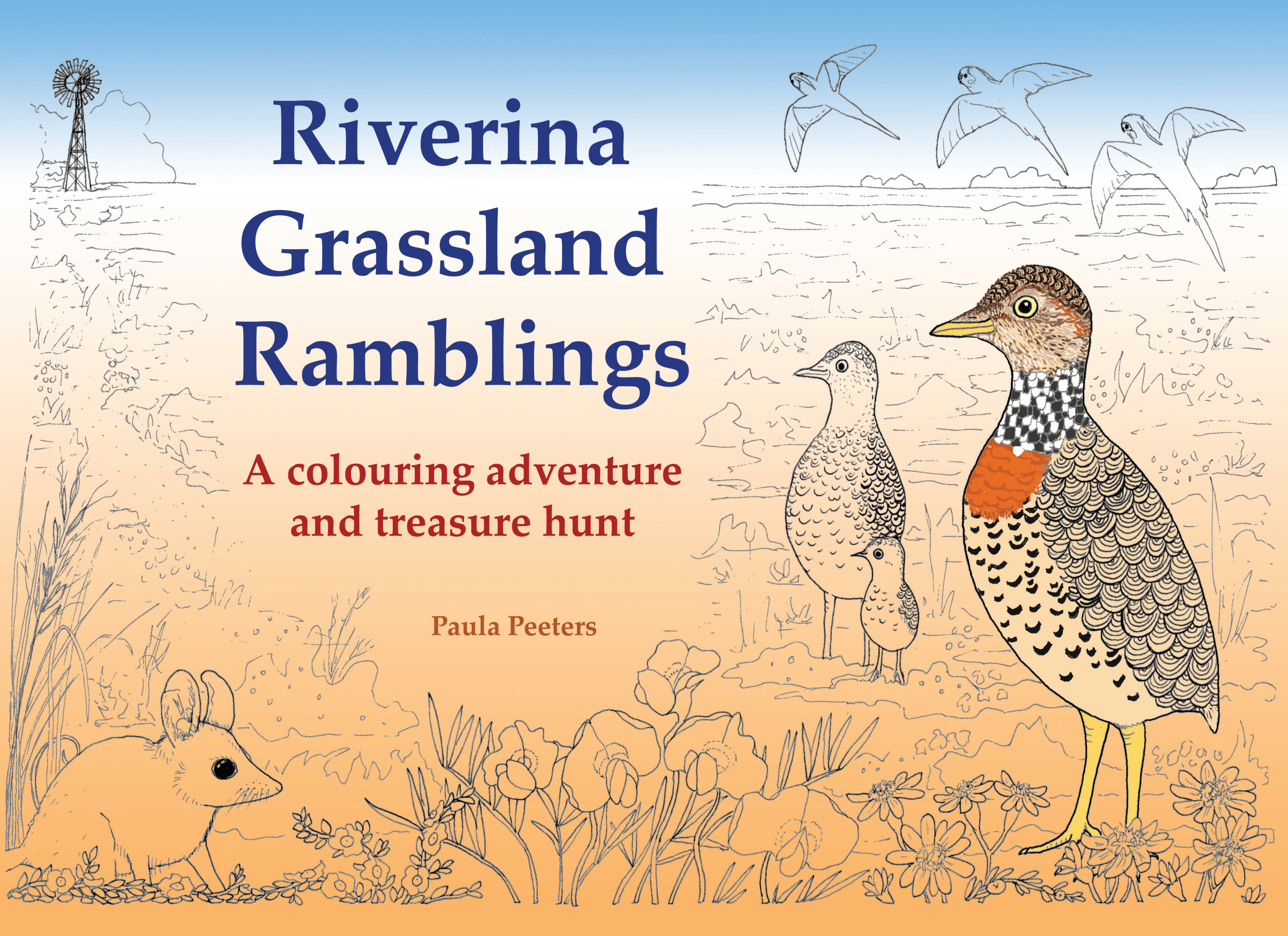


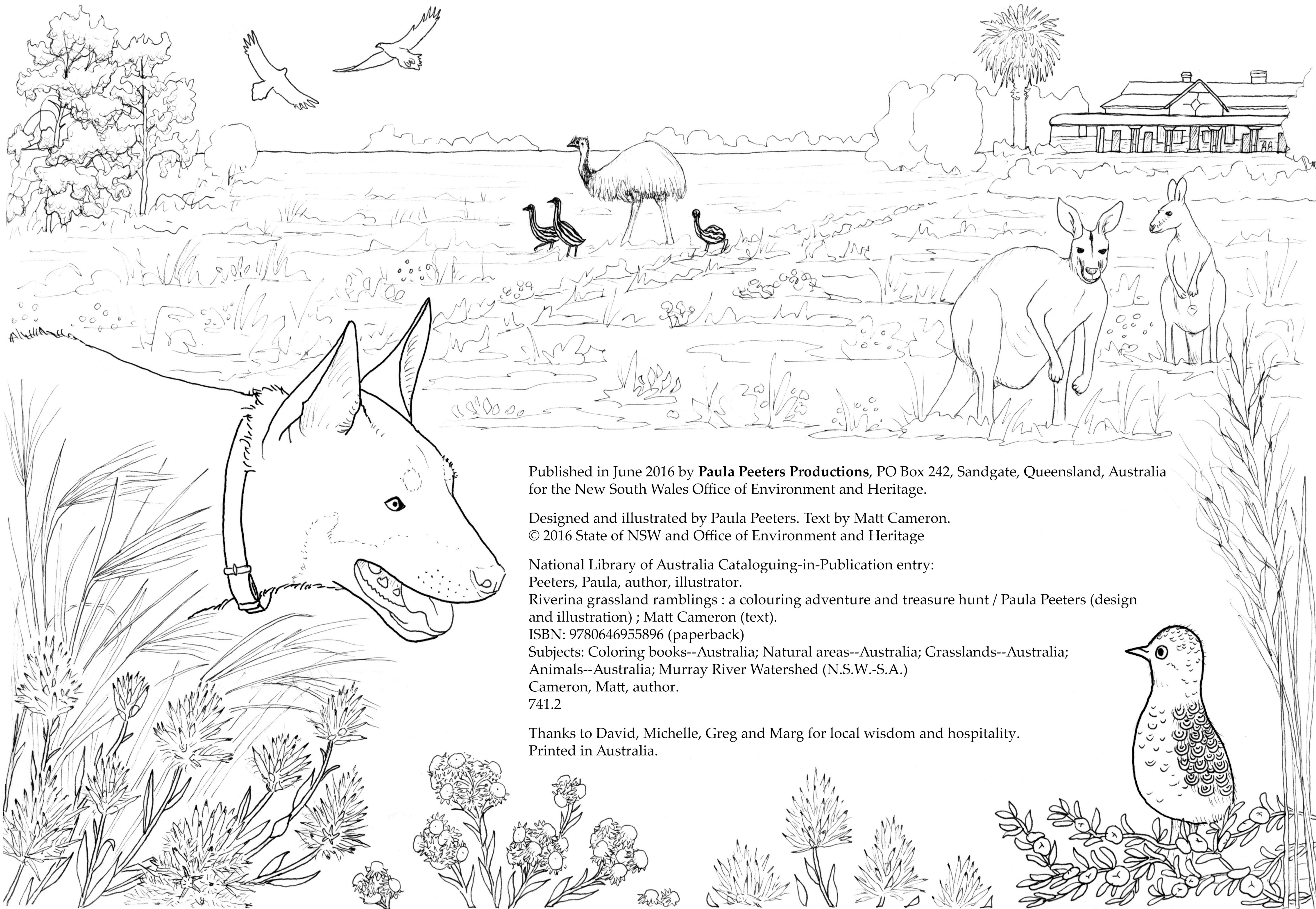
# Riverina Grassland Ramblings

A colouring adventure  
and treasure hunt

Paula Peeters







Published in June 2016 by **Paula Peeters Productions**, PO Box 242, Sandgate, Queensland, Australia for the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage.

Designed and illustrated by Paula Peeters. Text by Matt Cameron.  
© 2016 State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:  
Peeters, Paula, author, illustrator.

Riverina grassland ramblings : a colouring adventure and treasure hunt / Paula Peeters (design and illustration) ; Matt Cameron (text).

ISBN: 9780646955896 (paperback)

Subjects: Coloring books--Australia; Natural areas--Australia; Grasslands--Australia; Animals--Australia; Murray River Watershed (N.S.W.-S.A.)

Cameron, Matt, author.

741.2

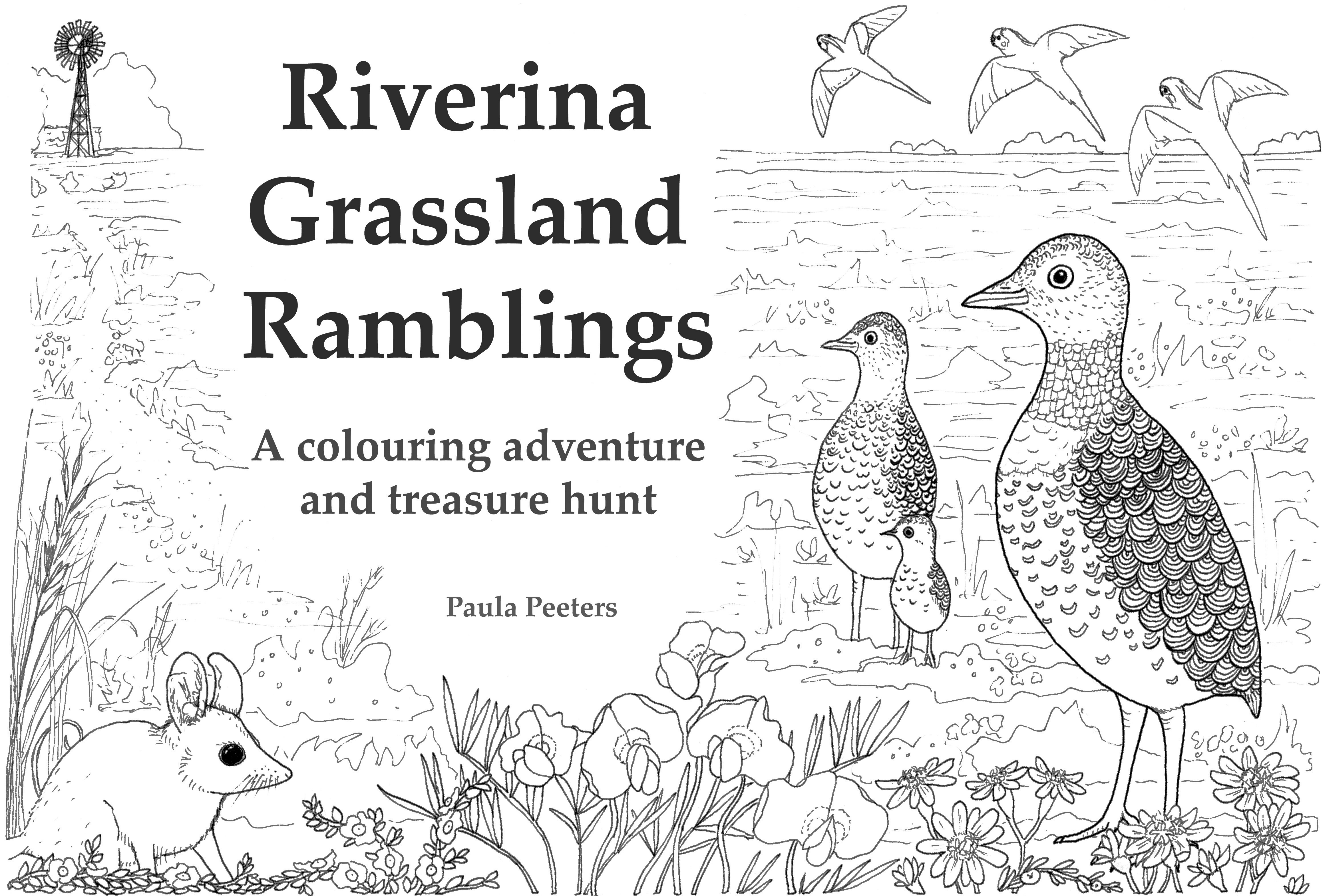
Thanks to David, Michelle, Greg and Marg for local wisdom and hospitality.  
Printed in Australia.



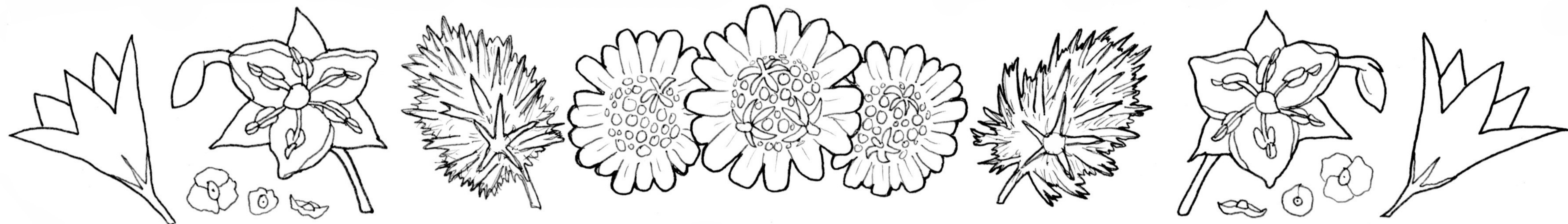
# Riverina Grassland Ramblings

A colouring adventure  
and treasure hunt

Paula Peeters







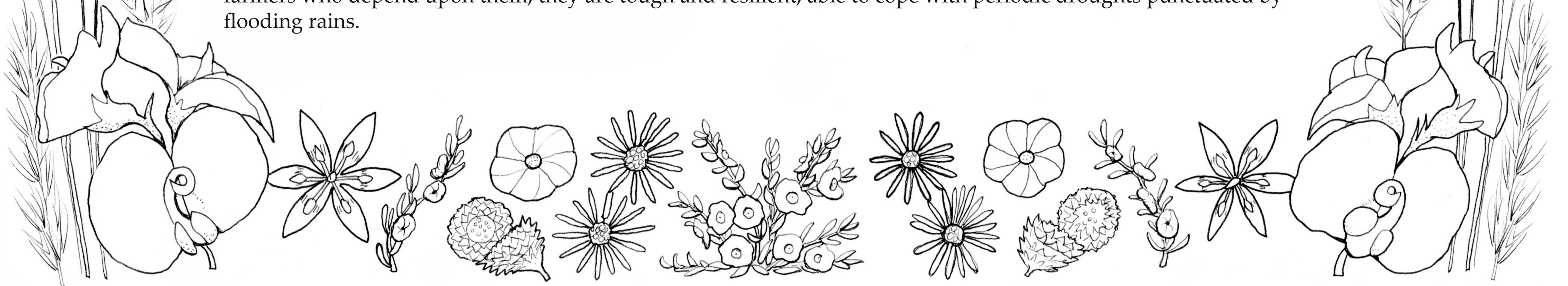
## Welcome to the Riverina grasslands

Riverina grasslands are special places, providing homes for many plants and animals. Walk out into a grassland paddock and look down at the ground. The apparent sea of native grasses dissolves into an incredibly diverse ecosystem, grasses jostling for space with miniature shrubs and a colourful collection of lilies, daisies and peas. Watch carefully and you may see one of the many grassland reptiles going about its business, a Shingleback perhaps, searching for a mate. Beneath your feet, a family of Fat-tailed Dunnarts shelter in a soil crack, waiting for nightfall before emerging to hunt insects.

Wander on a little further and you might be lucky enough to flush a Stubble Quail, your heart missing a beat as it explodes from your feet. Overhead, a Wedge-tailed Eagle rides a thermal, searching for a sheep carcass or road-killed kangaroo on which to feed. All the while, your ramblings are accompanied by the calls of hard-to-identify sparrow-like birds that flutter briefly above the grass to tease you, before plunging back into cover. Leafing through your field guide you settle on Australasian Pipit and Singing Bushlark.

With the sun on your shoulders, you climb to the top of a pine-clad sandhill rising from the surrounding plain. Off in the distance, you view a homestead nestled into a bend of a box-lined creek. It's a reminder that as well as having outstanding biodiversity values, Riverina grasslands are prime sheep and cattle country. The grasses, shrubs and herbs that provide wildlife habitat, are also excellent fodder for stock. Light to moderate grazing can help keep grasses in check, allowing the plants and animals that live between the grass tussocks to flourish.

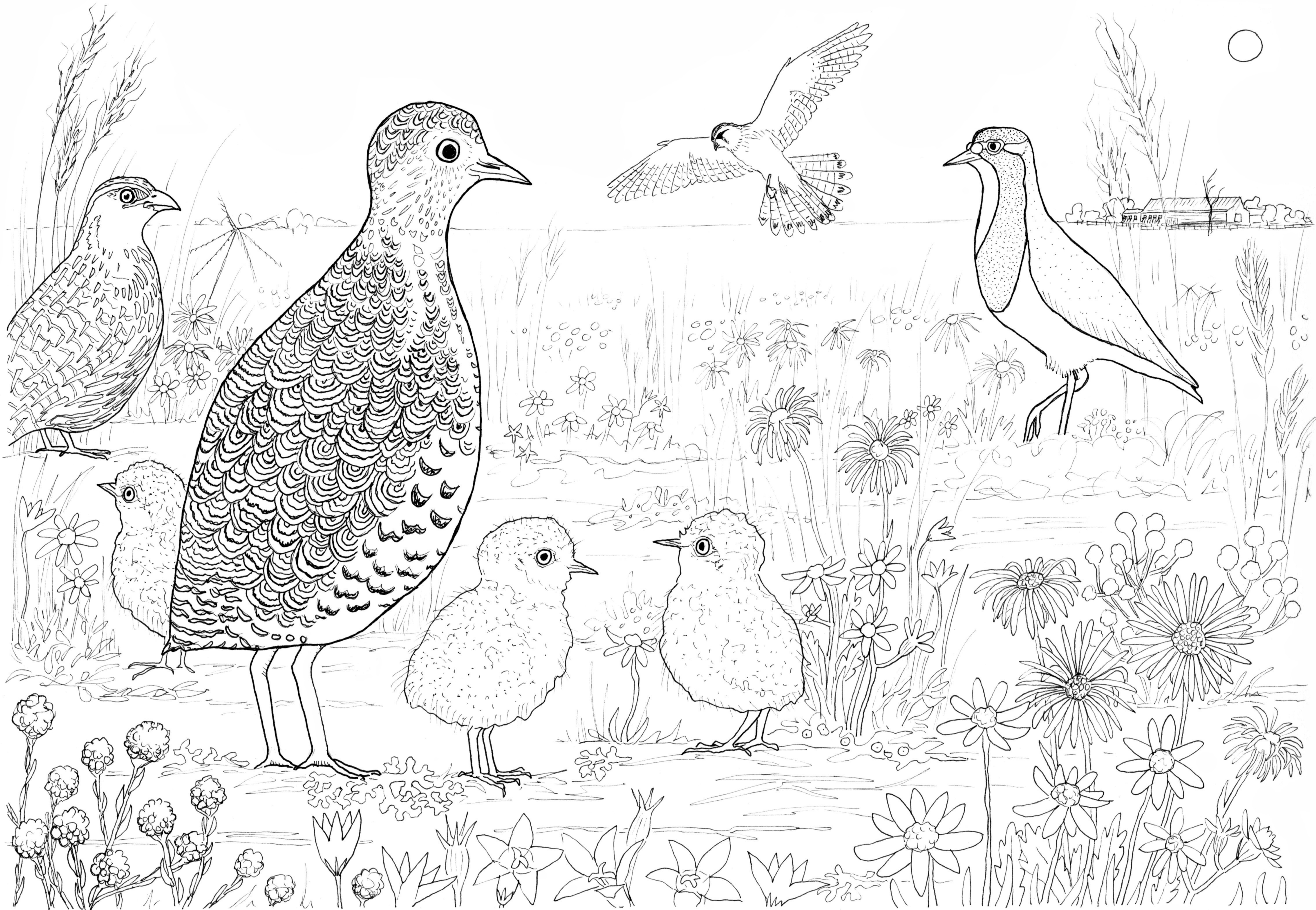
Heading back, you come across a farmer moving sheep, an Australian Kelpie busy behind the flock. The large, long-legged sheep are Peppin Merinos, a breed which originated on these plains and went on to transform the Australian sheep industry. Their long, dense fleece insulates them against the heat and keeps out the dust. Like the farmers who depend upon them, they are tough and resilient, able to cope with periodic droughts punctuated by flooding rains.



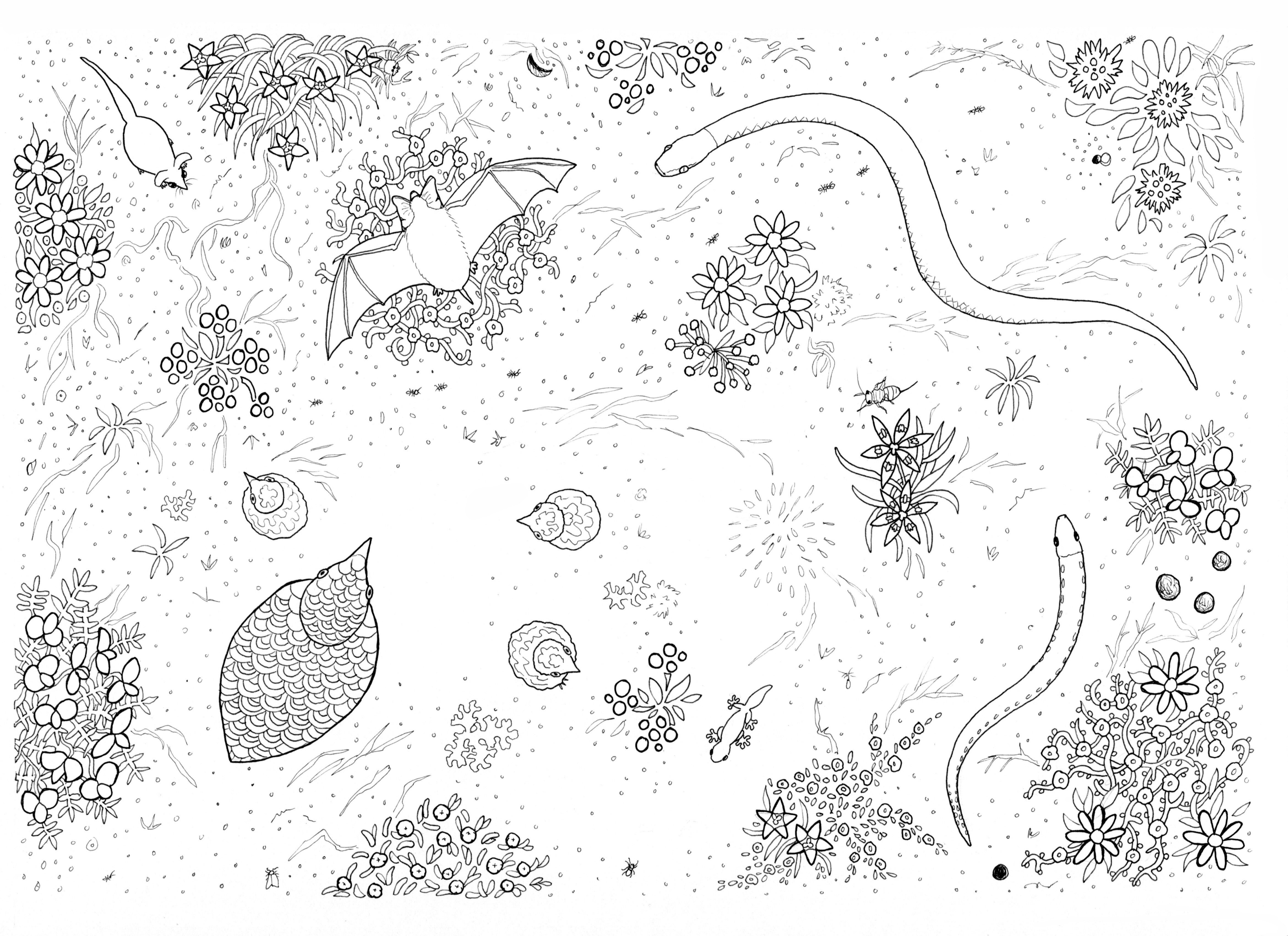




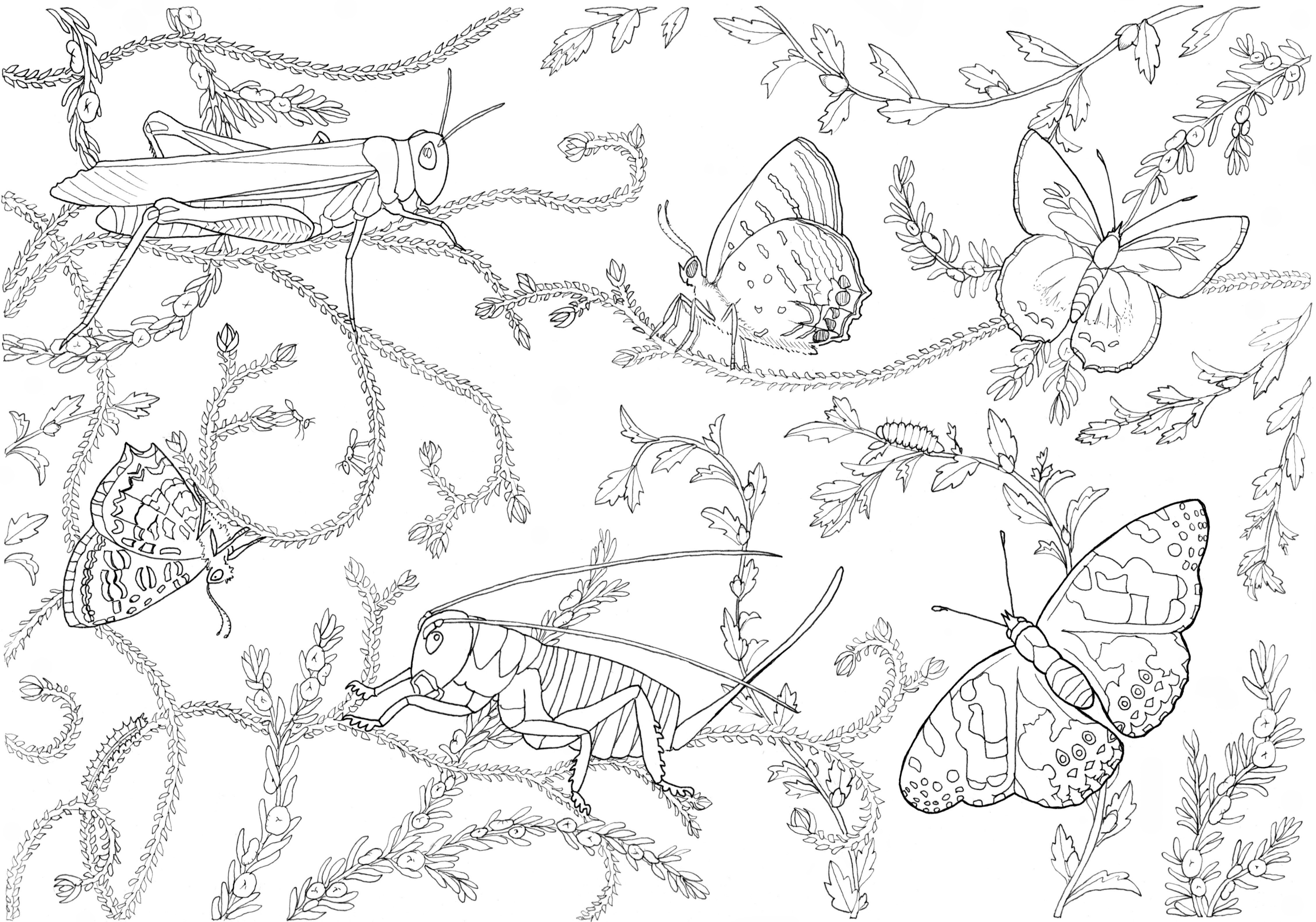




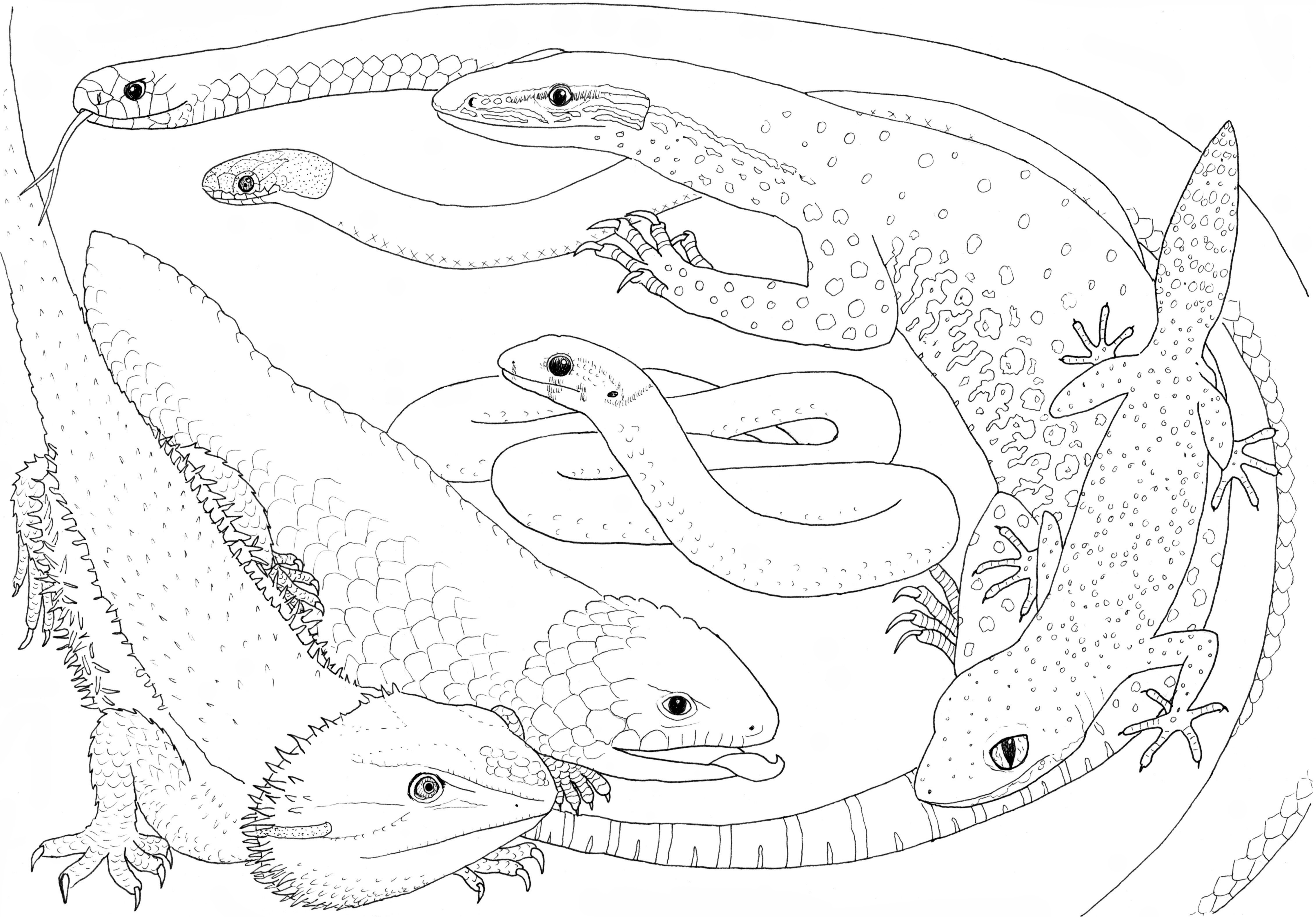












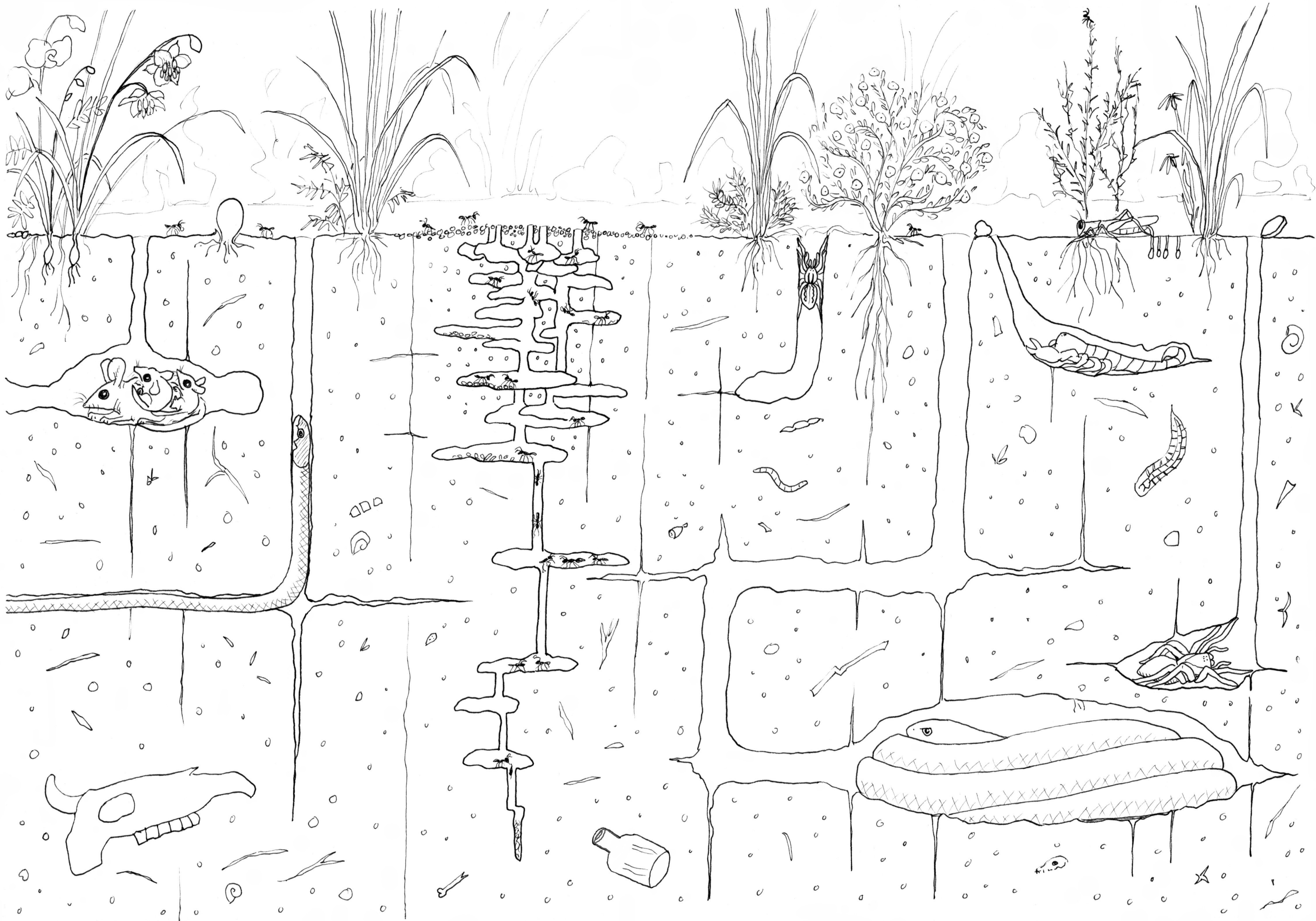




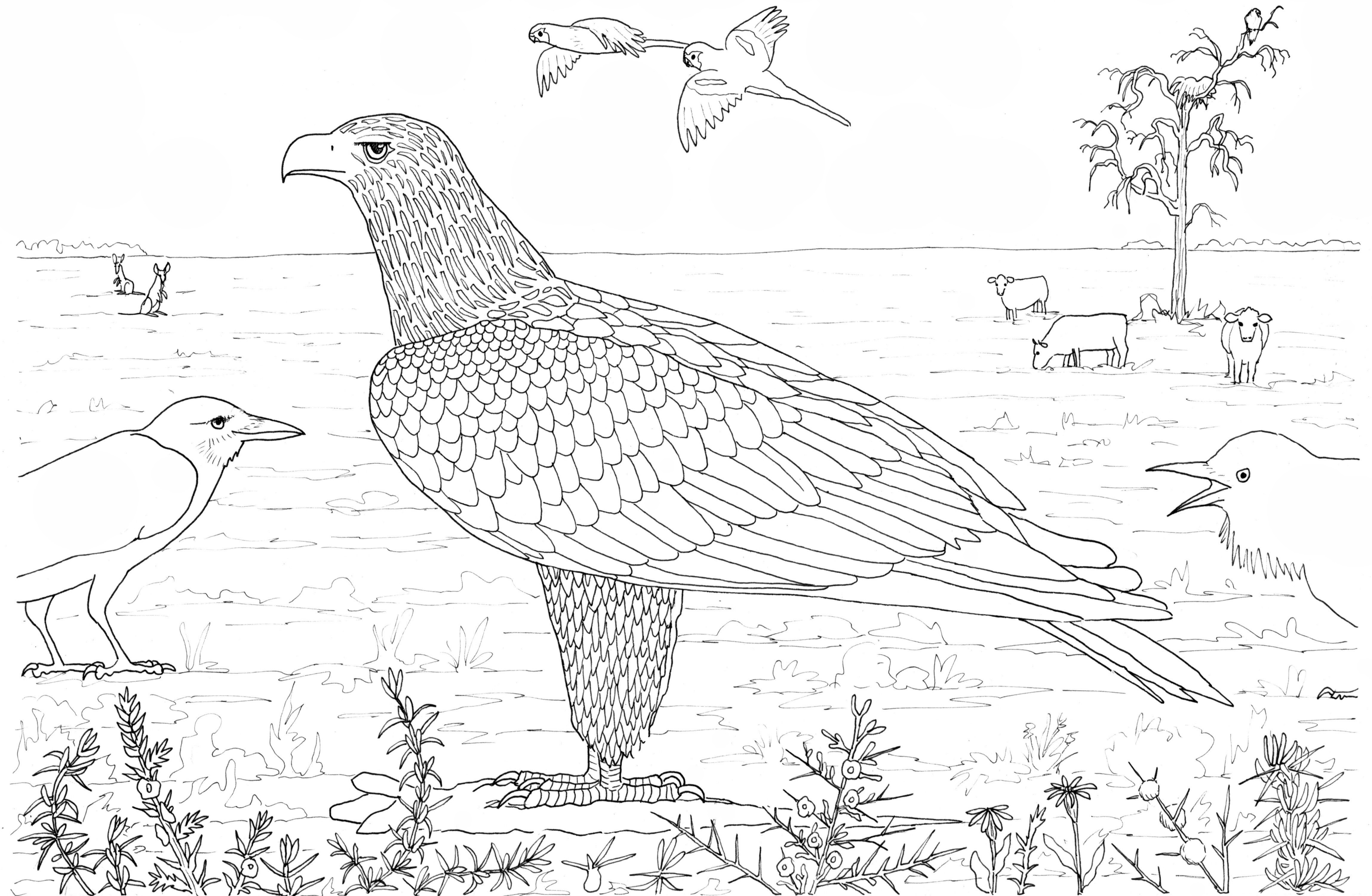




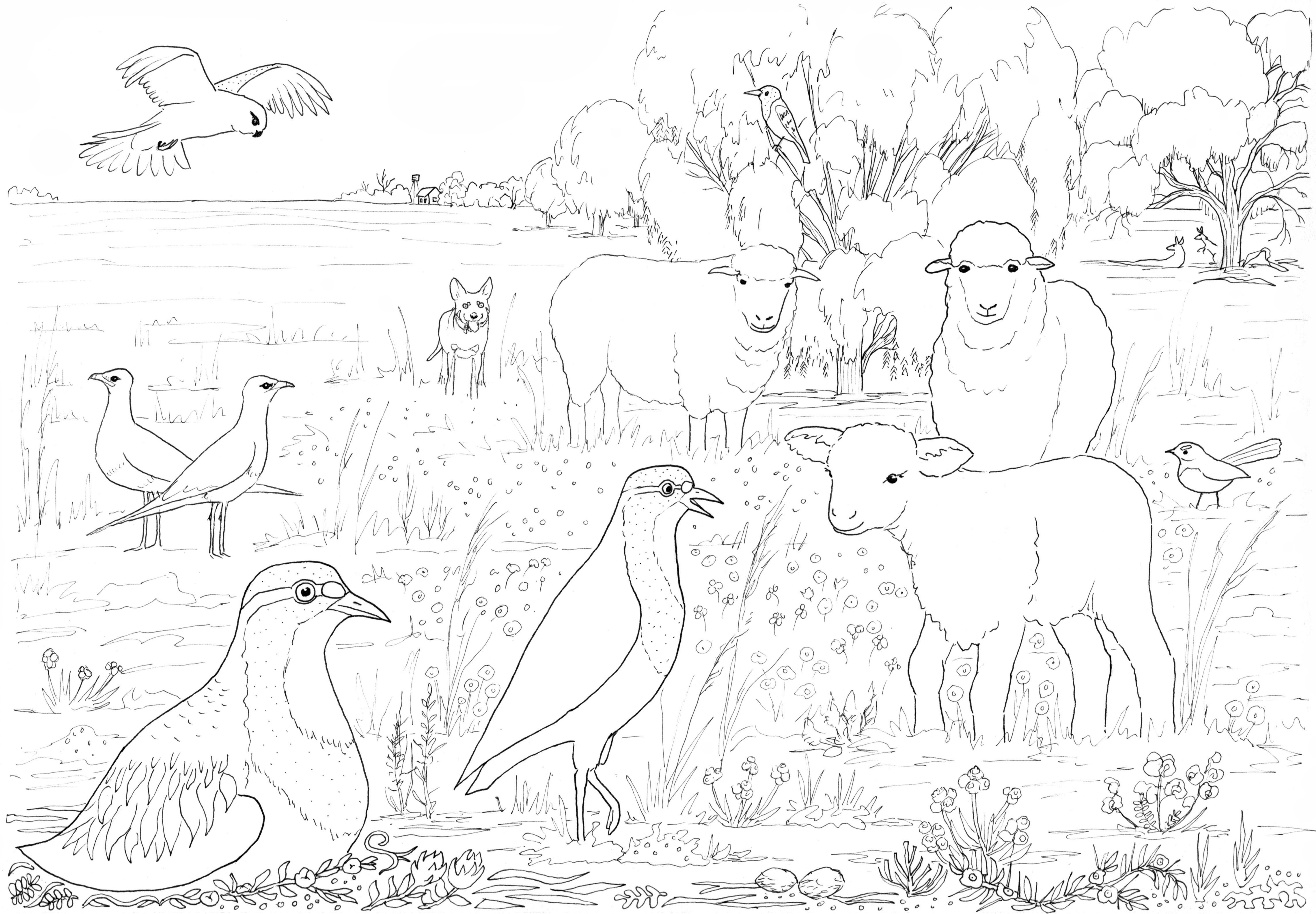




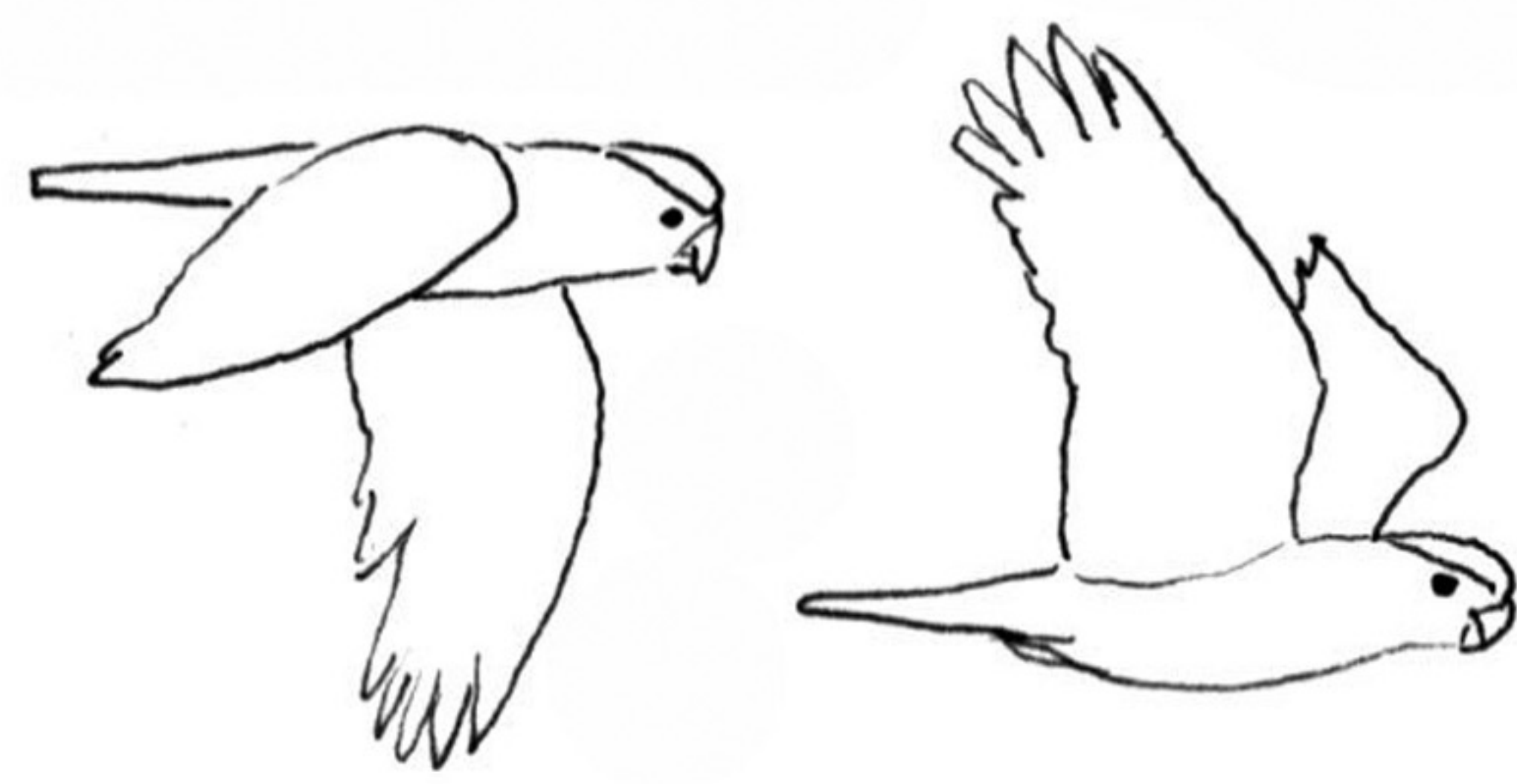








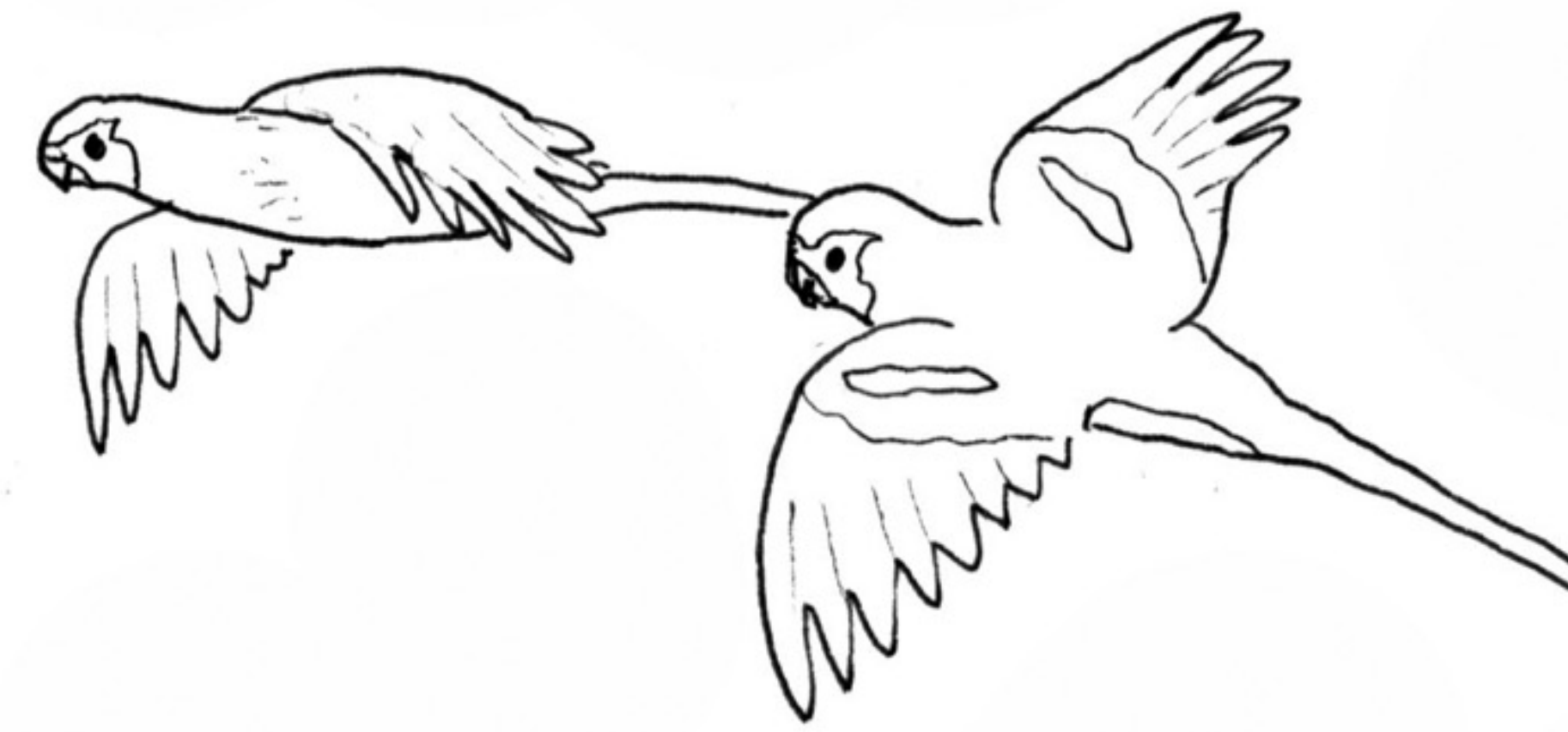




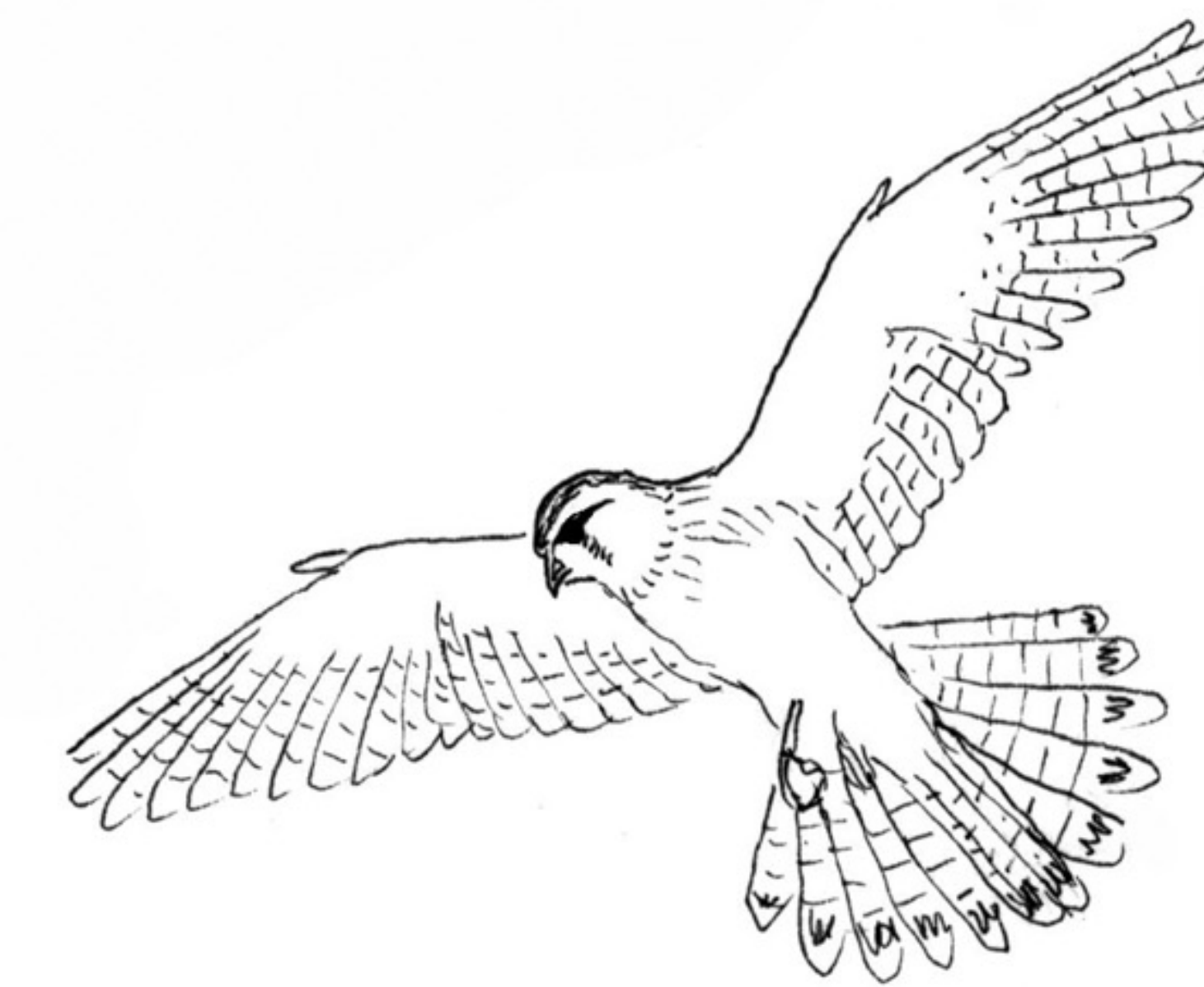
Galah  
*Eolophus roseicapillus*  
Find 3



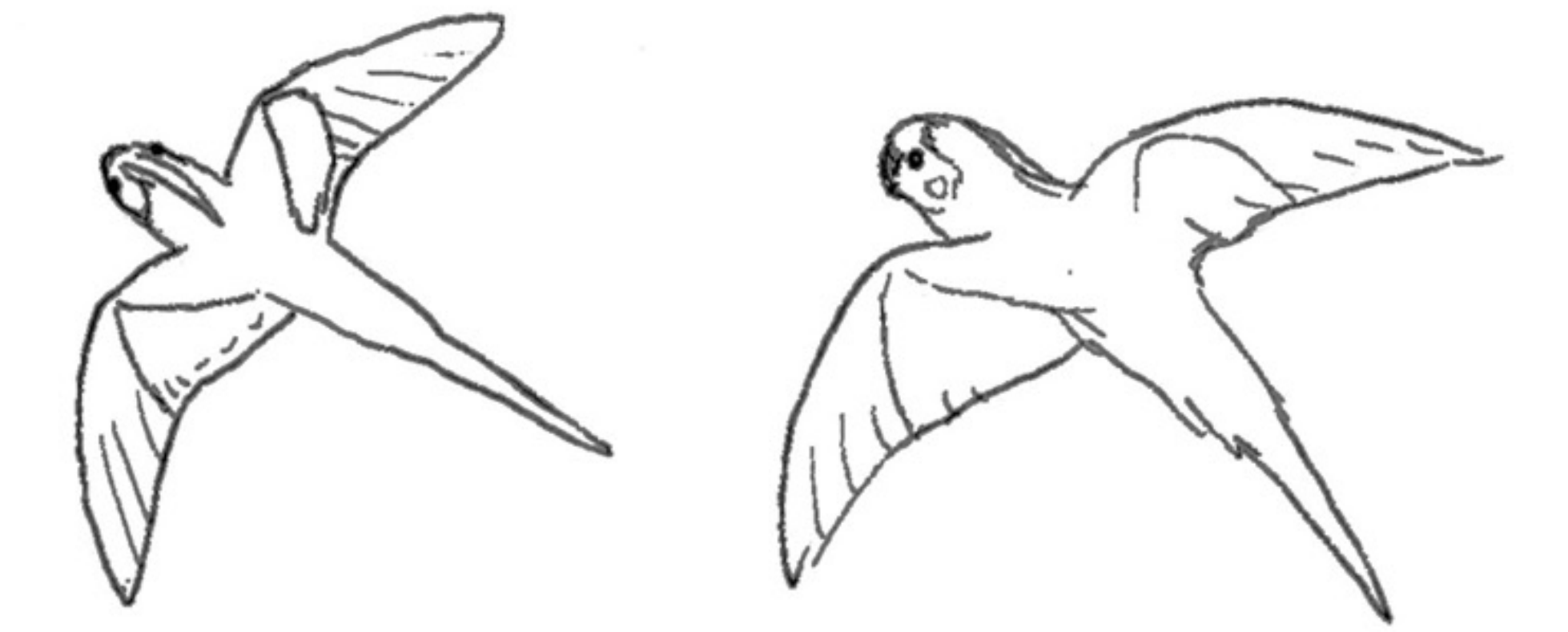
Black-shouldered Kite  
*Elanus axillaris*  
Find 1



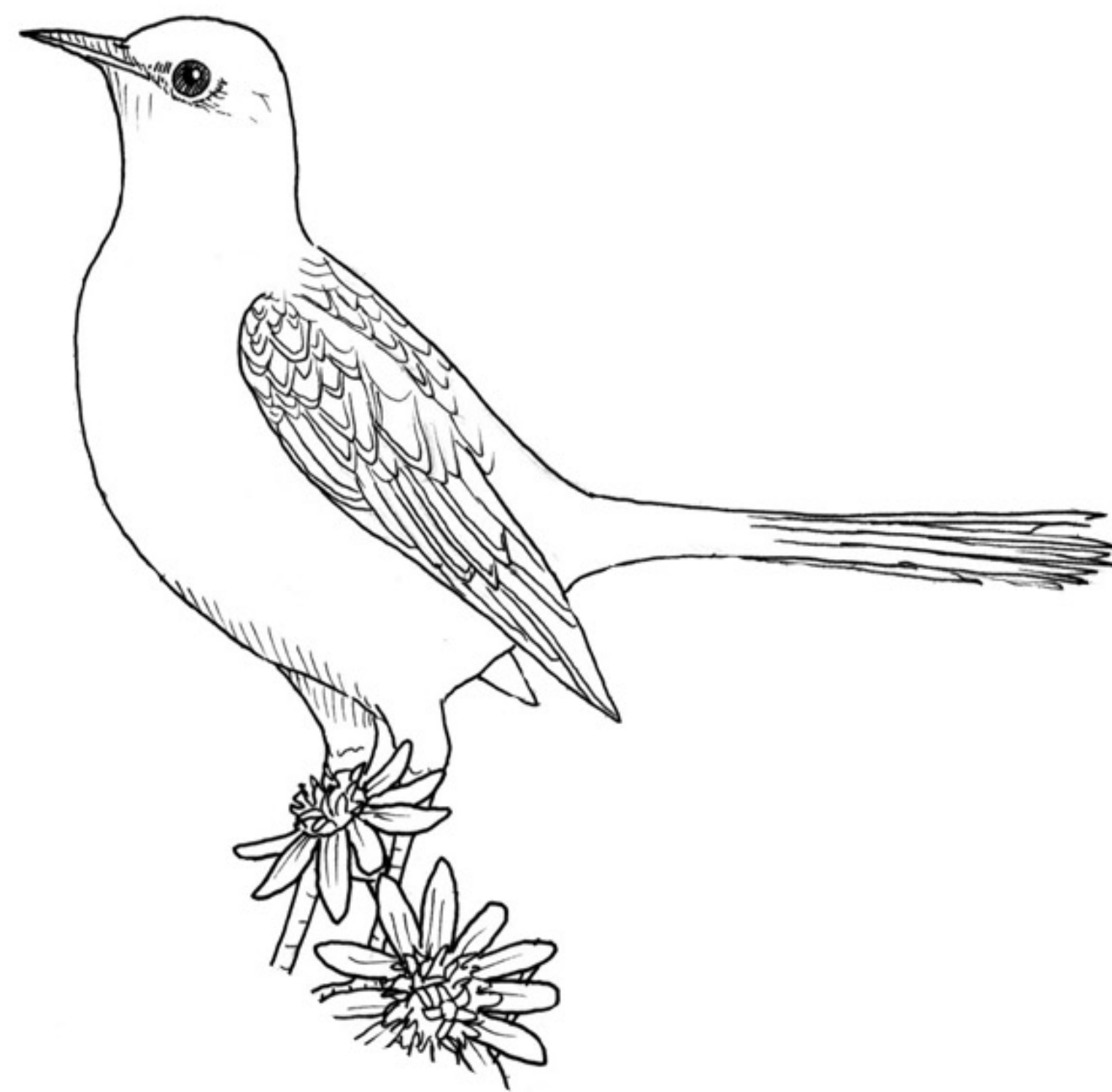
Blue Bonnet  
*Northiella haematogaster*  
Find 2



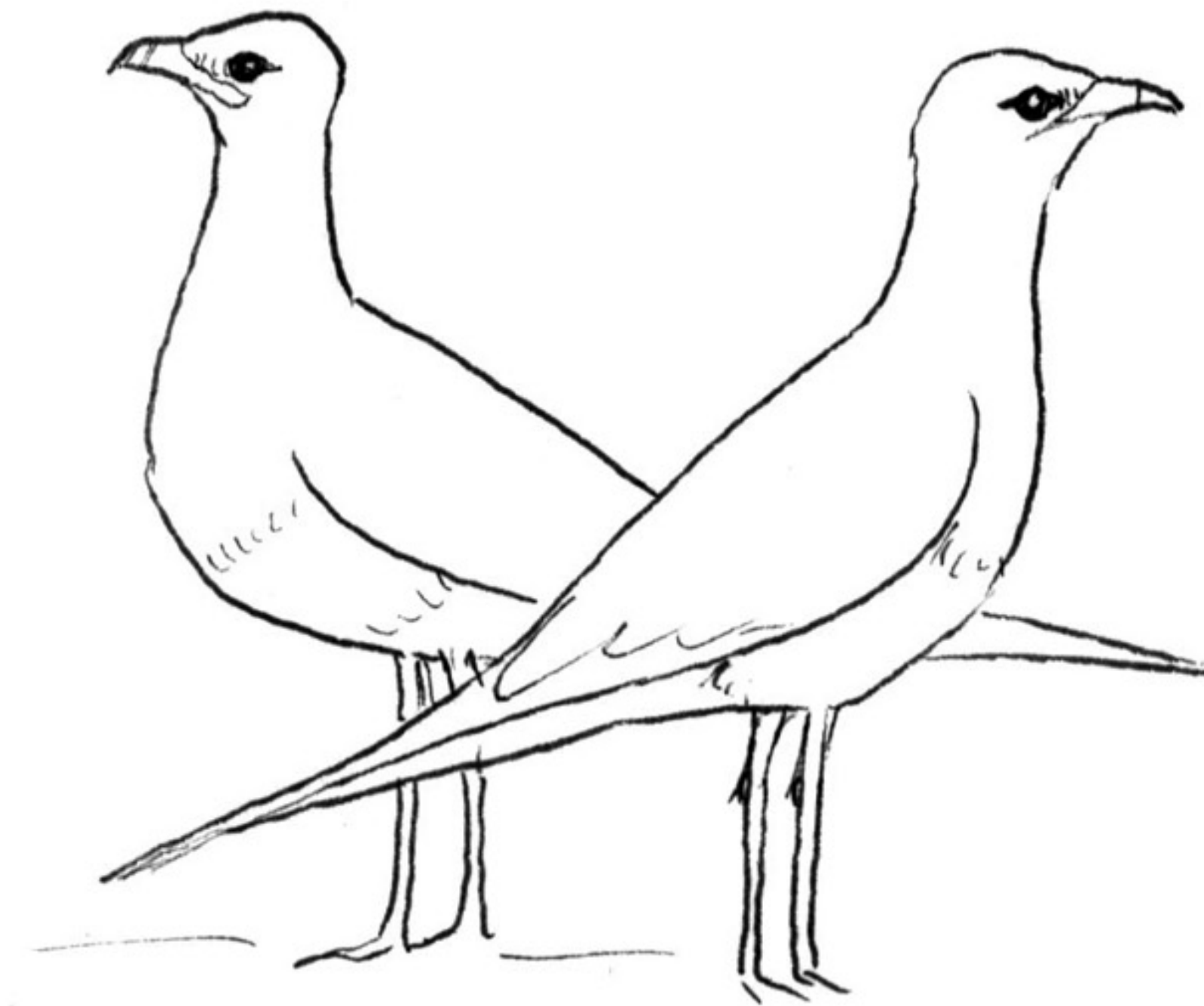
Nankeen Kestrel  
*Falco cenchroides*  
Find 1



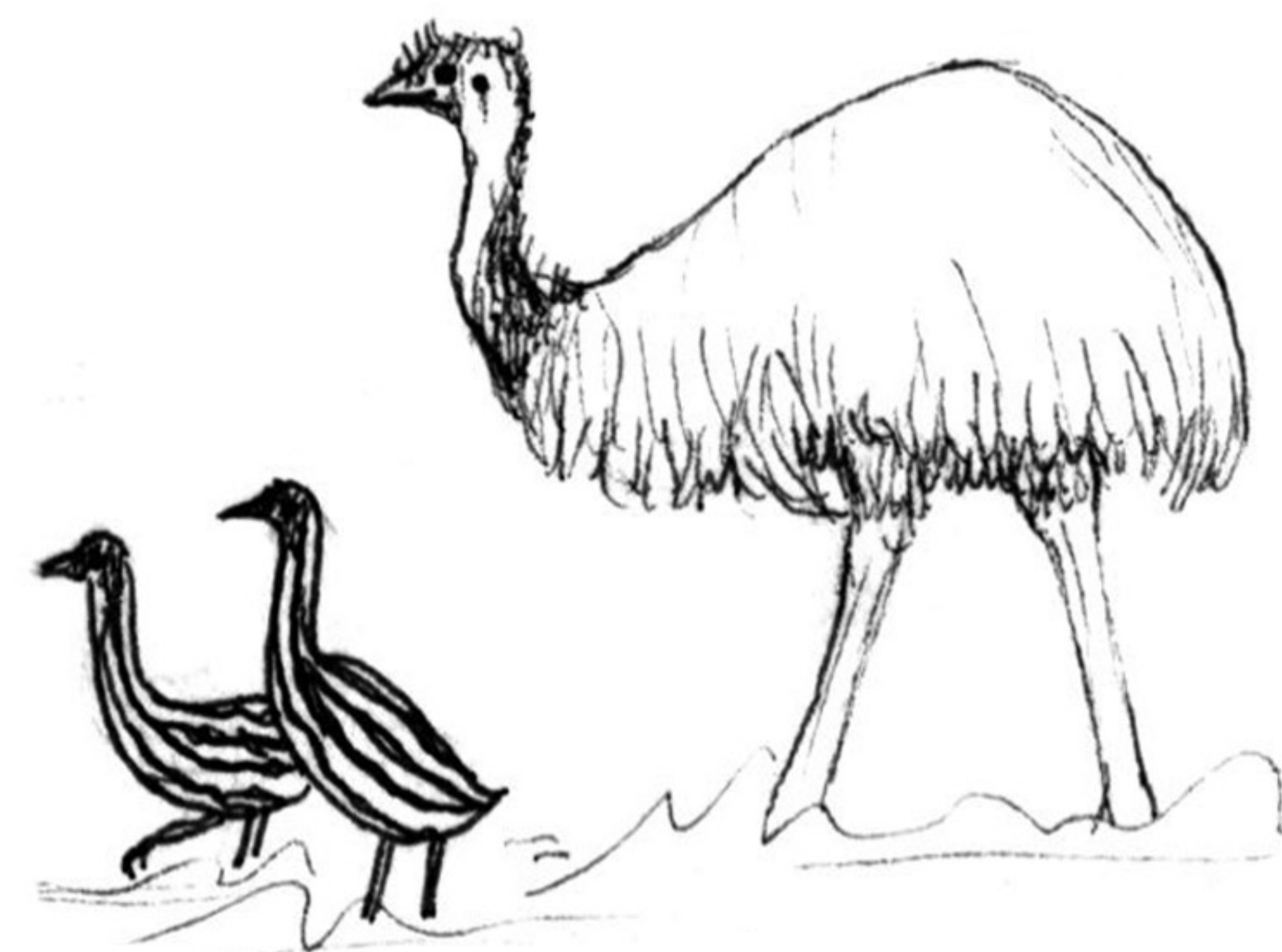
Cockatiel  
*Nymphicus hollandicus*  
Find 6



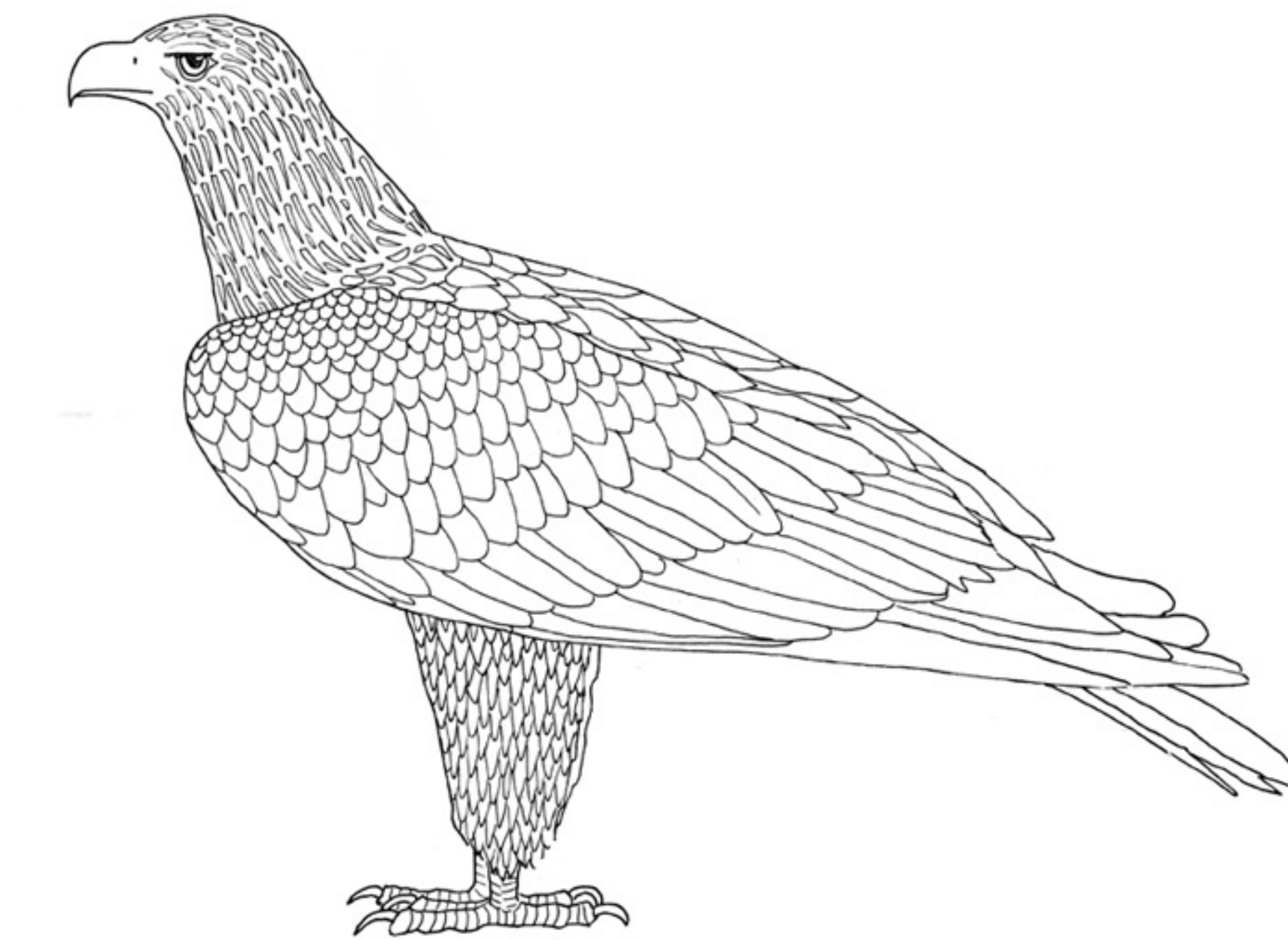
Brown Songlark  
*Cincloramphus cruralis*  
Find 1



Australian Pratincole  
*Stiltia isabella*  
Find 2



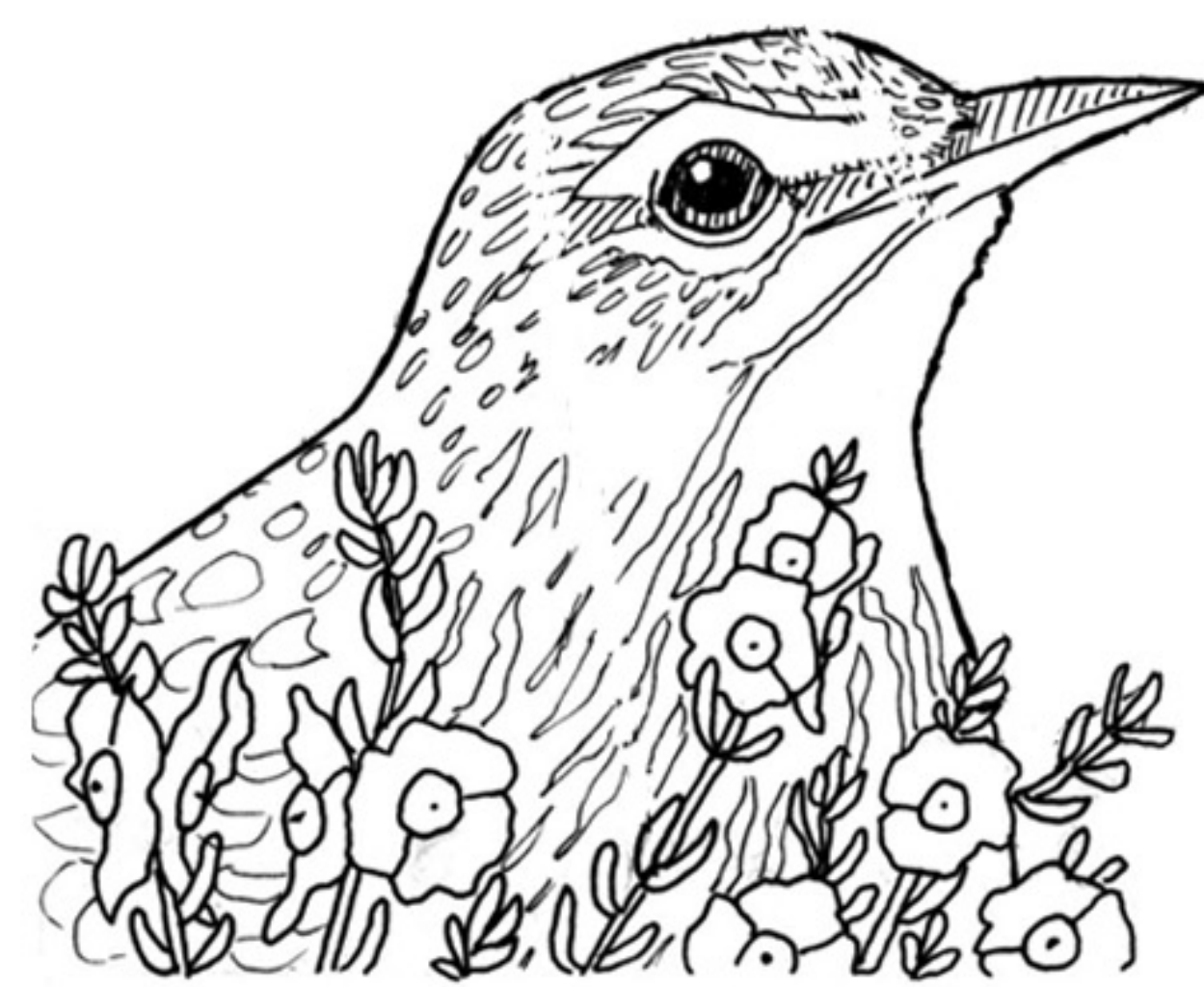
Emu  
*Dromaius novaehollandiae*  
Find 8



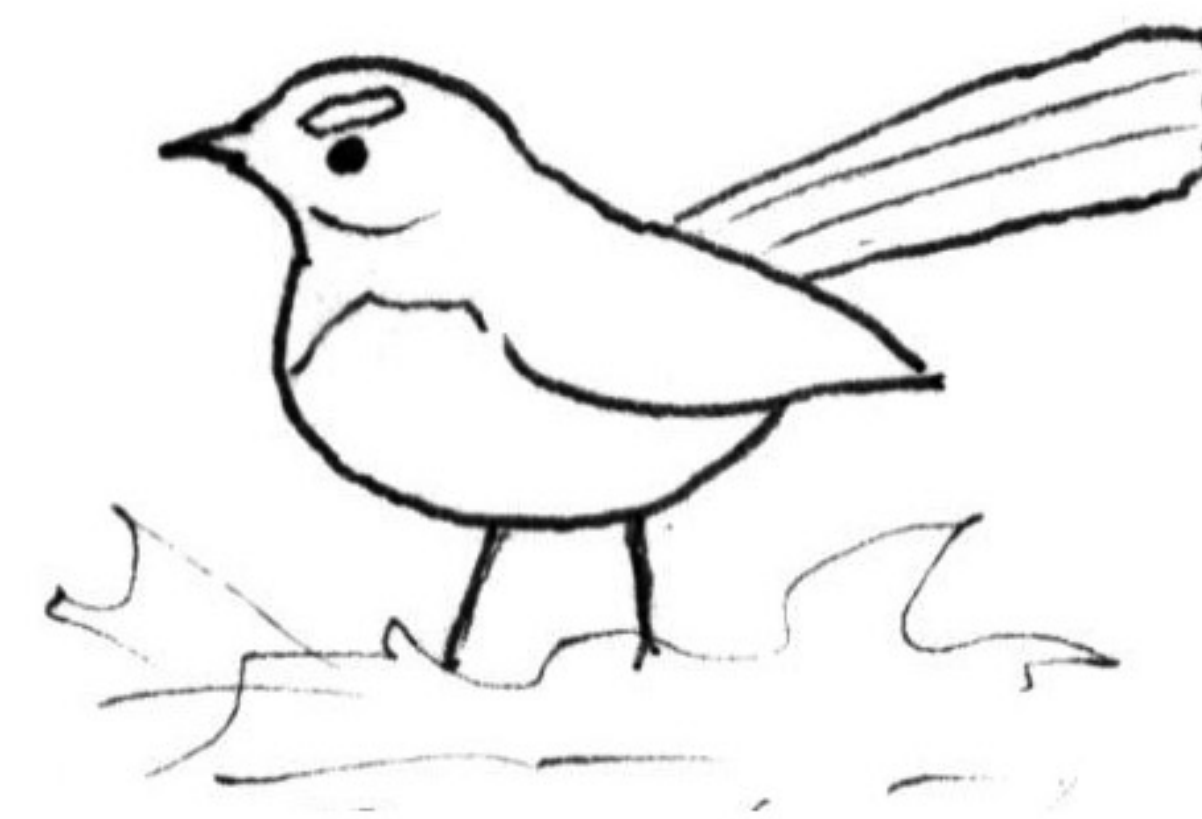
Wedge-tailed Eagle  
*Aquila audax*  
Find 6



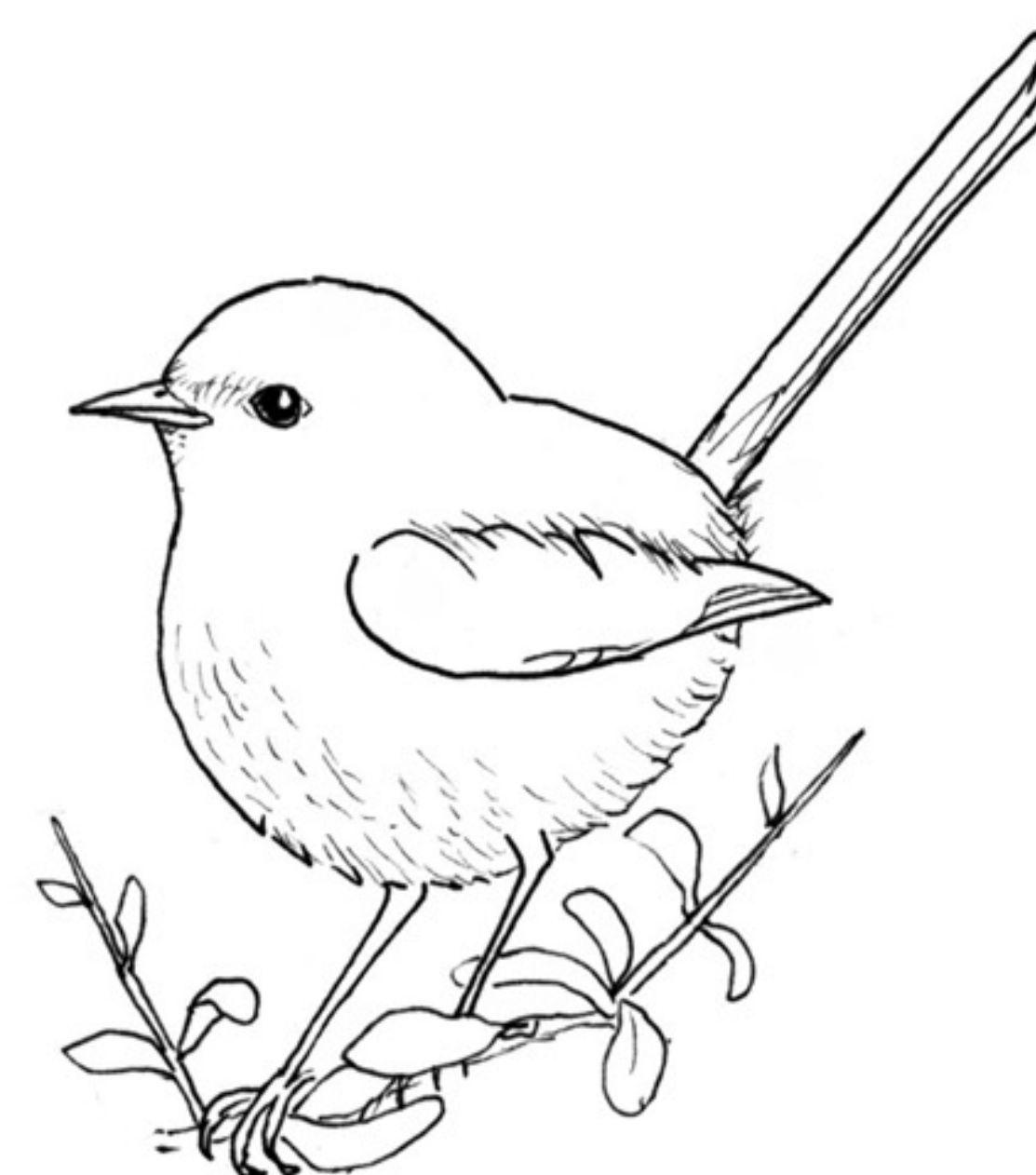
Banded Lapwing  
*Vanellus tricolor*  
Find 3



Australasian Pipit  
*Anthus novaeseelandiae*  
Find 3



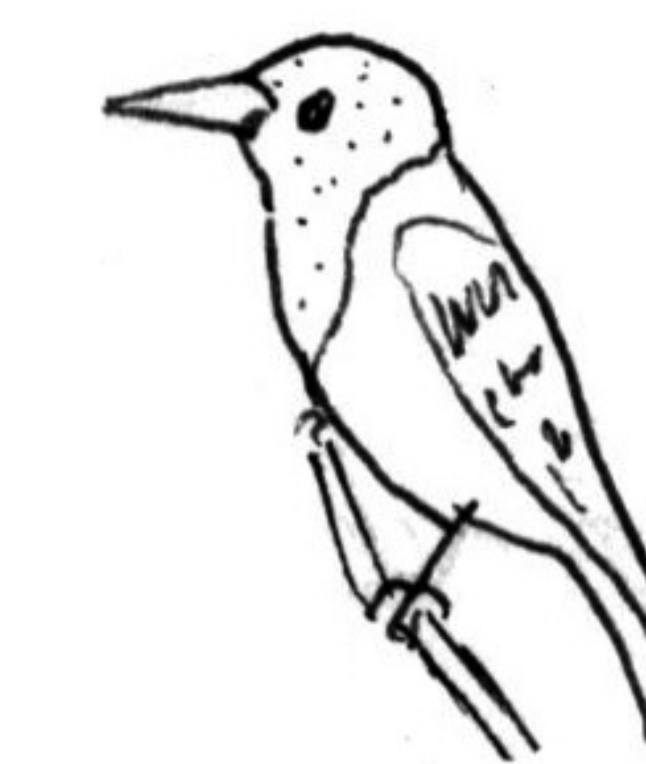
Willy Wagtail  
*Rhipidura leucophrys*  
Find 1



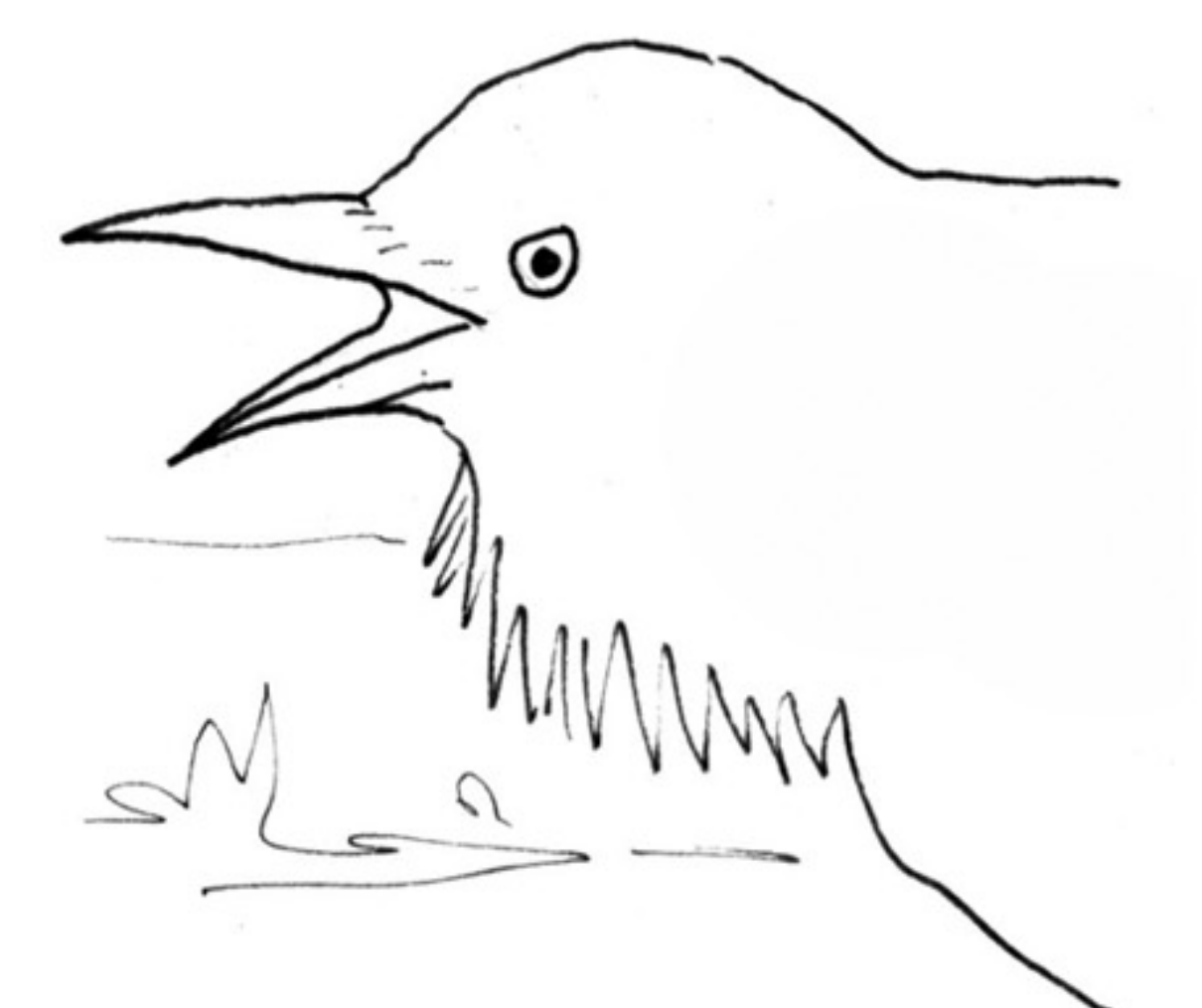
White-winged  
Fairy-wren  
*Malurus leucopterus*  
Find 3



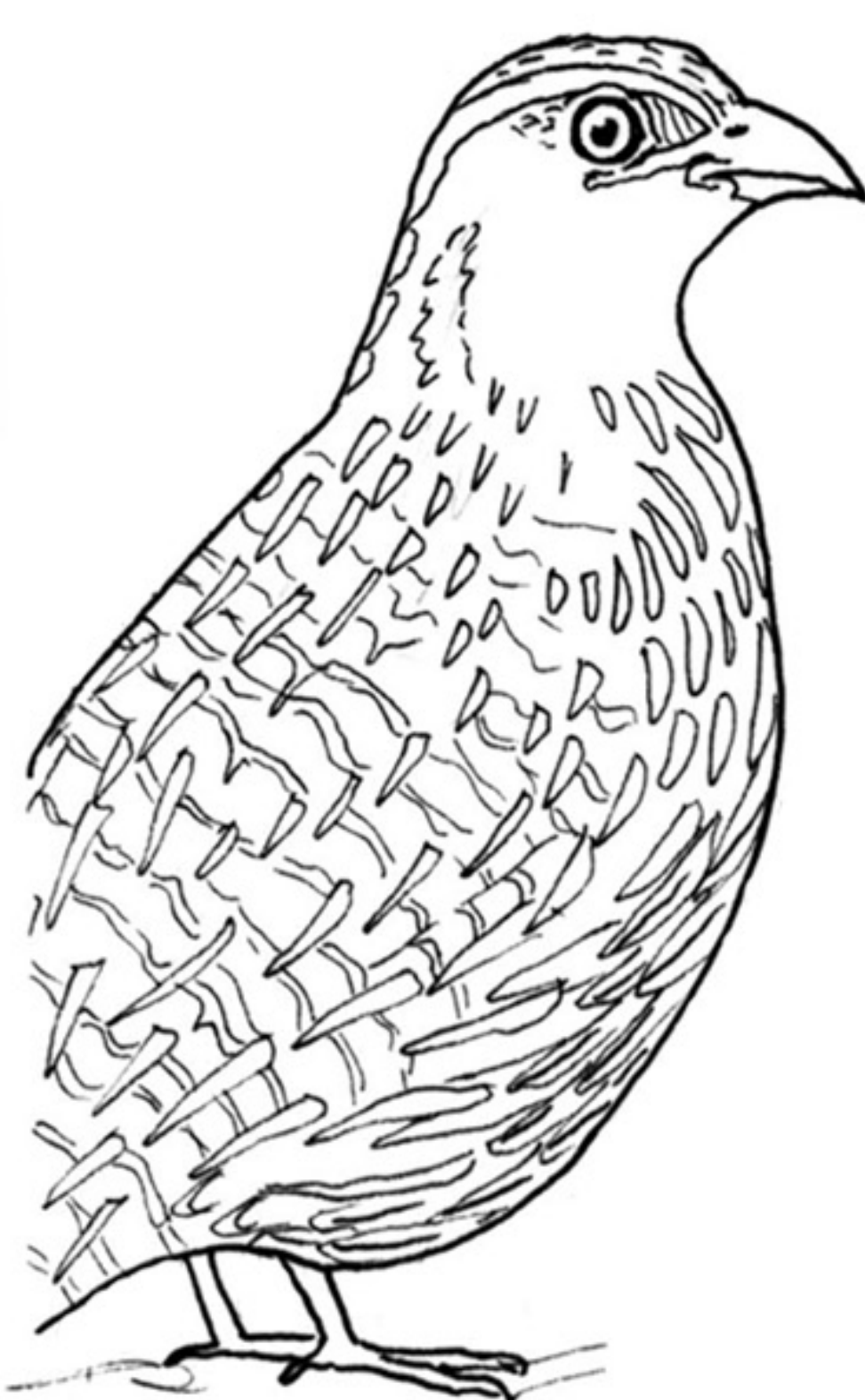
Singing Bushlark  
*Mirafrja javanica*  
Find 1



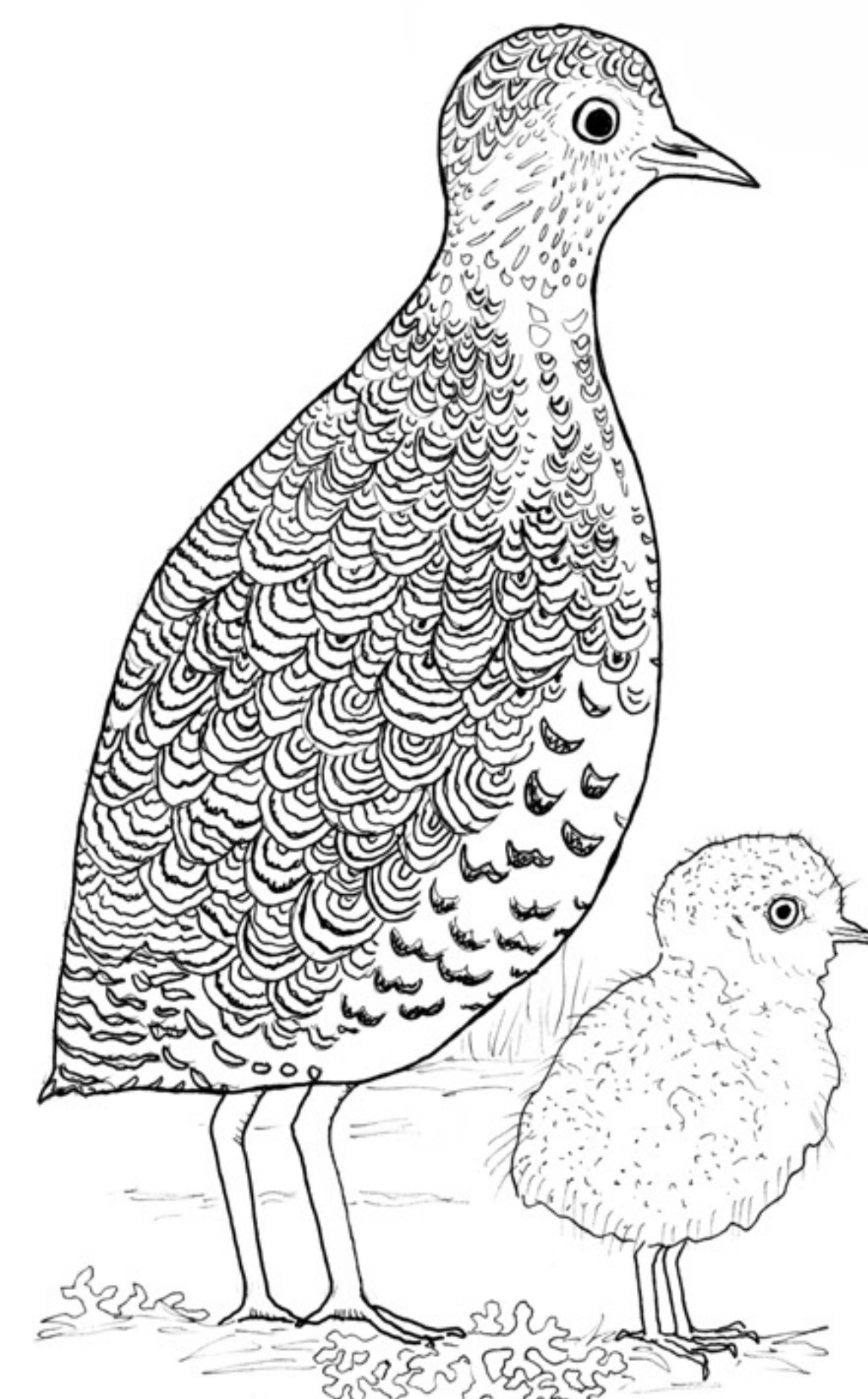
Pied Butcherbird  
*Cracticus nigrogularis*  
Find 1



Australian Raven  
*Corvus coronoides*  
Find 2



Stubble Quail  
*Coturnix pectoralis*  
Find 1



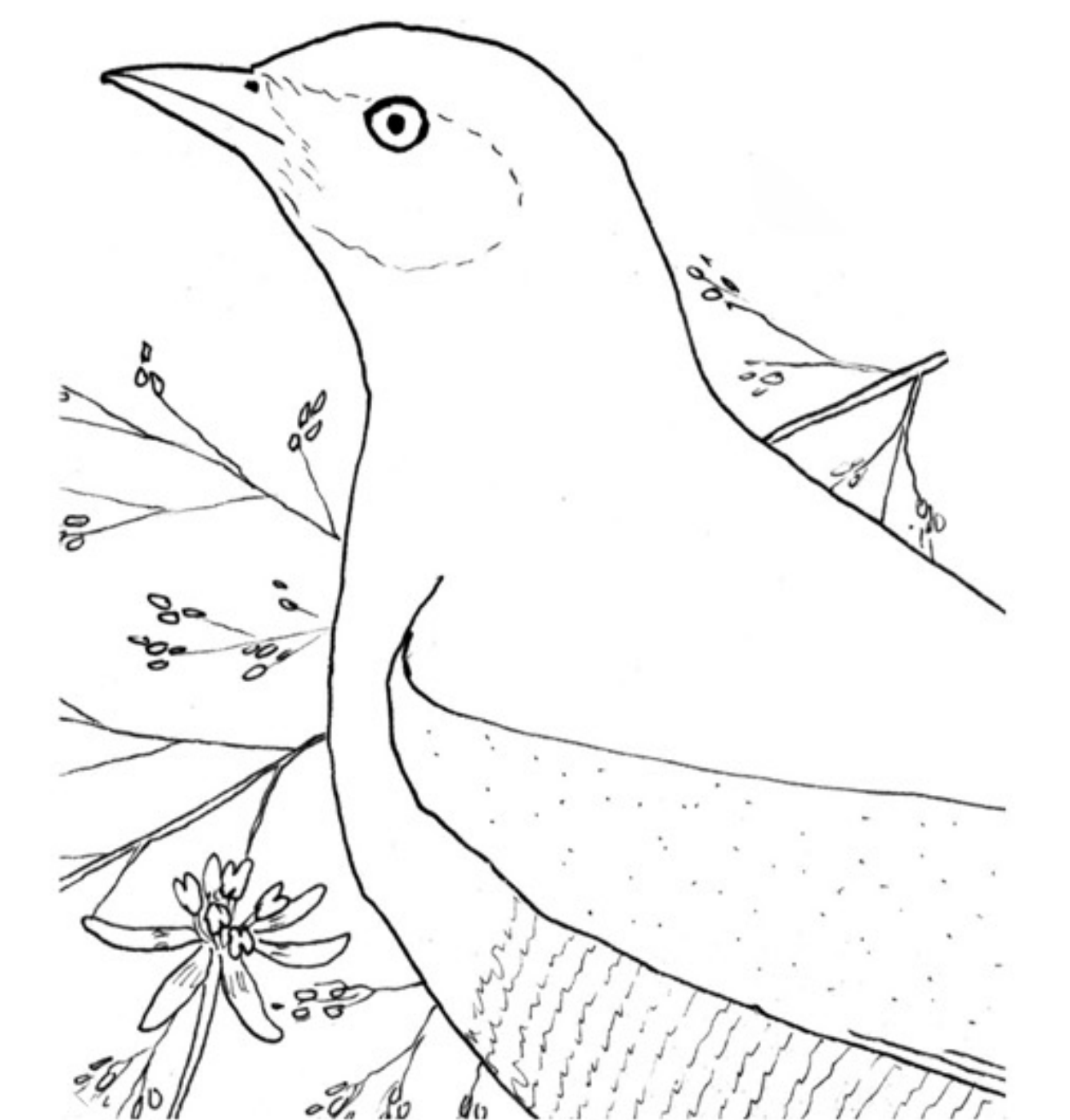
Plains-wanderer  
*Pedionomus torquatus*  
Find 16



Little Button-quail  
*Turnix velox*  
Find 2



Australian Magpie  
*Cracticus tibicen*  
Find 2

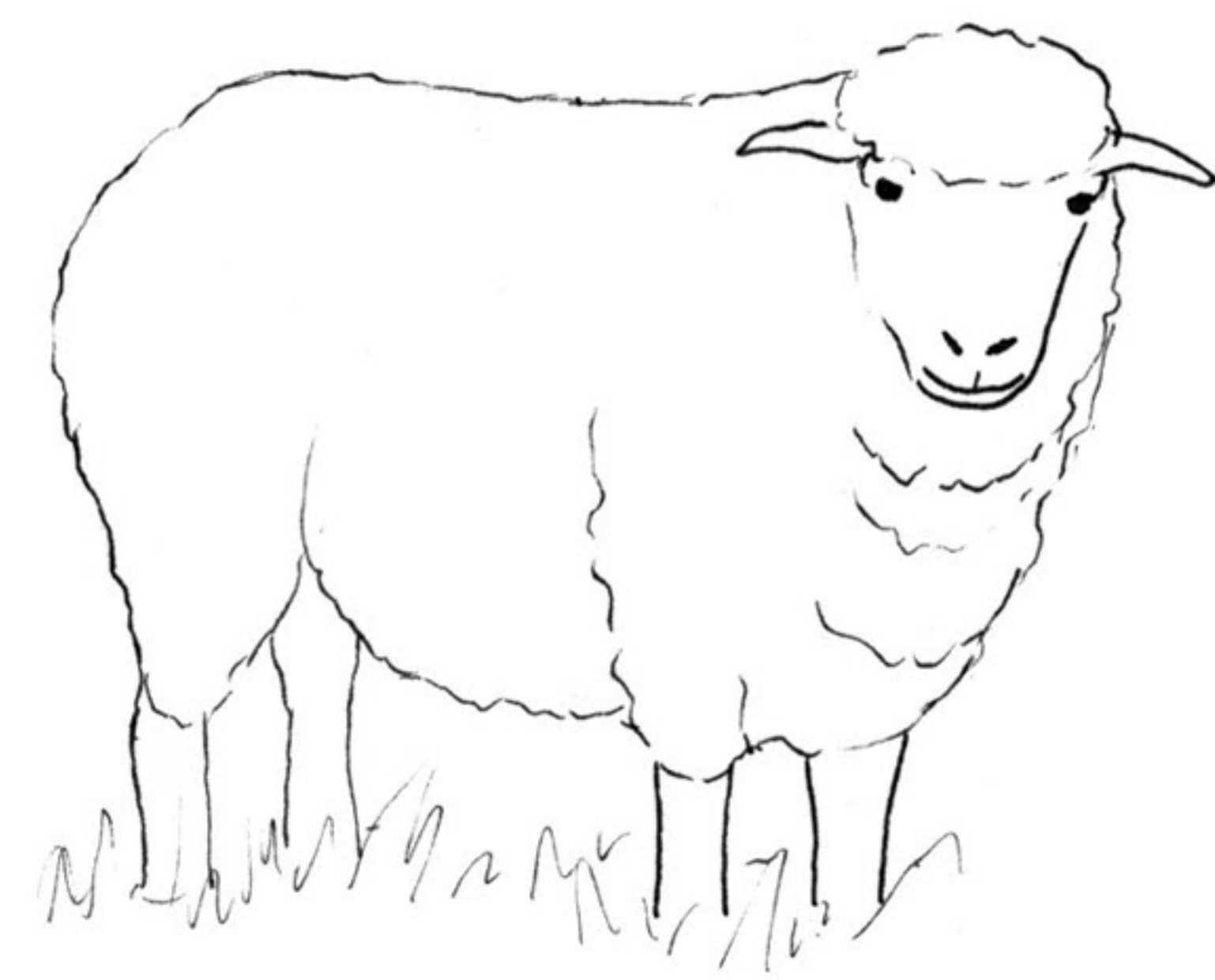


Ground Cuckoo-shrike  
*Coracina maxima*  
Find 2

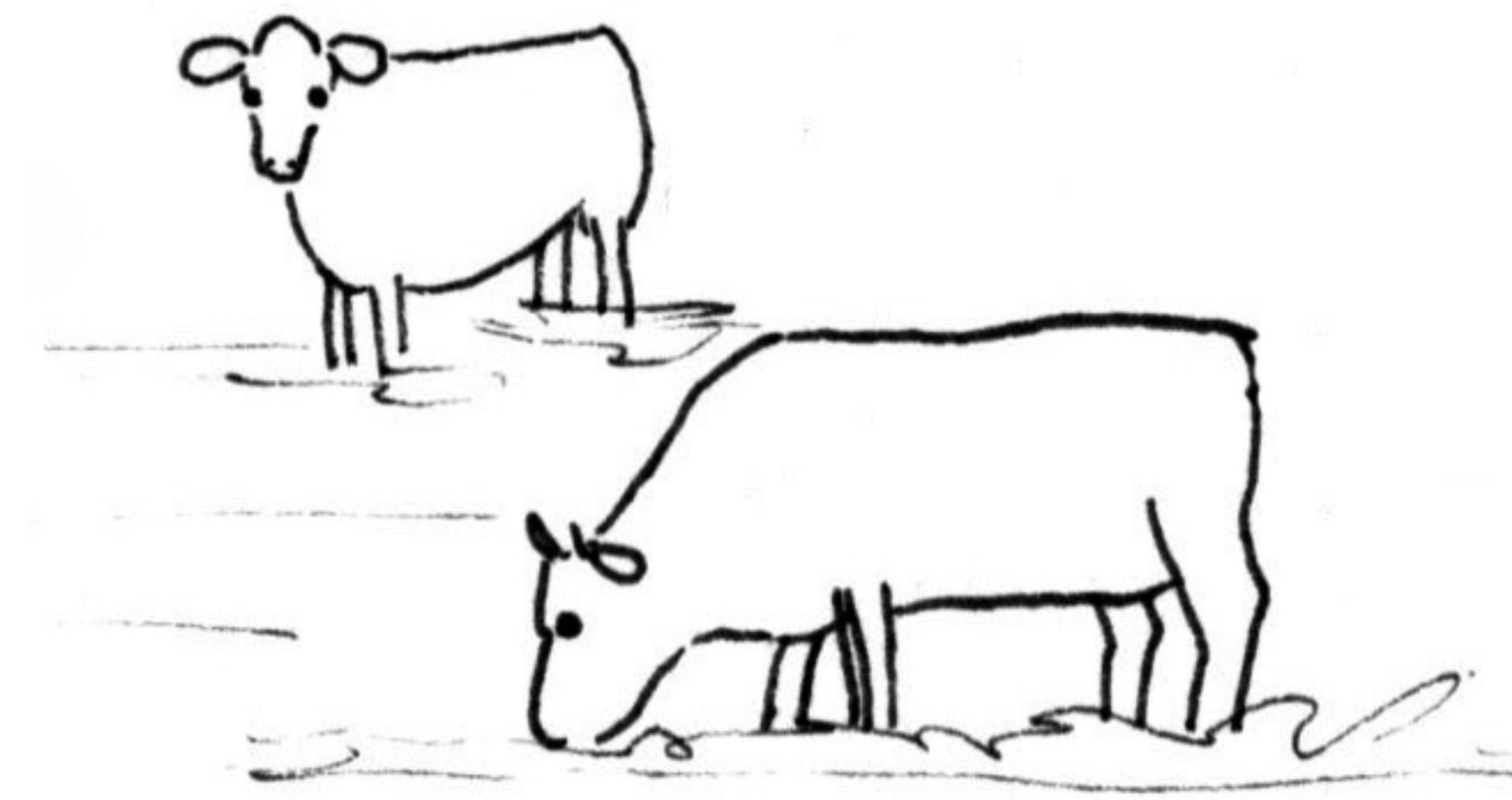




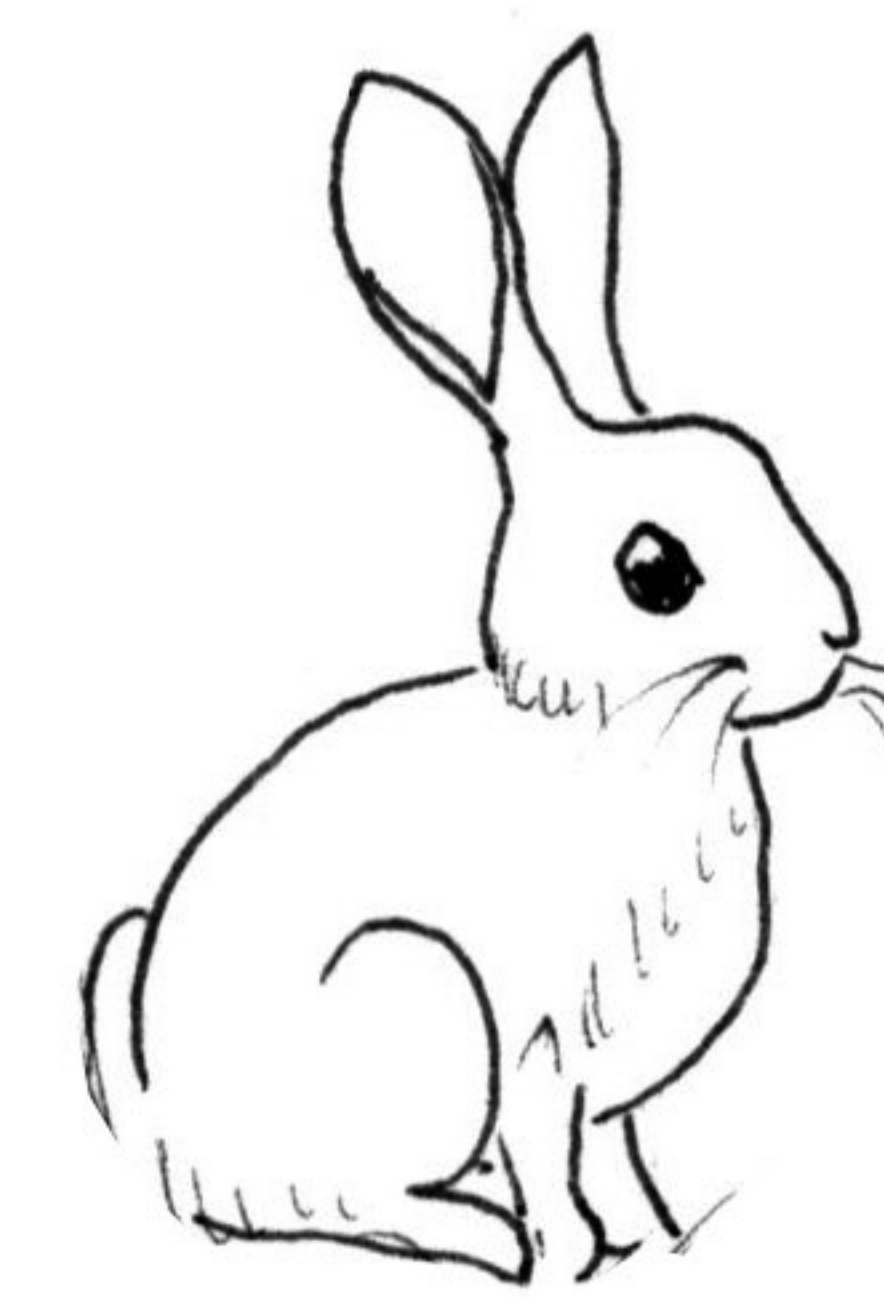
Kelpie *Canis familiaris*  
(Introduced)  
Find 4



Sheep *Ovis aries*  
(Introduced)  
Find 3



Cattle *Bos taurus*  
(Introduced)  
Find 3



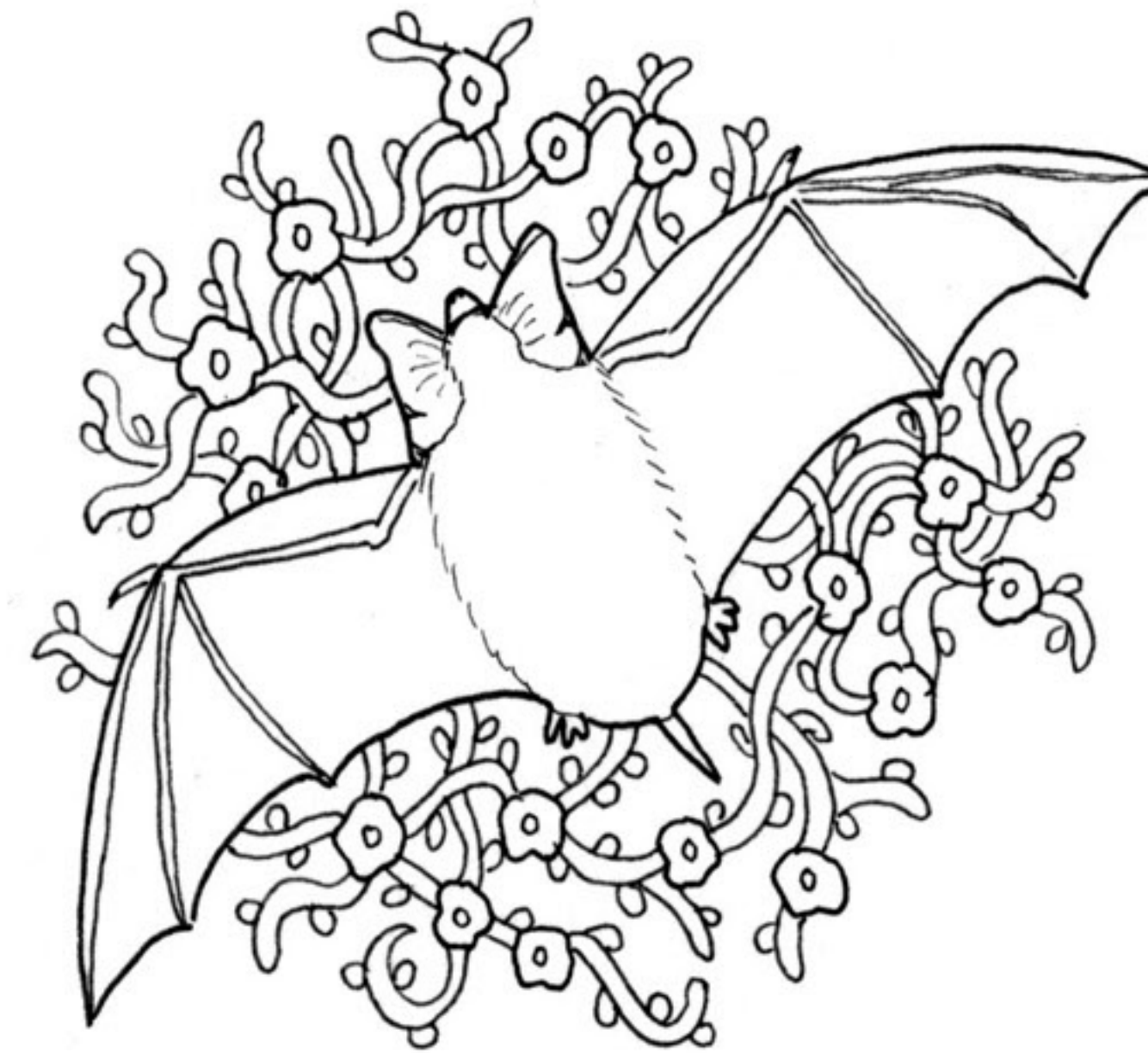
European Rabbit  
*Oryctolagus cuniculus*  
(Introduced) Find 1



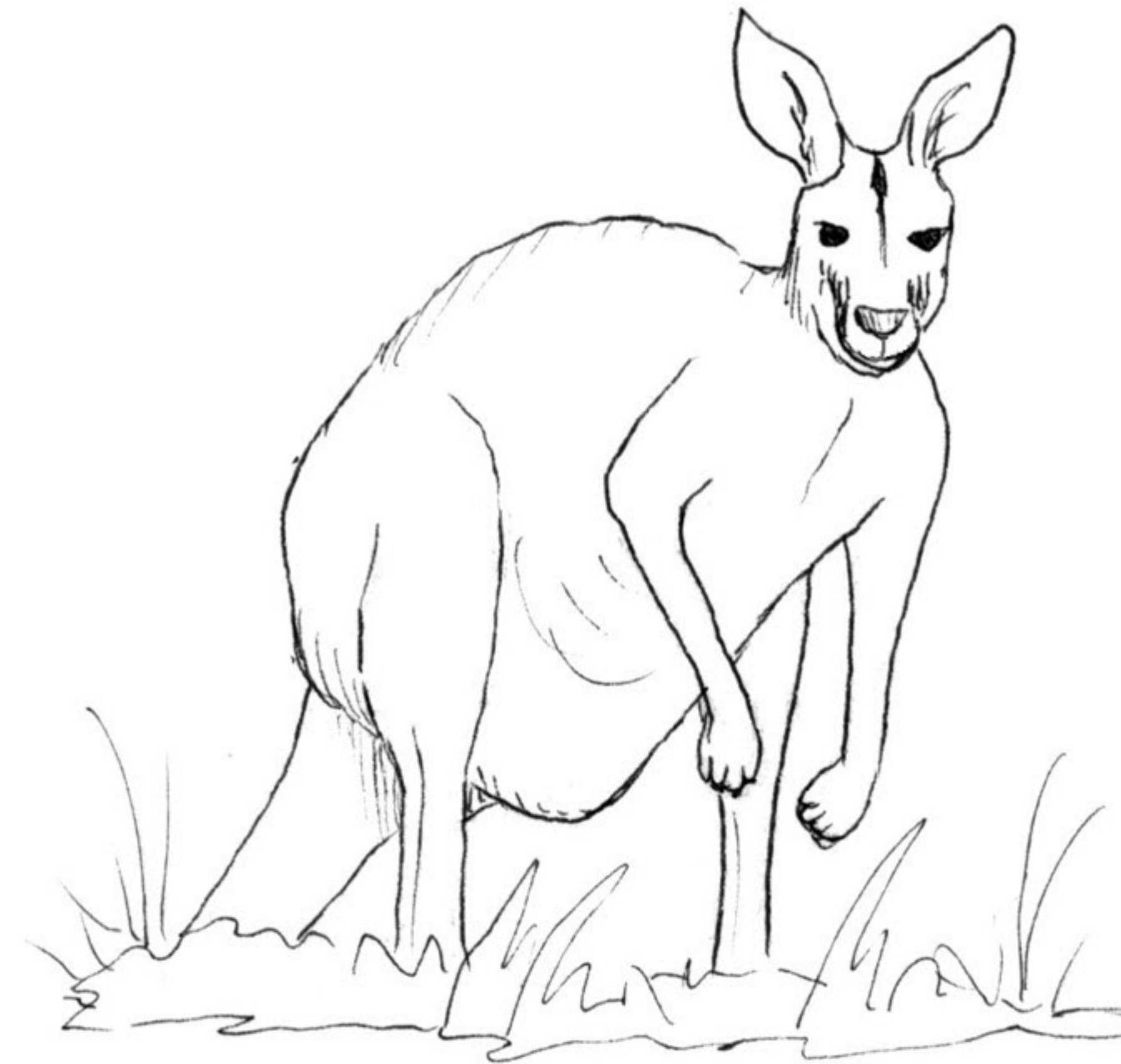
Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*  
(Introduced) Find 1



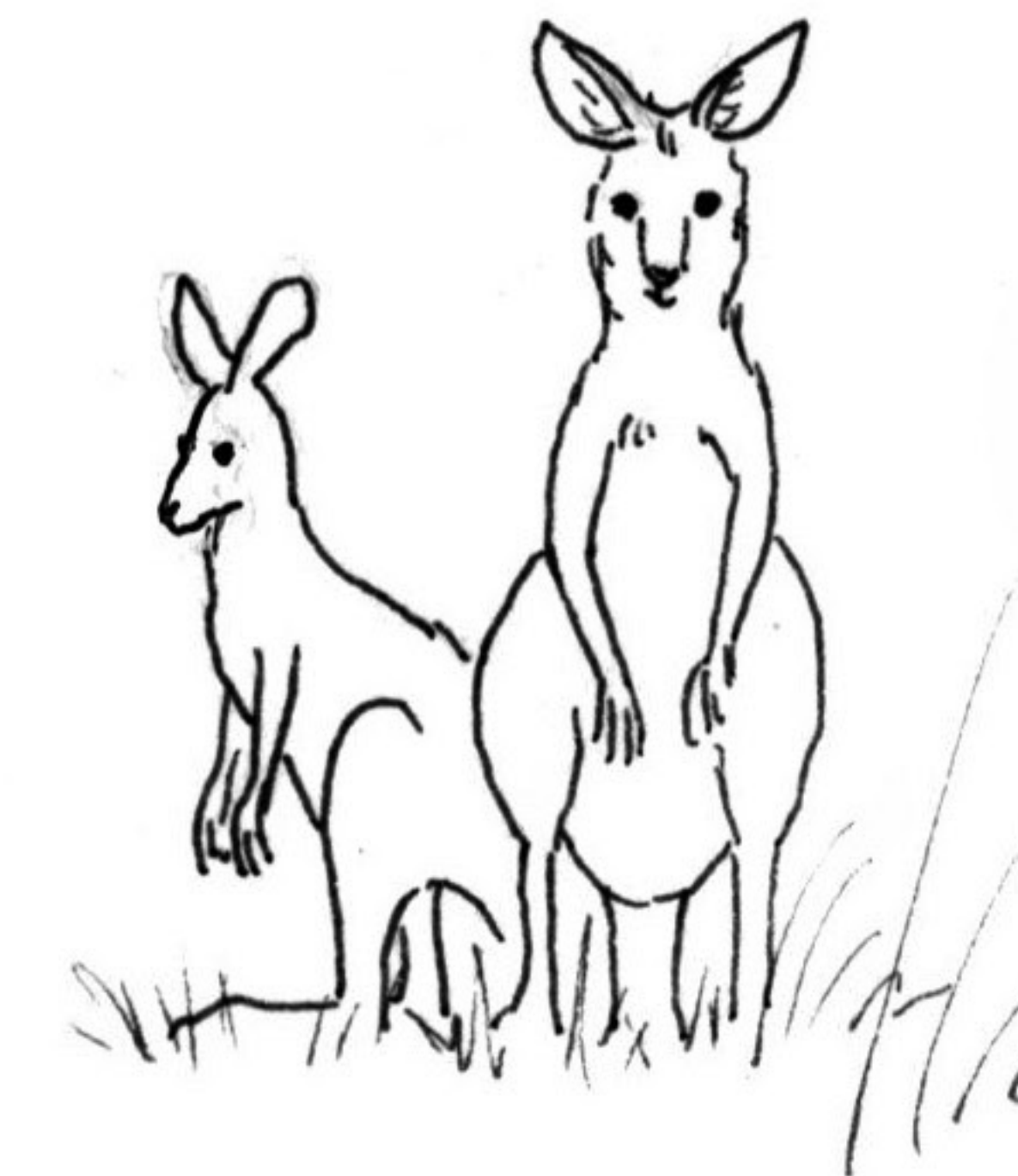
Fat-tailed Dunnart  
*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*  
Find 6



White-striped Freetail-bat  
*Tadarida australis*  
Find 1



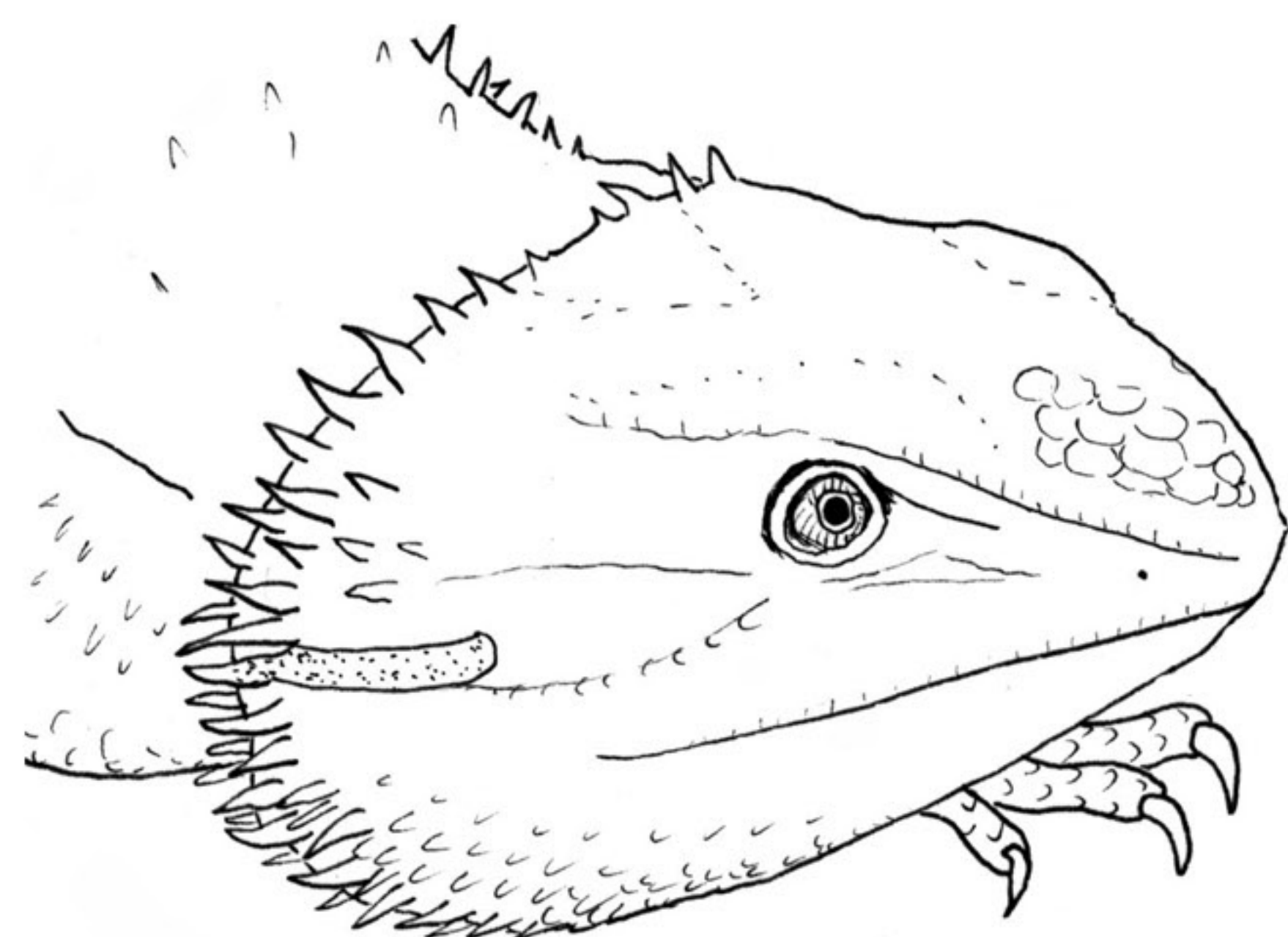
Red Kangaroo *Macropus rufus*  
Find 4



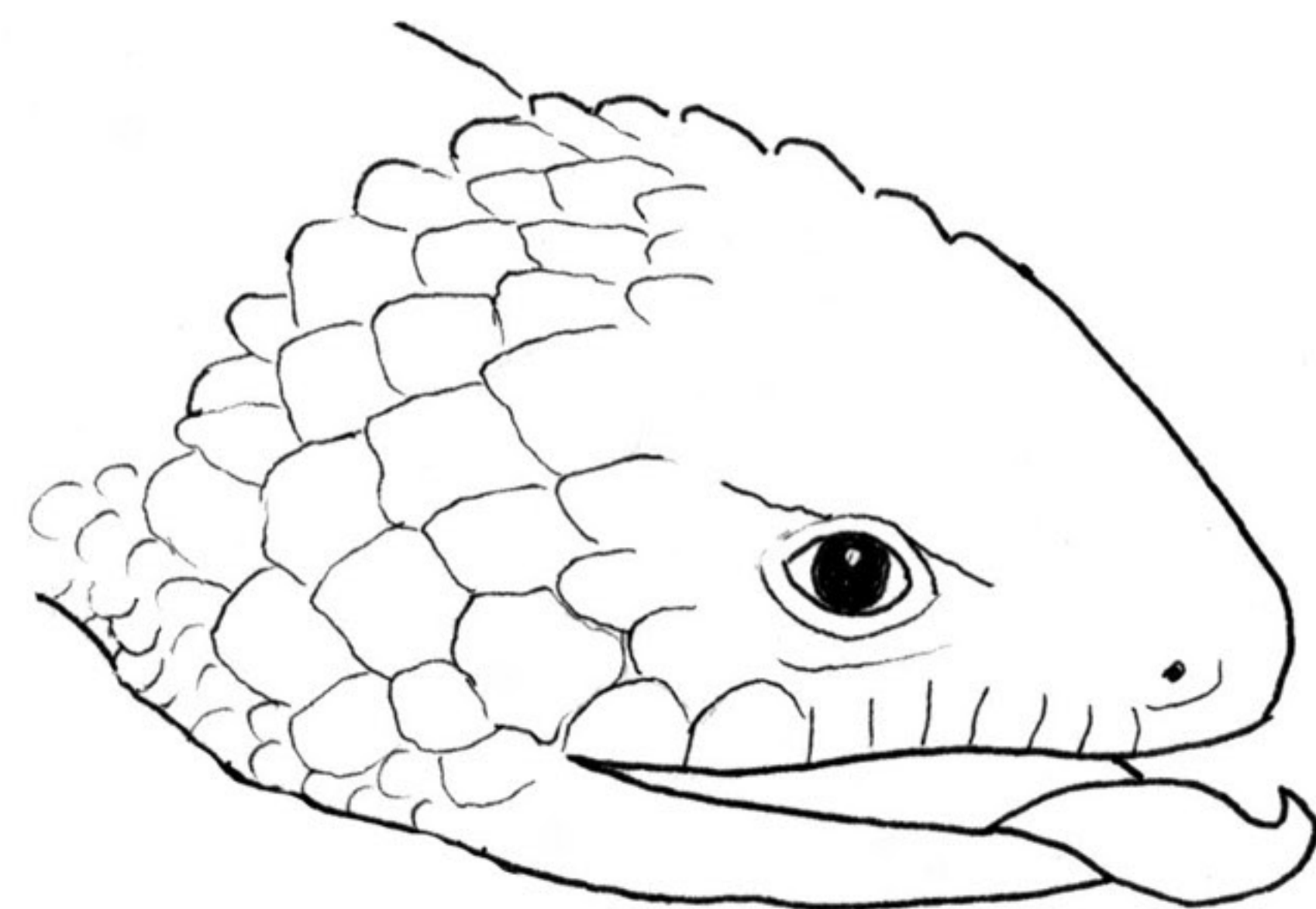
Western Grey Kangaroo  
*Macropus fuliginosus*  
Find 15



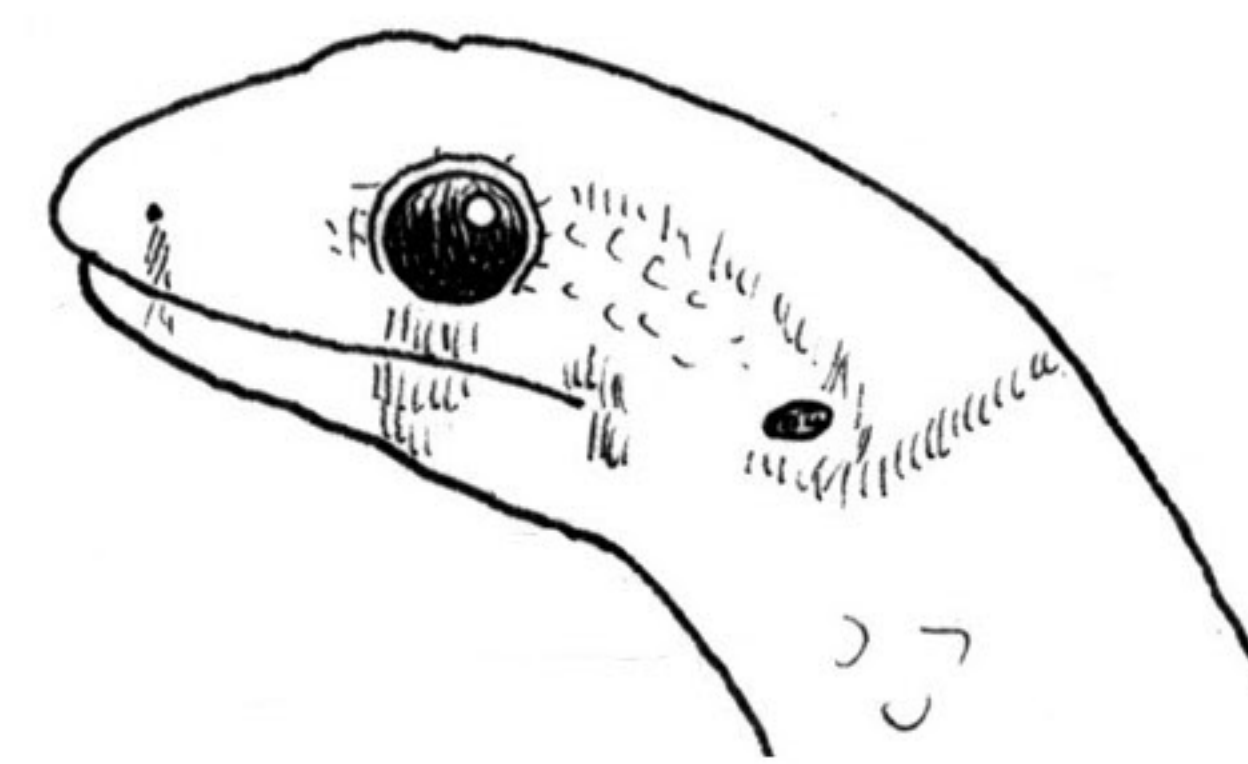
Tessellated Gecko  
*Diplodactylus tessellatus*  
Find 2



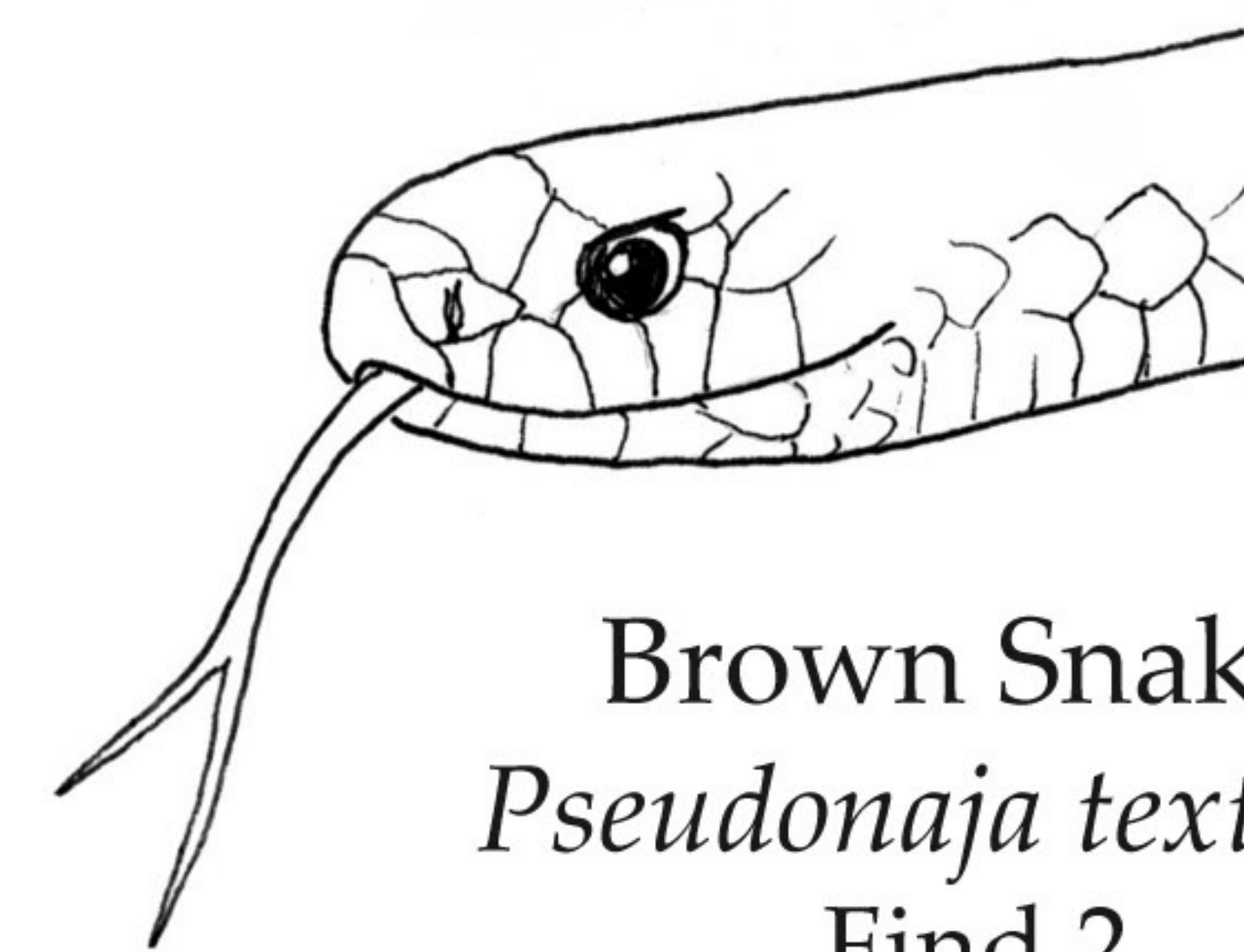
Bearded Dragon  
*Pogona barbata*  
Find 1



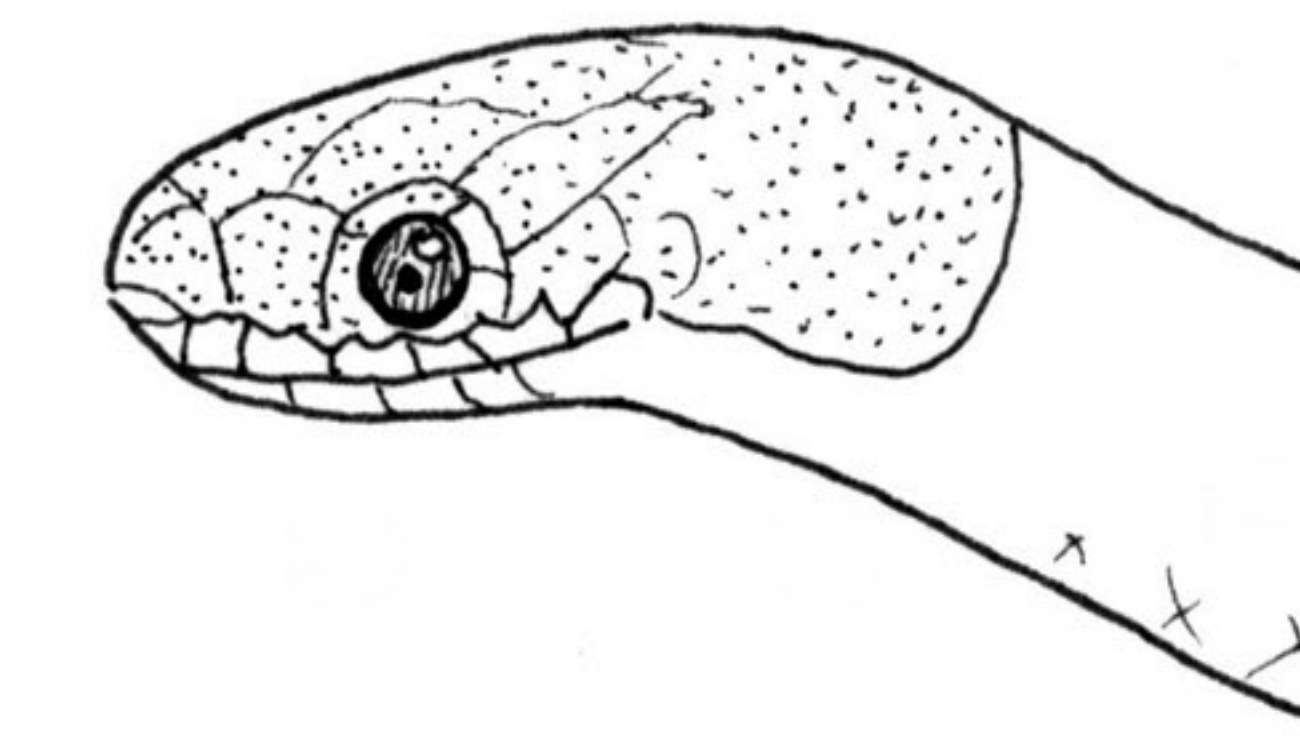
Shingleback *Tiliqua rugosa*  
Find 1



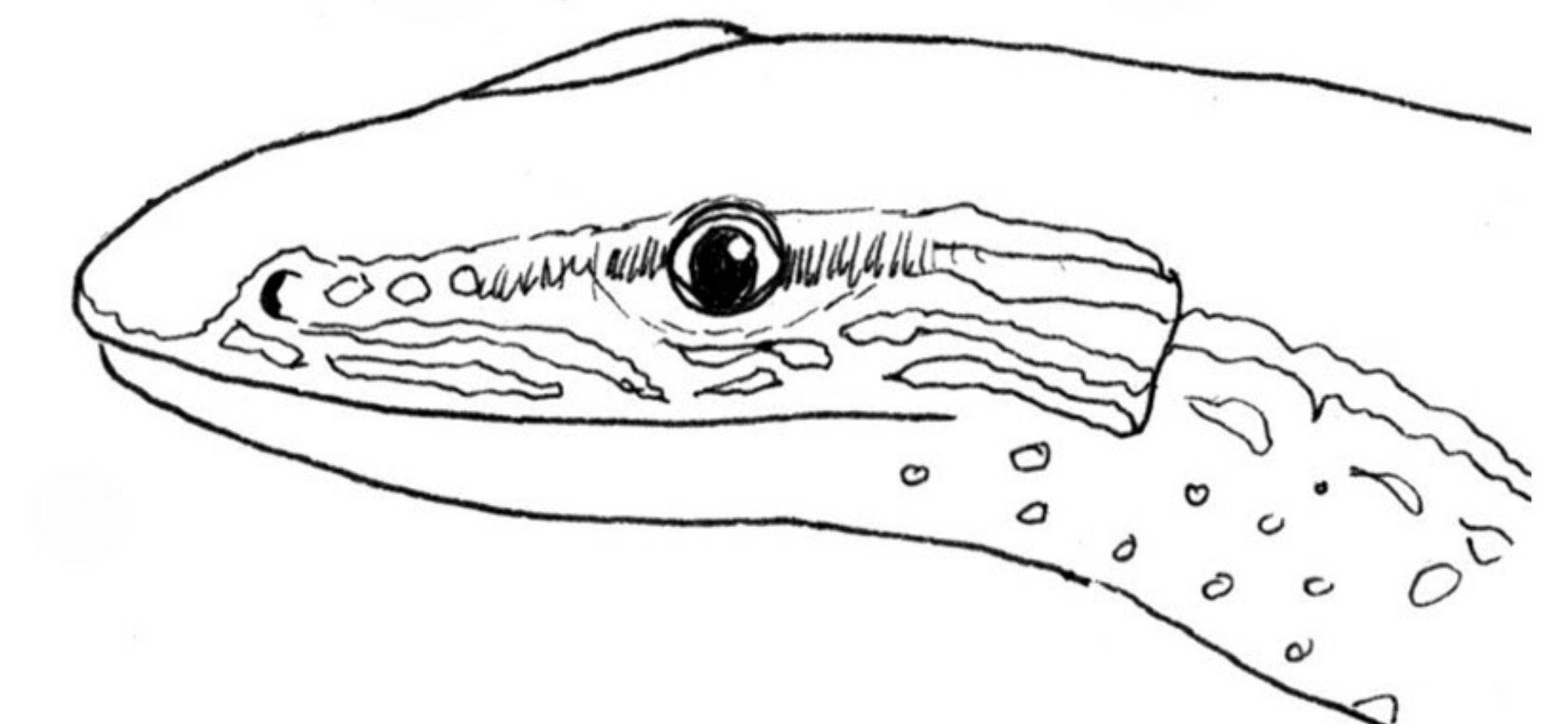
Eastern Hooded  
Scaly-foot  
*Pygopus schraderi*  
Find 2



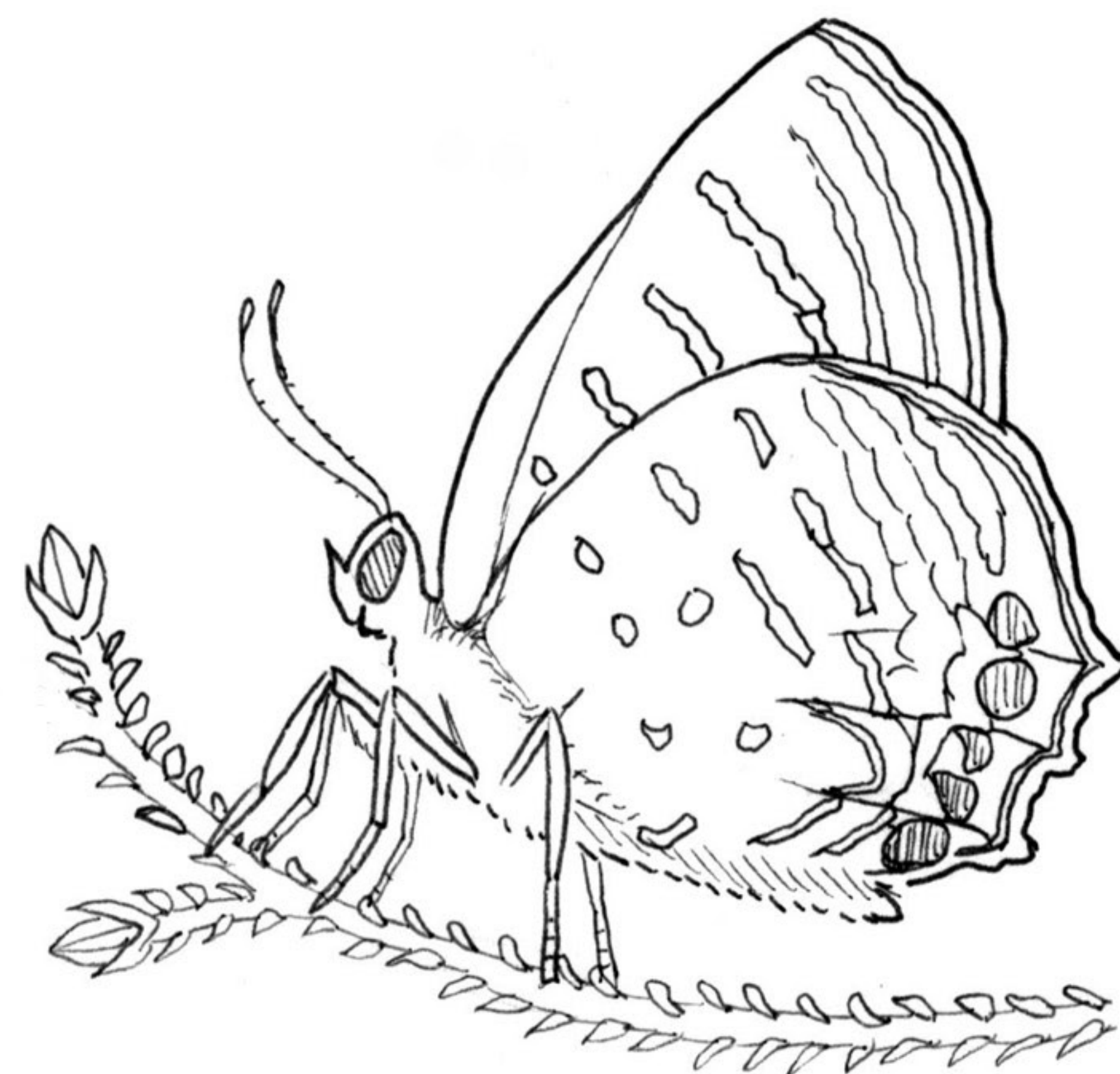
Brown Snake  
*Pseudonaja textilis*  
Find 2



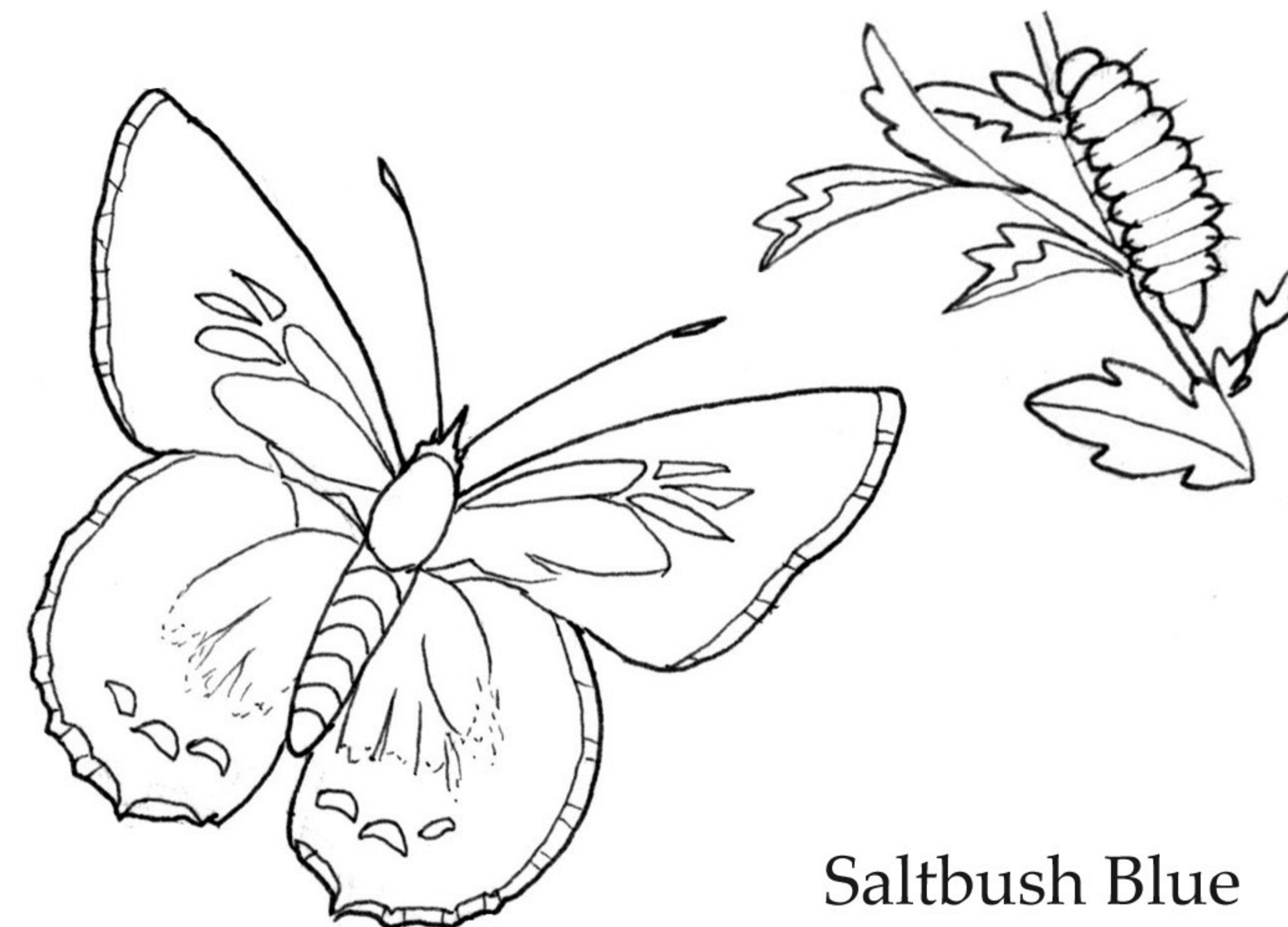
Curl Snake *Suta suta*  
Find 3



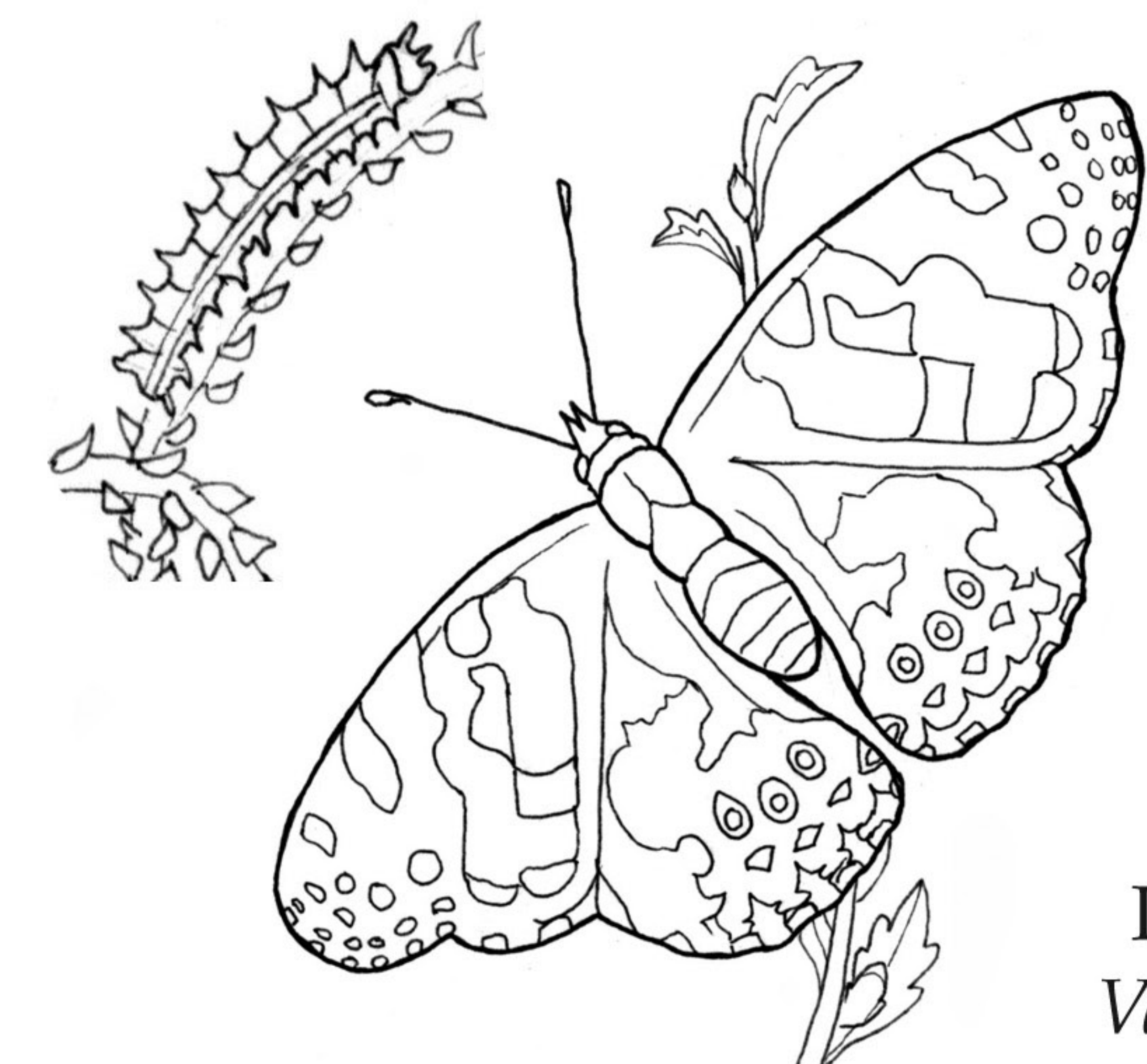
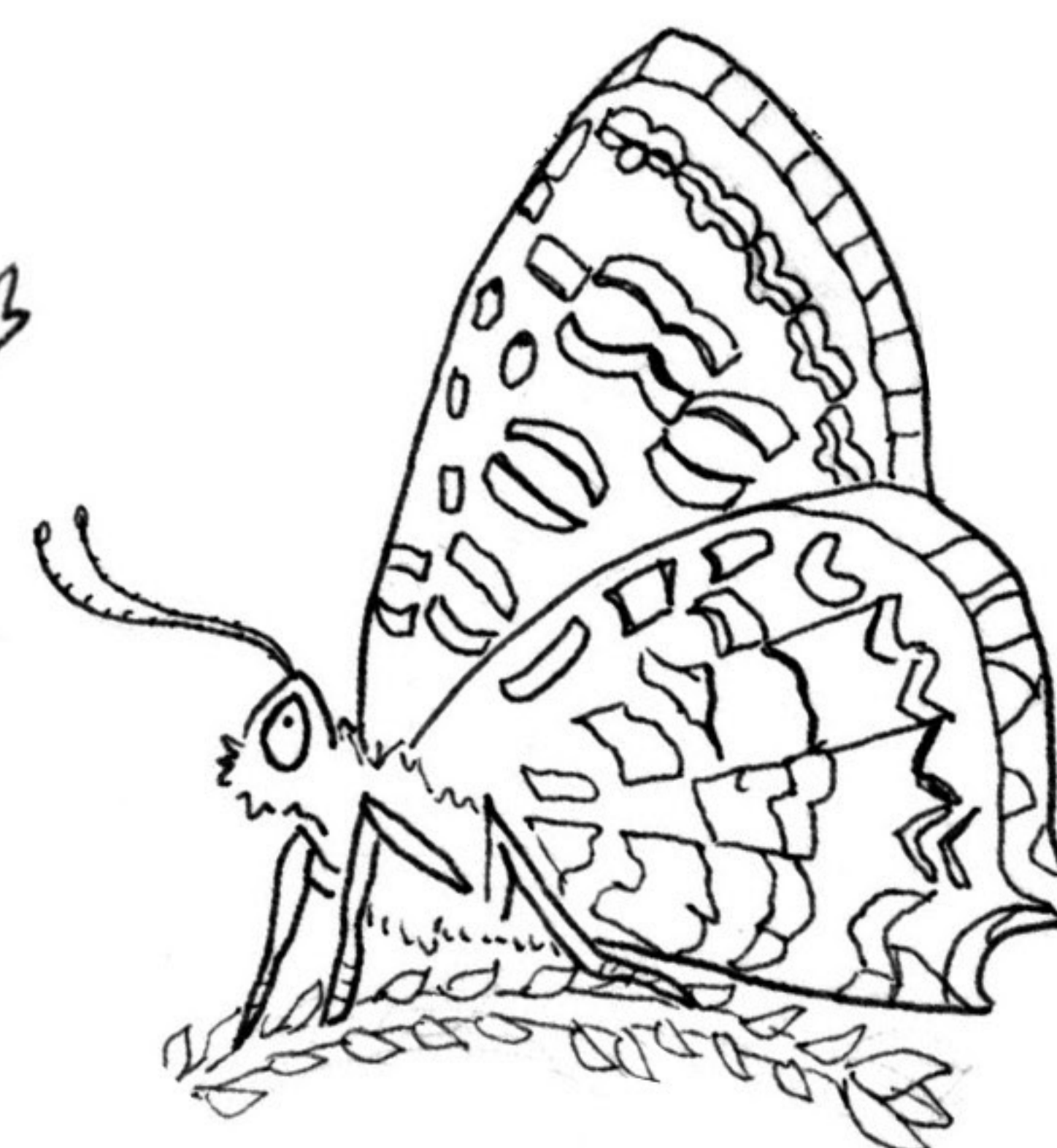
Sand Goanna  
*Varanus gouldii*  
Find 1



Stencilled Hairstreak  
*Jalmenus iclinus*  
Find 1

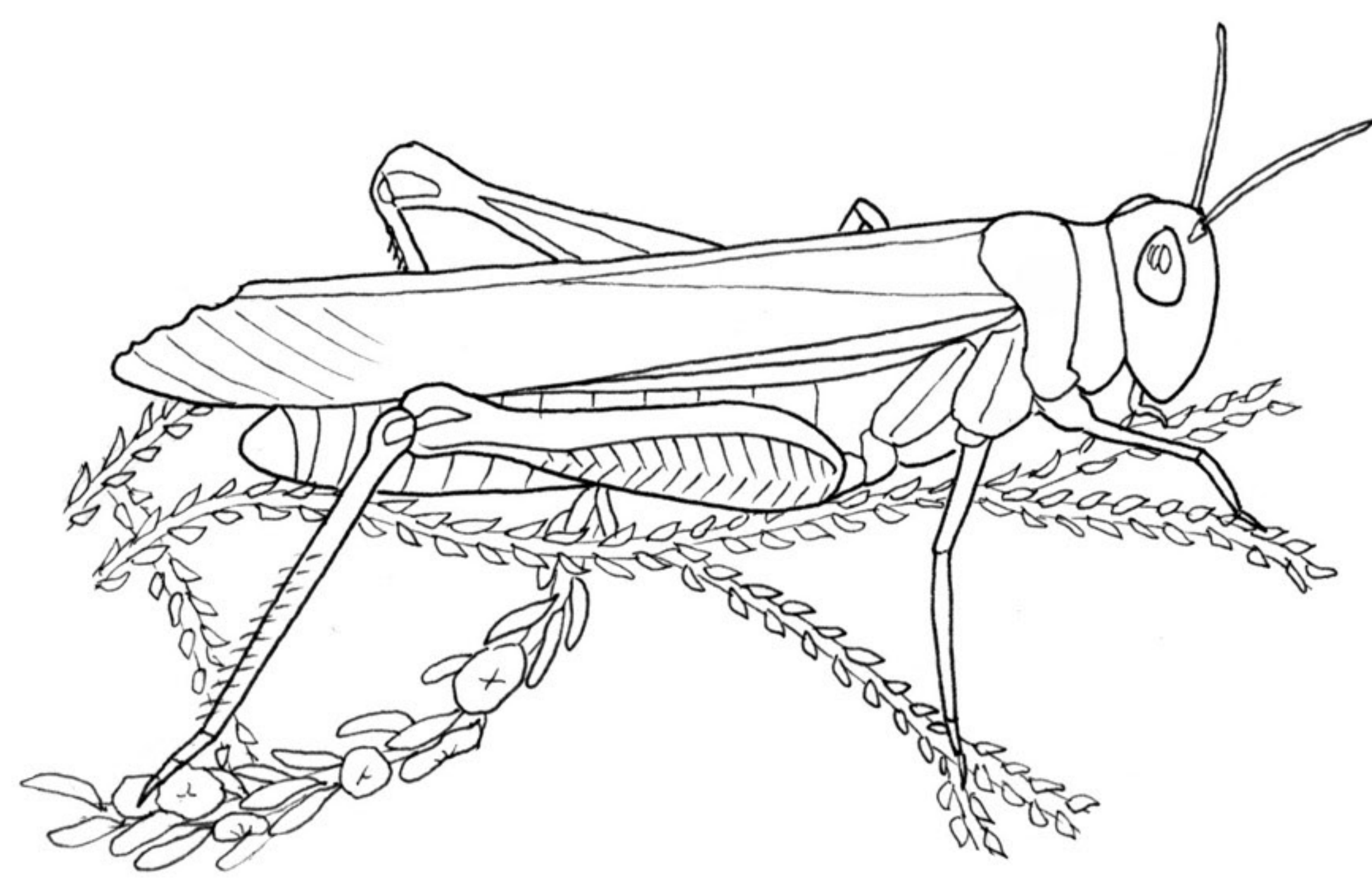


Saltbush Blue  
*Theclinessthes serpentata*  
Find 1 of each

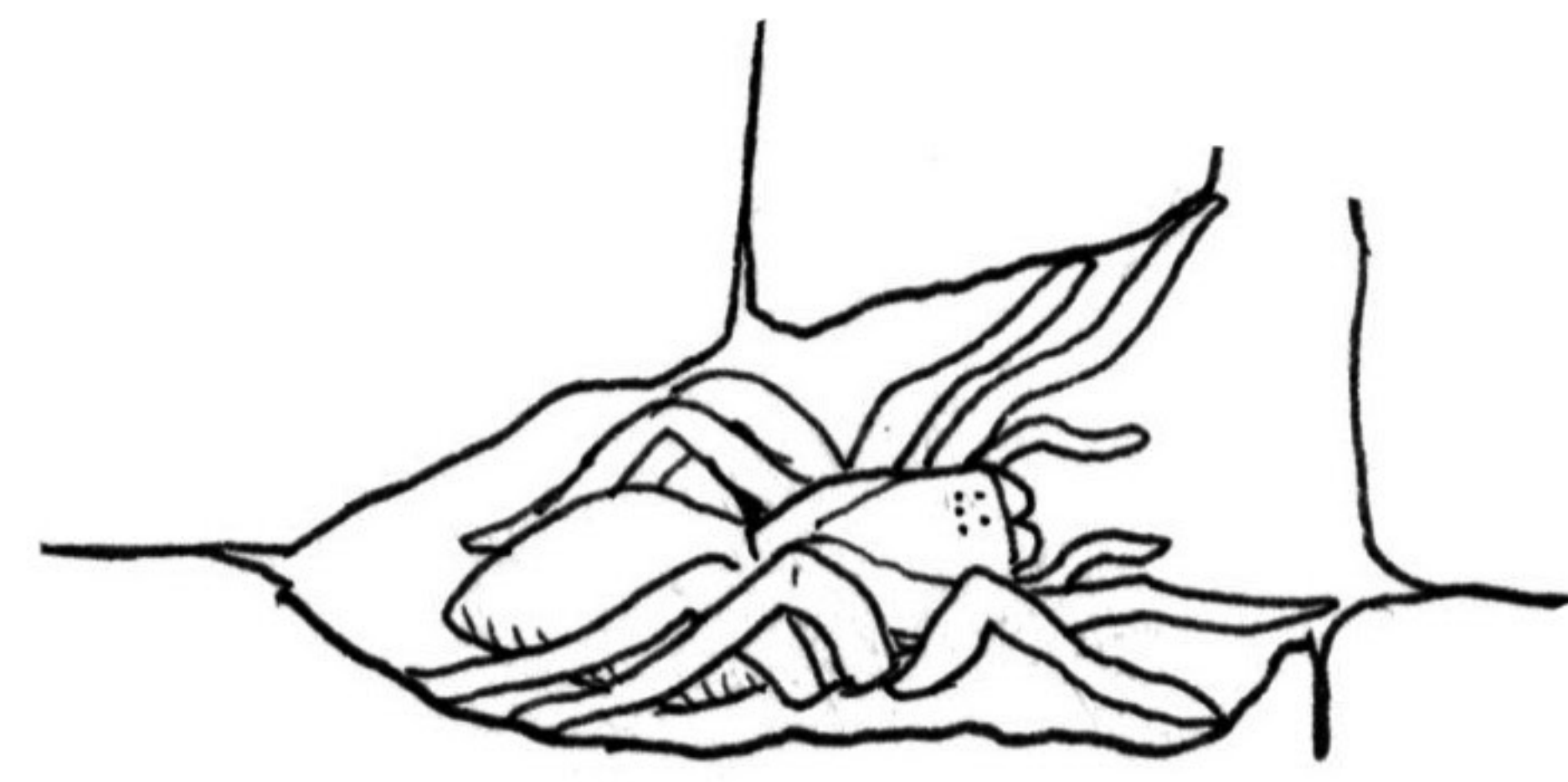


Australian  
Painted Lady  
*Vanessa kershawi*  
Find 1 of each

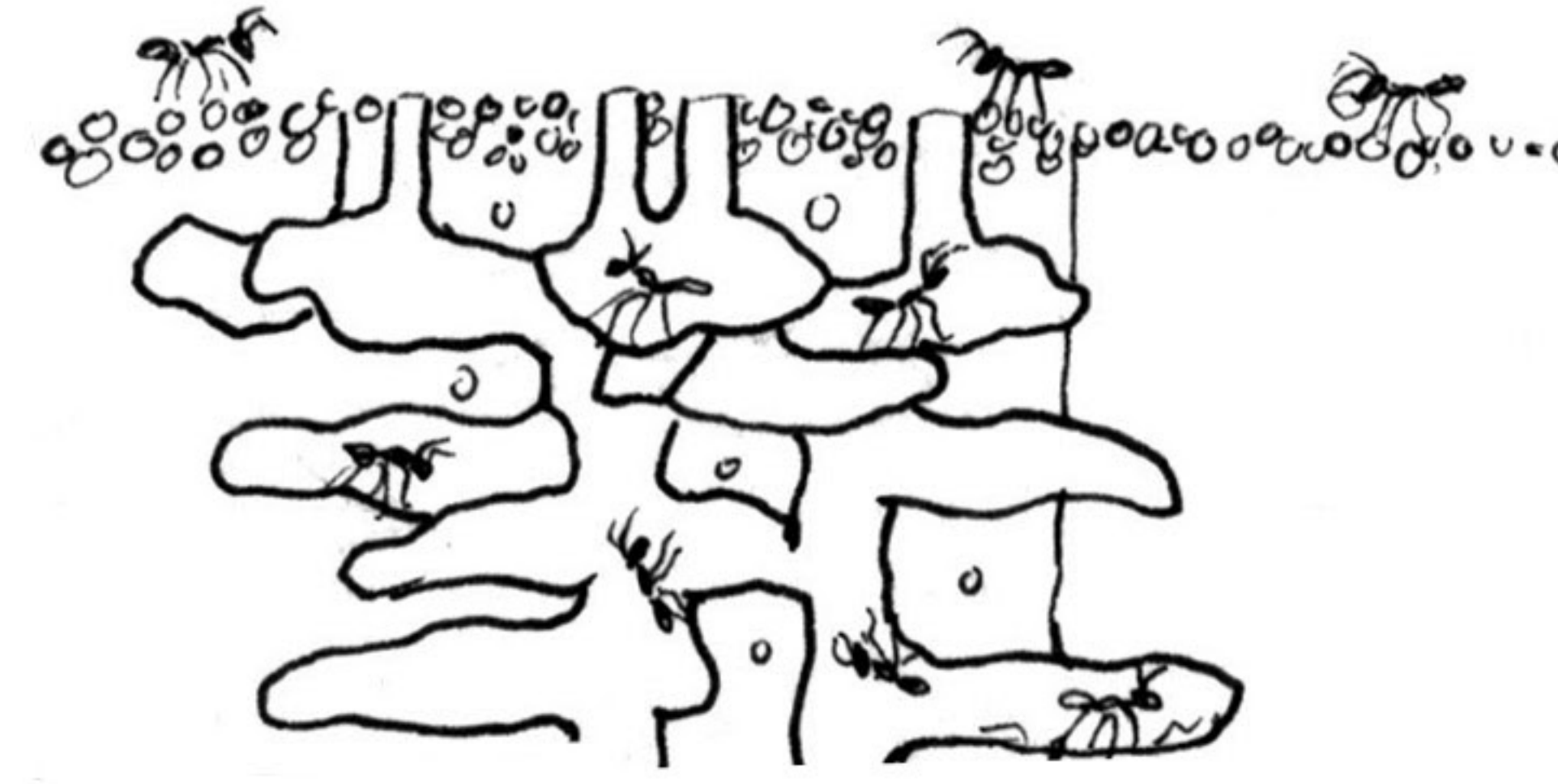




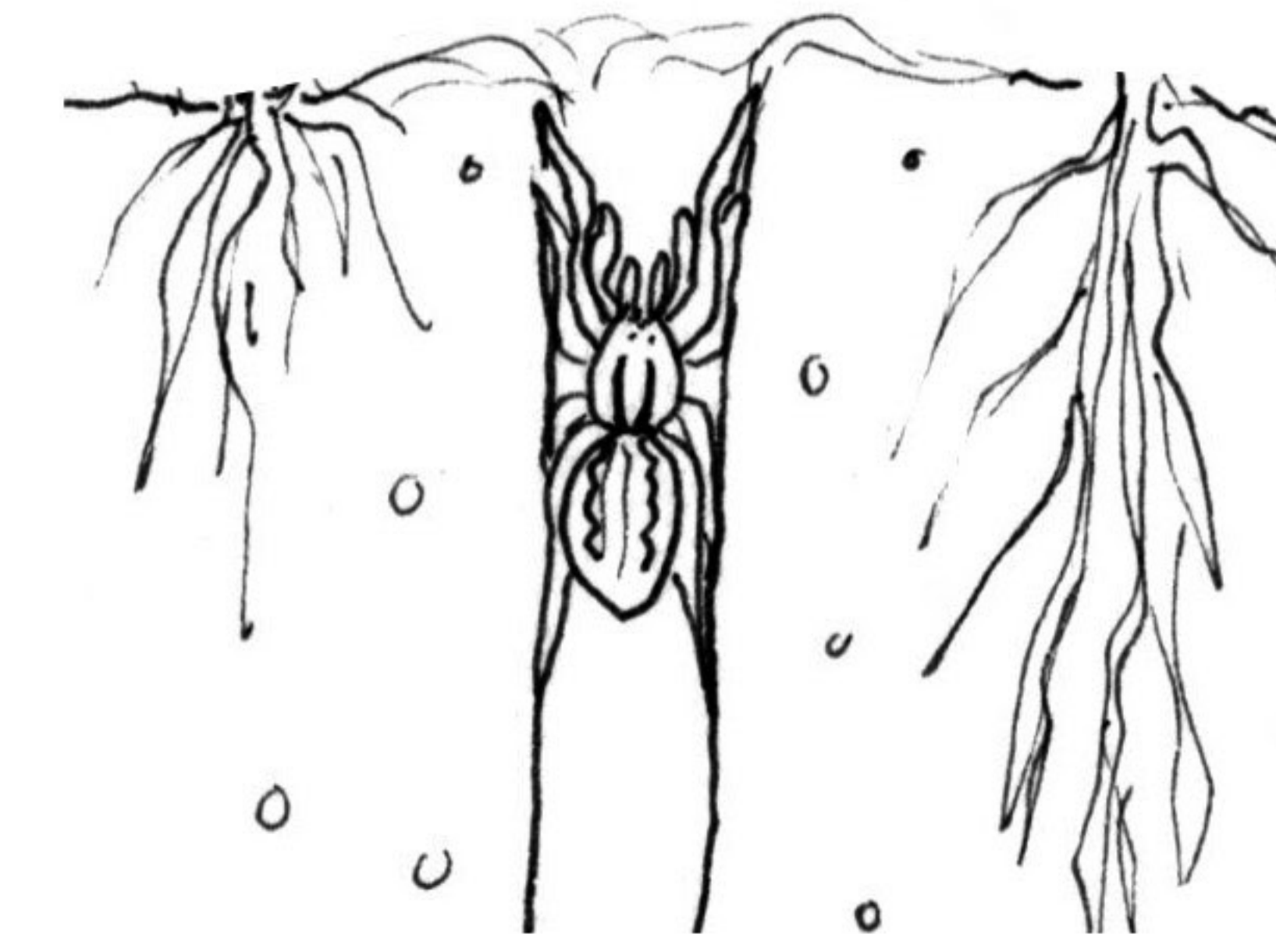
Australian Plague Locust  
*Chortoicetes terminifera*  
Find 2



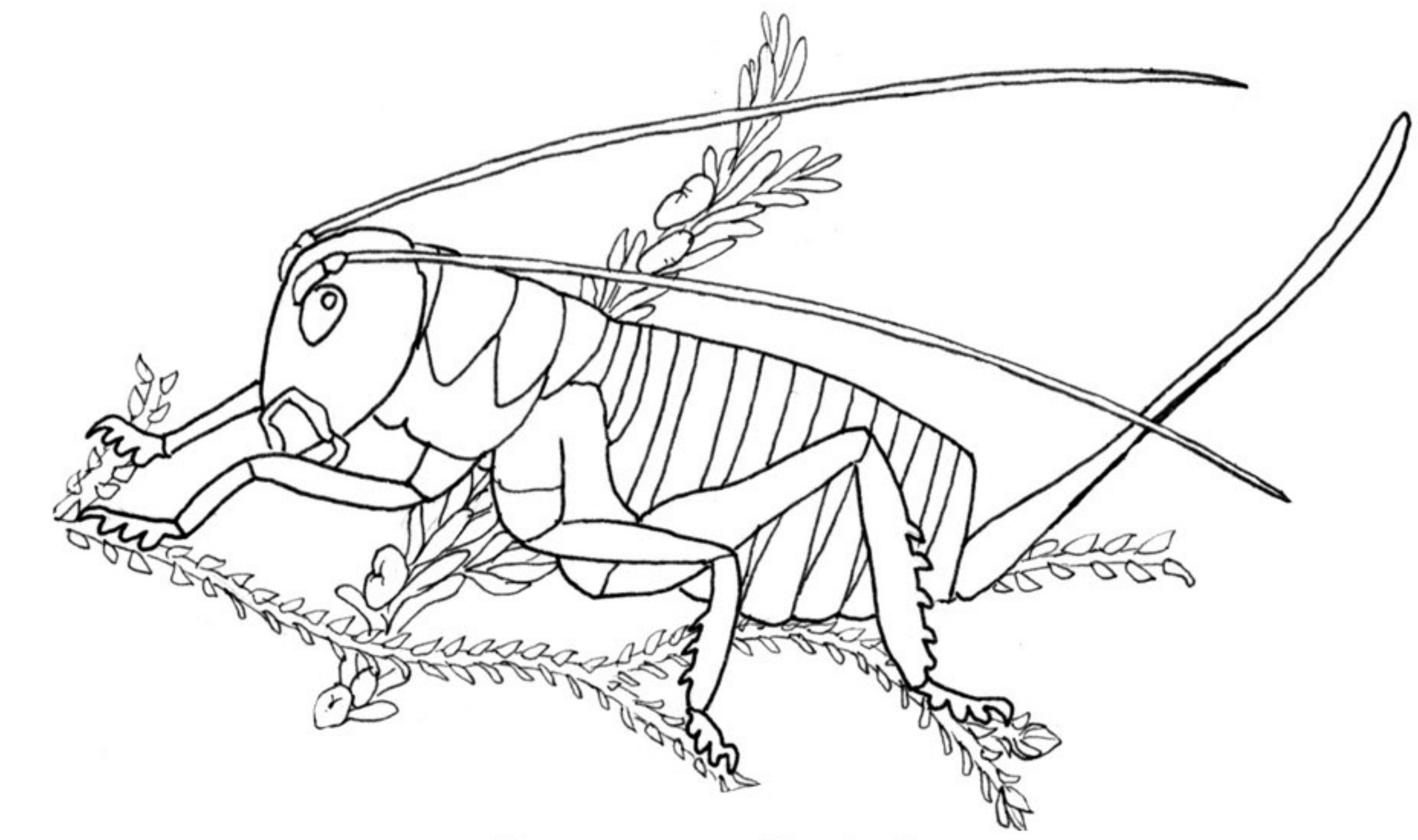
Trapdoor Spider  
Find 1



Meat Ant  
*Iridomyrmex purpureus*  
Find 39



Wolf Spider  
Find 1



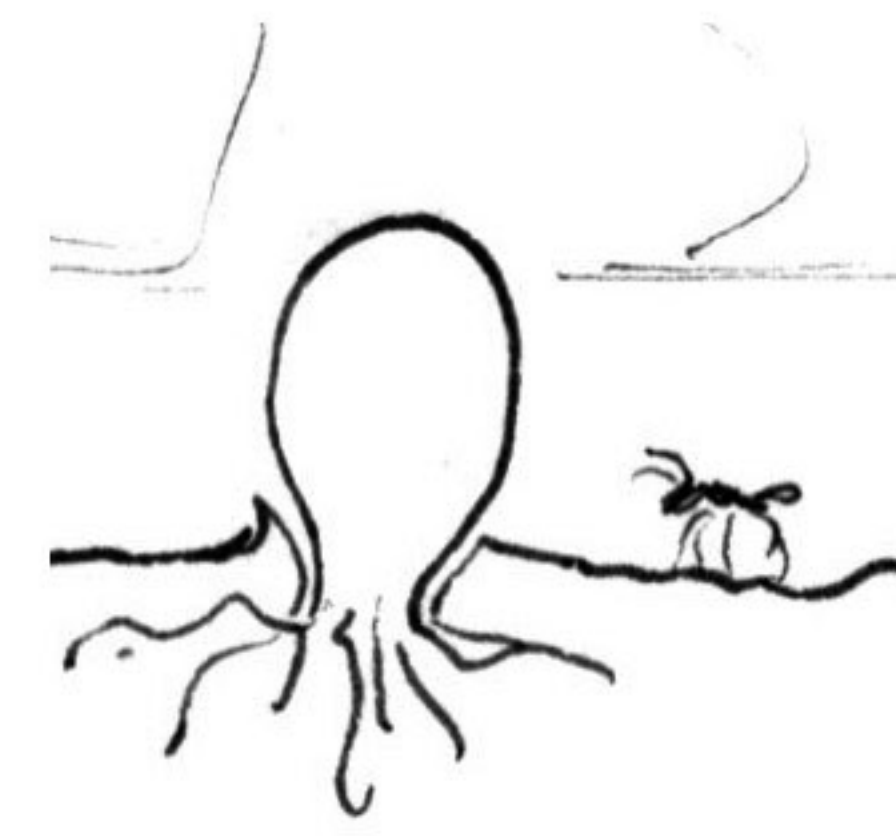
Raspy Cricket  
Find 2



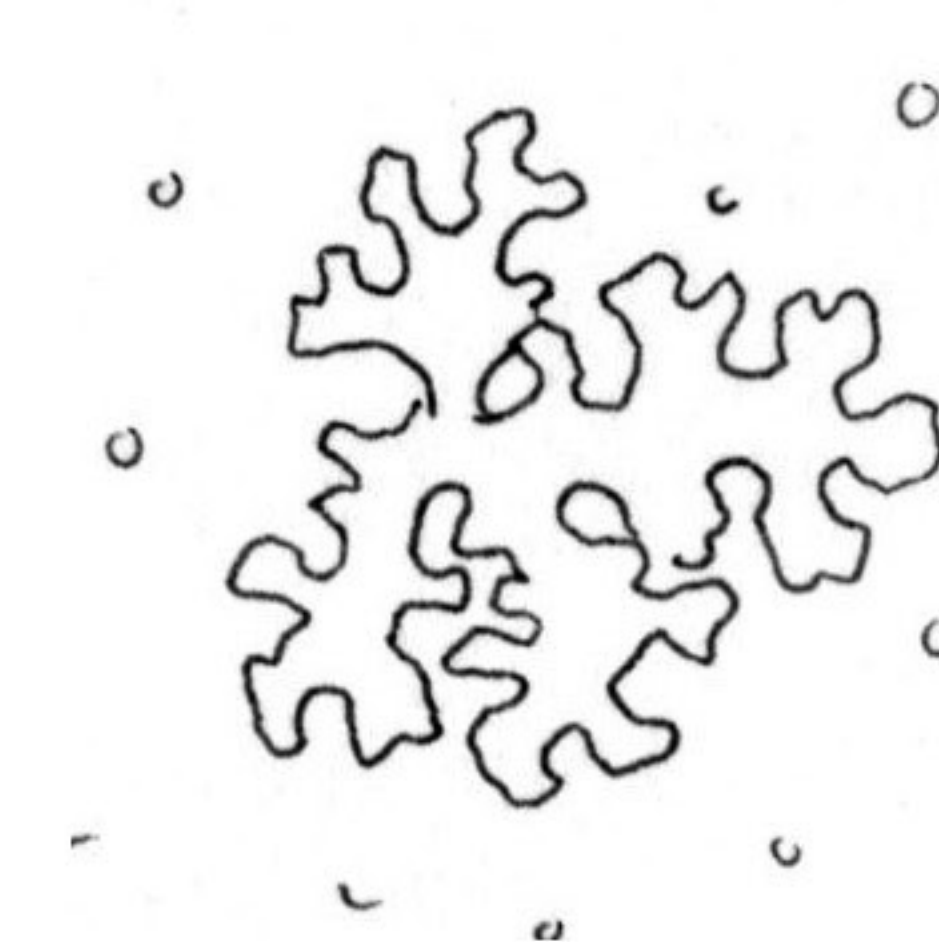
Native Bee *Trichocolletes maximus*  
Sole pollinator of *Swainsona procumbens* & *S. murrayana*. Find 1.



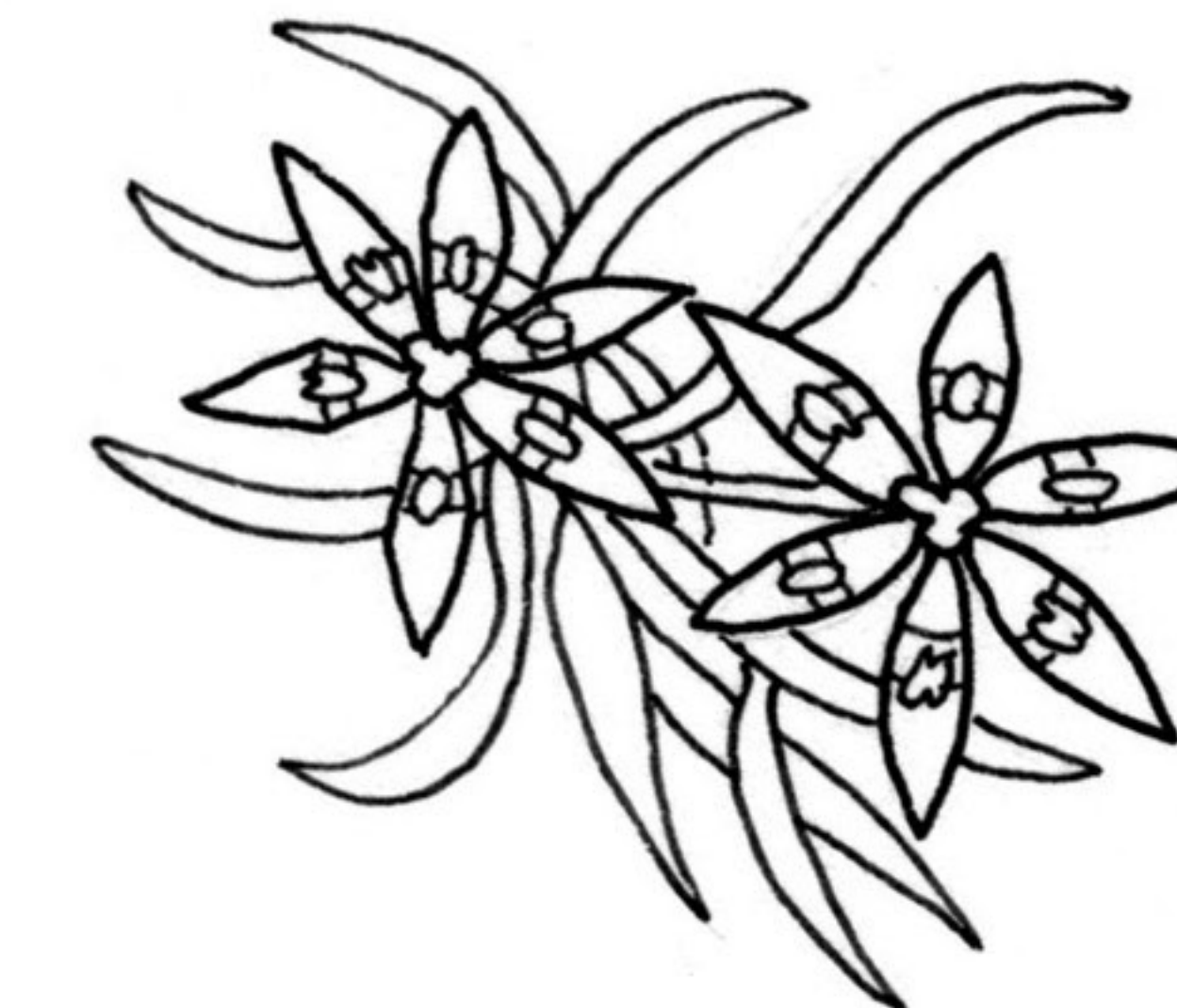
Small Vanilla Lily  
*Arthropodium minus*  
Appears on 3 pages



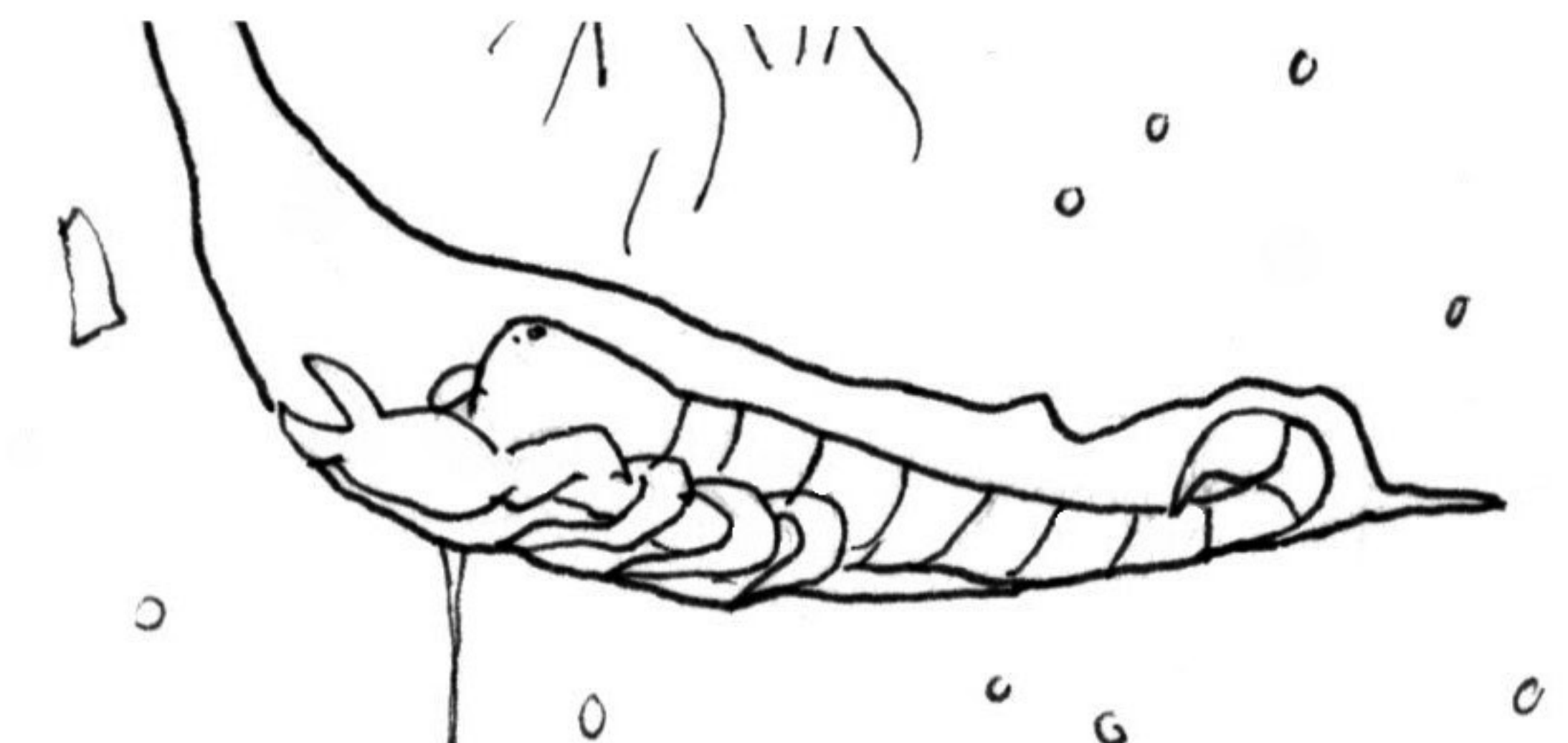
Ink Pot fungus  
*Podaxis pistillaris*  
Find 1



Lichen  
Appears on 2 pages



Early Nancy  
*Wurmbea dioica*  
Appears on 4 pages



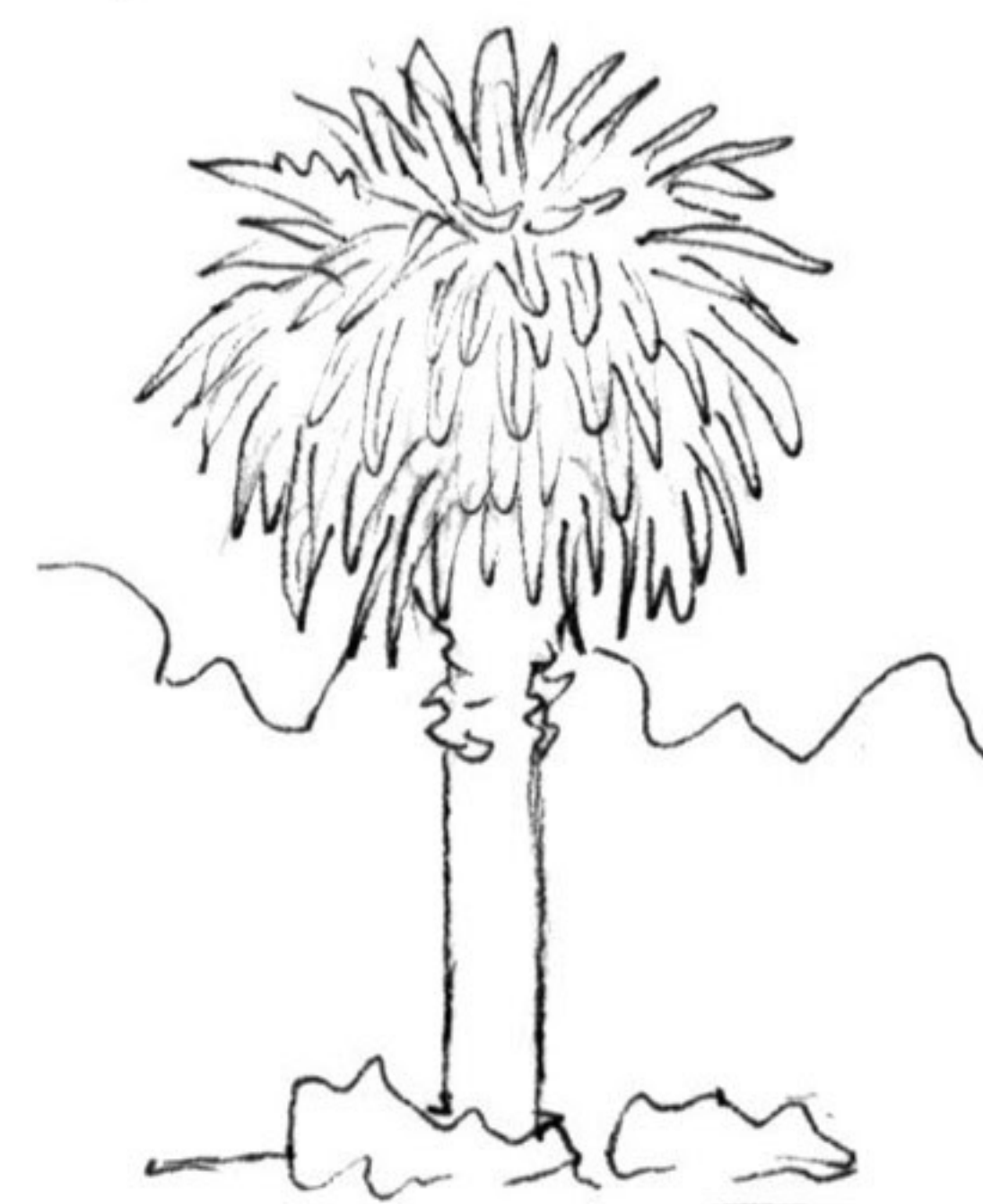
Scorpion *Urodacus armatus*  
Find 2



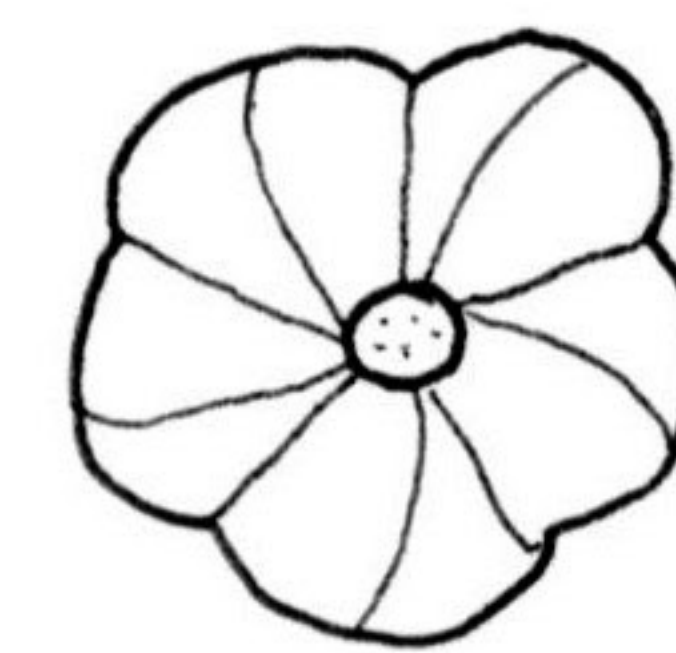
Lignum *Duma florulenta*  
Find on 1 page



Mat-rush *Lomandra* sp.  
(plus Bluebell flowers)  
Appears on 1 page.



Canary Island Date Palm  
*Phoenix canariensis*  
(Introduced). Find 2



Blushing Bindweed  
*Convolvulus erubescens*  
Find 4



Bluebell  
*Wahlenbergia* sp.  
Appears on 5 pages



Grey Germander  
*Teucrium racemosum*  
Appears on 1 page.



Slender Darling-pea  
*Swainsona murrayana*  
Appears on 4 pages



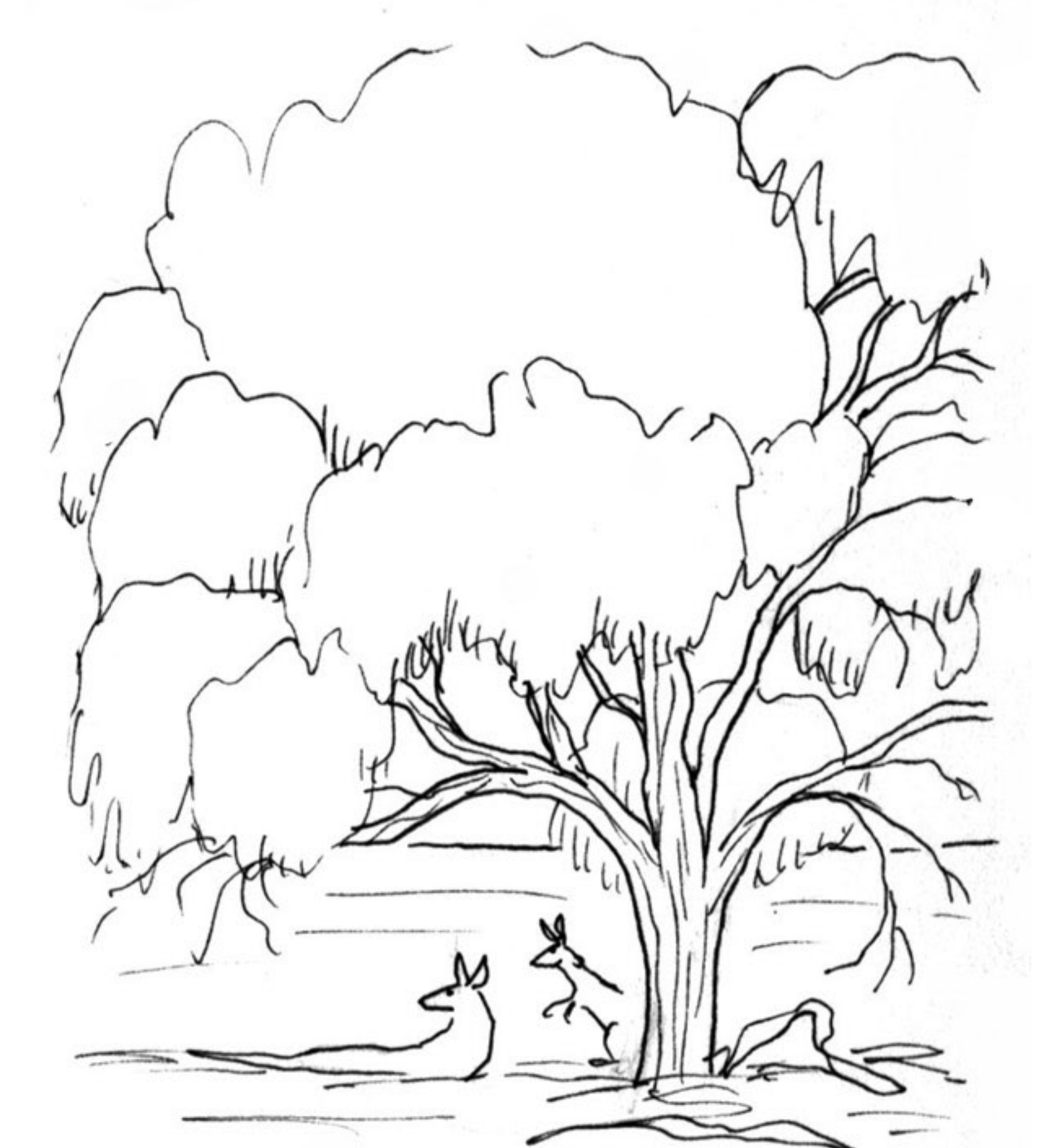
Broughton Pea  
*Swainsona procumbens*  
Appears on 5 pages



Weeping Myall or Boree  
*Acacia pendula*  
Appears on 5 pages



White Cypress Pine  
*Callitris glaucophylla*  
Find 9



Black Box  
*Eucalyptus largiflorens*  
Find 2





Prickly Saltbush  
*Salsola australis*  
Appears on 2 pages



Slender-fruit Saltbush  
*Atriplex leptocarpa*  
Appears on 1 page



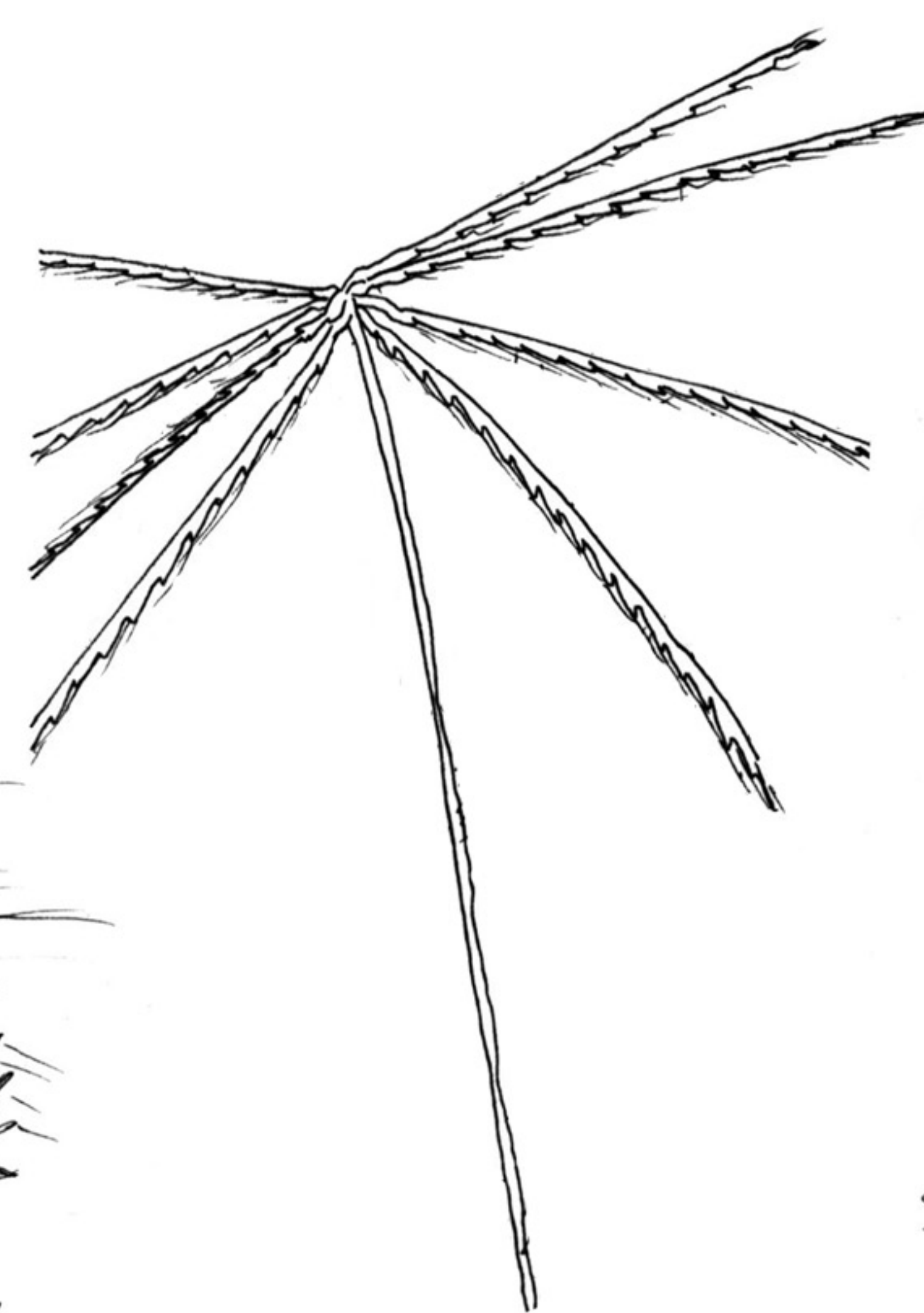
Top: Bunch Wiregrass  
*Aristida behriana*. Appears on 2 pages  
Bottom: Lambs Tails  
*Ptilotus nobilis* subsp. *semilanatus*  
Appears on 6 pages



Cottonbush *Maireana aphylla*  
Appears on 4 pages



Pale Poverty Bush  
*Sclerolaena divaricata*  
Appears on 1 page



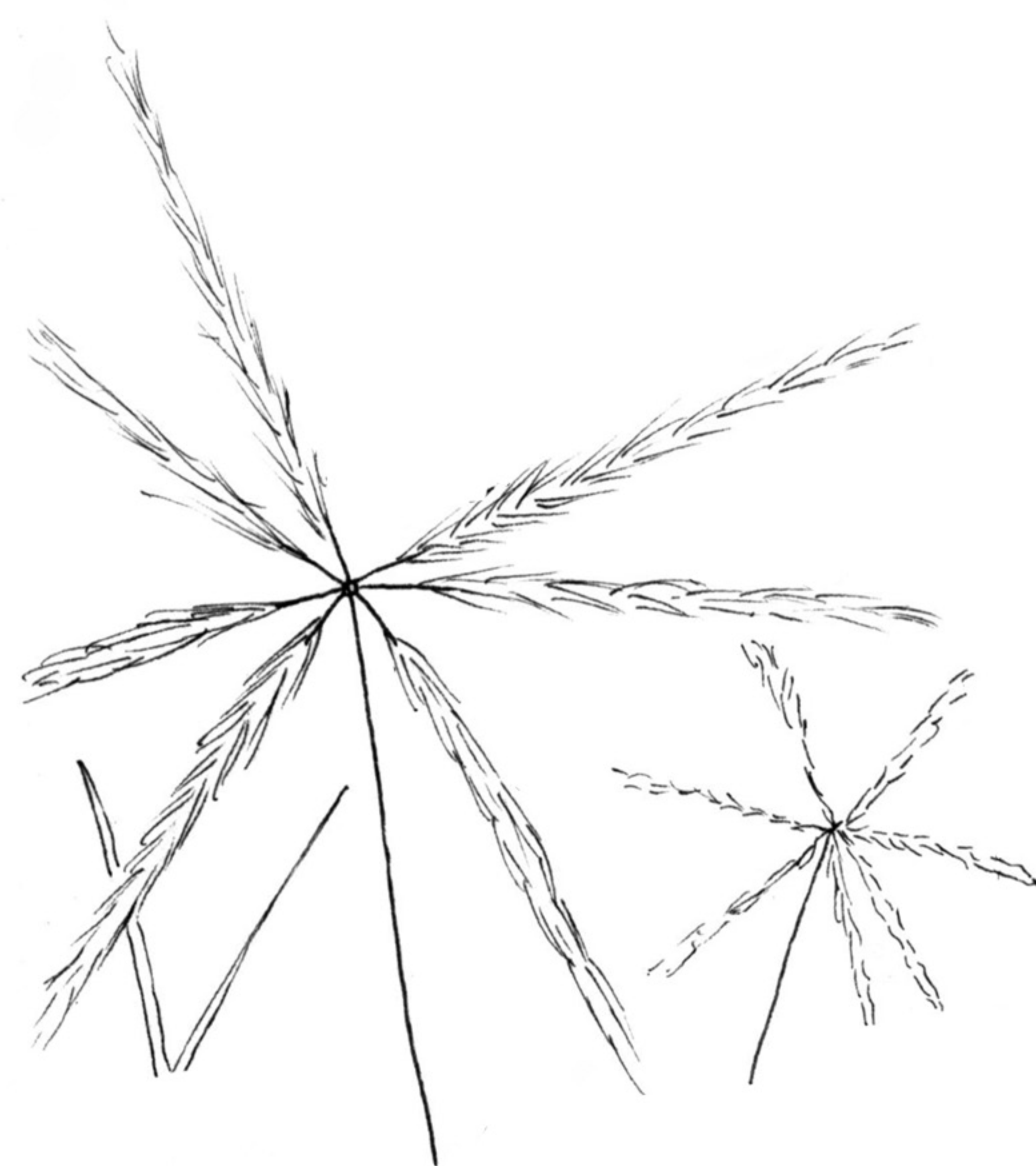
Windmill Grass  
*Chloris truncata*  
Appears on 2 pages



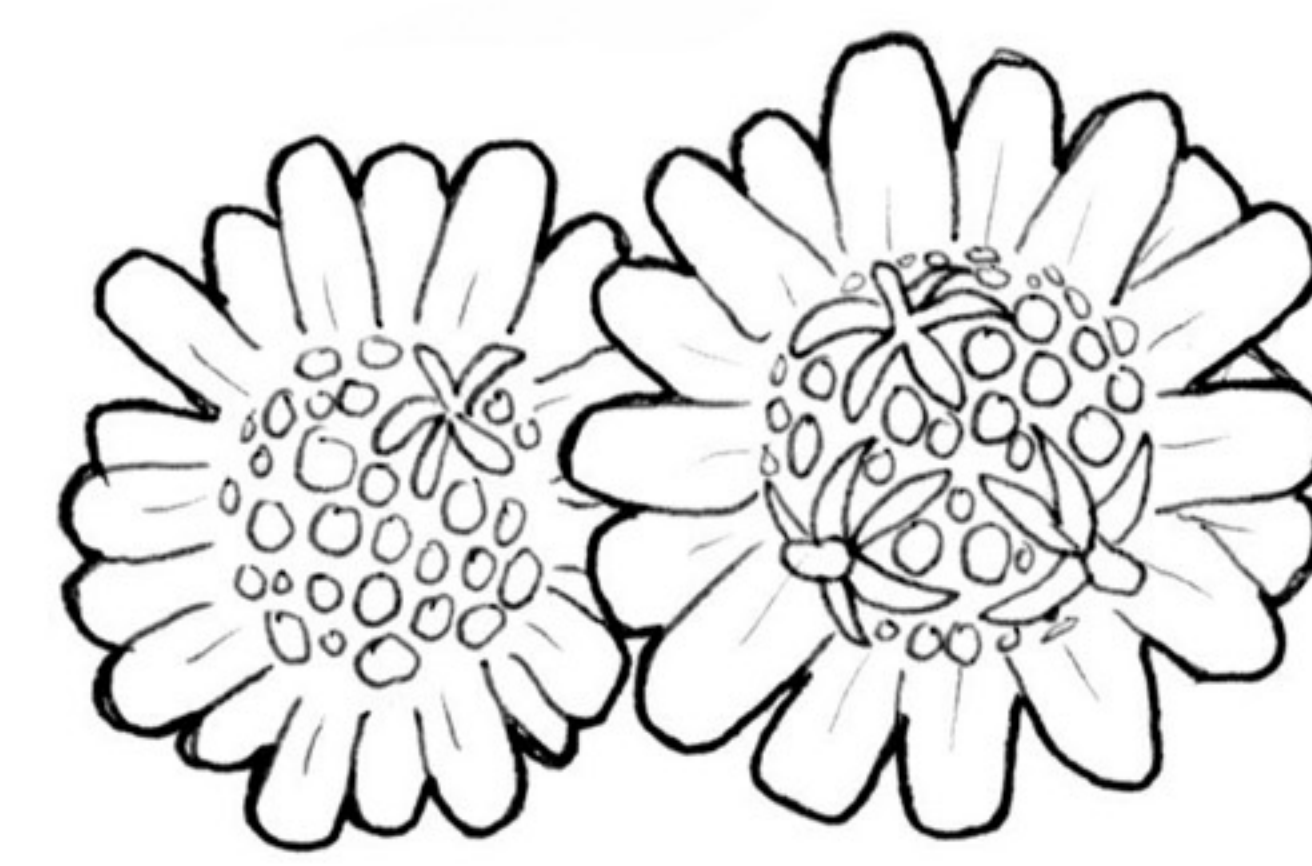
Ruby Saltbush  
*Enchylaena tomentosa*  
Appears on 9 pages



Black Rolypoly  
*Sclerolaena muricata*  
Appears on 1 page



Curly Windmill Grass  
*Enteropogon acicularis*  
Appears on 2 pages



Golden Sunray  
*Hyalosperma glutinosum*  
Appears on 3 pages



Black Cotton Bush  
*Maireana decalvans*  
Appears on 6 pages



Ringed Wallaby Grass,  
White Top  
*Rytidosperma caespitosum*  
Appears on 4 pages



Pale Beauty-heads  
*Calocephalus sonderi*  
Appears on 1 page



African Boxthorn  
*Lycium ferocissimum*  
(Introduced)  
Appears on 2 pages



Native Millet  
*Panicum decompositum*  
Appears on 1 page



Yellow Buttons  
*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*  
Appears on 7 pages



Fuzzweed  
*Vittadinia cuneata*  
Appears on 2 pages



Top: Plains Grass  
*Austrostipa aristiglumis*  
Appears on 2 pages  
Bottom: Nitre Goosefoot  
*Chenopodium nitrariaceum*  
Appears on 2 pages

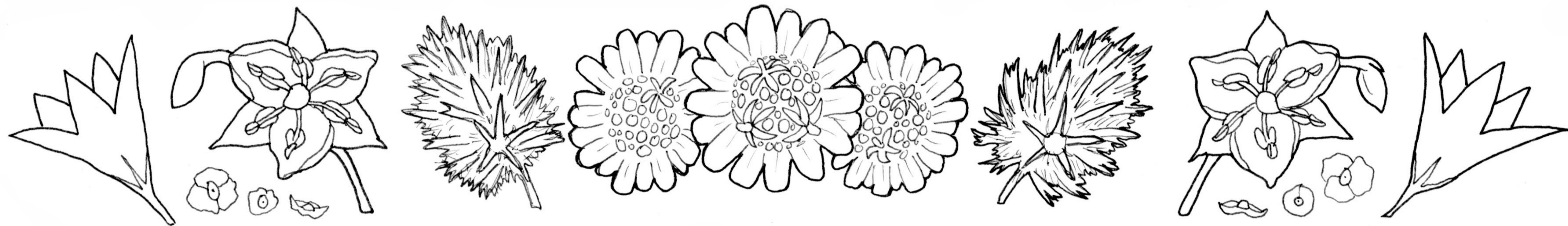


Top: Rough Burr-daisy  
*Calotis scabiosifolia*  
Appears on 4 pages  
Bottom: Small White Sunray  
*Rhodanthe corymbiflora*  
Appears on 5 pages



Rough Speargrass  
*Austrostipa scabra*  
Appears on 8 pages





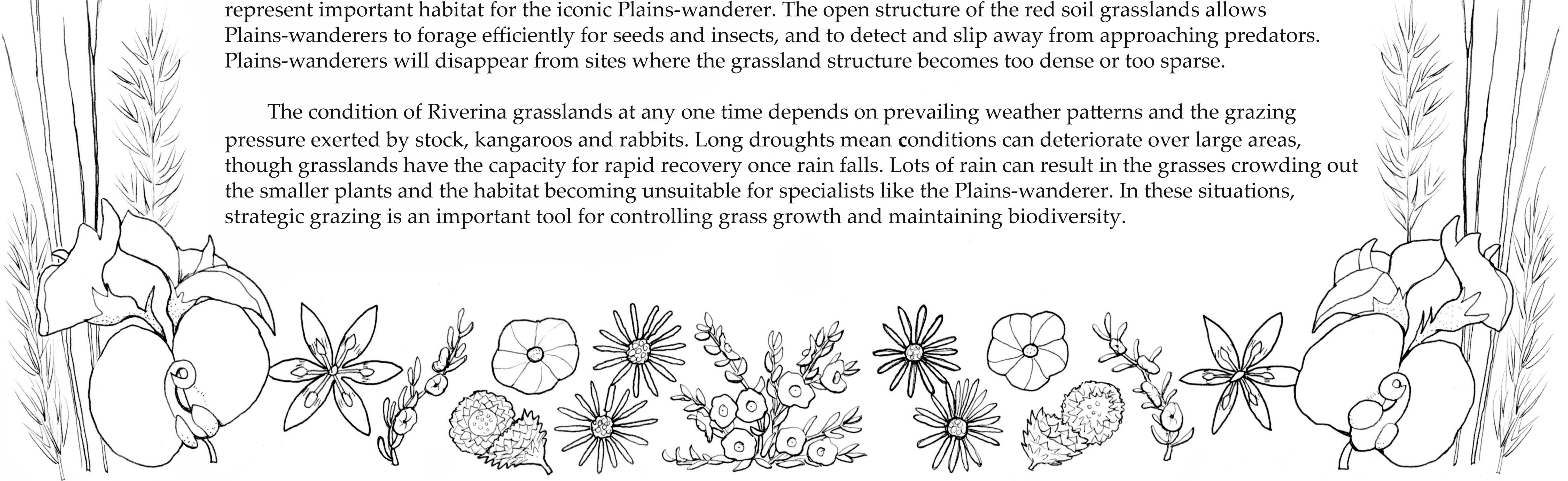
## Riverina grasslands in focus

The Riverina supports the largest expanse of native grassland in New South Wales, with grasslands dominating the area bounded by the southern NSW towns of Narrandera, Jerilderie, Hay and Deniliquin. In large part, these grasslands are derived from low open woodlands and shrublands, with high stocking rates and rabbit plagues in the late 1800's preventing the regeneration of trees and shrubs, but leaving the grassy, herb-rich ground layer intact. Excellent examples of Riverina grasslands can be experienced on public lands, including Oolambeyan National Park and the many Travelling Stock Reserves that border major roads.

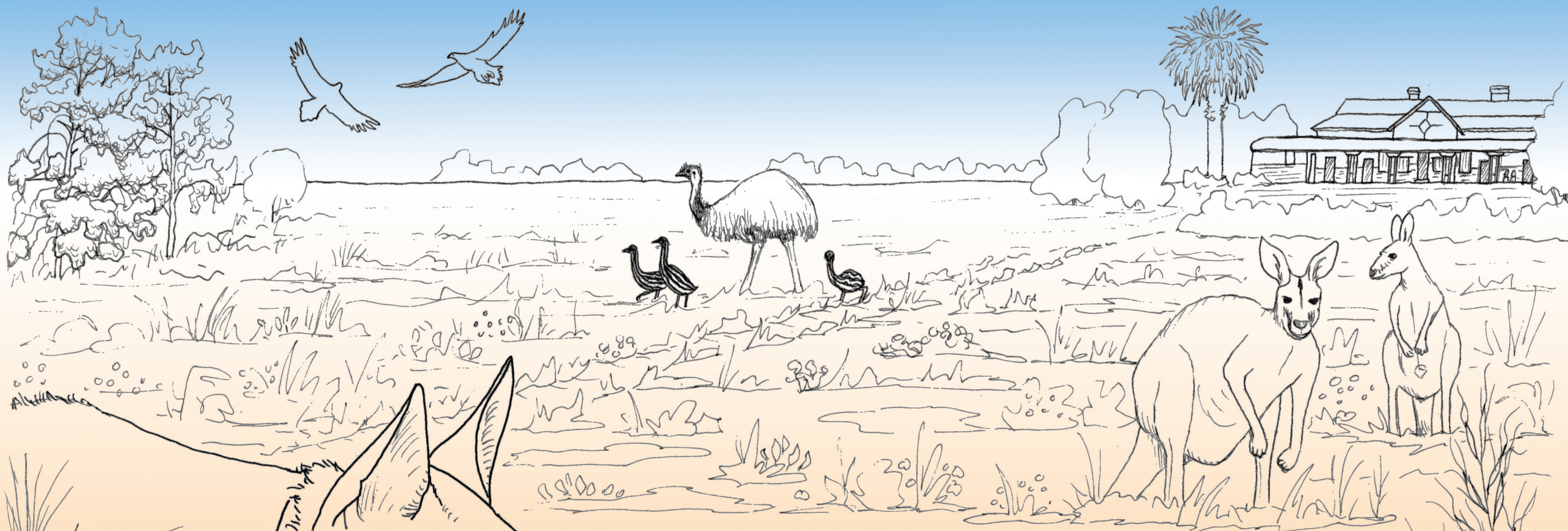
At first glance, Riverina grasslands appear uniform over vast areas. In fact, paddocks can contain a mosaic of different grassland types, each having a distinct structure and unique combination of plant and animal species. Heavy grey clays occupy low-lying areas, and these support relatively tall, dense grasslands dominated by species such as Plains Grass and Windmill Grass. Areas of hard red loam occur as slightly elevated islands among the grey clays, and support short, sparse grasslands characterised by species such as Rough Spear Grass, Ringed Wallaby Grass, and Yellow Buttons.

The grasslands that have developed on the hard red loams have lots of bare ground between grass tussocks, and support a wide variety of herbs. These red soil grasslands provide homes for many rare or threatened plants and animals, and represent important habitat for the iconic Plains-wanderer. The open structure of the red soil grasslands allows Plains-wanderers to forage efficiently for seeds and insects, and to detect and slip away from approaching predators. Plains-wanderers will disappear from sites where the grassland structure becomes too dense or too sparse.

The condition of Riverina grasslands at any one time depends on prevailing weather patterns and the grazing pressure exerted by stock, kangaroos and rabbits. Long droughts mean conditions can deteriorate over large areas, though grasslands have the capacity for rapid recovery once rain falls. Lots of rain can result in the grasses crowding out the smaller plants and the habitat becoming unsuitable for specialists like the Plains-wanderer. In these situations, strategic grazing is an important tool for controlling grass growth and maintaining biodiversity.







### How many plants and animals can you find?

An amazing grassland world awaits you inside the covers of this book, full of intriguing plants and animals waiting to be discovered and coloured.

Get down on your hands and knees, crawl through the grass, and see how many different flowers and creatures you can find.

Fred the sheepdog is happy to show you around, and introduce you to some of his favourite friends.

Come face to face with the iconic Plains-wanderer, a bird where the female has the more colourful feathers, and the male rears the chicks.

A key at the back of the book will help you identify any plants and animals that you find, and tell you how many more are hidden in the detailed illustrations.

**Good Luck!**



ISBN 978-0-446-95589-6



9 780646 955896