

# WONDERS

## Under the Moon

A collection of night-time creatures

Written and illustrated by  
**by Tai Snaith**

Teachers' notes prepared  
by Christina Wheeler



## Synopsis

*Wonders Under the Moon: A Collection of Night-Time Creatures* is an illustrated non-fiction book featuring over 200 nocturnal animals, many of which are vulnerable or endangered. Sharing details about the behaviour, adaptations and habitats of these quirky species, it also offers practical strategies to help safeguard their existence well into the future.

Grouped by their unique characteristics and features, these fascinating creatures will entice readers back to the text time and again.



## Themes



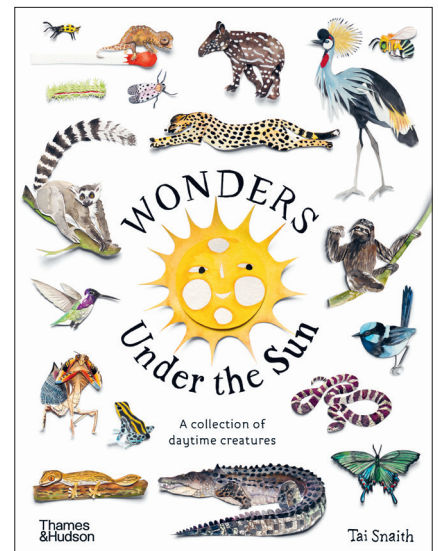
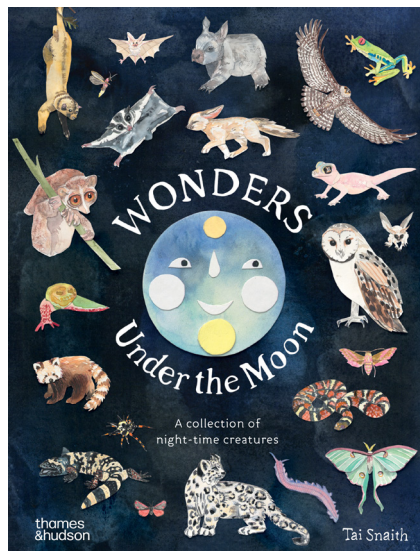
## Writing style

In *Wonders Under the Moon*, the creatures truly are the 'star of the show'. The contents page groups these nocturnal creatures according to their unique characteristics and behaviours. An informative introduction lays the foundations for a thoughtful text that provides interesting facts about a plethora of night-time animals, many of which are listed as vulnerable or endangered. Accompanied by intricate illustrations, intriguing details, and a comprehensive appendix detailing each creature's classification and habitat, *Wonders Under the Moon* is a field guide that will find its place with nature lovers and those who delight in the curious and factual. Given its inclusion of wildlife conservation, adaptations and sustainability, it connects with the English, Science and HASS (Geography) curriculums, with applications from Prep–Year 5.



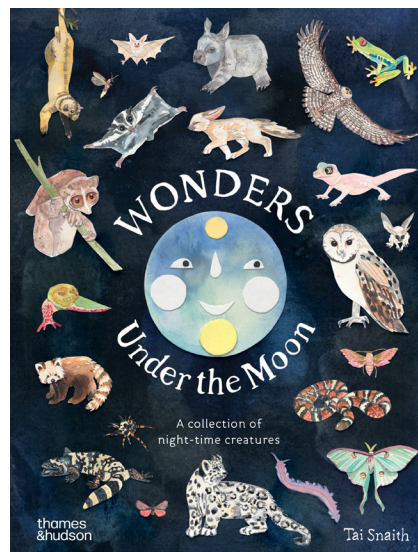
## Author motivation

My intention with *Wonders Under the Moon*, as with *Wonders Under the Sun*, was to provide a source of awe and inspiration for young people interested in animals and the natural world. As a child I would spend many nights with a spotlight looking for frogs and possums in trees and wetlands on our family farm. I then went on to learn how to draw them and even campaign to save their environments. I hope that children of various ages enjoy the book as an illustrative reference, learning about the conservation status and threatened species and inspiring their own creativity when it comes to comparing the similarities and differences between animals.



## Study notes

- Before reading *Wonders Under the Moon*, look carefully at the front and back covers and blurb. Which creatures do you recognise? What do you know about them? Complete the included KWL Chart to record your wonderings.

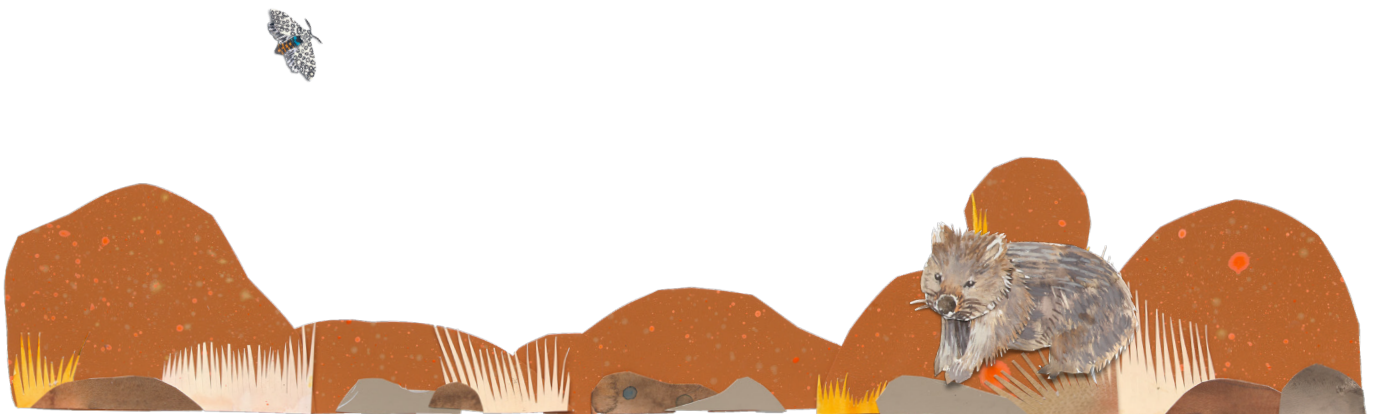


- Using the Contents page, discuss the title of each section. What do you visualise about each chapter from these headings? After reading each section, reflect on its title, discussing the author's use of language features to categorise the creatures in this way.

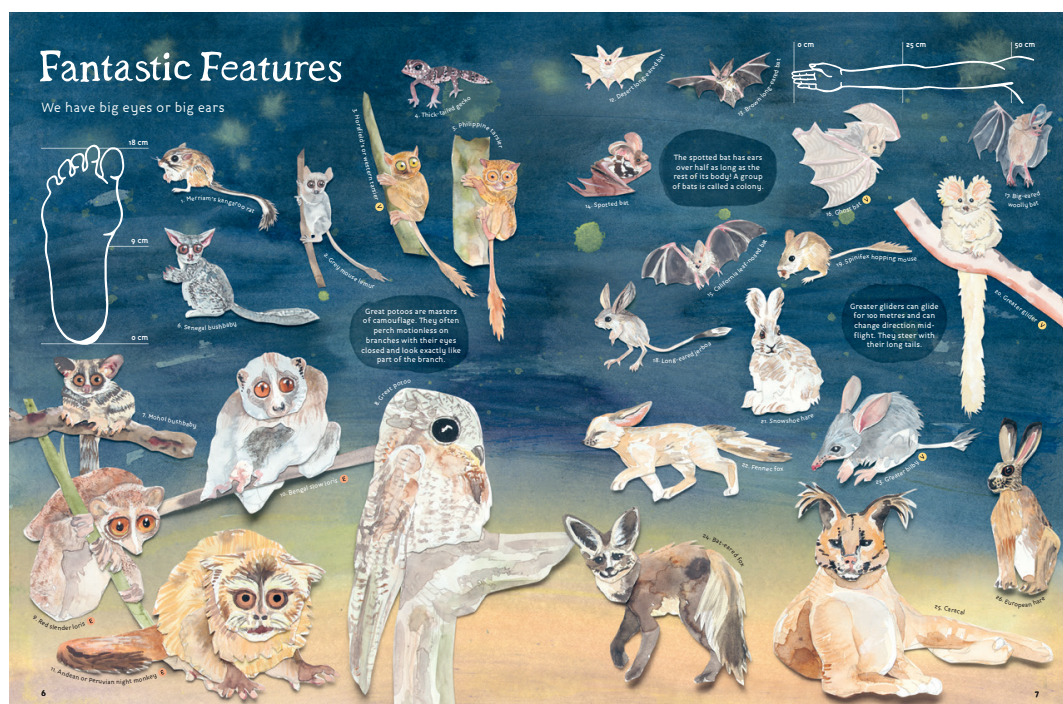




- As a class, read the introduction. As you read, highlight vocabulary to add to a class Word Wall. Create definitions for these words and try using this vocabulary in your writing and oral language tasks over the next few weeks.
- The Introduction shares valuable information about threats to many nocturnal species. Highlight any details that share this with readers. Take notes from your highlighting, using bullet points to clearly state each fact.
- Take time to browse the text, getting a feel for the layout and content. As noted in the Introduction, check for the **V** Vulnerable, **E** Endangered and **C** Critically Endangered species.
  - Create a table to record these species as you read.
  - Choose one of these species to research further, taking notes to record your information.
  - Present an information report to share details about this animal, including its appearance, diet, behaviour habitat and threats.
  - Include a drawing of this animal.
  - Share some practical ways that this animal can be better protected.



- Scan and project the opening first page (below). Spend time viewing and reading this page together:
  - What are its features? How is it laid out?
  - Use the outlines of the human body parts (feet and arms) to help gauge the size of the creatures. Why do you think this scale has been included?
  - Read the sentences in the text boxes. Discuss the sentence types (statements, exclamations) and sentence styles (simple, complex). Notice there are only two sentences in each text box. How have these sentences been structured? What main points are they sharing with readers?
  - Choose one of the creatures to find out more about. Write a list of bullet points about this animal. As a class, co-create two sentences to inform readers about this animal.
  - Repeat this with another creature from the same page, this time writing the two sentences with a partner. Compare your sentences with another pair. Refine your sentences to make the information clear and informative.
  - Ask students to choose a creature from a different section of *Wonders Under the Moon*. Research this animal and share information about it in two sentences.



- Using the template below, create a pictorial sequence that shares information about one of the creatures in *Wonders Under the Moon*.

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|



- After reading *Wonders Under the Moon*, create your own 'new creature' that has adapted to survive different threats you have learnt about. Feel free to include features from different animals that you have encountered throughout the text.
  - Devise a scientific name for your 'new creature'
  - Describe its behaviour and habitat
  - Sketch and label its features
  - Explain how its adaptations help it to survive
- With the help of a staff member or parent volunteer, start your own nature club that raises awareness about wildlife conservation in the local area. Create posters and offer to speak at assemblies to help promote your club.
- Choose an animal from *Wonders Under the Moon*. In a paragraph, describe this creature using illustrative and precise language.
- Discuss the use of collective nouns throughout the text. Examples include:
  - A colony of bats
  - An armoury of aardvarks
  - A roll of armadillos
  - A business/busyness of ferrets
  - A sparkle of fireflies
  - An eclipse of moths
  - A leap of leopards
  - A parliament of owls
  - Find out more about the origins of these collective nouns.
  - Consider using companion texts about collective nouns such as *An Ambush of Tigers: A Wild Gathering of Collective Nouns* by Betsy R Rosenthal (Millbrook Press), *Who's a Goose* by Scott Stuart (Scholastic) or
  - Find the collective names of other groups of animals.
  - Play a game of Memory using the cards below.
- With your class, conduct a nature walk around your school, taking note of the habitats that you see. Take photos of these spaces. What animals might call these places home, especially at night? As a class, co-create a photo story of these spaces.
- Which is your favourite section of *Wonders Under the Moon*. Why is this your favourite? Share with a friend.

- Create an infographic to share your understanding of how humans can improve the survival chances of nocturnal animals.
- Write a letter or email to your school principal persuading them to plant more trees and protect older trees in the school grounds.
- Read Tai Snaith's *Wonders Under the Sun* as a companion text to *Wonders Under the Moon*.
- What cool adaptations have the creatures in *Wonders Under the Moon* made to survive. Which do you find most fascinating? Why?
- Try drawing some of the creatures in *Wonders Under the Moon*. Alternatively, sketch one of the animals using a photograph as stimulus.
- Based on the information below, use Canva to design a poster informing others of ways they can help nocturnal animals to survive.



- In small groups, write and illustrate your own nature reference book called *Wonders Under the Sea*. Remember to include fascinating facts about your chosen creatures.
- Time-permitting, read *Devils in Danger* by Samantha Wheeler (UQP) as a companion novel to *Wonders Under the Moon*.



K

What do you already **know** about nocturnal animals?

W

What do you **want** to learn more about?

L

What did you **learn** about nocturnal animals from reading *Wonders Under the Moon*?

|              |            |                 |           |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| A colony of  | bats       | An armoury of   | aardvarks |
| A roll of    | armadillos | A business of   | ferrets   |
| A sparkle of | fireflies  | An eclipse of   | moths     |
| A leap of    | leopards   | A parliament of | owls      |