

NATURE NOTES



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EDITORIAL

Hello Readers,

Well, another month has passed and winter is here. This issue is about one of the most annoying (or most exciting) things about winter. One of our artists, Carol Measures, has created a special game about an unusual and risky winter sport. It's in the centre page. Play it with some friends.

Our colouring competition for Term 1 has closed. We will be judging the winners and sending them each a prize. The winners names will be announced in the July issue. If you missed out, don't be upset. Next issue, July, there will be a new competition. You will have another chance. Watch out for it !!

Happy Reading,

Rosalie Collie,
Editor.

P.S. Here's a message from Wally.

How does a poultry farmer earn his living?
By fowl means.

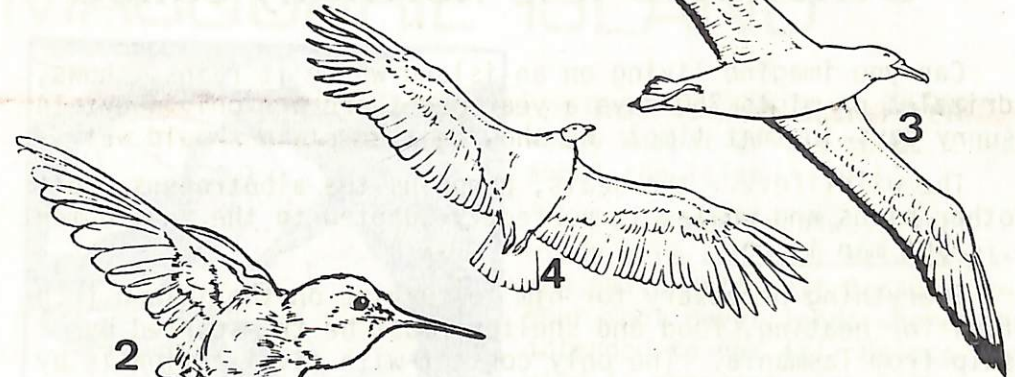
What did the mother kangaroo say to her baby?
Don't accept rides from strangers.

How did Jonah feel when he was swallowed by the whale?
Down in the mouth.

What did the leopard say when he finished his lunch?
"That hit the spot".



birds & birds



1. North African ostrich. The tallest bird alive today. Males are sometimes up to 3 metres tall.

2. The smallest bird in the world, shown here real size, is Helena's hummingbird from Cuba. It measures only $5\frac{1}{2}$ cms. from bill tip to tail.

3. The wandering albatross has a wing span of $3\frac{1}{2}$ metres which is larger than the smallest aeroplane - the Stits Skybaby ($2\frac{1}{2}$ metres).

4. The Condor has an average wing span of $2\frac{3}{4}$ metres.



If wombats could fly, we'd REALLY show them!



THE GREAT GREEN SPONGE

As it is known affectionately by all
Otherwise it is normally called —

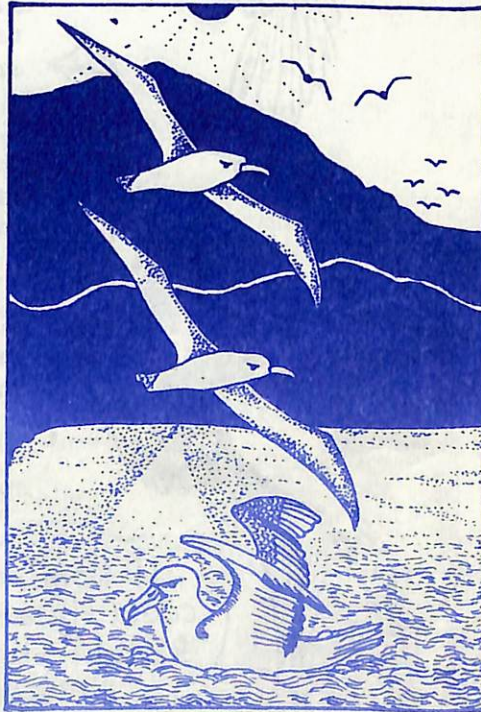
Can you imagine living on an island where it rains, snows, drizzles or mists 350 days a year and there are only about 14 sunny days in that time? We shouldn't complain should we!

The wildlife.... the seals, penguins the albatrosses and other birds and whales is perfectly adapted to the environment ... but man is not.

Everything necessary for him to survive on the island (e.g. fuel for heating, food and shelter) must be transported by ship from Tasmania. The only contact with civilization is by radio, or an air-drop until the relief ship arrives the following summer.

Wendy Wombat sent these pictures back, when the ship 'Nella Dan' made her return voyage to Tasmania.

She says that the flight of the Albatrosses as they play on the air currents around the slopes of the island, is a sight long to be remembered. At times pairs perform aerobatically; matching each twist and turn while only 2 to 3 metres apart. Of all the birds which live in these stormy latitudes the albatross family are probably the best adapted to utilise the strong winds that plague the island.



who have lived there...

MACQUARIE ISLAND



This is what dear little Wendy Wombat writes to us about the island.

"It is nearly always very windy here and that makes walking quite difficult because your foot never lands where you intended to put it! Unless the wind is constant, in which case you walk as though towards some place off the track and the strong wind keeps you on the track." (Very well thought out Wendy, full marks!)

"The walking tracks on the mountainous plateau, check that word in your dictionary, are very clearly marked by snow poles, (like fence posts). The visibility is poor because of persistent low clouds.

The Great Green Sponge is a very apt description of Macquarie Island, because it is shaped like a sponge and is constantly wet all the year around.

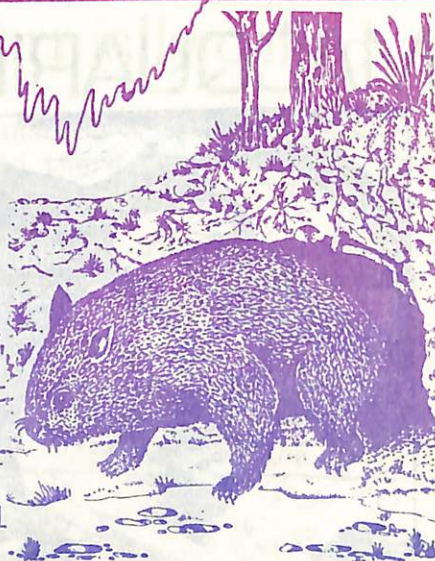
So we wear gumboots all the time!"



By Wilma Prohasky 5

GONE for the

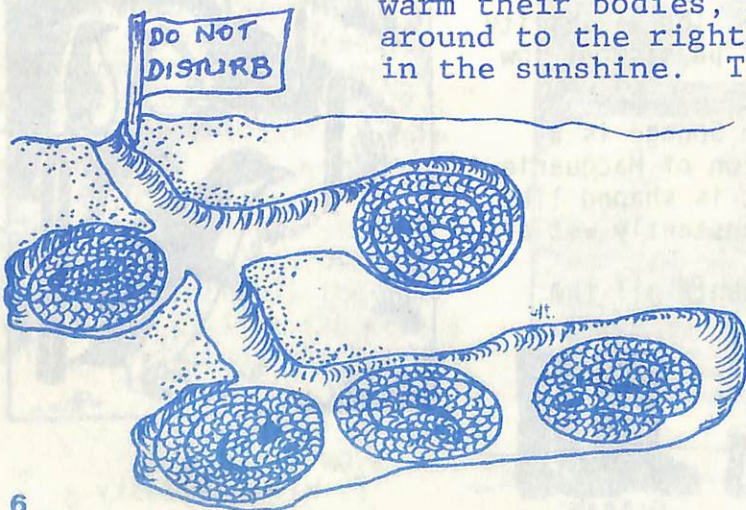
Do you wonder why Wally is looking so lonely? He came out of his burrow early one crisp cold winter morning, when he was visiting his cousin Wilbur in the high country of Gippsland, and saw his friend Cecil Copperhead Snake outting up a sign outside the entrance to his hole. The sign said "Do not disturb". When Wally asked Cecil what it meant, Cecil told him that snakes don't like cold weather and like to find a warm cosy sheltered place to sleep until the weather improves.



Wally was fascinated to learn that snakes cannot control their own body temperature, like birds and mammals. That's why more snakes live in the tropics than in cool areas, and why no snakes live in polar regions. Snakes depend on warm weather to warm their bodies, and must move around to the right places to bask in the sunshine. That's also the

reason for snakes from cold climates being darker in colour, because dark colours absorb heat faster than light colours.

When a snake becomes cold,



WINTER

its body slows down. This would be very dangerous for Cecil. He would become an easy meal for a hungry Kookaburra. So he (and his family) go to their winter home - a special hole in the ground, away from snow and frost, called a hibernaculum.



Next Wally called to visit Gerald the Gang Gang Cockatoo. But Gerald was packing his bags to move down to the warmer low country where he could be sure of find-

ing enough food. He particularly likes seed pods of wattles and gum trees, but will eat the larvae of gum emperor moths and other insects.

Wally is feeling very sad. He came all this way to see his friends - but everyone is leaving! - - - - Almost everyone! Here comes Wilbur in his winter gear, all ready to go skiing and tobogganing with Wally.



by R. Collie
ARTIST: W. Prohasky

WILD WILLY WIND & THE HOT-AIR BALLOONS

A GAME FOR 2 OR MORE PLAYERS - ROLL A DICE AND TRY TO GET YOUR HOT-AIR BALLOON

SAFELY HOME - WATCH OUT FOR WILLY WIND HE CAN BE A TRICKY CHARACTER



START

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9**

10 **11** **12** **13** **14** **15** **16** **17** **18** **19** **20** **21** **22** **23** **24** **25** **26** **27** **28** **29** **30** **31** **32** **33** **34** **35** **36** **37** **38** **39** **40** **41**

WILLY WIND

SAFELY HOME

CRASH! YOU HAVE HIT ANOTHER BALLOON MISS 1 TURN

WATCH OUT FOR LOW PRESSURE

CHECKPOINT 20

WATCH OUT FOR CYCLONE "WENDY"

EMERGENCY, DROP SAND BAGS... MOVE BACK 3 SPACES

GALES FORECAST, MOVE QUICKLY ONTO CHECKPOINT 35 AND SAFETY.

YOU'RE CAUGHT IN STRONG THERMAL CURRENT CARRIED BACK TO 31

BROKEN DOWN TOWED BACK TO START LINE!

LITTLE BEAUTY

WILLY WIND DROPS, YOU ARE FORCED TO LAND... WATCH THE TREE TOPS. MISS 1 TURN

WILLY BLOWS YOU ONTO A MOUNTAIN-SIDE CAUSES PUNCTURE IN BALLOON. PUT DOWN FOR REPAIRS. MISS 1 TURN.

YOU HAVE ACCIDENTALLY STEPPED ON YOUR COMPASS - CLUMSY - GO BACK TO CHECKPOINT 20 AND GET YOUR BEARINGS.

GUSTY WIND CARRIES YOU ALONG.. MOVE 4 SPACES

STRONG HEAD-WIND BLOWS YOU BACK TO START....

CAUGHT IN CROSS-WIND, BUT YOU ARE BLOWN ON TO CHECKPOINT 20

WILLY GIVES YOU A GOOD TAIL WIND AND BLOWS YOU HOME

YOU ARE BLOWN ONTO DESERT ISLAND WATCH OUT FOR SHARKS!

HURRAH!!

Windy Weather

Wind is simply air in motion. We can feel it because the air has weight. The air around the equator is heated by the sun and rises in fast-moving upward air currents. This is because warm air is lighter than cool air. The cool air is then sucked into the space.

Land heats up and cools down faster than the oceans. Therefore, in summer, air over tropical lands is heated faster than air over the seas. Low pressure air masses are created and cooler air from the sea is drawn in.

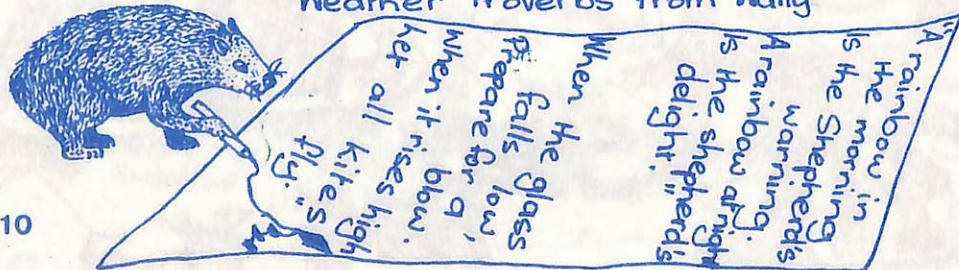
An instrument called an ANEMOMETER is used to measure wind velocity (speed). Can you find a picture of a Three Cup Anemometer?

Hurricanes and cyclones are exactly the same, but in the South Pacific and Indian Oceans they are called cyclones, while in the Atlantic and the N.E. Pacific areas they are known as hurricanes. By which name are they known in Australia?














The worst damage in cyclones is usually done only indirectly by the wind. Although it may unroof houses and if strong enough uproot trees, the main damage it causes is that the wind force on the ocean surface whips up the sea to such an extent that it causes tidal waves which can flood coastal areas and even carry quite large ships well inland to be stranded when the water recedes.

The winds in tornadoes, like the winds in cyclones, also cause intense damage. Because of their intensity, they cause the air pressure to drop so that air trapped in closed houses cannot escape and the house explodes.

Weather Proverbs from Wally



The Beaufort scale of wind force was devised in 1808 by Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort. It was based originally on the amount of canvas that a man-of-war could carry with different winds. The scale has since been revised and extended for use on land.

0.	Calm	1km/h	Smoke rises vertically	
1	Light air	1-5km/h	Direction shown by smoke	
2	Light breeze	6-12km/h	Direction shown by wind vane	
3	Gentle breeze	13-20km/h	Wind extends a light flag	
4	Moderate breeze	21-29km/h	Raises dust and loose paper	
5	Fresh breeze	30-39km/h	Small trees in leaf start to sway	
6	Strong breeze	40-50km/h	Umbrellas used with difficulty	
7	Moderate gale	51-61km/h	Inconvenient to walk against wind	
8	Fresh gale	62-74km/h	Twigs broken off trees	
9	Strong gale	75-87km/h	Chimney pots and slates removed	
10	Whole gale	88-102km/h	Trees uprooted; considerable damage.	
11	Storm	103-120km/h	Widespread damage	
12-17	Hurricane	120km/h	Extremely violent.	

A wind as fast as the fastest speed run by a man is classed as a "strong breeze" on the Beaufort scale. A wind as fast as a running cheetah is classed as a "storm".

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass -
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all -
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field or tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

Robert Louis Stevenson

A PUZZLE TO TRY

M	O	I	S	T	U	R	E	C
F	O	G	H	K	Y	N	O	U
L	S	U	E	C	Y	V	E	M
E	N	N	E	L	E	Y	L	U
E	O	I	T	R	C	Z	Z	L
C	W	A	T	E	O	S	Z	U
Y	A	R	G	S	R	S	I	S
C	G	R	N	N	O	T	R	U
T	H	H	A	E	N	O	D	B
F	A	C	I	D	A	R	K	M
C	I	R	R	U	S	M	N	I
D	L	Y	M	S	U	L	E	N

Can you
"Weather"
the storm?

CAN YOU FIND THESE WORDS?
WHEN YOU DO, CIRCLE THEM.....

AIR CIRRUS CORONAS FOG
COVER CUMULUS DARK DENSE
DRIZZLE FLEECY SKY GRAY
HAIL MOISTURE NIMBUS RAIN
SHEET STORM SNOW

PAUL'S 1/2 PAGE



NATURE IN THE NEWS

Gulls battered by storm

Hunger and stress from constant buffeting by storms killed about 30,000 kittiwakes (Rissa tridactyla), washed up along the French Atlantic coast recently.

Autopsies showed that most of the kittiwakes, a medium-sized, lightly-built gull, had died from a haemorrhage in the gizzard.

The birds, weakened by their migration from Greenland, suffered three weeks of buffeting by gales without being able to land or find food.

Many washed up on beaches around La

Rechelle had lost a quarter of their normal body weight.

The kittiwake is more oceanic than most other gulls, being found over the open sea rather than near the coast.

It is a widely distributed bird in the northern hemisphere.

Thanks to the
"Weekly Times"
7.3.1984
and "The Sun"
13.3.1984 →
2.4.1984
↓

This news is all
cat as-tropic!
I think I'll
sit this
month
out in
my burrow



Sting kills boy

BRISBANE — A boy was killed by a box-jellyfish while swimming near the tip of Cape York at the weekend.

The jellyfish stung Charlie Yoelu, 10, while he was in knee-deep water last Saturday at Sassa Beach, near Bamaga.

A friend, who heard a scream, dragged the boy from the water and laid him on the beach where he died.

Sgt. Wardrope, of Bamaga police, said Charlie, an islander, lived nearby.

"There aren't any jellyfish on the islands," Sgt. Wardrope said.

"The young lad didn't know any better."

Sea snake bites

SYDNEY — A man now in a satisfactory condition in St Vincent's Hospital is believed to be Sydney's first victim of a sea snake.

Mark Sanamata, 19, of suburban Summer Hill, was bitten on the big toe while swimming in shallow water in front of Bondi Surf Lifesaving clubhouse on Saturday afternoon.

He was taken to the intensive care unit at St Vincent's in a serious condition, suffering severe respiratory difficulties.

The assistant curator of Manly Marineland, Ray Hyde, said yesterday that Mr Sanamata was "extremely unlucky" as the yellow-bellied sea snake was very rare south of Queensland.

One of those stings

HOBART, AAP — A teacher got an "agonising" sting when she picked up a platypus.

Lee McGuinness, from Molesworth School, near Hobart, said the sting made her hands swell and now, several days later, her arms still felt sensitive.

"I never should have picked it up," she said yesterday. "I should have realised that it should stay in the creek."

Miss McGuinness and some pupils were looking for fish in a creek near the school when they saw the platypus.

She scooped it into a bucket and took it back to school to show other pupils.

"It clambered out and as I was putting it back into the bucket it dug in with what I thought were its claws," she said.

But the dig came from spurs, which the male platypus has inside its back legs for defence.

Miss McGuinness said she was given painkillers but was told there was no antivenom for the poison, which wasn't recorded as having caused any deaths.

"It's not a venomous animal that should be feared, but people should be aware that it has dangers," she said.

Thanks to "The Sun"
8.3.84 ↑ and
2.4.84 →



THE NT rescue isn't the first for dugongs. This one was rescued in Queensland in 1964.

NT rescuers brave crocs

RESCUERS are braving crocodile-infested Northern Territory waters to save huge dugongs and turtles stranded after Cyclone Kathy.

About 200 turtles and 23 dugongs, rare marine mammals, have been saved since late last week when they were stranded on mudflats.

Conservation rangers, James Cook University biologists and locals were working until late last night and planned an aerial survey, said Vicki Thomas, of the NT Conservation Commission.

Rewarding

Rescuers were covered in mud and risked crocodiles as they rolled turtles and dugongs into nets that were lifted towards the water by a helicopter, she said.

Some of the turtles weighed about 90 kg and

By MARIE McNAMARA

the biggest dugong was about 500 kg.

"It is exhausting but rewarding work and we are all getting very involved," Ms Thomas said.

"The dugongs are enormous but very gentle. They lie perfectly still while they're hoisted, and it's wonderful to watch them paddle away."

Among those saved were two pregnant dugongs and two turtles tagged at Raine Island, near Cape York.

One of the rescuers, a Townsville marine biologist, recognised them, Ms Thomas said.

She said it was impossible to estimate how many dugongs and turtles had died after giant cyclone swells carried them on to the mudflats, about 500 m from the high-tide mark.

Elephant Jokes

Why did the eleph marry the ant?

He wanted to have eleph-ants!

What do you know when you see three elephants walking down the street wearing pink tee-shirts?
They're all on the same team!

How do you stop a herd of elephants from charging?
Take away their credit cards!

Why do elephants have trunks?
They can't afford suitcases!



At one time windmills and water-wheels provided most of the energy in industry. Nowadays windmills as you see in the picture are actually wind-driven water pumps. In many parts of the world, windmills are still used for grinding corn, but there are several designs. Have a look in your library and see if you can find some of these strange looking windmills.



P.S. We'd love to include some of YOUR jokes, poems or stories. Please send them to us. Signed---

Wally