

Dear David,

How have you been? It's been a while since we last spoke. I was out doing a bird survey the other day and was reminded of you when I saw a **Spotted Dove (*Spilopelia chinensis*)**.

Do you remember back in the early days of the Gardens' completion, how excited we were when the fauna started returning? I still remember us doing our rounds together when we saw a couple of Spotted Doves foraging for seeds and fruit on the ground. I have never been so happy to see this common local bird in my life!

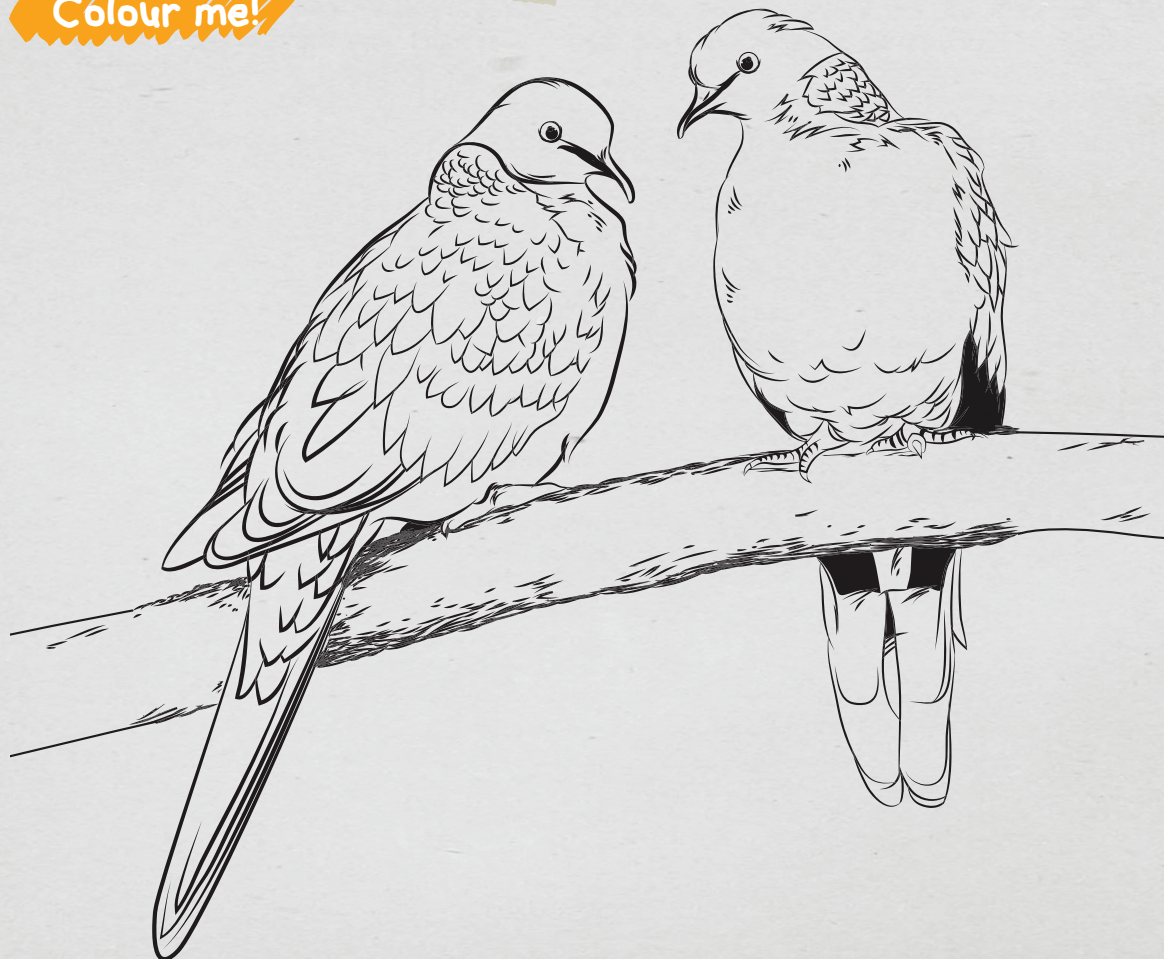
Recently, I discovered that Dove parents build their nest and look after their young as a couple. Fascinating, isn't it? I even dug up some of our old research pictures. Here's one of the Spotted Dove.

Brings back memories, doesn't it? Let's have dinner one of these days. I can meet you over at the Gardens. It would just be like old times.

Take care, my friend!

Warmest regards,  
Jerry

Colour me!



## Letters to David: Small Creatures

Dear Jerry,

Time flies, doesn't it? The picture of the Spotted Doves really brings back some memories.

Do you remember our first rainy season just before we opened? The Gardens were overrun with Millipedes (*Anoplodesmus sp*)! We were so happy to know that the soil was healthy enough to support fauna and that there were natural organisms breaking down rotting plant material and regenerating it into nutrients for the plants. Yet, at the same time, we were worried that they would frighten the visitors! Good thing our fears were unfounded. People didn't even realise they were there!

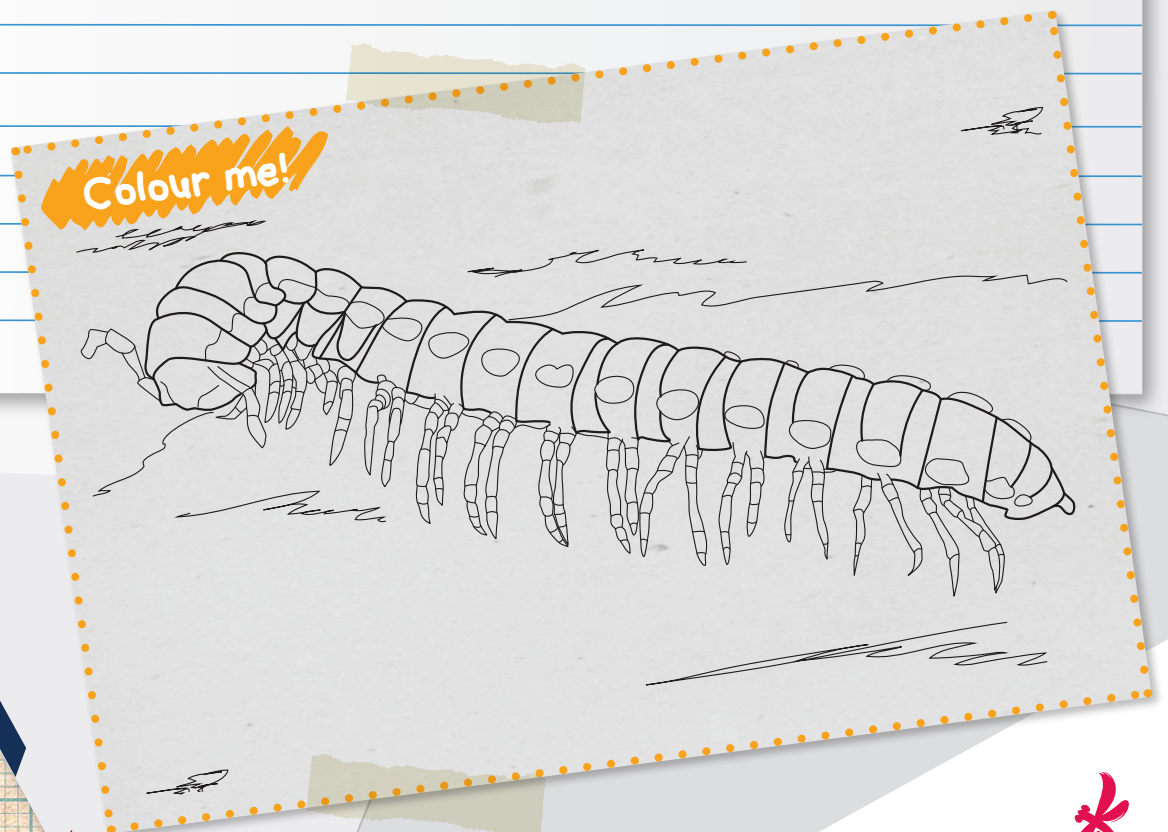
Come to think of it, Millipedes really are quite amazing. There are more than 10,000 known species of millipedes in the world. There is even fossil evidence that suggests millipedes were amongst the first land-dwelling animals! We don't usually notice these small organisms but when you think about it, they are crucial to our ecosystem.

After I received your picture, I went back to look at my files and found some old pictures too. Here's one of the Millipede.

Shall we meet up next Wednesday? We could grab a drink and take a walk around the Gardens. Just like old times.

Let me know!

Your friend,  
David



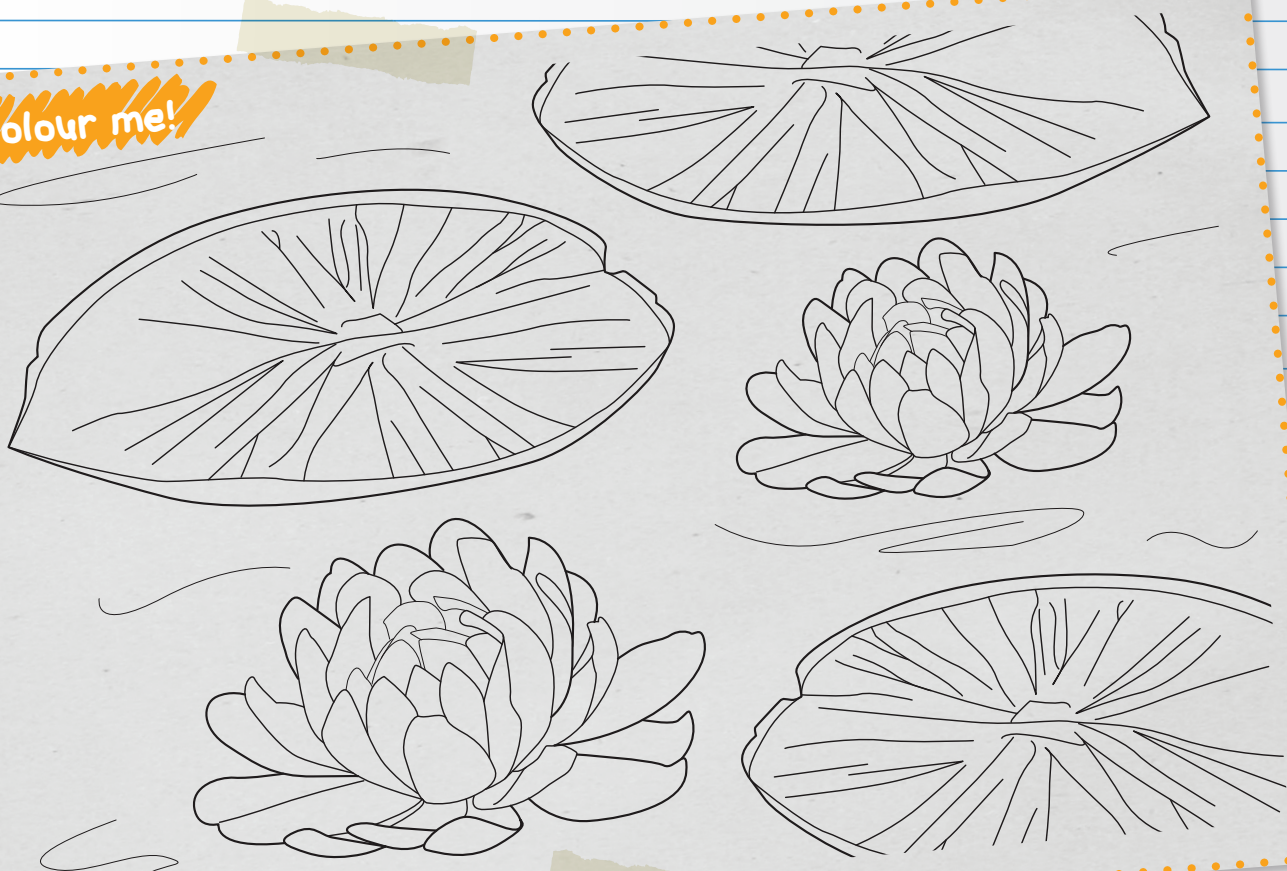
Dear Penny,

Our date by the Victoria Lily Pond at the Gardens was lovely. I saw some **Victoria Lilies (*Victoria amazonica*)** in their native habitat on the Amazon River that day. As the largest species of Water Lily in the *Nymphaeaceae* family, they were truly a sight to behold! The leaf of the Victoria Lily can grow up to 3 metres in diameter and is so strong that it can support a human baby! I drew you a picture of the lilies I saw.

How is the planting at the Sun Pavilion? Are the Cardons holding up well? I hope to send more plants back to add to our collection.

Missing you,  
David

Colour me!



Dear David,

I miss you too! The Victoria Lilies sound lovely.

The **Cardons** are growing well. I know that it is the tallest cactus species in the world but seeing them in real life still amazed me! To think that ours still have room to grow! Can you imagine what it'd be like when they grow to their full height? Also, until Carlos told me, I did not know their fruit could be eaten! I read that the ribs running down their trunks adapt to survive in dry climates, allowing them to expand and contract to store water. How amazing is that?

I have drawn a picture of the Cardon I planted here for you too. Hope you like it.

Thinking of you,  
Penny

**Colour me!**

