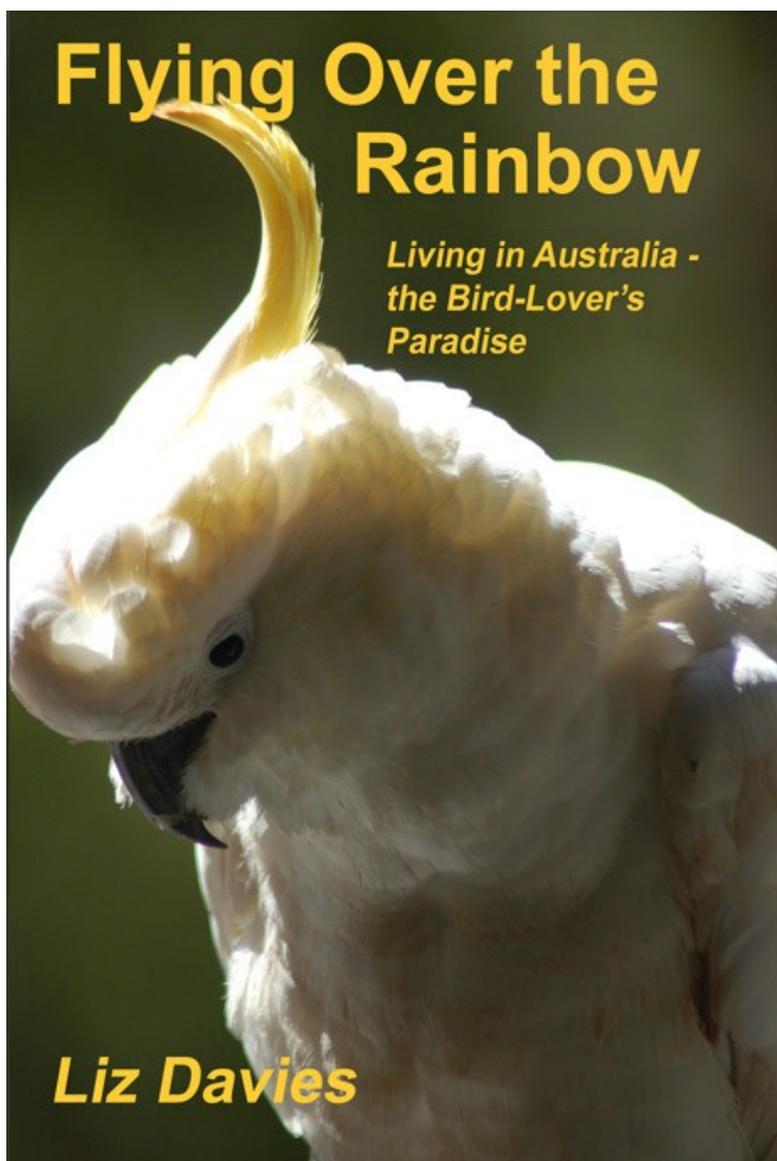


This PDF contains excerpts of stories from the book “Flying Over the Rainbow: Living in Australia – the Bird-Lover’s Paradise”.
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(Front Cover)

Flying Over the Rainbow

Living in Australia – the Bird-Lover’s Paradise

By Liz Davies

Available now on Amazon.com
ISBN: 978-0-9872050-0-1

About The Book

Any Australian souvenir book worth buying will include photographs of the Great Barrier Reef, the Sydney Harbor Bridge, Uluru (formerly known as Ayers Rock), and the trees of Sherbrooke Forest. Author Liz Davies and her husband Stephen moved to Australia in 2006 and set up housekeeping in a small village surrounded by those trees. Living among the giant eucalypts and tree ferns has proven to be quite an adventure. Kookaburras, cockatoos, magpies and other wild birds, many of which have lost much of their fear of humans, visit them daily. With wild wallabies eating her flowers and giant spiders roaming the house, Davies has her hands full. *Flying Over the Rainbow* is a collection of stories about an American expat living in what she describes as “one of the most beautiful and possibly one of the most dangerous places on earth”.

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Buster tapping on the window outside the kitchen. Moments later he ripped a strip of wood from the windowsill!

From: “Please Don’t Eat The House”

...Buster bounced down from the deck rail to the deck itself and strutted over to the window. He looked through the glass at close range, first with one eye, then with the other. He saw me sitting at the table next to the window; I was ignoring him. Buster walked up to the glass on the bottom of the door and tapped lightly with his beak. This didn’t produce the handful of seeds he wanted.

If I wasn’t going to respond to the protocol, I was going to be punished. He’d show me!

He took two steps back, looked up to make sure I was watching and then reached down and... rip! He peeled a thin six-inch strip of wood from the deck floor! He stood in front of the window turning the strip of wood in his beak, looking at me through the glass...



**These days, I always notice which way
the trees are pointing.**

From: “Slaying Giants”

...“You can predict the way a tree will fall,” he went on, “by looking at the way the branches are aligned. Do you see this one next to your house? Most of the branches are pointing in the direction of the house. When that tree comes down you’re going to have two buildings instead of one.”

We looked up in horror at what he was pointing to. Sure enough, the lovely mountain ash above the retaining wall had most of its massive limbs pointing toward the house....



Signs such as this one appear frequently in Australia, reminding everyone to stay on the “correct” side of the road.

From: “Right Is Wrong”

... Stephen and I still laugh about what happened at the airport on my first trip to Australia. I’d just gotten off the plane, was severely jet-lagged, but thrilled to be here at last. We tossed my bags into the trunk of his car and I automatically walked to right side, preparing to get in.

“Are you driving?” he asked.

“Well, no,” I began, puzzled by his question. Then I looked down at the car. The door was partially open and I was surprised to see a steering wheel on the passenger side!...



We've never gotten close to them, but we see and hear the wallabies frequently on the slope below the house.

From: “A Gardener’s Lament”

...On the edge of the terrace, opposite my raised beds, the brush and weeds had been mashed down. A zig-zag path of matted plants had been sculpted from the yard below, coming up the steep slope and ending just in front of the beans. Something large had made that path, something hungry.

A few days later, the bean plants were stripped of leaves. Next the tomato plants were chewed on and ripped out of the ground. The zucchini and eggplant disappeared.

It was about this time that Stephen and I started sitting out on our patio after dinner, enjoying the cool air as the sun went down. One evening there were noises below the house. The rustling of tall grass and weeds was followed by “thump-thump”. Then silence. We slowly rose from our chairs, not wanting to alarm whatever was below. Moving to the edge of the deck, we peered down to see the culprit. An adult wallaby had hopped up out of the bush and was sitting in the open grassy slope above the tree ferns....



After decades of drought, the forest was dangerously dry.

From: “Black Saturday”

...I sat in my office, as I had the previous week, soaking my feet in a bucket of water and trying to stay as cool as possible. By mid-afternoon, something just didn't seem right and I glanced outside. The forest around our house was bathed in an orange light. It looked like a sunset, but without the accompanying shadows. I went outside to have a look. I couldn't smell the smoke, but there was enough in the air to give everything a weird copper tint.

In the north-eastern sky was an enormous café au lait cloud: the smoke from the Kilmore East fire. Satellite photos of this smoke cloud, taken six hours after the fire started, show it extending approximately the distance between Cleveland and Cincinnati. I watched it slowly crawl over the mountain peak, a brown thundercloud that had nothing to do with rain.

At 4:30, a grassfire cut off our westerly (and preferred) escape route. At about the same time, reports on the radio warned residents that the brown cloud I could see was super-heated, and dropping burning material in the suburbs to the north of our mountain. Next, we heard new fires had started in the valley to our east; only our southerly escape route was not reported as being blocked by bushfire...

About The Author

Born in 1956, author Liz Davies lived most of her life within just a few miles of her childhood home in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. No one who knew her in her youth would have suspected she'd ever travel the world or live anywhere more than a ten-minute drive from her parents' home.

She worked in the IT field as a programmer/analyst and consultant for nearly thirty years. Always a believer in the value of formal education, Davies pursued her studies when it was feasible, given the demands of career and family, and finally earned her Bachelor of Business Administration in 2001 (she jokes that she got her 4-year degree on the “25-year plan”). She went on to earn a Masters of Business Administration and for five years enjoyed teaching undergraduate students as “Professor Davies” of Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio.

These days, she is a parrot slave, writer, artist, gardener, “foodie”, self-described quilt-a-holic, a great lover of books and a woman of faith. She lives in Australia with Stephen, the love of her life, who spoils her rotten. She is a very happy woman.

A life-long “closet author”, Davies has been writing stories since childhood (most of which were pretty awful, really). In addition to this book, she maintains a website for parrot lovers and posts weekly updates to her weblogs. *I Quilt, Therefore I Am* is dedicated to quilting and *Still Flying Over the Rainbow* is where she continues to share the ongoing adventure of living in Australia. Both blogs are accessible via her website:

www.sevenparrots.com



Liz and Laka, her technical advisor.

An avid bird fan for most of her life, author Liz Davies hit the jackpot when she and husband Stephen moved from suburban Ohio to the rural outskirts of Melbourne, Australia. Their adventure begins with sad goodbyes to their Ohio avian flock. But sadness is quickly replaced with the joy of living in a place where colorful native parrots and other wild birds are regular visitors.

Kookaburras, cockatoos, magpies and more! They're all here - many of them amazingly unafraid of the human residents of their forest home.

Life in the rainforest is sometimes frustrating, often hilarious and occasionally more than a little dangerous, but the natural beauty of the place pulls at the heart. Despite enormous spiders, wildlife devouring her flower garden and the very real threat of bushfire, author Davies remains, making her home among the giant gum trees of southeastern Australia.



Liz Davies



(back cover)