

DECEMBER - JANUARY

(Giacon and Betts 1999).

later, a koala joey will be born.

when they will hibernate.

Raymond Saunders.

MURRUMAY

Jason Allan.

YARAAYBAA (SUMMER - TIME OF SUN)

'We get Summer rains here in Walhallow' – Jason Allan.



PIR TIME OF SUN)











WII (FIRE)

Kamilaroi (Walhallow) Fire and Seasons Calendar

GURRAARI (CYPRESS PINE), YURRANDAALI (TREE GOANNA), DHULII (SAND GOANNA), GUDA (KOALA), BIGIBILA (ECHIDNA), GARAARR (GRASSES)

Just before heavy rain, the **gurraari (cypress pine)** releases a mist that floats through the air. The **creeping saltbush** flowers

during hot weather, these plants provide food for adult butterflies and their larvae, like the saltbush blue butterfly.

Many garaarr (grasses) produce seed during Summer, which Kamilaroi people harvested as a major part of their

food supply. 'Women picked the ripening ears while they were still green. They stacked them inside a brush

enclosure which was set alight. The burnt seeds were piled on possum skin rugs. The men's job was to

thresh the grain by trampling it in a rectangular hole in the ground. It was then winnowed in bark dishes and stored in skin bags until needed. To prepare it for eating it was ground with water

on millstones and made into flat cakes which were cooked in the ashes of the fire'

During Yaraaybaa (Summer – time of sun), the **guda (koala)** breed. In the lead up to breeding, males can be heard bellowing and fighting. At this time, young koalas start to leave their mothers and explore the world. A month

'The **yurrandaali** is the big **tree goanna** which is eaten by

some of our mob. The **dhulii** is the **sand goanna**, the

of the Kamilaroi people' - Neville Sampson.

Goannas and other reptiles are fat at the end of

Yaraaybaa (Summer), preparing for the cold time

important foods at Walhallow. People still

'Bigibila (echidna) and rabbits were

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

GIINBAY / DHANGGAL (SMALL /LARGE MUSSEL),

'When rain comes from the west, we

just get the tail end. When it comes from the east you get a good storm'

'I know when Spring is coming because

'Pelicans come and go with the seasons,

'Buubumurr (platypus) is found in the

Mooki River here. It is special because it

lives in the water and keeps the waterways

Buubumurr (platypus) breed in Yarragaa (Spring).

'When I was young, we would see giinbay /

dhanggal (small / large mussel) down at the river.

Mussels were an important part of the traditional diet of the Kamilaroi mob. Maliyan (wedge-tailed eagles) come and go

during the cold time, Dhandarraa (Winter – time of frost, ice).

The **guni (native bee)** makes warrul (honey) when there

YARRAGAA (SPRING WIND / SPRING)

clapsticks and boomerangs' - Raymond Saunders.

throughout the year, they usually arrive before they start breeding

'Native honey is found out in the bush on the hills around here'

'Different winds tell you different things. If there is rain coming.

We used them as bait. I haven't seen them for a

as the water levels change' - Jason Allan.

the wattles start flowering and I start

sneezing' - Raylene Saunders.

clean' - Neville Sampson.

long time' - Michelle Saunders.

are abundant flowers.

Raymond Saunders.

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER

GILAA (GALAH), MAAYAAL (WEEPING MYALL)

(THUNDER, LIGHTNING)

GUNI (NATIVE BEE), WARRUL (HONEY)

MALIYAN (WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE),

BUUBUMURR (PLATYPUS),

eat the porcupine sometimes'

little one with the tail coming up, it is a totem for some

'The kids are learning fast, they are good. They love learning their language and culture' - Neville Sampson.

FEBRUARY - MARCH

YUURUU (RAIN)

BAGAY (RIVER), MURAAY (SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO), YURAYAA (FROG), GARRARANA (DRAGONFLY),

BALABALAA (BUTTERFLY), GUWIIRRA / GUMBI GUMBI (NATIVE APRICOT / MALLEE WILLOW) 'When we get water in the gully country, the **bagay (river)** flows afterwards' – **Jason Allan**.

Sometimes, big flocks of muraay (sulphur-crested cockatoos) come to the Mooki River, and the maliyan (wedge-tailed eagles) swoop down and catch them. Following the warm and wet weather, there are a lot of balabalaa (butterflies) and garrarana (dragonflies. Yurayaa (frogs) are abundant and are calling loudly.

> The baan (mistletoe) is flowering, it is also called snottygobbles and has a sweet, sticky, slimy fruit. The gumbi gumbi / guwiirra (native apricot / mallee willow) produces fruit several times a year. The **Darling lily flowers** during the hot time. Its **bulb** can be harvested and pounded to make a paste with water, which can be used as a substitute for flour.

> > 'Don't eat the flesh of the gumbi gumbi, it will make you sick. You can chew or crush the seed and put it on your tooth, if you have a toothache. The leaves make the strongest medicine an Aboriginal man will ever find' - Neville Sampson.

APRIL - MAY BALAL (DRY)

BIBIL (BOX TREE), BAL / NHAADHUU (NARDOO), GULIMAN (COOLAMON), GUDUU (MURRAY COD), GIIRRAY (CRAWBOBS), DHAGAAY (YELLOWBELLY), BULAWAA (PAIR OF EMUS)

'The **bibil** (white box) bark is the best to take the quliman (coolamon) from' – Jason Allan.

The mugga ironbark, white box, cooba and golden everlasting are flowering. The bal / nhaadhuu (nardoo) plant is growing prolifically in wet areas.

This aquatic fern is a bush tucker that you can

process and eat the spores. 'We put it [nardoo] on a big flat stone, crush it with a little flat stone, pour water with it, mix it up like dough, cook it in the ashes' - Arthur Dodd

> The weather is cooling down and the grasses have cured, many plants have finished reproducing and animals are becoming less active, so it is a good

> > time to start cultural burning.

(in Ash et al 2017).

'We look after Country and Country looks after us. We use fire to look after the grassy plains, the rangelands and woodlands. Our people burned the Country to keep our estate healthy' - Ted Fields Jnr.

Emus are forming bulawaa (pairs) for breeding. **Guduu (Murray cod)** breeding season is late Spring to early Summer. Traditionally it was common to wait until the first big frosts came to start catching the guduu. The fishing of guduu continued all Winter. Guduu love garriil gali (cold water) (Yaama Gamilaraay! 2022).

'I was born and raised here. We ate giirray (crawbobs), dhagaay (yellowbelly) and guduu down at the river' - Raylene Saunders.

JUNE - JULY DHANDARRAA

(WINTER - TIME OF FROST, ICE)

YARRAAN (RIVER RED GUM TREE), YARRAANBIIN (RIVER GUM FLOWERS), WANDHALA (EAGLEHAWK) BANDAARR (GREY KANGAROO), WAN.GUY (WALLABY), DHIIL (WILGA), DHINAWAN (EMU), BURRUGARRBUU (MAGPIES)

The Caley's ironbark, dhiil (wilga), yarraan (red gum), bibil (bimblebox), bluebells, billy-buttons and Darling pea are flowering.

'The dhiil is an important plant for us' – Raymond Saunders.

'The burrugarrbuu (magpies) are starting to collect

their nest materials for breeding' - Jason Allan.

Bandaarr (grey kangaroo) and wan.guy (wallaby) were eaten and used to make fur cloaks. Dhandarraa (Winter – time of frost, ice) was the best time to harvest these animals as their coats

were thick during the cold time. Dhinawan (emus) are laying their eggs. 'When you are cooking bush tucker you must know how to cook it properly. Don't overcook the bundaarr or

dhinawan. If you do, it will get too tough and you can't chew it' - Neville Sampson. Cold time is a good time for **cultural burning**. In July 2022, we undertook the first cultural burn at Walhallow for many years.

The burn was gentle, well controlled and burnt steadily back against the wind. We observed mammals, insects and birds escaping the

fire-because it was slow, they didn't get burnt. Birds of prey like the wandhala (eaglehawk) and butcherbird came in to catch a meal. 'The cultural burn was a good experience and it looked clean and tidy after the burn. It is great to have young

Aboriginal men involved and learning their culture this way. You could see the expressions on their faces- some were nervous, others were keen. After they had a go, you could see their chests puff out' - Raylene Saunders.

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Buliyaagu gaba ngaya giirr ngaanngu Gamilaraay wana ganu yana-y maal dhaay walaaybaa gadhabal dhawun gaagi gadhabal yaraadha gaba nginda, gaba yaadha

present, the traditional owners of this land that we are on today, Let's all walk together as one on this country welcome you to our wonderful land have a wonderful dav

GAMILARAAY LANGUAGE The Aboriginal language words included in this calendar are from the Gamilaraay²⁵ language which is used in the Walhallow region of north-western NSW

their Habitats program. Additional support was provided through the Walhallow LALC, Firesticks Indigenous Alliance, North West

ville Sampson, Jason Allan, Raymond Saunders, Raylene Saunders, Michelle Saunders, Ted Fields Jnr, Michelle O'Leary, Paul Moxon, Luke Raveneau, Don Peach, Mick Miller, Den Barber,

ILLUSTRATIONS Bandaarr (grey kangaroo), dhinawan (emu), guda (koala) Artist Chris Reid.

PHOTOS Michelle McKemey, John Hodge, Louise Docker, fir0002, Alexandre Goloskok, Jukka Jantunen, Louise Merigot, Andrew Pavlov, David Milledge, Steve, Alex Roy, Roger K Jolley, Derek Blomfield, James Niland Images reproduced with permission from photographer or under creative commons by attribution.

Kerry Hardy (www.baabaa BlackSheep Studio) Jacqueline Gothe, Sian Hromek and Lyndal Harris.

Walhallow Aboriginal community and Michelle McKemey.

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WALHALLOW LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

MICHELLE MCKEMEY Melaleuca Environmental Consultancy Services **w**: www.MEnvironmental.com.au **P:** 0437 350 597 E: michellemckemey@gmail.com









If you spend time outside you get to know it' – Jason Allan. There are lots of gilaa (galahs) at Walhallow. Galahs breed in loyal pairs, with the male galah chirping and screeching to try to impress the female. **Emu chicks** have hatched and the father is looking after his family.

'We see the pretty green parrots feeding in the red bottlebrush' - Michelle Saunders. The maayaal (weeping myall) is flowering. The yellow box flowers coming into Yarragaa (Spring). 'The big old mother maayaal tree is an important tree. This tree is traditionally good for tools,

'It was good to be a part of the first cultural burn here in many years. The Elders who have

passed didn't talk about it. It is good to see the land rejuvenated' - Michelle Saunders.

WELCOME TO COUNTRY nhama, birralii yalagiirrmawu ngaragay yalagiyu nhama wurruga nhalay dhawun garaga yilaadhu ngaya guliyaay ngindaay ngaanngu ngiyaningu

I would like to acknowledge our Kamilaroi Elders, Children the pas Thank you, good day

The Kamilaroi (Walhallow) Fire and Seasons Calendar is supported by the Australian Government's Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Local Land Services and the NSW Government

N THE CULTURAL BURN

Sam Des Forges, Lesley Patterson, Joanne Stead, Tremane Patterson, Todd Reid, Kylie Taylor, Donny Fermor, Nioka Jade, Sommar Conlan, Derek Blomfield, Kaliela Thornton, Rodney Barber,

Patrick_K59, Phil Spark, LiquidGhoul, Josh Griffiths, Joanne Stead,