

Gabby Dawnay

Margaux Samson Abadie

ROUND
and ROUND
goes
MOTHER
NATURE

48 Stories of Life Cycles Around the World

WIDE

EYED

To my dearest M – for your support and inspiration, always x – G.D.

*To all the curious young minds – always keep your wonder about
the magic of life on Earth. – M.S.A.*



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WIDE EYED EDITIONS

STORIES

ANIMALS

MAYFLY 11

LUNA MOTH 12

RED KANGAROO 14

DRAGONFLY 16

MIDWIFE TOAD 18

ORANGUTAN 20

ANGLERFISH 22

OCTOPUS 24

RATTLESNAKE 26

CHICKEN 28

SEAHORSE 30

POLAR BEAR 32

NAKED MOLE-RAT 34

TARDIGRADE 36

HONEY BEE 38

IMMORTAL JELLYFISH 40

GREENLAND SHARK 42

HUMAN 44

PLANTS & FUNGI

OAK 47

WHEAT 48

SQUIRTING CUCUMBER 50

DANDELION 52

COCONUT PALM TREE 54

SUNFLOWER 56

APPLE 58

MUSHROOM 60

SEQUOIA 62

THE FOREST &
THE WOOD WIDE WEB 64

LOTUS FLOWER 66

BAOBAB TREE 68

VENUS FLYTRAP 70

EARTH

STORM 73

FOUR SEASONS 74

WATER 76

LAND (CONTINENTS) 78

VOLCANO 80

TORNADO 82

MOUNTAIN 84

SAND 86

GLACIER 88

DIAMOND (CRYSTAL) 90

CARBON 92

SPACE

BEAM OF SUNLIGHT 95

STAR 96

MOON 98

COMET 100

EARTH 102

BLACK HOLE 104

INDEX 106

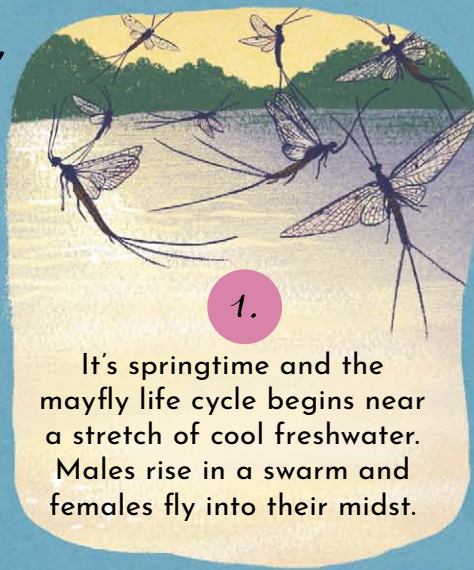




MAYFLY

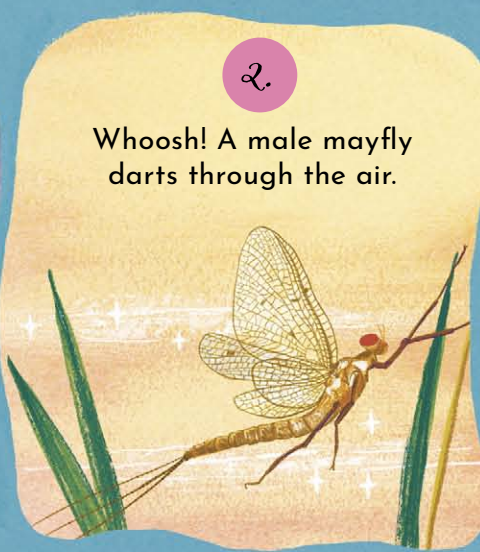
ABOVE THE WATER, A SHIMMERING CLOUD RISES

The life of an adult mayfly is truly fleeting. Living just a day or two, once it reaches maturity it spends its precious time finding a mate and reproducing. Curiously, while a single mayfly's life may be brief, its ancestors have been zipping through the air since before the dinosaurs! It's the oldest flying species alive today and can be found all over the world.



1.

It's springtime and the mayfly life cycle begins near a stretch of cool freshwater. Males rise in a swarm and females fly into their midst.



2.

Whoosh! A male mayfly darts through the air.



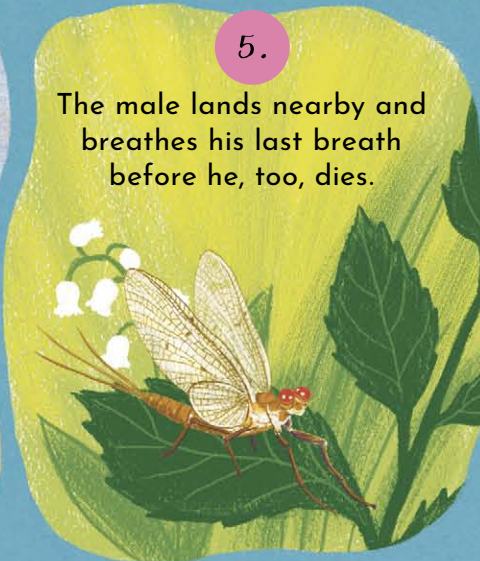
3.

He uses his elegant, elongated front legs to catch a passing female and they mate mid-flight.



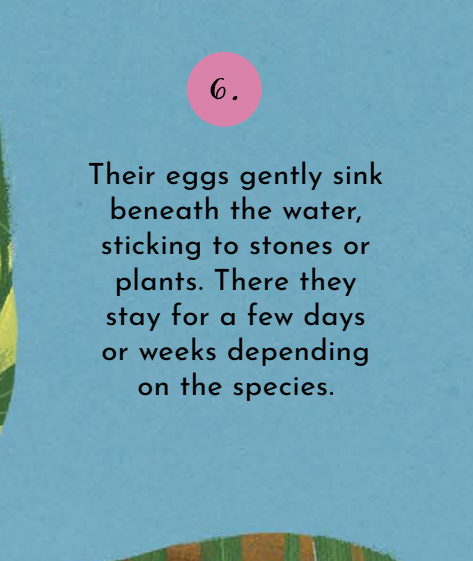
4.

Once they've mated, the female drops to the water's surface to lay her eggs. Then, exhausted, she dies.



5.

The male lands nearby and breathes his last breath before he, too, dies.



6.

Their eggs gently sink beneath the water, sticking to stones or plants. There they stay for a few days or weeks depending on the species.



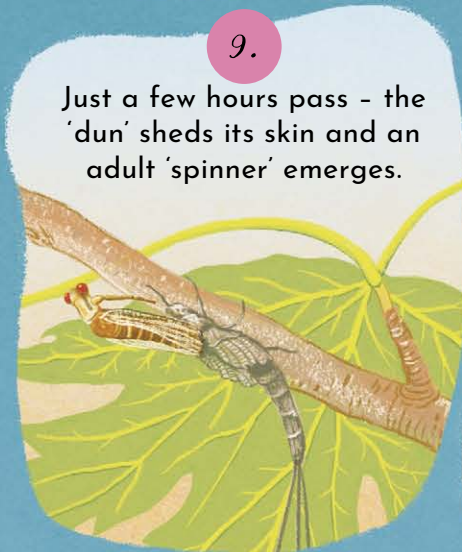
7.

The eggs hatch and young nymphs emerge. They spend about two years under the water, munching, munching until...



8.

... what's this?
A dull-coloured creature drags itself onto the shore to dry its waterlogged wings. This is the 'dun', the third stage of a young mayfly's life.



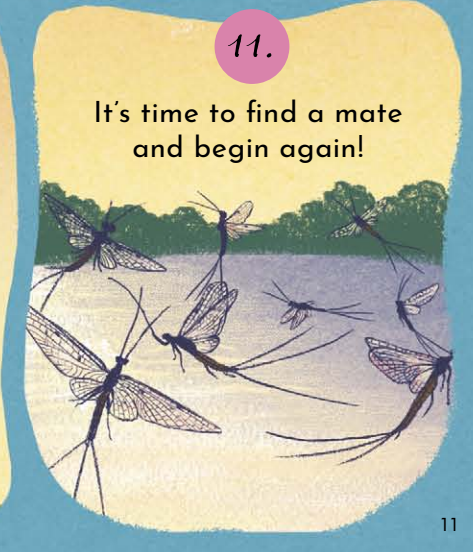
9.

Just a few hours pass - the 'dun' sheds its skin and an adult 'spinner' emerges.



10.

It's now a fully grown adult mayfly and it must move fast.



11.

It's time to find a mate and begin again!

LUNA MOTH

IN THE EBBING GLOW
OF THE SILVERY
MOON A LUNA MOTH
FLIES BY

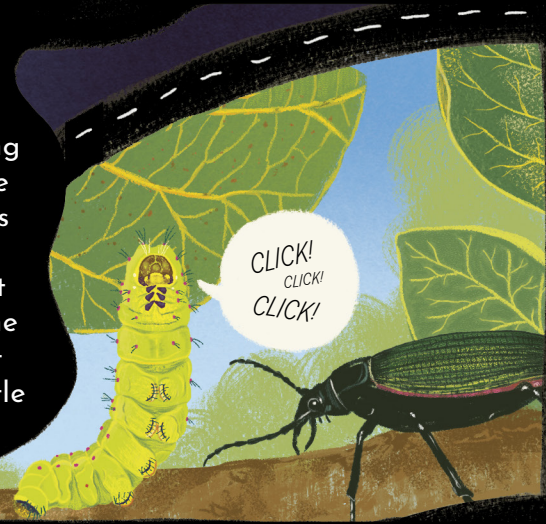
With its cotton-wool body, lovely lime-green wings and elegant tails, the luna moth is a truly enchanting creature. Its fleeting lifespan and nocturnal habits make it a rare and special sight to see.

Named after the Roman Goddess of the Moon, everything about this moth is heavenly. Like most moth species, lunas love the night. They flutter and spin silently in the moonlight searching for a mate like pale, lonely ghosts. They have no time or need to feed, they are devoted to one purpose – creating the next generation.



3.

A predator appears, looking for dinner! One fierce little caterpillar rears up. It uses its mouth parts to make a noisy clicking sound. But the predator persists, so the brave caterpillar spits out a yucky liquid and the beetle scuttles away.



2.

After about ten days, tiny green grubs emerge. These young caterpillars are VERY hungry. They spend their days munching on tasty leaves.



1.

On the leaves of a persimmon tree something special is happening. A female luna moth is laying her eggs. Soon she'll flit away into the night, her purpose complete.



7.

Freshly-hatched females must move fast – they have only a week at most to live. Quickly they release a scent containing irresistible 'pheromones' to attract a mate. Once mated, they'll lay their own eggs, and so the cycle continues.



4.

As they grow, the caterpillars shed their skins. They are 'moulting'. Once they've moulted for the fifth time, they find a suitable tree and wrap themselves in leaves.

5.

Snug inside their cocoons, something magical begins to happen: the caterpillars start 'metamorphosing'. This takes about three weeks.

6.

One morning, they emerge, transformed into adult luna moths. They spread their wings in the warm sunshine. They will be dry and ready for flight by dusk.

LUNA MOTHS LAY THEIR EGGS ON THE LEAVES OF TREES INCLUDING WILD CHERRY, WALNUT, HICKORY, SWEET GUM, PERSIMMON AND BIRCH.

RED KANGAROO

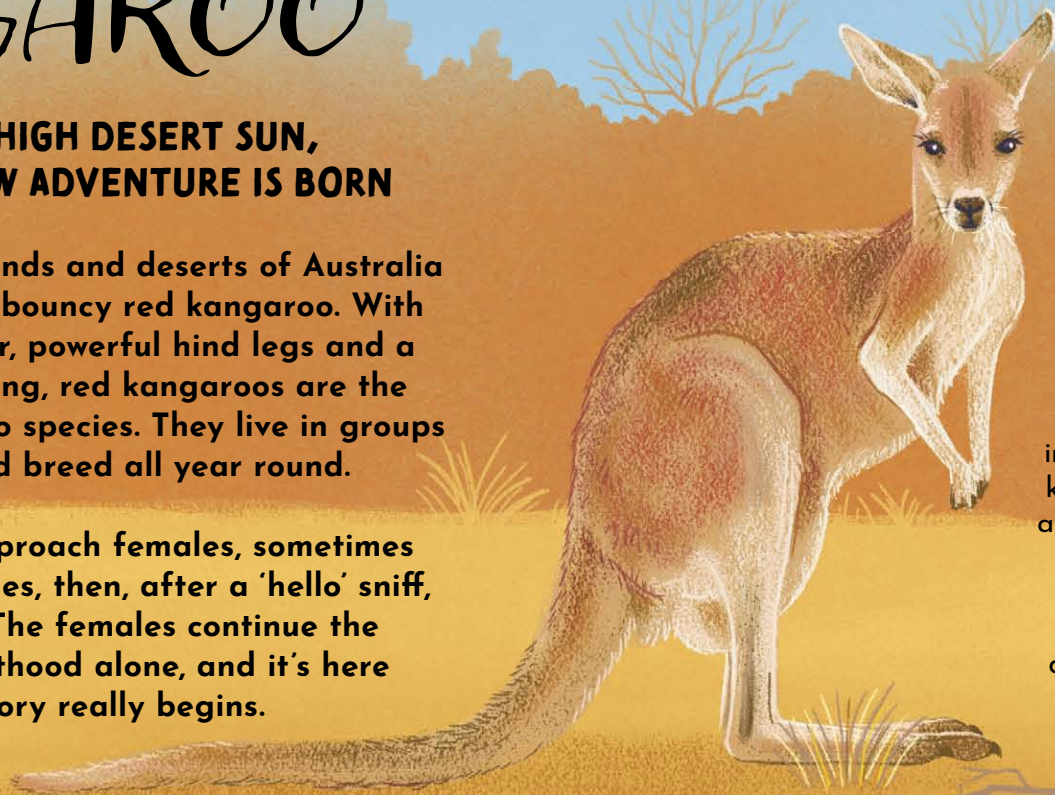
UNDER THE HIGH DESERT SUN, A BOUNCING NEW ADVENTURE IS BORN

The wide-open grasslands and deserts of Australia are home to the big, bouncy red kangaroo. With soft rust-coloured fur, powerful hind legs and a long tail for balancing, red kangaroos are the largest of all kangaroo species. They live in groups called 'mobs' and breed all year round.

Boisterous males approach females, sometimes fighting off other males, then, after a 'hello' sniff, it's time to mate. The females continue the journey into parenthood alone, and it's here that our story really begins.

1.

This female red kangaroo has been pregnant for twenty-eight days, and now, with very little fuss, out pops the tiniest of babies. Hairless, pink and almost blind, she uses her strong forearms to crawl up her mother's fur and into her pouch. The mummy kangaroo often mates soon after and becomes pregnant again. When this happens she has a neat trick - she can delay the birth and development of her second baby until her first has left her pouch!



2.

Once inside her mother's pouch, the little joey immediately latches on to a teat. In a perfect cycle, the mummy kangaroo eats her joey's waste and converts it into nourishing milk. Here the little joey remains, drinking and growing, safe and sound.



KANGAROOS ARE MARSUPIALS. MARSUPIAL BABIES DON'T DEVELOP INSIDE THEIR MOTHER'S WOMB. INSTEAD, THEY SPEND 235 DAYS GROWING INSIDE THEIR MOTHER'S ROOMY POUCH.

3.

At just 190 days, little joey is an adorable, furry mini version of her mum. She pokes her head out and looks around. Once she's brave enough, she climbs out for a bit of exploring, and mum then has a chance to give her pouch a good spring-clean!





4.

With her pouch clean and ready, mum bends down so her joey can hop back inside. Then off they bounce!



5.

Little joey continues to grow and mature. She spends longer and longer outside the pouch now. But she still nurses from her mother. And while standing outside, she will often pop her head inside her mum's pouch for comfort.



6.

At around ten months little joey spends all her time outside, and, by one year, she is not so little any more. She is now a fully grown kangaroo and ready to strike out on her own!

