



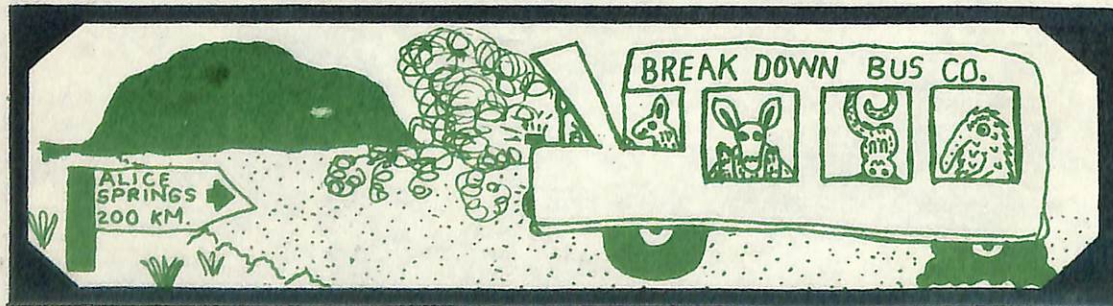
# Dear Readers

Well, I've finally done it and I'm not a bit sorry.

Anyway, it's about time echidnas had a say around here.

These humans think they know everything about everything. Echidnas can be editors, too. This month (June I think) MR. ERNEST SPIKE ECHIDNA will be the new editor of Probe.

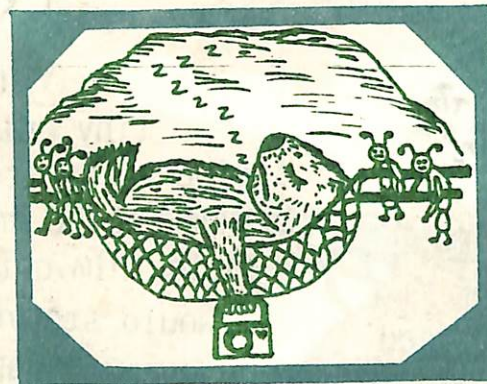
What do you think is happening on the front cover? It's a <sup>ph</sup>Xoto I took while Wally Wombat and I were visiting the Northern Territory, a very hot part of Australia. On the way to Ayers Rock (which was much too big for my rock collection I'm sad to say) our bus broke down.



Here we were, stranded in the middle of nowhere. The nearest garage was in Alice Springs, two hundred kilometres



away. It didn't take the other animals on the bus long to find a cool waterhole nearby. Sitting in their deck chairs they decided it was much too hot to crawl under the bus and help Wally fix it. Some of the lizards even decided that they were sick of city life and were not going back even if the bus was fixed.



And of course, poor old Wally ended up doing all the work. No wonder he was too busy sleeping to look at Ayers Rock when we eventually got there.

It wasn't until one of the wallabies tripped over a termite mound that we found out about the word co-operation. It means working together. We even met the queen termite who told us that over one million termites can live together in a big mound. All of them have special jobs which help all of the other termites. Soldier termites look after the worker termites by frightening away termite eaters. Worker termites look after the soldier termites by feeding them because soldier termites cannot do this by themselves. One of the termites borrowed my camera to take the 'inside' picture you see on the next page.



# Co-operation in a termite colony

Only a few termites have wings. These will fly away one day to become king or queen of a new termite colony.

Without hurting them, kingfishers build their nests in termite mounds.

A termite colony has

one queen and one king termite. They are the only ones able to make termite eggs. The queen has a very large body which helps her to lay 3000 eggs a day.

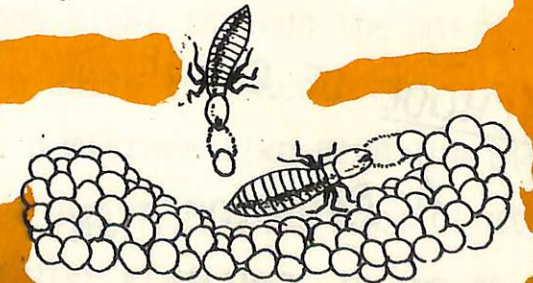
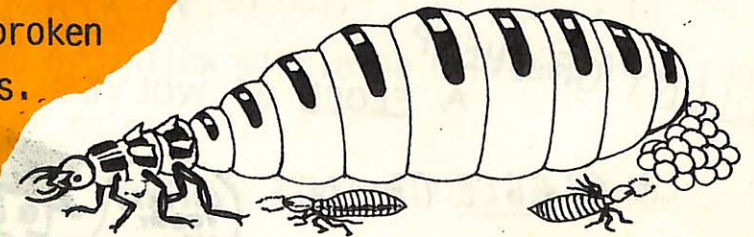
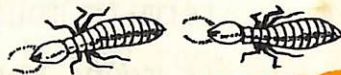
Worker termites dig new tunnels and repair broken ones.

Very tiny animals live inside a termite's body. Without these animals inside him, a termite would starve to death even though he kept eating enough food.

The queen, the king and the soldier termites cannot feed themselves. The worker termites must do this for them.

Soldier termites have big jaws to protect the other termites from enemies (like ants and echidnas) and to keep the nest clean.

After the eggs are laid, the workers take them to a special nursery area. Here the workers look after the young until they are grown up.





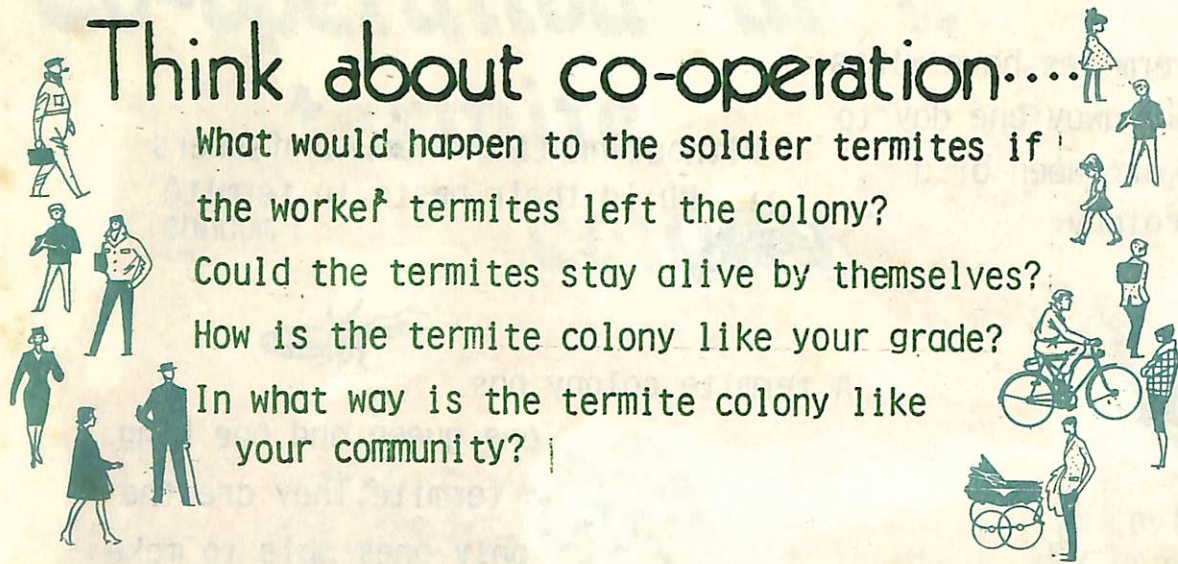
# Think about co-operation....

What would happen to the soldier termites if the worker termites left the colony?

Could the termites stay alive by themselves?

How is the termite colony like your grade?

In what way is the termite colony like your community?



Like the termites, many animals live together in groups. These groups often have special names. Ernie has mixed these ones up. Can you put the right group names in the right places on another piece of paper. Perhaps you could think of some more.

A COLONY OF SHEEP

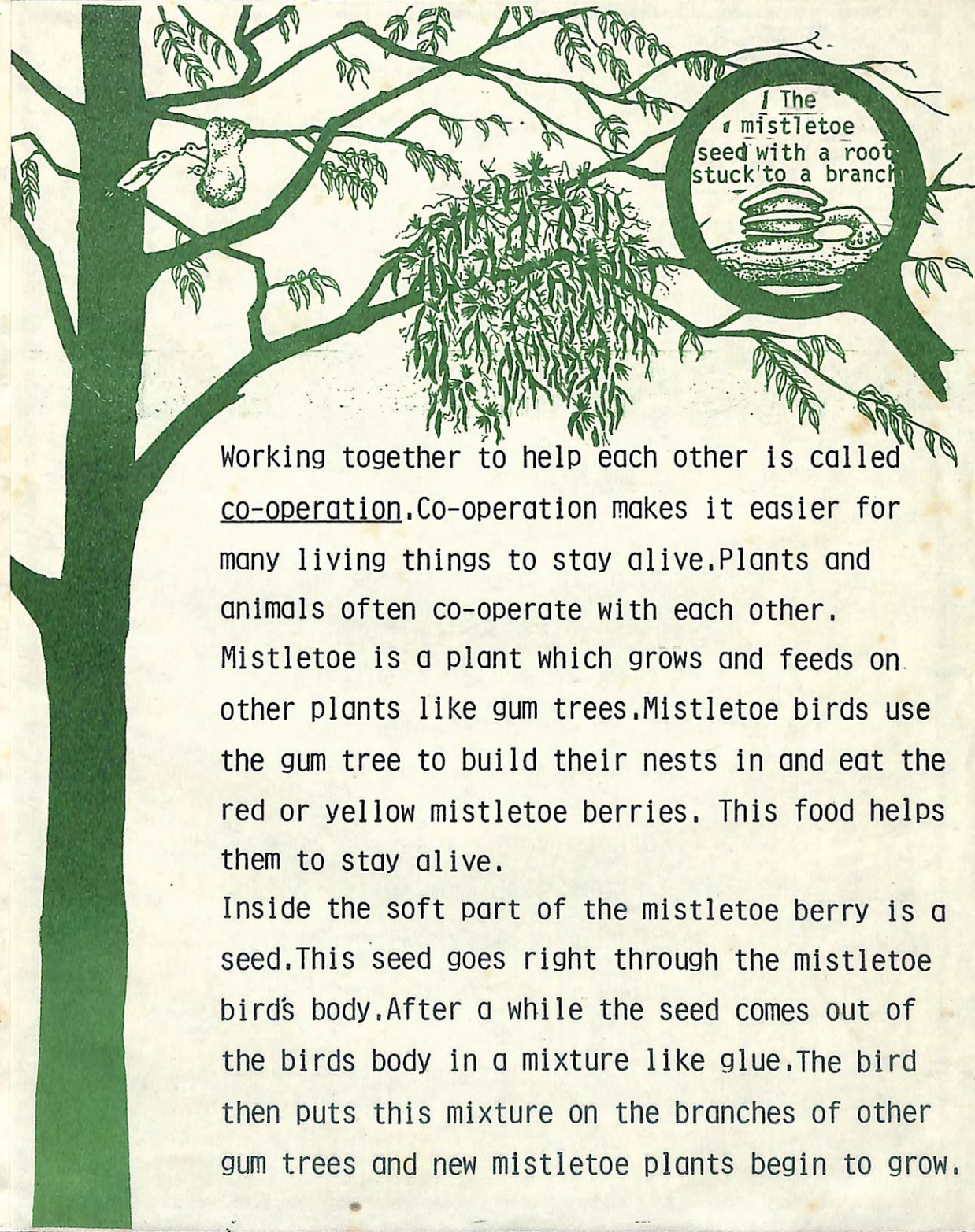
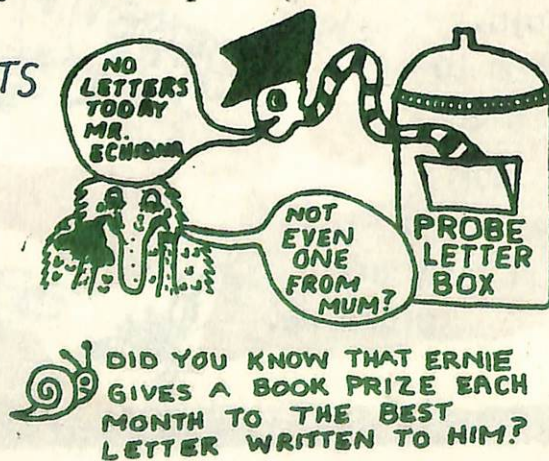
A FLOCK OF WOLVES

A GAGGLE OF ANTS

A SCHOOL OF GEESE

A PRIDE OF FISH

A PACK OF SWANS



The mistletoe seed with a root stuck to a branch

Working together to help each other is called

co-operation. Co-operation makes it easier for

many living things to stay alive. Plants and animals often co-operate with each other.

Mistletoe is a plant which grows and feeds on other plants like gum trees. Mistletoe birds use the gum tree to build their nests in and eat the red or yellow mistletoe berries. This food helps them to stay alive.

Inside the soft part of the mistletoe berry is a seed. This seed goes right through the mistletoe bird's body. After a while the seed comes out of the bird's body in a mixture like glue. The bird then puts this mixture on the branches of other gum trees and new mistletoe plants begin to grow.





FISH



DRAGONFLY



BUTTERFLY



DUCK



RABBIT



BUDGERIGAR



HUMAN

Animals like termites are called social animals because they live together in groups. Social animals work together to help each other.

Look at the animals on this page. Color in the social animals green. Color in the other animals red. Can you think of a group name for these other animals? Think carefully about the color you choose for the budgerigar.

Perhaps your class can make a chart with many different animals on it, showing which animals are social animals and which are not.



FAIRY PENGUIN



ANT



SNAKE



PLATYPUS



MOUSE



BEE

TEXT BY DEBRA BRYDON ARTISTS THIS MONTH:  
WILMA PROHASKY AND DEBRA BRYDON

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