

# Voice of the future: What does World Heritage mean to a young Australian?

Jessey Reid

My name is Jessey Reid, I am 10 years old and live in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, Australia. I acknowledge and pay my respects to the Elders past and present of this place and as the first peoples of Australia.

I'm going to talk to you about what World Heritage means to a young Australian.

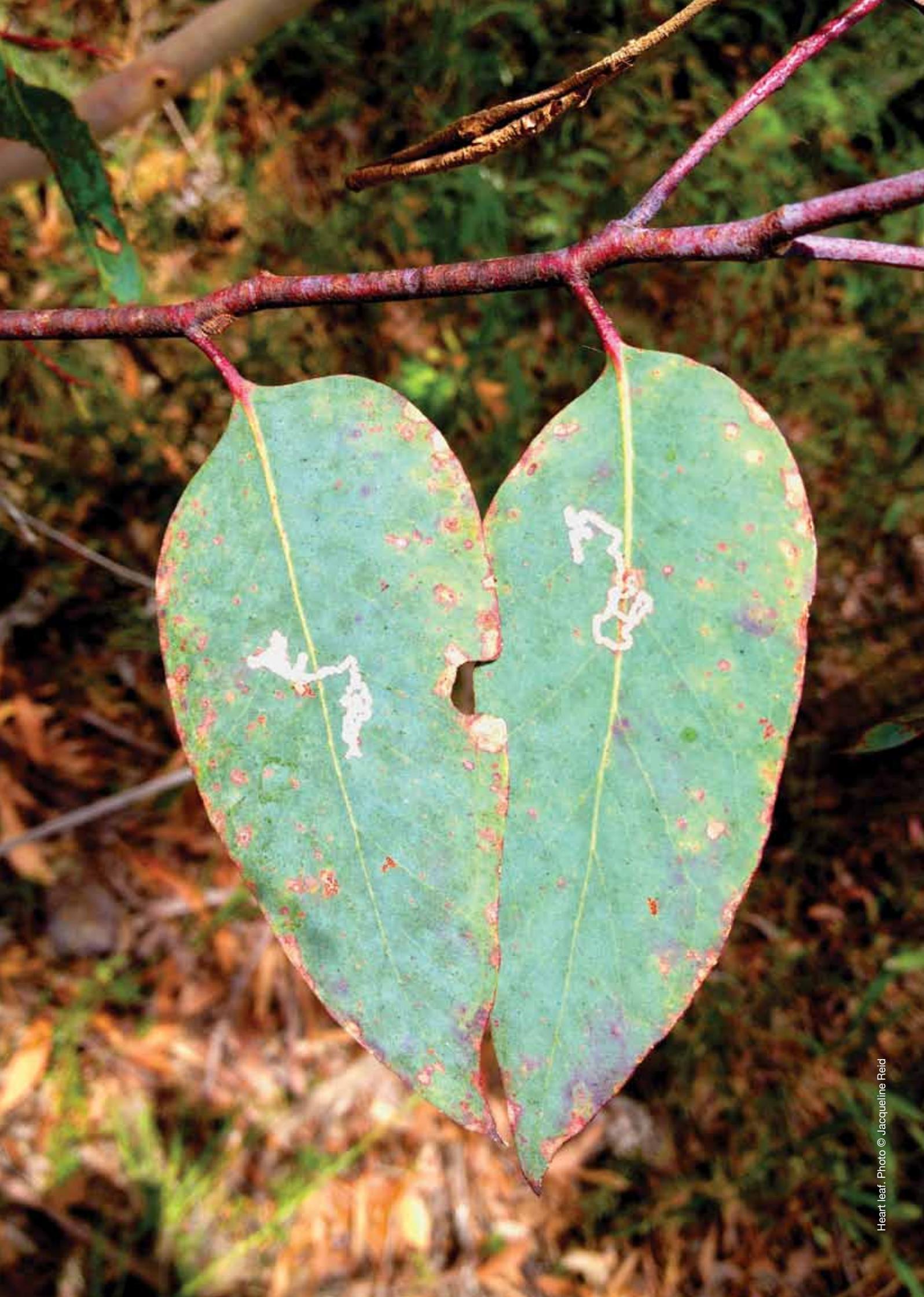
A World Heritage area means a SPECIAL PLACE to me. Just think of your special place. How would you feel if it was destroyed?

Basically, World Heritage places are special places that belong to us and that we need to protect so we can share with our kids about what they mean to us and our families.

My mum, Jacqueline, has enjoyed the bush since she was a baby and shares that love and appreciation with me. She is the Executive Officer for the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and does lots of work with children and grown ups about national parks and World Heritage. I am a trainee Ranger and trainee Executive Officer and help Mum with her work when I can. I help to tell the story of World Heritage in the Blue Mountains and beyond.

We celebrated the Greater Blue Mountains 10<sup>th</sup> birthday as a World Heritage area in 2010. Hundreds of people were invited to 'make a wish for World Heritage'. My wish was that "no-one would litter in the national parks".

A number of community activities were held under the theme *Put Yourself in this World Heritage Picture*. Activities celebrating "our future, our heritage, our place", aimed to raise community awareness of what it means to be part of a World Heritage Area – the story of and the relationship between people and place. This included raising the profile of the World Heritage emblem and enhancing recognition of the global Patrimonto program (youth heritage guardians). Lots of children came to the celebration and we were awarded by the Governor of NSW as World Heritage Youth Guardian, after making our 'patrimonto pledge'. We all made a human picture of the World Heritage emblem.





Passing on a love of the natural world and all its cultural meanings will be crucial to the future of World Heritage. Photo © OEH.

I get to visit lots of amazing places and go on bushwalks with my family and friends. We visited Fairy Dell in the school holidays and saw the most amazing toadstool – it was purple. It's great to visit other World Heritage places. I've been to the Wet Tropics, Gondwana Rainforests, Willandra Lakes, Sydney Opera House and parts of the Convict sites – one day I would love to visit Paris!

We help to host amazing Living Country Culture Camps every year with the 6 Aboriginal language groups that have connection to the Country of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families come along to learn and share stories and experiences. We enjoy camping, traditional workshops, performances and presentations and we learn traditional dance, song, stories, tool making, bush tucker and medicines, artefact identification and much more.

My school was the first to be involved in the Bush Trackers project where we enjoyed a local bush walk with National Parks Discovery Rangers and our photos, poems, pictures and stories are going to help create a bushwalking guide for other kids. I think this is a great project which is helping some of my friends enjoy the bush, to visit safely and have fun! I'm lucky my mum works at National Parks.

I don't really want to be successful when I grow up because as David Orr (2005) says, "the planet does not need more 'successful' people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every shape and form. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these needs have little to do with success as our culture has defined it."

Thank you for listening and helping to look after our World Heritage - it belongs to us all.



## References

Orr, D.W. (2005). *Ecological Literacy: Educating our Children for a Sustainable World*. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco.

## Links

[www.livingcountry.com.au](http://www.livingcountry.com.au)

[www.bushtrackers.com.au](http://www.bushtrackers.com.au)

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## Biography

Jessey Reid and her mum Jacqueline Reid were born and raised in the Blue Mountains of Australia. Ten year old Jessey enjoys being part of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife 'team' that delivers ecological and World Heritage messages at a range of events across the Blue Mountains and beyond.

Jessey enjoys looking after her pets (2 dogs, 2 cats, 10 chickens and 5 fish), cooking, bushwalking, playing with friends, her iphone and practising her flute.