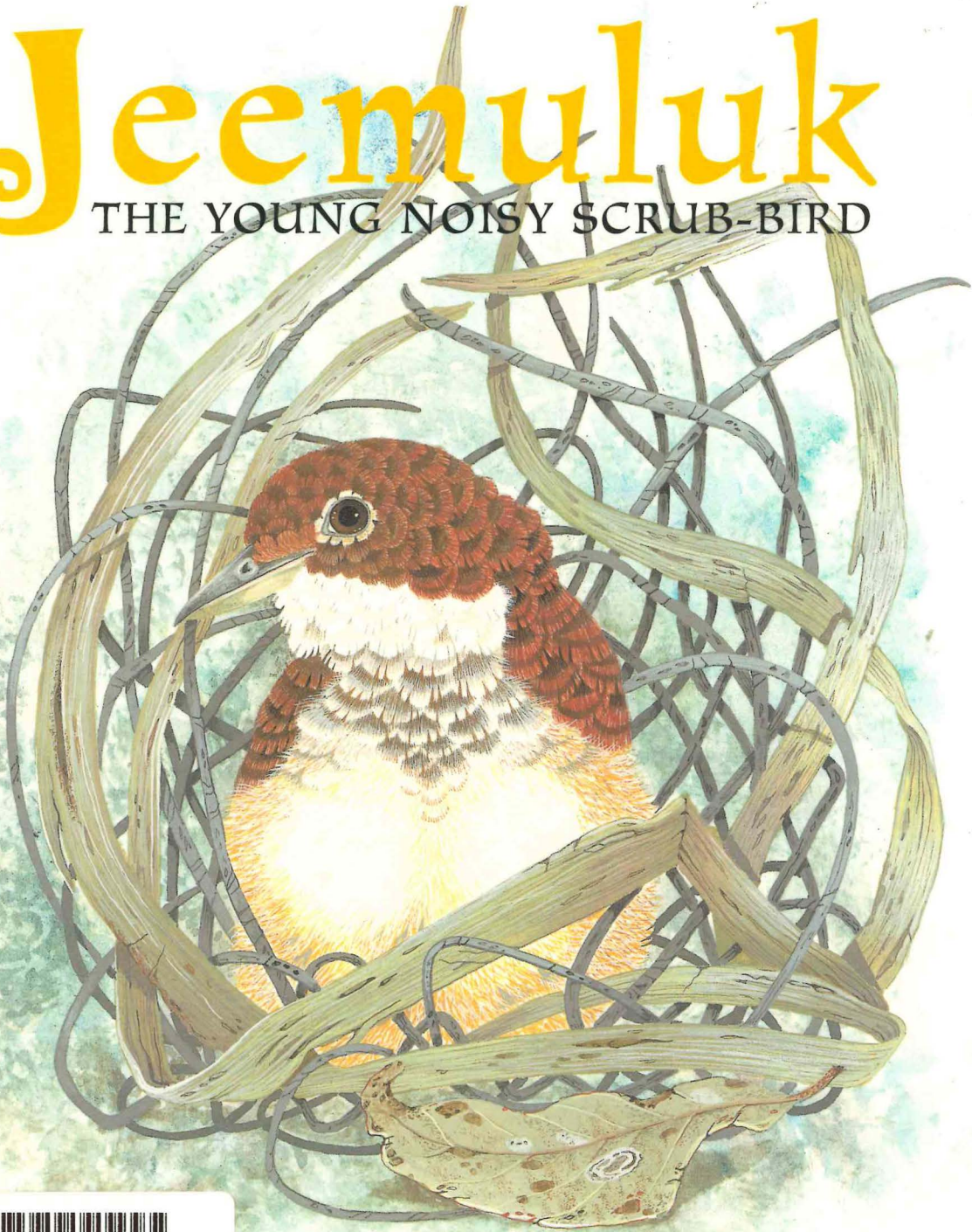


Jeemuluk

THE YOUNG NOISY SCRUB-BIRD



019298

Jeemuluk, the young noisy scrub-bird /
Story by Corinn Wallace Hine ;
Illustrations by Carol Ann O'Connor

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Jeemuluk is a little bird with a big song
who is looking for a home.
His journey takes a surprising detour.

Jeemuluk is the Aboriginal name for the noisy scrub-bird,
a shy yet curious bird with a very loud song.

Jeemuluk's journey is set in the moist gullies and thick scrub
which surround the granite headlands of Two Peoples Bay Nature
Reserve, near Albany on the south coast of Western Australia.

Noisy scrub-birds were once thought to be extinct. Through the
work of the Department of Conservation and Land Management,
numbers have increased and new colonies have been established.

Proceeds from the sale of this book go to support the
endangered species recovery program for the noisy scrub-bird.

Corinn Wallace Hine creates interpretive displays for national parks and
nature reserves within Western Australia, helping visitors to discover
delightful creatures and places like Jeemuluk and Two Peoples Bay.

Carol Ann O'Connor first met Jeemuluk when
she was commissioned to paint a portrait of
the endangered noisy scrub-bird. This portrait
was presented to HRH Prince Philip, on
behalf of the people of Western Australia, in
recognition of his efforts toward protecting the
noisy scrub-bird's habitat. The painting now
hangs in Sandringham Palace in England.



*Artist Carol Ann O'Connor
with HRH Prince Philip,
Duke of Edinburgh.*



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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

JEEMULUK THE YOUNG NOISY SCRUB-BIRD

Your purchase of this book will help to support the endangered species recovery program for the noisy scrub-bird, which is managed by Western Australia's Department of Conservation and Land Management.

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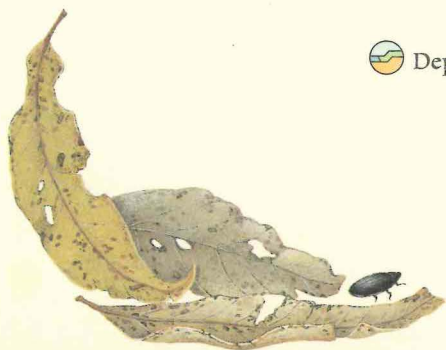
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Department of Conservation and Land Management





By the end of the 1970s, the population of noisy scrub-birds had grown sufficiently for it to be possible to remove some birds to create other populations outside Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve. This was an important step, as the amount of habitat available for the bird within the reserve was limited, and a single population would always be vulnerable to wildfires.

Since 1983, translocations of noisy scrub-birds have resulted in new populations in several places east of Albany. The most successful translocation was to Mt Manypeaks, where steep gullies provide habitat similar to Mt Gardner.

Mt Manypeaks now has more noisy scrub-birds than the parent population. Overall, the total number of noisy scrub-birds has increased tenfold since its rediscovery, and the population is spread along almost 50 kilometres of the coast around Two Peoples Bay. Since 1997, noisy scrub-birds have been reintroduced to a site in the Darling Range, close to where John Gilbert first recorded the species.

Protection of the scrub-bird's habitat within the reserve and surrounding areas has also benefited other rare species. The numbers of western bristlebirds (*Dasyornis longirostris*) and western whipbirds (*Psophodes nigrogularis nigrogularis*) have increased and spread north and east of Two Peoples Bay.

An exciting spin-off from the conservation of the noisy scrub-bird came in late 1994 when a small, rabbit-sized marsupial called Gilbert's potoroo (*Potorous gilbertii*) was found on the slopes of Mt Gardner. This animal had not been reliably reported anywhere in the south-west for more than 100 years and had been officially proclaimed extinct. The potoroo must have come very close to extinction. Despite intensive efforts, only 15 individuals were captured in the first year after rediscovery.

Ongoing endangered species recovery programs for the noisy scrub-bird and Gilbert's potoroo are managed by Western Australia's Department of Conservation and Land Management with support from Environment Australia and Alcoa (Aust.).

Revised from the article 'Two Peoples Bay' by Alan Danks, in the Winter 1996 edition of LANDSCOPE, published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

HISTORY OF THE NOISY SCRUB-BIRD

The noisy scrub-bird was called Jeemuluk by the Noongar Aboriginal people who inhabited the south coast of Western Australia.

This almost flightless small brown bird became further known when illustrated in John Gould's *Birds of Australia*, printed in 1845. John Gilbert, Gould's tireless collector in Western Australia, reported that the noisy scrub-bird was the loudest of all the songbirds he knew, and the most difficult to obtain as a specimen.

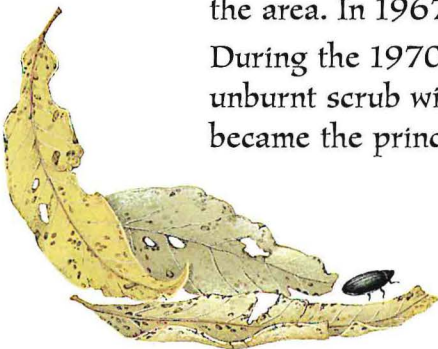
Gould originally named this new species the noisy brush-bird and considered it one of Australia's most interesting birds. Later it became known as the noisy scrub-bird and was given the scientific name *Atrichornis clamosus*, which means 'loud bird without bristles'.

In years to come, the bird became increasingly difficult to find. Much of its habitat had been cleared for agriculture and development of townsites. Unsuccessful searches were made throughout the south-west by many ornithologists, and scientists began to fear that the bird was extinct.

In 1961, the loud musical song of the territorial male drew Harley Webster, Albany school teacher and amateur ornithologist, into the scrub at Two Peoples Bay. There he saw a bird that he had never seen before, despite years of bird watching in the south-west. Shortly afterwards, in February 1962, a small remnant population of about 100 noisy scrub-birds was found inhabiting the gullies of Mt Gardner.

Following this rediscovery, many local, national and international conservationists (including HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh) worked to protect the bird's habitat and stop the town site development planned for the area. In 1967, Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve was formally gazetted.

During the 1970s, research showed the noisy scrub-bird needed dense, long unburnt scrub with a well-developed leaf-litter to survive. Fire exclusion became the principal direction for management of the reserve.



Jeemuluk

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Today was different.

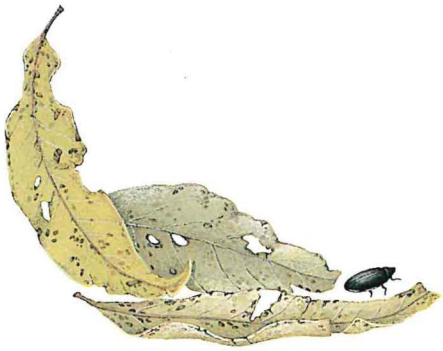
Today, Jeemuluk, the young noisy scrub-bird, wanted to sing.



It had been more than a year since Jeemuluk left the protection of the cosy nest his mother had woven together from sedges and grasses.



...they knew the quiet female
noisy scrub-bird was now living
in the bush nearby.





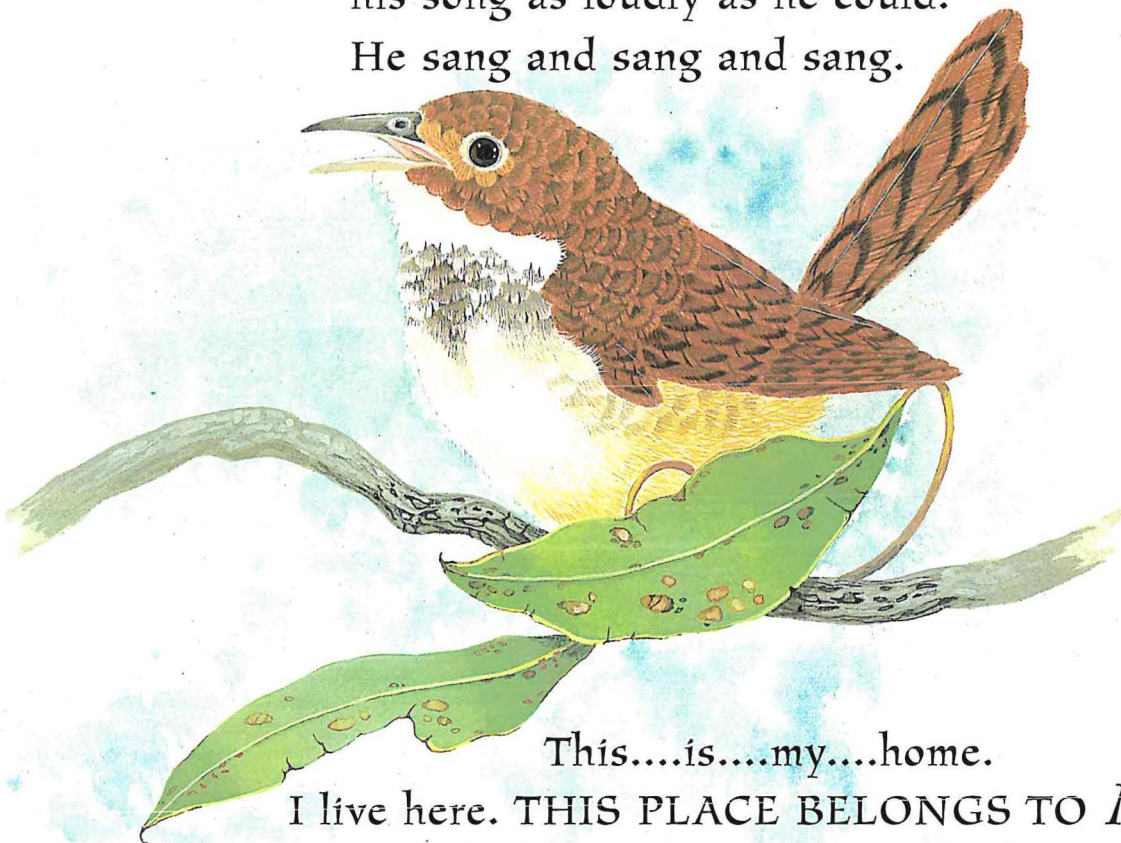
J Jeemuluk was happy. He knew he had found a good place to be his territory.

There is one thing Jeemuluk didn't know.

The people in the big boots were happy too. They had helped Jeemuluk find the right place to claim with his song and....



Jeemuluk sat on a branch and sang
his song as loudly as he could.
He sang and sang and sang.



This....is....my....home.
I live here. **THIS PLACE BELONGS TO ME!**

J Louder now, he sang his song again.

Chip....chip....chip....chip....
píp píp píp PIP PIP PIP PIP *PIP!*

And again.

Chip....chip....chip....chip....
píp píp píp PIP PIP PIP PIP *PIP!*

There was no answer. No other male
noisy scrub-bird was claiming this
place where there was shelter and
plenty of food.





J Jeemuluk hunted in the soil and found many bugs that he liked to eat. He sat very still and listened for the song of a male noisy scrub-bird. He didn't hear one.

Shyly at first, Jeemuluk sang his song and then he listened.

All he heard was the whistling of the wind and the *tsk tsk tsk* of some lorikeets who were feeding in a nearby tree.

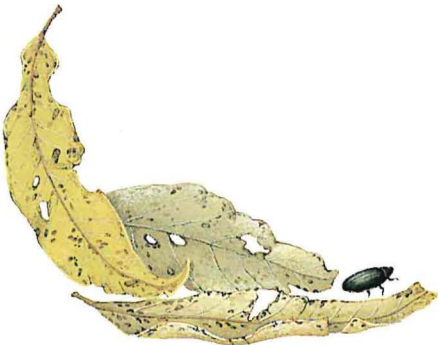


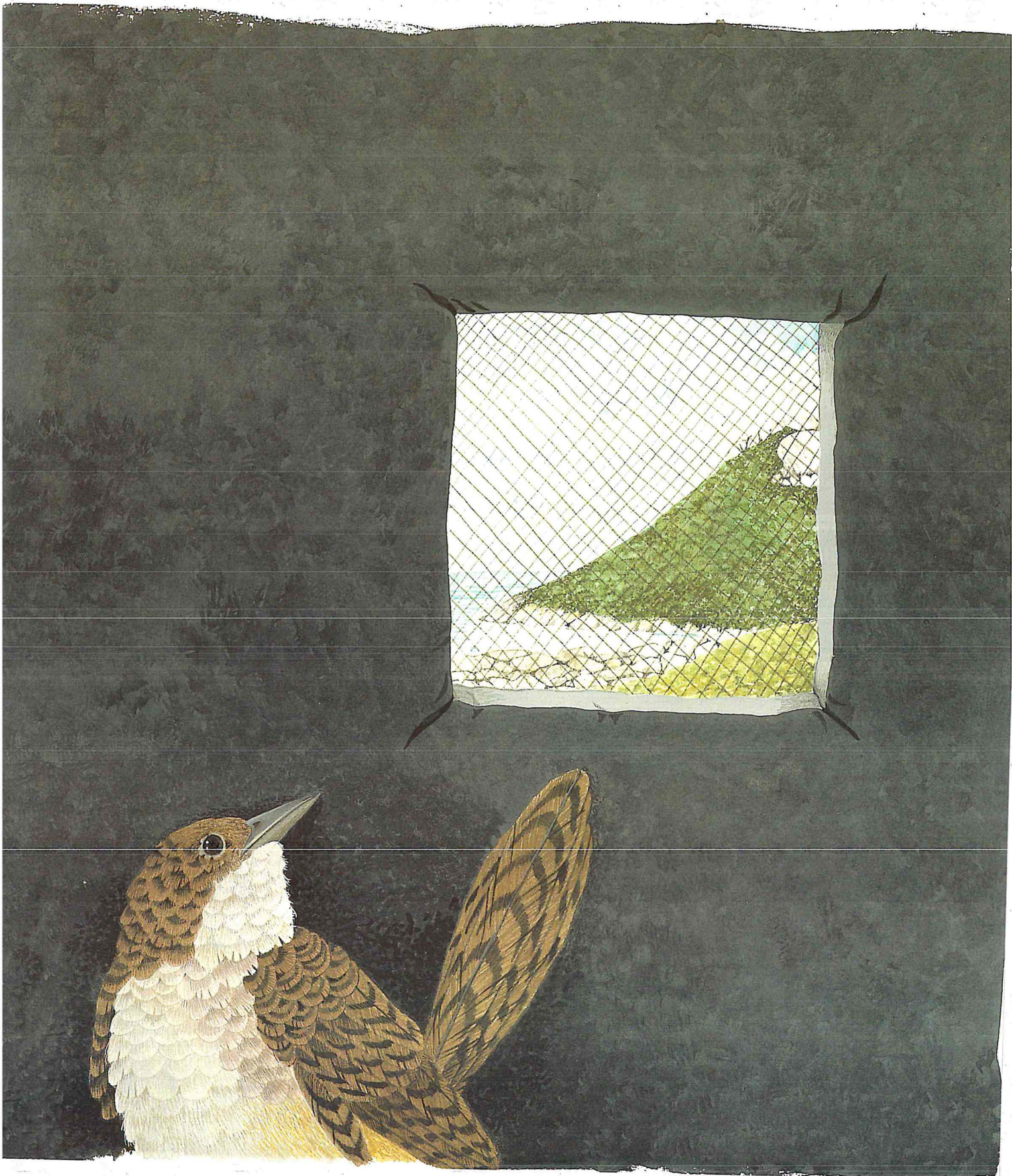


Suddenly the side of the box opened.
The light was very bright.
Jeemuluk could see thick scrubby
bushes all around. He did not stop
to think any longer.

Jeemuluk was out of the box so fast
that all you could have seen was a blur.
He dashed into the shelter of the
bushes and felt very lucky to be there.

The big boots went away.

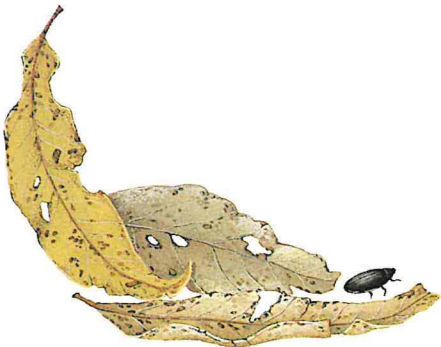




One day, there were lots of big boots around the cage and a strange box was placed inside.

Jeemuluk was startled by a sudden noise. He dashed into the dark safety of the box. The box closed and he felt it being lifted into the air.

For a long time, Jeemuluk gently bounced along in the box, wondering what would happen next. He heard low murmuring sounds and felt the box being set down with a soft thud.





The big boots returned.

A flap opened and a tray full of bugs slid onto the dirt floor of the cage. Once the big boots went away, the other bird carefully hopped out and began to eat. Soon Jeemuluk joined her.

The two birds lived in the cage for several weeks. There was shelter and plenty of food and water, but Jeemuluk knew that this was not the place to sing his song.



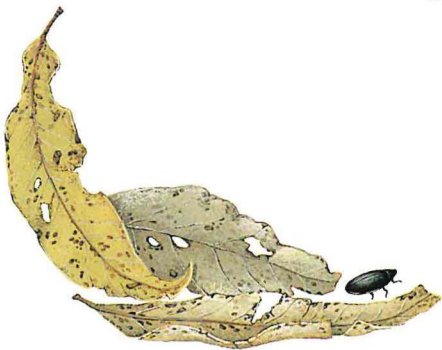


The hand placed Jeemuluk into a big cage filled with grasses and logs and bushes. Jeemuluk dashed under a bush to hide.

The big boots went away.

Another noisy scrub-bird was already in the cage.

She was hiding too.





A pair of big boots appeared
by the box.

A hand reached in and gently
caught Jeemuluk. His tiny heart
was beating faster than it had
ever beaten before.





Jeemuluk travelled on, darting from bush to bush. Suddenly his path was blocked by a nearly invisible wall made of netting.

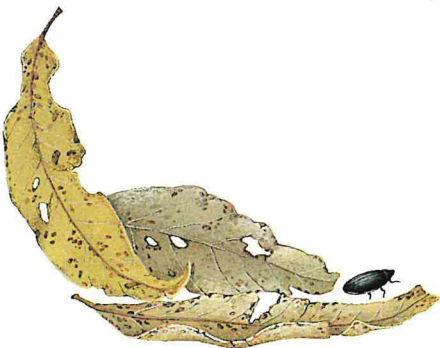
Startled, he ran to find cover and found himself trapped in a box. He felt very frightened.





Jeemuluk kept searching but he couldn't find the right place. Either the trees were too tall or the bushes were too far apart. He would not be safe from foxes and hawks.

At other places there weren't enough tasty bugs to eat or grasses to build a nest. No female would want to raise her chick there.





Jeemuluk wanted to find a territory of his own to claim with his song. He needed a place with shelter and plenty of food, a place where he could find a female to be his mate.

Jeemuluk hopped and dashed through the scrub until he found a place that looked good, but another male noisy scrub-bird was already there, loudly singing his claim.





Jeemuluk knew the song meant:

This....is....my....home.

I live here. **THIS PLACE BELONGS TO *ME!***

The bird was using his song to mark
out his territory, almost like putting
a fence around a yard.

J Jeemuluk could hear the song of
another male noisy scrub-bird nearby.
Again and again he heard the song
start softly and build to a loud
PIP at the end. ...

Chip....chip....chip....chip....
pip pip pip PIP PIP PIP PIP *PIP!*

Chip....chip....chip....chip....
pip pip pip PIP PIP PIP PIP *PIP!*

Chip....chip....chip....chip....
pip pip pip PIP PIP PIP PIP *PIP!*





Jeemuluk had learned to find bugs and grubs in the damp soil of the gully where he lived on the south coast of Western Australia.

He could not fly very far, only from branch to branch, but he could dash between bushes so quickly that he was very hard to see.



