

The Wild Life.

#3: A Little Bit Lost.

AUTHOR

LAURA BUNTING

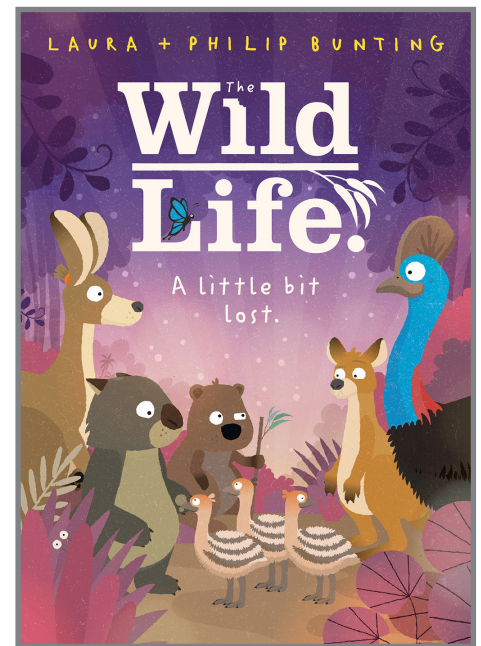
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Roo has woken up with three new babies—weird babies—in her pouch. But where did they come from? And can Wombat become the funcle (fun uncle) he thinks he will be?

Follow Quokka, Wombat and Roo on a quirky quest to return three very lost chicks to their parents.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laura Bunting (nee Venuto) is a features writer and sub editor by trade, having spent over 10 years in print and digital magazine publishing, under titles such as *SBS Feast*, *Mindfood*, *Time Out*, *Notebook/HomeLife*, and many more. She is the author of picture book favourites, *Koalas Eat Gum Leaves*, *Kookaburras Love to Laugh* and *Liarbird* all illustrated by her husband, Philip Bunting.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Philip Bunting is an author and illustrator. His books have been translated into multiple languages, and published in over 25 countries around the world. Since his first book was published in 2017, Philip has received multiple accolades, including Honours from the Children's Book Council of Australia, and making the list for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 2018.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class, discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
 - What can you see happening on the cover of this book?
 - What does it mean to be 'A Little Bit Lost'?
 - What can you see in the cover artwork that indicates that the characters might be lost?
 - Who do you think might be the main character/s in this book?
 - Who has read the previous *The Wild Life* books?
 - What do you think might happen in this story, and why?
- Roo dreams that she is flying. Have you ever dreamt that you were flying? What does it feel like to fly in your dreams? Paint a picture of you flying in a dream.
- Roo thinks that Wombat might have been dreaming about zombie snails again. Wombat thinks that zombie snails

are creepy little weirdos. What do you think a zombie snail might look like? How might it behave? Write a short paragraph describing your vision of what a zombie snail might act and look like, and then draw or paint a picture to illustrate your description.

- While still half-awake Roo has confused thoughts upon finding babies in her pouch that are most definitely not joeys. What would a part-joe, part-bird baby look like? Draw a picture of what you think a feathered joey with a beak might look like.
- When Roo faints, Wombat crushes some gum leaves and holds them under her nose to wake her up. Do you think this would really work? Why/why not?
 - As a class, go on a walk around your school or local area, and collect leaves from as many different eucalyptus varieties as you can manage. When you return to class, investigate the different leaves, and identify which ones have the strongest smell. During your investigation, some things to consider might be:
 - Can you describe what the smell is like?
 - Do the different varieties of leaves have different smells?
 - What do the leaves look like? Do you think this might affect the smell?
 - How does crushing the leaves affect the smell?
 - Why do you think Wombat might have crushed the leaves?
 - What else affects the smell of the leaves?
- Quokka says that he is terrible at charades. What are charades and why might she think that Owl is playing them? As a class, play a game of charades—there are many different versions of this game, so you might like to research online or in the library, and find a version that would suit your class best before you play.
- Quokka thinks that the bird footprints look like the letter W. What letters might other animal footprints look like (or look a little bit like, if you squint a bit and use your imagination.) Try and create a font out of animal footprints, and then use it to write your name. You might need to combine two or more footprints together to create some of the letters!
- Quokka is a very small animal, so a bird's footprint being larger than his head just means that it belongs to a rather large bird, not to a monstrously huge one. How big would a bird or animal have to be if its footprints were larger than your head? Draw a picture of an imaginary creature with footprints larger than your head, and write a description of it below your drawing.
- Why did Quokka decide to go with Roo and Wombat after all?
- Why does Wombat find himself behaving like an un-funcle? What is it about being responsible for actual (rather than imaginary) baby animals that causes him to act in a way that is so different from how he had imagined he would behave around small children?
- Wombat says that Quokkas throw their babies at predators to distract them while the mother escapes. Is this true? Research Quokkas and find out if Wombat was telling the truth. What other facts about Quokkas can you find out while you are researching? Choose at least three facts to illustrate and create a mini-fact sheet or information poster starring Quokkas.
- Look at the picture of the inside of Quokka's brain. What are the different parts of his thinking that we can see in there? What might you find in your brain? Think about what thoughts and feelings you have most often, and using this picture of Quokka's brain for inspiration, draw a diagram of the inside of your own head.
- Why was Quokka scared of the Quoll? Where do Quolls live, and what do they eat?
- How many different animals appear in the story, and what are they all? (Remember to include any animals or birds that you see in the illustrations, even if they don't say anything or interact with Wombat and his friends.)
- What do you think is the funniest scene in the story, and why? Write a paragraph sharing your answer to this question.
- The three friends encounter a lot of dangers on their journey. What are some of the dangers that you might need to keep an eye out for if you went on a long walk through the bush in your local area? As a class, brainstorm and make a list. You might want to invite a local Elder to come and talk to your class about what you could expect to find if you went for a long walk on country where you live.
- Look closely at the graph where Quokka is visualising what he got in Life's Lottery of Cool Skills. Which skillset do

you think is the most impressive and why? If you were to include yourself in the graph, what are some of the cool skills that you would be able to list? (Hint: think about skills that all humans have, as well as special ones that you personally have.)

- Did the book end the way you thought it might? What was the most surprising thing to happen in the story, and what was the most predictable? Share your thoughts on this with the class, and think about the different ways in which people think, and how they often are surprised by very different things.

AUTHOR OF NOTES
RAE CARLYLE