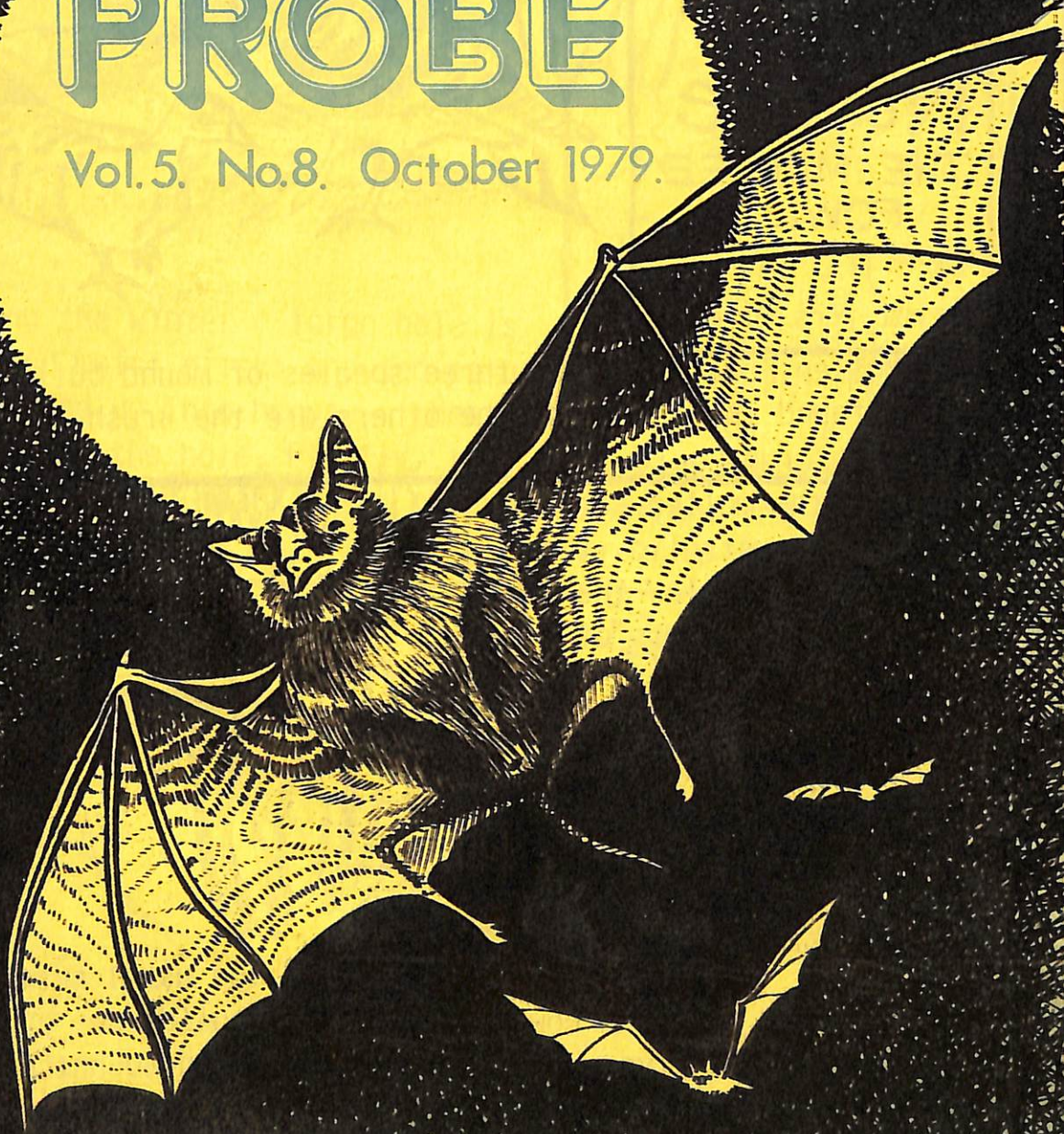


PROBE

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The Mallee Fowl cannot adapt itself to new conditions - it must

Wonders of Nature

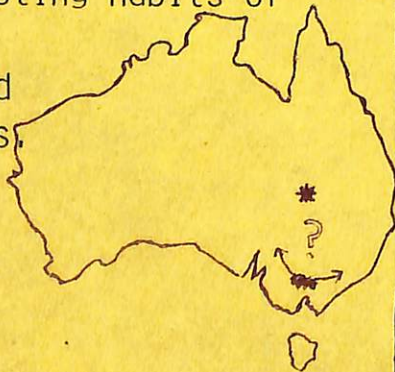
THE MALLEE FOWL

Text: H.J. Lawry.
Artist: Mrs. M. Lees.



The Mallee Fowl is one of three species of mound building birds found in Australia. The others are the Brush Turkey and the Scrub Fowl.

Found in the mallee scrub regions of Australia, these birds do not follow the usual nesting habits of other feathered creatures.

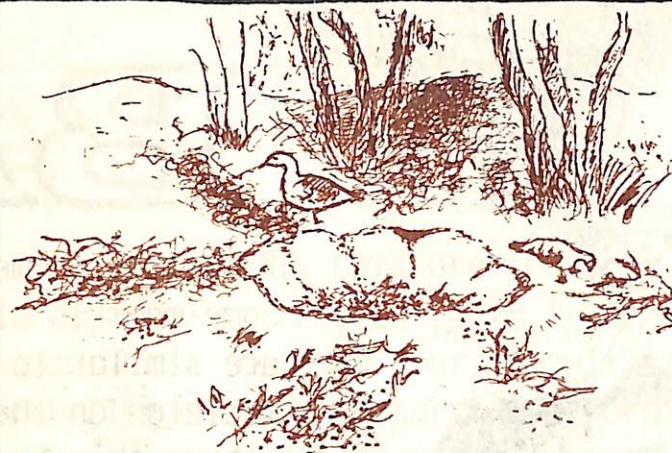


* See if you can find how far the "Mallee" type country extends.



Instead of the usual nest, the Mallee Fowl builds an incubating mound to hatch its eggs. (like a built-in heater).

have Mallee scrub to live in. Unfortunately, a lot of Mallee scrub is being



During the winter a large hole is dug and moist sticks and leaves are scratched up into heaps - then buried in the hole. Finally, the moist, organic material is covered up with sand.



There it starts to decay and ferment - giving off heat in the process. With the aid of the sun, the mound is kept at an almost constant temperature of 35 degrees centigrade.

Father Mallee Fowl digs the holes and then.....



.....Mother lays her large eggs. The eggs are then covered over. From 15 to over 30 eggs are laid in this way.



After about 60 days, the young chicks hatch out, struggle to the surface, dry out and then go off into the scrub to look for food.

AND SO THE CYCLE STARTS AGAIN.....

cleared nowadays, and in areas like The Whipstick the Mallee Fowl has disappeared.....

BATS

Common Bat or Pipistrel.

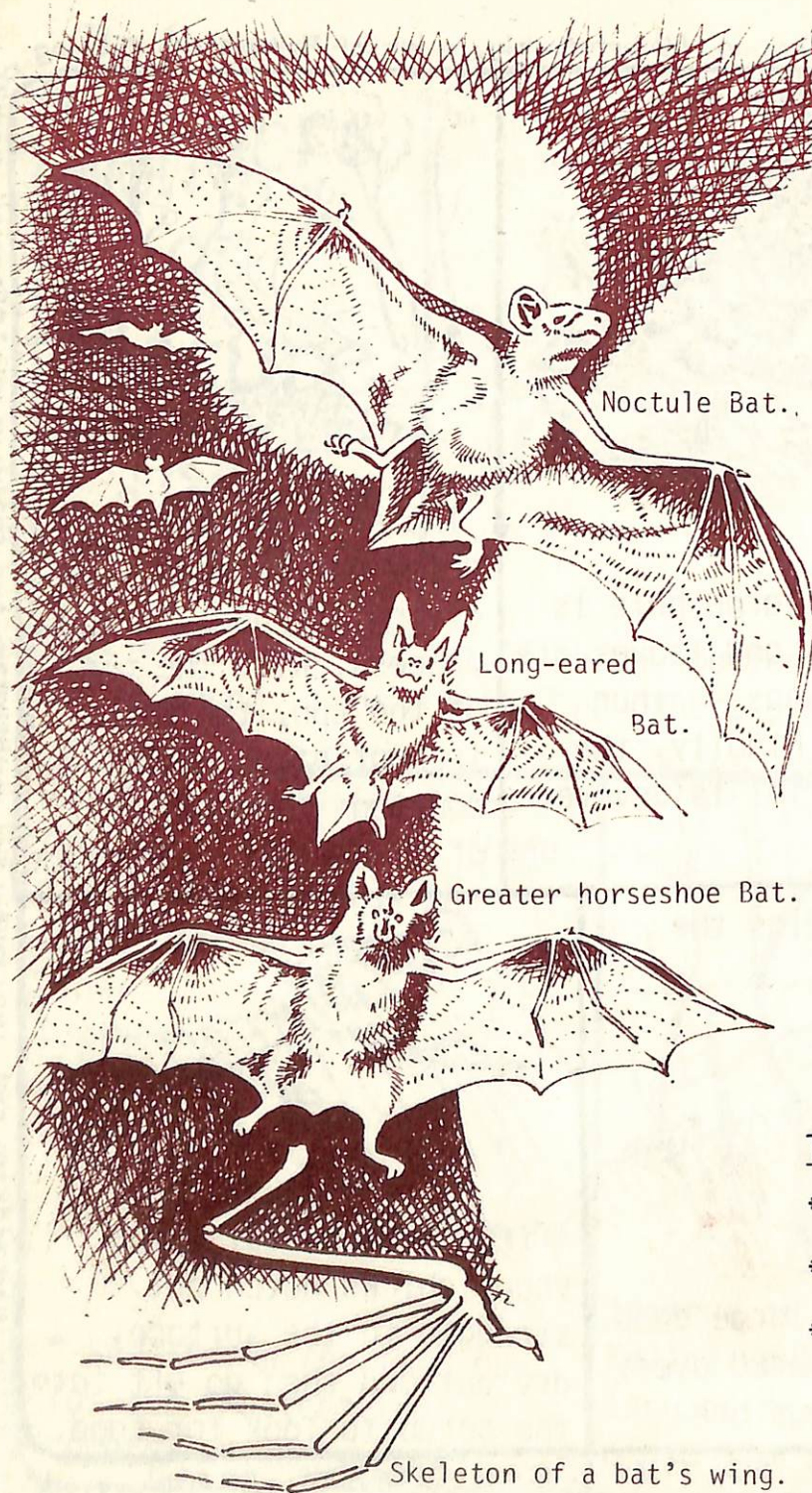
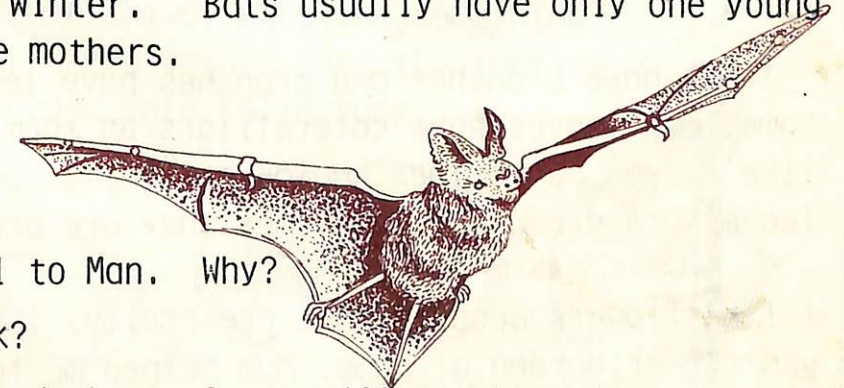


Of all the mammals large and small, bats are the only ones to fly. Some mammals glide from tree to tree but bats truly fly. Their wings are similar to a human hand. Compare your arm with that of the bat wing skeleton on the left. The bat has a short upper arm with a backward pointing elbow, then the strong forearm leads to a small wrist with a clawed thumb to aid in climbing. The four fingers are extremely long and are covered with a thin membrane or double layer of skin to form the surface of the wing. By bending its fingers the bat can change the shape of its wings to perform complicated flight manoeuvres. Their wings are also temperature regulators. Flying uses a lot of energy, so, as the body temperature rises, more blood enters the wing veins to be cooled by the large surface. This maybe the reason bats are nocturnal. They fly and feed at night and sleep by day in a shady place. Bats are found in nearly all parts of the world except in the desert and very cold parts. The greatest numbers are found in tropical rain forests. Bats that live in cold climates hibernate in winter. Bats usually have only one young and the females make very attentive mothers.

Things to find out:

- * Where do bats go during the day?
- * What do they eat? Bats are very useful to Man. Why?
- * How do bats find their food in the dark?

Bats are very skilful flyers and in the darkest places will not bump into objects, so there is no need to fear them tangling in your hair.

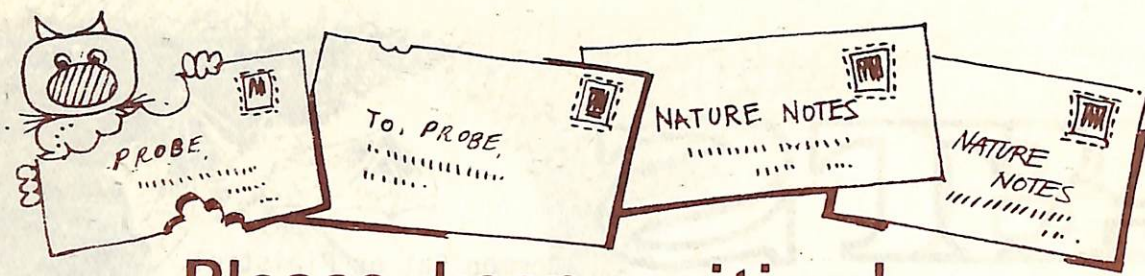


Noctule Bat.

Long-eared
Bat.

Greater horseshoe Bat.

Skeleton of a bat's wing.

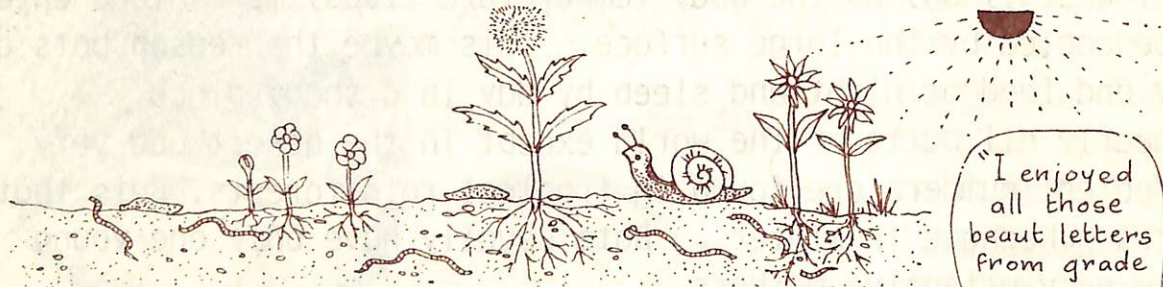


Please keep writing!

(your letters are delicious!)

My brother and I have been helping our Dad dig the garden. We found lots of worms which help to break down the soil. This helps plants to grow. We also saw some slugs and snails. They are pests because they eat plants.
Alison Haggart. Marlborough P.S. Vic.

Earth worms live in the earth. They are long. One day I found one and it was slippery.
Bradley Jennings. E. Ringwood.

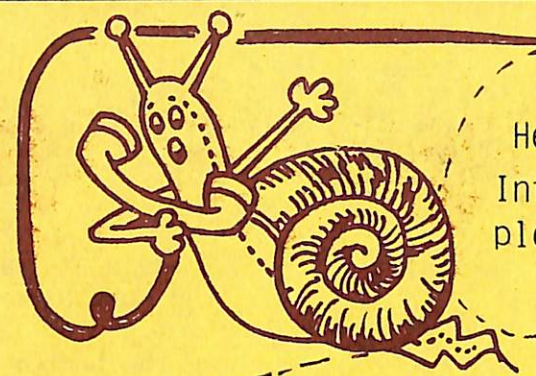


Trees have branches and branches have leaves. Sometimes leaves have caterpillars on them. I like leaves. Sometimes koalas eat them. Sometimes leaves are green and sometimes they are brown.

Natalie. East Ringwood P.S.

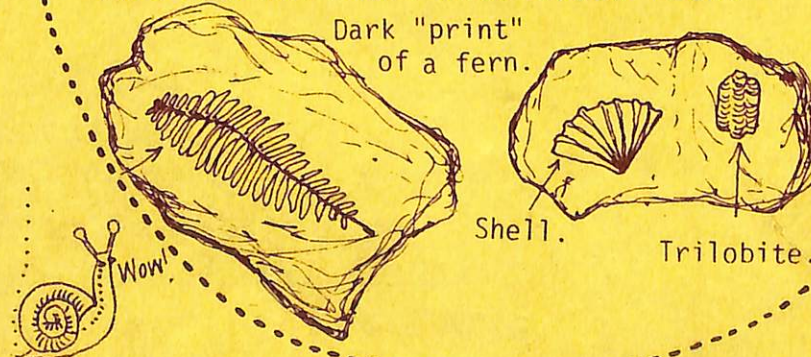
I like flowers because they are pretty. I have my own flower garden at home. Mum helped me to make it.
Shea McCrohan. East. Ringwood P.S.

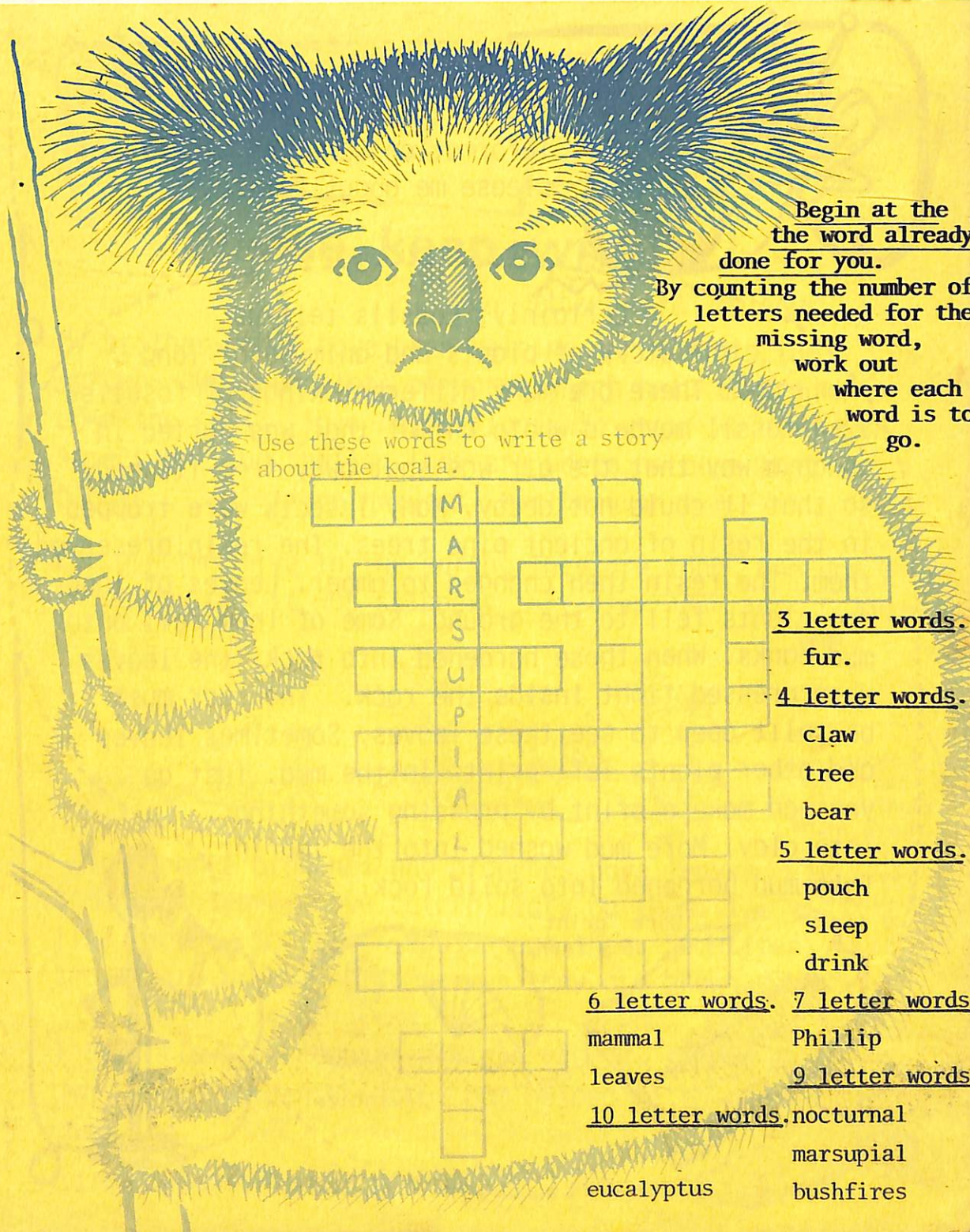
EDITOR: L. ORME. ARTISTS: A.DUNSTAN, W.PROHASKY.



Hello, is that the Probe Information Service? Could you please me about fossils?

Certainly. Fossils tell us the story of plants and animals of long ago. There are many different kinds of fossils. A fossil maybe a whole animal that was buried in such a way that the air was shut away from its body so that it could not decay. Many insects were trapped in the resin of ancient pine trees. The resin preserved them. The resin then changed to amber. Leaves of long ago plants fell to the ground. Some of them fell onto mud banks. When these hardened into rock, the leaves were pressed tight inside the rock. The rock must be split open to see these leaves. Sometimes leaves and other plants left prints in the mud, just as you can make a print by pressing something into clay. More mud washed into the imprint. This mud hardened into solid rock.



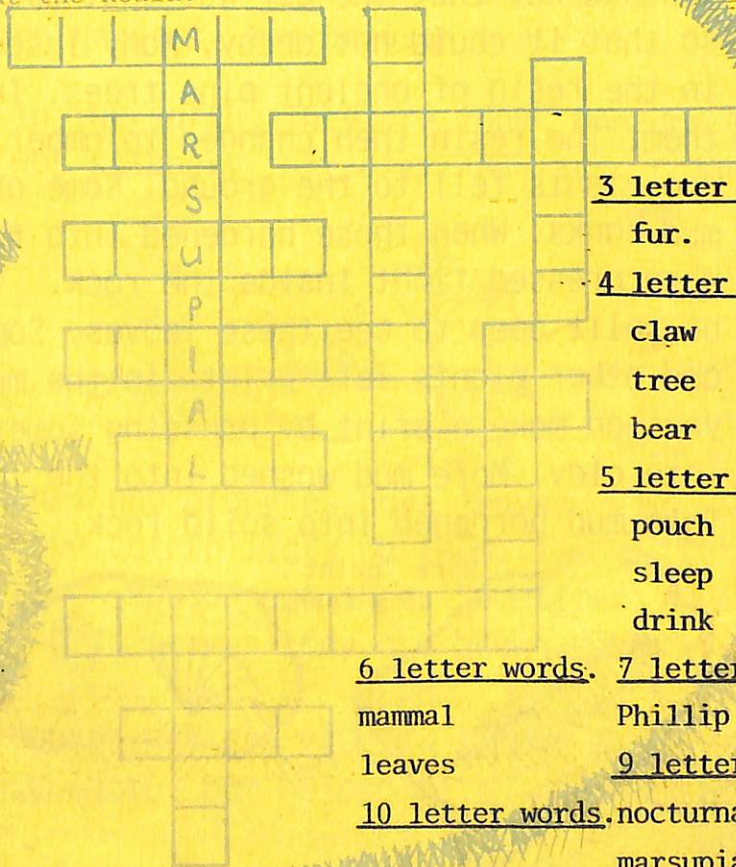


Begin at the
the word already

done for you.

By counting the number of
letters needed for the
missing word,
work out
where each
word is to
go.

Use these words to write a story
about the koala.



3 letter words.

fur.

4 letter words.

claw

tree

bear

5 letter words.

pouch

sleep

drink

6 letter words. 7 letter words

mammal

Phillip

leaves

9 letter words

10 letter words. nocturnal

marsupial

eucalyptus

bushfires