

Killer Whale [*Orcinus orca*]

**Nature Notes**



# editorial.

Hi there!

Welcome to Nature Notes for 1983.

This month we have a competition made up by Catherine Mullins from the State Schools Nursery. See if you can guess the answer - it took Wally AGES but he got it in the end.

Watch out for Probe this year, which is being written by Mrs. Dianne Darley, our new assistant editor. NN's first issue has lots of info' on whales, but you can read that for yourselves!

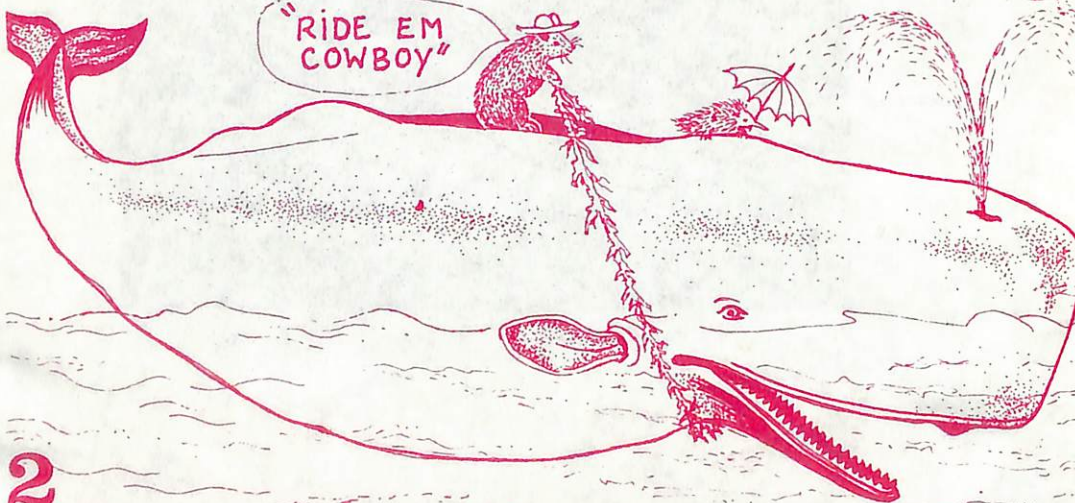
Bye for now,  
Mandy Carmichael.

## CONTENTS.

- P.1....cover
- 'Killer Whale'
- P.2...editorial
- P.3...Spouting Off
- P.4..."Killer"
- P.5...Whale History
- P.6...It's All Greek To Me.
- P.7...Skeletonised Leaves.
- P.8..."This is Your Life, Nigel Numbat"
- P.10..Competition.
- P.11..Another One Bites the Dust.
- P.12..Super Snail
- P.14..Group Therapy
- P.15..Aussie Word.
- P.16..Wally and the Cricket.

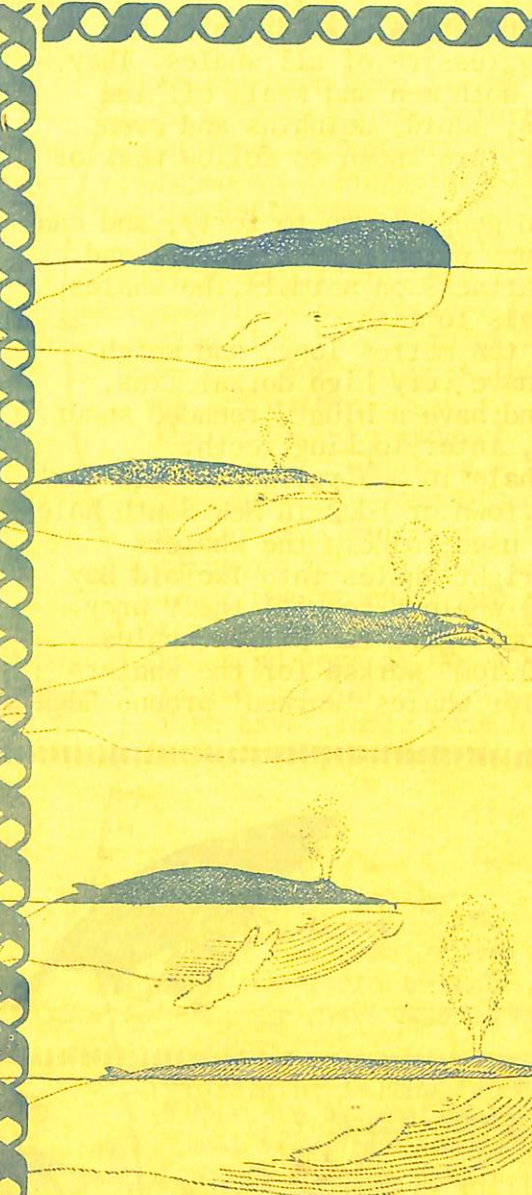
COLORING COMPETITION WINNERS, FROM DECEMBER 1982 ARE: J&S CROMPTON, RAELINE FITZGERALD LINDA WRIGGLESWORTH, TOBY HENGVELD. WELL DONE!

"RIDE EM COWBOY"



2

# SPOUTING OFF



Whales are mammals of the 'order' cetaceans. which also includes dolphins and porpoises. Whales are very special mammals, because they are so large, and especially now because so many are in danger of extinction.

What's the first image of a whale that comes to your mind? Most people would answer 'a spouting whale'. Well, the picture in their mind would be there, but would they know exactly why whales spout?

Whales spout from their 'blow hole', which is really their nostrils, which have moved to the top of their head over millions of years. The whales of today still breathe in and out using these nostrils.

When a whale surfaces from a dive, it breathes the warmed air and tiny droplets of oil out of its nostrils. Because the 'stale' air is warmer than the air at the surface of the ocean, it vapourises, and can be seen for long distances. It is visible on hot, dry days as well as cold days, because of the oil in it.

Whales spouting. TOP TO BOTTOM: Sperm Whale; Gray Whale; Pacific Right Whale; Humpbacked Whale; Blue Whale.

3



# KILLER!

Killer Whales are black and white whales, which are reputed to be the most aggressive of all whales. They have been known to knock both men and seals off ice floes. They feed on seals, squid, dolphins and even other smaller whales. They are known to follow weak or injured animals for prey.

The killer whales hunt in gangs of up to forty, and can swim very fast. These gangs often have a leader, and have been known to plan attacks on animals. The whales prefer warm blooded animals to fish.

Killer whales grow up to ten metres long, and weigh up to four tonnes. They have very high dorsal fins, up to two metres high, and have a blunt, rounded snout. They have large, conical, inter-locking teeth.

The most famous Killer Whale in Australia was 'Old Tom'. 'Old Tom' lived near the town of Eden in New South Wales and was a huge bull, who used to help the whalers there herd humpback and right whales into Twofold Bay to make it easier for the whalers to kill their prey. In return, the whalers would give the killer whales part of their catch. 'Old Tom' worked for the whalers for forty years. The killer whales 'worked' around Eden right up to 1930.

WHAT DO  
YOU MEAN—  
"YUMMY  
WARM  
BLOODED  
WOMBAT?"



\*What are some other 'famous' whales in history?

\* Have you read 'Moby Dick' or 'Orca' ?

\* How do whales communicate?

\* Why do you think the killer whales at Eden would have helped the whale hunters?

\* Why did the Killer whales stop 'working' at Eden, around 1930?

## history

Whales have been living in the sea for nearly 50 million years. Before this they used to live on land. Scientists think the whales were related to a furry, pig-like animal that roamed the earth eons ago.

Now, as we know, whales are entirely aquatic. They have lost their furry coats, and have a smooth skin, suitable for the water. Under their skin they have a thick layer of blubber, which is fat, and protects them from the coldness of icy waters.

Whales have horizontal tail fins, made of skin and muscle, unlike a fish's.

The whale has remnants of its four legged ancestor still with it. The two paddle-like flippers are all that is left of the whales' arms, whilst there are parts of a pelvis in the whales' bone structure, which mean it had hind legs at one time.

Whales breathe air, and haven't got gills, like fish have. Their nose has moved to the top of their head, to make it easier to breathe.

### FIND OUT.....

- \* What are some of the different types of whales in the world today?
- \* Why is there a movement to try and stop the whaling industry ?
- \* Who are the world's largest whaling nations?
- \* What is the difference between a BALEEN whale and a TOOTHED whale?
- \* Which species is the largest?
- \* See what you can discover about BEACHED whales—why people think it happens, etc.



# It's all Greek to me!

Throughout the world, the scientific names given to plants have been in Latin, or if originally in another language, they have been changed to Latin. Why Latin? Well, Latin is the language of science and it serves a purpose of having one international language by which plants are named. Sometimes Greek names are used too. How are plants named? A lot of the names are actual descriptions of the plants involved. Can you try and guess what 'eucalyptus citriodora' is? It's the lemon scented gum, and it's pretty easy to see how the Latin name describes the tree. Some plants are named after their discoverer. Can you think of one? What about the Banksia, discovered by Sir Joseph Banks? Other plants are named in ways which are unfamiliar to us. That's when a botanical dictionary can come in handy. Even though we tend to use a lot of 'common' names for plants instead of their scientific names, there are still quite a few scientific names that have crept into our language, and we don't even realize it! The names Chrysanthemum, Hydrangea, Oleander, Philodendron and Rhododendron are all scientific names, so as you can see they really AREN'T too hard to master after all!



Well, it's not in echidna, that's for sure!

5.

# SKELETON!

Sometimes when you walk through the bush, you can find a skeleton of a leaf. Leaf skeletons can be really useful if you are studying leaves, or if you wish to use skeletonised leaves for making cards or pictures. Here's a 'recipe' for making skeletonised leaves.

You will need one tablespoon of washing soda in one litre of water. Place the leaves in this mixture, and leave them for about an hour. Make sure you don't get ANY of the liquid on your hands or face.



Remove the leaves and rinse them in clear water. Use a soft brush to carefully remove any leaf tissue that remains on the skeleton.

Your leaf is likely to be a brownish color. If you wish you can soak it for about an hour in a weak solution of bleach, to make it whitish. You can then dye it, if you wish. When you have finished your leaves, place them on newspaper to let them dry. If you want them to be flat, dry them between two pieces of paper, with a weight on top.



When you have finished your leaf, look at it, and see if you can pick out the major midrib, and other features of the leaf.

By M. Carmichael



# This is Your Life

## Nigel Numbat

GIVE HIM A BIG  
HAND FOLKS!"

YES NIGEL, WE HAD  
TROUBLE FINDING  
YOU, IT SEEMS THAT  
NUMBATS OR 'BANDED  
ANT EATERS' AS YOU  
ARE ALSO KNOWN,  
ARE TO BE FOUND  
ONLY IN REMOTE  
AREAS OF SOUTH  
WEST AUSTRALIA  
IN WOODLANDS AS  
YET UNTOUCHED  
BY MAN. OTHER  
PARTS OF AUSTRALIA  
USED TO BE HOME  
TO YOUR RELATIVES,  
BUT DUE TO THE  
DESTRUCTION OF WOOD-  
LAND AREAS YOUR  
FOLKS DIED OUT, GREAT PITY!



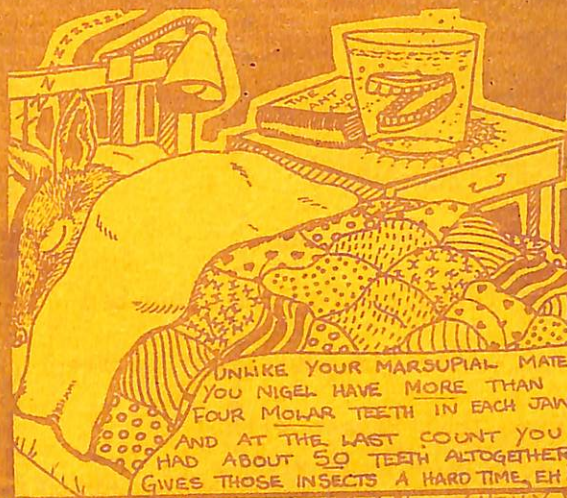
YOU AND YOUR BROTHER NED  
WERE BORN FEBRUARY TIME,  
BUT YOUR MUM NOT HAVING A  
POUCH, HAD TO  
CARRY YOU  
UNDER HER  
BODY. YOU  
LADS KEPT A  
TIGHT GRIP  
ON HER FUR.



ANOTHER NEAT WAY OF  
KEEPING OUT OF PREDATORS,  
CLUTCHES WAS TO DO YOUR  
FORAGING FOR FOOD, NAMELY  
TERMITES, DURING THE  
DAYLIGHT HOURS WHEN  
YOUR ENEMIES WERE  
FAST ASLEEP.

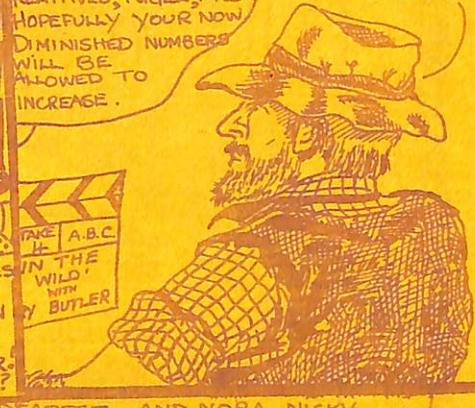


ONE THING THAT  
STANDS YOU  
APART FROM  
MOST OTHER  
MARSUPIALS  
IS YOUR  
BEAUTIFUL COAT  
ALTHOUGH IT'S  
VERY COARSE  
THE LOVELY  
CREAMY WHITE  
STRIPES  
ON YOUR  
BACK AND THE  
RUSTY RED COLOURING CERTAINLY  
DO LOOK HANDSOME.



CONSERVATIONISTS HAVE  
LONG BEEN CONCERNED  
ABOUT YOU AND YOUR  
RELATIVES, NIGEL- AND  
HOPEFULLY YOUR NOW  
DIMINISHED NUMBERS  
WILL BE  
ALLOWED TO  
INCREASE.

"LOOK AND ENJOY  
THIS WONDERFUL  
LAND WE CALL  
AUSTRALIA!"



APPLAUSE

NELLY DEAREST... AND NORA, NICKY  
AND NANCY... WHAT A LOVELY SURPRISE!  
.. AND I THOUGHT I WAS ONLY  
INVITED OVER HERE TO ATTEND  
A SEMINAR ON "SURVIVAL OF  
THE FEW"



YES NIGEL, UN-UNKNOWN  
TO YOU, WE FLEW YOUR  
WIFE AND FAMILY OUT  
HERE TO BE WITH US  
TONIGHT TO SHARE IN  
THE OPPORTUNITY OF SAYING  
"NIGEL NUMBAT...  
THIS... IS...  
YOUR... LIFE!"



AS YOU GREW UP IN THE  
WOODLAND HABITAT, YOU SOON  
LEARNED HOW TO PROTECT YOUR-  
SELF FROM PREDATORS. ONE  
WAY WAS HIDE IN ANY ONE OF THE  
HOLLOW LIMBS OF FALLEN WANDOO  
TREES. ENEMIES OFTEN FOUND IT  
QUITE FRUSTRATING TRYING TO GET  
INTO A LOG AFTER YOU.

BY CAROL MEAGURES



# Who am I?

I have no roots  
nor do I wear boots  
My body is floppy  
and is also very sloppy  
I can be brown, green or red  
a mulch or fertiliser in a garden bed  
But mostly in water I'm just floating free  
with a name that rhymes with

T R E E

SEND YOUR ANSWER  
TO: C. MULLIN  
STATE SCHOOLS'  
NURSERY

ARTHUR STREET,  
OAKLEIGH. VIC.  
3166.

FIRST 10 CORRECT ENTERIES WILL WIN A  
FREE PACKET OF SEEDS.

## ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST?



The orange-bellied parrot: only 120 are known to exist.

This is the orange bellied parrot, Australia's most endangered parrot. These birds nest in tree hollows, one hundred feet (30 m) up in the air, in remote areas of South West Tasmania. They migrate to Victoria every year, flying over Bass Strait, and stopping off at King Island. It is in Victoria that the move has been made by the State Government to save and reclaim the feeding grounds of this parrot. The parrot feeds on small seeds only found in salt marsh vegetation. Areas to be set aside for the parrot include Point Wilson, near Werribee, and ideas about re planting Mud Island and Swan Island for the birds to feed on have been suggested. Maybe the parrot has a chance yet!

By M. Carmichael



# SUPER SNAIL

MIGHTY MOLLUSC  
of  
THE UNDERWORLD

The beautiful Lisa Lacewing was about to meet a dreadful doom — but where?

The Riddler's Riddle

1. Having a perfume.  
2. That which gives the earth light and heat.  
3. Moisture left as night air cools.

BUT...

ANSWER →

SCENTED SUN DEW

The plant grows in damp places.

HELP!

Beneath the water 6 monsters lurk. Can you name them? Will Super Snail swim through them to the island?

ANSWERS : NEXT PAGE.

Super Snail was practising his Karate chops one morning, when a fly brought him a message from the Riddler...

Swiftly solving the riddle, Super Snail zooms to the rescue.

No, he won't. He's got more sense!

FOILED AGAIN!

In the nick of time the mighty mollusc rescues the hapless maiden.

SIGH!  
I'm saved!

Zoom on, Super Snail, to your next assignment.

THE END

'Aussie Word' answers: Across: 1. Kangaroo. 2. platypus. 3. cuscus 4. Rock 5. Man. Down: 1. Koala. 2. Grey 3. Owls. 4. track 5. Possum 6. Euro 7. Tuan.  
• How well did you go?



# Group Therapy

A group of lions is called a pride of lions. Can you name the following groups?

1. A ----- of geese
2. A ----- of monkeys
3. A ----- of fish
4. A ----- of dolphins
5. A ----- of bees
6. A ----- of hounds
7. A ----- of sheep.



1. hbhhmf

2. usppg

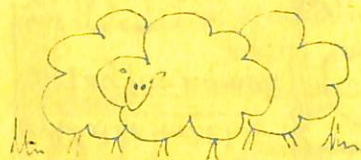
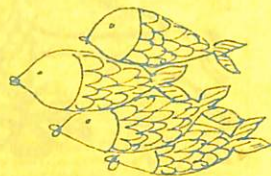
3. tipbm

4. tdippm

5. txbsn

6. qbdL

7. gmpdl



The answers are written in code. A = B, B = C, etc.

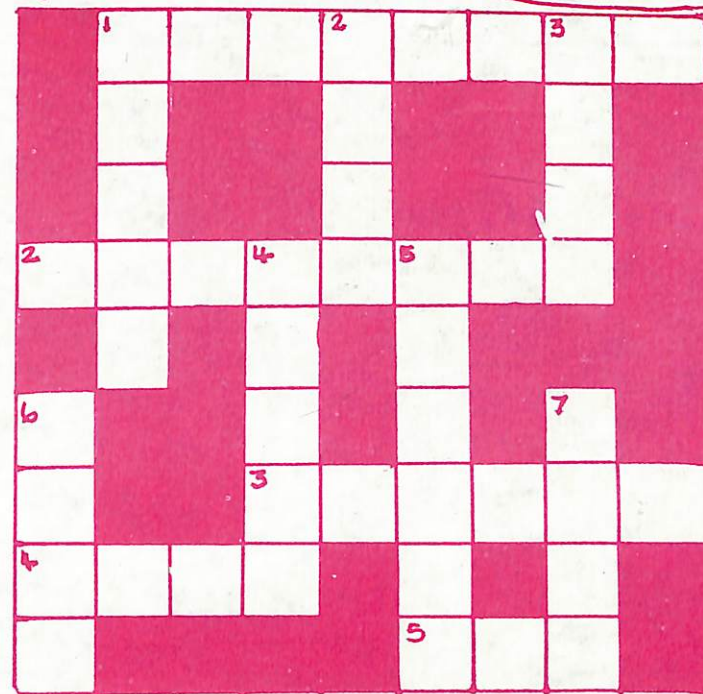
Can you work them out?

## DID YOU KNOW?



Very few people are actually aware of the vast amounts of wood people use during their lives. According to American statistics and considering that wood is used for building, furniture, paper, matches and thousands of other things, during the course of time from the cradle to the grave, 400 medium sized trees are used by each person.

# aussie word!



where's the clue for W-O-M-B-A-T Ed?



## clues

### DOWN

1. A marsupial which is sometimes called a 'bear'. (It's not.)
2. A type of kangaroo. It's name describes its color.
3. Birds which hunt at night.
4. Another word for 'trail'.
5. A well known marsupial. (A phalanger)
6. A type of kangaroo which lives in rocky areas.
7. A 'native squirrel' or native cat.

### ACROSS

1. A large marsupial.
2. A monotreme.
3. A member of the possum family, with a scaly tip to its tail.
4. A type of wallaby.
5. Often an enemy of all these creatures.

answers on p. ~~14~~

They're on 'Super Snails' page

This is page 14



# Wally

AND THE

## CRICKET

Hm. I wonder what sort of a beast this is?  
6 legs — so it must be an insect! 2 wings  
so it must be a bird!



It digs holes in the ground — so perhaps it's a reptile — or a mini-wombat!



Don't be silly!  
I'm a cricket!

**CRICKET!?**  
Did you say cricket?



Are you going to the Cricket Match at the MCG?



What's that?  
Is it for crickets?

No, it is cricket!  
It's a game that you play.

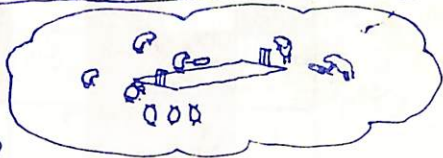


I don't understand.

\* Well, you have two sides — one out in the field and one in. Each person in the side that's in goes out, and when he's out he comes in and the next person goes in until he's out.



Yes, that's why we dig holes — so we can go in and out.



When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in out. Sometimes you get people still in and not out.



Clear as mud!

When both sides have been in and out and in and out — that's the end of the game!



It's U never catch on, Wally. Stick to digging holes mate.

\* Acknowledgements to the Marylebone Cricket Club.

16

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