all decide how big your pool is going to be and the final shape it will take. Approximately 4' X 2'6" with a finished depth of 1'6" is a good size. Discuss the safety of this very carefully. It is a good plan to decide on the final surroundings of the pool at this stage too.



A Sand layer B Polythene C "Anchor" Rocks D Water level

Now go ahead and dig the hole heaping the dirt around and well back from the edge. Try to get the top edge level all round if possible. What tool could you use to help in this? Next, line the hole and over the edges with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " layer of builder's sand, or if your soil is fine simply smooth the inner surface down very carefully, making sure there are no sharp stones protruding. Having done this, you must decide how much black plastic lining will be necessary to cover all surfaces and overlap the edges by at least one foot. A trial layer of newspaper will give a fair indication of the amount required. The black plastic may be purchased from your Building Supplies shop. After lining the pool fold the creases down flat, anchor the edges with selected rocks, carefully place a nice big round rock in the bottom (a safety precaution). Your pool should now be ready for filling with water.

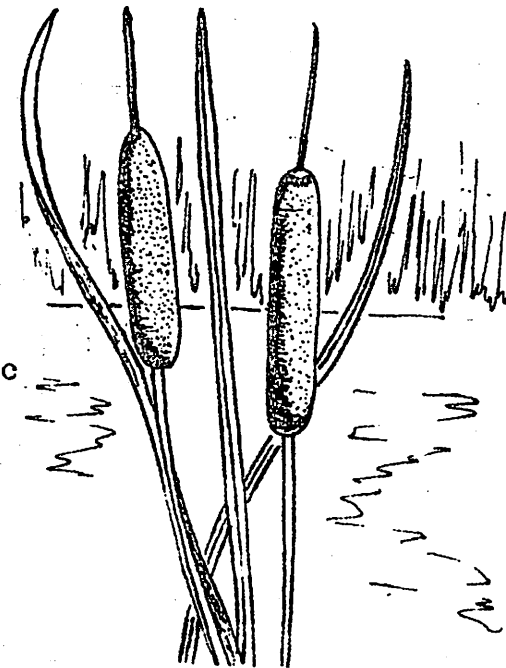
Once the necessary final levelling has been achieved mask the edges with the slate and rocks aiming always to obtain as natural an effect as possible. I think it is a good idea to let the pool stand now for at least two weeks.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Your pool will be more durable if you lay the polythene directly on the soil and cover it with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " layer of concrete. Paint the concrete later with black pool paint.

Before stocking your pool, empty out the old water and refill. Some careful decisions must now be made about the type of fish and plants you put in. I suggest the selection of a hardy type of fish, but be guided by your fish supplier in this. Acclimatise them by floating their container in the pool before their release. Feed your fish according to the instructions on the fish food tin.

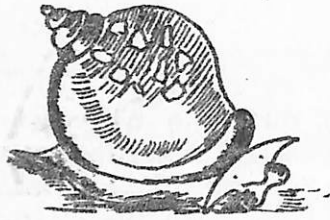
An inexpensive plant is the Bulrush or Reed Mace (*Typha angustifolia*). This is the tall reed-like plant which often grows thickly where there are wet conditions. More than likely there is some growing not far from where you live. Dig up a couple of rhizomes with leaves attached and plant them in black plastic flower-pots using the mud in which they have grown. Put an inch layer of gravel on top to avoid water discolouration and stand the pots on the bottom of the pool. Soon several tall green leaves will appear. See what you can find out about this interesting plant.



The Bulrush or Reed mace

Two or three lilies will provide further interest. Plant these in 6" pots too. I find a 2-3" layer of well dried cow manure topped by a layer of garden soil to be a good planting medium. Cover this soil with gravel too. Three or





our pond snails at this stage to eat the algae and your pool is complete. You will be surprised how many creatures make it their home.

The look of your pool will be enhanced by well planned surroundings. Pebbles over plastic or a thick layer of lilydale topping, look attractive, especially if you plant some native ground cover plants in them. A few small stringy bark logs near or overhanging the water look nice too.

I am sure that many of you children in the schools could manage to make a pool like the one described above. Wouldn't it be fun to work on it as a class or group project? Why not ask your teacher if you can make a rock pool for part of your science program this term? If you do make a pool, please let me know how you get on.

LETTER BOX

This interesting letter was sent in by Mandy O'Callaghan of Grade 5S Blackburn Lake.

Dear Editor,

While I was on my holiday at McCrae we found a strange thing on a wattle tree. It was about 3" in diameter and it had a brown suede-like surface.

I picked it off the tree and cut it open. It was like wood inside and pale green in colour. The centre was similar to an apple core.

Would you please explain to me how it grew there and what it is.
Editor;

The object you describe is a gall. It was most likely caused by a FUNGUS which made the tree grow a knob where normally it would not. On some plants galls are inhabited by gall flies—tiny boring insects. See if you can find any of these in the trees near your home. Observe which trees are prone to grow galls and whether all galls are inhabited.

CROSSWORDS CLUES.. See back page

Across

3. A night animal that lives in a burrow.
5. A coloured bird with a hooked beak.
8. A laughing bird.
10. A small blue-capped bird.
12. A feather-tailed flying animal
15. An animal that may hide in roofs or trees.
17. This bird finds its food in flowers.
18. A big bird with a crest.

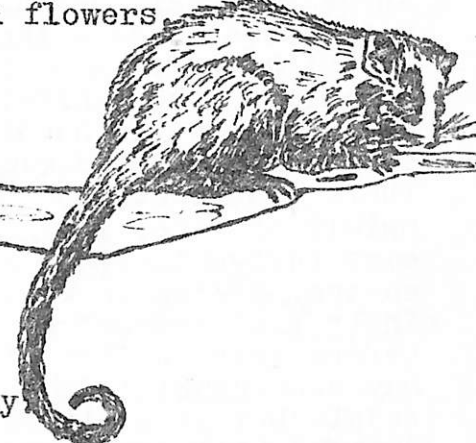
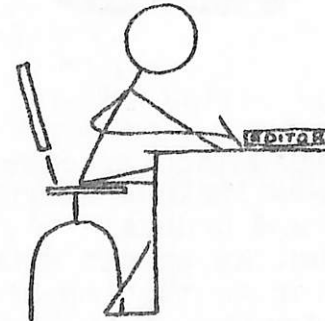
Down

2. A cuddly looking animal.
1. A graceful bird on a lake.
4. A large dancing bird.
5. A duck billed water animal.
6. A kind of wallaby
7. A bird of prey.
8. A large hopping animal.
9. A rose breasted cockatoo.
11. Little birds that like honey.
13. A large bird of prey.
14. Large colourful seed eating bird.
15. Large flightless bird.

Peter Ikin Gr.5 Blackburn Lake

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you for the crossword puzzle Peter. I'm sure our readers will enjoy it. Remember this is your magazine girls and boys and I hope that crosswords and similar articles to those appearing on the following pages will become a regular feature each month. If you would like your school to appear in "From Here and There", please send your contributions to me and I will try to print them sometime this year.



FROM HERE

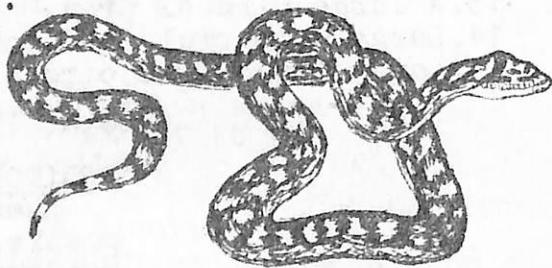
This month's school: Blackburn Lake Primary School
A CARPET PYTHON

A carpet python makes an unusual pet. They are very clean because they do not have fleas or the parasites other animals have. With gentle handling they become very docile. Their diet consists mainly of mice. The mice must be given to them alive as they prefer to kill their food themselves before they swallow it. This may seem cruel to some people but it isn't really. Pythons kill their prey by coiling themselves around it and squeezing hard. Death is almost instantaneous. Snakes only eat one mouse every eight to ten days.

During winter their box must be heated to a constant 75 degrees. This is necessary as they are prone to pneumonia which is fatal to them. Every so often they need to be wiped over with a soft cloth moistened with peanut oil. This keeps their skin soft and clean. They shed their skin three or four times a year. Our

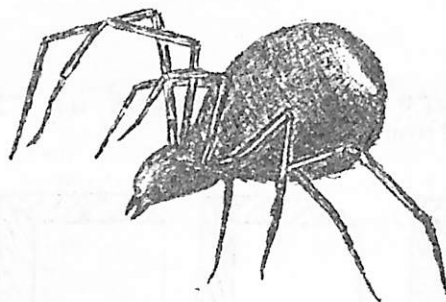
python is called Napoleon. We have many laughs at his ability to get into unusual places, crawling up the venetian blinds, into the book shelves, and, if we are not watching him inside the television set.

Fiona Schroeder 6W.
Watch out Napoleon there are some "shocking" programs on! ..Ed.



Spiders.
Australia's 1400 species of spiders include many strange and unusual specimens. The spider does not belong to the insect family and has eight legs. Most spiders use poison

AND THERE



to catch their prey, but this is not usually harmful to humans. The Red-back and the Funnel-web, however, have very dangerous poison fangs and their bites can be fatal.

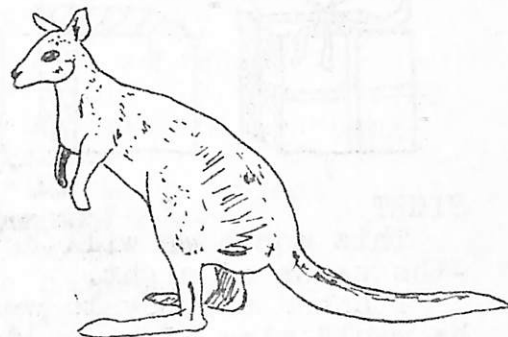
David Watts 5B
Our Wildlife.

We should all aim to protect our wildlife. Children in later years will miss so much if they are unable to experience the thrill of seeing a koala in a tree or a kangaroo hopping across a paddock.

We have a lot to learn about our native animals. Did you know that a baby kangaroo climbs from the birth canal to the pouch at the size of a shelled peanut? When the baby reaches the pouch he stays there for at least six months, then one day out

pops a head: the head of a fully developed baby kangaroo.

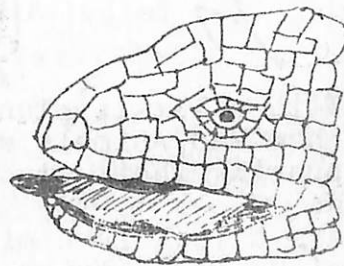
Julienne Allerton 5-6N



A BLUE TONGUE.

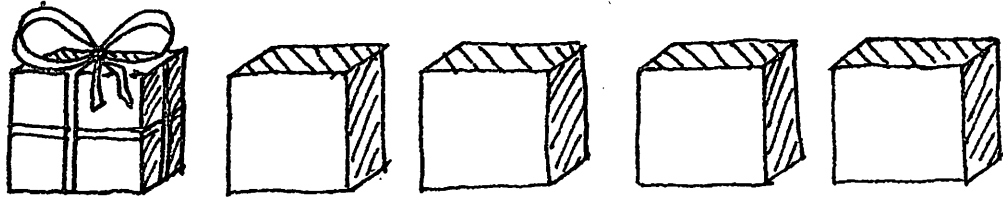
In the holidays my Dad found a Blue-tongue lizard sunning itself in our backyard. It was about a foot long. We put it in a bucket and let him out in the long grass over the road.

Elisabeth Jones 4D.



WHAT A

When you were born you were made a present of five wonderful senses. Can you name them?

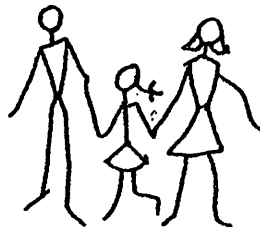


SIGHT ? ? ? ?
This month we will have a look at only one of these -the sense of sight.

I asked one boy to write down some of the things he would miss if he suddenly lost his sight. This is his list:

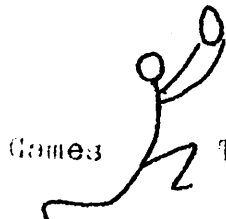


His dinner

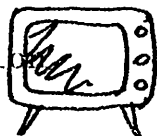


His family

WHAT WOULD BE SOME
OF THE THINGS YOU
WOULD MISS?



Games



Television

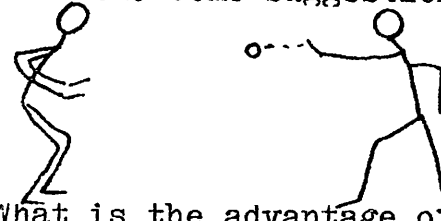
With a little planning you could make a fine study of how Man, Animals and insects have special ways of improving their sight.

MAN:

Have a look in a mirror, study a friend closely. Have a close look. Write down what you notice with perhaps

BEAUTIFUL SIGHT

a few questions that come to mind. Have you wondered why you have TWO eyes? Wouldn't ONE do? Try some experiments using both eyes first, then with one eye covered. Some suggestions:



catching a ball
writing a sentence
throwing a ball to a friend
reaching out and touching
an object.
pointing to an object

What is the advantage of having two eyes?

Protection:

Because your eyes are so precious your body guards them well. How is this done?

Improving Our Sight:

Man has not been satisfied with his naked eye. Very cleverly he has invented ways of improving his vision. Try this word game-you'll have to sort out the jumbled letters for the answers!

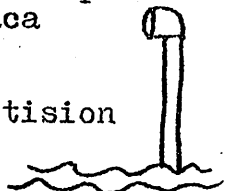
INSTRUMENTS:

1. to see very small objects epocsorcim
2. to see things in the distance scteleope
3. to see inside your body ryxa
4. to see from a submarine prsoeeicp
5. to store interesting sights meraca
6. to bring pictures into your

home of important events
while they are happening veletision

How did you go?

Can you think of others?

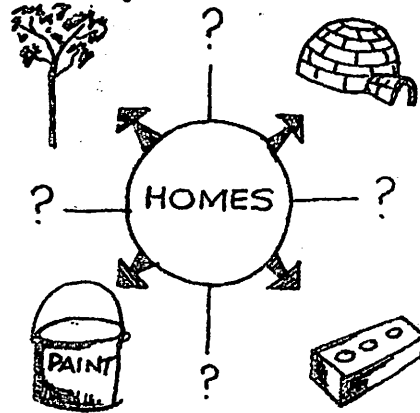


Use your library to find out some information about these inventions and their inventors

THE OVERFLOW

Last year in our inspectorate many schools attempted to introduce some new and exciting ways of working, particularly in the fields of written expression, science and social studies. To many teachers these were not really "new" as similar schemes have been in operation in some of our schools for years, but 1971 saw a big leap forward in this type of work. In many cases this "new" work involved working from a central theme-branching out into new fields of thought and interest, each in some way related to the initial theme.

By now you are porbably wondering what on earth this has to do with Nature Notes.

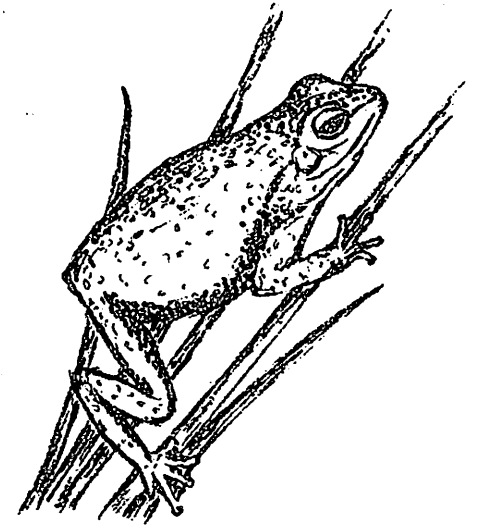


During the latter part of last year our family made an extensive tour of the east coast of Australia, covering nearly 8000 miles and a tremendous variety of country -the flat, but not monotonous, plain of outback N. S.W., the majestic mountains of the Great Dividing Range, the lush tropical rain-forests and fruit plantations, and of course the beautiful white sands and deep blue water of the coastline.

Lately I have been reliving some of our experiences on the road and wondering how they could be of

assistance to Nature Notes

I remembered the beautiful tree frogs which were so loved by Sue and Paul, and the frequent occasions they spent studying them at close range. These friendly creatures we found in great numbers in Southern Queensland and it was no surprise to discover later that their family Hylidae (Tree Frogs) were among the most populous in Australia.

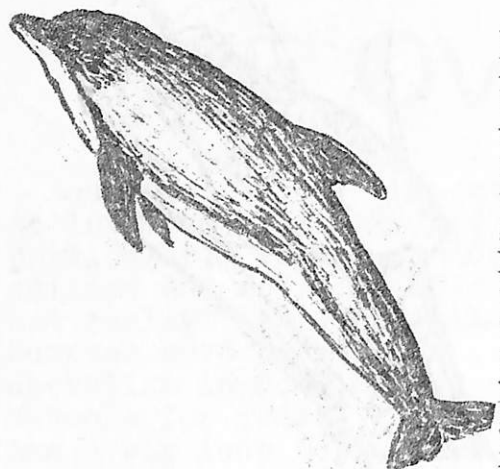


It was in this area, and further north in particular, that we met the ugly cane toad. What a contrast to our pretty little tree frogs! These odious creatures had been imported from Hawaii to North Queensland to control the cane beetle. At night they seem to be everywhere, staring with their baleful eyes.

One of the less pleasant aspects (to us Victorians at any rate) was the enormous number of fires in Queensland - not only sugar-cane fires in preparation for harvest, but bushfires. I cannot remember travelling in any part of Queensland north of Brisbane without the mountains being obscured by smoke from burning bushland. It was even more horrifying to learn that most Queenslanders did not care much about this sad state of affairs. The general attitude seemed to be that there was plenty of bush so what did it matter? We saw little or no attempt to control fires. I wonder if any thought was given to the bush creatures which either perished or lost their homes. And what of the large scale pollution of the atmosphere?

At Tolga on the Tableland our camp was visited at night by several small wallabies which came out of the nearby rain forest - not to mention a friendly possum which came down from a nearby jacaranda to scrounge for a biscuit.

One of the highlights of our tour was the fantastic



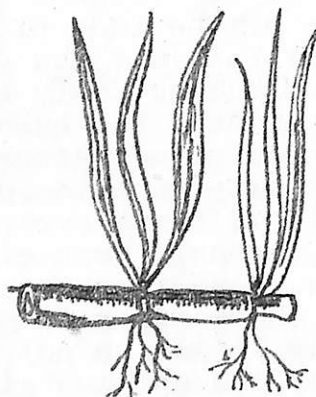
performance of the dolphins at Marineland near Southport. I am not usually in tune with watching trained animals perform, but I was amazed at what these dolphins could do. Surely they rank close to humans in intelligence. We saw them skip the pool length on their tails, leap vertically 18 feet, sing in tune and just like humans look for the applause that never failed to follow their feats.

These are just a few of our multitude of experiences. Can you see how they relate to my opening paragraphs on working from a theme? Each of these incidents was of sufficient interest to us to provide a starting point for much wider investigations and discoveries.

For example our meeting with the frogs and toads could lead to a wider investigation of the species, to discover the differences between them, their feeding habits, animals that prey on them, or vice-versa perhaps then a study of their life cycle. The Smoky state of Queensland, due in part to the burning of the cane, could lead to a study of the sugar cane itself and other allied studies or on the other hand to pollution or conservation.

What has this to do with you? Well you have just returned from holidays too, and no doubt you also had many thrilling experiences. Why not allow your experiences to "overflow" and branch out with many "new" ideas, Discoveries and enjoyment to yourself.

Go to it and good luck!



STOLEN VIEW



In your school library, or on a bookshelf in one of the classrooms you will probably find a copy of the Gould League's "Birds of the Ranges". This little book is full of wonderful drawings of our mountain birds, and tells of their habits. There are pictures and notes about the dwindling Helmeted Honeyeater the Satin Bower Bird and the great Wedge-tailed Eagle.

One of my favorites is the Eastern Whip Bird. Have you ever heard this bird's whip-lash call? If you can talk your family into an afternoon visit to the Dandenongs and spend some time in the forests there, you will be sure to hear the male bird calling with a song that sounds just as if he is cracking his stock-whip.

We live at Kalorama and the forest is right at our back door. Some weeks ago we heard the call right near the edge of the scrub followed by another from a different hiding place. We were able to creep down to an old man blue-gum and hide, and we saw a whip-bird hopping about on the low branches of some mimosa. He was feeding on a large grub he had found in the bracken ferns below. So busily was he eating and calling to another bird nearby that he didn't see us, and he



Eastern
Whip-bird

played about for quite some time. Every time he called, his mate gave a chuckled "choo choo" cry as if she thought it was all a joke, or wanted to make sure that she had the last word!

We treasure this wonderful chance we had to see the bird. When he called, his dark green crest tipped forward and he shook his wings to help him make the as loudly as he could. Whipbirds are very timid and are hardly ever seen outside their bushland hiding place. But if you can sit quietly in a fern gully and wait patiently, you just might be allowed to see something that few people have been lucky enough to enjoy—a whipbird in his native haunts.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE See Page 7 for clues.

