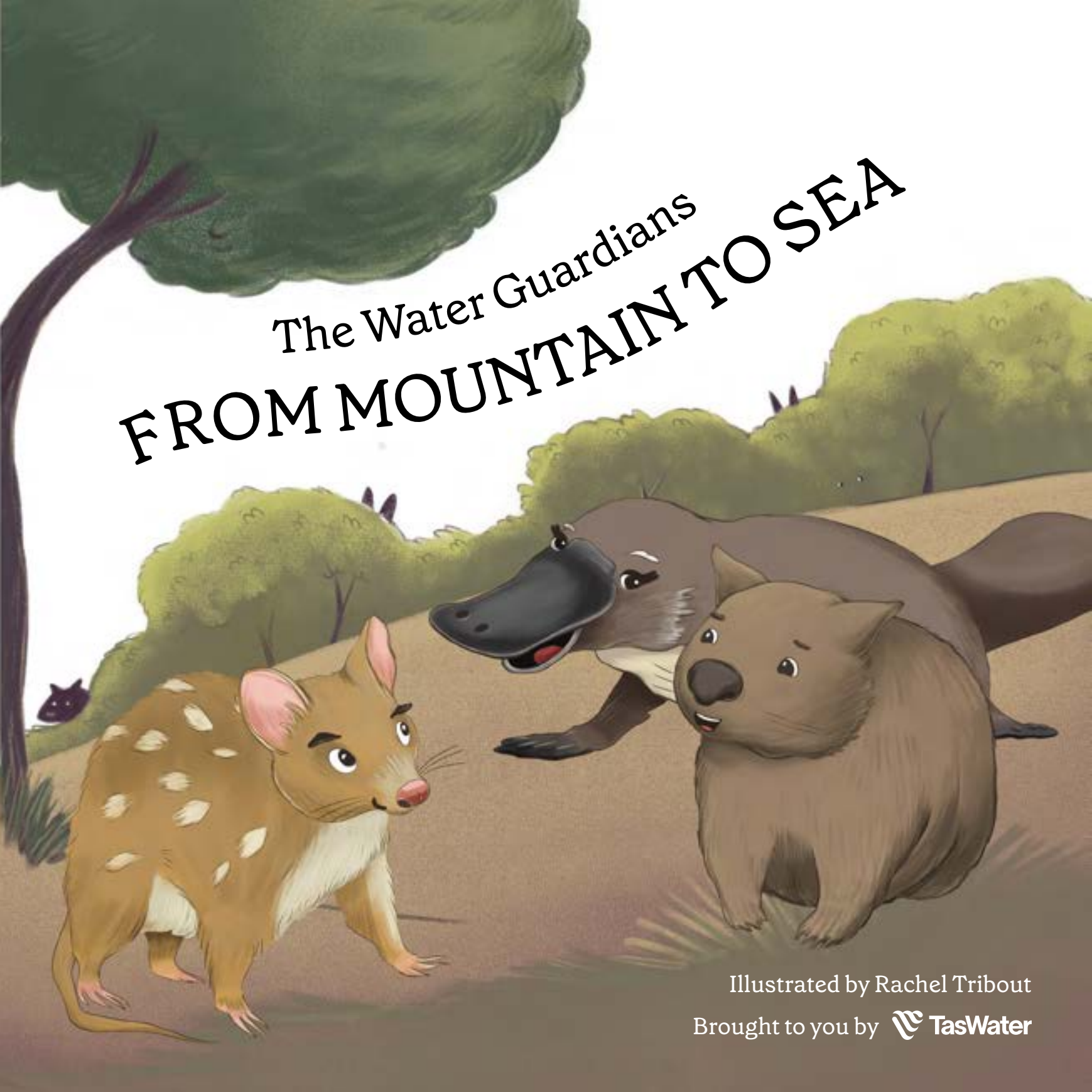


An illustration of three Australian animals in a natural setting. On the left is a macquarie duck with a brown body and white spots. In the center is a wallaby with a brown body and a large, dark, open mouth. On the right is a possum with a brown body and a large, dark, open mouth. They are standing on a dirt path. In the background, there are green bushes and a large tree on the left. A small black cat is visible on the left side of the path.

The Water Guardians FROM MOUNTAIN TO SEA

Illustrated by Rachel Tribout

Brought to you by  TasWater

Always learning, for a thriving Tasmania.

Brought to you by TasWater
in collaboration with Kimberlin Education
Illustrations copyright © Rachel Tribout 2024.

All rights reserved.
© Tasmanian Water and Sewerage
Corporation (TasWater) 2024.
Except as permitted by the copyright law
applicable to you, you may not reproduce
or transmit this book in any form without
permission in writing from TasWater.

The Water Guardians FROM MOUNTAIN TO SEA

Brought to you by TasWater
in collaboration with Kimberlin Education
Illustrated by Rachel Tribout



Chapter 1

West Coast of Tasmania, Strahan



An illustration of a river scene. On the left, a green grassy bank slopes down to a brown river. In the background, there are rolling hills and a cloudy sky with rain falling. On the right, a green hill features a small cave where a brown wombat is sitting. The wombat is looking out from the cave. The text is written in a playful, slightly curved font across the scene.

Down by the banks of the mighty river King,
a furry wombat waddled, such a funny little thing.

Yawning,
as she shuffled in a lazy display.

Far too tired;
no energy to play.

Her West Coast home had received endless rain,
she felt it was her duty and her right to complain.

‘Hmpf, my paws are all soggy and they just will not dry,
I’m so tired of this wetness, I feel I could cry!’

Her water-soaked limbs made it difficult to slumber,
counting sheep didn’t work, no matter the number.

Aunty Laurel emerged from her riverbank burrow,
she was **yawning** too, her brows all a-furrow.

‘Hush, dear Winnie, don’t let out another peep!
Can’t you see that it’s daytime? I’m trying to sleep!’

The magnificent monotreme let out a long sigh,
‘You’re nocturnal, I get it Winnie, so am I.’

Winnie explained, 'I'm tired of
this
rain,

I want it to stop, it's becoming a pain.'

Laurel couldn't believe what she was hearing.

Water is so precious,
so special,
so endearing!

'Have a nap, little one, meet back here later,
I have so much to tell you about the wonders of nature.'

And as darkness fell later that day,
they set off, farewelling Strahan's bay.

Through a bathroom window,
the pair spotted Keith,
Strahan's champion sandboarder; brushing his teeth.

Past the ramshackle west coaster huts,
they trudged and they plodded as childrens' eyes shut.

A smattering of stars swept across the night sky,
but a shocking sight brought a tear to their eyes.



While white foam spilled from his mouth,
the tap was left *running*,
the water gurgled south.





‘What a waste!’ Laurel cried as it went down the drain.

She wished Keith could hear her say,

‘This is such a shame.’

But Winnie was puzzled, she didn’t understand,
why save water when there’s so much at hand?

Then Keith decided to hop in the shower,
he stayed there,

s i n g i n g ,
for what felt like an hour.



Laurel was ready with so many reasons why,
we need to take care of the water supply.

‘For starters, who needs it? Animals, people and food.

If we want it to last,
we’ve got to change our attitude.’



‘Just because there’s plenty, it shouldn’t go to waste,
we need it for generations, to savour and to taste.

Changes to climate, population and weather,
mean we have to think smarter, and **save water together.**’

Winnie was **shocked**
by what she had heard,

But deep within her,
something had stirred.



‘Let’s keep going,’ she announced suddenly.
‘We’ve got to spread the word, from forest to sea.’

‘Slow down, little one,’ Laurel said.

‘This island is vast, let’s first rest our heads.’



Her head nodded slowly;
she slept under Keith’s house,

Dreaming lovely dreams,
as quiet as a mouse.

Chapter 2

Queenstown



After a restful daytime nap, the pair headed east,
stopping every so often for a yummy local feast.

Queenstown creatures welcomed them with glee,
friendly faces popped out from rivers, dams and trees.

After such a long trek, their legs needed a pause,
somewhere to stop
and **stretch** out their claws.

Looking out over the pink-brown moonscape,
their gaze landed on a most unusual shape.

A grunting,

a shuffling

and then

a big snort.

What was it?

Who was this

strange-looking sport?

'Hi, there!'

*It cheerfully greeted the shocked,
timid pair,*

*'They couldn't help themselves,
they continued to stare.'*

'Jasper the Eastern Quoll, or "Jaz" if you like,'

'They continued to say,

'You've just finished your hike?'

'No,' The pair said,

'We've only just started, actually,

We're on a journey

from forest

to sea.'



‘We are on a mission,’ the pair began to explain,
‘To understand water; from river, tap, to drain.’

Jaz nodded, they wanted to know more.

Life on their own
was a bit of a bore.

‘Count me in, please, I’d love to explore,’

Jaz was keen to take them from mountain to shore.

They headed off together, destination: Lake St Clair.

They set a good pace, the wind in their hair.

But then Winnie looked back,
Aunty Laurel had fallen behind.

She let out a **yelp**,

her paws were all **entwined**.

‘Untangle me, Winnie! What’s happening here?’
Jaz came on over and the problem was clear.

A hair tie was wound ‘round so **tight**,

Jaz sighed,

‘I wish humans would do what’s right.’

‘Don’t they realise this is the water
they rely on for drinking?’

They just throw rubbish away,
without even thinking.’



They all huddled close,
Laurel grateful to be free,
as Jaz told them how much better things could be.

‘Just the other day, another mate of mine,

had his legs all caught up in some old fishing line.’

And on top of all that, I was saddened to see,
chip packets,
cans and papers
under that tree.’

Jaz pointed out a colourful Fagus beech,
its branches spread
wide,

as though giving a speech.

‘If that tree could talk,’ Jaz puffed out their chest,
‘it’d tell humans to pick up their rubbish,
our waterways are stressed!

What’s thrown on the ground,

ends up in the lake,

We need to protect this place
for goodness’ sake!’

They all felt helpless, what could they do with their paws?
They wanted to help with Jaz's noble cause.

Let's spread the word, let's gather together.
We'll clean all this up, no matter the weather.

Jaz put the call out, and collected their mates.

'C'mon you lot, there's no time to waste.'



And slowly, but surely, the lake's shore shone bright,

with not a speck,
nor an ounce
of litter in sight.

‘We did it,’ they cheered.

‘We cleaned up the shore,

but we know we’re not done,

we can do more.’

Exhausted from their afternoon’s job,

the animals flopped down, a united mob.

‘Thanks for your help,’

said Jaz as they all walked away,

‘Now my friends and I are
off to good ol’ Freycinet.’

Chapter 3

Freycinet



The trio trudged on, the east coast in their sights.

That night they were greeted

by the most spectacular lights.

‘Aurora Australis!’

Laurel shouted with glee,

‘The Southern Lights, something I’ve wanted to see.’



Jaz looked up and was briefly mesmerised,

by the beauty above them, right in front of their eyes.

They stood and they watched, and then it was morning,

but what happened next,
came without warning...

‘Ouch!

Step back, you’re
on top of
my toes!’

The cranky voice yelped,
and Jaz quickly froze.

Winnie slowly emerged from the grass.
She then blocked their way,
not allowing them to pass.

‘I’m sorry, dear Winnie,

I didn’t see you there,’

Jaz apologised, but Winnie didn’t seem to care.

Winnie stood firm and said in a loud booming voice,

‘I’m desperately thirsty,
but I don’t have a choice...’

‘A choice of what?’

Jaz enquired,

‘Of where to drink,’ she said, sounding tired.

And then Laurel knew why the little wombat was sad,

the drinking water situation was incredibly bad.

She explained,

‘Have a look at what’s going on,
so much of the water is salty or it’s gone.’

‘Back home, there was plenty, we were so blessed,
but it’s not the same in the east
as it is in the west.’

Laurel was right, Jaz knew why this was so,
the east was drier, the **rainfall** was low.

*‘Things are different here, young Winnie, high rainfall is rare,
so East Coasters must work hard
and show that they **care**.’*

‘Care for what?’ Winnie enquired.

‘For **our water**,’ Jaz said, feeling inspired.

‘Don’t you know that we need it to be healthy, to thrive?’

*To stay hydrated, in order to **survive**.’*

Jaz got a bit cheeky now and started to giggle,

‘Winnie, you know when you get that feeling? That niggle?’

‘You mean when I poop?’ Winnie’s laughter started to waft,

‘That’s right!’

Jaz said, ‘You need water so they stay soft.’

A wombat’s

square
lumps

were certainly an unusual poo,

and water was essential,
they absolutely knew.

Looking around, once the laughter had ended,

Freycinet was magnificent, they decided,
even splendid.

But they hadn't seen many waterways,
barely a stream,

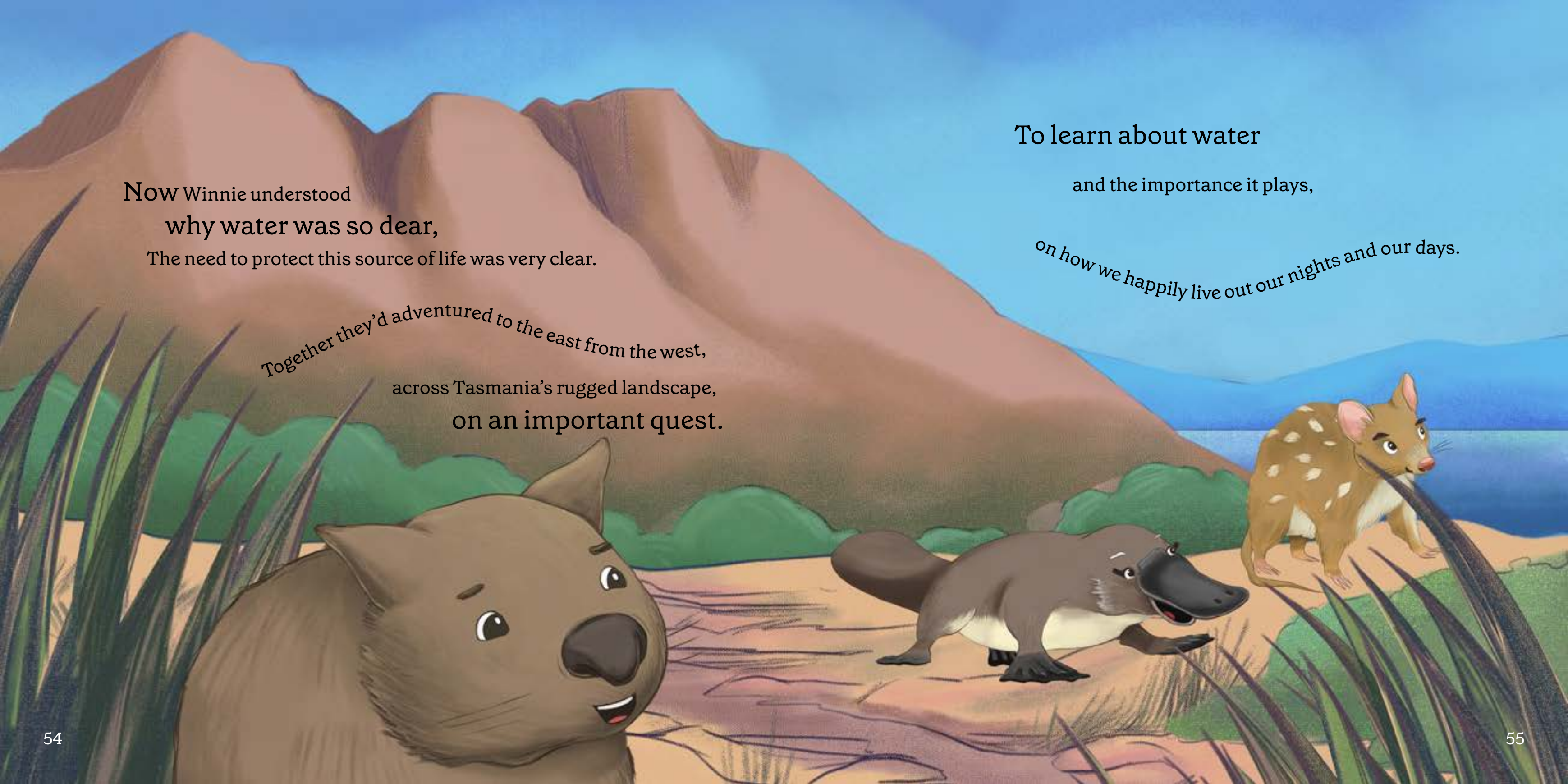
so different from the west, where rain was a dream.

Without enough water, everyone suffers.

You cannot **grow or thrive**,
and life is made tougher.

They'd woven their way through backyards and parks,

and witnessed water-saving lessons under the cover of dark.



Now Winnie understood
why water was so dear,
The need to protect this source of life was very clear.

Together they'd adventured to the east from the west,
across Tasmania's rugged landscape,
on an important quest.

To learn about water

and the importance it plays,

on how we happily live out our nights and our days.

For now ... our water guardians' job is done.

But remember, it's up to everyone!

Are you a water guardian too?

What are some things that you can do?

Ocean, rivers, creeks, and springs.

'Water ...

It's Tasmania's precious thing.'

Winnie the wombat thinks there's too
much rain, but Aunty Laurel knows
how important water is!

They set off on a Tasmanian adventure
to learn about water's role in nature.

Full of fun, friendship, and valuable
lessons; this story is perfect for
enjoying at school or home!

Brought to you by TasWater
in collaboration with Kimberlin Education
Illustrated by Rachel Tribout

