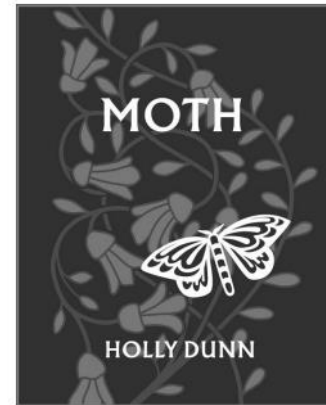




PINK SHIRT DAY

Moth

Holly Dunn (2018). The Copy Press, NZ



Moth is a children's book about fitting in. It was a hit with my three-year-old daughter. She was excited about opening the book and reading it straight away, asking to hear it twice. It was clear to me she was intrigued about the moth's life – she picked up on themes noting “the moth is trying to find friendly friends” and “is flying away from fires”. I feel she was able to grasp the ideas portrayed in the book about finding alternative friends and facts about the life of a moth. I also enjoyed reading the book and taking in the scenes created through black and white illustrations of birds and insects native to Aotearoa. I feel children of all ages could have a positive experience reading this book, even though it touches on what can be a difficult situation.

Reviewed by Kellie Christophersen, Playcentre mum and aspiring health promoter

Moth is a sweet and very beautiful book about a moth. But beyond this it's a book which personifies feelings of loneliness, self-doubt and hope in finding a way through darker times. The imagery and words connect well and Dunn is an incredibly talented illustrator. The book has a “stamp” like quality, produced in black, white and grey. Each image appears stencilled onto the pages and the moth, kōwhai and ruru have been delicately sketched.

I am however stuck with the question – who is this book for? While the back cover states “Children and adults will enjoy spotting the different plants and animals native to New Zealand”, I'm not convinced. This book is elegant. The lack of colour suggests a darker, more serious theme directed at adults, but its simplicity and heavy use of pictures implies it's a children's book. My other questions were about the ending of the book – the words were poetic and structured well, but the lack of a clear narrative and conclusion left me a little lost. The outcome is I've googled moths and am now fascinated with how many native moths (and butterflies) New Zealand is lucky to have – approximately 1700, of which 90 percent are unique here. So if this is the outcome of the book, for me, or anyone, it's a good one.

Reviewed by Anna Mowat, Family Advisor at All Right?

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