

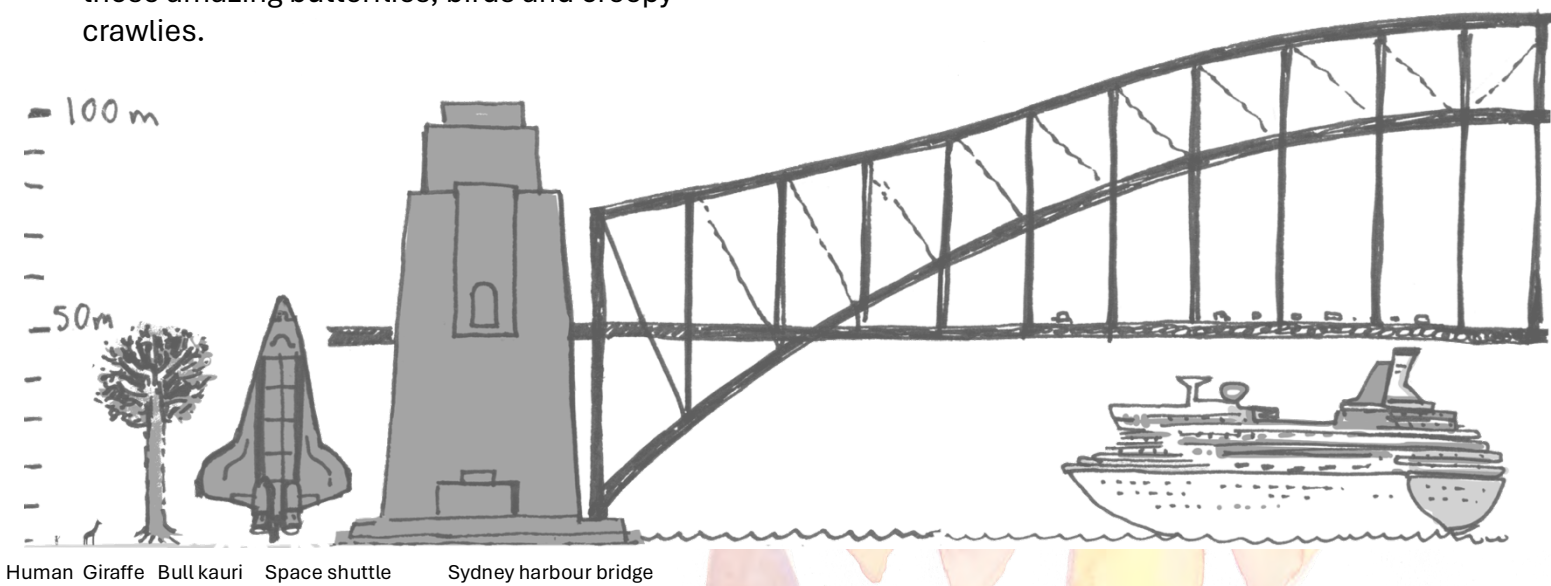
Seed To Sky

Art Notes by Liz Anelli

Here I talk about making the artwork for our picture book, 'Seed to Sky, Life in the Daintree,' and pose questions and ideas that you might want to explore at home or in your classroom.

➤ How does a 50-metre-tall tree fit onto the pages of a picture book?

The bull kauri is one of Daintree rainforest's tallest 'emergent' trees, pushing through the canopy to reach sunlight above. Early in the book, as the seed starts to grow, the action is close to the forest floor but even as a twenty-year old sapling, it stands 10 metres tall. As the story progresses, I move the viewpoint higher up the branches. I also use perspective, fore-shortening and careful placing of foreground and background elements to create a sense of dramatic scale and to highlight those amazing butterflies, birds and creepy crawlies.



Human Giraffe Bull kauri Space shuttle Sydney harbour bridge

➤ Is the rainforest green all over?

My dedication at the back of this book pays tribute to the artist William T Cooper. First hand observations of light and shade, colour and pattern inspired me in my paintings. There *is* lots of green but it's never boring. You feel you can taste and smell the colours. Dawn, midday, dusk and rain showers all bring different shades, shadows and sparkle. Even at night there are luminescent fungi to light up a spider's dew-speckled web.

My top research moment was, on a guided night walk, finding the soft white petals and magical 'Chanel Number 5' scent of ylang ylang blossom.



Sketchbook studies



On-site research is very important in all my books for developing a colour palette and getting a feel for atmosphere. Rainforests are warm and wet which makes everything grow big. Plants intertwine. Some (epiphytes such as orchids) even thrive on the surface of another plant. There's not much space for an illustrator to creep in and make sketches and paper gets horribly soggy. Meanwhile my driver patiently waits.

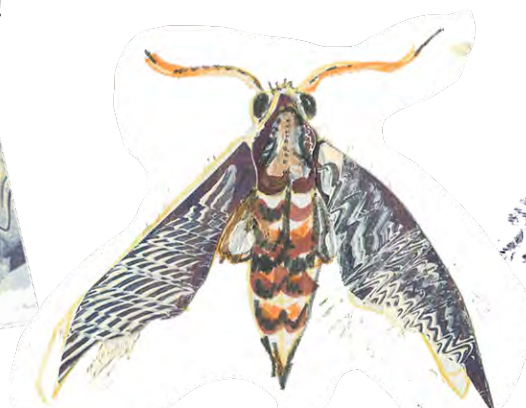
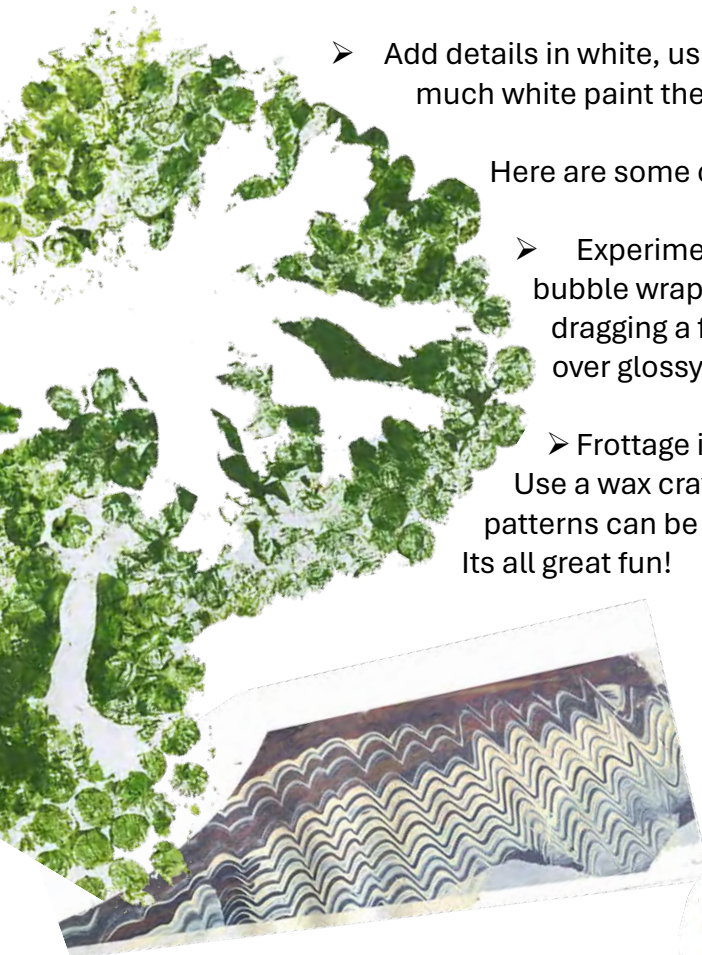
Back home, (all the way round the world in Cambridge, England), I make studies at my local Botanical Gardens where those lovely tangly plants are helpfully explained by specimen labels. And they have a tea shop. I find it easier to recreate the complicated leaf shapes by reversing the image making process (working in negative space). Here's what to do:

- First cover the sheet entirely with back ink.
- Paint the spaces around the plants in white paint, leaving the plants themselves in black.
- Add details in white, using a smaller brush. If you think you have added too much white paint then just go back in with the black ink.



Here are some other techniques:

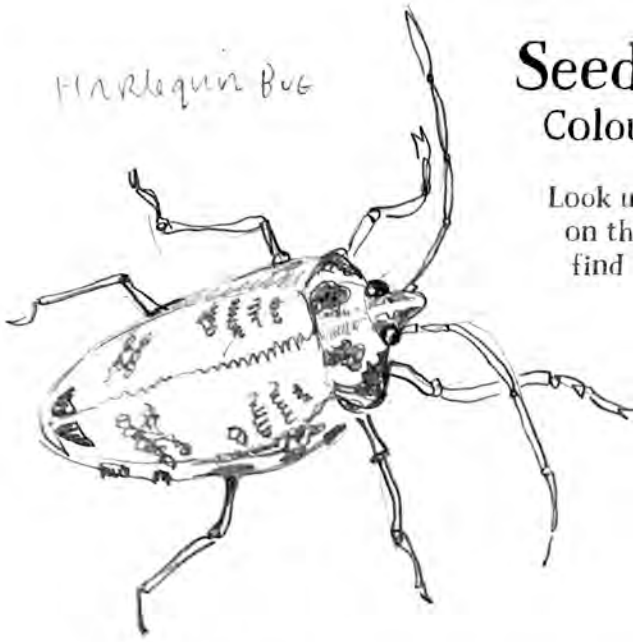
- Experiment printing with a scrunched up bubble wrap; and make interesting marks by dragging a fork through thick paint, applied over glossy magazines.
- Frottage is an arty word for taking rubbings. Use a wax crayon or thick pencil. Amazing patterns can be found in the most ordinary places. Its all great fun!



Seed To Sky Colour-in sheet

Look up these insects
on the internet to
find their colours

Harlequin Bug



Tectocoris diophthalmus - harlequin bug

Rainforest
Christmas
Beetle

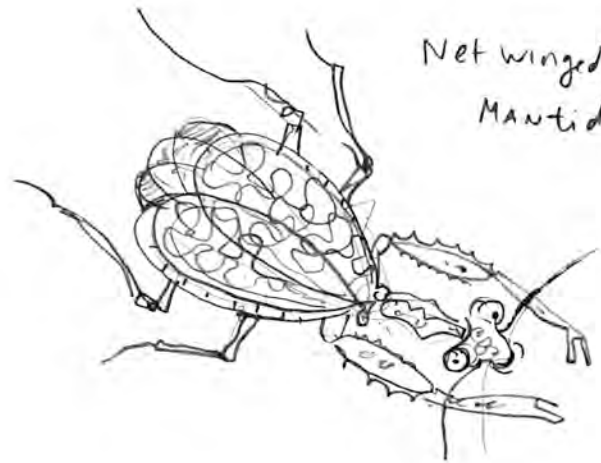


Anoplognathus sp - Christmas beetle.



Corymica pryeri

Corymica pryeri - night moth



Net winged
Mantid

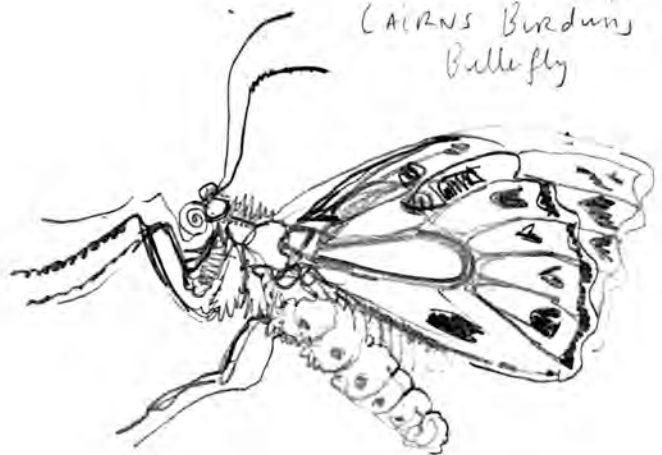
Neomantis australis - Net-Winged Mantis

Hawk Moth



Sphingidae - Hawk Moth

Cairns Birdwing
Butterfly



Cairns birdwing - *Ornithoptera euphorion*