

Education Resource

Logan Art Gallery

20 June to 29 August 2026

WHERE
DO I
BELONG?

Two white bird silhouettes are perched on the letters of the title. One bird is perched on the letter 'E' in 'WHERE', and the other is perched on the letter 'I' in 'DO I'. The birds are facing each other, as if in conversation.

Our birds through art

loganarts.com.au/wdib



Acknowledgement of Country



Logan City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waterways and skies across the City of Logan. We extend that respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Australia's First Peoples.

Contents:

Overview.....	3
<i>Where do I belong?</i> - About the exhibition	4
Exhibition themes	
Theme 1 <i>Please Like Me, I'm Not That Bad</i>	5
Theme 2: <i>Home Sweet Home</i>	6
Theme 3: <i>Nurture Our Nature</i>	7
Theme 4: <i>Habitat Connects Us</i>	8
Activities overview	9
Sculpture	10
Painting, drawing and mixed media.....	20
Printmaking	25
Installation art	28
Media arts	30
Music.....	34
Creative practice and environmental awareness.....	36
Cross-curriculum links.....	38
Resources.....	44
Acknowledgements.....	46

Overview

This education resource supports the exhibition *Where do I belong?* and is designed for teachers, educators and arts practitioners working with children and young people.

The resource provides a practical collection of teaching ideas and learning activities that can be used in classrooms, galleries and other learning environments. Activities are flexible and can be adapted to suit different year levels, learning abilities and curriculum needs.

The resource may be used to support:

- Classroom Visual Arts programs
- Cross-curriculum units of work
- Stand-alone Visual Arts lessons
- Gallery-based and outreach learning experiences.

Additional background information, artist references, web links, and cross-disciplinary connections (including Science and Sustainability) are included to assist teachers with planning and implementation.

Through engagement with *Where do I belong?* students are supported to:

- Observe and investigate the natural world
- Develop care and responsibility for the environment
- Explore ideas of belonging, place and connection through art.

WHERE DO I BELONG?



Del Kathryn Barton (Australia b1972) *girl #8* 2004, pen, gouache, watercolour and acrylic on polyester canvas, 119.7 x 86 cm, Art Gallery of New South Wales, donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program ARTAND Australia 2015 © Del Kathryn Barton, Image © Art Gallery of New South Wales 312.2015

About the exhibition

Where do I belong? is a creative exhibition that brings people together to explore ideas of belonging, connection, and responsibility, while drawing attention to the urgent need to protect Australia's birdlife.

"Since the European colonisation of Australia, 21 species of birds and 27 species of mammals have been declared extinct. Over 200 of Australia's bird species are currently facing extinction, and many more are in decline. The loss of Australia's bird life...reflects the loss of natural habitat as a result of land clearing, urbanisation and invasive species."
– Australian Museum.

The artworks in the exhibition explore the relationship between people and birds. They invite viewers to learn more about Australia's native species and to see them with fresh eyes. Behaviours that are often misunderstood are natural survival responses, shaped by the need to protect young, find food and adapt to changing environments.

The City of Logan contains diverse wetlands, bushlands and grassy woodlands that are important places for both people and wildlife. These environments face increasing pressure from urban expansion and climate change. Like all living things, we share a desire to feel safe, connected and part of a place we can call home.

Across four themes, the exhibition encourages visitors to reflect on how we care for our environment and the actions we can take to support healthy habitats where people and wildlife can thrive.

Theme 1:



PLEASE LIKE ME, I'M NOT THAT BAD

This theme explores why some bird species, such as ibis, magpies, noisy miners, cockatoos and pigeons, are often viewed negatively. Students are encouraged to examine personal perceptions and consider the ecological roles these birds play in both urban and natural environments. The artworks invite discussion about bias, misunderstanding and coexistence. Artists whose work reflects on this theme are Lucy Culliton, Kris Estreich, Uncle Reginal Knox, Lexi Tetley, Christopher Trotter and Daniel Wallwork.



Lucy Culliton, *Spring pigeon XV*, *Spring pigeon VIII*, *Spring pigeon VII*, 2016, oil on board, 40 x 40 cm.
Images courtesy of the artist and Jan Murphy Gallery

Theme 2:

HOME SWEET HOME



This theme focuses on nests, nest boxes and habitats, and examines ideas of shelter, safety and belonging. Students are invited to reflect on what “home” means for both people and wildlife, and how environments support survival and wellbeing. The artworks of Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, Jillian Beardsworth, Elizabeth Gould, Leila Jeffreys, Richard Lewers, David Marpoondin, Anna Louise Richardson and Nadya Wilson have been used to illustrate this.



Elizabeth Gould, *MALURUS CYANEUS*,
Vieill in *The birds of Australia Vol. 3*, 1973,
55 x 38.5 cm, John Gould Facsimile ed.
Melbourne: Lansdowne. RBF 598.2994
GOU John Oxley Library. On loan courtesy
of the State Library of Queensland.

Theme 3:

NURTURE OUR NATURE

The title 'NURTURE OUR NATURE' is written in a white, hand-drawn, sketchy font. The word 'OUR' is smaller and positioned between 'NURTURE' and 'NATURE'. To the left of the word 'OUR' is a light brown silhouette of a cat jumping. To the right of 'OUR' is a light blue silhouette of a bird perched on a branch.

This theme highlights the vulnerability of native bird species and the impact of human activity, including introduced species and habitat loss. Students are encouraged to consider stewardship and informed action to support biodiversity and environmental care. The artworks of Chelsea Carkeet, Michael Cook, Nicola Hooper, Christina Lowry, Sharon McKenzie, Migaloo Press Artist Collective, David Morton of Dead Puppet Society and Ben Quilty reflect this theme.



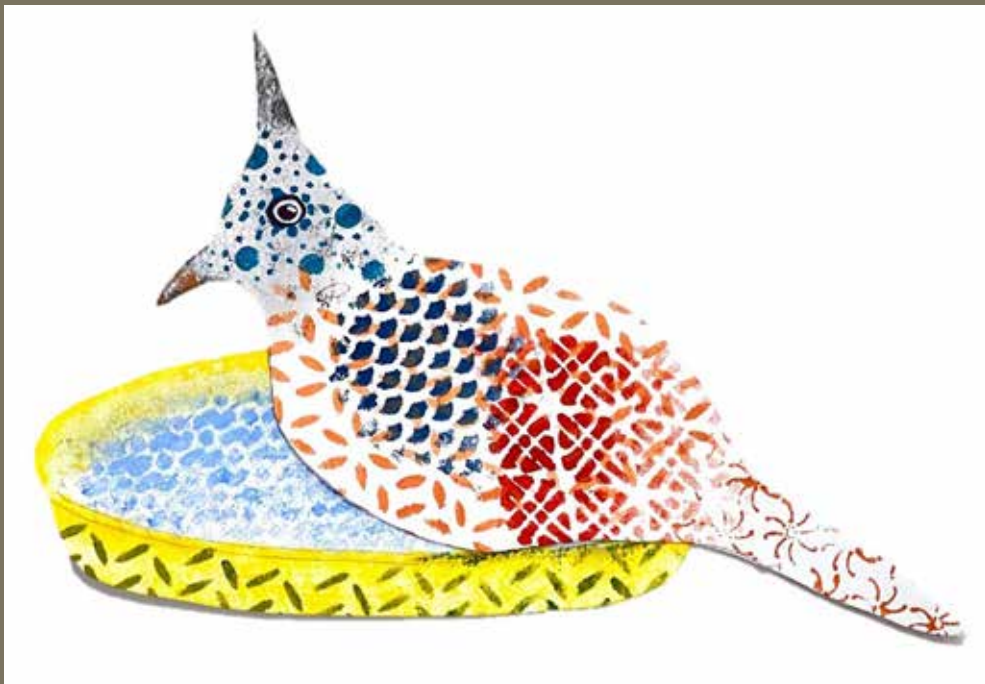
Michael Cook, *Nature Morte (Blackbird)*, 2021, inkjet print on paper, edition 7, 91 x 122 cm
Donated 2026, Logan Art Collection. Photograph Louis Lim, image courtesy Logan Art Gallery

Theme 4:



HABITAT CONNECTS US

This theme focuses on birds in local environments and encourages community-led action. Through creative practice, students explore how art can raise awareness, build empathy and support conservation efforts. Installations by Rachael Lee and Monte Lupo Arts demonstrate how we can use our surrounding habitat to connect with the birds around us.



Bird silhouette painting with patterned stencils, workshop sample courtesy of artist Rachael Lee

ACTIVITIES



Dead Puppets Society - David Morton, *Rosellas*, 2022, brass and copper, 30 x 42 x 30 cm. Photograph by David Kelly, image courtesy the artist and Dead Puppet Society

The learning activities in this resource are intentionally open-ended and inquiry-based. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities to suit:

- student year levels
- individual learning needs
- skill development
- prior experience in Visual Arts.

Activities may be extended to support deeper conceptual understanding or simplified for younger learners. The resource supports differentiated learning and encourages students to engage creatively, critically and reflectively with the ideas and artworks presented in the exhibition.

Curriculum links

To support planning and implementation, a guide has been developed that links the themes explored in *Where do I belong?* with the Australian Curriculum (v9.0), Visual Arts in Practice (2024 v1.2) and Visual Art (2025 v1.3) senior syllabus. The guide helps educators align learning experiences with curriculum expectations and student learning outcomes.

The activities and ideas throughout this resource support key learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. They provide opportunities for educators to extend existing teaching and learning, using creative practice as a way for students to demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding. The guide can be downloaded from the *Where do I belong?* page on the Logan Arts website: loganarts.com.au/where-do-i-belong



Sculpture

Where do I belong? features a range of sculptural artworks that explore ideas of belonging, habitat, vulnerability and human impact on the natural world.

Artists use a wide variety of materials and methods, including found objects, recycled materials, natural fibres, clay and mixed media. Through sculpture, artists communicate stories about birds, ecosystems and our shared responsibility to care for the environment.

Featured sculptural artists

- Abdul-Rahman Abdullah (*The Days*)
- Mary Barron (*Feather Community Project*)
- Kris Estreich (*House of Crow*)
- Monte Lupo Arts (*Birds, Birds, Birds*)
- David Morton (*Rosellas*)
- Ben Quilty (*The Joseph Banks Project no. 1 & 2*)
- Christopher Trotter (*Domestic Noisy Mynah*)
- Daniel Wallwork (*Hello Cocky*)
- Nadya Wilson (*Nestling/Fledgling series*)

Ben Quilty, *The Joseph Banks Project no.1*, 2011, steel, fencing wire, resin, enamel, 224 x 158 x 158 cm. Image courtesy of the artist

Daniel Wallwork, *Hello Cocky*, 2016, resin, talc, 2pac paint and custom exhaust pipe 120 x 35 x 25 cm
Purchased 2016, Logan Art Collection.
Photograph Carl Warner,
image courtesy Logan Art Gallery

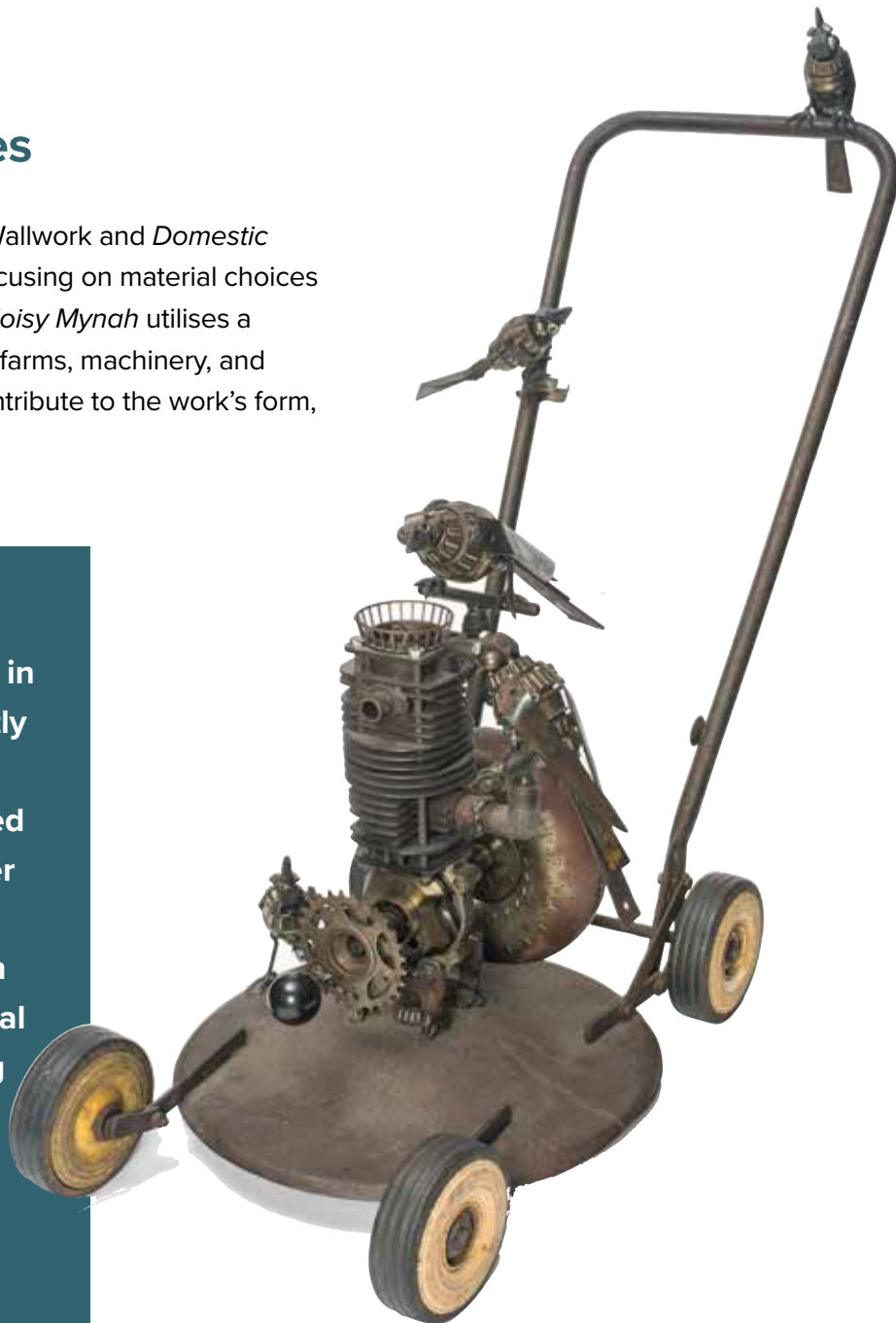


Upcycled and repurposed sculptures

Students view *Hello Cocky* by Daniel Wallwork and *Domestic Noisy Mynah* by Christopher Trotter, focusing on material choices and construction methods. *Domestic Noisy Mynah* utilises a range of found materials sourced from farms, machinery, and industrial contexts. These materials contribute to the work's form, texture and conceptual meaning.

“ My passion is to source and join unrelated objects in a manner that appears perfectly plausible. I like to create new forms that look like they existed in a fictitious reality from either past or present, both living or dead. This is achieved through exploring materials both natural and man-made, then matching their apparent weathered condition and their ability to connect. I perceive the found objects I use as very special. They still have great form, patina, life and energy. ”

– Christopher Trotter



Christopher Trotter, *Domestic Noisy Mynah*, 1997, recycled metal, machine parts, motor mower body and handle, 84 x 42 x 135 cm, Logan Art Collection
Photograph Carl Warner, image courtesy Logan Art Gallery

EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students investigate artists who use found and repurposed materials in sculptural practice.

Guiding questions may include:

- What types of materials are used?
- Why might the artist choose these materials?
- How are the materials constructed or assembled?
- How do materials contribute to meaning, storytelling or symbolism?



Bird sculpture using upcycled materials

Students explore sculptural responses using upcycled and repurposed materials, drawing inspiration from artworks in the exhibition.

1. Observation and drawing

- Students select a bird found in their backyard, school or nearby habitat.
- Using photographs or direct observation, students produce multiple drawings of the bird.
- Drawing from different angles helps build visual understanding.
- Drawings may be detailed or gestural sketches and focus on shape, line proportion and distinguishing features.

2. Planning

- Using their drawings as a reference, students plan the construction of a three-dimensional sculptural form.
- This may include annotated sketches, a list of materials and chosen construction techniques.
- Students explore scale by deciding whether the sculpture will be life-sized, miniature or oversized.



Children's drawing from Logan Art Gallery workshop. Image courtesy Lesley Nicholson

3. Construction

- Students gather a variety of upcycled or repurposed materials (e.g. plastics, metals, cardboard, textiles, natural objects).
- Encourage students to experiment with techniques such as gluing, wiring, stitching, wrapping, layering or tying to construct their sculpture.

4. Presentation

- Students consider how their sculpture will be displayed. Will it stand independently, be suspended, or form part of a group installation?
- Viewing the sculptural artworks in *Where do I belong?* provides examples of how artists present and display sculptural forms for audiences.

EXTRA ACTIVITY



As a concluding activity, students curate a small classroom exhibition. Sculptures may be displayed as a group installation and supported by simple labels that explain materials, process and meaning.

Other sculptural artists using found materials

- Jordan Sprigg, *The Wedge Tail Eagle* sculptures made from recycled metals found from retired machinery, scrap heaps and clearance sales.
- Madeleine Kelly, *Spectra of Birds* sculptures created from milk cartons and Tetra Pak containers.



Left; Dead Puppet Society - David Morton, *Roosting Tawny Frogmouth*, 2021, brass and obsidian, 110 x 90 x 90 cm
Photograph by Christian Tiger, image courtesy the artist and Dead Puppet Society



Kris Estreich, *House of Crow*, 2022, wood, ink, pens, plastic and artificial greenery, 79.5 x 35 x 19 cm
Logan Art Collection
Image courtesy Logan Art Gallery



Wavey Ocean Forest, *A path you're taking*, 2025, magpie skull, copper wire, rutilated quartz, smoked quartz, onyx, garnet, ammonite fossil and resin. Image courtesy Logan Art Gallery

Clay and plaster sculptures



In *Where do I belong?*, sculptural works by Monte Lupo Arts demonstrate how clay and ceramic techniques can be used to explore ideas of community, place and connection. Clay and plaster are traditional sculptural materials that allow artists to model form, texture and detail while responding to themes of care, fragility and belonging.

Working with clay and plaster supports hands-on learning and encourages students to think carefully about structure, surface and display. These materials are well suited to creating bird forms and symbolic sculptural responses linked to the exhibition's themes.



Clay sculptures from Logan Art Gallery workshops. Images courtesy Lesley Nicholson



EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students explore how artists use clay and plaster in sculptural practice. Guiding questions may include:

- What qualities do clay and plaster have as sculptural materials?
- How do artists use texture, form and surface to communicate ideas?
- What challenges or possibilities do these materials present?
- How do these sculptures connect to ideas of care, fragility or community?

Students may view selected works by Monte Lupo Arts in the exhibition and discuss how material choice supports the artist's message.



Christina Lowry, *Ex Libris* (detail), 2025, unfired paper porcelain. Image courtesy of the artist

Exhibiting local artist Christina Lowry created *Ex Libris* (from the collection of), an installation made up of more than 1,000 hand-crafted bird skulls. Lowry works with unfired paper porcelain through collaborative community workshops to explore ideas of fragility, loss and care.

The repeated forms draw attention to the vulnerability of bird populations and create space for discussion about conservation and public awareness. Working with clay and plaster allows students to explore form, structure and surface while engaging with these themes in a tangible way.



Students investigate how clay and plaster are used in sculptural practice.

Guiding questions may include:

- How does repetition affect the meaning of an artwork?
- How do form and surface communicate ideas of fragility or care?
- How does this work encourage reflection or dialogue?



Plaster bird sculpture

Students explore sculptural responses using plaster materials, drawing inspiration from artworks in the exhibition.

1. Construction

- Students create a basic bird form using kitchen foil, shaping the body, wings, tail and beak.
- The foil armature provides structure and support.

2. Applying plaster

- Pre-cut plaster gauze strips are soaked in water and layered over the foil armature.
- Students build up layers to strengthen the form and define shape.
- Sculptures are left to dry completely.

3. Decorating

- Once dry, sculptures may be decorated using paint or tissue paper applied with diluted craft glue.
- Additional embellishments such as beads, feathers or buttons may be added.

4. Presentation

- Students consider how their sculpture will be displayed.
- Will it stand independently, be suspended, or be shown as part of a group installation?
- Students reflect on how the form and surface communicate meaning.



Christina Lowry,
'Ex Libris' installation
at Logan Art Gallery
2025, porcelain paper clay
installations, dimensions
variable. Photograph by Louis Lim.
Image courtesy of the artist



Paper clay bird skulls

Inspired by Christina Lowry, students design and create a sculpture of a bird skull using clay materials.

1. Observation and drawing

- Students select a bird skull to observe (real, replica or image reference).
- Students carefully draw the skull, focusing on shape, structure and proportion.
- Students observe where shadows and highlights fall on the white surface.

2. Planning

- Students consider how the skull form will be created as a three-dimensional object.
- Attention is given to beak shape, bone structure and overall scale.

3. Modelling

- Students soften and prepare clay material.

- Clay is shaped to replicate the skull form, with careful modelling of key features.
- Once complete, forms are placed in a suitable space to air-dry.

4. Presentation

- Students consider how their sculptural forms will be displayed.
- Display options may include a museum-style arrangement or a grouped installation that reflects ideas such as flight paths, habitat, diet or loss.
- Students reflect on how display choices influence meaning and audience response.

Resources

- Bird skulls from Queensland Museum Loans Hendra, museum.qld.gov.au/learnand-discover/qm-loans

EXTRA ACTIVITY

Origami Paper Birds, Bush Heritage
bushheritage.org.au/news/bush-buddies/origami-paper-parrots

Fibre and natural materials sculpture

In *Where do I belong?* artworks such as *Nesting bird* by David Marpoondin, *nestling/fledgling* (series) by Nadya Wilson and *Feather* by Mary Elizabeth Barron demonstrate how fibre and natural materials can be used to explore ideas of shelter, care, displacement and belonging.

Like clay and plaster, fibre and natural materials support hands-on sculptural processes that emphasise making, texture and structure. Working with these materials encourages students to think carefully about how form is built, how materials carry meaning, and how sculptural works reflect relationships between people, environment and home.



Nadya Wilson, *nestling/fledgling* (series), 2026, copper wire, cotton, found objects (twigs), artist's hair, dimensions variable
Image courtesy the artist

EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students explore how artists use fibre and natural materials in sculpture. Guiding questions may include:

- What materials can you see in these artworks?
- How does texture contribute to the overall meaning of the sculpture?
- How do artists use symbolism and material choice to communicate meaning?

Bird nests represent shelter, safety and belonging. They are a literal “home” for birds and provide a strong conceptual link to the exhibition *Where do I belong?*, particularly the theme Home Sweet Home.

This sculptural activity invites students to observe and investigate how birds construct nests using available materials. Students then explore creating bird sculptures using natural materials, such as wood, sticks, grasses, leaves, seed pods, vines and other sustainably gathered plant fibres.

David Marpoondin, *Nesting bird*, 2017, acrylic on milkwood
37 x 17.5 x 16 cm. Purchased 2017, Logan Art Collection
Photograph Carl Warner, image courtesy Logan Art Gallery





Natural material nests

Not all birds build nests in trees using twigs and leaves. Some species construct nests on the ground, while others build elaborate structures for mating rather than shelter.

These different nesting behaviours respond to environment, purpose and available materials.

1. Explore nesting behaviours

- Students discuss how different birds build nests and why these structures vary.
- Students consider how environment and purpose influence nest design.
- Students reflect on questions such as:
 - Have you ever found or observed a bird's nest?
 - What materials did the bird use?
 - Where was the nest located, and why?

To extend meaning through symbolism, students may incorporate layers of meaning into their nest sculptures. This may include:

- Using colour or material choices symbolically
- Weaving strips of paper or plastic containing written words, phrases or symbols
- Including text that reflects personal ideas of home, safety or belonging

Students reflect on:

- Is it a place of safety, comfort, fragility or protection?
- What does this nest represent for you?
- How does your choice of materials help communicate this idea?

2. Planning

- Students plan their own bird nest sculpture.
- Students select materials and consider how the nest will be structured and supported.

3. Construction

- Students create a bird nest sculpture using a selection of materials.
- Students experiment with construction techniques such as weaving, wrapping, layering, binding or stitching to ensure the nest holds its form.

4. Reflection

- Students reflect on their making process and outcomes. Guiding questions may include:
 - How did your nest change as you worked with the materials?
 - What challenges did you encounter during construction?
 - How does your sculpture communicate ideas of home or belonging?
 - How might this artwork relate to human experiences of displacement or housing insecurity?



Resources

Examples of how birds nest

- Australian brush-turkey, mound-building nests
youtu.be/TrjnM1cr72s
- Bowerbirds, bower nest builders
youtu.be/bOfukj1aM1E
- Birds are the ultimate architects, Australian Geographic
australiangeographic.com.au/news/2024/07/birds-are-the-ultimate-architects
- Active Nests, iNaturalist
inaturalist.org/projects/active-nests
- Urban Bird Nests, iNaturalist
inaturalist.org/projects/urban-bird-nests

Other relevant sculptural artists

- Zora Verona, *Succulent Snake* sculpture, made from collected natural fibres.
- Therese Coffey, *Nest II* sculpture, created from washed up twigs, sticks and branches.



EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students draw or paint their completed nest sculptures, exploring line, composition, and positive and negative space. Teachers may consider inviting an experienced sculptural fibre artist to share their practice and making techniques with the class.

Weaving workshop with Therese Flynn-Clarke.
Images courtesy Therese Flynn-Clarke

Painting, drawing and mixed media

Where do I belong? features a range of painting, drawing and mixed media artworks that explore belonging, habitat, care and human impact on the natural world. The works respond to loss and connection, using birds as messengers of memory, witnessing and shared experience.

Artists use a variety of techniques and materials, including pencil, paint, collage, textile elements, and layered surfaces, to create space for birds to be seen and valued. Through close observation of birds and their environments, artists communicate stories of place and suggest that care and healing remain possible, even within ever-changing landscapes.

Featured artists

- Del Kathryn Barton (*girl #8*)
- Lucy Culliton (*Spring Pigeons series*)
- Nicola Hooper (*Space Invaders and Morris Willows*)
- Reginal Knox (*Scrubby Creek*)
- Anna Louise Richardson (*I asked for a sign*)



Lucy Culliton, *Spring pigeon X* and *Spring pigeon II*, 2016, oil on board, 40 x 40 cm
Images courtesy the artist and Jan Murphy Gallery

Drawing and painting

In *Where do I belong?*, students may be inspired by artists such as Leila Jeffreys, Del Kathryn Barton, Anna Louise Richardson and Lucy Culliton, who explore birds that are often overlooked or endangered. Nicola Hooper's *Space Invaders and Morris willow* uses papercut, watercolour, gouache and wire to draw attention to the impact of introduced flora and fauna on Australia's native plants and animals.

EXPLORE
& RESPOND



Students explore how artists use drawing and painting to represent birds and respond to environmental themes.

Guiding questions may include:

- What birds are shown in these artworks, and why might the artist have chosen them?
- How do line, colour and texture influence how the bird is represented?
- What details suggest information about the bird's habitat or behaviour?
- How do the artworks encourage us to notice, value or care for birds and the environments they live in?



Anna Louise Richardson, *I asked for a sign (wedge-tailed eagle)*, 2022, charcoal on cement fibreboard, 202 x 126 x 3 cm
Photography Natasha Harth. Courtesy of Hervey Bay Regional Gallery Art Collection

In Leila Jeffreys photographic portrait *Bleeding-heart*, from *The wound is the place where the light enters* series, the bird has a natural red marking, appearing to bleed, as if its body is manifesting the collective pain that is felt by this planet. Yet at the same time, it embraces its wound with a spirit of openness and beauty. Students may use colour symbolically in their own work to communicate meaning.

Listen to Jeffreys' talk about the inspiration for the series:

vimeo.com/762454688?fl=pl&fe=cm

Students are encouraged to consider how colour and background can be used to communicate ideas. This may include depicting habitat, food sources or environmental messages. Paintings may be used to raise awareness of habitat loss or other environmental issues affecting birds.

Leila Jeffreys, *Bleeding heart*, 2022, *The wound is the place where the light enters* series, Edition 1 of 8 + 2 AP. Photograph on archival fibre based cotton rag paper, 140 x 90 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Olsen Gallery



Resources

Drawing techniques and tips

- How to Draw Birds, Artists Network artistsnetwork.com/art-mediums/drawing/how-to-draw-birds-8-techniques-and-tips
- How to get started with sketching birds, Julia Bausenhardt juliabausenhardt.com/how-to-get-started-with-sketching-birds
- The Elements of Art: Line, National Gallery of Art nga.gov/educational-resources/elements-art/elements-art-line
- *The Laws Guide to Drawing Birds*, John Muir Laws (2015)
- *Drawing and Painting Birds*, Tim Wootton (2011)

Reginald Knox, *Scrubby Creek*, 1997, oil on canvas, 152 x 122cm. Commissioned by Logan City Council. Logan Art Collection, image courtesy Logan Art Gallery

Nature journaling

Nature journaling is a practice that combines drawing and writing to record observations of the natural world. It supports the development of observational drawing and sketching skills and provides opportunities to explore a range of materials and media. Through nature journaling, students can build a stronger connection to nature while developing curiosity and ecological awareness.

Nature journaling may be used to support mindfulness, environmental reflection or citizen science activities.



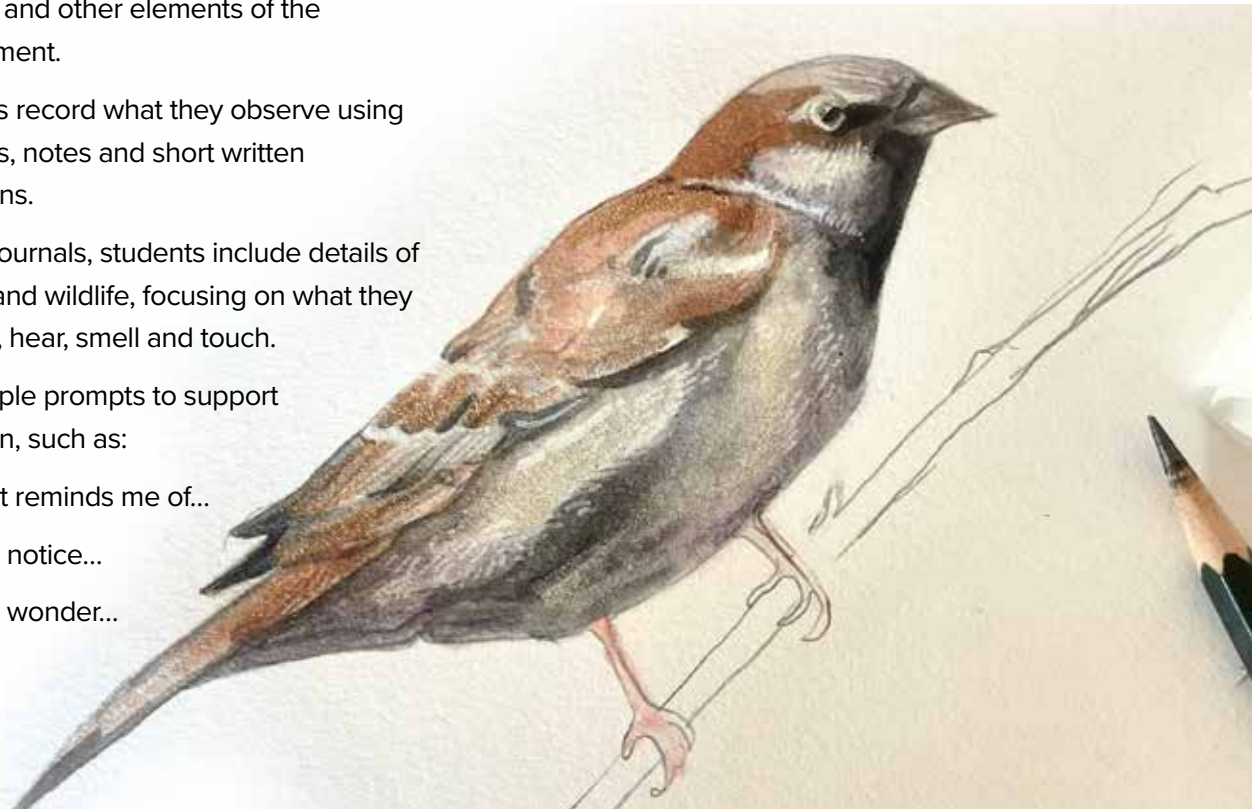
- Find a quiet outdoor location around the school grounds or in a nearby park.
- Students sit quietly and observe birds, habitats and other elements of the environment.
- Students record what they observe using sketches, notes and short written reflections.
- In their journals, students include details of habitat and wildlife, focusing on what they can see, hear, smell and touch.
- Use simple prompts to support reflection, such as:
 - It reminds me of...
 - I notice...
 - I wonder...

Resources

- What is nature journaling?, Nature Journaling Week naturejournalingweek.com/blogs/what-is-nature-journaling
- Free online lessons, Paperbark Writer paperbarkwriter.com/free-online-lessons
- Example journal pages, Journaling With Nature journalingwithnature.com/journal-pages



Journaling workshop by Therese Flynn-Clarke.
Images courtesy Therese Flynn-Clarke



Nicola Hooper, *Sparrow*, watercolour on paper. Image courtesy the artist

Mixed media

In contemporary art, ecology is often used as a subject matter to explore relationships between living things and the environments they rely on. Artists respond to environmental change and biodiversity through careful observation, research and creative interpretation. Birds are commonly used as subjects because they are visible indicators of environmental health.

Working with ecology as a subject matter supports students to connect creative practice with real-world issues. Through their artworks, students can explore local environments, investigate ecological relationships, and communicate ideas about care, responsibility and sustainability.



Mixed media artwork by Therese Flynn-Clarke.
Image courtesy the artist

Nicola Hooper, *Space invaders and Morris willows*, 2024, watercolour and gouache, papercut and wire 76 x 48 cm hung over *Space invaders wallpaper*, 2026, digitally printed from watercolour drawings and lithographic print, size variable. Image courtesy the artist

Students examine the following artworks in *Where do I belong?*, focusing on threatened, endangered and invasive birds, and the habitats they rely on.

- Ben Quilty, *The Joseph Banks Project no.1 & 2*, sculptural works (p10) responding to the introduction of myna birds and European blackberries, and their impact on native ecosystems.
- Nicola Hooper, *Space invaders and Morris willows*, mixed media works exploring ecological damage caused by introduced species to Australia's flora and fauna.



Mixed media artwork as an ecological response

Students create a mixed media artwork that explores ecology as a subject matter, focusing on birds, habitats and environmental change.

1. Observation and investigation

- Students examine artworks in *Where do I belong?* that respond to ecological issues such as habitat degradation, introduced species, and threatened or endangered birds.
- Students select a bird that is meaningful to them. This may be a local species, a threatened or endangered bird, or a bird affected by environmental change.

2. Planning

- Students consider the ecological issue they wish to explore in their artwork.
- Students plan how images, text and materials may be combined to communicate their ideas.

3. Building the background

- On quality watercolour paper or canvas, students create a background using layered collage materials.
- Layers may include paper, tissue, handwritten text, scientific information, poems or personal reflections.
- Light-coloured tissue paper may be applied using craft glue to unify layers.
- Allow the background to dry fully.

4. Adding colour and imagery

- Students apply a paint wash, ink or watercolour using a limited colour palette.
- Students use their observational drawing skills to add the bird image, either:
 - drawing directly onto the background
 - or drawing on a separate surface that is cut out and attached.
- Light-coloured tissue paper and permanent marker may be used for the bird image to create subtle layering.

5. Refining and resolving

- Students add final details using drawing, paint, or hand or machine stitching to create texture and depth.
- Students adjust composition, colour and materials to strengthen the message of the artwork.

6. Reflection

- Students reflect on their process and finished work. Guiding questions may include:
 - How does mixed media enhance storytelling about birds and habitats?
 - How does layering images and text contribute to meaning?
 - What ecological message does your artwork communicate?

Resources

Other relevant visual artists

- Sobrane, ABC Open: The Birds abc.net.au/education/abc-open-the-birds/13995288



Printmaking

Where do I belong? features a range of printmaking artworks that explore the impact of introduced species, habitat loss and environmental change on Australian flora and fauna. These works draw attention to species at risk and highlight how care for habitat can begin at a local, personal scale.

Artists use printmaking techniques to repeat images, share ideas and create visual records. Through repetition and visual archiving, printmaking allows artists to document birds and their habitats. These works create space for appreciation, reflection and environmental responsibility.

Featured artists

- Richard Lewer (*Bird Song series*)
- Rachael Lee (*Within you without you*)



Richard Lewer, *Regent Honeyeater*, *Bird Song series*, 2024, lithograph. Collection of Michael Fox Arts Accountant & Valuer. Image courtesy the artist and Jan Murphy Gallery

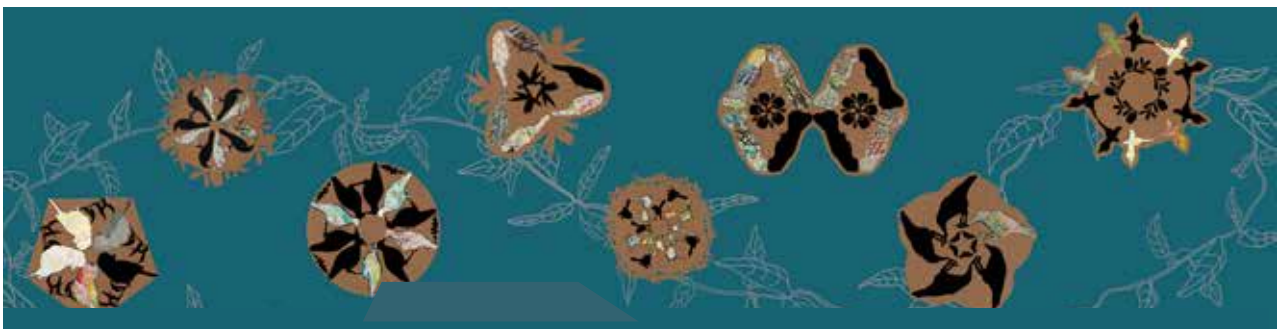
EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students examine printmaking artworks in the exhibition, focusing on how artists use processes such as relief printing, repetition and layering to capture texture, pattern and change in nature.

Guiding questions may include:

- What natural elements are shown in these printmaking artworks (for example, birds, feathers, textures or habitats)?
- How do printmaking techniques capture detail, pattern or texture differently from drawing or painting?
- Why might an artist choose printmaking to document birds or habitats over time?
- How does repetition change the way we see the subject or understand its importance?
- What qualities of nature are emphasised through processes such as layering or monoprinting?

Rachael Lee, *Within you without you*, 2026, digital design for installation, cork, acrylic, paper cut, pigmented ink on watercolour paper, stencilled acrylic on watercolour paper. Image courtesy the artist



Monoprinting

Within nature, no two forms are identical, and variation is part of the beauty and function of the natural world. Monoprinting reflects this quality, as each print is unique while still forming part of a series.

Monoprinting supports students to explore relief printmaking processes, composition, texture and environmental themes. Through this process, students can capture the intricate shapes and surface details found in birds and their habitats.



Foam relief printing and monoprinting

Students create a foam relief print using observational drawings of birds from their garden, school grounds, local parks or bushland.

1. Observation and planning

- Students make an observational drawing of a chosen bird.
- Students consider composition, placement and any background elements before beginning the print.
 - For lower primary, focus on simplified shapes, minimal detail and the printing process.
 - Upper primary and secondary students may explore layered prints, more complex compositions and conceptual ideas linked to ecology.

2. Preparing the printing plate

- Students trace around a piece of commercial printing foam onto paper to create a working area.

- Students transfer the drawing onto the printing foam using a pen or pencil. Take care not to press too hard on the foam, as this can create holes.
- Texture may be added by pressing objects into the foam surface.
- Any text or numbers must be drawn backwards so they print correctly.
- Tissue paper may be glued onto paper (chine collé) to add colour and texture.

3. Printing

- Students place a small amount of printing ink onto a sheet of plastic or an old tile and roll the printing ink out until smooth.
- Students roll ink onto the foam using a brayer.
- Students place the foam ink-side down onto quality paper.
- The back of the foam is rubbed firmly by hand or with a suitable tool to transfer the print.
- Multiple prints can be created.
- Students are encouraged to ink leaves, feathers and various textures to layer monoprints over their relief prints.

Resources

- How to do foam printmaking, The Logan Art School
youtu.be/4fs4XJ9heDo

A dark teal banner with the text 'EXTRA ACTIVITY' in a white, serif font. To the right of the text is a yellow silhouette of a bird in flight. Below the banner is a light teal box containing text.

Students may extend this activity by exploring more complex processes or experimenting with different printmaking materials, such as lino printing and carving tools.



Gelli printing

Students create a background print using a soft, reusable gelatin plate, building layered textures and colours to represent a bird habitat.

1. Preparing the plate

- Use a commercial gelli plate (a home-made gelatine plate may also be used).
- Students apply a small amount of acrylic paint to the plate and spread it evenly using a brayer.
- Students experiment with colour combinations.

2. Creating texture

- Students arrange natural materials (such as leaves or grasses), feathers, stencils or textured objects onto the plate.
- Students consider how texture and pattern can suggest habitat.

3. Printing

- Students remove the objects and press paper onto the plate to transfer the print.
- Students repeat the process to build multiple layers to develop rich, textured backgrounds.
- Layering and abstraction may be used to suggest different habitat features.



Sandra Pearce, *Curlew Camouflage* (detail), 2025, monotype and solar plate etching. Image courtesy the artist

4. Using the prints

- Once dry, students use the gelli prints as background surfaces for drawing, painting or collaging bird imagery.
- Prints may be combined with observational drawing or mixed media bird studies.

Resources

Gelli printing tips and techniques

- Printing Single Prints with Multiple Layers, Gelli Arts youtu.be/fK3AQ08sYRc
- Monoprinting Without a Press, Gelli Arts youtu.be/l5sqMIF_i50
- Make Beautiful Bird Nest Prints, Starlu Studio youtu.be/yUH_rE7kSqu
- Mastering Botanical Gelli Printing, Clare Cosens Designs youtu.be/UIK9GJszgqQ

Selection of lino prints and mono prints from Logan Art Gallery workshops. Images courtesy Lesley Nicholson





Installation art

Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, *The Days*, 2017, wood, oil, paint, 240 V lighting, dimensions variable (detail). Commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre for the exhibition *Myuran Sukumaran: Another Day in Paradise*, 2017. Campbelltown City Council Art Collection.

Within the exhibition *Where do I belong?*, installation art is used to communicate ideas of repetition, symbolism, ecology and belonging. These works use repeated forms and materials to create strong visual impact, encouraging reflection on themes such as presence, absence and loss.

Artists create immersive, three-dimensional works that transform space and shape how audiences experience ideas, materials and meaning. Through scale, repetition and site-specific arrangement, installation art invites viewers to move through, around or within the work, deepening connections to place and highlighting relationships between people, birds and their environments.

Featured artists

- Abdul-Rahman Abdullah (*The Days*)
- Mary Elizabeth Barron (*Feather*)
- Nicola Hooper (*Space Invaders*)
- Peter Hughes and Monte Lupo Arts (*Birds, Birds, Birds*)
- Rachael Lee (*Within you without you*)

responses and how symbolism can operate at both individual and collective levels.

Guiding questions may include:

- Why might an artist choose installation art rather than a single object?
- How does repetition contribute to meaning and emotional impact?
- How does material choice influence interpretation?
- How does the viewer's movement through space affect understanding of the work?
- How do audience interactions and the placement of an installation influence interpretation?

EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students explore how artists use space, repetition, scale and materials to communicate

meaning. Consider how installation art can create strong emotional or reflective



Installation artwork

Students plan and create an installation artwork inspired by themes explored in *Where do I belong?*, such as habitat, belonging, species loss, human impact, conservation and protection, and community action.

1. Planning

- Students work individually or collaboratively to identify a theme or idea to explore.
- Students develop a conceptual focus or guiding question for their installation.
- Students select materials that support their ideas. These may include found, recycled, natural or symbolic materials.
- Students consider how scale, repetition and spatial arrangement can communicate meaning.

2. Developing the design

- Students plan their installation using:
 - Annotated drawings or diagrams
 - written explanations of intent
 - consideration of site, audience movement and interaction.

3. Making

- Students create their installation in response to their plan.
- Where creating a full installation is not feasible, students may instead:
 - design a proposal or maquette (scale model)
 - create a digital mock-up or floor plan
 - present a curatorial statement explaining their concept

4. Presentation

- Installations may be created temporarily in a classroom, hallway, library or outdoor school space.
- Students may take on curatorial roles, considering placement, signage and audience flow.
- Installations are documented using photography or video for reflection and assessment purposes.

5. Reflection

- Students reflect on their work using discussion, written responses or visual diaries. Guiding questions may include:
 - How effectively does the installation communicate its intended message?
 - What is the relationship between space, materials and audience?
 - What are the challenges and opportunities of working at scale?
 - How does installation art differ from traditional sculptural forms?

Resources

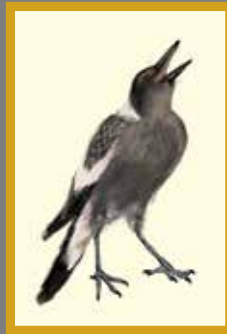
Other relevant installation artists

- Prita Tina Yeganeh, *My Soil Farsh* فرش : *Iteration 3 (Place, As Guest)*: Installation artwork using soil, water, scent, light and sound to create sensory experiences that explore memory, place and belonging.
- Jonathan Jones, *untitled (giran)*: Flock-based installation artwork using winged sculptural forms and sound to share traditional knowledge and encourage the exchange of ideas and skills.
- Fiona Hall, *Tender*: Installation artwork using US dollars, wire and vitrines to explore the complex intersections between the natural world and human systems of trade.

Media Arts

Within the exhibition *Where do I belong?*, media artworks are used to document and interpret ideas about birds, habitat and belonging through time-based and digital media. These works explore the natural environment and human relationships with place, drawing attention to environmental change and care.

Artists use photography, video and sound to record, sequence and present images of birds and their habitats. Through framing, sound, timing and point of view, media arts can communicate meaning, tell stories and influence how audiences observe and understand the natural world.



Lexi Tetley *Kiki and Maggie* series
2025, digital drawings, sizes varied

Featured artists

- Leila Jeffreys, *Spotted bowerbird egg no. 2*
- Chelsea Carkeet, *Flight or Fight, No. 1*
- Michael Cook, *Broken Dreams #3*
- Lexi Tetley, *Kiki and Maggie* series

Students examine media artworks in the exhibition, focusing on how artists use time-based and digital media to document and interpret birds, habitats and relationships with place.

Guiding questions may include:

- What birds, habitats or environmental details are shown in these media artworks?
- How do photography, video or sound capture moments or perspectives that may be difficult to show using drawing or painting?
- How do framing, sound, sequencing or point of view influence the way meaning is communicated?
- Why might an artist choose media arts to document birds or habitats over time?
- How do media artworks help raise awareness or deepen understanding of environmental change and care?
- What ethical considerations should be considered when recording birds or natural environments?

Photography

Within the exhibition, photographic artworks are used to capture moments that reflect ideas of place and belonging. Drawing inspiration from artists such as Michael Cook and Leila Jeffreys, photography invites close observation of birds and their environments.

Through framing, light and point of view, photography can draw attention to small or easily overlooked aspects of the natural world. These images encourage reflection on connections between people, birds and the environments they share.



Bird photography

Students use photography to observe, record and communicate ideas about birds and their habitats.

1. Observing and recording

- Students use cameras or tablets to photograph birds, habitats or symbolic representations within the school grounds or local environment.

2. Exploring techniques

- Students experiment with:
 - framing and composition
 - point of view (such as close-up, wide shot or detailed views)
 - light, colour and contrast
 - sound, where applicable (for time-based or digital presentations)



Leila Jeffreys, *Spotted bowerbird egg no. 2 [Large]*, 2024. From the series *Stillness* Edition 2 of 4 + 2. AP photograph on archival fibre based cotton rag paper, 140 x 110 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Olsen Gallery

3. Selecting and sequencing

- Students review their photographs and select images that best communicate their intended message.
- Images may be sequenced or presented as a short series to tell a visual story about birds, habitat or human impact on the environment.

Video and time-based media

Where do I belong? features video and time-based media that explores birds, habitats and ideas of home and belonging through movement, sound and sequencing. These artworks capture change over time and encourage viewers to engage with environments in dynamic and immersive ways.

Through observational footage, animation and storytelling, video and time-based media allow artists to explore relationships between people, birds and place. Editing choices such as timing, sequencing and sound influence how meaning is constructed and how audiences interpret environmental messages.



Video work

Students create short video works to communicate ideas about birds, habitats and belonging.

1. Observing and recording

- Students record video footage of local habitats, birds or symbolic representations within the school grounds or local environment.
- Footage may focus on movement, behaviour, or changes over time.

2. Developing ideas

- Students develop a short video work that may include:
 - observational footage of habitats
 - stop-motion animation using found objects or symbolic materials

- narrative or symbolic sequences exploring ideas of home, habitat or belonging

3. Planning and sequencing

- Students plan their media work using storyboards or shot lists.
- Students consider how sequencing, pacing and sound contribute to meaning.

4. Editing and reflection

- Students edit and refine their video, making deliberate choices about what to include or remove.
- Students reflect on how editing decisions influence audience understanding and emotional response.



Louise Wheatley recording vision and sound of birds in Hawthorn Park, Logan. Image courtesy of the artist



Bird film or animation

Using artist Louise Wheatley's short film in *Where do I belong?* as inspiration, students create a short film or animation about a bird.

1. Exploring ideas

- Students view and discuss the artwork, focusing on how movement, imagery and sound are used to communicate ideas.
- Students choose a focus for their own work. This may include:
 - birds in their backyard or local area
 - bird habitats and behaviour
 - threats to bird biodiversity
 - educating others about protecting birds and their environments.

2. Planning

- Students decide on the format of their film or animation. This may include:
 - stop-motion animation using clay, modelling clay or found objects
 - illustrated sequences using drawings or collage
 - filmed footage of environments or symbolic scenes
 - a short scripted film or documentary style video.
- Students plan their work using a simple storyboard or shot list.
- Students consider how images, movement and sequence can communicate their message.

3. Creating

- Students create their animation or short film using digital devices.
- Students photograph or film their images in sequence to create movement.
- Sound, narration or text may be added where appropriate.

4. Editing and refining

- Students review and edit their film, making decisions about timing, order and clarity.
- Students consider how editing choices affect meaning and audience response.

5. Sharing and reflection

- Students share their completed film or animation with others.
- Students reflect on how effectively their media work communicates ideas about birds, habitat and belonging.

Resources

Other relevant media artworks and artists

- Pet Superstars: This cocky rocks, ABC Education abc.net.au/education/pet-superstars-this-cocky-rocks/13822904
- Isobel Knowles and Van Sowerwine, *You Were In My Dream* collection.qagoma.qld.gov.au/objects/11077
- Del Kathryn Barton and Brendan Fletcher, *The Nightingale and the Rose* collection qagoma.qld.gov.au/objects/39703
- Robert Walton, *Flashover* robertwalton.net/project/flashover
- Nature Photographer of the Year, Australian Geographic australiangeographic.com.au/nature-photographer-of-the-year
- Julian Opie, *Australian birds* ngv.vic.gov.au/julian-opie-australian-birds
- Tabor Robak, *Megafauna* ngv.vic.gov.au/tabor-robak-megafauna



Music

Edgy and Hedgy, Jasmine Wheatley with drum sticks and Taylor Wheatley playing acoustic guitar in Hawthorn Park, Logan. Photograph by Jonathon Wheatley

Within the exhibition *Where do I belong?*, music and sound artworks capture natural soundscapes created from locally recorded birdlife. Works by artists such as Louise Wheatley and Edgy and Hedgy invite audiences to listen closely and experience Logan from a fresh, immersive and poetic perspective.

Through listening, composition and performance, music allows artists to explore birds, habitats and ideas of belonging through sound. By using birdsong and environmental recordings, composers and sound artists represent place, movement and mood, encouraging reflection on the relationships between people, birds and their environments.

EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students listen and respond to music and sound artworks in the exhibition.

Through close listening, students explore how sound can communicate ideas about birds, habitats and belonging.

Guiding questions may include:

- What sounds can you hear in these birdsongs or soundscapes?
- How do birds use sound to communicate?
- What musical elements can you identify, such as pitch, rhythm, tempo or repetition?
- How do natural sounds influence mood or atmosphere?
- How can sound represent a specific place or environment?
- What challenges might arise when recreating or responding to natural sounds?
- How can music and sound influence the way we feel or respond?



Bird inspired soundscape

Students create a soundscape inspired by birds and their habitats using voice, instruments and found sounds.

1. Exploring sound

- Students listen to birdsongs and environmental sounds.
- Students experiment with ways sound can represent birds, movement and place.

2. Selecting sound sources

- Students choose sounds for their composition. These may include:
 - percussion instruments
 - body percussion and voice
 - found sound objects
 - handmade or improvised instruments
 - digital sound apps or recording devices
 - electronic instruments or recorded sounds.

3. Planning

- Students plan their soundscape using a music graphic organiser.
- Students consider how layering, repetition and contrast can create mood or atmosphere.

4. Creating and rehearsing

- Students compose and rehearse their bird or environmental soundscape.
- Compositions may be performed live or recorded.

5. Sharing

- Students share their soundscapes through:
 - live performance
 - audio recording

- integration into an installation or exhibition setting.

Resources

Graphic notation and organisers

- Graphic notation, Education NSW education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/creative-arts/creative-arts-curriculum-resources-k-12/7-10-curriculum-resources/graphic-notation
- Graphic organisers, Australian Curriculum australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/formative-assessment/designing-formative-assessment/graphic-organisers

Learning and listening to bird sounds

- Xeno-canto - sharing wildlife sounds from all over the world. xeno-canto.org
- Bird ID Skills: How to Learn Bird Songs and Calls, All About Birds, allaboutbirds.org/news/how-to-learn-bird-songs-and-calls
- Bird calls, Melbourne Museum museums victoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/at-home/play/bird-calls
- Wild Ambience - nature soundscapes and wildlife sounds from around the world wildambience.com/wildlife-sounds

Other relevant musical artworks

- Tully Arnot, Bird Song youtu.be/qEN5kp6X50s
- Dr Leah Barclay, *Biosphere Soundscapes* biospheresoundscapes.org
- Mangrove: A landscape made from music, ABC Open, abc.net.au/education/abc-open-mangrove-a-landscape-made-from-music/13995218
- Feathers, Fur and Fins: A song about a sulphur-crested cockatoo, ABC Education abc.net.au/education/feathers-fur-and-fins-a-song-about-a-sulphur-crested-cockatoo-v/13753764
- The Soundtrack of Australia: Eavesdropping on wetland birds, ABC Education, abc.net.au/education/the-soundtrack-of-australia-eavesdropping-on-wetland-birds/102689260

Creative practice and care for the environment

An exploration of birds in local environments encourages students to consider their role in protecting and supporting bird habitats. Linked to the exhibition theme *Habitat Connects Us*, this activity emphasises observation, community connection and positive environmental action.

Through creative practice, students explore how art can raise awareness, foster empathy and encourage care for the natural world. By investigating relationships between birds, habitat and human activity, students are supported to use art as a way to communicate responsibility, promote action and engage with their communities.

Rachael Lee's *Within you without you* and Monte Lupo Arts' *Birds, Birds, Birds* demonstrate how creative practice can extend beyond the gallery into everyday environments and community-led action.

Opportunities beyond creative practice to connect with nature, learn about local bird species and take positive environmental action may include:

- Logan City Council's Environmental Conservation Partnerships program, or similar biodiversity backyard initiatives
- BirdLife Australia's annual Aussie Bird Count, a citizen science program that encourages observation and data collection





CALL TO ACTION

Students select a native bird species found in their local area, school grounds or the broader Australian environment. This may include a common backyard bird or threatened species.

1. Research and investigation

- Students research their chosen bird, focusing on habitat and food sources, threats to survival (such as habitat loss or introduced species), and actions people can take to support this species.

2. Choosing an art form

- Students choose an art form that best suits their ideas and interests. This may include drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media, photography, animation, installation, or another appropriate visual form.
- Students consider how artworks can communicate care, fragility or resilience.

3. Planning

- Students plan their artwork by considering:
 - the message they want to communicate
 - how material choice, scale, colour or imagery supports their ideas
 - how their chosen art form influences interpretation.

4. Creating

- Students create an artwork that responds to their research and chosen bird.
- Materials may include recycled or upcycled items, natural materials, paper, paint, digital tools, or mixed media approaches, depending on the selected art form.

5. Call to action

- Each artwork is accompanied by a short call to action, which may include:
 - a written pledge to protect or support the chosen bird
 - a brief explanation of how individuals or communities can help
 - practical suggestions such as planting native species, providing water sources, keeping pets secure, or participating in bird counts.

6. Sharing and reflection

- Artworks may be displayed individually or as part of a group display to raise awareness of local birdlife.
- Students reflect on their work using discussion, written responses or visual diaries.

Guiding questions may include:

- How does your chosen art form communicate a message about habitat or protection?
- What action are you encouraging the viewer to take?
- How did your research influence your creative decisions?
- How can art raise awareness or influence attitudes toward environmental responsibility?



Cross-curriculum links

The themes and activities within *Where do I belong?* connect with a range of learning areas and cross-curriculum priorities across the Australian Curriculum and Queensland syllabus. These links support integrated learning and provide opportunities for students to explore environmental, social and creative ideas through multiple perspectives.

Science

Students investigate ecosystems, habitats and biodiversity, with a focus on birds and their behaviour. Learning may include bird anatomy, life cycles, communication through sound, nest building and the impact of environmental change. Linking Science and Visual Arts supports students to use scientific knowledge as inspiration for creative practice, helping them observe, interpret and communicate understandings about the natural world.

- **Home Sweet Home – Gallery 2**

This theme invites students to explore the impacts of urban development on people, birds and wildlife. Learning may include consideration of urban sprawl, the loss of bushland for housing, and the shared challenges of creating homes for both communities and nature. The theme also encourages proactive responses, such as investigating ways to create habitat through planting endemic species or building species-appropriate nest boxes in backyards, parks or school grounds, and exploring how communities support people experiencing housing insecurity.

- **Nurture our Nature - Gallery 1**

This theme supports learning about the impact of feral animals on bird and wildlife populations. Students may investigate cause and effect within ecosystems and consider human responsibilities in caring for native species. Linking with Media Arts, students can create visual or digital works, such as educational posters, that communicate information about issues like the impact of feral cats on birds and actions individuals and communities can take to help protect wildlife.

Humanities and Social Sciences

Students explore relationships between people, places and environments through inquiry, discussion and creative practice, with a focus on belonging, responsibility and care. Learning experiences support investigation of familiar and changing places, including why places are valued and how people care for local environments. Through creative and visual practices, themes such as urban development, habitat loss and environmental change encourage students to consider how human choices shape communities and environments, and how civic responsibility can contribute to positive outcomes for both people and wildlife.



English

Students develop literacy skills through observation, discussion and reflection. Activities support speaking and listening, journalling, creative and factual writing, and the creation of artist statements. Birds, habitat and place can be explored as subjects for narrative, poetry, information texts and visual storytelling.

Sustainability

Sustainability is embedded throughout the resource through a focus on environmental stewardship, biodiversity and future-focused thinking. Students are encouraged to consider conservation, the use of recycled or natural materials, and actions that support caring for birds, habitats and ecosystems.



Lyrebird, 2024



Night Parrot, 2024



Wedge Tail Eagle, 2024



Orange Bellied Parrot, 2024



Pink Cockatoo, 2024



Whipbird, 2024



Providence Petrel, 2024



Regent Honeyeater, 2024



White Albatross, 2024

Richard Lewer, *Bird Song* series, 2024, lithograph. Collection of Michael Fox Arts Accountant & Valuer
Images courtesy the artist and Jan Murphy Gallery



Michael Cook, *Broken Dreams #3* (detail), 2010, inkjet print on paper, 124 x 110 cm. Collection of The University of Queensland. Gift of Patrick Corrigan AM through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2014. 2014.64.03
 Photograph Carl Warner, image courtesy The University of Queensland

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

This section supports the Australian Curriculum cross-curriculum priority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. It provides opportunities for students to explore the cultural, symbolic and regional significance of birds in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art practices, and to recognise ongoing connections to Country, culture and knowledge.

EXPLORE & RESPOND

Students examine *Broken Dreams #3* by Michael Cook, featured in *Where do I*

belong?, and consider the symbolic role of the bird within the artwork. Students may also research and explore artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists that feature birds as subject matter.

Guiding questions may include:

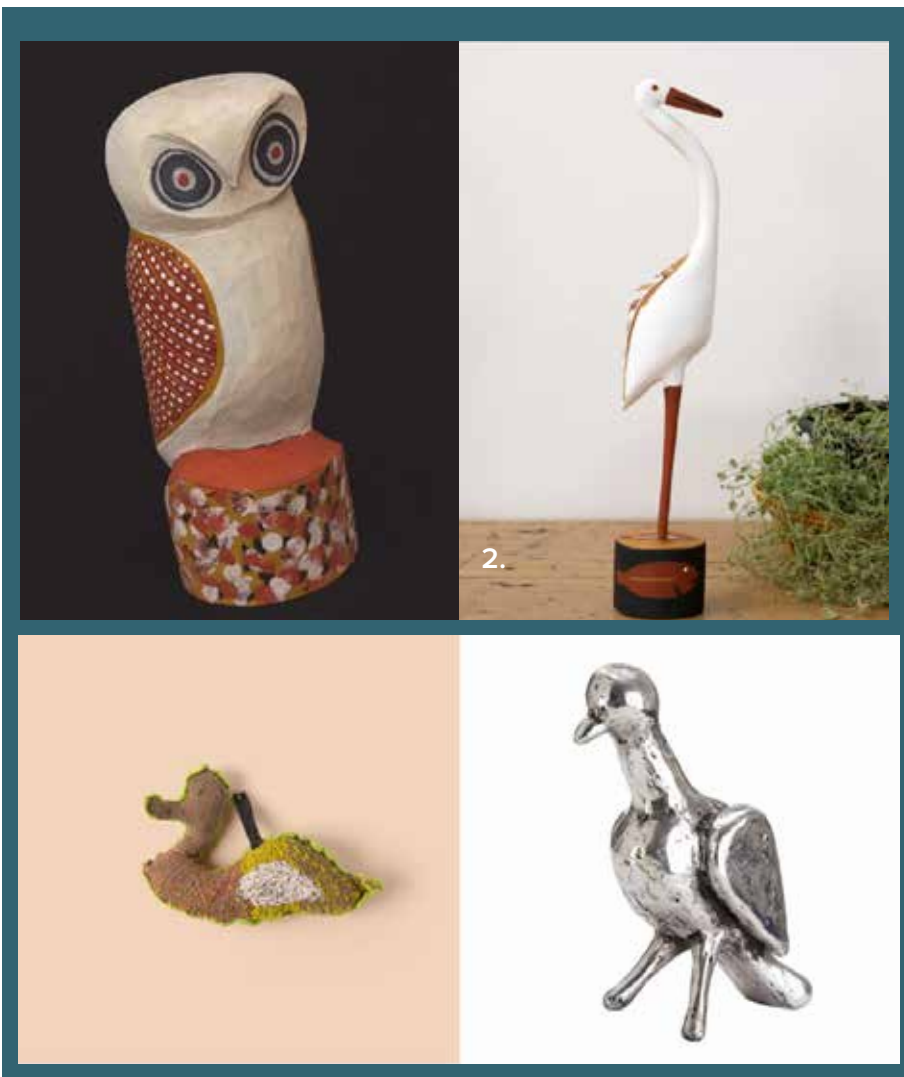
- What bird species are represented?
- What cultural, regional or symbolic meanings are associated with these birds?
- How are materials and techniques connected to Country and cultural practice?
- What are the similarities and differences between Western creative practices and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander approaches?
- What ideas or feelings might the bird symbolise, such as freedom, loss, resilience or cultural identity?
- What elements of visual language help communicate these ideas?
- How does the artwork communicate identity, knowledge or story?
- Why do you think the artist chose to use a bird to convey these messages?

Birds appear extensively in Aboriginal artworks and sculptures across Australia, reflecting desert, riverine, coastal and urban environments. While many birds are not traditionally hunted for food, some species, such as magpie geese, bush turkeys and emus, are highly valued, and bird eggs have also been an important food source.

In many regions, birds such as parrots, cockatoos, budgerigars, hawks, eagles and kingfishers feature in cultural stories and are connected to Dreaming and totemic systems, linking people, animals and Country.

Examples of regional connections include:

- In the Tiwi Islands, bird carvings are part of ceremonial life and appear on Pukumani poles. Birds are understood as messengers between the spirit world and the human world.
- In the Kimberley region, the owl is associated with Wandjina spirits and ideas of seasonal renewal.
- In Cape York, birds are sometimes depicted as spirits being released from the earth.
- In the Yugambah language area, the wedge-tailed eagle (Mibunn) is a revered totem, representing the eagle's role in watching over the land and its people.



Contemporary and urban Aboriginal artists continue to depict familiar birds such as magpies and kookaburras, reflecting ongoing cultural connections in modern contexts.

1. Romolo Tipiloura
Owl Turutjikini
carved wood & ochre, H 32 cm

2. Bob Ali, Maningrida, *Gomarla (Egret Bird)*, Leichhardt Tree with ochre pigment and PVA
47 x 7 x 8 cm

3. Yarrenyty Arltene Artists
Hanging Bird soft sculpture

4. Thomas Toikalkin, Torres Strait
Pigeon, cast aluminium

Fibre and soft sculpture

Students can extend their sculptural learning through fibre and soft sculpture practices inspired by artists such as Yarrenyty Arltere Artists and Tjanpi Weavers. Through these approaches, students explore techniques such as wrapping, binding and armature construction, and consider how process and cultural practice shape meaning. Learning experiences invite students to think about how fibre and soft sculpture differ from traditional Western sculpture.



Soft sculpture bird

Inspired by the work of Yarrenyty Arltere Artists, students design and create a soft sculpture bird using textile materials.



Marlene Rubuntja
Bird on Country (back), 2025
wool, cotton, acrylic paint, metal bucket, 83 x 39 x 32 cm
<https://edwinacorlette.com/artists/yarrenyty-arltere-artists>

1. Planning

- Students begin by sketching a simple plan for their bird, considering shape, proportion and distinguishing features.
- Designs are transferred onto fabric (felt is recommended, as it does not fray) and two identical shapes are cut

2. Making and embellishing

- Students embellish each side of the bird using simple hand-stitching techniques.
- Materials may include embroidery thread, buttons, feathers, sequins or fabric remnants.
- Text, pattern or symbolic markings may be added to communicate meaning.

3. Construction

- Once both sides are complete, students stitch the pieces together, leaving a small opening.
- Students fill the bird with polyester stuffing or fabric scraps, and securely stitch the opening closed.

- Additional features such as beaks, wings, tails or legs are attached using strong stitches.
- Legs and feet may be created using soft wire, inserted and secured within the body.

4. Displaying and reflection

- Students consider how their sculpture will be displayed:
 - Will the bird stand independently or be suspended?
 - How will balance and stability be achieved?
 - How does placement affect the viewer's experience?
- If the bird is intended to hang, ribbon or strings securely stitched to ensure balanced suspension.
- Students may present works individually or as a group installation, supported by artist statements and process documentation.



Fibre and natural material bird sculpture

Inspired by the work of Tjanpi Weavers, students design and create a bird sculpture using locally available and natural materials.

1. Planning

- Students explore examples of bird sculptures and discuss material choice, form and connection to place.
- Locally available materials such as sugar cane mulch, grasses, shredded paper or natural fibres are selected.
- Students plan the basic shape and structure of their bird, considering size, balance and distinguishing features.

2. Making and building form

- Students begin by creating a simple armature using wire, for example a single piece of wire to form the body and neck.
- Scrunched newspaper or recycled paper is wrapped around the wire to build the basic bird shape.
- Fibre materials are layered over the armature and secured tightly using string, wool or twine.

3. Construction and refinement

- Students continue to build form using wrapping, layering and binding techniques.
- Additional materials such as sticks or wire may be incorporated to create beaks, wings, tails or legs.
- Students adjust and refine the sculpture to ensure stability and strength.

4. Displaying and reflection

- Students consider how their sculpture will be displayed:
 - Will the bird stand independently or be suspended?
 - How will balance and stability be achieved?
 - How does placement affect the viewer's experience?
- Students reflect on how material choice and making processes connect to place, sustainability and cultural practice.
- Students may present works individually or as a group installation, supported by artist statements, process documentation and a curatorial rationale.



'Inspired by Tjanpi Weavers' workshop at Narangba State High School with artist Therese Flynn-Clarke, sugar cane mulch, wool, found materials. Image courtesy Therese Flynn-Clarke

Resources

- Soft Sculpture Bird: the process of creation, Shape Moth Quilts, shape-moth.blogspot.com/2011/01/soft-sculpture-bird-process-of-creation
- Making a cardinal or other crested Bird, Anna Wood Handmade annwoodhandmade.com/tag/soft-sculpture
- How to make a fabric: Bird Ornament Tutorial, Decorika youtu.be/PZcoGaMiW8M
- Beginners Sewing Tutorial: Bird from Fabric Remnants, Red Rocking Bird, youtu.be/u8b63amMu4
- Scrappy Beetle, Afrayed Upcycling youtu.be/csia2ajWkXo



Resources

Material suppliers

- Reverse Garbage, Woolloongabba
reversegarbagequeensland.com.au
- The Sewing Lair, Beenleigh
thesewinglair.com.au
- School Art Supplies, Loganholme
schoolartsupplies.com.au
- Logan Artists Association, Loganlea
loganartists.com
- Art Shed Brisbane, West End
artshedbrisbane.com.au
- Eckersleys Art Supplies, Underwood
eckersleys.com.au

Additional bird activities

- Flying Australian birds, Lotta Magazine
lottamagazine.com/newsite/kids-crafts/flying-australian-birds
- Australian Bird Craft, A Few Small Adventures
afewsmalladventures.com/2021/07/24/australian-bird-craft-inspired-by-busy-beaks
- Kids' zone, Bush Heritage Australia
bushheritage.org.au/news/bush-buddies
- Birds and biodiversity, Cool.org
cool.org/search?term=birds

Books about birds

- *Bowerbird Blues* by Aura Parker
- *The Circle* by Jeannie Baker
- *Busy Beaks* by Sarah Allen
- *Backyard Birds* by Helen Milroy
- *Black Cockatoo* by Carl Merrison
- *Aboriginal Peoples and Birds in Australia* by Philip A Clarke
- *The Australian Bird Guide* by Peter Menkhorst
- *This Bird: Noticing Our Urban Birds* by Astred Hicks

- *The Birds at My Table* by Darryl Jones
- *The Bird Book: The Stories, Science, and History of Birds* by Rob Hume
- *Our Bird Collection*, Koori Curriculum
kooricurriculum.com/blogs/news/top-books-about-birds
- Story Time: Swifty the Super-Fast Parrot, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/abc-education-story-time-swifty-the-super-fast-parrot/102707136

Bird education programs and digital tools

- Birds in Schools, BirdLife Australia
birdlife.org.au/projects/birds-in-schools
- Aussie Bird Count
aussiebirdcount.org.au
- iNaturalist
inaturalist.org
- Merlin Bird ID
merlin.allaboutbirds.org
- eBird
ebird.org
- Birda
birda.org
- Birdly, BirdLife Australia
sunbird.tv/apps/birdly-birdlife-australia

Discovering native birds and their habitats

- Bird Places of Logan, Birds Queensland
birdsqueensland.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/birdplaces_Logan.pdf
- Creating Places for Birds, Birds in Backyards
birdsinboxyards.net/places
- The State of Australia's Birds 2015, BirdLife Australia
magazine.birdlife.org/the-state-of-australia-s-birds-2015
- Urban Birds, BirdLife Australia
birdlife.org.au/programs/urban-birds

- The art of birdwatching, Bush Heritage Australia
bushheritage.org.au/news/bush-buddies/birdwatching
- How to build a nest box, Wildlife Queensland
wildlife.org.au/how-to-build-a-nest-box
- Are you connected to the bush?, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/abc-730-are-you-connected-to-the-bush/14002240
- Who are the creatures living in your garden?, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/kids-in-the-garden-ep-11-who-are-the-creatures-living-in-your-g/13633286
- How did birds survive while dinosaurs went extinct?, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/how-birds-survived-while-dinosaurs-went-extinct-/103048592
- Rescuing tawny frogmouths, ABC Open
abc.net.au/education/abc-open-rescuing-tawny-frogmouths/13969926
- Migratory birds, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/migratory-birds/13938484
- Our Animals: Pretty parrots, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/our-animals-ep-12-pretty-parrots/13631674
- How are animals suited to their environment?, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/how-are-animals-suited-to-their-environment/102171566
- Big eggs and little eggs, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/gardening-australia-junior-big-eggs-and-little-eggs/106257982
- Bird Feet, BIRO
biro.org.au/images/Education/Feet.pdf
- Bird Beaks, BIRO
biro.org.au/images/Education/Beaks.pdf
biro.org.au/images/Education/Beaks2.pdf

Discovering introduced and invasive species

- Bird management, Logan City Council
logan.qld.gov.au/community/environment-and-sustainability/wildlife/bird-management
- Introduced birds, Birds in Backyards
birdsinyourbackyards.net/birds/featured/Introduced-birds
- Australia is 'at war with feral cats', ABC News
abc.net.au/news/05167666
- Eat the Invaders: Feral cats, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/eat-the-invaders-feral-cats/104842946

Discovering birds in cultural context

- First Nations Storytelling, Australian Museum
australian.museum/publications/birds-storybox/first-nations-storytelling
- Kurdarrku: The Brolga, ABC Education
abc.net.au/education/kurdarrku-the-brolga/13819456
- First Peoples land overlaps with 130 imperilled bird species, WWF Australia
wwf.org.au/blogs/first-peoples-land-overlaps-with-130-imperilled-bird-species

Acknowledgements

Teacher Education Resource

Developed by Therese Flynn-Clarke

Additional contributions by Chelsi Foskett, Lesley Nicholson, Sienna Harris, Nicola Hooper, Carly Willats and Laura Bonner

Edited by Nadya Wilson and Sylva Cooper

Designed by Nicola Hooper



Therese Flynn-Clarke working in her artist studio in Logan

Artist & educator profile

Therese Flynn-Clarke is a practising visual artist and educator with a strong focus on sculptural practice and mixed media. Her work is informed by close observation of the natural world and demonstrates versatility across a wide range of materials, techniques, and forms.

Flynn-Clarke has exhibited nationally and has received awards and recognition for her artistic practice. She has also coordinated numerous community-based art projects, working collaboratively with artists, students, and community groups.

In education, Flynn-Clarke has extensive experience teaching across Early Years, Primary, Secondary, and University contexts, and has delivered Professional Development for artists and educators. She has worked as a Primary Arts Specialist and classroom teacher across multiple Australian states and is known for enriching learning environments through creativity, inquiry, and enthusiasm.

Contact

Website: thereseflynnclarke.com

Facebook: facebook.com/ThereseFlynnClarkeArt

Instagram: instagram.com/thereseflynnclarkeart



WHERE
DO I
BELONG?



TEACHER'S NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



Community Bank
Logan and Helensvale



This project is supported by Community Bank Logan and Helensvale, a franchise of Bendigo Bank, the Queensland Government through the Queensland Arts Showcase Program and the Regional Arts Development Fund, a partnership between the Queensland Government and Logan City Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

Printed June 2026. Details are correct at the time of printing but may be subject to change.