

Protecting our parrots

**EDUCATION/
ENVIRONMENT**
Lachlan Valley Way

THE artistic talents of kids from Boorowa Central School and St Joseph's are brightening up the Lachlan Valley Way as new road signs are installed featuring their artwork of a renowned and threatened local icon - the Superb Parrot.

Threatened Species Manager at the Office of Environment and Heritage, Dr Damon Oliver, launched a Superb Parrot art competition with the schools last year to harness their creativity and help save the iconic bird.

"The Boorowa community has a long association with helping to conserve the threatened Superb Parrot, going back to at least the 1980's when road signs were erected around the Shire promoting the need to protect hollows in trees," Dr Oliver said.

"But after several decades, these signs were faded, missing or had lost their Superb Parrot logos; with less than 10,000 of these striking green parrots thought to be left in the wild, we don't want to



Students from St Joseph's Primary School with St Joseph's principal Brendan Maynard, Hilltops administrator Wendy Tuckerman and landholder Heather McLeod.

lose them either.

"The art competition was a way to engage Boorowa kids with local environmental issues and create new signs to remind us that large trees, both dead and alive, provide

essential nesting habitats," said Dr Oliver.

More than one hundred children from both schools entered the competition and three talented winners were chosen from each.

The stand-out winners were announced alongside the unveiling of the colourful new signs at Hilltops Council Chambers and at Boorowa Central School on September 7 marking Threatened

Species Day 2016.

"I have always been amazed at how enthusiastic and knowledgeable the local kids from Boorowa are about their environment and particularly threatened

woodland birds like the Superb Parrot.

"It's all about establishing that connection to the environment early on.

"We even have some of them involved in our annual Superb Parrot monitoring program which allowed them to collect important population information," Dr Oliver said.

Joining the competition winners at the celebration were the school Principals Brendan Maynard and Paula Hambly, landholder Heather McLeod and the Hilltops Council Administrator, Wendy Tuckerman.

"The timing could not have been better, as Superb Parrots usually arrive back in Boorowa at the end of winter, to breed during spring and early summer before migrating north in January," Dr Oliver added.

The NSW Government's \$100 Million Saving Our Species (SOS) program is helping many threatened species through funding of on-ground habitat restoration and by galvanising community involvement in recovery actions.