

# Illustration notes on Desert Lake



The Story of Kati Thanda\_Lake Eyre

by Pamela Freeman & Liz Anelli

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**Introduction:** The main character in this book is a place – The fragile environment of Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre. Liz received an Australian Society of Authors research award to create this book so in July 2014 packed up her paintbrushes and hitched a ride with a 4-wheel drive trip to go see what it was like for herself.



## What did I find?

I go out drawing a lot. When I sit down to sketch my hardest task is usually selecting what to leave out - as there isn't enough space on the piece of paper for everything I can see. This is just as true for a busy street scene as a quiet landscape. When I sat by the dried up lakeside I saw a wealth of different colours, texture and patterns. I certainly didn't lack things to draw. Its just a question of looking closely enough





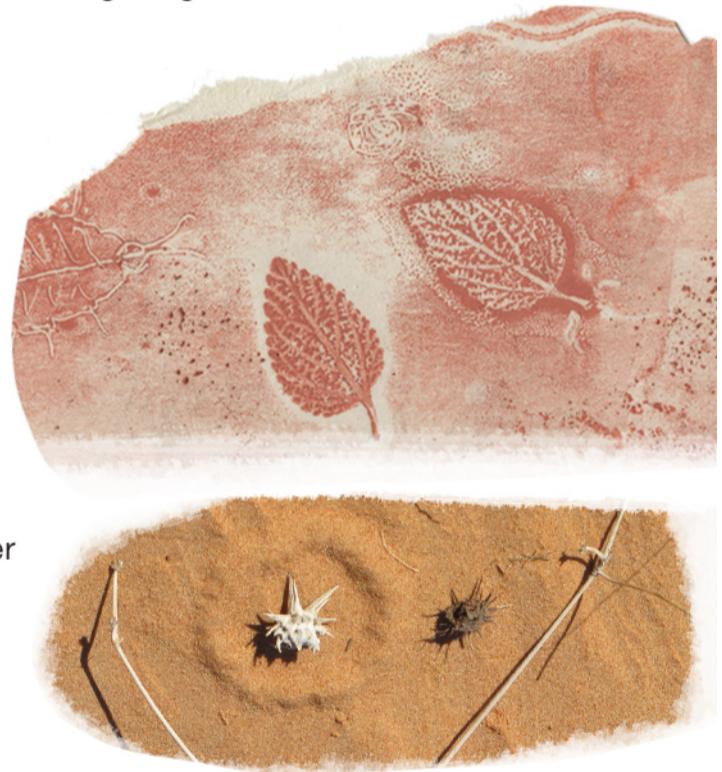
### What did I think?

Have you ever taken a walk (perhaps along a beach with rock pools) and imagined the scale completely changing in everything you see? Instead of stepping over a small rock you think you are actually 5,000 feet up in the air, flying above a massive mountain range. I guess our world looks a bit like that to an insect.

I made friends with the little black and white critter that appears on several page spreads. It clambered over my sketchbook and tried to crawl up my jeans. Then I saw it again with a friend on its back. Watching it traverse sections of windblown sand, negotiate clusters of seeds, scabble up dunes and across cracks was fascinating. When I identified its feet marks all around me I realised that the place must be teeming with living things I couldn't see.

### Endpapers:

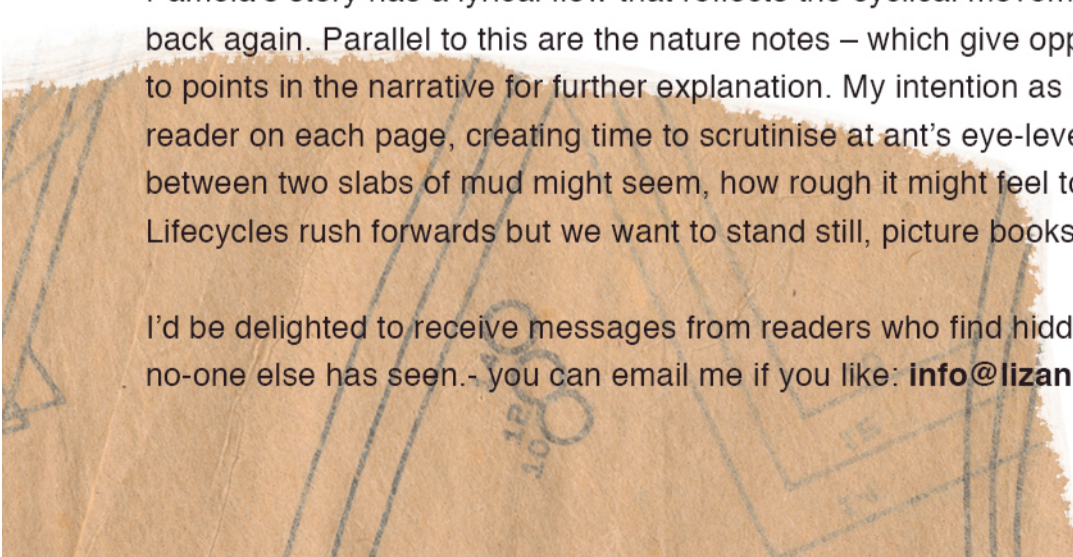
Here are the faint lined tracks that you see on the endpapers - along with those of hopping mice, wriggling snakes, lizards and the impressions of parts of plants. These pages are very special, the entire book is held between them. I rolled printing ink onto a sheet of metal and used various tools to scratch and smudge the surface to make hints of the creatures that maybe had just passed by or were hiding. I then printed this onto off-white paper using a big old-fashioned printing press. This is called monoprinting.



### Text and Image

Pamela's story has a lyrical flow that reflects the cyclical movement from dry to wet and back again. Parallel to this are the nature notes - which give opportunities to come back to points in the narrative for further explanation. My intention as illustrator is to still the reader on each page, creating time to scrutinise at ant's eye-level how deep a chasm between two slabs of mud might seem, how rough it might feel to walk over the dry crusts. Lifecycles rush forwards but we want to stand still, picture books let us do both.

I'd be delighted to receive messages from readers who find hidden creatures they think no-one else has seen.- you can email me if you like: [info@lizanelli-illustration.com](mailto:info@lizanelli-illustration.com)





## Make Your Own Desert Bug

### You will need:

- Old colour magazines
- you can also use my printed patterns below\*
- Scissors & glue sticks
- Plastic fork
- Thick paint & a brush
- Any other scraps of collage materials (remember insects like to be camouflaged to not get eaten)



1. Can you find some insects to look at? Real or pictures
2. Spread the paint onto a sheet of colour magazine for the body
3. While it is wet, scrape wavy lines with the fork revealing some of the colour and pattern below
4. When dry – cut out the body shape you want
5. Cut out wings from something else – stick these on top
6. Strips of text make quite good legs. Tearing instead of cutting them out with scissors makes them appear hairier. Stick these underneath your body
7. Add details – in collage, paint or drawing. Don't forget the mandibles and antennae.

