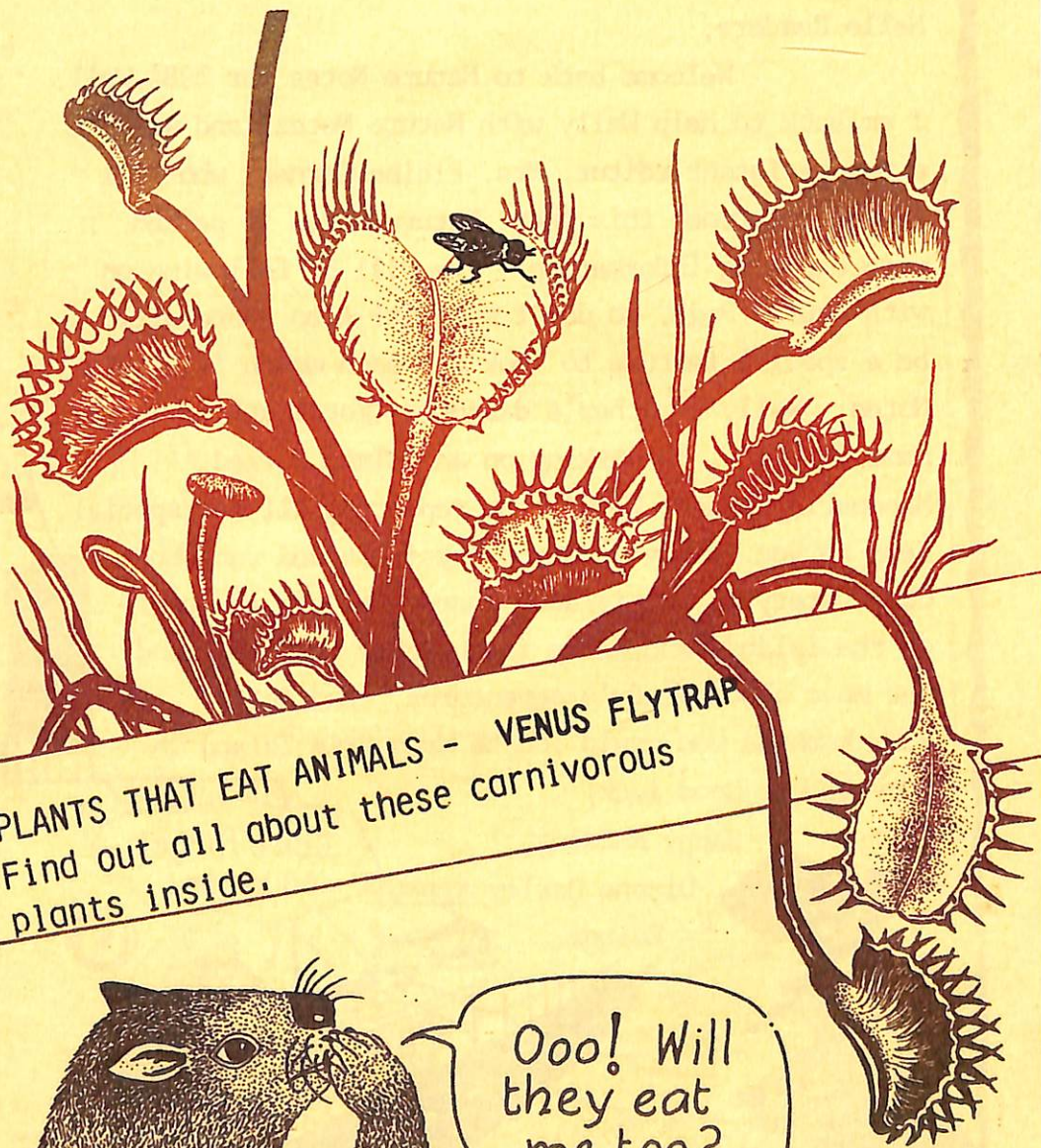


NATURE NOTES



PLANTS THAT EAT ANIMALS - VENUS FLYTRAP
Find out all about these carnivorous
plants inside.

Ooo! Will
they eat
me too?

vol. 21 no. 1
MARCH 1984

EDITORIAL

Hello Readers,

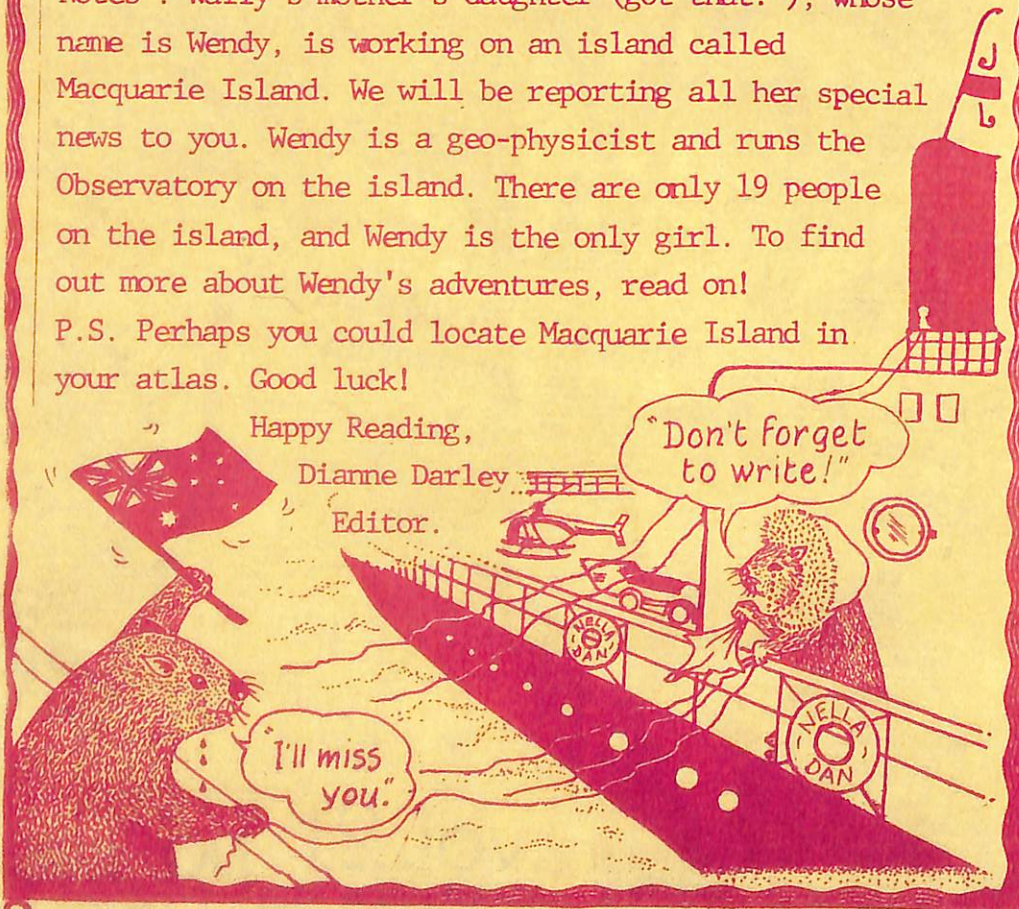
Welcome back to Nature Notes for 1984. Well, I am back to help Wally with Nature Notes, and we have a new assistant editor, Mrs. Elaine Garner, who will be writing Probe this year. Nature Notes is packed with exciting information - we will be following on with Paul's Page, so don't miss it! Also there will be a special feature to look for each month in Nature Notes. Wally's mother's daughter (got that?), whose name is Wendy, is working on an island called Macquarie Island. We will be reporting all her special news to you. Wendy is a geo-physicist and runs the Observatory on the island. There are only 19 people on the island, and Wendy is the only girl. To find out more about Wendy's adventures, read on!

P.S. Perhaps you could locate Macquarie Island in your atlas. Good luck!

Happy Reading,

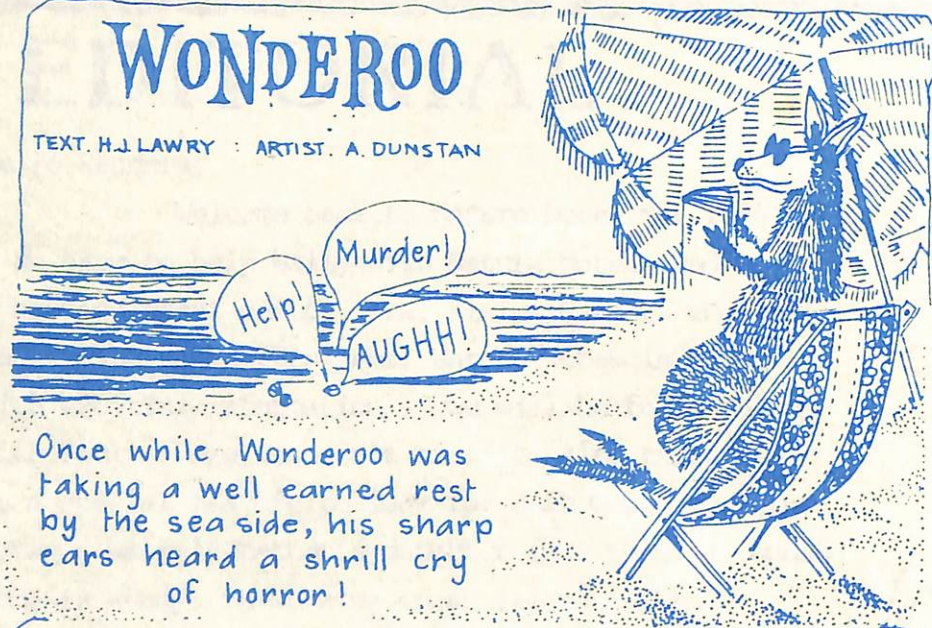
Dianne Darley

Editor.



WONDEROO

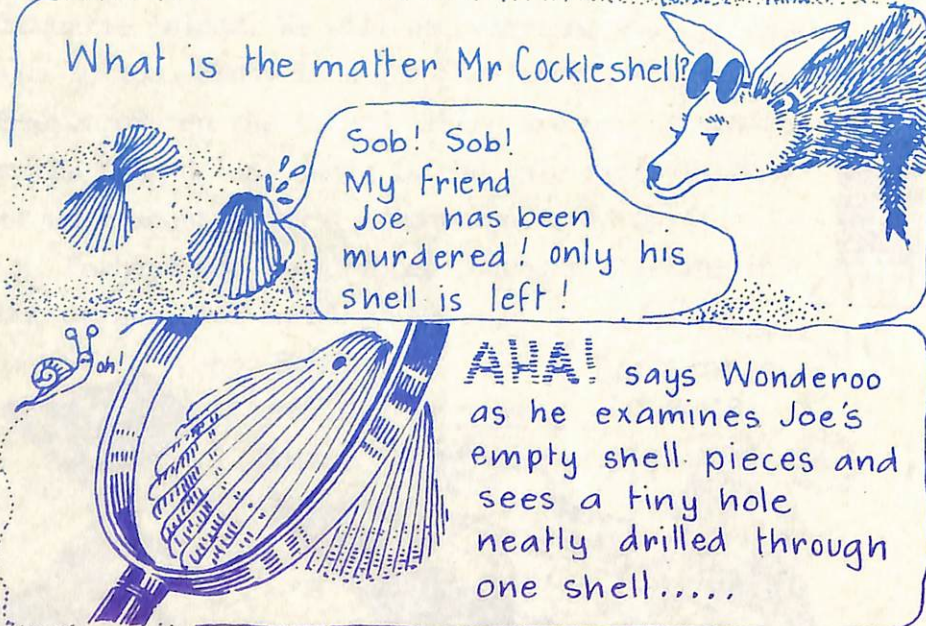
TEXT: H.J. LAWRY : ARTIST: A. DUNSTAN



Once while Wonderoo was taking a well earned rest by the sea side, his sharp ears heard a shrill cry of horror!

What is the matter Mr Cockleshell?

Sob! Sob!
My friend
Joe has been
murdered! only his
shell is left!



AHA! says Wonderoo as he examines Joe's empty shell pieces and sees a tiny hole neatly drilled through one shell.....

* DID YOU KNOW? *
* Molluscs are mostly creatures of the sea, although some *
* groups have colonised the land, the best known of these *
* being the SNAILS and the SLUGS. *

CAN YOU FIND OUT?

- ★ What makes the glistening trail the snail leaves behind?
- ★ What the general shape of the snail's shell is called?
- ★ The snail in this cartoon is a carnivorous snail; what is the other group of snails?

Looking into a nearby rock pool, Wonderoo soon finds the culprit basking in the warm sun Mr C.* Welk!



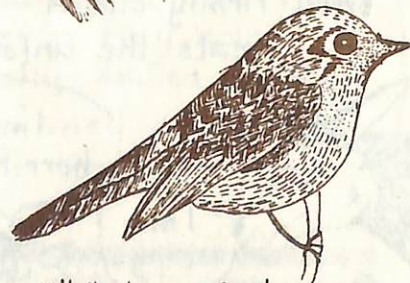
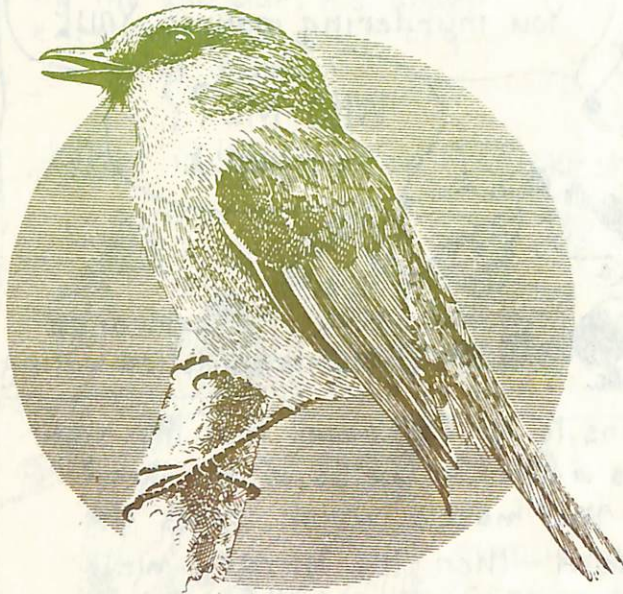
Wonderoo explains to Mr Cockleshell that the snail-like welk bores a hole in shells of his kind and destroys the muscle which holds the shell firmly closed - then the hungry welk eats the unfortunate shell fish!



And with that the wily welk dived into the pool and was not seen again!

FLYCATCHERS

The term "flycatchers" refers to a group of birds with particular feeding habits. Flycatchers eat not only flies and other winged insects, but also other small invertebrates. Flycatchers include wagtails, fantails, some whistlers, some Australian robins, the Crested Bellbird and the Jacky Winter. All are found in various parts of Australia.



Whitebreasted
Robin.

Can you
find out
more about
this group
of birds?

6

Flycatchers are most frequently seen in the open spaces near trees or under a tree canopy in woodland or forest regions.

During the nesting season, they need to hold a territory, so they have food for their young. They defend their territory using strong, distinctive calls and an unwelcome intruder is chased out.

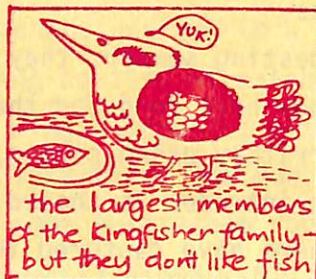
The flycatchers have captured the interest of people so much, that many people have given them descriptive folk names such as Willie Wagtail or Rickety Dick, referring to its erratic flight habits. It is also known as "the shepherd's companion" because it so often perches on the backs of stock.

* Are there any "flycatchers" in your area?



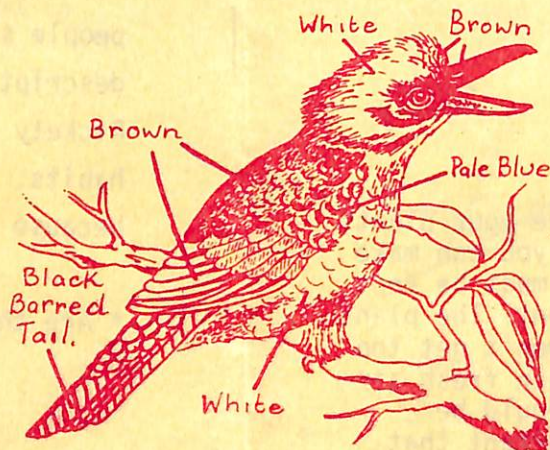
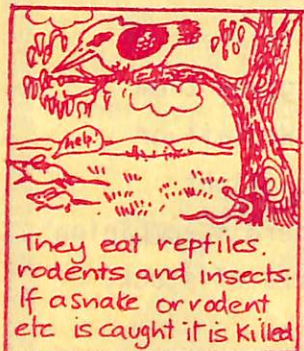
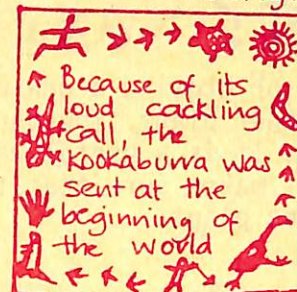
Grey Fantail.

7

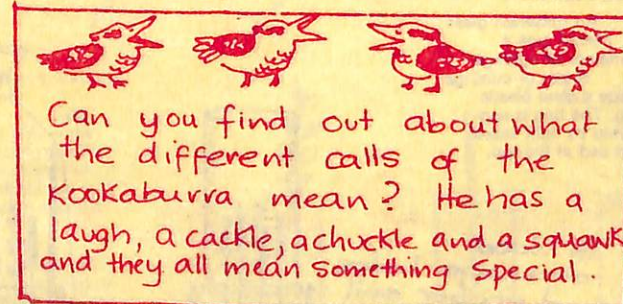
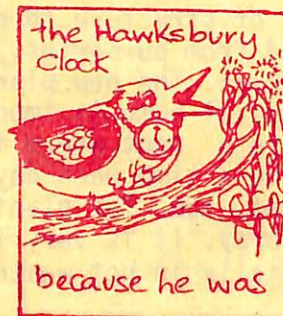


KOOKABURRAS

According to Aboriginal legend -



When white man came to Australia he called the Kookaburra -



"Hope they're not partial to wombats!"



"Eek, let's not stick around to find out!!"

PROPAGATE A

what is it?

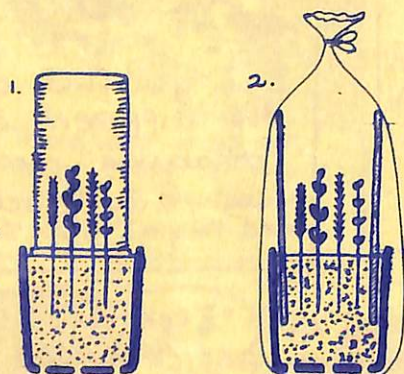
Propagation is a way of growing a new plant. It is done by using part of another plant. You don't need a seed for this type of growing. It is a useful way of starting a new plant, because it makes sure that the new plant is the same as the parent plant.

what do I need?

You will need some sort of structure to place your plants in. They can be purchased from nurseries, or you can make one like the ones shown here. The new plants must be kept moist and warm, so a special home is important. The plant will need to be placed in a spot where it won't get too much sun. There should be a time each day when fresh air can move around the plant, too. The plant should be watered with a gentle spray. It is very important that it is kept moist, especially in hot weather.

1. An upturned glass jar, placed over a container of cuttings.
2. A pot of cuttings inside a clear plastic bag. The bag is supported by light stakes and tied at the top.

* Good drainage holes and proper soil mix is important!



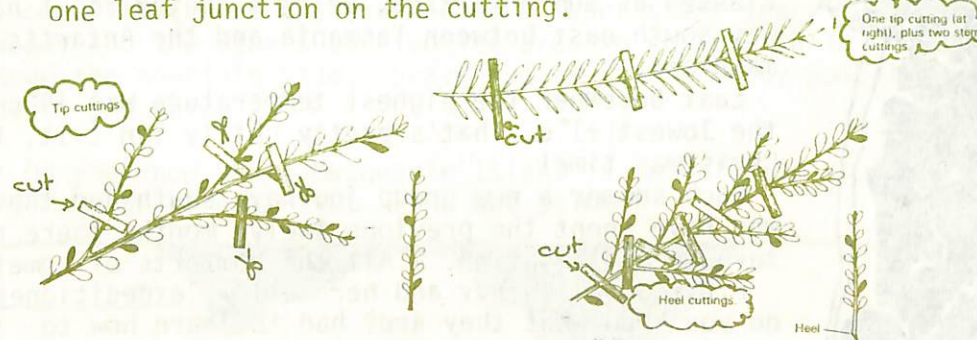
A mixture commonly used for propagation by cuttings.



PLANT

what now?

OK, you'd like to try propagation, and have found a plant you'd like to grow yourself. There are several ways of cutting the plant, which are shown here. These cuttings should be about 5-15cm long, and there should be at least one leaf junction on the cutting.



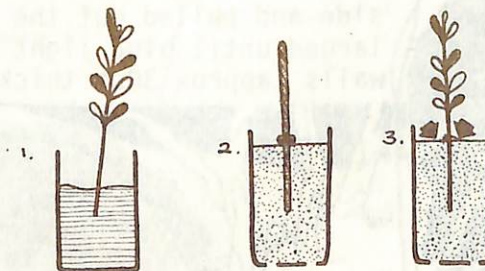
Now you have your cutting, this is the next step.



remove half of the leaves, to make the stem.

Then....

1. Dip cutting in rooting hormone.
2. Make a hole in the propagating mixture, using a clean stick. A rubber band will mark the desired depth of hole.
3. Place cutting in hole, and firm the mixture where shown by arrows.



AND.... Place your cutting in its special home, where the roots will begin to grow. REMEMBER to water your cutting, and to give it some fresh air. DON'T leave it in the sun, but keep it warm. GOOD LUCK!

NEWSFLASH MACQUARIE

Wendy Wombat, Wally's sister, was very excited. She was one of the lucky ones to be chosen to spend a year on fabulous Macquarie Island. The island is classed as Sub Antarctica, being situated about half way south east between Tasmania and the Antarctic mainland.

Last December the highest temperature was $+9^{\circ}\text{C}$ and the lowest $+1^{\circ}\text{C}$. That's pretty chilly isn't it, for Christmas time!

Each summer a new group journeys south and those who have spent the previous twelve months there return to civilisation. - All the comforts of home.

First of all Wendy and her fellow "expeditioners", do you know what they are? had to learn how to survive in the harsh cold climate. Brrr!

Most of their training was in Tasmania. They were flown by helicopter to make a camp near Cradle Mountain.

They were taught how to build igloo-type shelters, (pretend Eskimos, hey!), using snow, by piling ruck-sacks and boxes together, then shovelling lots of snow over them. Then they dug a hole through the side and pulled out the filling. The cavity was enlarged until blue light could be seen through the walls (approx 30cm thick).

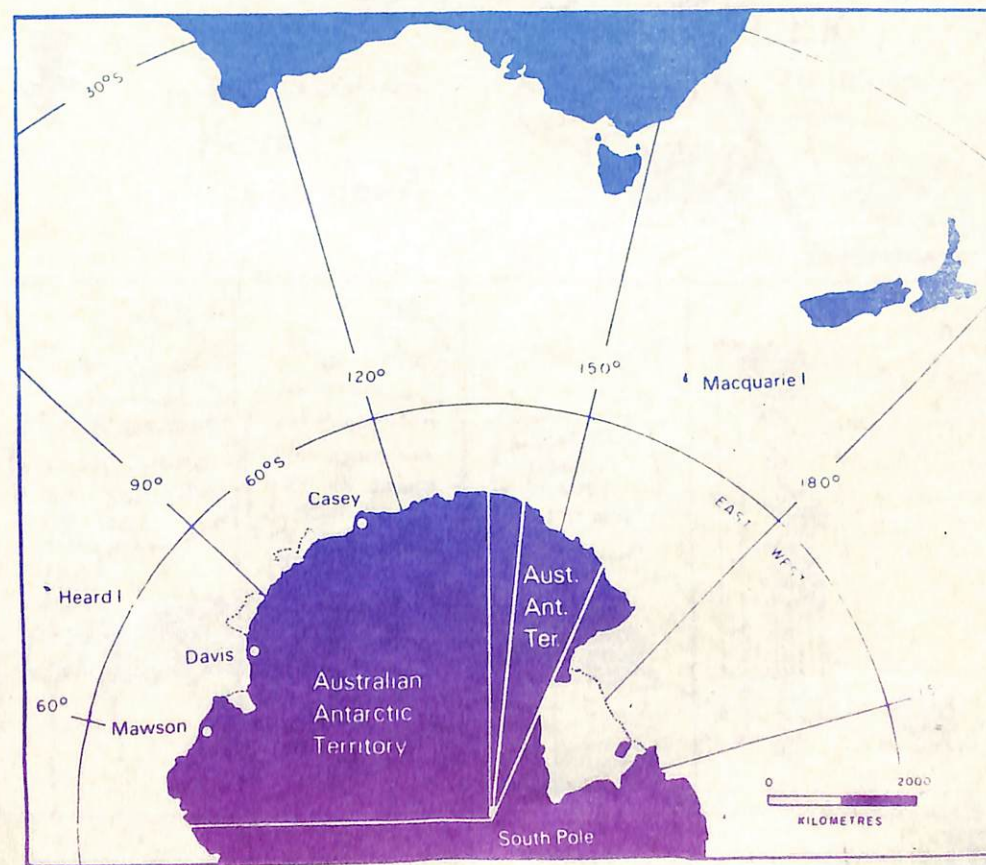


..... from ISLAND

An entrance passage was made the same way. A pretty nifty idea, don't you think!

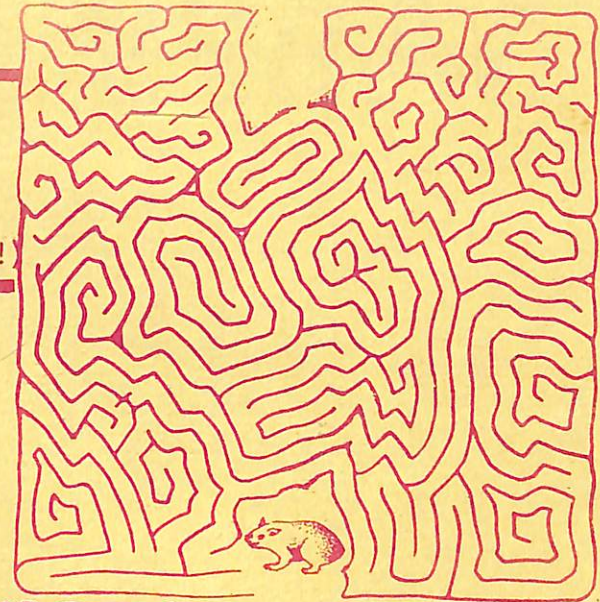
The group practiced using ropes (in pairs) to get up steep snow drifts; over the top and down super steep scary 90° drops. Wendy and the others carried ice axes to control their descent down the mountain side. Brave rugged little Wendy Wombat, don't you think?

* Do you know where Macquarie Island is in relation to Australia and the Antarctic? Find out below.



NEWSFLASH MAGAZINE

CAN YOU HELP WALLY FIND
HIS WAY TO HIS BURROW?
(YES, HE GOT LOST AGAIN!)



Paul's 1/2 page

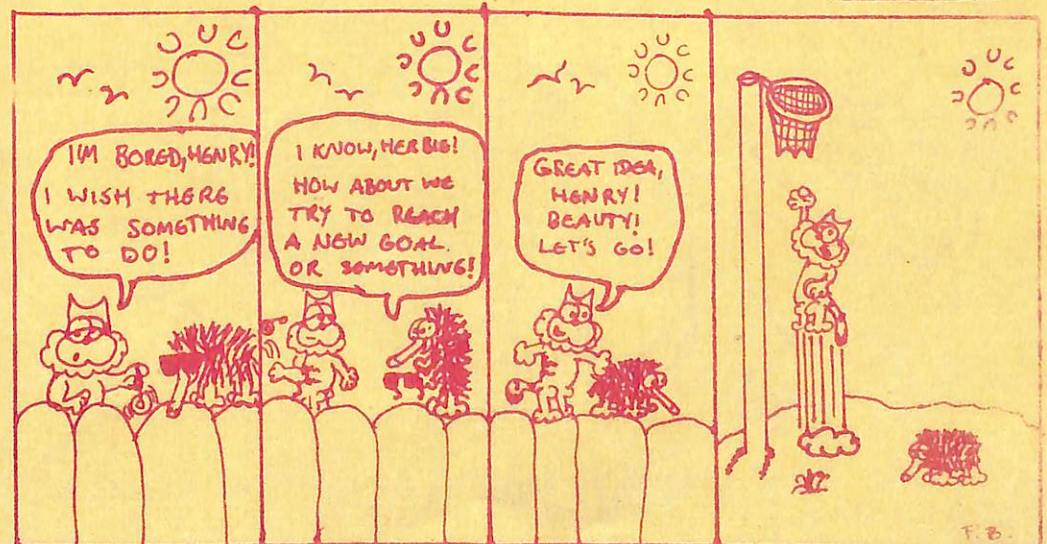


INTRODUCING
HENRY
THE ECHIDNA

GIDDAY
AUSTRALIA!



EEK!!
An imposter!



TASTY TRAP

The plant on the front cover, the Venus Flytrap, is a carnivorous plant that eats animals. Each of the Venus Flytrap's leaves is made to attract and trap small animals. The red valves, the color of raw meat, attract the insects. When the trigger hairs are touched, the trap is sprung (like a mouse-trap!), and the two halves of the leaf snaps together, capturing the prey! The insect cannot escape, and the valves squeeze together, so the digestive process can begin. The insect is gradually dissolved by the plant's juices.

You may wonder as I did why plants trap insects and eat them! The reason is that the plants cannot get all the nourishment they need from the swampy ground in which they live. They need more nitrogen, and they can only get this from the bodies of the insects. So, we see that the plants eat insects for survival!

THINGS TO DO.....

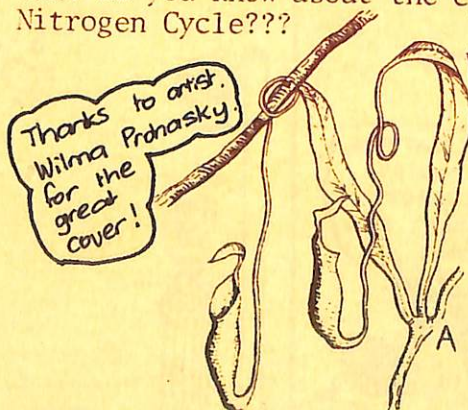
Can you find out about other carnivorous plants listed below -

Sundew

Butterwort

Pitcher

What do you know about the cycle of events, called the Nitrogen Cycle???



P.S. You may still be wondering whether the Venus Flytrap could eat Wally. The answer is NO!! It can consume 3 large flies, or one small animal the size of an earthworm. WALLY IS SAFE!!!!

A Climbing
Pitcher Plant

By D. Darley
EDITOR.