

The Friends of the BTRW would like to present “HOME GONE AWAY”

Starring the following local Threatened Species:

ROXY the Brush-tailed rock-wallaby – endangered cliff-dwelling marsupial, joeys killed by foxes

GLOSSY the Glossy-black cockatoo – endangered bird, threatened by habitat clearing

FRUITY the Grey-headed flying fox – vulnerable flying marsupial, impacted by habitat loss and poisoning

BROADY the Broad-headed snake – vulnerable reptile, threatened by habitat modification

BUBBLES the Platypus – semi aquatic monotreme, threatened by habitat loss and pollution

DIGGER the Long-nosed potoroo – vulnerable small marsupial, threatened by fox and cat predation

GUMNUT the Greater glider – vulnerable arboreal marsupial, impacted by habitat fragmentation

QUENTIN the Spotted-tail quoll – vulnerable carnivorous marsupial, threatened by habitat fragmentation, competition by ferals, and illegal shooting

FOX – introduced predator responsible for hunting many native marsupials to the brink of extinction

ROXY: Hey, did anyone hear that gun shot last night? I hope it was Dean getting a fox?

GLOSSY: No, Powerful Owl said Dean was working over at Illaroo last night. I have a terrible feeling that grumpy farmer John was shooting at Quentin the quoll last night. I know Quentin has been especially hungry lately because so many foxes and cats are eating his prey. Quentin does have that soft spot for chicken dinner too.

ROXY: Oh, I hope it wasn't Quentin! Queenie won't have anyone to breed with. That means no more baby quolls, no more quolls around here forever! That is so sad.

GLOSSY: Farmer John should lock up his chickens at night to keep them safe from quolls ... and foxes.

ROXY: GLOSSY can you help me find BROADY the snake 'cause I want to ask him a question?

(Roxy and Glossy look underneath the rocks calling out loudly: “Broady”)

FRUITY: Hey! Who's making all that racket. Some of us are trying to get a good day's sleep, you know.

GLOSSY: Oh hi Fruity. Sorry. Broady will be under one of these rocks. I remember when there used to be so many more rocks up here on top of the escarpment.

ROXY: Humans have taken so much of Broady's home away. I think they use his rock shelters for decoration.

BROADY: Yes. That's why I am one of the last broad-headed snakes around here. There's not many places left for us to call home anymore.

GLOSSY: I'm hungry. I'm off to try and find some casuarina cones. When I was a boy – a hundred years ago – there used to be thousands of us Glossy's living around here. But the humans kept chopping down the forests to make paddocks for their cows. They chopped down so many old trees with nesting hollows. There is nowhere left for us to bring up our chicks. They chopped down the casuarina trees we fed on. Now I fly alone over paddocks of weeds, where my habitat used to be.

FRUITY: I know what you mean Glossy. The humans get so cross at us when we eat their orchard fruit, but they forget that they have chopped down so much of our original forest. You Glossy's are a bit fussy though. You should try some of the juicy rainforest fruits.

GLOSSY: Yuck. No thanks! (flies away squawking)

ROXY: Hey Broady. Have you ever seen **aliens with horns?**
I got **chased right off my cliff** by a mob of them yesterday.
Never seen anything like them before.

BROADY: They are called goats or deer, silly.
The humans have brought them over the ocean and let them go wild here.

FRUITY: They seem pretty harmless though.

BROADY: No way! Goats and deer are bad news for our forests Fruity. While you and your mates are busy helping the forest regenerate by pollinating the flowers and dispersing the seeds, the feral goats and deer are eating all the baby trees ... which means there won't be any young trees to replace the old trees when they die. So there will be even less native fruit for you and your mates to eat Fruity.

(Throw the blue paper over the front of the stage)

ROXY: Hey ... did you hear that splash in the creek? Maybe it was Bubbles the Platypus. Let's go see.

All together: Hi Bubbles. What ya doing?

BUBBLES: I am collecting up the humans rubbish.
I had a terrible time yesterday. I managed to get a plastic bag all twisted around me.
I thought I was going to die.

ROXY: Here ... we'll give you a helping **paw and claw**.

BROADY: Speak for yourself! It's starting to get dark. I'm going to go slither under a stone.

(Roxy and Bubbles put plastic rubbish in the bin)

FRUITY: I don't understand why humans pollute our air, water and soil.
I felt so sick last week after eating some peaches.
I didn't realise that the humans had **just** sprayed them with pesticides.
I wish there were more organic farmers like Olly.
He doesn't use any artificial fertilisers or pesticides and he really looks after the soil life.
And his fruit tastes so much better than those chemical ones.

DIGGER: "Crying"

ROXY: Hey ... that's Digger the potoroo. What's wrong Digger?

DIGGER: I was just watching all of you other threatened species. I feel so inadequate around you guys.

FRUITY: Why? **We are all special in our own specially adapted ways.**

DIGGER: Oh... I know it's silly, but you are all such amazing acrobats. I'm not really good at anything.

ROXY: What on earth do you mean?

DIGGER: Well Roxy, you hop up and down cliffs ... and Fruity does air gymnastics ... Bubbles does underwater ballet ... and Gumnut can glide between trees 100m apart. **Everyone is good at something.** Except me.

ROXY: That's just not true Digger.

Have you forgotten that you spend much of your life digging up **forest-friendly fungi fruits.** You and your cute little friends **keep the forest healthy** by spreading those spores around **and turning over the leaf litter.**

DIGGER: Oh, you're so sweet Roxy! But what's scat smell?

FRUITY: Oops, my guano always makes me unpopular!

(Gumnut glides onto stage landing on a stick)

GUMNUT: Weeeeeee.... Did I just here my name? What's going on guys?

DIGGER: Hi Gumnut. I love watching you do that. Gliding looks heaps fun.

GUMNUT: **It is fun gliding through the forest. But since the humans widened their road, the possums and gliders cannot make it to the other side. That's where we used to find food in winter. We used to climb across the road where the tree tops met, but now our home has been fragmented. You know how frightened we are of going down to the ground where the foxes and cats prowl. And there are so many cars these days ... going so fast along the road.**

DIGGER: Oh, that reminds me I just heard some awful news about my cousins. There was a fire through their heath so all the feral cats and foxes have come to take advantage. Potoroos need some unburnt patches of thick vegetation close to the ground to hide in. Did you know that 75 million Australian natives are killed by feral cats every year? I wish humans would keep their cats inside their house and their dogs inside their yard, and get them all de-sexed at the vet.

ROXY: A fox found my first joey in the cliff cave, where I carefully hid her while I went to find some dinner. And last summer my poor little joey was taken by a dog. We need to find a way to get rid of these ferals before all of us little Aussies become extinct.

FOX: Those silly humans should never have shipped us foxes over from Europe. Politicians, scientists and local communities will have to work very hard together to get rid of us foxes. We are ever so smart. See, I have been doing my maths homework. If the 7.2 million foxes in Australia are eating an average of 150g of native animals every day, foxes eat over 394 thousand tonnes of native Australian animals every year. That's equivalent to half a billion potoroos!

GUMNUT: Has anyone seen an old tree with a hollow? I have finally found a mate but now we are worried we won't be able to find a home to have our family.

ROXY: Many of the surviving populations of us threatened species are now so small that they are becoming dangerously inbred! We are losing all our genetic diversity and natural resilience!

DIGGER: Yes, that's something we have all got in common isn't it? Fragmented habitats and tiny populations ... battling for survival.

GUMNUT: Now, if drought, fire or disease strikes, we are even less likely to have survivors amongst us to continue breeding.

ROXY: I am scared we will become extinct. Ferals are hunting our families ... and humans are taking our homes away!

QUENTIN: Boo!

ROXY: Oh, Quentin. You are ok? We thought you'd been shot!