

BUSH BUBS

HELEN MILROY

ISBN (HB): 9781760994471

YEAR LEVEL: K–Y2

ABOUT THE BOOK

Bush Bubs is a delightful rhyming book about the baby animals found in Australia. Children will love the vibrant illustrations and learning about native animals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helen Milroy is a descendant of the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. She was born and educated in Perth. Helen has always had a passionate interest in health and wellbeing, especially for children. Helen studied medicine at the University of Western Australia. She is currently a professor at the University of Western Australia, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, and Commissioner with the National Mental Health Commission. Helen was recently appointed as the AFL's first Indigenous Commissioner. Her books for children include *Wombat, Mudlark and Other Stories* (2019), *Backyard Birds* (2020), *Backyard Bugs* (2021), *Backyard Beasties* (2022), *Bush Bubs* (2024), *Bush Birds* (2023), *Owl and Star* (2022), *Crow Baby* (2023), and *The Boab Tree* (2024).

THEMES

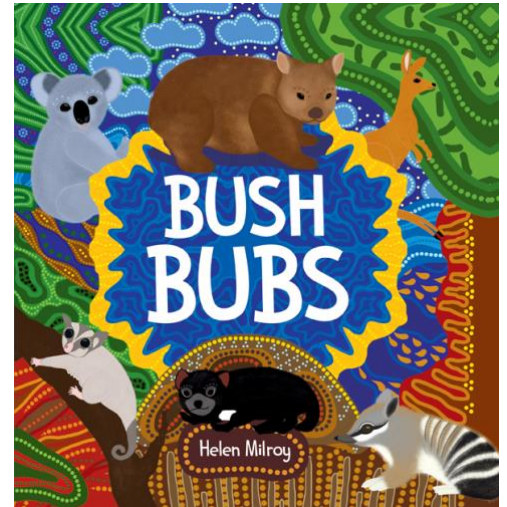
- Native Australian animals and their babies
- Australian landscape
- Rhyming words
- Actions – verbs
- Descriptive language

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- Early Years – preschool
- K–Y2 English
- K–Y2 Visual Arts
- K–Y2 Biological Sciences

USEFUL WEBSITES

- helenmilroy.com
- australian.museum/learn/animals/mammals
- wwf.org.au/what-we-do/species



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion Ideas

1. Read the story a couple of times. Ask the children the name of the animal on each page.
2. Ask the children what words they can use to describe the animal – it can be colour, characteristics, how they move, etc.
3. Make a class poster. Have pictures of each animal on the page, and around each picture write the descriptive words the children have provided.
4. Talk about sounds in words and when words end in similar sounds (rhyming). Go through the book together and find the rhyming words.
5. Once the children have heard the story a few times, read again and pause at the final rhyming word to see if they can input the word.
6. Ask the children what other Australian animals they have seen or know about.
7. The author has used the illustrations to show the reader the habitat where each animal can be found. Ask the children if they can work out where the animals may live from the pictures. How have colours been used to show this?
8. Discuss the baby name for each animal, explaining how some are called joeys, some puggles and some pups.
9. On the final page, the author asks us to look after our '**precious bush bubs**'. Discuss why these animals need looking after. What is happening to our native environment that is causing problems? What can we do to help look after these animals?

Creative Writing and Biological Sciences

1. For younger students: Using the classroom poster of the animals and descriptive words (see Discussion Idea #3), the children will choose one animal to draw and annotate. The teacher or EA can work with each child to help with the annotation. They can then complete the sentence: 'I like this animal because ...' using the words around the picture to help with this or use their own words.
2. For older students: Have them research an Australian animal and its baby, then write a fact sheet about it, including:
 - a. Its different names (scientific, local names, common)
 - b. Physical description
 - c. Habitat
 - d. Diet
 - e. Threats to its survivalA template can be prepared for students' research, and this can then be made into a class book.
3. Students can use their fact sheets to see if a partner can guess which animal they are talking about from the descriptive language they have used.
4. Students choose their favourite animal from the book and write a story in which it is the main character. Pay particular attention to the setting of the story and to describing the personality of your main character as well as what they look like.

Arts

1. Identifying animals from their shadow prints. Use the final page in the book. Ask the children who can find the [name each animal]. Once the children are familiar with this, ask them to come up and point to a shadow and name the animal.
2. Make a class mural of the different Australian animals and their babies. Have the children work with sponges to paint the animals (use a stencil so the outline of the animal is maintained). Include trees, grasses, water, etc. to accurately reflect the habitat of the animals. Older students may choose to do paintings in keeping with the illustrative style of the book.

Health and Physical Education

1. Read each page and ask the children to show the action (pointing, waddling, swimming, eating, sleeping, curling up small, standing up tall, howling, growling). Then play Simon Says with these actions.