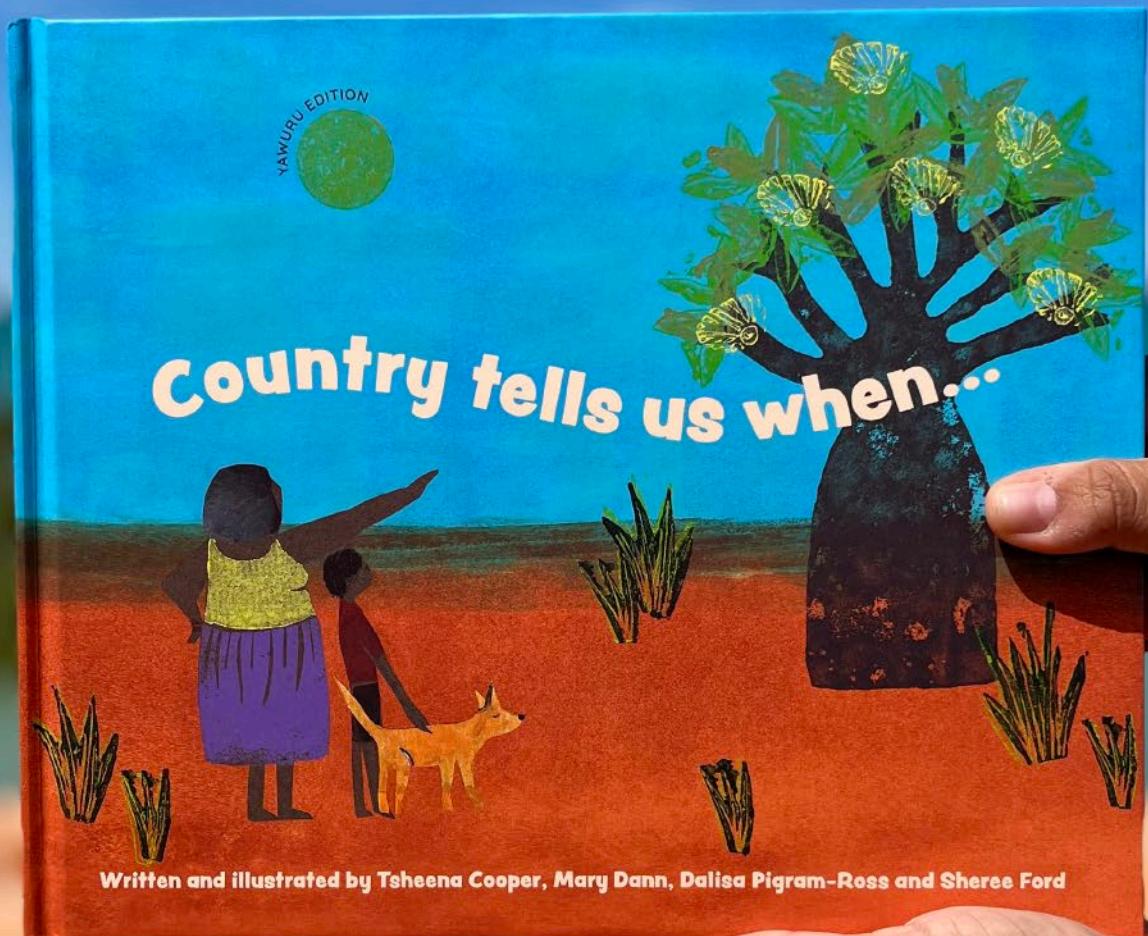


BUSKING FOR CHANGE

2025

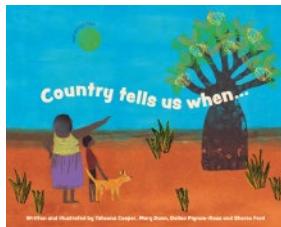


Country Tells Us When ...
Honours Aboriginal Language
and Knowledge Systems



Written and illustrated by Tsheena Cooper, Mary Dann, Dalisa Pigram-Ross and Sheree Ford

BUSKING FOR CHANGE



“Some cultures around the world have four seasons that they look out for on a calendar; Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring.

Us Yawuru mob, we don’t have four seasons that are told to us by a calendar. We have six seasons and Country tells us when they have arrived by what we feel, see, taste, smell and hear.”

Country Tells Us When... is a book from Western Australia teaching readers all about how the Yawuru people read the seasons. The Yawuru people are the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters in and around Rubibi (the town of Broome). The story was created by educators Tsheena Cooper, Dalisa Pigram-Ross, Sheree Ford and FaFT parent Mary Dann, with the support of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF), for the children throughout the Kimberley.



Authors and Illustrators: Dalisa, Mary, Sheree and Tsheena.

At Cable Beach Primary School, where the creators work, Yawuru language is incorporated into everything the children do. The language is taught to the students, the rooms are named in Yawuru, and there are posters in language throughout the school.

By the time students reach Year 6, most speak Yawuru quite well.

The former Kindilink teacher at Cable Beach Primary School, Sheree, was also the Kindlink teacher at La Grange Remote Community School in Bidyadanga when the KindiLink was receiving ILF's Book Supply and Book Buzz packs. *“So when I came to Broome I was of course going to carry on those programs because they were too good to let go of,”* she says.

Sheree then learnt about ILF's Community Publishing program, which focuses on the publication of books by and for First Nations remote Communities.

Aboriginal Islander Education Officer, Tsheena, and Sheree wanted to create something that could be a valuable Yawuru resource for the children at Cable Beach Primary School and the surrounding Communities.

The only books they had in Yawuru were the ones that they had created themselves, so having something professional and hardcover was an exciting opportunity for the educators.

Dalisa is a Yawuru Language Teacher at Cable Beach Primary School and worked on the translation for the story, with the help of the Mabu Yawuru Ngan-ga Language Centre.

“It was about creating something we wanted to use and that could help people,” says Sheree.

BUSKING FOR CHANGE



And not just for the people in Broome, Tsheena explains. *Country Tells Us When...* also has Mangala and Karajarri translations for some of the surrounding Communities that share the same seasons.

"As an Aboriginal person, everywhere you go the seasons are different. I am a Noongar and Yamatji from the south of Western Australia, and our seasons down there are completely different. There's different animals, and so many different things happening during seasons opposed to up here in the Kimberley. It is important to showcase that for children. Children see seasons everywhere, everyday, with what is going on around them," explains Tsheena.

The book also showcases the colours of the Kimberley region, which allows the children to see their environment accurately reflected in a book.

Sheree explains that *"I just feel really excited to have a book that the kids in the Kimberley can completely relate to. You don't see books with that red ochre earth colour and the aqua blue, it's so the Kimberley colours."*

"Having that very simple thing in a book lets the kids connect to it and see their lives reflected in print. It engages them in so many ways because it is their story, they are more interested in the book, which builds up their literacy if they are more engaged in the book."

When creating the book, Sheree, Tsheena and Mary individually mixed up the paints to create colours that were capturing the Kimberley.

They used a process of lino printing, a block printing technique where a design is cut into a piece of lino. The block is then rolled in the paints and pressed onto the paper. It is a stamping process that is repeated throughout the book to create beautiful patterns.

The story shows the children's lives, their environment, and their languages reflected in print. This is something that is very special to the Community.

"I feel very proud to have been a part of the language and cultural content part of this little book because finally I can say I have been part of a team of people that made that happen," says Dalisa.

For everyone involved, this book has been extremely rewarding.



The Community at Cable Beach Primary School is excited to have *Country Tells Us When...* adapted into a song by ILF Ambassadors. You can [purchase this book](#) or register for [Busking For Change 2025](#) below.



BUSKING FOR CHANGE

