

HOW TO BE A GUMNUT BABY

CLASSIC ADVENTURES FOR MODERN CHILDHOOD

TO CELEBRATE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MAY GIBBS' GUMNUT BABIES®, NATURE PLAY SA HAS CREATED A SPECIAL LIST OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES INSPIRED BY THE STORIES OF THE ICONIC AUSTRALIAN ARTIST AND CHILDREN'S AUTHOR. READ MAY'S WONDERFUL TALES, DELIGHT IN THE FOLKLORE THAT HAS CAPTIVATED GENERATIONS, AND HEAD OUTDOORS TO DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH WITH YOUR FAMILY!

On all the big Gumtrees there are Gumnut Babies. Some people see them and some don't; what do you see when you look closely at the bark, leaves and canopy of an ancient Gum?

When twilight deepens into dark and the last tint of sun has stolen from the distant hill, go on a walk with your family; this is the time when little Gumnut blossoms fold their petals about them and close their eyes in sleep. Find a spot to stop and listen, what can you hear?

Christmas Bell Babies love, above all things, to play leapfrog with their friends from the creek. Gather your friends for your own game of leapfrog at the park!

Go on a spring bushland adventure in search of the Pea Flower Babies (you may find them by searching for their bright yellow pea flower hats!) What other wildflowers and colours can you discover?

Picnic in your favourite natural place: smell the wattle, listen to the birds, look at the sun in the green leaves, breathe the clean air and let your eyes be filled with blue sky.

Go walking in a field or forest, keeping your eyes peeled for Mushroom babies — be careful not to mistake them for real mushrooms, or to step on the funny little fellows!

Native Fuschia Babies run about together, holding hands and balancing carefully because of their long red and white caps. What can you find outdoors to run and balance upon with a friend?

Camp overnight in your garden or the great outdoors, waiting until the Sun has gone and the big Stars come out one by one (this is the time the Bush Babies fall asleep!). In the morning, listen for the Early Birds as they wake the Bush Babies, and you, for another day.

Did you know that in return for a little drop of scent, Butterflies will carry the Boronia Babies about for hours? Spend an afternoon playing in a garden, counting butterflies and other flying insects — perhaps you may even see a Boronia Baby flying too?

Spiders are great friends with the Boronia Babies: they make fine strong swings for them and at night the Babies sleep under spider nets so that they may rest undisturbed. Get up early and go on a bushwalk; see how many spiderwebs you can spot along the way!

In Winter, when the sky is grey and all the world seems cold, rug up and explore your local natural place, for this is the ideal time to find wattle babies! They put on their yellowest clothes!

Wattle Babies enjoy boating down the creeks and on the still pools of the river. Make your own miniature boat from seed pods, leaves and bark, then test it out in a small creek or puddle — what happens to it; where does it go?

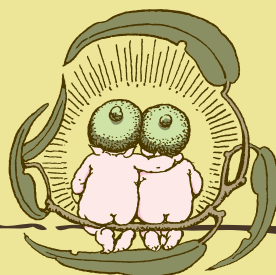
Frogs are very friendly with the Wattle Babies — be inquisitive and discover a place where frogs live; perhaps you can even see or hear a frog minding the wattle baby boats or teaching them to swim?

The Gumnut Babies have many Bush Creatures for friends, such as Mr Lizard, Mr Kangaroo, Little Emu Wren, and Mrs Kookaburra. Find a quiet spot to sit in a National Park and close your eyes: how many different Bush Creature friends can you hear (listen for birds, insects and animals)?

Gumnut Babies live in little round houses in the treetops of the Big Gumtrees; their homes hanging in the shelter of the leaves, warmed by the Sun, cooled by the Breezes, and kept clean and bright by the Rain. Use natural materials to make a tiny shelter for the Gumnuts to visit when they venture down from the trees, or work with your friends to make a large bush shelter of your own!

When the wind blows high, the Gumnut Babies ride the tossing boughs and shout; for that is how they learn the art of never falling. Once the winds settle, go with your family in search of Gumnut and Blossom Baby caps, big Gum leaves, fallen seed pods, and other natural treasures the Gumnut Babies may have dropped while busily riding the boughs.

Sometimes, when the moon is very full, the Nuts take the Blossoms to some far-off tree and tell them stories. Find a special tree to rest under and write or share a story with your family and friends.



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