

Teacher Notes

Themes

- Conservation
- Animal habitats
- Ecology

Key learning outcomes

- Learn about the Australian animals that depend on tree hollows for survival
- Understand the different ways in which animals benefit from tree hollows
- Learn how tree hollows are formed and how long it can take
- Understand how humans can impact the environment
- Learn how to contribute to tree hollow conversation and awareness

Key curriculum areas

- **Science:** Science Understanding (Biological sciences); Science as a Human Endeavour
- **English:** Language; Literacy
- **Cross-curriculum Priority:** Sustainability

Publication details

Life in a Hollow

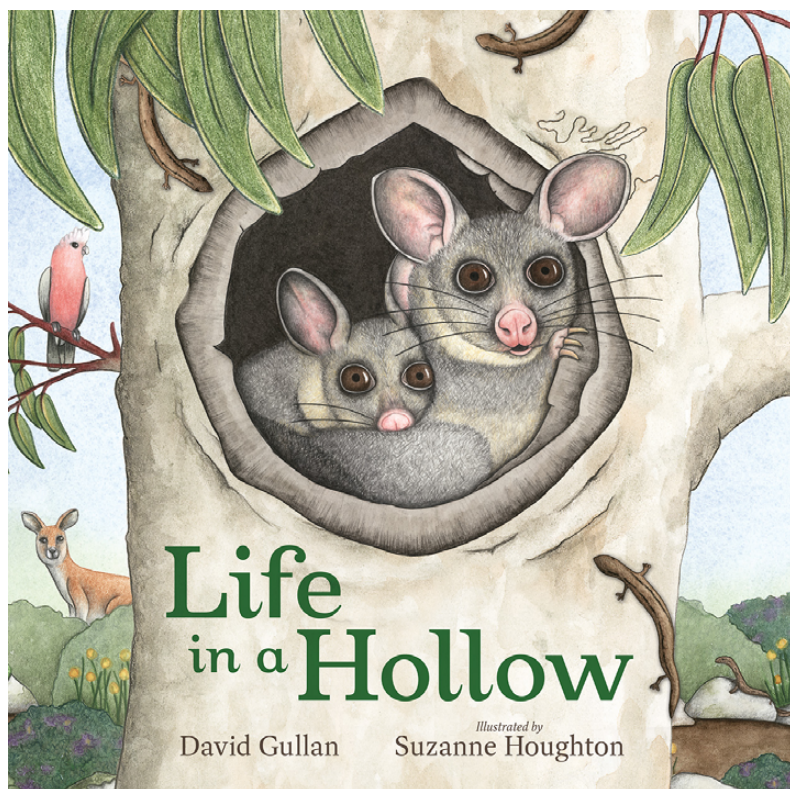
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Life in a Hollow

David Gullan and Suzanne Houghton

About the book

Who is home in the hollow?

Tree hollows are very special places that provide animals, both big and small, with a space to nest and feel safe.

Explore life in a tree hollow in the Australian bush and meet the native creatures who come to call a hollow a home. You'll be surprised just how many choose to move in!

You'll also discover the important role tree hollows play in the environment and how we can help protect them.

Recommended for

Readers aged 5 to 9 (Years 1 to 4)



PUBLISHING

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About the author and illustrator

David Gullan is a primary school teacher, who developed a love of Australian wildlife from his parents. He now aims to share his passion for Australia's native creatures with children everywhere.

Suzanne Houghton is an award-winning illustrator who loves nothing more than to splash colour on a page. When it comes to her books there is one thing Suzanne wants more than anything: to bring joy.

Pre-reading questions or activities

Some animals build their homes out of leaves and sticks, some bury into the soil, some even venture into caves, but many of Australia's wonderful creatures depend on the little-thought-of tree hollow. This book is about tree hollows and all the animals that come to call a hollow a home. Maybe you have seen a tree hollow before. What kinds of creatures have you seen using tree hollows?

Where do tree hollows come from?

What do you think all these animals use tree hollows for?

How long do you think it takes trees to develop tree hollows?

Think about these questions as you read the story and explore *Life in a Hollow*.

Discussion questions

Science

1. In the story we see a variety of animals use the tree hollow for a range of purposes. What are some the different reasons animals depend on tree hollows?
2. What are some of the things that contribute to the hollow gradually growing larger?
3. Read the section 'More about tree hollows' at the back of the book. Discuss how long it takes for tree hollows to form for different size animals. Use a timeline to visualise how long it really takes for these homes to form, comparing the time to other events the students can relate to such as their age, their parents' age etc.

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English

1. In the story the baby possum is referred to as a joey. What other Australian animals have joeys? Do you know what this group of animals is called?
2. Many different types of species appear in the book. Can you name them? (e.g. insects, reptiles, mammals/bats, birds, marsupials, amphibians). Why do you think the author decided to use a variety of animals instead of just one?

Sustainability

1. Tree hollows provide so many animals with shelter and protection in Australia. Discuss with the students what the effect of logging might have on the populations of some of these Australian animals.

Activities

Science

Tree hollow survey

This survey can be done either at school or sent home as a fun activity for students to do with their family and bring their data back to school to share. Using the worksheet on page 5, students can record any tree hollows they have seen, the location of the tree hollow, the approximate size of the tree hollow (insect size, skink size, microbat size, small parrot size, possum size etc.), and record if the hollow is occupied or not, and if so, who is living there.

Nesting box design

Nesting boxes are terrific solutions for quickly replenishing the amount of available homes for Australia's hollow-dependent animals, but all these animals require different features to be happy in a nesting box. Look at some of the nesting box designs featured at the Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary: <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife/nesting-boxes>. With your class, read about the features they have included to meet the needs of different animals out looking for a home. Using the information about nesting boxes, work with a partner or a small group to design your own nesting box for a particular animal, being sure to include the appropriate features to meet the needs of your chosen animal.

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Who lives in a hollow?

Using the tree hollow colouring worksheet on page 6, draw an animal that you might find inside the empty hollow, and then colour in the rest of the sheet! Use information from the book or do some further research to choose appropriate animals to fill the empty hollows. You can even cut all the different hollows out and join them one on top of the other to create a single tall tree housing all your hollow-dependent creatures. A fantastic classroom display!

English

Sequencing and predicting

Did you notice that the animals that came to call a hollow a home in the story arrived in a particular order? Recount the order the animals arrived at the hollow. Then, using evidence from the text, make a prediction about what animals might come next and justify your prediction.

Persuasive writing

Tree hollows are a crucial habitat for many Australian animals, but as trees are being cut down and hollows take so long to replace, we need to start thinking about protecting the tree hollows we have left. Using information from the book, write a persuasive text that will convince others to join the fight to protect Australian tree hollows.

Sustainability

Hollow awareness

Tree hollows need protecting, and raising awareness and teaching others about the importance of hollows can help. With that in mind, create an awareness poster to teach others about tree hollows, the role they play in Australian ecosystems and the animals that call them home. You can then display the poster near a tree hollow in your school, community or even your own backyard! By sharing your knowledge with others, you can make a difference.

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Worksheets

Tree hollow survey

	Location	Size	Occupied
Tree Hollow 1	<i>Flemington Primary School, beside the oval</i>	<i>Suitable for small parrots</i>	<i>Yes. A family of rainbow lorikeets.</i>
Tree Hollow 2			
Tree Hollow 3			
Tree Hollow 4			
Tree Hollow 5			
Tree Hollow 6			
Tree Hollow 7			
Tree Hollow 8			

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Who lives in a hollow?

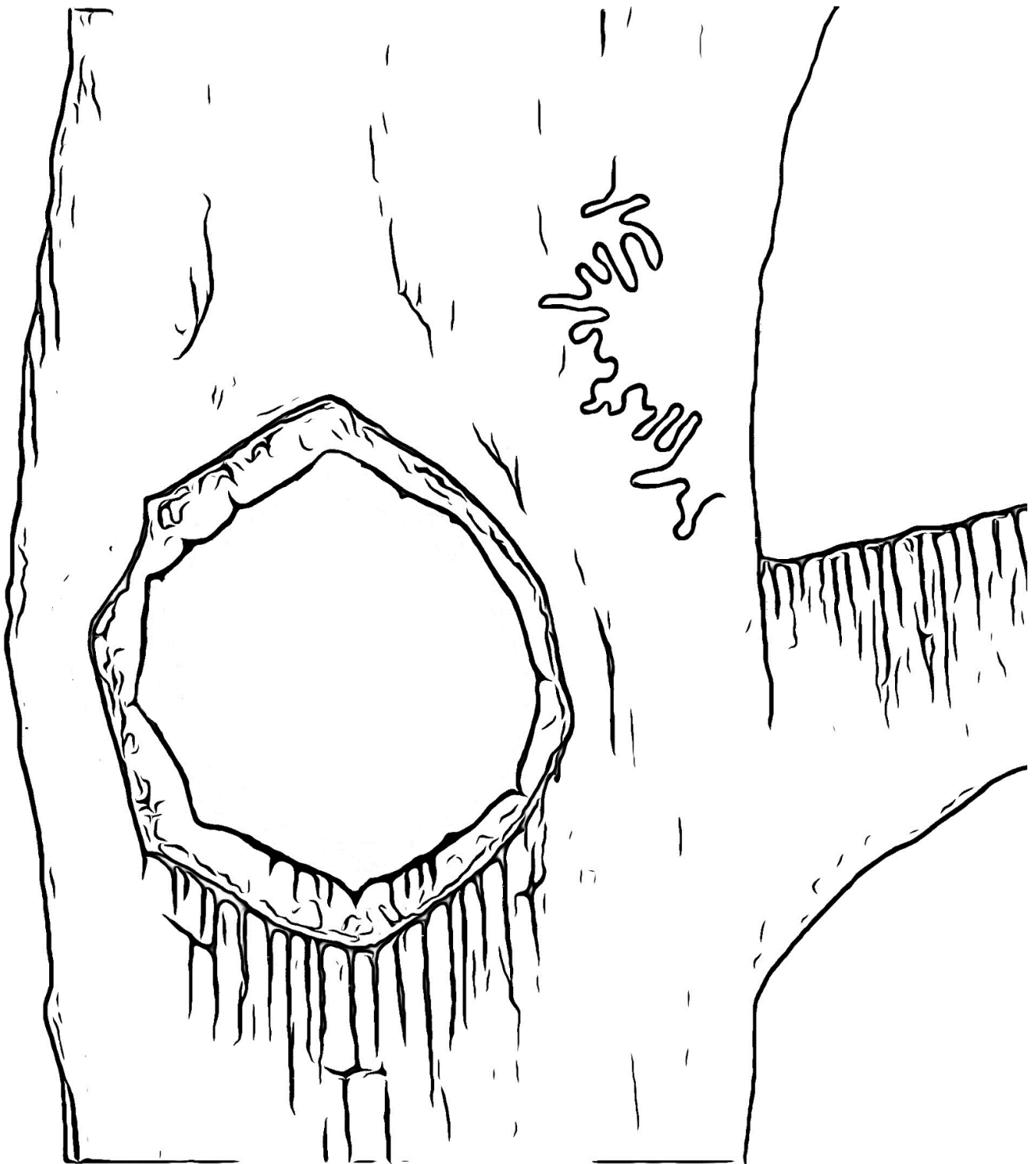


Illustration © Suzanne Houghton.

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Australian Curriculum Links (Version 8.4)

Year level	Learning area: Science	Other learning areas
Years 1/2	<p>Science Understanding: Biological sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Living things live in different places where their needs are met (ACSSU211) <p>Science as a Human Endeavour: Nature and development of science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in objects and events (ACSHE021)	<p>English: Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand concepts about print and screen, including how different types of texts are organised using page numbering, tables of content, headings and titles, navigation buttons, bars and links (ACELA1450)Understand the use of vocabulary about familiar and new topics and experiment with and begin to make conscious choices of vocabulary to suit audience and purpose (ACELA1470) <p>English: Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (ACELY1655)Engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours, showing interest, and contributing ideas, information and questions (ACELY1656)
Year 3/4	<p>Science Understanding: Biological sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Living things have life cycles (ACSSU072)Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive (ACSSU073) <p>Science as a Human Endeavour: Use and influence of science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions (ACSHE051)	<p>English: Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand how different types of texts vary in use of language choices, depending on their purpose and context (for example, tense and types of sentences) (ACELA1478) <p>English: Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures (ACELY1670)
All	<p>Cross-curriculum Priority: Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">OI.2: All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.	

Related books from CSIRO Publishing

- *A Hollow Is a Home* (<https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/7729>)
- *Swiftly: 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>)
- *Tiny Possum and the Migrating Moths* (<https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8009>)

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>