

LEARNING TIME

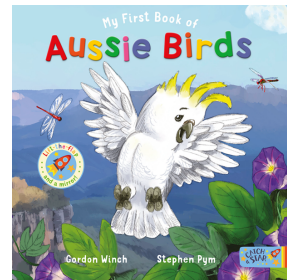
My First Aussie Birds

By Gordon Winch and Stephen Pym

Introduce Australian birds to your baby with this easy to hold and enjoy board book. What else can you see? Perhaps you will find a unique insect, plant, or animal too.

Discover different birds hiding under the flaps. Can you guess them before you peep? Point out the special characteristics that make each bird unique, perhaps the long beak, colourful feathers or tiny feet.

Learn some unusual words like crest, wings, feathers, beak. Name some plant species too like the Banksia, Waratah, Sturt's Desert Pea, and Morning Glory.



Children learn language by listening to it and using it.

- Early interactions between adults and babies have a long-lasting impact on brain development.
- Babies learn to talk by listening to people talk, and from people speaking with them.
- Choose books with large, bright pictures, or high contrast images such as in this picture book and give baby time to explore the images.

Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

We can help babies become confident learners by:

- Allowing time in your day for play, songs, and stories. Have fun with babies while you read, smile, make eye contact, make silly voices, make animals noises.
- Families are a baby's first teacher. We can be active role models for families by inspiring them and giving them ideas for play activities that they can enjoy at home.
- Providing opportunities for baby to explore, experiment and be hands on with books. Ensure books are accessible for babies to play with, have them on the floor or in easy to access places such as in baskets or on bottom shelves.
- Ensure books are clear and easy for them to see the pictures, bright and bold or black and white books are easier for newborn babies to focus on as their eyes are developing.
- Build strong brain connections by naming and explaining things in their world, not once but many times, and in many ways.

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Welcome

Ask caregivers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Encourage parents to sing facing their baby so that baby can watch their mouth move as they sing and talk – this helps babies learn to speak themselves.

Welcome song - Come Along

Come along and sing with me, sing with me

Come along and sing with me, it's time for story time!

Repeat and replace 'sing' with bounce, rock, clap etc.

Come along and bounce with me, bounce with me, bounce with me

Come along and bounce with me, it's time for story time!

Song

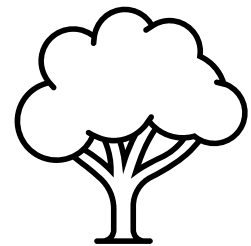
Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree

Merry, merry king of the bush is he

Laugh, Kookaburra Laugh

Kookaburra gay your life must be



More songs about Australian Animals: Australian Animal Songs Album by Don Spencer

Explore songs on Spotify or Youtube

Before Reading

Encourage the group to sit comfortably in a place where they can see the book. If you have multiple copies of the same book this is a simple way to encourage families to join along with you.

You might like to model how to explore the front cover of a book. Draw attention to the animals on the front cover say, "Look at my book, I see Australian birds, this bird has a yellow crest, it's a Cockatoo. Let's look for more birds and creatures in the book".

During Reading

It might be helpful to focus on one thing like the name of the birds, but if you have toddlers or older children you can include some facts for the birds and explore the other illustrations, the plants and insects and practice counting. Follow the lead of the children. It's not essential to read all the pages in the book.

Draw the readers' attention to the things on each page and help them to see them by pointing to things. Name the plants, insects, and birds, commenting on what the animal is doing or where it is. Model the use of positional words such **as under, on, around, behind, above, below**. This will model strong language use by linking naming things with descriptions. *"I can see two insects; one is green and is on top of the branch. Can you see it? The other one is brown and hiding under the branch. It's harder to see, but I think you can find it."*

There are many opportunities in this book to practice counting if the children are able and interested.

After Reading

Encourage conversation about the animals, repeating their names and showing baby face to face how to say those words. Have a quiet time together resting and reflecting.

Read

- Adults can be encouraged to borrow books to read in full to their child at home. Explain to caregivers that children are often able to concentrate for longer periods in a comfortable one on one situation. The adult reader is also to go at a pace that suits the child and gently redirect their attention.
- Books do not have to be read in one sitting. It might be that you read a few pages together and come back to it later. Let parents know that books can 'grow with the child'. Re-read the same books to the children as they grow older. As they grow toddlers and preschoolers will also enjoy and notice additional details.

Talk

- Spend time together reflecting on the things you observed and enjoyed in the book.
- Conversation tips: *'Did you like the book?', 'What bird did you like?', 'I liked the Fairywren, with blue feathers', 'The cockatoo has a lovely yellow crest on its head'.*

Play

- Find soft toys or puppets that represent the birds, animals, or insects in the book. Try a toy library.
- See if you can spot some birds in your local environment.

Sing

- Use the song lyrics on the following page to print out and give to families or enlarge and make a poster they can all see and follow along with.
- This is a great song to use puppets or finger play. The five ducks can be represented by five upright fingers. As each duck disappears put a finger down until you get to zero ducks coming back. Have them waddle off behind your back and reappear with one less duckling each time.
- When all the duck(lings) return, put up all the five fingers and air kiss them all to end the song.

Five Little Ducks

Five Little Ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.

Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack,” but only four little ducks came back.



Four Little Ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack,” but only three little ducks came back.

Three Little Ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack,” but only two little ducks came back.

Two Little Ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack,” but only one little duck came back.

One Little Duck went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack,” but none of the five little ducks came back.

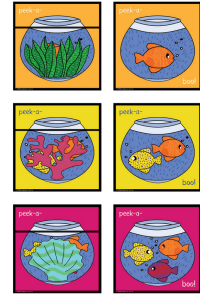
So Mother Duck went out that day, over the hills and far away
Mother Duck said, “Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack!!!!”

And all the five little ducks came back!

Extension Activity

Try our baby peek-a-boo cards available from Little Book Press

<https://littlebookpress.com.au/collections/books-for-babies/products/peak-a-boo-cards>



Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area. If your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles:

- **Busy Little Creatures** by Fiona Bowden (*Little Book Press title*)
- **My First Baby Australian Animal** by Fiona Bowden (*Little Book Press title*)
- **Baby Dance** by Katrina Germein and Doris Chang (**Speech Pathology Shortlisted Book 2017**)
- **My First Aussie Animals** by Gordon Winch and Stephen Pym

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*) **or** your preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action)

Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!

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