

Wild At Art: threatened species art competition for kids

ACF is partnering with [Forestmedia Network](#) to make this year's threatened species art competition for kids bigger than ever!

About the competition

Wild At Art: threatened species art competition for kids helps children unleash their artistic creativity while learning about Australia's incredible plants and animals and the threats facing them.

Children are invited to submit an artwork of one of Australia's many threatened native animals or plants, along with a short written description of why they chose that species.

The competition is open to all children aged 5-12 who live in Australia. Online submissions will be open from Saturday 5 June, World Environment Day, to Friday 30 July.

Finalists will be announced in August with winners announced on Tuesday 7 September, Threatened Species Day.

Australia's extinction crisis

Australia is truly the lucky country. As a nation, we are one of the few mega-diverse places on Earth that supports an incredible array of completely unique plants and animals.

Our extraordinary and celebrated species, from the koala through to the wollemi pine, have evolved isolated from the rest of the world over tens of millions of years. Australia is spoilt when it comes to wildlife, but sadly in modern Australia, our governments are failing to protect the plants and animals that make our nation so unique. We have caused the extinction of more mammals than any other nation, and today nearly 2,000 plants, animals and ecosystems remain under threat of extinction.

Once a species is lost it can have ongoing ramifications for people and nature. Extinction is a confronting but important concept. There are cultural, scientific, ecological and moral impacts from the extinction of species.

Read more about Australia's extinction crisis and the failure of our national environmental law in our report [Fast-tracking extinction: Australia's national environmental law](#).

Instructions for the artist

Research

Research some of the threatened animals and plants in Australia, then choose one to represent in your artwork!

You may decide to look for a species that's threatened in your area, or one that used to live in your area but is now extinct there. Or you may decide to choose one that lives further away, but is very interesting to you. The only rule is that **your chosen species must be native to Australia** (i.e. it occurs here naturally and has not been introduced).

You may also like to find out the reasons that animal or plant is threatened. Perhaps it has suffered habitat loss from logging, land-clearing or bushfires, or perhaps it is threatened by introduced animals like foxes and cats.

You can find a list of Australia's threatened [animals](#) and [plants](#) on the federal government's Species Profile and Threats Database.

Create

Create your own work of art that interprets your chosen animal or plant. Make sure it falls within the categories of drawing, painting or mixed media (such as collage). Three dimensional, photography and video works can't be accepted.

Please make sure it is your own work. Copying the shape and form of a species is fine as long as you make it your own creation. Tracing, or having a parent or anyone else work on any part of your entry is not allowed.

Reflect

The reflection is a short piece of writing that describes anything you care to mention about the artwork, like what inspired you to depict that species. Your reflection should be 50-150 words long and can be included in the registration form. This will help the judges understand more about you and your work. Parents or teachers may help younger children fill in this section.

Send

Please ask for an adult's assistance to create a clear digital copy of your artwork that's under 5MB in size. The file should be uploaded via the online submission form by a parent, teacher or legal guardian.

The online submission form will be open for entries from Saturday 5 June (World Environment Day).

Tips for the artist

1. Remember that your artwork may be chosen for an exhibition and if so, will be seen amongst other artworks either indoors or outdoors (depending on the venue). Sometimes soft pencil drawings can work, but most often strong, bright colours are best to make your artwork stand out.
2. Compositions using simple, bold shapes are the most eye-catching. Think about your composition first – where you are going to place your species on the page and what will the background look like? Do some quick sketches first. You could look at past finalists' artworks to get a sense of what compositions have worked in previous years.
3. Make sure the species you have chosen is identifiable in your artwork. If your species is lost in its surroundings, or very small, or drawn with fuzzy lines in a way that it's hard to recognise, the judges will not be able to progress it to the finals.
4. Sometimes the judges get a number of entries that look almost the same, and it's clear they were copied from the same photograph. None of these will progress to the finals. You can copy (but not trace) the basic form and shape of the species from photographs, but then you have to add your own creative interpretation, so that the finished product is your original work. There is no limit to the materials you can use as long as it is a two dimensional artwork.
5. Make sure the species falls within the guidelines – it can be any Australian threatened species. The species could be extinct. Many children draw or paint species that are only native to other parts of the world. Being in a zoo doesn't make them native to Australia. These can't be accepted no matter how fabulous they look.
6. When choosing your species, it helps to find one that isn't very common. It's not hard to find one that other entrants might have overlooked, as there are nearly 2000 plants, animals and ecosystems under threat in Australia. There may be a prize for Most Unusual Entry. This can either be a very unusual species, or more usually a very interesting and unusual interpretation.
7. Think about how to create some dramatic impact. A turtle floating in the sea surrounded by plastic garbage tells us something about why the species is threatened as well. Make sure you keep it simple and direct though – sometimes the face and eyes of the animal says it all.

8. You don't necessarily have to include the whole body of the species in the artwork – it could just be the head or front part of an animal. It just depends what works best.
9. Usually there are many less entries featuring threatened plants than threatened animals, and that's why we will likely offer a prize for Best Plant Entry. Sometimes children think that plants are less interesting to draw, but [have a look at some of the past entries](#) and you'll see how interesting they can be!
10. In general, marker pens rarely look good on paper. They don't allow for subtle changes of tone and emphasis, and look scratchy if they are covering a larger area. Stay away from marker pens for your entry, unless a teacher shows you an interesting way of using them.
11. We will accept artworks that are A4 in size, but A3 is our preferred size. It doesn't matter if it's horizontal or vertical in orientation, or if the shape is a little different (square, oval or elongated for instance). A2 is the biggest size we will accept for an individual entry.

How to enter

The online submission form will be open on ACF's website from 9am on Saturday 5 June, World Environment Day.

All submissions must be received by 5pm Friday 30 July 2021. Entries received after that date will not be accepted.