

TAWNY TROUBLE

DEB FITZPATRICK

ISBN (PB): 9781760995294

YEAR LEVEL: Y3–6

ABOUT THE BOOK

When Tessa's family accidentally hit a tawny frogmouth while driving through the bush at night, they feel terrible. But the tawny is alive and needs their help. What Tessa doesn't know is where that help will lead ... Deb Fitzpatrick's new novel is perfect for nature-loving readers who have a soft spot for animals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deb Fitzpatrick loves bushwalking with her family. When she can, she sneaks away to a shack in the karri forest of the south-west of Western Australia. She's the author of novels for readers of all ages, some of which have received awards in Australia, been published in the US and optioned for film. Deb regularly teaches creative writing to both children and adults, and has a Master of Art in creative writing from UWA.

She loves weaving stories from real life into her writing. Deb lived for several years in the cloud forest of Costa Rica, where she did a lot of hiking while toucans, three-toed sloths and spider monkeys crossed through the forest canopy above her. Deb shares her life with her lovely family and their kelpie, who is absolutely not a failed sheepdog.

THEMES

- Native fauna
- Wildlife care
- Conservation
- Family
- Taking responsibility
- Urban legends

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Y3–6 English

Y3–6 Science

Y3–6 Humanities and Social Sciences

Y3–6 The Arts

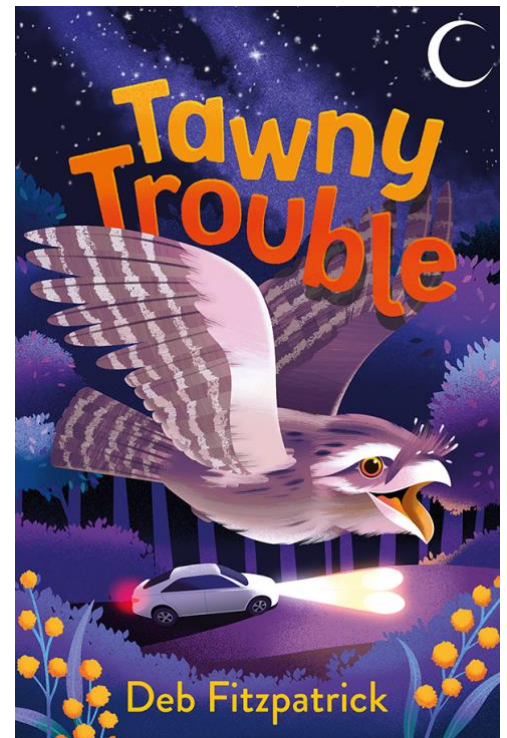
USEFUL WEBSITES

Author's website: debfitzpatrick.com.au

Australian Museum: australian.museum/learn/animals/birds/tawny-frogmouth

WIRES Australian Wildlife Rescue Organisation: wires.org.au

Nannup Music Festival: nannupmusicfestival.org



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Have you ever rescued an injured animal? Recount your experience.
2. What are the key factors to consider when rehabilitating an injured animal?
3. What are some threats to Australian native wildlife? What can individuals and communities do to help protect them?
4. Tessa explains that human food can make animals sick. What are some other reasons people shouldn't feed wildlife?
5. Tessa is excited to see food trucks at the music festival. Which food truck would you like to visit, and what would you order?
6. What do you think Tessa's mum means when she says she likes to hold CDs? (p. 13)
7. The family struggles to agree on a name for the injured bird. What would you name the bird and why?
8. Sharon says that Otto **'lives completely off-grid'** (p. 39). What does this mean?
9. Describe Tessa's feelings when handing Tawny over to Otto's care.
10. Tessa is shocked to feel excited about breaking the rules. Have you ever experienced this feeling?
11. What is 'the thing' Tessa plans to do when she goes to Otto's at night?
12. What do the following words from the story mean? Use each word in an original sentence.
 - a. reconvene (p. 27)
 - b. mottled (p.27)
 - c. gammy (p. 74)
 - d. territory (p. 81)
 - e. rehabilitate (p. 83)
 - f. pining (p. 94)
13. What do these sayings mean?
 - a. **'we have some precious cargo on board'** (p. 8)
 - b. **'at a loose end'** (p. 82)
 - c. **'penny for your thoughts'** (p. 84)
 - d. **'not on your nelly'** (p. 122)
14. Create a character profile for Tessa, including her personal traits, motivation and development throughout the story.
15. Describe the relationship between Tessa and her siblings.
16. Consider Tessa and her family. In what ways is their family dynamic similar or different to your own family?
17. What are some ways the author builds tension around the idea of the Nannup tiger?
18. How can art and literature inspire people to protect the environment?
19. The author uses figurative language to add interest to her writing. Identify which figurative device (simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, repetition) is used in these examples:
 - a. **'The moon hangs like a crisp slice of apple over the road'** (p. 5).
 - b. **'Beside us, hugging the edges of the road, are gnarled brown marri trees ...'** (p.7)
 - c. **'It starts with a weird, deep, constant ooom-oom-oom, ooom-oom-oom ...'** (p. 32)
 - d. **'I can't sleep with the best bad thing filling up my head. It overflows and fills my whole body, which tingles and fizzes as I lie here pretending everything is normal'** (p. 87).
 - e. **'Please please please please please please go in. GO IN. GO INSIDE!!!'** (p. 109)
20. At times, the author chooses for a character to not say what they mean, instead letting their silence or body language speak for them. What is being expressed in these examples?
 - a. **'Mum turns away slightly, but I hear her whisper to him, "That's if it's still alive in the morning." They exchange a look'** (p. 19).
 - b. **'"We've had some funny business going on around here with gates lately." He looks at me very quickly then'** (p. 118).

Creative Writing

1. Create a written, oral or audiovisual news report detailing a fictitious sighting of the Nannup tiger. Be sure to include relevant information such as who, what, when and where, as well as eyewitness accounts of the event.
2. Create a pamphlet guide to caring for an injured native bird. Include a list of dos and don'ts.

3. Tessa's dream holiday is in the bush with her family, surrounded by animals, riding bikes and building cubbies. Write a paragraph describing your dream holiday.
4. Write a review of *Tawny Trouble*. Include your opinion of the story, your favourite part and to whom you would recommend the story.
5. Write a diary entry recounting the events of the story from the perspective of one of the characters other than Tessa.
6. Imagine if Tawny hadn't returned to Otto's aviary after Tessa let her out. Write an alternative ending to the chapter 'The Great Escape'.
7. Write a descriptive paragraph about the bushland setting and include sensory details such as sights, sounds and smells.

The Arts

1. Work collaboratively to script and perform a dramatic performance based on an important event from the book, such as arriving at Otto's house or the car breaking down.
2. Design a poster advertising the Nannup Music Festival. Consider the information, design and images that will persuade your demographic to attend.
3. Create an artwork depicting your favourite scene from the book.
4. Create an alternative front cover for the book.
5. Tessa enjoys seeing the Family Shoveller Band at the Nannup Music Festival. Listen to some of their music and write a paragraph sharing your personal opinion of the music.
6. Look online to discover the latest line-up for the Nannup Music Festival or a music festival near your home. Which bands or performers would you be most interested in seeing live?

Humanities and Social Sciences

1. Locate Nannup on a map of Western Australia.
2. Tessa explains the history of their accommodation: **'The village used to be a mill town ... But logging isn't allowed here anymore, and the forest has grown back, like a big scab healing over. Now the cottages are places for families on holiday, like us.'** (p. 23)
 - a. What does this quote tell you about how and why the village has changed over time?
 - b. What aspects of the village have remained the same?
3. Create a map of the village based on the description from the book. Include a key.
4. Investigate the Indigenous history of Nannup and the surrounding region.
5. What impact did human activities have on the extinction of the thylacine?
6. Research where your closest wildlife hospital is located. How can they be contacted?

Science

1. Work in groups to research, create and present a multimedia presentation on an animal featured in the story, such as the tawny frogmouth, kangaroo, Gilbert's potoroo or thylacine. Include details on physical characteristics, habitat, diet, behaviour, reproduction and threats.
2. The family used a cardboard box to create a temporary space for the injured bird. Design a temporary home for an injured bird using items you already have at home.
3. How do plants provide shelter for the animals in the story?
4. Create a class list of extinct animals, like the thylacine, or near-extinct animals, like the Gilbert's potoroo. Research some of the main threats to these species.
5. What role do/did these organisms play in their bush habitat: producers, consumers or decomposers?
 - a. tawny frogmouth
 - b. kangaroo
 - c. thylacine
 - d. possum
 - e. moth
 - f. mealworm
 - g. kookaburra
 - h. eucalyptus tree
6. What adaptations does a tawny frogmouth have to help it survive in its habitat?
7. The tawny frogmouth is well-camouflaged in trees due to its colouration and ability to remain still. List other examples of physical and behavioural camouflage.