

Teacher's Kit

Year 4-6

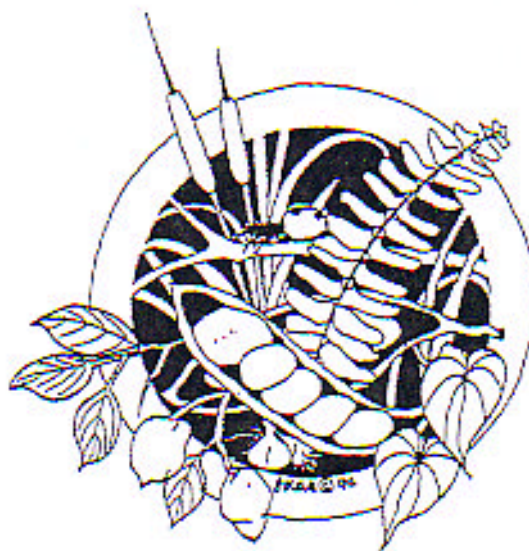
The Koori Walk

A study of useful wild foods, medicine and useful plants

Hunter Region Botanic Gardens
Pacific Highway, Motto Farm, 2324
Telephone 02 4987 1655

Date of Visit: _____

Time of Visit: _____



Prepared by the Education Committee with extensive input from Carol Ridgeway-Bissett and Vi Brown of the Maaiangal Aboriginal Heritage Centre (Inc),

A Study of useful wild foods, medicine and useful plants.

A Two-hour activity at the Hunter region Botanic Gardens.

The gardens cover 140 hectares which is mainly natural bushland with areas of planted gardens and botanic specimens. The gardens have been designed specifically as a resource for conservation and education. Features include:-

- A Botanical Collection with over 2500 species arranged in landscaped gardens.
- Natural bushland including woodland and wetland.
- An outdoor classroom.
- A visitors centre with educational displays, toilets, refreshments, etc.
- Botanical Library and discussion room that seats 15.
- Covered seating areas for lunchtime, etc

The Koori Walk Activity.

What better way is there for your students to appreciate and understand some of the Traditional Koori Lifestyle than a guided walk through the type of bushland that existed in the area before 1770? Your guide has been trained to show you some of the insights that the Kooris have of this environment. This has included insights from members of the current Koori community.

It is important to understand that Koori use of the land is still a living tradition, though to a large extent they live in the "European" community, they still use the traditional foods, medicines, ceremonial plants, etc..

The walk is designed to develop the knowledge and skills that form the Aboriginal Studies unit of the Human Society and its Environment Syllabus. It is assumed that lead up work has been done in the classroom to set the scene for the walk and that it will form the basis for later follow up activities.

Walk Format.

The walk is designed to take 2 hours from arrival to departure as part of the PSCLEC package, although it can be a standalone unit.

12. On arrival a short time is allowed for toilets, disposal of rubbish, application of sun screen and insect repellent (if needed), storage of bags, etc.
13. The children are met by the guide and taken to the first stop on the walk for the introductory talk and observations at that site.
14. They then move on into the bushland where they will stop at up to 7 more locations chosen for the plants there.
15. Student activity sheets are designed to tie in with what is observed at these stops.

Other activity sheets are intended for use on the overall walk rather than a specific stop. (We have intentionally included in the activity sheets far too much work for the time available. This is to allow the teacher to either choose what is most suitable for the class or to provide follow up work at school. To guide the teacher these notes include typical responses expected for many of the activities. These responses will obviously vary depending on the season, weather, ability of the class, etc.)

16. The walk should be finished in time to allow a departure about 2 hours after arrival or for the lunch break.

We Provide:

17. Trained guides to lead the walk and initiate the activities.
18. This Teacher's Kit for your guidance.
19. An activity kit for your selection of activities appropriate to your students.
20. Our guide will tailor the walk to suit the activities of your choice.

You Provide:

21. Teacher and assistance to supervise the children. (Note the duty of care always remains with the teacher. Our guide has the power to exclude from the walk any student who refuses to follow directions. The guide also has the authority to terminate the walk should the behaviour be inappropriate or the teacher in charge does not exert due and reasonable control of the school group.)
22. Worksheets for the children of the activities you have chosen for them to do.

Before the Walk:-

12. Preparatory activities should include the code of conduct expected to be observed.
13. It is suggested the material in the next sheet, "An aboriginal view of life ", should be covered as appropriate to the class. It is a view of aboriginal activity written by members of the Maalangal Nurra (clan) of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation which inhabits this area.

AN ABORIGINAL VIEW OF LIFE

WHO WE ARE

For thousands of years our people have lived in the area now known as the Port Stephens Council area. We are known as the Maalangal Niurra, (Clan), of the Worimi Nation. Our language is Kattang.

OUR VIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT

We call the Earth our Mother, as she supplies everything we need to survive. That is the reason Aboriginal people look after the land. We do not take anything from the land unless we need it e.g. for Food, Shelter or Fire. If we cut down a tree or kill an animal, bird or reptile we always thank Mother Earth for letting us have it, trusting she will replace or renew it. This is the spiritual element of aboriginality.

MEDICINE In past days we didn't have medical doctors as we have today but there were and still are people with special healing knowledge. All our medicine comes from the bush. The medicines we use include bark from trees, mud, animals, birds, fish and leaves. Some examples of our treatments include:- Tea tree bark used as bandages because it is very soft. Mud is used to cover open wounds to stop bleeding. Goanna fat is a powerful medicine. Teas are made from chosen leaves for different illnesses.

TOOLS AND WEAPONS

Coolamons are made from tree bark and from tree burls (Lumps formed on the side of tree trunks). Large coolamons are used to carry babies. They are also used to carry food and water. String is made from grass trees, flax, vines and tree fibres. This is used for weaving fish traps, animal snares and for fishing lines. Fish hooks are made from shells. Grinding stones are used to make flour. Digging sticks, spears, woomeras, , boomerangs and waddis are all made from chosen tree branches. Other tools include axes made from stone, and scrapers made from shell or stone.

FOOD

The women gather fruit, vegetables, seeds and nuts. The seeds and nuts are ground to make flour or eaten directly. Many of these foods need treatment to remove poisons. Ants, grubs, shellfish, crabs, woodworms and fish formed a major part of our diet.

The women also hunted small animals such as bandicoots, lizards and snakes.

The men hunted the large animals, such as kangaroos, wallabies, emus, goannas and possums, with spears, boomerangs and waddis.

The Worimi did not hunt the koala as it is their totem (sacred) symbol.

STORY TELLING AND LEGENDS

These were used to pass knowledge down the generations. They are stories of people, of events and of the dreamtime. They define the spiritual relationship between the people, the plants, the animals and the land.

WHAT WE HOPE THE CHILDREN WILL LEARN FROM THE KOORI WALK

The Koori way of life, which sustained the people of Mother Earth, through countless generations, provides guidance towards solutions of the environmental issues that are now being faced by modern society.

Suggestions for follow up activities at school.

Activity 1

Corroboree statues.

Koori hunters had to be able to stalk their prey by being perfectly quiet and still when approaching it. The aim of this game is to bring home to the children that this is harder than many think.

One person is 'it'. All the other kids in the group move around behind 'it' dancing and clapping. 'It' calls out 'Corroboree', and all the kids have to stop and be perfectly still before 'it.' has time to turn around. If 'it' spots any kid moving that kid becomes 'it' for the next round.

Activity 2

Progressive story telling.

Story telling was an important part of tribal activity. It was the means by which the oral history of the tribe was passed from one generation to the next. The Worimi and other tribes loved to tell stories around the campfire at night. Have the class imagine that they are in a bush camp, sitting in the evening telling stories to each other.

Find a nice straight stick. The leader starts holding the stick, draws a circle on the ground and begins by telling one tribal story. The leader passes the stick to a child. Have the child tell a traditional tale from your resource material. The stick is then passed to another child who tells another story or repeats one that has already told. The procedure was repeated by the tribe until they went to sleep for the night.

This built a mental encyclopaedia of the tribal history and knowledge throughout the tribe.

Activity 3

Creative writing- 'A day in the life of a Koori Kid'

Imagine you are a Koori kid, and you have just woken up in your bushland camp. What will you do today? Write a story using words and pictures to describe what you will eat, where you will play, how you will find food, make shelter for the night and anything else you think you may do for the day.

Book list

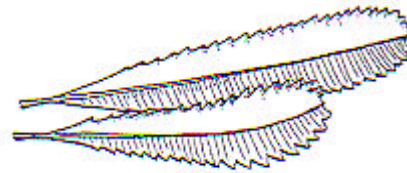
Aboriginal Myths - Tales of the Dreaming. <i>A.W.Reed. Reed Books 1991</i>	ISBN 0730102017
Aboriginal Legends - Tales of the Dreaming. <i>A.W.Reed. Reed Books 1994</i>	ISBN 0730102009
Bush Toys. Claudia Haagen. <i>Aboriginal Studies Press 1994</i>	ISBN 0855752459
From the Dreamtime. Jean E Ellis. <i>Harper Collins 1995</i>	ISBN 1863710167
Aboriginal Stones. <i>A.W.Reed. Reed Books. 1994</i>	ISBN 0730104818
Women's Work. Museum of Victoria. 1997	ISBN 0730624544
Australia's Aboriginal Heritage. Collins Dove	ISBN 1863712623

LEAF SEARCH

As you do the walk, you will have many plants pointed out to you.
Lookout for these leaves and fill out the names of plants as you see them.



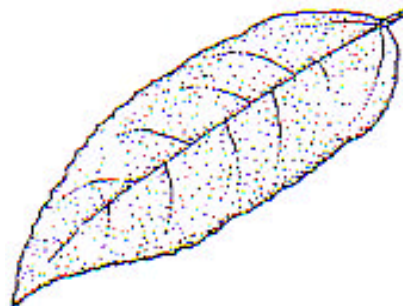
Common Name: Bracken fern
Scientific Name: *Pteridium esculentum*



Common Name: Old man banksia
Scientific Name: *Banksia serrata*



Common Name: Mat rush
Scientific Name: *Lomandra longifolia*



Common Name: Sandpaper fig
Scientific Name: *Ficus coronata*



Common Name: Burrawang
Scientific Name: *Macrozamia communis*



Common Name: Native parsnip or carrot
Scientific Name: *Trachymene incisa*