

Gindaja The Cassowary

Trevor Fourmile



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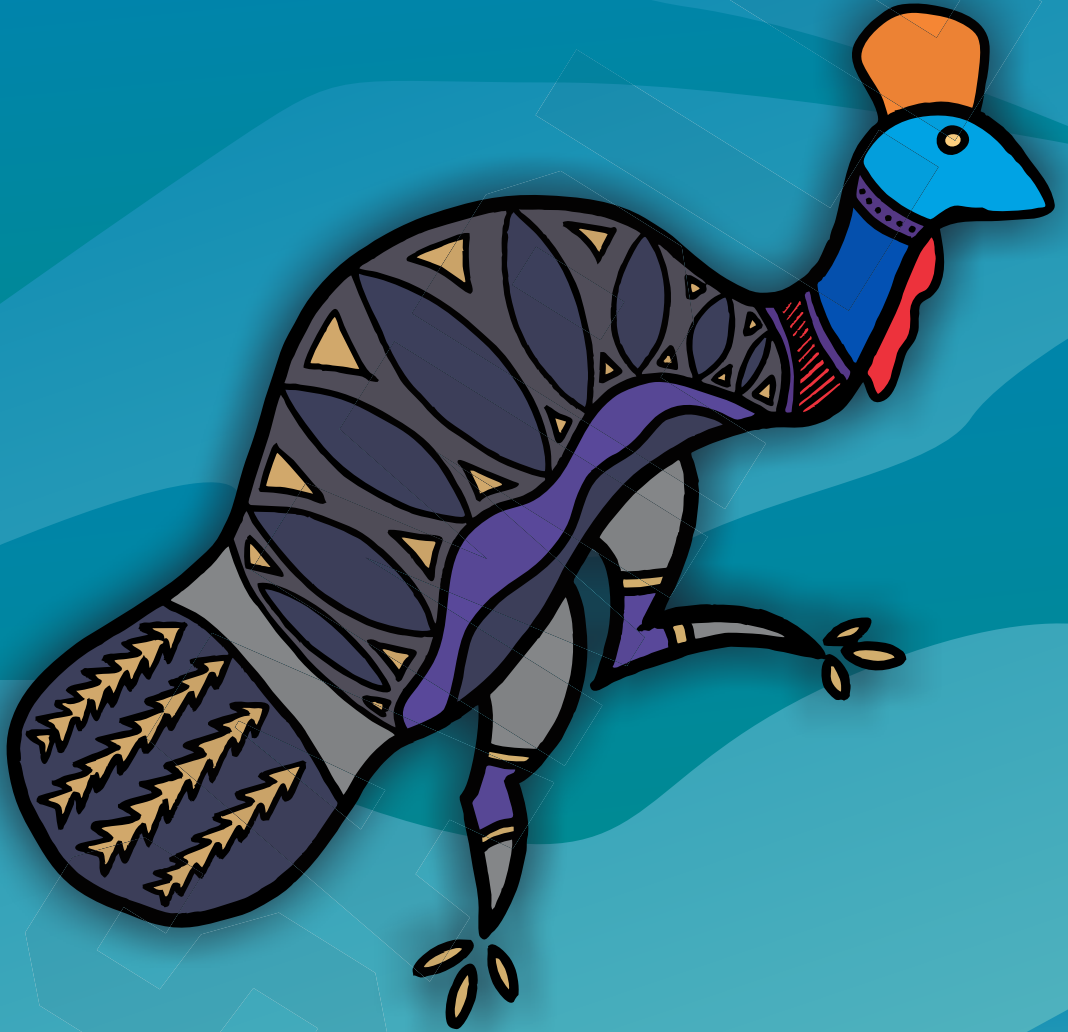
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Far North Queensland is home to the Yidinji people. Their main town is called Cairns. The Yidinji name for Cairns is **Gimuy** (ghee-moy). This means slippery, blue fig tree. The *Southern Cassowary* lives in the tropical rainforests near Cairns. It is a totem for the Yidinji people and very special to them. They call it **Gindaja** (gin-duh-ja).



In Yidinji story time, Gindaja had large wings and could fly. He lost his way and flew into a very big lake. He got stuck in the mud and flapped his wings but could not free himself. He lost his wing feathers and walked from the lake. The feathers he had left were black from the mud.



Today, the cassowary is a very large bird that cannot fly. It is a bit like an emu. The cassowary is the third tallest living bird in the world. It grows about 2 metres high. Only the ostrich and the emu are taller than the cassowary.



The feathers of a cassowary are very black and shiny. An adult cassowary has a tall, brown helmet on its head. It also has bright blue, purple and red colours on its neck. Even with all these bright colours, they can still be hard to spot in the rainforest.

Gindaja – The Cassowary

This book explains in detail the special characteristics of Gindaja, The Southern Cassowary and the importance of this bird to the local Yidinji people, past and present. Find out why this clever bird is called “the rainforest gardener”, why you should always keep your distance from them, and how its population is being protected for future generations.



Author's Bio:

Trevor Fourmile is from the Yidinji people of the Cairns area of Far North Queensland. His Yidinji name is Bumi which means “lightning flash”. Trevor works as a Community Engagement Officer at Hymba Yumba Independent School in Brisbane and loves teaching the younger generation his culture through traditional dancing, storytelling and writing children's books.

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