



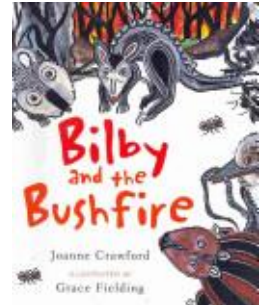
# BUSHFIRES, DROUGHTS & FLOODS

## Selected Fiction

### Bushfires - Picture Books

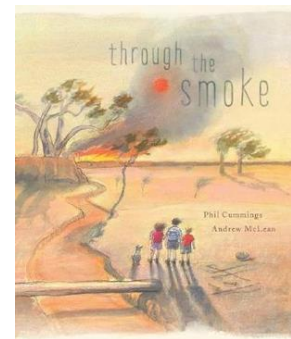
**Bilby and the Bushfire** by Joanne Crawford, Grace Fielding (Illustrator), 2007 **Picture Book**

Bilby, the small nocturnal Australian marsupial, is back! When a storm sparks a raging bushfire, the loveable Bilby and his friends are forced to leave their homes to escape the danger. Each animal uses its own natural defences against the fire. But what will Bilby do? He's never been in a bushfire before!



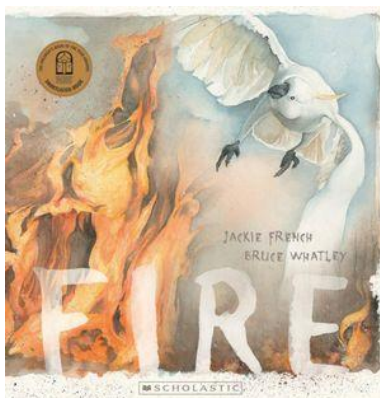
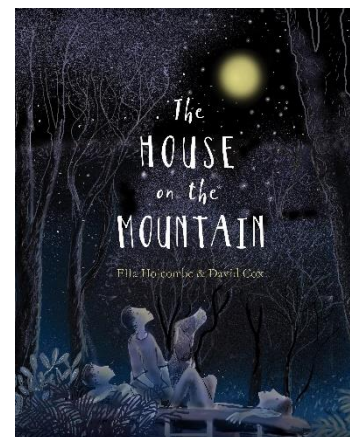
**Through the smoke** by Phil Cummings, Andrew McLean (Illustrator), 2019 **Picture Book**

The fire awoke like a dragon. Its flames licked the sky, and smoke veiled the sun. With a hungry crackle and an angry hiss, the cruel beast circled, trapping them. Until, through the smoke, knights appeared. Through the Smoke tells the story of three kids, their imagination and a frightening fire in the Australian bush.



**The House on the Mountain** by Ella Holcombe, David Cox (Illustrator), 2019 **Picture Book**

'The day before the fire comes feels like any other but my chest feels hollow, like a birdcage'. Atmospheric and intensely moving, this is the story of a young family experiencing a bushfire, the devastating aftermath, and the long process of healing and rebuilding.



**Fire** by Jackie French, Bruce Whatley (Illustrator), 2014 **Picture Book**

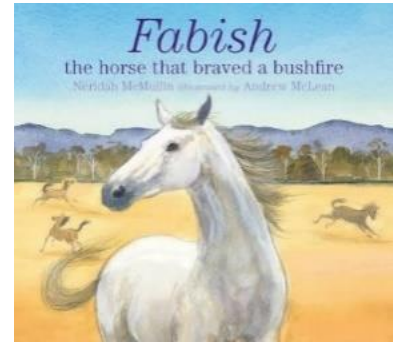
'One small spark brought fire awake. Winding like a small black snake. Fire flickered, fire crept. Flames snickered; bushfire leapt...' Inspired by the bushfires that have affected many Australians, Fire is a moving and sensitive story of a natural disaster as seen through the eyes of a cockatoo. The fire mercilessly engulfs homes and land, leaving a devastating path of destruction. But from the ruins, courage, kindness and new life grows.

## **Fabish: The Horse that Braved a Bushfire** by

Neridah McMullin, Andrew McLean (Illustrator), 2016

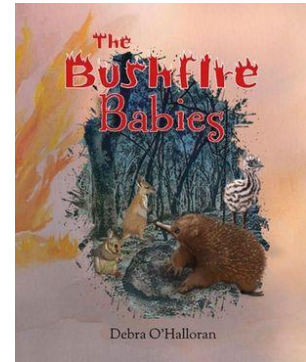
### **Picture Book**

Based on the true story of a horse called Fabish, who saved a group of young horses during the Black Saturday bushfires. Fabish was a retired grey racehorse who took care of the yearlings in a paddock far away from the training track. He showed the flighty young horses what was expected of a racehorse. One hot summer day, a wild wind blew up and Fabish smelled smoke. Fire was coming, fast. The trainer threw open the gate, Fabish neighed to the young ones and they galloped away. All through the night, the fire raged, and the trainer battled to save the racehorses in the stables. But what would become of Fabish and the yearlings? Could he save them from the firestorm?



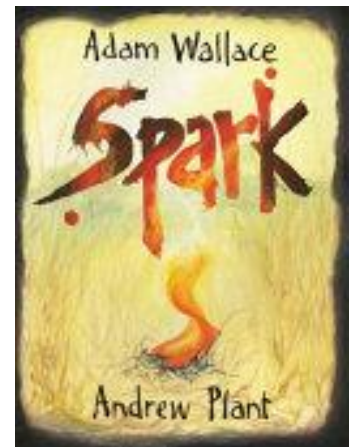
## **The Bushfire Babies** by Debra O'Halloran, 2016 **Picture Book**

A bushfire rages through the land leaving four animal babies to fend for themselves. Bush fires cause animals to be frightened and confused. For many there is nowhere to run. Four, fearful young survivors join together in their search for families, food and water. Who will help them, are they alone?

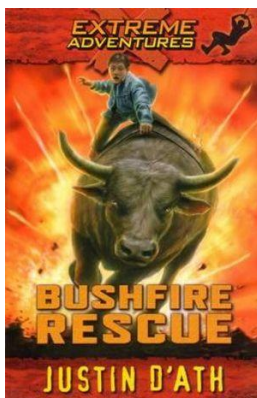


## **Spark** by Adam Wallace, Andrew Plant (Illustrator), 2016 **Picture Book**

I began as a tiny spark in the dry grass. All I wanted was a friend. I found one in the wind, who helped me grow, who helped me fly! In the end, though, was the wind really my friend at all? Andrew Plant has always loved the Australian bush and painting it and the animals that live in it. He was 20 km from the Black Saturday bushfires, but remembers the taste of ash in the thick, hazy air, and seeing the glow that night in the sky.



## **Bushfires – Independent Readers**

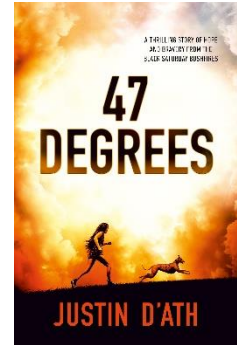


### **Bushfire Rescue: Extreme Adventures** by Justin D'Ath, 2005

It's the holidays and Sam Fox has gone to the high country to stay with his grandparents. While trying to stop cattle rustlers from stealing a stud bull, an injured Sam is isolated in the mountains during a horrific bushfire. To survive, he must rely on his courage; ingenuity, and the help of Chainsaw - a mad old rodeo bull! An action-packed rollercoaster ride, Bushfire Rescue is the second book in the series **Extreme Adventures**. For Ages: 6 - 8 years

## **47 Degrees** by Justin D'Ath, 2019

Zeelie wonders if they're in danger. When temperatures soar to 47 degrees one hot summer day, 12-year-old Zeelie hopes the nearby bushfires everyone's talking about aren't heading towards her family's new home. What will they do if the wind changes direction? What about their belongings and their beloved pets?



## **Where There's Smoke** by John Heffernan, 2010

There's smoke over the hills, but nobody in Edenville seems too concerned, even though it's fire season and the bush is tinder-dry. Luke has made friends in this town, his mum has found a job she likes, and it's starting to look as if they'll stay for a while. But Luke knows that good things don't last, and everything he has come to rely on is threatened by a much bigger event, one that could destroy everyone and everything.



## **Firestorm!** by Roger Vaughan Carr, 1985

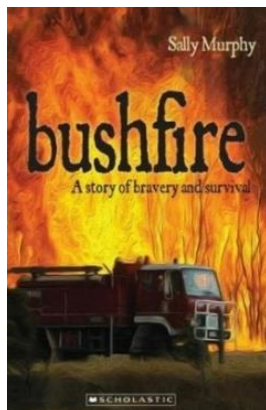
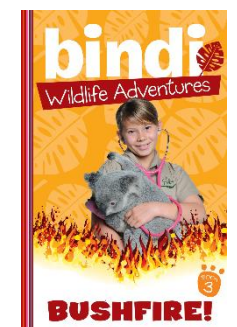
The Ash Wednesday bushfires were a series of bushfires that occurred in south-eastern Australia on 16 February 1983, which just happened to be Ash Wednesday and thus were named as such. This story is written from the author's first-hand experience of these Ash Wednesday fires.



## **Bushfire** by Bindi Irwin and Jess Black, 2010

### **Bindi Wildlife Adventures Series**

While on an early morning bushwalk, Bindi and her best friend, Rachel, notice smoke on the horizon. On a super-hot day, this can only mean one thing. Bushfire! The girls spend an exhausting day helping out at the Australian Wildlife Hospital, caring for the victims of the fire.



## **Bushfire** by Sally Murphy, 2019

### **My Australian Story Series.**

Amy is staying in Marysville with her grandmother where she helps in the garden and cleans out the gutters. It is, after all, bushfire season. As summer arrives, so do the fires, and Dad is busy helping control the flames in bushfires that have started burning in Victoria. But it is early February 2009, and the Black Saturday bushfire is about to encircle Amy and her family and teach Amy first-hand about tragedy and survival.



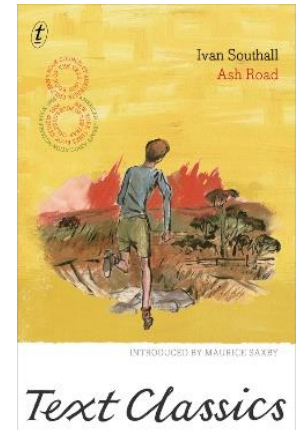
## **Wildfire** by Chris Ryan, 2007

A searing drought, a parched landscape and a fire-starter with a box of matches are a recipe for tragedy. Hot conditions and a group of activists with a sinister agenda combine to create a terrifying bushfire which horrifically bursts into life and tears through the region destroying property, houses and lives.



## **Ash Road** by Ivan Southall 2013

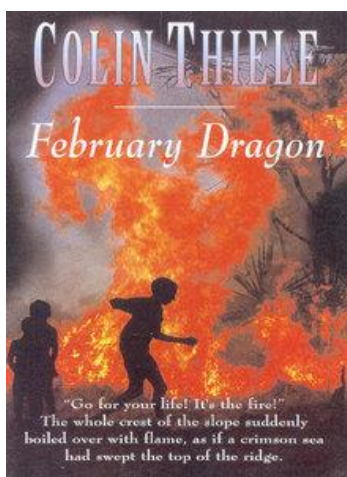
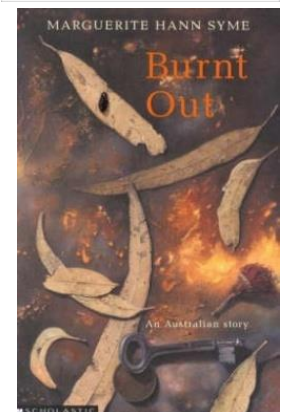
This action-packed adventure story is so evocative of rural Australia you can taste the eucalyptus. It's hot, dry and sweaty on Ash Road, where Graham, Harry and Wallace are getting their first taste of independence, camping, just the three of them. When they accidentally light a bushfire no one would have guessed how far it would go. All along Ash Road fathers go off to fight the fires and mothers help in the first aid centres. The children of Prescott are left alone, presumed safe, until it's the fire itself that reaches them. These children are forced to face a major crisis with only each other and the two old men left in their care.



[Teacher's Notes](#)

## **Burnt Out** by Marguerite Hann Syme, 2001

It's Ash Wednesday, 16 February 1983. The hills around Adelaide, Australia are ablaze. Bushfires are destroying property, houses, lives. In the days to come, one young family will discover just how much they have lost.



## **February Dragon** by Colin Thiele, 2005

Australia in February is high intensity bushfire season and the lives of three Australian children are cruelly affected when a bushfire known as the February Dragon sweeps across the countryside. It disrupts the lives of the Pine family of Upper, Gumbowie, a township halfway between Melbourne and Adelaide.

## Droughts -Picture Books

**All I Want for Christmas Is Rain** by Cori Brooke, Megan Forward (Illustrator), 2016 **Picture Book**

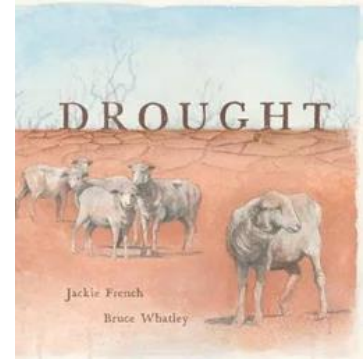
An Australian Christmas is threatened when drought takes hold. A little girl has only one wish, for rain. Will her wish come true? [Teacher's Notes](#)



**Drought** by Jackie French, Bruce Whatley (Illustrator), 2018 **Picture Book**

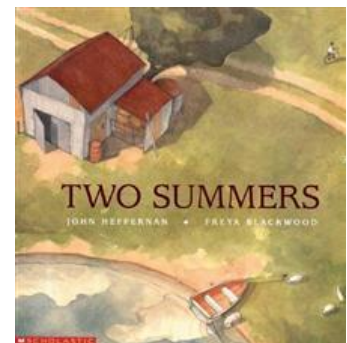
I remember when rain stopped,  
When day by day the water dropped,  
All across a sun-bleached land,  
Drought spread its withered, deadly hand.  
From the award-winning creators of *Flood*, *Fire* and *Cyclone* comes *Drought*, a moving story about the devastating effects drought has on many Australians and their farms.

[Teacher's Notes](#)



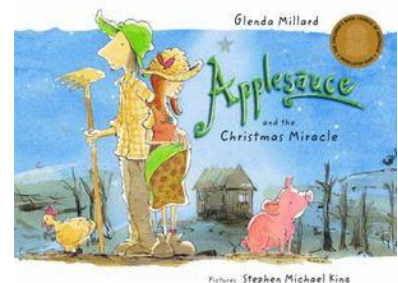
**Two Summers** by John Heffernan, Freya Blackwood (illustrator) 2000 **Picture Book**

Rick is going to visit the farm again, but will he recognise it? Same friend, same farm, totally different landscape. A book about the cycles of nature



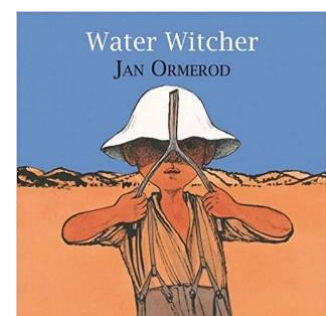
**Applesauce and the Christmas Miracle** by Glenda Millard, Stephen Michael King (Illustrator), 2008 **Picture Book**

Against a rural Australian setting of drought and bushfire, a little pig called Applesauce learns that Christmas comes from the heart.



**Water Witcher** by Jan Ormerod, 2006 **Picture Book**

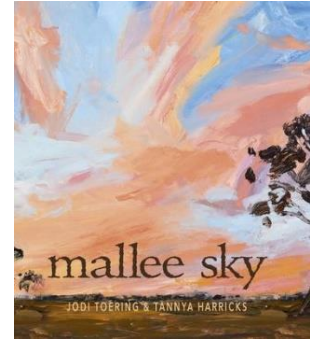
The rainwater tanks are empty, and everything is thirsty. Dougie and his sisters can't even remember the last time it rained. Could Dougie be a water witcher like his grandfather and find water for them all? *Water Witcher* brings to life the experience of a family in drought-stricken rural Australia during the Depression era. Through the eyes of Dougie, the optimism of childhood shines through despite the tough work and harsh conditions. Jan Ormerod's stunning, evocative illustrations make this a rich and resonating book.



**Mallee Sky** by Jodi Toering, Tannya Harricks (Illustrator), 2019

Picture Book

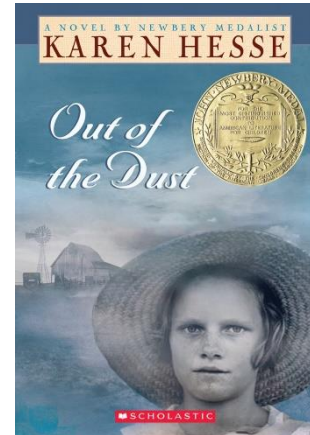
The first people of the land call the Mallee “Nowie”. It means sunset country. When the sun goes down the red heat of the day bleeds into the sky and sets it on fire. Drought and rain – life under a Mallee Sky. An extremely timely and beautiful picture book about the effects of drought and climate change in the Mallee.



## Drought – Independent Readers

**Out of the Dust** by Karen Hesse, 1997

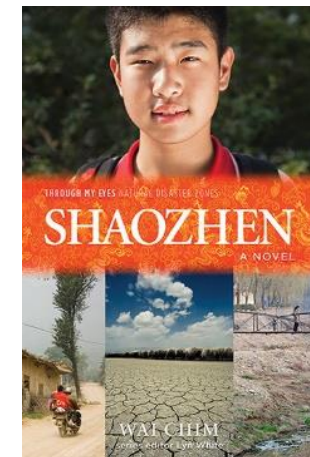
**Verse novel** set in the Oklahoma panhandle in the 1930s. It tells the story of a girl named Billie Jo, who struggles to help her family survive the drought afflicted years of the Great Depression. Fighting against the elements on their Oklahoma farm, Billie Jo takes on even more responsibilities when her mother dies in a tragic accident and her father suffers crippling depression. Winner of the Newberry Medal. Teaching resources available to buy from Scholastic.



**Shaozhen** by Wai Chim, 2017

**Through My Eyes: Natural Disaster Zones Series**

Shaozhen has no intention of staying in his remote Henan village and becoming another poor farmer: he'll finish school, and then, hopefully, work in a factory in one of the major cities, just like his father. But when Shaozhen returns home for the summer holidays, imagining days filled with nothing but playing basketball with his friends, he's in for a shock. The worst drought in over sixty years threatens the crops that the entire village relies on for income. As the water situation becomes dire, Shaozhen realises he must come up with a plan. But will it be enough to save his family and friends and secure the future of his village?



**Wildfire** by Chris Ryan, 2007

A searing drought, a parched landscape and a fire-starter with a box of matches are a recipe for tragedy. Hot conditions and a group of activists with a sinister agenda combine to create a terrifying bushfire which horrifically bursts into life and tears through the region destroying property, houses and lives.



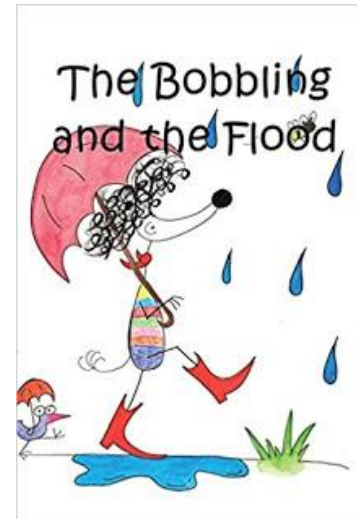


## Floods – Picture Books

### **The Bobbling and the Flood** by Inger Brown, 2018

**Picture Book**

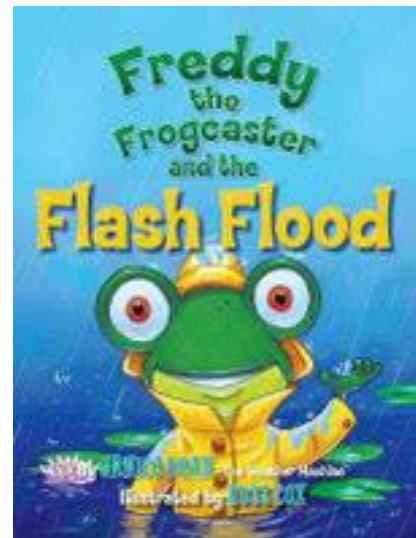
Bobbling Poodle wasn't very happy. It was raining and it didn't seem to be stopping. He wanted it to stop. The rain got heavier and then started coming through the roof of his house. There was so much water that it flooded his house, so he had to leave. He had an idea though. He was going to use an umbrella as a boat and go and find the plug so that he could drain all the water away and get his home back. But where was that plug?



### **Freddy the Frogcaster and the Flash Flood** by

Janice Dean, Russ Cox (Illustrator), 2017 **Froggy the Frogcaster Series** **Picture Book**

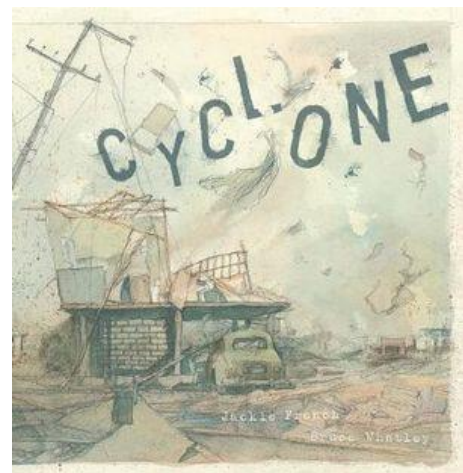
Freddy the Frogcaster and his friends are hoping for rain. Their town of Lilypad is dry, and plants and trees are brown because of a terrible drought. Freddy gets excited as he sees a storm coming that could bring water to thirsty trees and grass. He leaps into action to warn everyone to be prepared. Suddenly there's a change in the forecast that could affect everyone's plans--and make Freddy wonder if he's meant to be a frogcaster. The fifth title in this **series**, *Freddy the Frogcaster and the Flash Flood*, explains droughts, storms, floods, and flash floods, and encourages kids of all ages to be weather ready, just like our friend Freddy.



### **Cyclone** by Jackie French, Bruce Whatley

(Illustrator), 2018 **Picture Book**

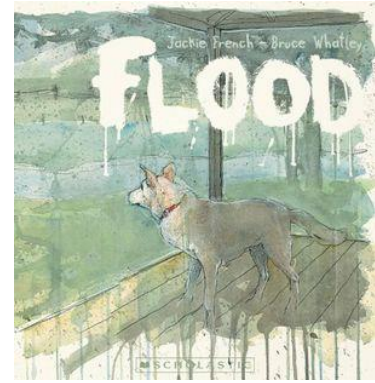
Christmas Eve 1974 is marked indelibly into the Australian psyche, as the night tropical Cyclone Tracy devastated and flooded the city of Darwin. Now, over 40 years later, Jackie French's lyrical rhyming text tells the story of a city's indomitable spirit, and Bruce Whatley's sumptuous illustrations bring to life the powerful force of the storm to a whole new generation of readers.



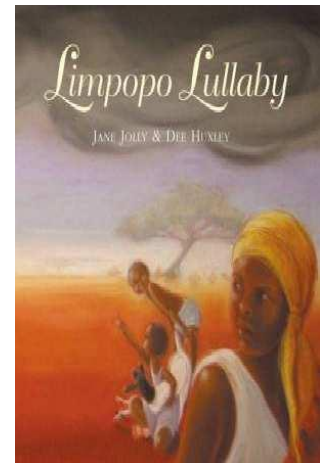
**Flood** by Jackie French, Bruce Whatley (Illustrator), 2011**Picture Book**

The rain stopped, but the wall of water surged into the river. Hour by hour the river rose. In some places water only nibbled at the banks, but in others it burst across the riverbends ... up into the streets. It sounded like a helicopter. It sounded like a flood.

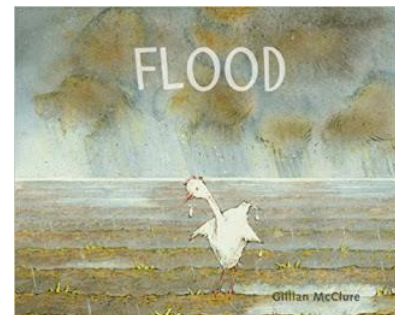
Inspired by the Queensland floods, this is the story of a natural disaster as seen through the honest eyes of a cattle dog that has been separated from his family. The floodwater mercilessly rips through the towns, and finally recedes, leaving a devastating widespread path of destruction. But from the ruins, courage and kindness emerge. A tiny tugboat heroically guides a wayward boardwalk out to sea; rescuers pluck friends and strangers from the dangerous waters; communities gather, providing aid, shelter, comfort and — above all — hope.

**Limpopo Lullaby** by Jane Jolly, Dee Huxley (Illustrator), 2004**Picture Book**

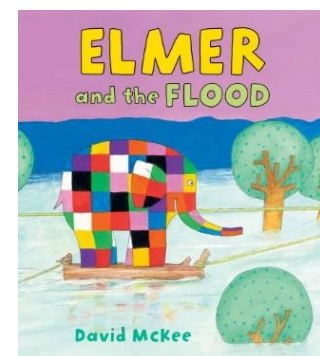
As the mighty Limpopo River bursts its banks and with her husband away working, Josette, who is about to have her next baby, is forced to shelter with her children in the huge milkwood tree near their village. They cling for their lives, above the swirling waters, for three days. It is not until the fourth day that help arrives and a miracle occurs. This touching story of bravery, love and new life is based on a real incident that occurred during the devastating floods in Mozambique in 2000.

**Flood** by Gillian McClure, 2014 **Picture Book**

Three animals – two of whom are arch-enemies, the third merely disgruntled – are thrown together in a flood. Finding unexpected skills like steering, swimming and hanging on, they finally reach a small hillock and scramble onto it to wait for the water to subside, while contemplating their newfound reliance on one another.

**Elmer and the Flood** by David McKee, 2015 **Picture Book**

Rain or no rain, Elmer is going for a walk. After being cooped up in a cave with his herd, he longs for a bit of fresh air and some peace and quiet. But peace and quiet is going to have to wait – when Elmer goes outside, he discovers the rain has caused a flood..... Can brave Elmer work out a way to save a stranded young elephant?





## **Frog is a Hero** by Max Velthuijs, 2013

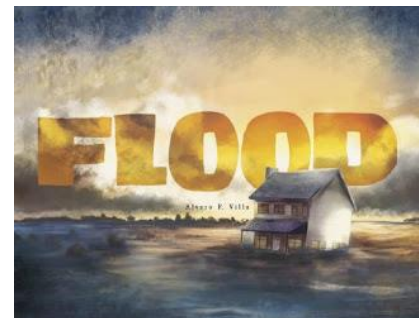
**Frog Series** Picture Book

Delighted at first, when it begins to rain, Frog eventually finds that even a water-loving amphibian like himself can get too much of a good thing when the river floods, and his house is inundated. Seeking shelter at Duck's house, and then Pig's, and finally ending up all together at Hare's island home, as the waters rise, the friends are inconvenienced, but not endangered. Until, that is, the day the food runs out, and Frog decides that, as the best swimmer, he must go for help...



## **Flood** by Alvaro F. Villa , 2013 **Picture Book**

This is a wordless picture book which shows the preparation of a family for an impending storm, how they evacuate and what happens when their house is flooded. It also shows how the family pull together on their return to restore their house to order, and life resumes. This intense, beautiful look at a flood's effect on a family carries a simple message of hope and recovery.



## Floods – Independent Readers

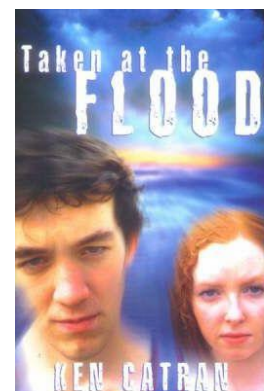
### **Grimsdon** by Deborah Abela, 2019

Grimsdon is in ruins. Three years ago, a massive wave broke its barriers and the sea flooded this grand city. Most were saved, some were lost - and some were left behind. Isabella Charm and her best friend, Griffin, live with three other children in the top of an opulent mansion. They've survived with the help of Griffin's brilliant inventions, Isabella's fighting skills and their vow to look after each other. But what will happen when a newcomer arrives in his flying machine? A thrilling novel set in a post-apocalyptic, flooded world. For Ages: 9 - 11 years.



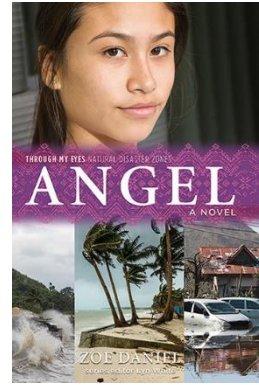
### **Taken at the Flood** by Ken Catran, 2001

Comet GABRIEL has sideswiped the Earth, triggering earthquakes, volcanoes and a monster tidal wave. Bruce and Karen are among the few left alive - struggling to survive in the bleak, hostile aftermath of disaster. They are strangers but must unite. Because everything they know has been taken at the flood. And only the strongest will live.



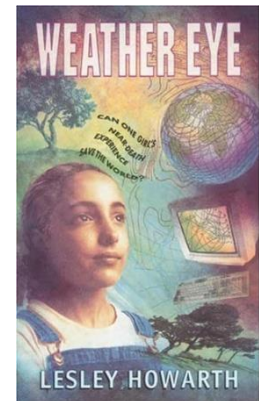
**Angel** by Zoe Daniel, 2018 **Through My Eyes: Natural Disaster Zones Series**

Angel's family has seen many typhoons. For generations they've passed across the central Philippines around November, bringing with them drenching rains and strong winds and flooding. Lately they seem to be stronger, more destructive, but Angel and her family and their neighbours know how to batten down for big storms. It's part of their way of life. But when the biggest typhoon of all comes to Tacloban, Angel faces the biggest challenge of her life ... An engaging and suspenseful story about one girl surviving Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013.



**Weather Eye** by Lesley Howarth, 1995

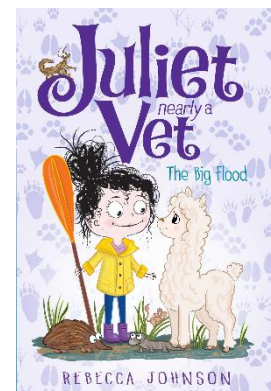
Telly Craven is a Weather Eye, part of a club that shares information by computer about climatic conditions around the world. And, as 1999 ends, weird things are happening: floods, earthquakes, force ten gales. It's during such a storm that Telly has a Near Death Experience, leaving her with strange psychic powers.



**The Big Flood** by Rebecca Johnson, 2016

**Juliet, Nearly a Vet Series: Book 11**

Hi! I'm Juliet. I'm ten years old. And I'm nearly a vet! It's been raining for days and the farms and paddocks near our house are flooded. Luckily, Chelsea and I are all ready to help when Mum is called out to deal with some stranded alpacas. A vet must be ready to go at a moment's notice! But there are also many small animals that need rescuing. Can we convince Dad to take us out in the canoe before the water rises further? For Ages: 6 - 9 years



**Flash Flood** by Chris Ryan, 2010

*Code Red, Code Red... it's a major disaster! The Thames Barrier has gone, and London is underwater...*

Ben is in London for the day, but suddenly his visit becomes a terrifying struggle to survive as the Barrier is overwhelmed and a torrent of water floods through the city's streets in an unstoppable deluge of destruction. Then it gets really dangerous.

With streets underwater, communications down, rats pouring up out of the sewers and thousands of people in a state of panic, survival becomes a very key issue for Ben and his mates. But worse is to come when a high-security prison is evacuated, and a vanload of category A prisoners is caught in the torrent...

## **Storm Runners** by Roland Smith, 2010

### **Storm Runners Series: Book 1**

Chase Masters and his father are "storm runners," racing across the country in pursuit of hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods. Anywhere bad weather strikes, they are not far behind. Chase is learning more on the road than he ever would just sitting in a classroom. But when the hurricane of the century hits, he will be tested in ways he never could have imagined.



## **The Surge** by Roland Smith, 2011

### **Storm Runners Series: Book 2**

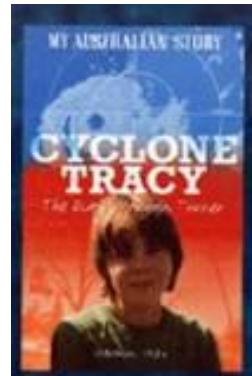
Chase and his friends Nicole and Rashawn have just survived Hurricane Emily, the storm of the century, but their troubles are just beginning. Although they've made it to the safety of Nicole's family's farm--the winter home of the Rossi Brothers' Circus--the floodwaters are rising, and they need to reach higher ground. The circus's lions have escaped their cages, and a dangerous and unpredictable leopard is also on the loose. Have Chase and his friends lived through a terrifying night only to face a new disaster?



## **Cyclone Tracy: The Diary of Ryan Turner, Darwin, 1974** by Alan Tucker, 2006,

### **My Australian Story Series**

Ryan and Nev both love fishing and spend all their spare time at the wharf or out on Darwin Harbour, and keeping an eye on local weather and tides. When Ryan makes a new friend, his father is not pleased. Troubles with his dad are nothing compared to what lies ahead for Ryan when Cyclone Tracy devastated Darwin on Christmas Eve, 1974.



Compiled by Dajo Finlayson 2020

