

Spring has sprung!

Gould League Newsletter, September 2022



Wakey Wakey!

After months of cooler conditions, our plants are waking up to the extra warmth, some are starting to flower, the bugs are out pollinating, and our wonderful wildlife are peeking their heads out of their cozy homes and waving hello to Spring!

With the warmer weather approaching, our native birds are also excited for the new season as it's time to build their nests. Did you know that each bird builds their nest in a very special way?



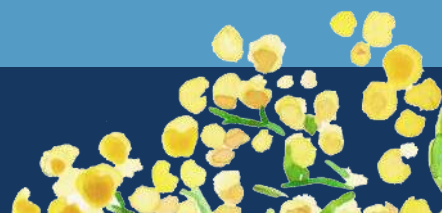
The marvelous magpie favours high places like tall trees, light towers or sports scoreboards to keep safe from their predators. They craft their homes with sticks, mud, hair or wool as well as some synthetic materials such as plastic and wire.

The playful parrot, like this Gang Gang, needs protection from airborne predators, so builds hidden nests in tucked away tree hollows.



Trees that contain these nests are so important because they keep the eggs in a safe and warm place. It then becomes the baby chicks home until they are big enough to fly. Some birds use the same tree every year to raise their chicks!

Next time you are out, look up and see if you can spot a nest. Which bird could it belong to? What materials did they use? Can you see any birds peeking out? Keep those listening ears on too as you may hear tiny chirps coming from that same nest in a few weeks.



Often we hear birds but we don't always see them. However, we can still work out who they are by their call. Use this [link here](#) to help you work out some calls you might have heard. Who could it be? Can you make the noise of a Sulphur Crested Cockatoo or the Tawny Frogmouth? What else?



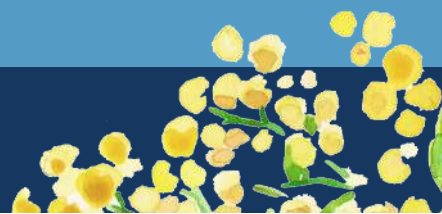
Speaking of listening ears, this is what scientists needed to find the very mysterious Night Parrot (*Pezoporus occidentalis*). For a long time the Night Parrot was assumed extinct as it was last seen alive in Western Australia in 1912. But then some sightings started happening from the 1970s – in Queensland! Curious to solve this mystery, a very passionate naturalist, John Young, dedicated 15 years to finding this bird. Eventually he was rewarded with close up video footage of the bird in 2013. Only a few other sightings have happened since.

Unlike most parrots, this is a ground dwelling bird and makes it's home under tussocks of Spinifex in the desert. This makes it highly vulnerable to being caught by foxes and cats!

It's location is still a secret today with only a few people knowing where to find it!



Learn more about the amazing Night Parrot in this fun video



Did you know? John Young who discovered the Night Parrot shares the same passion as the John and Elizabeth Gould who the Gould League is named after. They also dedicated many years to discovering the birds species of Australia. And thanks to such dedication of many scientists as these, we wouldn't know all of the amazing bird and animal species of Australia.

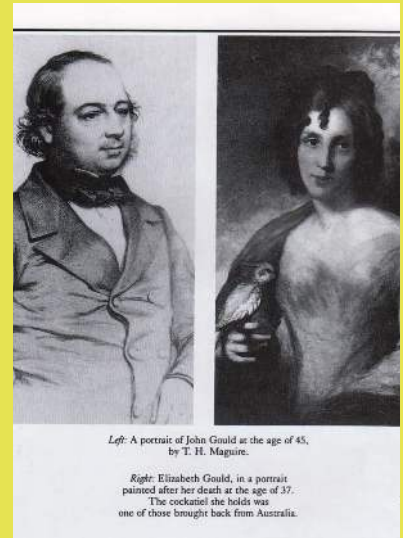
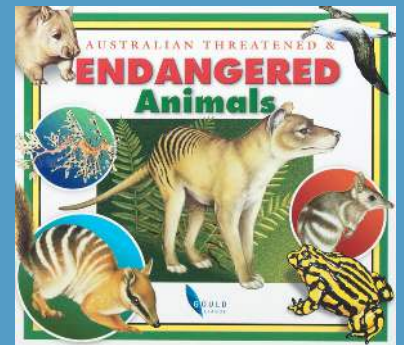
Are you passionate about birds?

Do you want to help scientists find out more about birds? A bird scientist is called an Ornithologist. You could be an Ornithologist too by taking part in the Great Aussie Bird Count in October. You need to use your eyes and your ears. It's really fun and easy and your help makes a big difference to scientists around the country! Maybe a parent/ guardian can download the app which includes great guides to help you identify your birds. Then you can join thousands of other explorers to help protect our precious Australian birdlife.

Are you passionate about threatened species?

Coming up on September 7th is National Threatened Species Day. While Australia is home to so many amazing plants and animals, over 1700 species are listed as threatened or endangered! In recognition of this day Gould League has a free PDF copy for all our Kids and Nest members of our book "Australian Threatened and Endangered Animals".

This book discusses dozens of threatened and endangered species and what scientists are doing to help them. Click on the picture to download your free copy.



Left: A portrait of John Gould at the age of 45, by T. H. Maguire.

Right: Elizabeth Gould, in a portrait painted after her death at the age of 37. The cockatiel she holds was one of those brought back from Australia.

We hope you have enjoyed our Spring Newsletter. Time to get out and look for those birds in the sunshine! Enjoy!

