

WILD FAMILIES

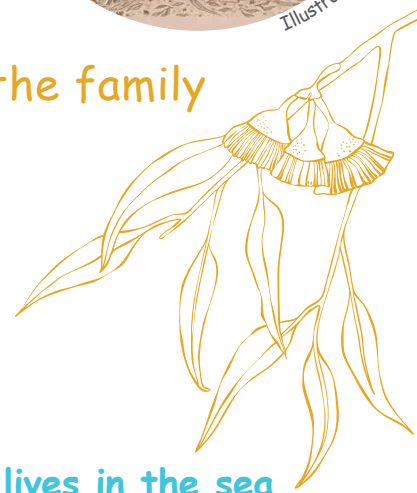


Enjoying, learning and looking after nature with the family

GET TO KNOW VICTORIA'S SPECIAL TREES

Trees are an important part of Victoria's natural areas. They provide us with clean air, habitat for wildlife, shelter, shade, cooling and places to play!

There are hundreds of native tree species in Victoria including many species of gum trees, banksias with big cone flowers, rainforest trees, and wattles with their puffy yellow flower heads.



Majestic stands of Mountain Ash.

Mountain Ash - the tallest tree

The Mountain Ash is not only Victoria's tallest tree, but the tallest flowering tree in the world! The Ada tree near Powelltown, west of Melbourne is a Mountain Ash that is 76 metres tall, 15 metres around and is thought to be nearly 400 years old! When big old trees such as these lose branches, hollows start to form, which provide homes for wildlife such as possums, owls and parrots. See www.greatforestnationalpark.com.au/ada-tree.html

A tree that lives in the sea

There is a species of tree in Victoria that provides habitat for fish and crabs! The White Mangrove is a tree that lives on the coast between low and high tide and has special roots that stick up above the ground and water. A great place to see these trees is on the Barwon Estuary in Barwon Heads or Corner Inlet at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

Roots of mangroves pop up above the ground.

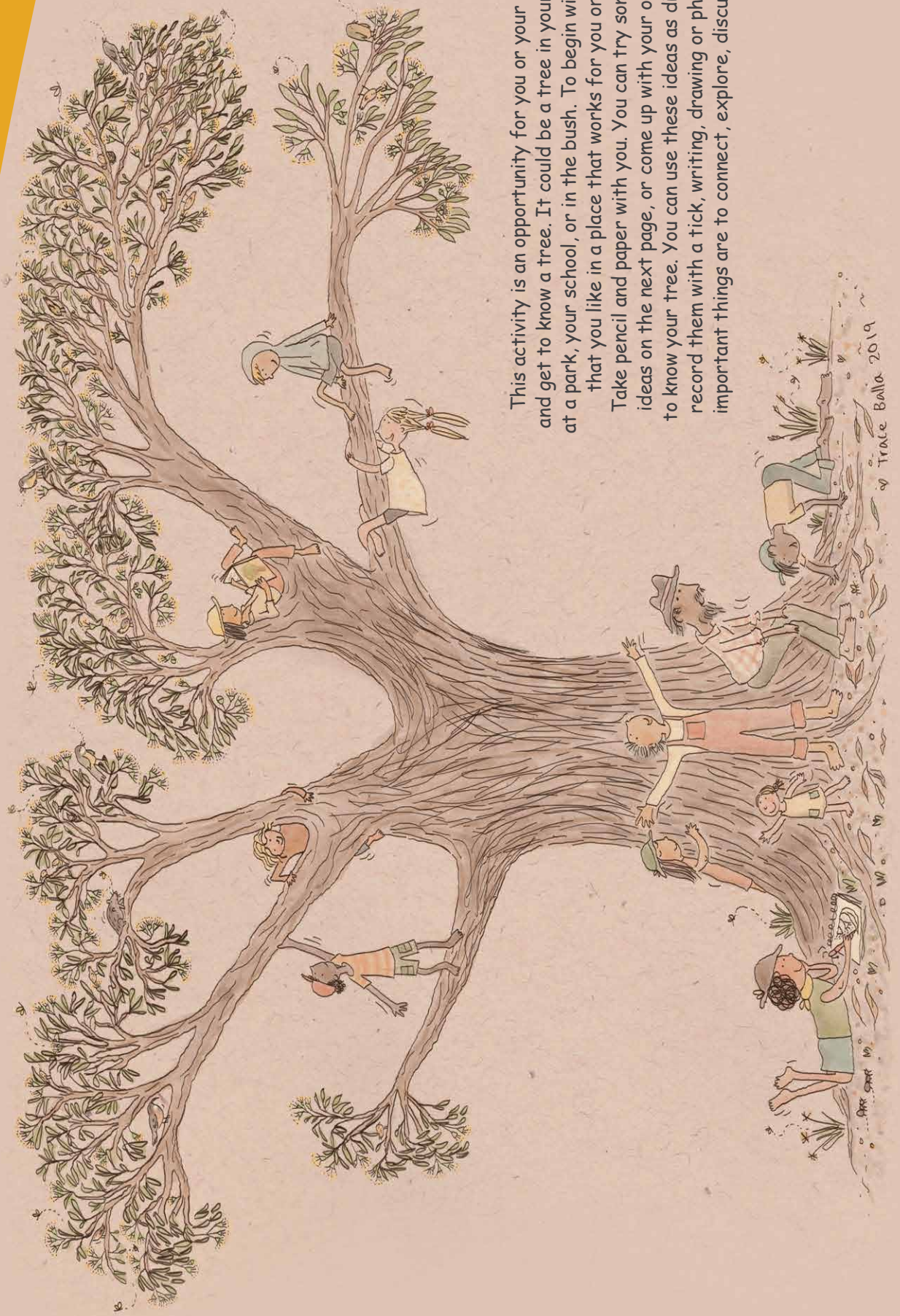


Photo by Martin Griffith

Photo by Krista Paterson-Majoer



It's nice to meet you tree



This activity is an opportunity for you or your family to meet and get to know a tree. It could be a tree in your neighbourhood, at a park, your school, or in the bush. To begin with, choose a tree that you like in a place that works for you or your family.

Take pencil and paper with you. You can try some or all of the ideas on the next page, or come up with your own ways to get to know your tree. You can use these ideas as discussion points, record them with a tick, writing, drawing or photos. The most important things are to connect, explore, discuss, and reflect.

It's nice to meet you tree



1

Take some time to breathe deeply. You may be breathing in oxygen created by your tree, and it may breathe in the carbon dioxide that you are breathing out.

2

What shapes can you see in the tree? Are there twisted branches, light and shadow patterns, or markings on the trunk?

3

How old do you think the tree is? Is it older or younger than you? Your family members?

4

How many colours and shades are there on the tree?

5

Describe the feel of the bark with as many words as you can.

7

What wildlife could be living in or eating the tree? Remember to look for tiny insects and big creatures.

9

Are there any plants, lichen or moss growing on the tree? Describe them.

10

What sort of environment does this tree live in? Is it a dry forest, a school yard, a riverside, a farm, a mountain top?

6

Describe the shapes of the leaves with as many words as you can. What do they smell like if you crumple them up in your hand?

8

Does your tree have flowers? Describe their shape and colour. Do they smell nice?

12

What sorts of things may have happened around this tree over its lifetime? Maybe bushwalkers leaning on it, birds nesting in its branches, children climbing it, or even fire. You may wish to write a creative story about what your tree could have experienced.

13

How is this tree like me/us? Take some time to consider things about the tree that are similar to you, for example it is growing, or it lives in the same street.

14

Give your tree a name. You could make up a name like 'The Magic Flowering Gum' or 'The Grey Ribbon Bark Tree' or use a field guide to identify what type it is.

15

Draw a picture of your tree or a part of your tree, such as a leaf or branch. Include as much detail as you like.

16

Return to your tree at different times of the day or year as a chance to get to know it better or observe any changes.

11

What parts of the tree can you see at your feet? Are there leaves, fallen branches, seeds/nuts, flowers or roots poking through the soil?



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VICTORIAN
NATIONAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION
Be part of nature

www.vnpa.org.au



Caring for our trees – use recycled

Trees are a valuable part of our environment. They provide us with clean air, habitat for wildlife, shelter, shade, cooling and places to play!

You can show you are grateful to trees by buying and using toilet paper and printer paper made from recycled 'post-consumer waste' and encouraging your family, friends and school to do the same.

Otherwise, your toilet paper may be made from forests that have been cut down especially so we can wipe our bottoms.

Buying and using recycled toilet paper and office paper means we leave more forest for wildlife habitat and stop trees from being flushed down the loo and run through the printer.

To learn more about switching to ethical paper, see www.ethicalpaper.com.au



Trees are my home.
Please care for them.

Photo by Nic McCaffrey

Which tree is which?

There are more than 160 different species of eucalypts (gum trees and similar) in Victoria, along with many other types including banksia and wattle trees.

We can identify all the different tree species by looking at their features including their bark, leaf shape, bud, flower and fruit/nut shape and looking at where they grow. When we learn to identify these trees we get to know them and their homes better.

Great resources for identifying tree species are *Trees of Victoria and adjoining areas* by Leon Costermans or the VicFlora website vicflora.rbg.vic.gov.au

Photo by It's a Wildlife

I'm a Tawny Frogmouth
and I live in a tree.
Caring for trees is caring
for my home.



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