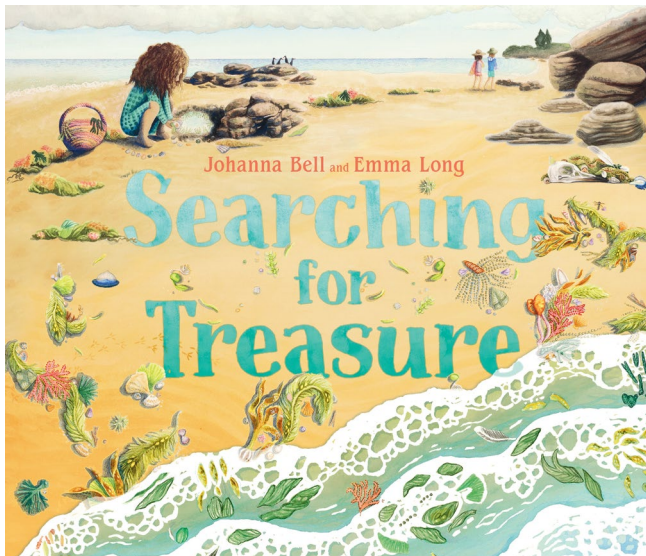


# Searching for Treasure

By Johanna Bell  
Illustrated by Emma Long



A lush, joyful picture book celebrating the wonders of a walk on the beach and the treasures to be found on the high tide line, with a gloriously surprising gatefold finale.

**RECOMMENDED FOR**

3–6 (Lower Primary)

**THEMES**

Beach, play, sea creatures, imagination and creativity

**ISBN (AUS)**

9781761180682

## SYNOPSIS

*Searching for treasure on the high tide line.*

*One step, two steps, what can you find?*

A walk on the beach becomes a joyous, creative adventure.

What has the sea washed up?

Can you find its hidden treasures?

Find sea urchins and shark eggs, ghost crabs and cuttlefish, limpets and barnacles and so much more.

From award-winning creators Johanna Bell and Emma Long, this magnificent read-aloud tale celebrates the joy of discovery.

## CREATORS' MOTIVATIONS

'*Searching for Treasure* is a book about discovery and the joy of uncovering something rare. It's a celebration of our coastlines and all the varied and unique ways that marine species have adapted to thrive in the sea. It's about cycles; the ebb and flow of the tide; the uncovering and recovering as the beach reshapes itself; the death that follows a storm and the life that lives in the items washed ashore. It's a game of hide-and-seek, peeling back layers to discover new plants and animals, and it's a slow meander along the high tide line, kneeling down to look closely at the micro worlds that exist under a pile of seaweed or a giant cuttlebone; losing track of time, becoming absorbed by minutiae. It is also an ode to childhood and all the discoveries we make when we're gifted time to explore the natural world.'

Johanna Bell

'For me *Searching for Treasure* is about the joy, awe and wonder still to be found in nature. And about how, despite the global access to wonders around the world, there is still nothing quite as breathtaking as stepping out into the wild and making discoveries for ourselves.'

Emma Long

## **A NOTE ABOUT THE SEA DRAGON FEATURED AT THE END OF THE STORY**

'When I was three, massive storms struck the coast of Sydney. Afterwards, my dad took me down to the local beach to look for flotsam and jetsam. I remember there were piles of seaweed almost as tall as me and the air tasted salty from all the sea spray.

'That day, on the high tide line, we found a weedy sea dragon, washed up. I knew it was special because my dad bent down very slowly and lifted it up gently, as if it were still alive. 'Darling,' he said, 'this is very rare. Some people look their whole lives and never find a sea dragon.' Together, we marvelled at the bright oranges and purples and the camouflaged leafy wings.

'Ever since, I've been obsessed with sea dragons. I've lost count of the number of beaches and the number of hours I've spent searching high tide lines. I never have found another sea dragon, but along the way I've discovered hundreds of other species and a deep love of beachcombing.

'When I wrote this book I wasn't thinking about the sea dragon, but I must have mentioned it to Emma who sensed how special it was to me because in the final pages of the book, when the girl is allowed to dream, that's what she creates – an enormous sea dragon, more beautiful than any I've ever seen.'

Johanna Bell

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Johanna Bell lives in Tasmania where she writes fiction and runs a community arts business called StoryProjects.

Johanna is the author of *The Colour Catchers*, illustrated by Laura Stitzel and *Hope is the Thing*, illustrated by Erica Wagner, and co-author of the award-

winning, highly acclaimed bestsellers *Too Many Cheeky Dogs*, *Go Home Cheeky Animals!* and *Cheeky Dogs: To Lake Nash and Back*, illustrated by Dion Beasley.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Emma Long is an accomplished artist, exhibiting regularly in group and solo exhibitions across the Northern Territory. Their passion for creative arts has led them to work as an art educator in secondary schools as well as pursue a Bachelor of Visual Arts, a Certificate in Printmaking and a Graduate Diploma of Education. They are inspired by the fresh, raw beauty of nature and feel most at home in the bush with a brush in hand. Emma lives in Darwin with their husband and four children and continues to work as an illustrator and an art educator. Other books they

have illustrated include Diane Lucas and Ben Tyler's *Walking in Gagudju Country* and *Walking the Rock Country in Kakadu*.

## IN-CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### Before Reading

- Look closely at the book's cover and answer the following questions:
  - Where do you think this story will be set?
  - What time of the year is it likely to be?
  - What do you think it will be about?
  - If the story is called *Searching for Treasure*, what sort of treasures do you think might be found? (Look closely, because many of them are pictured on the cover.)

### After Reading – Questions for Younger Students

- After your teacher has read the book out loud, discuss what you liked about the story and pictures. (NB: teachers may want to leave the smaller, more detailed information for subsequent readings.)
  - Can you explain why lifting the flaps on pages might be like searching for treasure on a real beach?
  - What was the surprise treasure the young girl 'made' at the end of the story?
  - Does such a creature really exist?
  - If it doesn't exist, can you guess what real sea creature it might be based on?
  - Go back to the beginning of the book and see if you can find an example of each of the following in the story: a ladybird, seaweed, a fish, pink coral, a shell, periwinkles and a bluebottle.

### After Reading – Questions for Older Students

- Read the book through and discuss what you liked about the story and pictures. (NB: older students should be encouraged to read the smaller, more detailed information.)

- Can you explain why lifting the flaps on pages might be like searching for treasure on a real beach?
- What was the surprise treasure the young girl ‘made’ at the end of the story?
- Does such a creature really exist?
- If it doesn’t exist, can you guess what real sea creature this one might be based on?
- Go back to the beginning of the book and the page with the words *One Step, two steps, what can you find?* Fill in the blanks in the following sentences about the interesting creatures featured on this page (as well as the one under the flap).

\_\_\_\_\_ are the homes for soft animals called \_\_\_\_\_.

The best time to look for shells is after \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ are the remains of cuttlefish.

Some sharks lay \_\_\_\_\_. And baby sharks are called \_\_\_\_\_!

- Turn the page and match each sea treasure found here with its correct fact.

Velvet weed	can grow taller than a grown-up.
Kelp	are animals.
Scallops	is soft and furry.
Sponges	propel themselves by snapping their shells together.

- How many creatures can you name that feature on *Searching for Treasure's* endpapers (the double-size sheet folded, with one half pasted against an inside cover)?

### **Become a Nature Explorer**

- Next time you visit a beach, remember to pack a journal and some coloured pencils. Once on the beach look closely at everything around you – the waves, the birds flying above, the seaweed washed ashore and the tiny creatures that might be hiding in the sand or rockpools. If you find something interesting, draw a picture of it in your journal and write a few words about what you can see.  
NB: if you live too far from the sea to visit a beach, you could take a journal and pencils to a riverbank or local park.

### **Design a Flashcard Game**

1. Choose five of your favourite 'treasures' from *Searching for Treasure*.
2. Using cardboard, cut out five cards, each 10 cm x 15 cm.
3. Place an image or illustration of each of your five treasures on one side of each card. (NB: You can draw the objects, use photos, or print royalty-free images from the internet.)
4. On the reverse side, write the name of the object and a brief description or fun fact about it, e.g., 'My tentacles can grow up to 10 metres long!' could be on the other side of an image of a bluebottle.
5. Start the game by holding up a flashcard with the image on the front while reading out the information on the back of the card. Can your friend identify your 'treasure'?