

The Kangaroo and the Porpoise

When I was young, my grandfather told me this story as we sat under a shady tree about why the animals look like they do.

A long time ago in the Dreamtime, in the country around Bulbul, there lived a kangaroo and a porpoise. Porpoise was friendly, caring and kind hearted. Whereas, kangaroo was sly, cunning and selfish. Both kangaroo and porpoise had babies and they used to go hunting together.

One day, kangaroo asked porpoise if she would look after her baby whilst she went hunting for bush tucker.

"All right," said porpoise, "I'll look after him."

So, kangaroo went off on her own to look for bush tucker- some long yams, goanna and emu. When kangaroo came back, she said to porpoise, "All right, it's your turn now. You can go hunting and I'll look after your baby."

So off porpoise went, looking for bush tucker while kangaroo stayed behind to look after the babies. Porpoise was away for quite a long time and her baby started crying because she was hungry. porpoise heard her and rushed back to feed her.

"Give me my baby," porpoise said to kangaroo. "She's hungry and I want to give her some milk."

Now, that porpoise baby was a really pretty baby and kangaroo wanted to keep her for herself.

"No," said kangaroo. "She's crying for me, not you!"

"No, she's crying for me!" said porpoise.

"No" said kangaroo.

"She's *my* daughter. Give her back!" said porpoise.

Then they started to argue and fight. kangaroo grabbed a nulla nulla to attack porpoise. She hit porpoise which made a hole in her head. Porpoise got furious and grabbed a stick too. She hit kangaroo on her two arms and broke them. Now kangaroo couldn't pick up her baby so she could only hop on her back legs. She hopped away into the bush, with porpoise's baby tucked into her pouch. porpoise was really miserable.

"I don't want kangaroo's baby" she said. "He's too ugly."

And she threw him into the pandanus trees. Then she ran down to the beach and jumped into the salt water. She dived down under the water and she swam about for a while.

Eventually, she came up to the surface again and the water spurted out of the hole in her head.

"I will stay like this forever," she said. "I'll live here in the sea".

And she dived down again. She is still there today. Next time you see a porpoise, look for the hole in its head, that is where kangaroo hit porpoise. Kangaroo lived his life with little arms yet always remembered this happened because of his actions. And that little kangaroo baby turned into a white frog. You can still see him today, living in the pandanus trees.