NATIONAL TREE DAY

ACTIVITY BOOK

National Tree Day

PLANET ARK

A range of fun and educational activities to make your Tree Day even more memorable!

INTRODUCTION

Our world is a wonderful place to live

We must all help to protect our environment and create a world where we live in balance with nature.

An easy and effective way to clean the air is to plant trees! Trees absorb carbon dioxide and provide food and shelter for birds and other animals.

To get everyone involved in planting more trees, Planet Ark created National Tree Day, which takes place on the last weekend of July every year. National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day are opportunities to celebrate nature and connect with your community while taking care of your local environment.

Join other students across Australia to help protect our environment for our future. We even have some fun puzzles and games to help you learn more about how planting trees helps our environment.

PLEASE JOIN US and thousands of Australians on National Tree Day to make our world a better place!

Visit treeday.planetark.org

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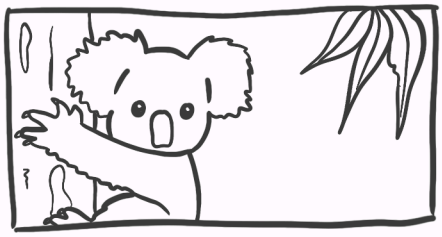
WHY PLANT A TREE?

Trees produce oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, regulate climate, prevent soil erosion, maintain soil quality, and provide habitats for wildlife. They also add beauty to our environment, enhance landscapes, and reduce noise pollution. Planting trees combats deforestation, a major global concern, and creates a better future for ourselves and future generations. It's a simple yet effective way to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable environment for everyone.



BIODIVERSITY

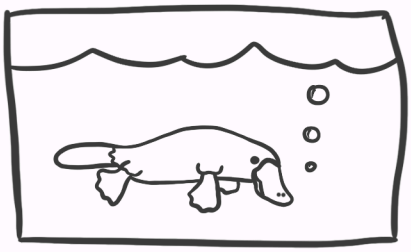
Biodiversity refers to the variety of living things. A single tree can provide a home to many mammals, reptiles, birds and smaller organisms such as insects, fungi and other plants. By planting native seedlings, we can improve the quality of existing habitats and connect patches of habitat with wildlife corridors.

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Trees, shrubs and grasses help cool the planet by absorbing and storing harmful greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, into their trunks and branches. This is important as it keeps carbon out of the atmosphere, which reduces the "greenhouse effect" and the impacts of climate change.

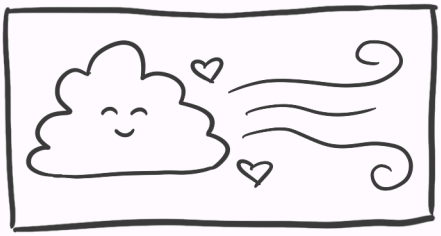
HEALTH

Humans are biophilic creatures, meaning we love to be in nature and connect with other lifeforms, such as plants and animals. Connection with nature provides many health benefits, particularly for our mental health. Trees help make us feel calm, reduce stress and their shade protects us from the sun's harmful rays in summer.



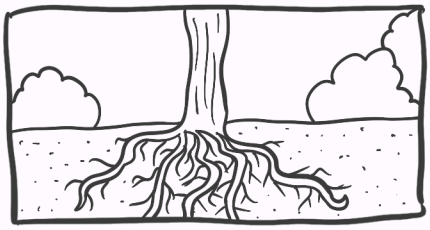
IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

Trees clean our water by slowing down its absorption process into the ground. Through their root systems, trees act as natural cleansers, filtering out pollutants and preventing waterside erosion and negative impacts on aquatic ecosystems and wildlife.



CLEAN THE AIR

Trees release oxygen, and clean the air we breathe through their leaves and bark. They absorb carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxide and other chemicals that pollute the air we breathe.



PREVENT SOIL EROSION

The intricate root systems in trees hold the soil around them in place, acting as a filter and encouraging water to soak into soil rather than running off into nearby water sources.

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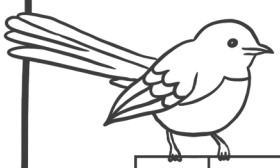
FIND-A-WORD



Can you find the native Australian trees?

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

Lemon myrtle
Acacia
Banksia
Melaleuca

Bunya pine
Bottlebrush
Eucalyptus
Silky oak

Grevillea
Lilly pilly
Waratah
River red gum

Lacebark
Snow gum
Firewheel tree
Flame tree

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MAZE

Help the Cassowary find her eggs!

DID YOU KNOW?
Cassowary eggs can be bright green or pale blue. Female cassowaries lay between 3-8 eggs at a time, with each egg weighing up to half a kilogram. She doesn't sit on the eggs, however - that's the male cassowary's job!

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COLOURING IN

Colour in the Rainbow Lorikeet!

Be as creative and colourful as you like.

Share your lorikeets with us using the hashtags
#connectwithnature and #nationaltreeday

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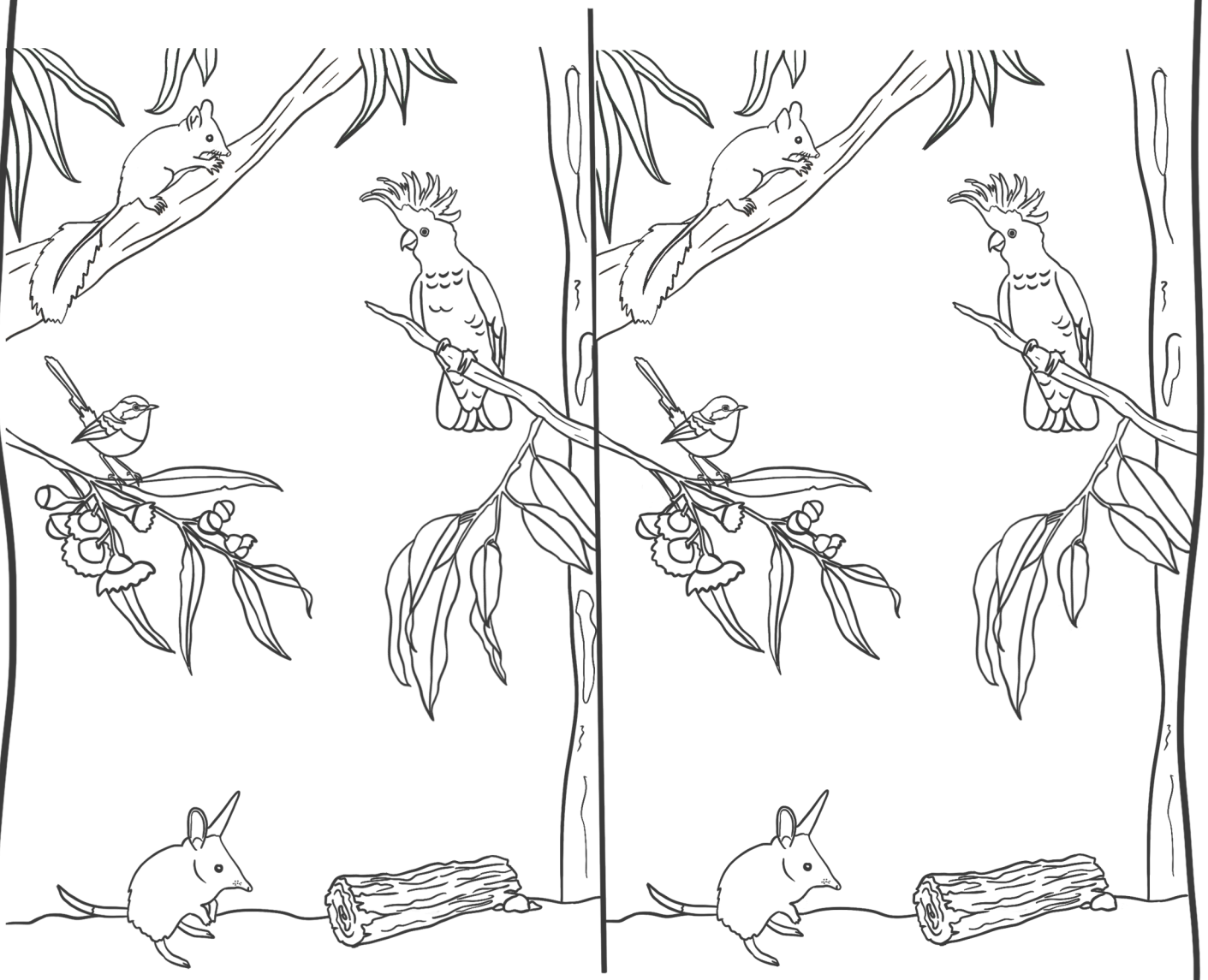
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are 8 differences between these pictures. Can you spot them all? Circle each one as you find it!



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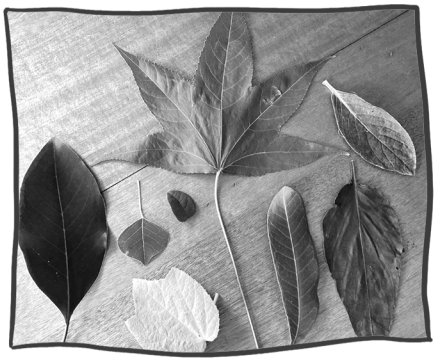
LEAF RUBBINGS

To create leaf rubbings you will need:

- Plain paper
- Selection of leaves
- Charcoal or coloured crayons (with the wrapping taken off)



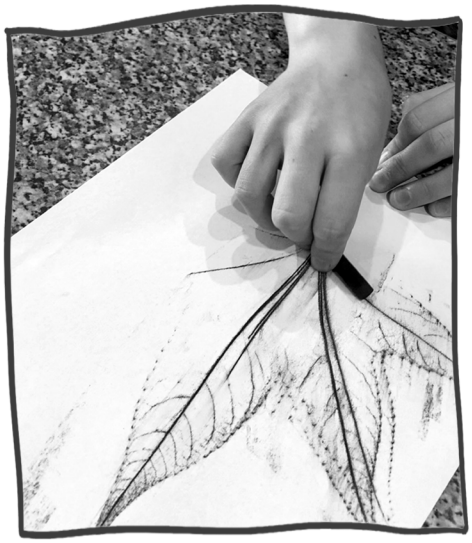
STEP 1

Gather your leaves – try to find a variety of shapes and sizes.

Leaf patterns are cool!!

STEP 2

Place a leaf with the veiny side (generally the underside) facing upwards, underneath your piece of paper.



STEP 3

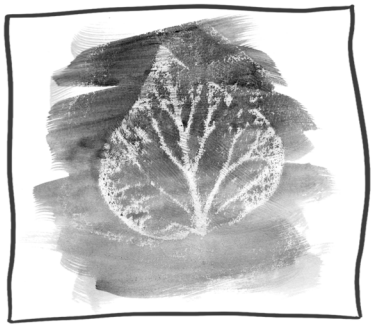
Pressing down on the stem of your leaf with a finger so it doesn't move, use the long side of your charcoal/crayon to rub over the leaf. For the best effect, use long sweeping motions.

STEP 4

Repeat with other leaves, experimenting with different colours and layouts, and then turn your creations into whatever you like! (eg. greeting cards, framed art or a hanging leaf mobile for your room.)

BONUS EXTRA!

If you have a white crayon, you could create your leaf rubbing like this, and then paint over it with watercolour paints for a special ghostly look!



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BOOKMARK

Colour in your own bookmark,
then cut it out and use it while you're reading books about trees!

INTERESTING TREE FACTS TO READ

- Trees live the longest of any species on Earth – the oldest tree may be over 5,000 years old.
- There are about 60,000 species of tree on Earth.
- In forests, trees 'talk' to each other using an underground network of fungi connected to their roots, called the mycorrhizal network. Trees can even share things with each other using this network, such as water, carbon, nitrogen and other nutrients!
- 'Dendrochronology' is the study of the rings in tree trunks. The rings don't only tell us how old the tree is, but – amazingly – can also show evidence of natural events such as volcanic eruptions or droughts.
- People in hospitals who have a view of trees from their window are reported to heal faster than those who can't see any trees.
- Ever heard the saying "knock on wood"? This comes from ancient pagan times, when it was believed that good spirits lived inside trees.

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TREE FRIENDS

Many plants and animals have a reciprocal relationship, which means that they both benefit from each other (and even need each other to survive!). Read about some of our native Australian 'Tree Friends' and then complete the activity at the end to test your knowledge.

HONEY POSSUM THE SWEETEST LITTLE POLLINATOR!

Key facts
Scientific name: *Tarsipes rostratus*
Conservation status: Protected
Lives in: Western Australia

Which trees are they friends with?
Honey Possums rely on nectar from native plants for food (including Banksias, Bottlebrushes, Grass Trees and Kangaroo Paws).

How do the trees benefit?
When Honey Possums feed on the nectar from native flowers, they collect pollen on their head and body from the flowers which allows them to pollinate the next flowers they feed on.

Threats
Habitat loss. Honey Possums are now extinct across most of WA's Central Wheatbelt, due to clearing of their preferred habitat.

FUN FACT

The Honey Possum's name is a bit misleading – they're only distantly related to a possum, and they do not eat honey (they eat nectar)!

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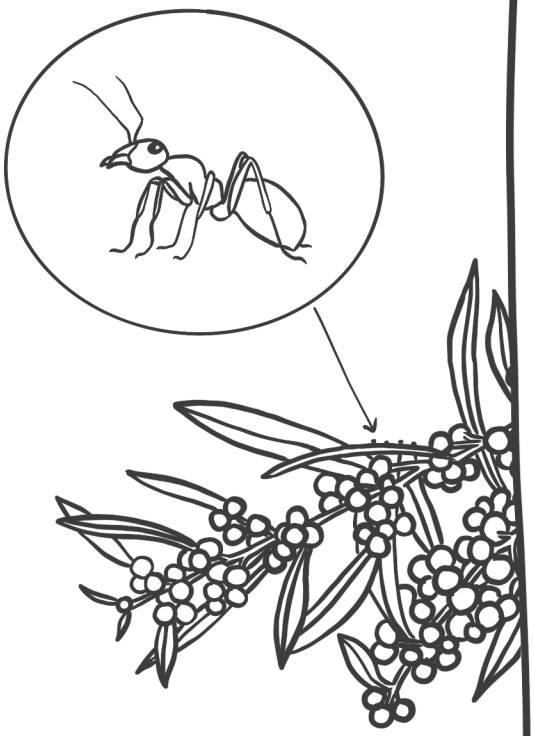
TREE FRIENDS

ANTS & ACACIAS YOU LOOK AFTER ME, I'LL LOOK AFTER YOU!

Key facts
Scientific name: (various)
Conservation status: (various)
Lives: Australia-wide



Which trees are they friends with?
Acacias (Wattles). When wattle seeds drop to the ground, they're collected by local ants who take them into their nest. The ants feast on the fleshy part of the seed (called the aril) and leave the harder seed.

How do the trees benefit?
In the ants' nest after feeding on the fleshy part, the wattle seed is protected and waits safely until the environmental conditions are right to start growing.

FUN FACT

Australia hosts 1,275 species of ants!

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TREE FRIENDS

SWIFT PARROT

PLEASE PROTECT THE OLD EUCALYPT TREES FOR ME!

Key facts
Scientific name: *Lathamus discolor*
Conservation status: Critically Endangered
Lives in: Tasmania

Which trees are they friends with?
Tasmanian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and Black Gum (*Eucalyptus ovata*) plants. These trees grow lots of flowers and produce large amounts of nectar for Swift Parrots to feed on. The parrots also nest in the hollows of old gum trees, which shows the importance of saving old growth forest.

How do the trees benefit?
Swift parrots are major pollinators of Blue and Black Gum trees, which means they help new trees to grow and survive.

Threats
Habitat loss, collisions with netting, fences, windows and cars.

FUN FACT

Swift parrots only breed in Tasmania, but some are known to fly as far as south-east Queensland, which is the longest known migration for a parrot!

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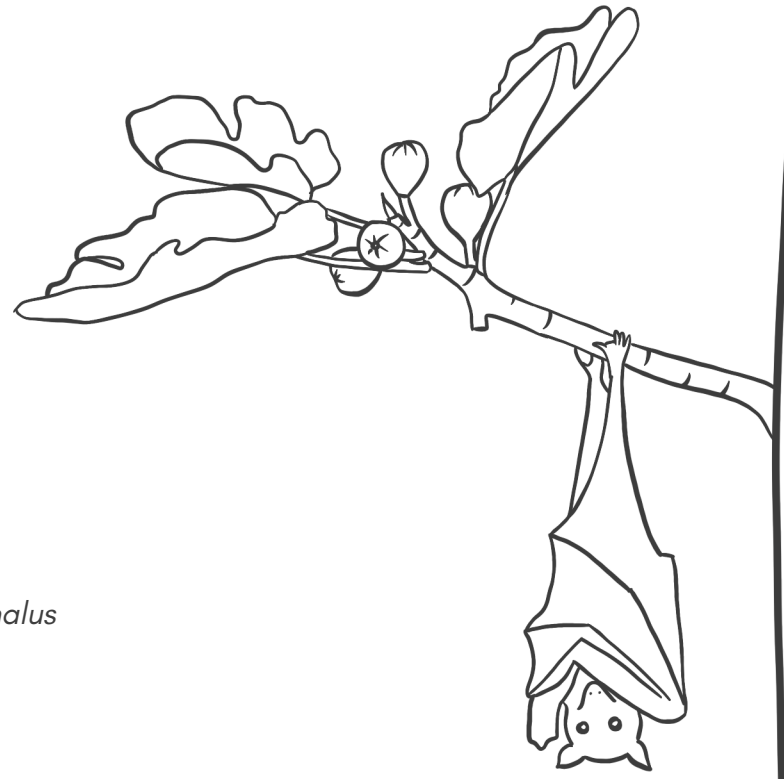
TREE FRIENDS



GREY-HEADED FLYING FOX

POWERHOUSE POLLINATORS & SUPER SEED SPREADERS!

Key facts
Scientific name: *Pteropus poliocephalus*
Conservation status: Vulnerable
Lives in: East coast of Australia

Which trees are they friends with?
Eucalypts, Melaleucas, Banksias and a range of rainforest plants. The Flying Fox is considered a 'keystone species', which means that they are vital to maintaining the diversity and function of Australia's forests and ecosystems.

How do the trees benefit?
Flying Foxes help to pollinate plants, which means they help new trees to grow and survive. They also help spread plants to new areas by eating seeds and then distributing them across the landscape in their poo!

Threats
Habitat loss via tree clearing, electrocution by power lines, entanglement in fruit netting.

FUN FACT

Flying Foxes can fly up to 60 km during the night to feed, before returning to their roosting sites at dawn.

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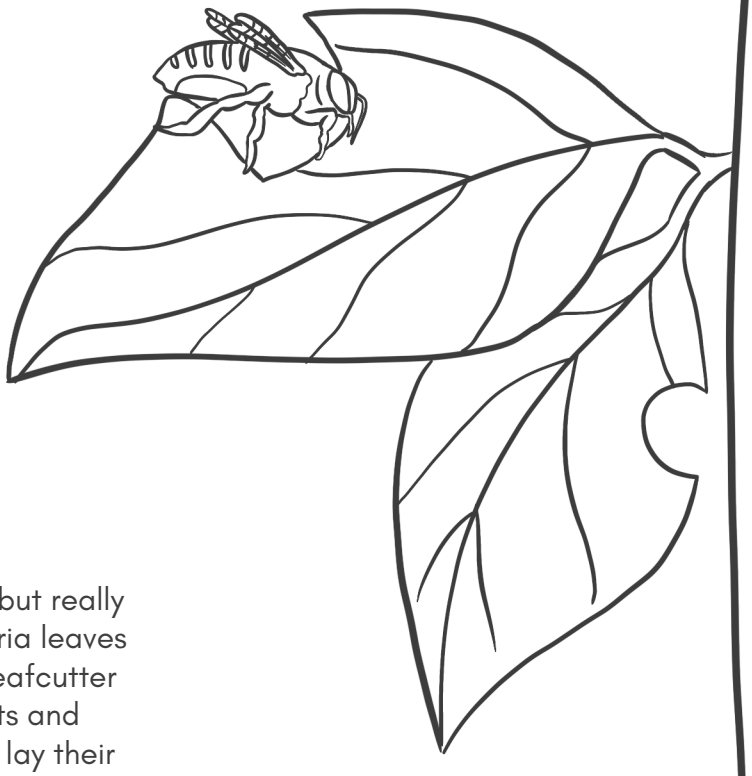
TREE FRIENDS

LEAFCUTTER BEE

THE MYSTERY BEHIND THOSE CIRCULAR HOLES IN LEAVES!



Key facts
Scientific name: *Megachile sp.*
Conservation status: Least Concern
Lives: Australia-wide

Which trees are they friends with?
Leafcutter bees cut all sorts of leaves, but really love softer ones like Rose leaves, Wisteria leaves and Butterfly bush (Buddleja) leaves. Leafcutter bees use their cuttings to line their nests and build tube-shaped 'cells', in which they lay their eggs.

How do the trees benefit?
Like all bees, Leafcutter bees are important pollinators, which means they help new trees to grow and survive by spreading pollen from flower to flower.

FUN FACT

Unlike honey bees, leafcutter bees are solitary creatures – they don't live in hives. Instead, they make their nests in cracks in timber, rocks and hollow tree stems.

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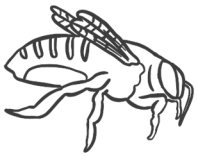
TREE FRIENDS

QUIZ!

Connect the animal with its favourite tree.

Grey-headed flying fox

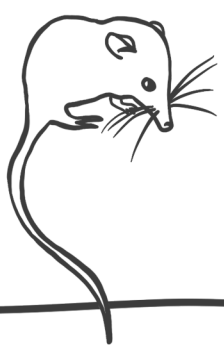
Leafcutter bee



Swift parrot

Ants

Honey possum



Acacia/wattle

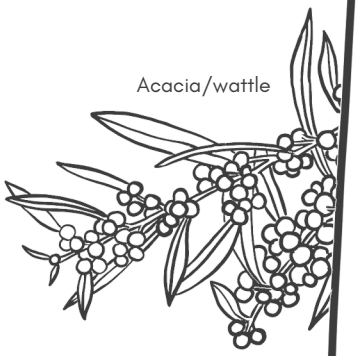
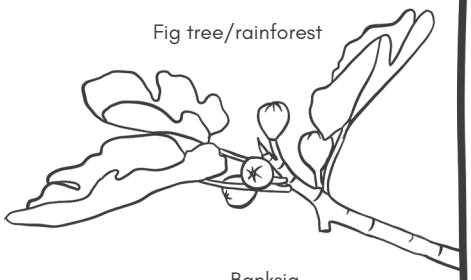
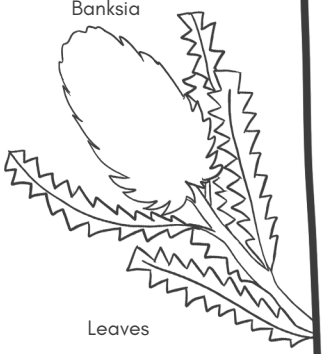


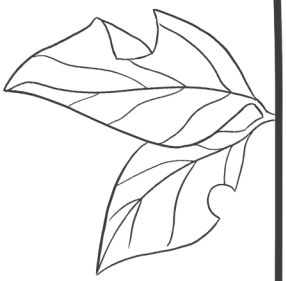
Fig tree/rainforest



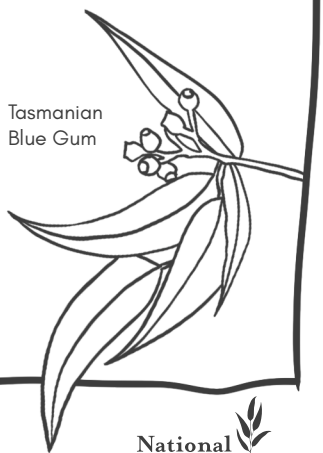
Banksia



Leaves



Tasmanian Blue Gum



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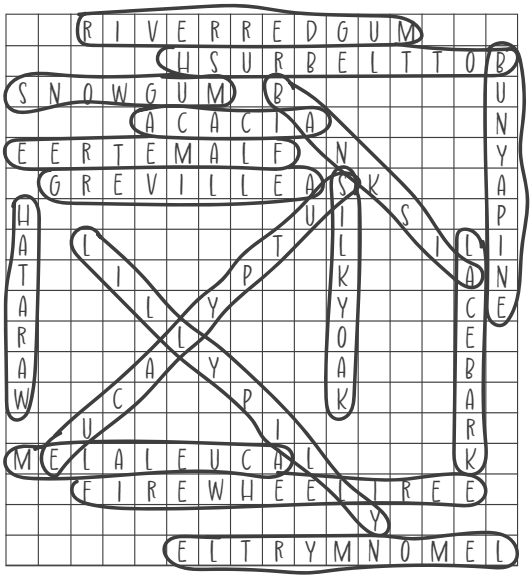
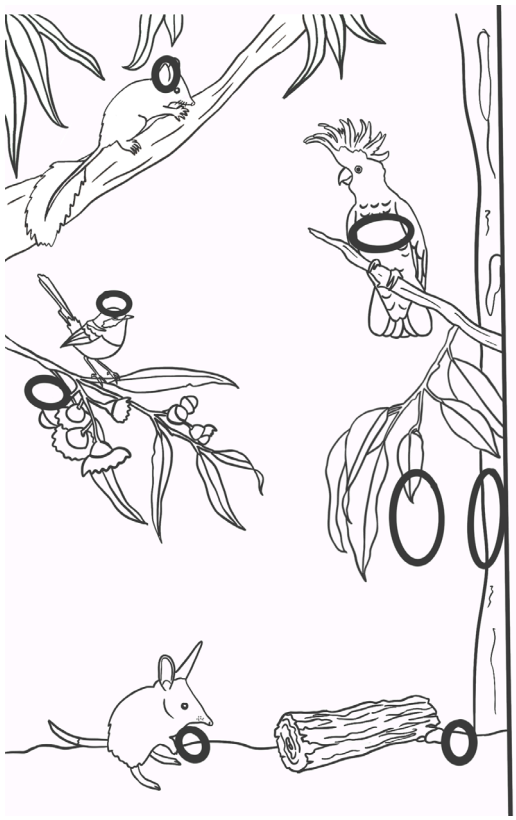
ANSWERS

FIND-A-WORD

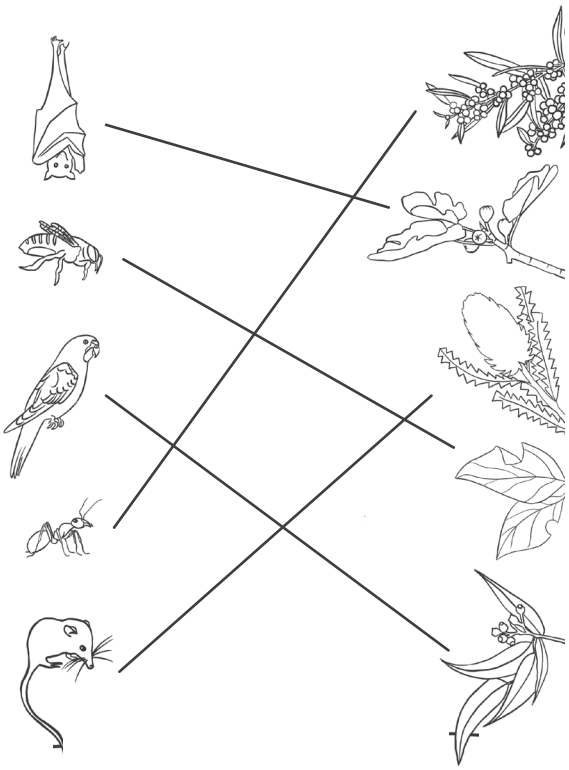


MAZE

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



TREE FRIENDS QUIZ



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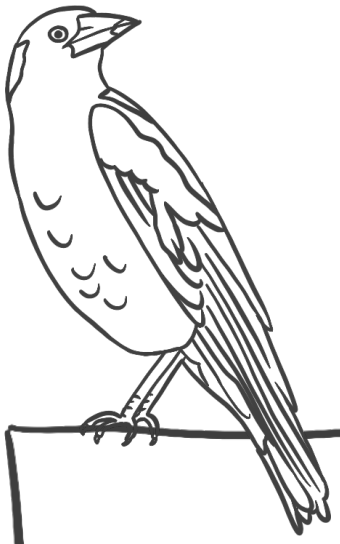

"

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. **The second best time is now.**

Chinese Proverb

Design and Illustration by Sarah Wiecek for Planet Ark Environmental Foundation

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