

# wollemi wilderness bike

art by helen lovelee



Our planetary forests are our lifeblood. Covering 31% of Earth's land area and home to two-thirds of all species (including 300 million humans), forests are vital to our survival and development.

Helen Lovelee's original artwork for Wishbone Bike honours the 2011 UN International Year of Forests. Her art depicts the critically endangered Wollemi Pine tree and three indigenous Australian creatures that inhabit the Wollemi Wilderness near Sydney, Australia.

The story of the Wollemi Pine's rediscovery is inspiring. It reveals humanity's age-old connection to nature, the improbable survival of an ancient species, and a modern success story in protecting this natural treasure.



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# wollemi pine story



*Wollemi pine cone*



*Sooty owl*

The Wollemi Pine is a dinosaur-age tree, believed extinct for 2 million years. Known only from fossils, it was rediscovered in 1994 by a park ranger out canyoning in a national park near Sydney.

That the Wollemi Pine species survived for 200 million years is amazing. Consider the intervening ice ages, earthquakes, continental movements, floods, droughts, fires and expansion of human civilization.

There are less than 100 Wollemi Pine trees surviving in the wild today. They live in 3 small stands in an undisclosed location in Wollemi National Park – part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area west of Sydney, Australia.

The Wollemi Wilderness is a rugged area of dramatic ravines, red earth, dry brush and giant trees. It is busy with birdlife and indigenous Australian creatures – including the brush tailed wallaby, the sooty owl, and the booroolong frog.

Australians have developed an innovative, award-winning conservation strategy to save the Wollemi Pine. It includes keeping secret the location of the remaining stand of wild Wollemi trees, and offering for sale commercially-grown seedlings via an officially-endorsed, global website. You can gift a Wollemi pine seedling to a friend [here](#).

In 2003, 4000 year-old rock drawings were discovered in a cave in the Wollemi Wilderness area. Many layers of ancient drawings are testament to the connection felt by generations of Aboriginal people who visited and marked this incredible terrain time and again

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# 2011 un international year of forests

Humankind is deeply connected to Earth's forests – socially, culturally, economically, spiritually. Our planetary forests are central to a sustainable future.

- Forests provide food, water, medicine, clean air and spiritual nourishment.
- They help to maintain a stable climate, environment and global economy.
- Forests play a key role in managing natural disasters.
- More than 1.6 billion people globally depend on forests for their livelihood.



During the **2011 International Year of Forests** the United Nations aims to raise awareness about the importance of forests and to inspire a sense of personal responsibility for a greener, more equitable, sustainable future.

Take time in 2011 to reconnect with your local forests. Find out where they are and visit. Go walking, cycling, camping. Take your kids for a forest ride.

Pause among the trees, for there is magic in the forests.

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## the artist – helen lovelee, in her own words:

Originally I'm from Sydney Australia, although I'm half English and I've made London, UK my home for now. After high school, I trained in environmental conservation. But the creative force was strong inside me and I finished my studies in arts, graduating as an illustrator.



My childhood was rich not because of the things I had but the things I did. I was a super active kid – I wanted to feel free. My mum let me be myself by not imposing conventional rules...I was allowed to jump on my bed and dig big holes in my garden! She gave me the freedom to explore spaces and objects around me, allowing my creativity to flourish.

For artistic inspiration I look to the natural world. When Wishbone asked me to design a bike for the UN Year of the Forest I was thrilled.

I made my design about the Wollemi Pine because it's close to my hometown Sydney and its a symbol of survival – their species have survived for 200 million years! The aboriginal meaning of Wollemi is 'Open your eyes, look around you and watch out'. I think this is good advice. People should become aware of what is happening to forests around the world, so forests survive to be enjoyed by others in the future.

To see more of Helen's work visit her website at [www.helenlovelee.com](http://www.helenlovelee.com)

