Fact Sheet No. 2:

BRINGING WILD BIRDS INTO THE GARDEN

Honeyeaters are pretty birds and will come into your school or home garden if there are plants, shrubs or trees to give them food and shelter.

The plants must come first and the birds will follow for food, and if you are lucky (and the birds comfortable) they may build nests and rear young.

Many of the native shrubs, such as Grevilleas, Hakeas and Banksias will flower and provide nectar and pollen for many months of the year. Very small plants are the best as they grow the fastest. They are also the cheapest!

The orange-flowered Tecoma is an untidy shrub (it is not a native) but it flowers during the winter when other flowers are scarce. The very attractive New Holland Honeyeater really likes these flowers and may stay to build a nest. It says " ZIT ZIT " and has white eyebrows and black, yellow and white streaks running from its beak to tail.

The White-plumed Honeyeater is another regular garden visitor, smaller than the New Holland and quite bossy. It is yellowish-green on top and light greyish underneath, with a white patch (plume) behind the eye. This little fellow is often called the Chickowee after its call.

If you are very lucky Eastern Spinebills may come into your garden. These birds are even smaller than the White-plumed, with a black head, white front and small white bib. Some of the back is brownish and the rest black. They have a very long curved beak, to reach deep into a flower, and can hover like a helicopter or Hummingbird whilst drinking from a flower.

All the above birds will also eat grubs and caterpillars and help to keep your garden plants healthy and happy.

Why don't you ask your parents or teachers to plant some shrubs to attract Honeyeaters. You will be amply rewarded when the birds visit or rear their young.