

Resource Reviews

Tiny Possum and the Migrating Moths

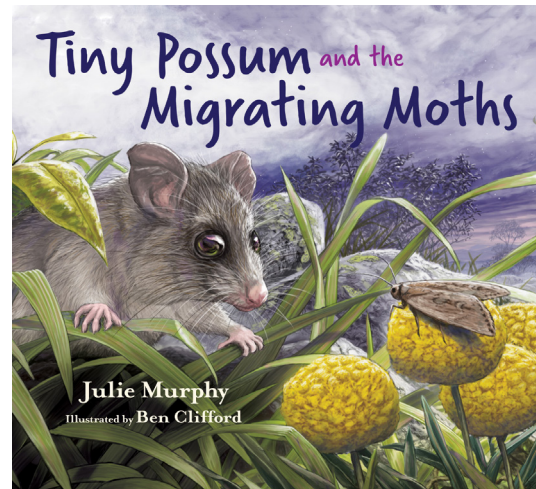
Written by Julie Murphy

Illustrated by Ben Clifford

Published by CSIRO Publishing

(<https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/8009>)

Recommended for ages 6 to 9.



Tiny Possum and the Migrating Moths is a beautiful story detailing the life of the critically endangered mountain pygmy-possum and the endangered bogong moths that the pygmy-possum relies on as a source of nutrition. Written by Julie Murphy, a former zoologist and zookeeper, the story is both factual and highly engaging for children. The realistic illustrations by Ben Clifford are magnificent and add another dimension to the story, bringing to life the plight of the pygmy-possums and bogong moths and their battle to survive.

This beautiful book provides an engaging stimulus with so many different possibilities for inquiry-based learning around food webs, natural cycles, and conservation. To compliment the educational themes of the book, there are teacher notes that can be downloaded from the CSIRO Publishing website. Both the book and teacher notes have direct links to the biological sciences understandings in the Australian Curriculum for Years 2–5, including exploring the physical and behavioural features that living things have to help them survive in their environment, how animals consume plants or other animals in their environment as sources of energy and nutrition, and that human activities can affect features of an environment in ways that significantly affect an animal's ability to survive.

The teacher notes also have suggestions for how to link Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures to the science content, including a discussion around the bogong moth traditionally being an important source of nutrition for Aboriginal people who live in the Southern Alps, and exploring how food can bring together members of diverse communities.

There are also strong links to sustainability, with part of the story highlighting that bright city lights can distract bogong moths from finding their way. The teacher notes include suggestions for experiments and activities linked with sustainable practices, as well as providing links to other resources including how humans can help save a species: "Lights off for the Bogong Moths" (see <https://youtu.be/ZAcL4FKPtHw>).

The teacher notes also have suggested pre-reading discussion questions and activities, as well as follow-up lessons, including experiments and inquiry activities that can easily be adapted to suit diverse student cohorts as well as different learner needs and interests.

My students adore this wonderful book, and it has been a valuable addition to my classroom resources. I would highly recommend it to other teachers.

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