Themes

- Cassowaries
- Sustainability
- Life cycles

Key learning outcomes

- Learn about the life cycle of the cassowary.
- Investigate and understand the impacts of deforestation and the importance of sustainability.
- Identify the role that birds play in the life cycle of plants.

Key curriculum areas

- Science: Science Understanding (Biological sciences, Earth and space sciences); Science as a Human Endeavour
- English: Literacy
- Sustainability: Systems; World views

Publication details

Cassowary Dad

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Cassowary Dad Beverley McWilliams and Julian Teh

About the book Tap, tap, CRACK!

Three stripy chicks hatch ...

After patiently incubating his mate's eggs, Cassowary Dad must raise the chicks alone. Cassowary Dad nurtures, teaches and protects his chicks. But looking after three chicks is not easy. When a cyclone tears through their rainforest home, will this devoted dad be able to save his family?

A heart-warming tale about the magnificent Australian cassowary.

Recommended for Readers aged 5 to 9 (Years 1 to 4)



About the author and illustrator

Beverley McWilliams writes non-fiction and historical fiction for children. She has a passion for Australian animals and hopes her books will spark an interest in native species.

Julian Teh is a Canberra-based scientific illustrator, and the illustrator of *On the Trail of the Plains-wanderer*. Fuelled by a lifelong passion for birds, he uses his paintings to tell the stories of his birding experiences.

Pre-reading questions or activities

There are many different animals in the world and because they are different, they have different families.

Think about your family. Who looks after you when you are with your family? (Is it Dad, is it Mum, is it both, is it a grandparent or a guardian?) Who makes your food? Who takes you to school? Who plays with you or helps you? (Discuss these questions with the students and talk about how families can be different. Allow students to engage in conversations about their different families respectfully.)

We are now going to read a story about an animal where the dad looks after the young.

Discussion questions

Science

Life cycles

- **1.** What is the life cycle of a cassowary? $Egg \rightarrow Cassowary chick \rightarrow Adult cassowary$
- 2. What is the life cycle of a mango pine? Seed → Seedling → Mango pine tree. The tree produces mango pine fruit which the cassowaries and other animals eat, the seeds are in the fruit and they get pooed out by the cassowary, and the cycle starts again.

English

Inferring

- 1. What happened to the forest? What clues in the book helped you to infer this?
- 2. What is the fruit and why is it there? What clues in the book helped you to infer this? (Use the worksheet on page 5 to assist students to infer.)



Sustainability

1. What are some things people can do to make sure that plants and animals continue to survive?

Activities

Science

Backyard walk

The cassowary helps seeds grow by spreading them around and providing them with nutrients from their poo. Go for a walk through your school and let students explore. Support students to find animals, plants, seeds, poo, etc. Discuss how these organisms work together to survive.

Different parents

In the book, the female cassowary lays the eggs, but the male looks after the chicks. This is the same for some penguins and emus. Different animals have different structures to look after the young of their species. In a lot of animal species, the young are not looked after by any parent, such as turtles and most spiders. Some animals have both parents look after them, such as ducks. Other animals live in a herd and are looked after by many adults, such as horses and giraffes. Sometimes it is the female who solely looks after the young, such as chickens. The cuckoo is a bird that lets another bird raise its young instead.

Place the above categories (types of parents) on the board. Let students research or think of animals that fit into each category and write the name of the animal on the board. Support students to expand their knowledge of animals by finding animals that they are unfamiliar with, using books or the internet.

English

Retell or summarise

Get students to retell or summarise what happens in the book *Cassowary Dad* by writing and drawing the events that happened. A cut and paste worksheet with pictures to support younger students is found on page 6.



Synthesising

Use *Cassowary Dad* to identify information about cassowaries. This can be done as a class or as an independent task. Use the table below to collect students' thoughts about what they knew about cassowaries before they read the book, after they have read the book, and then see if there are any questions students want to find out about. This could then prompt a research task into the cassowary that is focused on their questions.

| What I knew about cassowaries | What I learnt about cassowaries | Questions I still have about cassowaries |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Sustainability

How does logging affect animals?

Ask students to research and create a poster about logging. Students could find information about: the things that forests and bushland provide animals (besides a home); the effect of logging on animals; the effect of logging on the environment or surrounding areas, such as waterways; and how people can be sustainable with the use of wood and paper.



Name:_____

Inferring – Cassowary Dad

What happened to the forest?

| What can you see in the picture? | What does it say in the text? | What are some things that might destroy a forest? |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| | | |
| | | |

What is the most likely thing to have happened and why?

How did the cart of fruit get there?

| Where might the cassowaries be close to? | Who might put fruit in a cart? | What are some ways the fruit could get there? |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | |
| | | |

What is the most likely thing to have happened and why?



Name:_____

Retell the Cassowary Dad story

Cut out the picture with the sentence below it and paste the events in order.







| 4 |
|---|
| |
| |
| |





Their home is gone, and they need more food.



The cassowaries find a new place to live.

Illustrations © Julian Teh.



A cassowary cracks out of its egg.



The baby cassowary plays, eats and sleeps.



The cassowary poos and seeds grow into plants.



Australian Curriculum Links (Version 9.0)

| Year level | Learning area: Science | Other learning areas |
|------------|---|--|
| Year 1 | Science Understanding: Biological sciences | English: Literacy |
| | Identify the basic needs of plants and animals, including air, water, food or shelter, and describe how the places they live meet those needs (AC9S1U01) Science Understanding: Earth and space sciences Describe daily and seasonal changes in the environment and explore how these changes affect everyday life (AC9S1U02) | Use interaction skills including turn-taking, speaking clearly, using active listening behaviours and responding to the contributions of others, and contributing ideas and questions (AC9E1LY02) Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising and questioning when listening, viewing and reading to build literal and inferred meaning by drawing on vocabulary and growing knowledge of context and text structures (AC9E1LY05) |
| Year 2 | Science as a Human Endeavour: Use and influence of | English: Literacy |
| | Describe how people use science in their daily lives, including using patterns to make scientific predictions (AC9S2H01) | Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning (<u>AC9E2LY05</u>) |
| Year 3 | Science as a Human Endeavour: Use and influence of | English: Literacy |
| | Consider how people use scientific explanations to meet a need or solve a problem (AC9S3H02) | Use comprehension strategies when listening and viewing to build literal and inferred meaning, and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (AC9E3LY05) |
| Year 4 | Science Understanding: Biological sciences | English: Literacy |
| | • Explain the roles and interactions of consumers, producers and decomposers within a habitat and how food chains represent feeding relationships (AC9S4U01) | Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning, to expand topic knowledge and ideas, and evaluate texts (AC9E4LY05) |
| All | Sustainability: Systems | |
| | All life forms, including human life, are connected through Earth's systems (geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere) on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival (SS1) Sustainability: World views | |
| | World views that recognise the interdependence of Earth's systems, and value diversity, equity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability (SW1) | |

Related books from CSIRO Publishing

For younger readers:

- Creature Corridors (https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8147)
- On the Trail of the Plains-wanderer: A Precious Australian Bird (https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8005)
- Swifty: The Super-fast Parrot (https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8062)
- The Forgotten Song: Saving the Regent Honeyeater (https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8078)

For older readers:

• Sensational Australian Animals (https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8094)



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Other CSIRO resources

CSIRO has developed and delivered a broad range of high-quality STEM education programs and initiatives for nearly 40 years. Our programs aim to inspire the pursuit of further STEM education among students and the community, to equip the emerging workforce with tomorrow's skill sets, and to strengthen collaboration between industry and classrooms across Australia. For more information visit: https://www.csiro.au/en/Education

