

The magic of birds and the joy of singing

by Donna Kelly

Daylesford, Victoria, artist and musician, Vanessa Craven, has just published a children's colour picture song book, 'Birds in My Tree: The Magic of Birds and the Joy of Singing'.

"The Covid-19 lockdowns created a 'stay-at home' world in which I began to interact with the birds in my garden and in the bush around me," she says.

"Several photographs of these wonderful feathered

friends and a new song that I was moved to write, combined together to provide material for my children's book.

"It is a colourful picture songbook on birds.

"Their antics and their individual characteristics play an important part in the lyrics of the song.

"Each birdcall is a live recording at the end of each verse pertaining to that bird.

"This book is an interactive tool for teaching kids about the

different bird varieties and their birdcalls, and inviting kids to recognise and have fun with mimicking."

A QR code and a YouTube link give free access to the live performance of the song, "Birds in My Tree."

Vanessa said the "picture, music book and teaching tool" is filled with colourful bird

photographs, lyrics, guitar chords and music notation at the back of the book.

"It provides children,

and teachers with an audio-visual experience and an opportunity to learn about different birds, their birdcalls and learn a new song as well.

"It allows for creativity and experimentation with creating bird sounds, flapping wings, strutting about and having fun singing together.

"The book invites the reader to let their hair down and be part of a bird's life and enjoy interacting with them and embrace their quirkiness.

"It invites the reader to sing or recite the lyrics in the book.

"I hope the book brings much joy and appreciation of our flighty feathered friends.

"May their quirky personalities, bird sounds, photographs and the song enlighten and enliven the imaginations of 'little folk', aged 4 to 7 years of age.

"I hope it gives them a love for nature, leading them to a sense and desire to treasure, nurture and protect wildlife; to grow up and be advocates for protecting our ever-diminishing

wildlife and their habitats; to spend more time in the fresh air and not lose the art of connectedness to earth, and nature."

Originally from the foothills of the Himalayas in India, Vanessa made the move to Daylesford from Melbourne and has built an eco-friendly house with her partner and enjoys living in this beautiful area.

She is a singer/songwriter by profession, and has three CDs, two of which have original tracks which won awards from the Australian Songwriters' Association.

Her music is folk, blues, alt-country, pop and Latin.

She has three bands, Lunar Dust, Lake Mist and Sugar 'n' Spice, and plays music in a variety of settings including folk and blues festivals such as Newport, Denny Blues and

Roots, Newstead, Maldon and the Gigarre Moosic Muster along with performing at pubs, clubs, art galleries and special occasions.

"Music, art, photography and

writing are my loves," Vanessa said.

"My music reflects the Himalayas, Ganges to right here with the Murray River.

My photography captures poignant moments and moods in flora, fauna and landscapes, some published in Birdlife Australia.

My artistic flair stems from my observations of nature, life and living.

"I love letting the paint and ideas run freely together to create 'something'.

"I am mostly self taught."

Purchase directly from author : <https://www.acousticssessions.com.au/product/birds-in-my-tree/>

Book links: <https://www.vircravenbirdsongbook.com>

Song link: <https://youtu.be/IVMINGnhpiA>

Book Review : "Theosophy Downunder" No 148 June 2023: <http://theosophydownunder.org/australiannewsletterjune2023.pdf>

Image: Kyle Barnes (The Local)



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