

WALLY
GOES O.S.

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NATURE NOTES

EDITORIAL

Hello there,

Well, this month has been an exciting one for us here at "Nature Notes". Wally won Tattslo to last Saturday night and promptly announced that he was heading off for the 'good life'. Then, as if a marsupial bomb had exploded, our neat and tidy office was thrown into a whirlpool of clothes, suitcases, traveller's cheques and tissues (for the good-bye at the airport). "Don't forget to write", we cried out to our furry friend as he boarded the jumbo jet. "We want to know exactly what is going on in the rest of the world", added Ernie, who gets very good marks for social studies at school. "There aren't many books written for echidnas, these days", he complained. "They're all in English!"

Of course, we knew that Wally was a poor letter writer. So.... on the way to Tullamarine, we slipped James the snail from 'Probe' into his suitcase, to act as letter writer and photo-taker. Thanks to him, we are able to bring you this international issue of "Nature Notes".

Cheerio for now,
Debra Brydon



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'End seal kill' cry

OTTAWA, Mon., AAP. — About 200 chanting protesters from Europe and North America marched by torchlight to Canada's Parliament last night to demand an end to seal hunting.

The demonstration was part of a two-day effort to draw world attention to the annual slaughter of Harp seal pups which began last week off the northern Newfoundland coast.

Canadian and Norwegian sealers faced near-gale force winds and snow in the hunt off the Gannet Islands yesterday.

A smaller hunt off Prince Edward Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence was halted last week because, the Government said, inexperienced sealers were wasting pelts by their sloppy hunting and, in some cases, skinning cubs alive.

...are not found in Aussie, Wally. They live on drifting pack-ice in the Arctic part of the world.



Cows have pups. That's right! When Harp seal mums have babies, they are careful not to get too close to the edge of the ice.



In 1831, 687,000 Harp seals were killed in Newfoundland for their fur and blubber. Nowadays, about 500,000 are killed each year.



Harp seals live in big packs which travel long distances north to moult and south to breed in winter.



The pups' yellowish coat turns pure white after a few days. When left alone, the pups bleat like lambs and freeze in terror when danger (usually a sealer) comes along.



Two-thirds of the seals killed each year in March are pups. Many people argue for and against the killing of these cute and cuddly looking seals. What do you think people on each side of the argument would be saying?

WHAT DO YOU THINK? WHY?

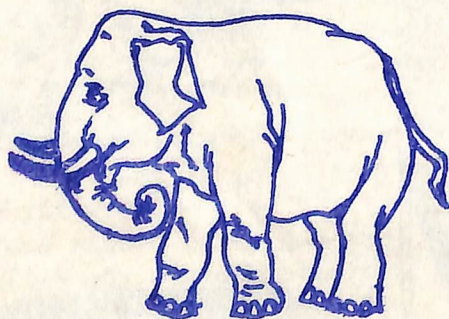
WRITE TO US HERE AT "NATURE NOTES" AND LET THE OTHER READERS KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

WHY ME?

What part of my body do the hunters want?

Today, many plants and animals are becoming so rare that many nature lovers fear they may disappear altogether. Humans are mostly to blame for this. Sometimes animals have their home environment destroyed. Sometimes the other animals and plants they eat are taken away when apartment blocks, mines or timber plantations take over the land. Sadly, some animals are hunted down and killed for their attractive fur or feathers. Find out the names of the animals on these two pages. Why are they becoming extinct so quickly? What do you think can be done to help them survive?

Should you buy ivory?



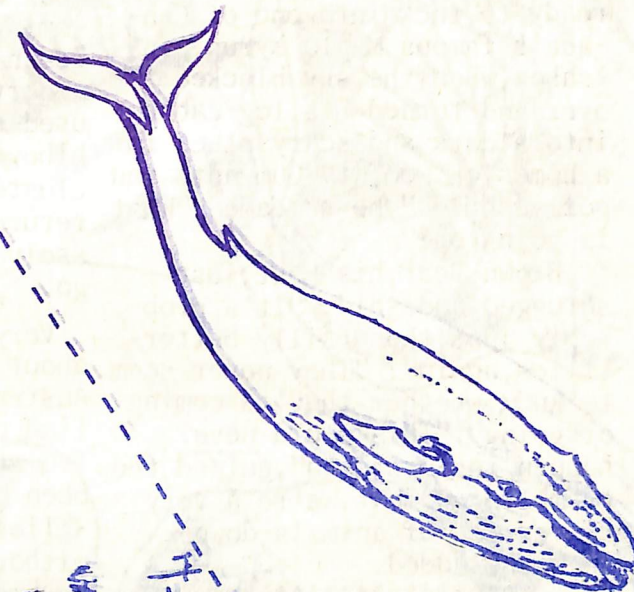
I am so rare that hunters go out to capture our young ones to breed in zoos. Mothers protect their babies so fiercely that the hunters have to kill them in order to get the babies. Sadly, when I am captured, I don't start new families very often.

What countries am I found in?

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After I am killed, different parts of my body become ingredients used in the making of PERFUME, DOG FOOD, FILM, SOAP AND PAINT. Can other ingredients be found to make these human wants? Could we do without some of these wants?

Artist: Peter Eno



In which parts of the world am I found in?

Did the American Indians have anything to do with the dropping numbers of my sort of animal? Who is to blame?

ARE ANY AUSTRALIAN ANIMALS BECOMING RARE? WHY IS THIS HAPPENING? CONSERVATIONISTS ARE OFTEN TALKED ABOUT IN 'THE NEWSPAPERS'. WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO DO? LOOK UP THE MEANING OF THE WORD- 'CONSERVE'-THIS WILL HELP YOU TO ANSWER THE QUESTION. by D. Brydon

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In Canada, Wally meets
up with some.....

Jet setters of the Butterfly world

Wally was just getting ready to tuck into one of Canada's famous Maple syrup pancakes, when the sky blacked over and turned his log cabin into a dark and scary place for a homesick wombat. "Gum nuts and gollywobbles", he screamed. "What is going on?"

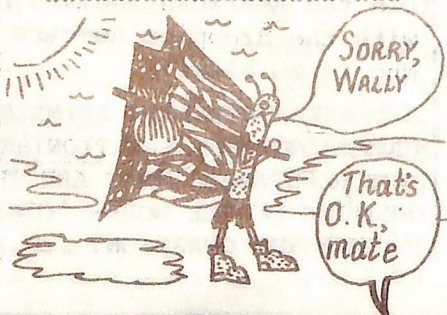
Brown Bear, his host, just shrugged and said, "It's probably just those silly butterflies, again". "They never seem to know whether they're coming or going". "This would never happen in Australia", gulped the trembling wombat. We're a very clever lot of animals down there," he added.

Of course, Wally was mixed up again. The swarm of butterflies that had frightened him were Wanderer butterflies (also known as Monarchs). These insects are found in every continent of the world, including Australia. Their first home is thought to be the continent of North America, where Wally met up with them. Here, every autumn, the Wanderers prepare to fly south from Canada to the southern parts of the U.S.A. - a long trip, indeed! As they travel, more and more Wanderers join up with them until the sky becomes a mass of black and orange. At night, the enormous group sleeps on trees and shrubs - making them

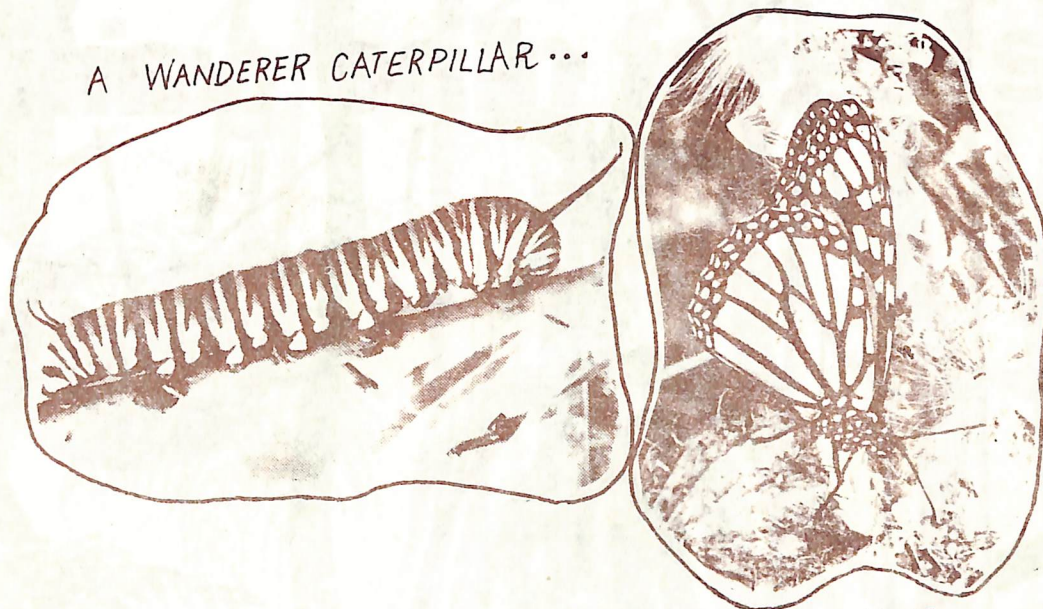
look as if they were blossoming. When they finally reach the U.S.A., they find a certain tree (the one they used the previous year) and hibernate on it in huge clusters. In the spring they return to Canada by themselves, laying eggs as they go.

Very little is known about the habits of the Australian Wanderers. To find out more, naturalists from the Sydney museum have been tagging them. Butterflies for tagging are either caught in the field or brought up from caterpillars. Many thousands of Wanderers are tagged as very few of the tags are ever handed back into them again. SO NEXT TIME YOU FIND A DEAD WANDERER BUTTERFLY HAVE A QUICK LOOK FOR A TAG.

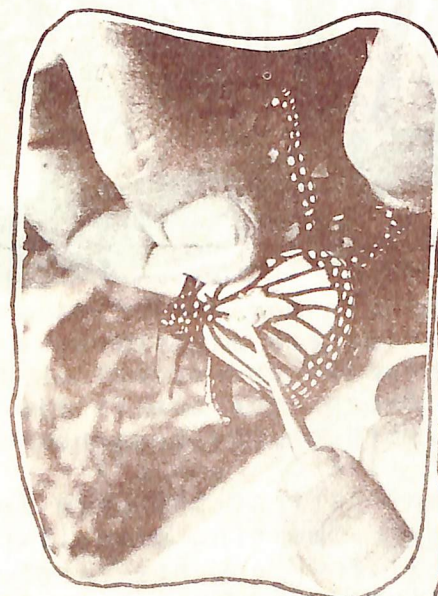
Photos: Thanks to "Australian Natural Resources" Vol. XIV, No. 7, page 217



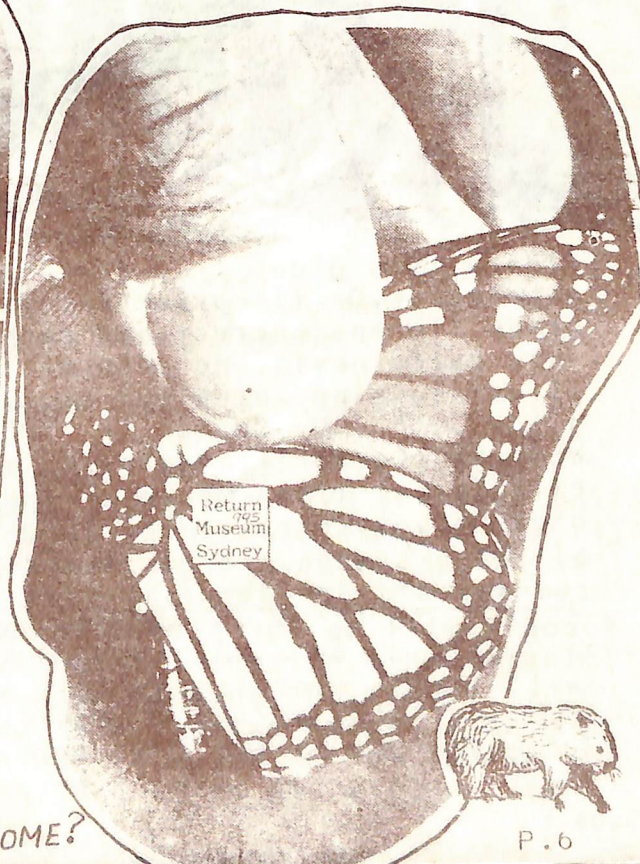
A WANDERER CATERPILLAR...



... ALL GROWN UP



IT'S NOT EASY TO
TAG A WANDERER!



HOME,
SWEET HOME?

... the vanishing rain forests



Artist: W.D. Prohaszky

"There is a giant tree, prominent in a forest that stretches to the skyline. On its canopy, birds and butterflies sip nectar. On its branches, orchids and mistletoes offer flowers to other birds and insects. Among them ferns creep, lichens encrust and centipedes and scorpions lurk. In the rubble that falls among the roots and stems, ants build nests and even earthworms and snails find homes. There is a minute munching of caterpillars and the silent sucking of plant bugs. Through the branches spread spiders' webs. Frogs wait for insects and a snake glides... (E.J.H. Corner in "THE LIFE OF PLANTS")

What Mr. Corner is trying to say is that the rain forest is like a living community. Because everything in a rain forest lives on, in or under something else, it reminds me of a tower of playing cards. Have you ever built one? Do you remember how long it took and how carefully you worked to make the cards balance on each other? Then all of a sudden, one of them slipped and the whole lot came tumbling down, didn't they? Today, many of the world's rainforests are about to 'fall over'. More and more land is being cleared for food crop growing as more and more people fill up our planet. Woodchippers are busy 'eating up' a rainforest somewhere in the world at this very minute. Sadly, not much is really known about living communities in rainforests. But when an area is logged, many other plants and animals lose their homes and their food—and end up just like the trees. Some of them will probably become extinct. WHAT DO YOU THINK CAN BE DONE TO SAVE THE WORLD'S RAINFORESTS? DO YOU THINK THEY SHOULD BE SAVED? WHY OR WHY NOT? PERHAPS YOUR LIBRARY CAN HELP YOU TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF THESE FORESTS AND WHICH ONES ARE IN DANGER.

In China, Wally helps to stop Pandas from becoming extinct.....



Earlier on this year, you may have read in the newspapers about Chia Chia and Ling Ling, perhaps the world's most worried about animals. When one of these precious pandas became sick, it was rushed to one of London's most well-known hospitals-for people. You may ask-why all the fuss? Well, pandas are almost extinct. If zoos don't succeed in breeding them, pandas will end up like the Moa or the Dodo. Skilled trappers, who know the animal's wily habits as well as the dense forests they live in, are hired by zoos to trap pandas. In China, men hunt in teams. James wrote telling us how the team was helped by Wally to build a big log-walled trap. This trap has a sliding door which hangs in such a way that it will slam shut when touched by a panda drawn to a bait. The favorite bait is charred pig bones. These are left in the front of the trap. Once caught, the pandas are carefully manhandled into wire cages for an easy trip down the mountainside to a Chinese animal sanctuary. Of course, Wally tried to tag along for the ride with the panda he helped to catch-everyone knows that, once caught, these bears live a life of luxury. James writes that Wally cannot understand why he doesn't get the same treatment back home in Aussie'



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Wally is inside, pretending to be a panda.



PHOTOS: Thanks to "Australasian Post"
April 16th, 1981

"What a lazy lot those pandas are", said Wally

p. 10

N A T U R E I N T H E P. 11 NEWS

Hamsters killed under Hamsters control scare over rabies

None of us like to see animals hurt or killed. Last month, the people working at Customs offices in our country were faced with a job they would not have enjoyed doing. During the past 12 months, hamsters and gerbils have been smuggled into Australia and sold in pet shops as 'wombles'. Although they are cute and cuddly pets, hamsters have never been allowed to enter this country. Why? If you



• A HAMSTER

have ever heard of the diseases-rabies and meningitis-you will know that we do not want them in Australia. Rabies kills many warm-blooded animals, including humans and cattle. It is a cruel and painful death. Because hamsters spread disease, many children had to hand in their pets (who were 'put down' without pain). I hope that, in time, they will understand why this had to be done.

A frog that gives birth by mouth

Here's some news from home, Wally!

THANKS TO "The Age"



When Australian scientists found this tiny creature in a Queensland forest in 1973, they couldn't believe their own eyes. A frog that gave birth to its young through its mouth was just too much to believe for the British magazine, 'Nature'. When asked to write an article about the Australian 'find', they replied with a polite 'no thanks'. Yet the frog did exist. Dr. Michael Tylor has just made a film about the frogs. The first frog he tried to film spewed six young frogs up to 60 centimetres across a room when it was picked up. The second mother just held her mouth incredibly wide and waited for the babies to step out. How does it all happen? One company is giving the scientists \$21,000 to find out-their work may help humans who suffer from stomach ulcers. So far, only a little is known. First, the female GASTRIC BROODING FROG swallows her own eggs and then eats nothing for up to 8 weeks. So next time your mum complains about you interrupting her meal-remind her that she's one of the luckier ones.

HOW ANIMALS

PROTECT THEMSELVES

Animals have many different ways of protecting themselves against other animals which might want to eat them. Here are some of the ways.
- See if you can think of others.



LIVING IN TREES. This koala like most mammals has a grey fur so it is hard to see high in a tree top. Living in a tree is also a method of protection from ground hunters like dingoes.

Text/photos: Thanks to
"Wildlife in Australia"
Vol. 5, No. 1, Pages 15-16

CAMOUFLAGE. This is another word which means colour which hides you. See if you can find the frogmouth in this picture.



Being big is often enough protection. Camels were brought to Australia as beasts of burden during the last century. Today camels run wild in central Australia.



Termites build strong-walled cities to save them from attack. These are termite mounds in the Northern Territory.

Below: BROKEN WING TRICK. This avocet is using a trick to lure the photographer away from her nest. She is pretending to have a broken wing and flutters over the ground away from the nest.



MOST ANIMALS HAVE MORE THAN ONE WAY OF PROTECTING THEMSELVES. FIND OUT HOW EACH OF THESE ANIMALS SAVE THEIR OWN SKIN - Echidna, Snake, Dolphin, Dog, Crocodile, Ant, Wombat, Fish, Frog and Jellyfish. WHAT ABOUT PLANTS?

Perhaps some of you
with a more unusual
pet could draw
a 'black ink'
front
cover.

All published articles
will, of course
win a book prize with
compliments
from Ernie.

CHICKS er' excuse
me, CHICKENS

jokes

NATURE NOTES NEEDS YOU!

AUSTRALIAN PETS
WORMS

serious info'

tortoises

DUCKS
cartoons
ANTS

RABBITS

weird pets

OR YOUR CHANCE TO
BE FAMOUS!

Why? Well, in September the crew here at
"Nature Notes" is going to take a rest.
We're hoping that you're going to do all
the work. September's issue is going to
be all about pets. As long as you have
a black pen and an interesting pet to
write and draw about that's all you need.
Don't forget to keep the writing neat and
the spelling correct - thousands of other
children may be read-
-ing your article.

PET DIARIES
Photos

AXOLOTL

plant pets

LIZARDS

poems

stories

CAVIES
(what are they?)

P.S. We will
be using the
same size
paper as
we
always
do,

pictures

DEADLINE :
31st. of July

Send to P.O. Box
28, Ringwood East, Vic.
3135

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