



MUDDY JOHN

Where have you gone?

KEEP SOIL ALIVE, PROTECT BIODIVERSITY



Photography with works by: Fabio Ferrão, Fabiola Campos e Mayre Casadei.



This book has been developed in collaboration with researchers, artists, curators, educators and people that want to make a difference in the preservation of the biodiversity of the soil. To you all, we thank you for the opportunity to open up an inclusive discussion and the creation of didactic material to inspire the preservation of the biodiversity of the soil.

Thank you!

Author

Leo Alenfel

My Corridor Gallery
Southampton, UK

Visual artists and illustrator of
avifauna
Fabiola Campos
São Paulo, SP - Brazil

Researcher and environmentalist
Fabiana Natalino de Souza
Espera Feliz, MG - Brazil

Biologist and photographer
Fábio Ferrão
São Paulo, SP - Brazil

Visual contemporary artist
Mayre Casadei
Bournemouth, UK

Notes for education

This book includes activities to teach through the practice of art and science to inform educators, parents and responsibles to encourage learning through curiosity and discovery.

Red Ovenbird

The species known as Red Ovenbird or Rufous Hornero (*Furnarius Rufus*), is found in South American countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. This bird is famous due to its ability to use soil (mud), sticks, grass and straw to build its nest which is shaped like an oven. It takes the bird from 18 days to a month to build its nest, in which both female and male birds are involved in the process. Their house size varies but can be around 20 cm tall and weighs from 5 to 12 kg and the bird couple tend to build a new home every year. João-de-Barro (John of Mud) as it is commonly known in Brazil, feeds on the ground from insects, worms, fruits and food consumed by humans such as bread.

Ferrão Videira, F., 2020. *Biologist And President of CEO - Centro De Estudos Ornitológico De São Paulo. Brazil.*



Red Ovenbird (*Furnarius Rufus*).
Fabiola Campos, 2020 watercolour on paper.

MUDDY JOHN

There is a little bird that is brown like the earth. It is hard working and diligent and loves his place of birth. John lives in South America in a country called Brazil. His dad and his mum told to their son, "we have built our house and we will teach you how it is done".



John smiled at them and sang happily at the door of the oven shaped nest, that he called home. Dad flew down to the ground and called little John, "come down in the mud and I will show you how it is done". John fast flew down and got dirty in the ground. He was happy as he could be, playing



and learning everything. Then his dad showed how to pick the mud with his own beak.

"John look at me and listen carefully. The soil is our friend because it is the home to everything.



In this soil we find life, the soil always provides. It is the home to mother nature, it's what keeps us all alive. Without

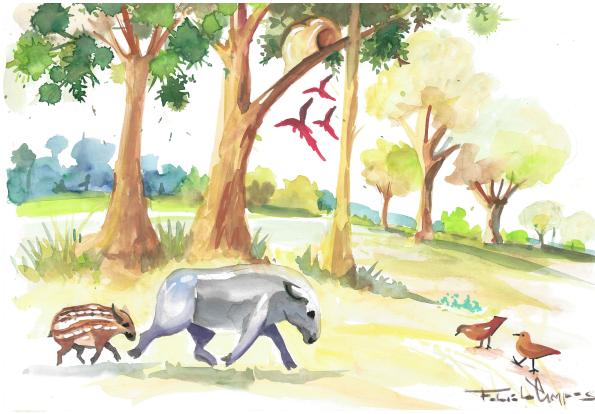
the soil there are no trees, there are no fruits, vegetables nor seeds. The soil feeds us all, it brings the flowers to the bees, it is the home to everything".

John looked around and saw a lot of land, there was soil without an end. So he asked his dad with a little bit of doubt. If there was so much to take, what was his worry all about.



His dad then sat down and explained to John, "life has changed so much since I was your age my dear son".

John looked confused and wanted to understand. He asked his dad what was different back then. Dad explained to John, "once I was a little bird just young as you are. I grew up in a place where the trees were not so far apart. Today we look around, I see far fewer trees. The soil is disrespected and without it we won't live".



They got a bit of mud and flew back home. When John met his mum she asked him what

was wrong? John replied, "Mum I am worried about the soil, it helps life, it can't be spoiled". Mum smiled with pride, she comforted John and explained why.

"Little John you are so sweet, the mud we take, it goes back in. The biggest problem is not our fault, it is when humans change it all. They cut down trees, they plant their crop, they poison the soil



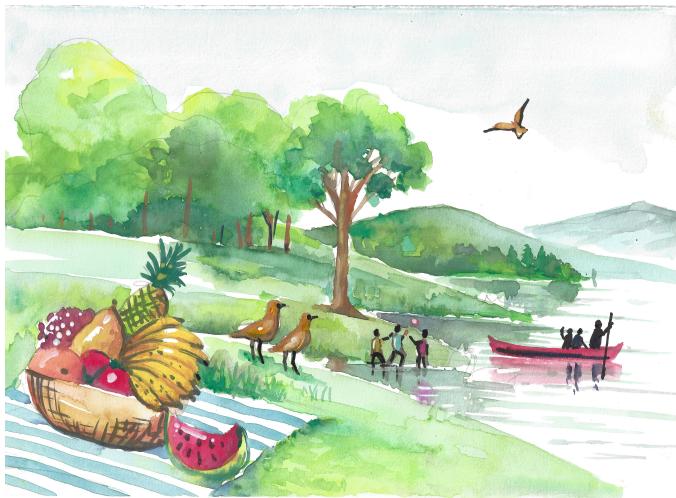
to produce more. It kills bugs and it kills life, and the soil to recover needs more time".

She cleaned little John, that was as muddy as the ground. Dad vowed, "don't worry dear son, let's build together. I will show you how it is done". He took some of the mud and helped his dad and his mum. He learnt his work well "and now off to bed my dear son".



Mum then declared as she kissed her little son, "happy dreams my little boy. Tomorrow we'll show you more, we must wake up with the sun". John went to sleep and soon enough he starts to dream. He was in a different place full of life, full of

green. There were birds of all kinds, there were plants, there was life. Humans lived amongst the



trees, and showed their children how to live.

They looked after the soil and planted, but not to spoil. They did not use pesticides and didn't harm the planet's life.

John was happy with what he found. A different place, a life's playground. There were people, there were animals, there were bugs all around. John sang happily, John sang loud with this place that he had found.

But he woke up suddenly, and wondered if it all was just a dream. He went out to see it all, then his mother started to call, "John, where have you gone?".

He replied from the ground and told his mum, he was so loud! "I had dream about a better land, the best there was around". Then he told his mum everything and asked her just like this.

"Is there something that we can do?", Mum replied intelligently, "let's talk and I will teach you. Everyone has to take responsibility. So we make friends and let them know we all must act, we all must grow. This is what we can ask..."

"What can you do to improve the rest?".



LET'S MAKE SOME ART?

HOW TO MAKE PAINT FROM SOIL WITH FABIANA



RECIPE

1- ADD 5 FULL SOUP SPOONS OF LINSEED IN 1/2 LITRE OF WATER AND LEAVE IT TO REST FOR 24HRS

2- SIEVE THE LINSEED AND REMOVE THE SEEDS FROM THE GEL

3- COLLECT AND SIEVE THE SOIL WITH THE COLOURS OF YOUR CHOICE. THE SOIL MUST BE DRY.

4- USE A SMALL CONTAINER TO MEASURE THE SOIL, WATER AND LINSEED GEL QUANTITIES.

5- USE 1 PORTION OF SOIL, 2 PORTIONS OF WATER AND 1/2 PORTION OF GEL. MIX IT ALL AND YOUR PAINT IS READY.



6- YOU CAN MIX AS MANY COLOURS AS YOU LIKE! THIS PAINT WORKS ON PAPER, WOOD AND IT CAN EVEN BE USED TO DECORATE WALLS.



NOW LET'S USE OUR MATERIALS TO COLOUR
WITH FABIOLA



LET'S BUILD A SOIL BIRD HOUSE WITH MAYRE



1- MIX SOME CLAY WITH SOIL AND STRAW.

2- ADD A LITTLE WATER, STEP, STEP, STEP UNTIL THE DOUGH IS DONE.

3- MAKE A LONG SNAKE OF MUD AND BUILD IN CIRCLES THE WALLS OF THE HOUSE.

4- MOULD THE SHAPE AND MAKE A HOLE PRESSING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE GENTLY. LET IT DRY AND YOUR BIRD HOUSE IS READY.

