

firesticks

Winba = Fire

Banbai Fire and Seasons Calendar Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area

“Winba = Fire in the Banbai language. The Echidna is kukra and we have also got the black grevillea”
- Kane Patterson.



JANUARY

WURUPIL = KOALA, WALE / WOLE = RAIN
IWAY = TURTLE, GOBERA = KOOKABURRA
WAGAN = CROW

Fruits of the **native raspberry** are a delicious snack. Insect populations explode and eucalypts are flowering, with many animals feeding. Many wildflowers are blooming. **Koalas** are breeding. Summer migratory birds visit, including the striated pardalote, **sacred kingfisher**, rufous whistler, satin flycatcher and grey fantail. **Bracken fern** roots were processed and eaten as a staple food, young leaves were rubbed onto skin to relieve insect bites. Bracken fern is abundant after fire. After the bushfires of 2019, the **Banbai rangers** worked hard to help their Country recover.

DECEMBER

AWKENDI / GUGINBIL = WATER

Beginning in spring, **moths** migrate from the plains to the mountains. They rest over summer in the mountains and then return to the plains to breed in autumn. In the old days, many Aboriginal people gathered at the Mother of Ducks Lagoon, Guyra, to celebrate a festival of the moth. Wattleridge is home to many species of orchid, some are rare or have only just been discovered by science. These include **leek**, **midge**, **donkey**, **beard** and **onion orchids**. **Black grevillea** ladies' tresses, buttercup, fairy aprons, crinkle bush, blue bell, native violet, **vanilla lily**, chocolate lily, native geranium, **fringed lily**, creamy candles, glycine pea, pea shrub, blue fax lily, native daisy, native iris, bulbine lily and forest goodenia are flowering. Black grevillea is a threatened species found only around the Wattleridge region. Lance beardheath, spiny-headed mat-rush and blackberry are fruiting. The roots of the vanilla lily were eaten raw or roasted. Geranium, glycine pea and fringed lily roots were cooked and eaten. Lance beardheath fruits were eaten. The **native potato** is flowering. The roots of this orchid were roasted and eaten in some parts of Australia. Aboriginal people could find the tubers by digging down where they noticed bandicoots had been scratching. Drooping mistletoe on New England manna gums are flowering, attracting eastern spinebills and New Holland honeyeaters. **Freshwater crayfish** are active after releasing their young.

NOVEMBER

BURR, INDYARA = EEL
TUK = FROG, WALMA = FLYING FOX

Sun orchid, **pink kunzea**, lemon dovetail, common buttercup, yellow buttons, native geranium, slender stackhouse, slender tea-tree, bell fruited mallee and other plants are flowering. The spiny-headed mat-rush is seeding. Mat-rush leaves were used to weave baskets and **eel traps**. Tea tree was used as an antiseptic and broom. Diurus orchid tubers (like lemon dovetail) were an important food resource in south eastern Australia, in some areas they were 'everyday vegetables for Aboriginal people'. **New England tree frogs**, common eastern froglets, spotted grass frogs, striped marsh frogs, peron's tree frogs and eastern banjo frogs are calling and breeding. **Snow gums** are flowering, attracting honeyeaters. A lot of bats are around, catching insects, including the threatened **eastern false pipistrelle**. Australian magpies are teaching their young.

OCTOBER

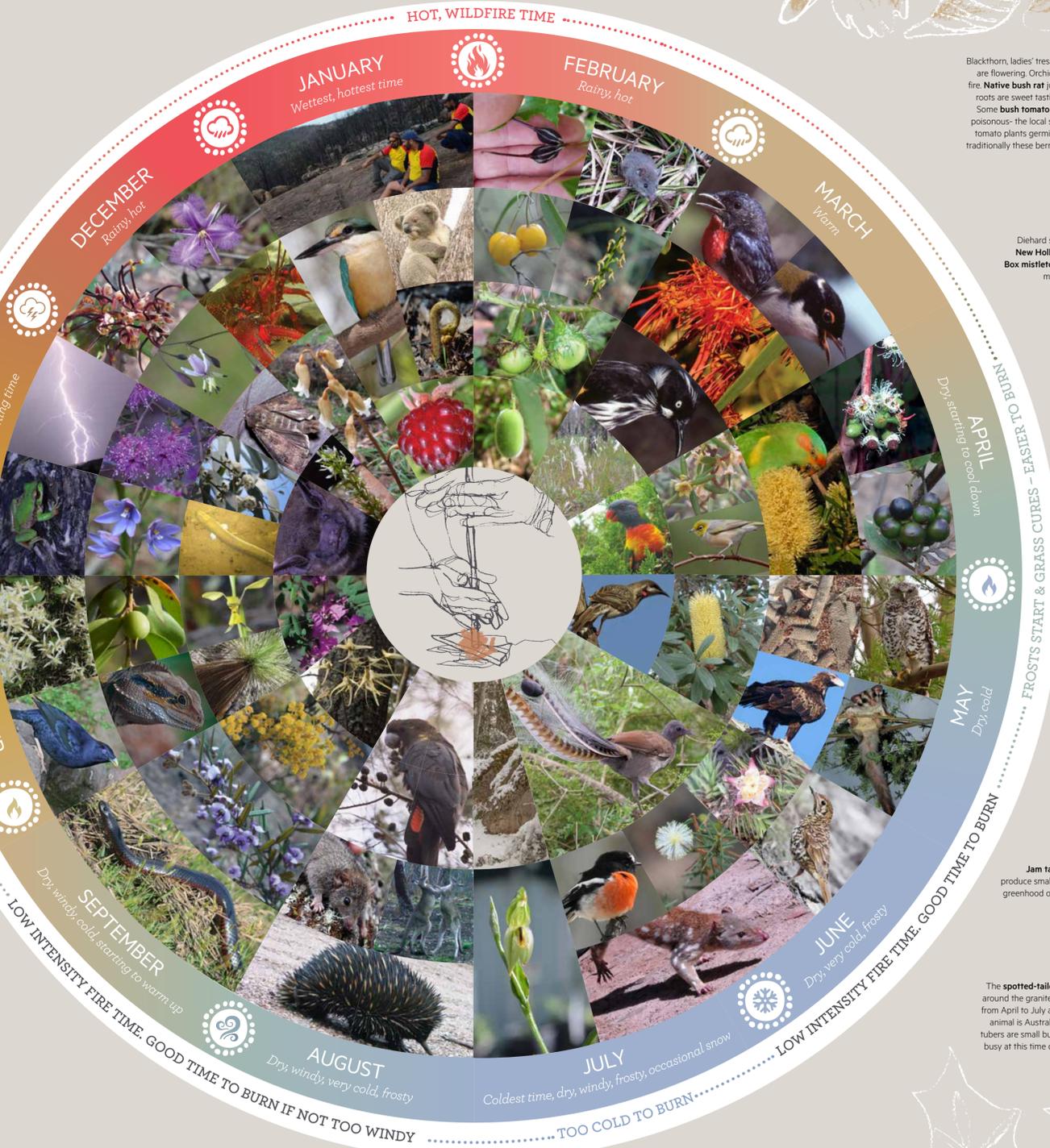
KUME = SLEEPY LIZARD,
GUNRUL = FRILLNECKED LIZARD, YURINDI = GOANNA

Geebung are fruiting. Native clematis, **lemon dovetail**, false sarsaparilla, leafy purple flag, wait-a-while vine, native violet, dusky finches, Australian indigo, beard heath, grass tree and other plants are flowering. **Native clematis** leaves were crushed and inhaled to cure headache or cold. **Australian indigo** roots can be used to stun fish in waterholes. False sarsaparilla stems were used as rope or string for baskets. **Grass trees** were important for food and tools. The flower stalks were used as a base for fire drills and dry material used as tinder to make fire. Whistling tree frogs and eastern sign-bearing frogs are breeding. **Eastern water dragons** are active around Lizard Gully. **Satin bowerbirds** are active near the homestead.

SEPTEMBER

TOOLS: ILEMEN = WOODEN SHIELD, WA'GARA = TOMAHAWK,
GANAY = DIGGING STICK, KUNNAI = YAMSTICK, PIKORA = SPEAR,
TUA = BOOMERANG, MAWKAW = STONE AXE.

Bridal veil orchid is one of the first plants to flower as the weather starts to warm up. The beautiful purple flowers of the **hovea** shrub welcome warmer weather to the bush. Snakes are becoming active, including highland copperheads and **red-bellied black snakes**. Many **wattles** are flowering prolifically. Wattles were often indicator species which were used to let people know when to use fire, move camp or access resources. Wattles have many uses including gum, seeds (ground or eaten green), timber, bark, 'apples', grubs/insects, tools, flowers and medicine.



FEBRUARY

BEAMBYU = EAT, PHATAE = FOOD

Blackthorn, ladies' tresses, geebung, native violet and greenhood orchids are flowering. Orchids such as the fringed midge orchid come up after fire. **Native bush rat** juveniles are active. **Wombat berries** are eaten, the roots are sweet tasting when raw - this plant is also used for medicine. Some **bush tomato** (*Solanum*) fruits were eaten but some species are poisonous - the local *Solanum* fruits are probably poisonous. Many bush tomato plants germinate after fire. **Common appleberries** are fruiting - traditionally these berries were eaten. The **black grevillea** is fruiting - the fruit looks like a swan.

MARCH

DULE = TREE

Diehard stringybarks are flowering, attracting birds such as **New Holland honeyeaters** and **white-naped honeyeaters**. **Box mistletoe** is fruiting, attracting **mistletoebirds**. People ate mistletoe fruit, colloquially known as snotty gobbles. **Blady grass** comes back prolifically after fire.

APRIL

BYURRANGARAN = MUSK LORIKEET,
BIRIBI = RAINBOW LORIKEET

The hairpin banksia and **prickly broom** heath are flowering. **wait-a-while** vine was used for rope or string. **Broad-leaved stringybarks** are flowering, attracting **rainbow lorikeets**, **musk lorikeets**, eastern spinebills, yellow-faced honeyeaters, red wattlebirds, New Holland honeyeaters, white-naped honeyeaters, noisy friarbirds and **silveryeyes**. Native Bush rat females are pregnant.

MAY

GAPI / KUPOAN / KURAKE /
GUPE / GURAKAI = POSSUM,
BANGGO = SUGAR GLIDER,
PUNIPU = NIGHTOWL

The **honeyeucalypt banksia** is flowering, attracting rainbow and musk lorikeets, eastern spinebills, yellow-faced honeyeaters, **red wattlebirds**, New Holland honeyeaters, white-naped honeyeaters, silveryeyes, satin bowerbirds and **sugar gliders**. Gliders and possums are important food for large owls such as the **powerful owl** and masked owl. These owls are listed as threatened species and they need large areas of forest, like Wattleridge IPA, to survive. Bird species are dispersing after breeding, including the fantailed cuckoo, flame robin and silveryeye. Banksia cones were used as **firesticks** to assist Aboriginal people to carry fire across country.

JUNE

WINBA = FIRE, BUANG = STRIKE FIRE,
RULE = SMOKE

Jam tarts may be known traditionally as mookrum - they produce small edible fruits and nectar. **Prickly moses**, jam tarts, greenhood orchid & mint bush are flowering. **Superb lyrebirds** and **Bassian thrushes** are breeding.

JULY

KARIL = COLD

The **spotted-tailed quoll** is a threatened species that can be found around the granite boulders of Wattleridge IPA. Quolls usually breed from April to July and have one litter per year of about 5 young. This animal is Australia's largest marsupial predator. **Greenhood orchid** tubers are small but starchy and nutritious. The male **scarlet robin** is busy at this time of year, getting ready for breeding, establishing his territory and looking for food.

“We are trying to pass on our knowledge, hopefully it is just going to go on for years and generations to come, about the Banbai people and them being in this area”
- Lesley Patterson.



WATTLERIDGE IS A 600 HECTARE INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA WHERE BANBAI KNOWLEDGE IS KEPT ALIVE.



BANBAI PEOPLE PERFORMING A CULTURAL PRACTICE.



A CULTURAL RESTORATION PRACTICE AT WATTLERIDGE IPA.



BANBAI RANGERS.

BANBAI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Thaibarra una burranay ngaiya nyam ngardna dunga nguralami
The members of the Banbai Nation would like to welcome you to learn about our country. This land was walked upon, played upon & hunted upon by our ancestors. As an act of remembrance, honour and loyalty to our ancestors, we ask that you take a moment to remember them.

Our vision for our country is that it is self-sustaining for future generations where our children learn cultural values (such as bush tucker and traditional practices) and understand what healthy country means. Our country is a meeting place for family and community gatherings where knowledge is shared and what we see now, generations will see in the future. Healthy country, healthy people and healthy waterways will make our country self-sustaining.

BANBAI LANGUAGE

The Aboriginal language words included in this calendar are the language of the Banbai nation of northern NSW.

SUPPORT
The Banbai Fire and Seasons Calendar is supported by the Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area, Banbai Enterprise Development Aboriginal Corporation, University of New England, Rural Fire Service, Rural Fire Service Association & Northern Tablelands Local Land Services (through funding from the Australian Government National Landcare Program).

RESEARCH
This fire and seasons calendar is part of a PhD research project undertaken by Michelle McKemey at the University of New England, under the supervision of Dr Emile Ens, M'Oliver Costello, Prof Nick Reed, Dr John Hunter & Dr Mal Ridges.

CONTRIBUTORS

Lesley Patterson, Tanya Elone, Travis Patterson, Tremaine Patterson, Nev Tomms, Don Patterson, Kane Patterson, Dominic Cumore, Cody Patterson, Jason Gee, David Milledge, Stan Hromek, Richard Buntingham, John Hunter, Emile Ens, Oliver Costello, Nick Reed, Mal Ridges, Lynn Baker, Ian Simpson, Vanessa Hunter, Lynne Debray, Jacqueline Gothe, Steve Mepham and Elaine Van Dyke.

FAUNA EXPERTISE
David Milledge.

PHOTOS

McKemey, David Milledge, Phil Spari, Greg Steenebeck, Myra Spencer, Mitch Palmer, John Hodge, Robert McCormack, Matt Campbell / Bowerbird, Fire002/Flagstaffs, Bernard Dupont, Alisdair, Bernth, Hansueli Kraul, CSIRO, Joseph C. Boone, John Tam, Ji-Hanson, Peter Reid, Patrick K59 Ron Knight and Paul Flko. Images reproduced with permission from photographer or under creative commons by attribution.

DESIGN

Kerry Hardy (www.babaa.net), Jacqueline Gothe, Stan Hromek and Lyndal Harris.

REFERENCES

Australian National Botanic Gardens (2007) Aboriginal Plant Use - NSW Southern Tablelands Australian Government, Canberra <http://www.wanbg.gov.au/plu/>
Cubis, L. (1977) Aboriginal Food Plants and Economies in Northeastern NSW. Thesis, University of New England, Armidale NSW
Duncan B and White H. (2015) Speaking our Way: A collection of Aboriginal languages within the Northern Tablelands of NSW. Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, New South Wales.
Guyra Local Aboriginal Land Council (1998) Banbai Language Booklet Guyra Local Aboriginal Land Council NSW
Hunter, J. T. (2003) Vegetation & Flora of Wattleridge J.A. Hunter Pty Ltd NSW

Hunter, J. T. (2005) Vegetation and floristics of Waira National Park and Wattleridge. Northern Tablelands, NSW. Cunningham 923: 255-274.

McKemey M. (2020) Developing cross-cultural knowledge (right way science) to support indigenous cultural fire management. Doctoral thesis, University of New England Armidale NSW.
McKemey M. B., Patterson M., Rangers B., Ens E. J., Reid N. C. H., Hunter J. T., Costello O., Ridges M. & Miller C. (2019) Cross-Cultural Monitoring of a Cultural Keystone Species Informs Reversal of Indigenous Burning of Country in South-Eastern Australia. Human Ecology 47: 893-904.

McKemey, M. B. and H. White (2010). Bush Tucker, Boomerangs and Bandages. New South Wales, Australia, Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority.

Milledge D. (2017) Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area Iconic Species: Firesticks Project. Sydney NSW.
Low, T. (1993) Wild Food Plants of Australia. Sydney Australia, Harper Collins Publishers.
Steffensen V. (2020) Fire country: how indigenous fire management could help save Australia. Hardie Grant Travel, Richmond, Victoria.
Zola, N. and B. Goff (1992). Koorie Plants Koorie People. Melbourne, Vic. Rosenberg Publishing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

MICHELLE MCKEMEY
M 0437 350 597
E michellemckemey@gmail.com
BANBAI RANGERS
M 0431 261 505
E Banbai.projects@gmail.com
AUTHORS
Banbai community and Michelle McKemey
COPYRIGHT
Banbai Nation 2020

This poster is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share Alike 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode>

You may reproduce, distribute and remix this work for non-commercial purposes as long as any derivatives are released under the same license, and you reference the work as follows:
McKemey, M. and Banbai Rangers (2020) Winba = Fire: Banbai Fire and Seasons Calendar. Firesticks Alliance NSW. Released under Creative Commons: CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 DOI: 10.25932/firesticks30653

