

BOODJIN

The Boyagin Rock Storybook



“...in that rock there is a big Waargle...”





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Cover photograph: Carpet snake by Tamara Wilkes-Jones

Cover quote in full: "My husband (Andy Collard) said that in that rock (Boyagin Rock) there is a big Waargle, water snake and when it wound itself round and round it looked like a big tyre. So he's there and I think it's sacred, it means water to us. Old Waargle is sacred to us and you must never kill it or harm it in any way." - Ballardong Elder Janet Collard (RIP), 2002¹

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Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc
269 Fitzgerald St, Northam, Western Australia
PO Box 311, Northam WA 6401
T: (08) 9670 3100 | Fax: (08) 9670 3140
E: info@wheatbeltnrm.org.au
W: www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au
ABN: 61 661 518 664

Kaya (hello)!

Noongar *katadjin* (knowledge) of *boodjar* (country) is a precious thing and a privilege to learn.

This storybook offers a glimpse of the rich *katadjin* surrounding Boyagin Rock. This *katadjin* is passed on to new generations of *Noongars* (the Aboriginal people of southwest Australia), both in rural and metro areas, whose *moort* (family) connections to Boyagin are strong.

Wheatbelt NRM respectfully thanks Noongar people for sharing *katadjin* in this storybook. Noongar *katadjin* belongs to and remains the intellectual property of the Noongar communities who shared it: story tellers are acknowledged on page 32.

Wheatbelt NRM also acknowledges the many individuals and groups who love and want to protect Boyagin and its amazing biodiversity. We thank them for generously contributing photos: photographers are acknowledged throughout and on page 32. All nature photos in this book were taken at Boyagin Nature Reserve.

We hope this storybook will inspire people to learn more about our unique *boodjar* and Noongar culture, and help deepen respect, love and care for our *kwobidak* (beautiful) country.

Kerry Collard
Aboriginal NRM Project Facilitator
Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc

NB: Noongar language is used throughout this book. Because there are many different Noongar language groups and it was an oral language (not traditionally written down), different words and spellings exist.

My Grandmother

[Yurleen Bennell, wife of William Garlett] used to say this was to be passed on to her children and her grannies...

There are places where you find serenity; where you find a sense of belonging... that this is a part of our place, this is a part of our area, our culture.

**Nitcha boodjar koonyarn
nitcha koorl buranginy
boodjar karluk maya
koonyarn wah. Deman
deman and maam wiern kia
moort koonyarn. Deman
and maam noonookurt,
boodjar koonyarn karla
koorliny. Koorlongka boorda
ngeenunyiny.**

Those words say that this is my country where I belong. This is *deman* and *maam*, my grandmother and grandfather's land, this is their land where their spirits move now. *Boorda* or later on, this is going to be the responsibility of my children and my children's children, their home and this place will always be linked to their spirit.

Reverend Sealin Garlett, 2002²

WARNING

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are advised that this book contains images and names of people who have passed away.

"Sacred places are special to us because we've been told a Dreaming story about that place by our mother or by our Elders."³

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Known as Boodjin to some Noongar people, Boyagin Rock is a huge granite outcrop that is of immense spiritual and cultural significance to Noongar people. It is sacred.

It is in the Noongar boodjar (country) of south-west Western Australia, in the Boyagin Nature Reserve south-west of Brookton and north-west of Pingelly.

The reserve has communities of rare plants and animals. It is one of the few areas of original fauna and flora left in the Wheatbelt.

Boyagin is in the Southwest Australia Ecoregion – one of only 34 internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots in the world.

Noongar	English
<i>Noongar / Nyungar / Nyoongar / Nyoongah / Nyungah / Nyugah / Yungar / Noonga⁴</i>	person or people / collective name of the fourteen groups of Aboriginal people of south-west Western Australia
<i>budjar/budjara² / boodjar/booya</i>	country of origin / belonging / earth / land / ground
<i>boya²</i>	rock / stone
<i>worl²</i>	sky
<i>maar²</i>	cloud



Sacred Boyagin Rock

Nyitting/dreaming

"...there was a great explosion as the earth was being formed. Boyagin Rock erupted and out of the ground came the wagles: the giant rainbow serpents. Their bodies, as thick as tree trunks, glistened and shimmered a silvery green. Each serpent had a mane of hair and large, luminous eyes; and as they slithered their way out of the rocky hill their haunting cries to the night sky were like the drone of a thousand frogs. ... They formed what we now see as the Avon River, going past Northam and Toodyay. And they rested many, many times. All the old Noongar people know their resting places – I know their resting places... The Noongar people know it as the Ballardong River, not the Avon River..."

– Everett Kickett (RIP), 1995¹

"The Nyitting or Dreaming... is the time before time when spirits rose from the earth and descended from the sky to create the land forms and all living things... Noongar creation stories can vary from region to region but they are part of the connection between all living things."³

Flood

"Years ago there was a group of Noongar people who started to break the law. They wouldn't listen to the old people and started disrespecting family and friends, and started marrying the wrong way and doing really bad things. Not respecting the women and the children. So children were being born with problems. They started killing a lot of the animals, but they were killing animals that were their totems and they were torturing them. There was much wickedness happening.

So the whispers were going around... 'Don't go there. Those people aren't doing the right thing by the law. They're abusing all the Elders and women and children.'

And it got to the old Wargle... He thought 'I'll have to do something about this' and became really angry... 'I'll have to go down there and have a look'.

He went through the land travelling and then he rose right up and looked and he saw all this wickedness happening. He became really angry and started to thrash about and caused the ground to shake. He let out a big roar and this huge wind came and the people started to get really scared. This darkness overtook the land and he thrashed his tail and called out and the rain and the wind and the lightning and the thunder came and it rained and it rained and it rained. Water was running all over the land.

He swam down to where all these people were trying to save themselves. There were a number of people there, that even though they were living in that piece of land where all this wickedness was taking place, they still kept to the law, they obeyed the law, they didn't bend. When the old Wargle came to them he said, 'You have obeyed the law, you have not broken the law of the Bibbulmun people. Climb up on my back.' They swam and got on his back and he told them to hold hands and stay strong.

When others tried to get on his back he moved his body so they couldn't get on, and thrashed his tail, and caused a lot of turbulence in the water so they couldn't get on. Then he swam with these people and as the water rose higher all those wicked people, they were lost. He swam around and around with these people on his back and as the water started to subside, he stopped at this place and circled around and he told the people, 'Get off now and stay here. You will be safe and continue to obey the laws of the Bibbulmun people and you will be looked after.'

After they climbed off his back he dived back down into the water and swam around and buried himself in the rock that we call Boodjin. That's why we are respectful to that rock and look after it."

Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones,
18 September 2010



Wargal
Carpet Python
Morelia spilota
subsp. *imbricata*



Boyagin Rock

In Noongar language *Boya* means rock or hard stone and *djinning* means looking or seeing.

Therefore Boyagin means the rock that sees or is looking and because old Waayrgle went down inside the big rock after he rescued the Nyoongar families from the big rain, he is always there watching over his people.

– Vivienne Hansen

This illustration by Anne Thomas accompanies the story 'Waargle' from the book, *Aboriginal Legends from the Bibbulmun Tribe* by Eddie Bennell, published in 1981.



Meaning of the word Boyagin

"Boya in Nyoongar means riches/money/value. The richness of *Boyagin* lies not just in the beauty and surrounds but also in the knowledge each Nyoongar carries in his/her heart of this country... It exceeds the value of dollars and cents. Its richness lies in ancient knowledge passed down from generation to generation."

– Liz Hayden

"*Granny Felix [Bennell] and Granny Bert [Bennell]* told me that Bookedja Djinning means looking long way."

– Mervyn Abraham

"...we say *Boodjin* these days but I really think originally it was probably *Boyagin*. Because they'd look at that rock and they'd say *Boya Gin*, see, or *Boodjin*... in our old ancient language the rock or a sacred rock or valuable stone was the boy. But these days Noongars we call that money. We call money the boy. But in the old days people called a sacred rock boy and then *djinwa* look."

– Gerry Collard, 2010⁶

"*And this place here, Boodjin Rock has always been special. And they say Boyagin. It's not Boyagin. It's Boodjin. You see the boodjar is the ground. All that rock is a symbol of what this ground is all about.*" – Janet Hayden

Holly Pea

Jacksonia floribunda

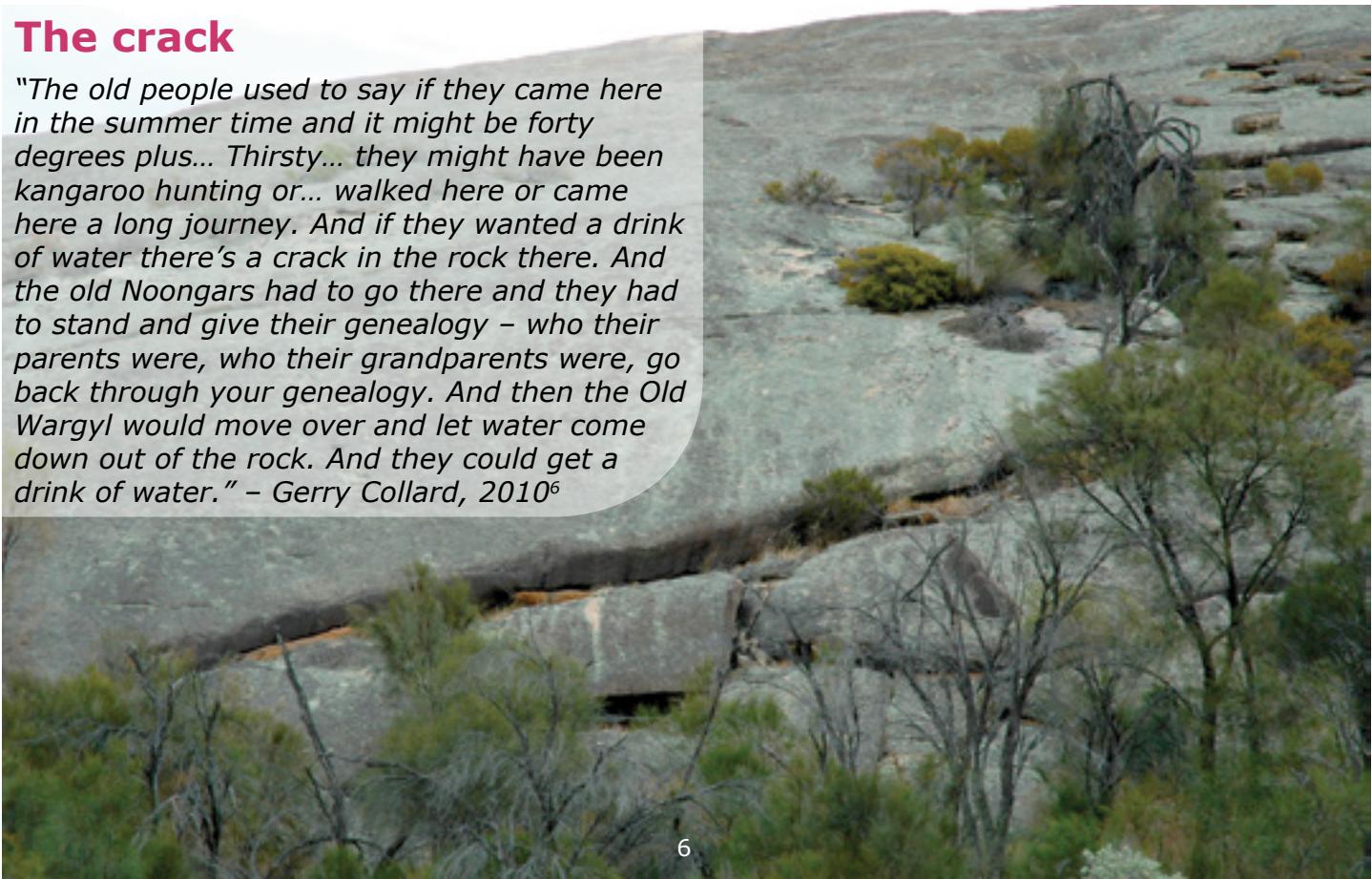
Photo: John Tann, 6 November 2011, CC BY 2.0

Ngoorndiny/resting place

"...they reckon the last place he camped was at Boyagin Rock. That was his resting place or *Ngoorndiny* – sleeping place of the *Waakal*."
– Reverend Sealin Garlett, 2002⁵

The crack

"The old people used to say if they came here in the summer time and it might be forty degrees plus... Thirsty... they might have been kangaroo hunting or... walked here or came here a long journey. And if they wanted a drink of water there's a crack in the rock there. And the old Noongars had to go there and they had to stand and give their genealogy – who their parents were, who their grandparents were, go back through your genealogy. And then the Old Wargyl would move over and let water come down out of the rock. And they could get a drink of water." – Gerry Collard, 2010⁶



Yira koorl/ go up/ascend

"A lot of our old people have climbed that rock."
– Janet Hayden

"One of the stories they told us that if you're game enough and you wanna see how long you're going to live on this earth, if you climb up the sheer face of the rock, and you don't go sideways enough, where I go [laughs], that tells you the longevity of your life. So if you can climb up without a break, you will live to a very long age." – Vivienne Hansen

"We'd go on the rock, used to go on a clear day so we could see York Hill [Mt Bakewell]."
– Don Collard

Boolkanitj

"[Felix 'Boolkanitj' Bennell] was sick, very sick... We were up home sitting and Nanna Millie [Reidy] said they couldn't find Pop. Everybody just went in all directions. Nanna Millie was frantic. Everybody went everywhere. He was in nobody's houses. Nobody seen him. And then we couldn't find Dad [Aubrey Hayden] anywhere. And we were asking where Dad was and Mum [Janet Hayden] said, 'Oh, he must have gone looking for Old Boy'. He went all the way out the back way, back of Brookton, past the Brookton dam. Dad found Pop Felix sitting on top of Boyagin Rock. Pop Felix to me was in his spirit world with his old people, he was preparing himself to leave us all. Dad came back with Pop in the car. That old man as sick as he was walked all the way to Boyagin, a place he felt he had to be and do what he needed to do. From the house in Brookton, Fall Street, all the way out here to the rock. So to me this place is a very spiritual place and will be kept as such." – Geri Hayden

"When he walked away he would have been about 85, 90 [years old]."
– Dorothy Reidy

"He took his shoes off, he took his shirt off. He just said he was going home." – Janet Hayden

Noongar English

<i>nyitting³</i>	the dreaming / cold / cold time / ancestral times / time of creation
<i>Wargyl / Wargle / Waakal / Wargal / Warrgul / Waargle</i>	spirit snake / the creator of the Noongar universe and the giver of Noongar lore
<i>Bibbulmun / Bibulmun</i>	Noongar people
<i>bokadja⁷ / bookedja</i>	long way / afar / far away
<i>djinang-iny⁷ / djinning</i>	look / see
<i>Ballardong / Balladong / Balardong</i>	One of the groups of Noongar people

Photo: Graham Zemunik, 31 December 2009

Persoonia hakeiformis





Koomal

Common Brushtail Possum / *Trichosurus vulpecula*



Nyingarn

Echidna / *Tachyglossus aculeatus*

Wandys mostly eat soft plant matter, but also eat insects and birds' eggs. Many animals, including snakes, eat wandys. Wandys give birth to 2-8 live young, weighing about 7 grams each, after a 20-22 week gestation. Many young die and the survivors grow slowly but mature King's Skinks can be quite long lived. Wandys can grow 55cm long and weigh 220g.⁸



Wandy

King's Skink / *Egernia kingii*

Above: Three visitors to a cave at Boyagin Rock in September 2010, captured by Wheatbelt NRM on a sensor camera. The Nyingarn has its back towards the camera.

Below: a small crevice on Boyagin Rock.



The caves

"It's a sacred place; there are sacred places on this rock. There's the caves that's there. There was supposed to be artefacts in the caves. But somebody's got them." – Geri Hayden

"We never ever went into those caves, for the simple reason in my time... we weren't allowed to go in ... We were told, same as the water holes, watch out for the wargyl there. We weren't allowed because our parents were strict like that, you understand? Keep away from those things because as I say that's how a lot of them get sick. They get sick with themselves – they go there and they realise they shouldn't have went, and they go home and worry themselves, you know. Just an automatic reaction. So if you don't do those things, you can go around parts of it without being afraid." – Don Collard

"...we were a bit frightened of the caves, the girls, you know the younger ones because they'd say 'don't come, it might be... something there that will take you away or something'." – Fay Slater

Kep/water

"Wherever you get a rock that stands out like that, it doesn't matter where it is, you'll always have water. That's something that Noongar people [know], and Aboriginal people right across the board, doesn't matter where they come from, they'll always head for a rock in the middle of nowhere."

The rock was like a gathering place for water. At the bottom of those crevices you'd always find fresh water. Mum would... take us bush and she'd always say if there's no gnamma holes there, or where the water had been running down from the gnamma holes, at the foot of that rock you'll always find it is soft and you dig around there, you'll find water." – Janet Hayden

Rivers

"...rivers, always been classified as, all my life, believe that was a Wargyl track, you understand, dreaming track." – Don Collard

"If you stuck to the river, you'd get a feed and a drink and all." – George McGuire

"...that big BOYA there [Boyagin Rock], it's in the middle of three rivers." – Geri Hayden

"Well the South Avon [River] was really something because the South Avon ran from almost into Pingelly right down to York..."

Mum and Dad had a habit of following the river. It wasn't only for fresh water, it was fresh food.

A lot of that has been totally destroyed...

When they dredged the South Avon in the 70s they just took out all the food source from out of the river and they just destroyed everything. And that water ways that was running off from the farms, they were just polluting the rivers. That's why a lot of the rivers died. And food was cut short..." – Janet Hayden, 2012⁹

Boyagin Creek

"The little stream there around the edge, before you go up, they've got a little bridge... now. It was just the stream with all the beautiful bulrushes and we'd go over that stream and it was so clear. It used to be our drinking water. I'd never drink it now. But it was just beautiful, pure, clean, you know."

It was so fresh and lovely. I mean on the hot days, that was cold, icy cold, you know. We'd get down on our hands and knees, no cups or nothing, and we'd have a good drink of water, and we'd then run up on the rock, and play with the lizards and the kalaris [lizards] and whatever else we could find up there, you know. And then we'd go down and have our drink of water and then we'd run home before dark.

It [the creek] was there all the year around that I remember." – Fay Slater

Ngama/gnamma

"The rock had everything on, the gnamma holes there and everything with the fresh water up there."

– Fay Slater

"...right up on top of the Boodjin Rock... one of the gnamma holes is significant because it shows the rock formation of the Old Wargyl. The Old Wargyl is a water serpent. It's very significant to our Noongar people." – Geri Hayden¹⁰

"...they say that Aboriginal people never really boiled their medicines until the white man come with billies but Aboriginal people had a way of doing that long before billy cans. Those rock pools, they'd place a hot rock in there and heat the water up." – Vivienne Hansen



Pan (shallow) gnamma on Boyagin Rock
Photo: Kate Raynes-Goldie, k4t3.org, 29 September 2012
CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

Wirn/ Spirits

Woodadji, balyat, mumari, gnardi

These are little people or little hairy smelly people that come out at night, screech, whistle and put you in a trance.

"Bulyit – [he's a] little hairy man about two foot high, that means devil, [he will] take the children, must not go out after dark, after 4 p.m. [must] gather them all up and bring them home. *Bardee borl bardee koorl barmaniny* - that is before our time, children going out and breaking up all those black boys to get the bardee.

They would then gather them all up and take them home. *Koorlongka dookaniny* – children cook the bardees when they get home.

After 4 o'clock they must not go chasing bardees, they wouldn't be allowed. They reckon these debil debil [devil devil] will take them away. That is a little bulyit man. As soon as the sun goes down, he starts edging them off and taking them away."

– Tom Bennell (RIP), 1978¹¹

"They're pretty dangerous. They get you mixed up in your mind." – Gerry Collard, 2010⁶

"...if you went out to play and if you didn't get back by sundown, look out, the spirits will get you, you know. You'd be home before dark, don't worry about that. Oh yeah." – Don Collard

"We were always told a certain time to leave. ... when I asked my Mum... 'Why is that, Mum?', she said, 'Well, some people talk about the little woodadjis hanging around here... some people are afraid.' But she said, 'you have nothing to be afraid of. They won't hurt you. It's just that over the years everyone just leaves by a certain time.'" – Vivienne Hansen

"*Little balyats and all would be around Noongars. Yeah true. That horse and cart was walking along up there, Uncle Tom [Bennell] on one side, Aunty Muriel and the boys on one side, and little fellas running along the side and he [Felix Bennell] said to Aunty Muriel, 'who are them little kids you went and brought with you?' And she said, 'what little kids?' ...and it was two little balyats running along with him.*" – Janet Hayden

"Noongars...we were telling stories... to the lady... I remember very plainly she said, 'Fay, can you tell us something about the little mumaris,' and I said, 'Well, they say that they don't like strangers. If you've never been here, don't come here. Because they'll... stir you up.' Anyhow, while I was talking she had her cameras or whatever they were using on us, and everything went dead. So she said, 'Oh, that's funny. I charged all those up. But it doesn't matter,' she said, 'I've got another set in the car.' So she went back to get them, come and set them up again, ...and just everything went dead. And she said, 'Oh my goodness... this is really scary.' It was just starting to get on to sundown too. She said, 'No, I'm sorry, I'm out of here. I'm going.' – Fay Slater

Elvis Bennell "All the stories you'd hear about little balyats... they do exist. Every time they used to come back Norman ['Doom' Bennell] used to get them all. They used to be sitting on his windows, you know, and looking at him and that."

Janet Hayden "He did, hey, he got scared, he got really scared."

'...djidi djidi [willy wagtails] can take you into the bush to the gnardis or woodartjis and bulyits.'¹³

Waakal kierp wirrinity

(Water snake spirit)

"The old Waakal that lives in the water, they never let them touch them. Never let the children play with those. They reckon that is *Noongar koorlongka warra wirrinityj warbaniny*, the Waakal, you're not to play with that carpet snake, that is bad.

Nitcha barlup Waakal marbukal nyininy – that means he is a harmless carpet snake. He lives in the bush throughout Noongar budjar. But the old water snakes; they never let them touch 'em. ...the real water snake oh, he is pretty, that carpet snake ...the Noongar call him *Waakal kierp wirrinityj*. That means that carpet snake, he belongs to the water.

You mustn't touch that snake; that's no good. If you kill that carpet snake *noonook barminyiny* that Waakal *ngulla kierp uart*, that means our water dries up – none. That is their history stories and very true too." – Tom Bennell (RIP), 1978¹

Ngulla kierp uart

(Our water dries up)

...a white man...used to own the garage here in Brookton, and he brought Dad food or something out there to our camp. When he was coming back this BIG snake was over the road. And he ran over it. And he put it in a big chaff bag, cos he'd never seen one that big, and he brought it into town... he said 'what sort of a snake?' He'd never seen one like it before. After that, the water dried up... deteriorated, so you know, the old stories, when the Wargle leaves here, the water dries up. It's never been the same, the water. I think it's just due to, oh, well I don't know what it's due to. Probably we don't have the seasons like we used to, you know. So it makes you think." – Fay Slater

Mathew Abraham (RIP), 2012 "From then everything went different. Changed. Change in the weather. White people come along with bulldozers, cleared it all, took Noongars' jobs, what Noongar used to do... From York-Williams Road to here... cut it all down. Now they ruined it all. Doesn't rain like it used to ... like on the winter side you know... Now we hardly get any rain."

Geri Hayden "Cut down too many trees."

Mathew Abraham "Yeah... killed all the water. Spoiled the earth. Nothing will grow. Everything dry off. It's dry. It's really dry. Years ago, we used to get rain mostly June, July, August, three months it would rain. Every day for a week. You can't get out of the camp."⁹

"Years ago got a wind from the north you'd know it's gonna rain within two or three days. It can blow for weeks now and you don't seem to get anything. I still believe that clearing the land stopped a lot of it. Clearing up too much land, and plus lots of vehicles, and all the fumes that's in the air. Definitely is some big problem in the weather." – Don Collard



Interconnectedness¹²

Woorda/fungi

Some kinds of *woorda* (fungus/mushroom) were Noongar bushfood². Most fungi is hidden underground. **Mycorrhizal fungi** live with the roots of plants and trees and provide nutrition from the soil to the plant.

Woylie

Small, nocturnal kangaroo-like marsupials, woylies mostly eat underground fungi (native truffles) that they dig up. Woylie diggings help water seep into the ground. Woylies also eat seeds, tubers and bulbs. They do not drink water, but get their water from their food.

Woylies gather grass, leaves and twigs with their tail and use them to build *wurlies* under bushes. *Wurlie* is a Noongar word for a shelter.

Woylies used to be widespread and common, but are now critically endangered.

Woylie / Brush-tailed Bettong / *Bettongia penicillata*

Mike Griffiths, sensor camera,
12:26am, 3 February 2013



Poison plants

Local native animals have a high tolerance to poison plants. Some of Western Australia's shrubby plants are so poisonous that sheep will die if they eat them. Foxes and feral cats can die if they eat animals that have eaten poison plants.

To protect livestock, farmers pull poison plants out. Luckily, in the past some woodlands with lots of poison plants were simply fenced off. This meant that some native plants survived and habitat for small mammals like woylies, numbats and tammars remained.

Manufactured 1080 poison is similar to the poison in the plants, so can be used to control ferals without harming native animals. Boyagin's poison plants include *Gastrolobium parviflorum* (Box Poison), *Gastrolobium rhombifolium* and *Gastrolobium stipulare*.¹³

What do woylies, dung beetles, poison plants and mycorrhizal fungi have in common?

Together they help grow healthy and diverse woodlands.¹²

- Plants shelter woylies and provide food for fungi.
- Woylies dig up and eat fungi.
- Dung beetles eat and bury woylie dung (which contains fungal spores ready to germinate).
- Mycorrhizal fungi supply nutrients to plants - which helps the woodland grow.

Some trees and shrubs do not grow well unless mycorrhizal fungi live around their roots.

The disappearance of woylies in woodlands may have led to the decline of some plants that depend on mycorrhizal fungi.

Species are interconnected and need each other.

To save endangered plants and animals, we need to save their whole environment.

Mammals^{14,15}

"There used to be just about all the animals you could think about: boodie rats, woylies... and brush tammars. Lots of animals." – Don Collard

Quenda/kwernt

Southern Brown Bandicoot/Short-nosed Bandicoot
Isoodon obesulus



Wheatbelt NRM, sensor camera,
15 October 2010

Quendas live in dense scrubby vegetation in forest and heath and on the edges of wetlands. They prefer a mosaic of burnt and unburnt vegetation. They eat soil invertebrates, plant tubers, roots and fungi, using their sharp claws to break through the soil surface. Quendas are solitary animals with home ranges as large as seven hectares. Quendas usually forage at night.

Djooditj/chuditj/chuditch

Western Quoll/Western Native Cat / *Dasyurus geoffroii*



Wheatbelt NRM, sensor camera,
11 October 2010

Chuditj were once found over nearly 70% of Australia but are now rare. They den in hollow logs, burrows, and tree hollows or cavities. An adult female may use up to 66 logs and 110 burrows in her exclusive home range of up to 55–120 hectares. Male home ranges are up to 400 hectares.

Usually nocturnal, chuditj eat quendas, numbats, woylies, brushtail possums, rodents, birds and their eggs, small lizards and reptile eggs, freshwater crayfish, crickets, beetles, spiders and scorpions. They also may eat fruits and flowers and the fleshy red outer coating of zamia seeds.

Early settlers complained chuditj stole chickens from their pens, so they hunted and poisoned them. Perth residents reported chuditj nested in roof cavities until the 1930s.

Kenngoor

Red-tailed Phascogale / *Phascogale calura*



This tiny, nocturnal animal eats invertebrates, small birds and small mammals, and lives in trees. They used to live across much of arid and semi-arid Australia but are now classified as rare or likely to become extinct. They live in wandoo and sheoak woodlands and prefer long unburnt habitat with a continuous canopy, as well as tree hollows. They line hollow logs and limbs with grass and feathers. Nest sites occur in highly flammable areas, often in dead sheoaks and in grass trees. Home ranges vary from 1.5-8 hectares, depending on the season.

Nyingarn

Echidna / *Tachyglossus aculeatus*

Nyingarn usually live alone and shelter under dense bushes, piles of debris, in hollow logs or



even in rabbit burrows. They eat mostly ants and termites, but also take beetle larvae and other invertebrates. They have strong claws to dig through soil, and one longer claw on the second toe of its hind feet for grooming between the spines on its back. Nyingarn have only one opening for reproduction and elimination of wastes (like birds and reptiles, and unlike mammals). When disturbed, they roll up into a ball, dig down into the soil or lock themselves between rocks, making it difficult for predators to attack. They can live 50 years in captivity.

Boodie

Burrowing Bettong / *Bettongia lesueur*

Small, thickset, nocturnal rat-like kangaroos, boodies used to be one of the most abundant small mammals across Australia. By the early 1960s, the species was extinct on the mainland. Other mammal species, such as the chuditj, bilby and brushtail possum have been reported to shelter in the warrens made by boodies.

Damar

Tammar Wallaby / *Macropus eugenii derbianus*



"Tammars, we used to kill them, years ago. They was beautiful, they was. Silver-tailed Tammar. Roast that and absolutely beautiful."
- Don Collard

Tammars rest in low, dense scrub during the day and come out to eat (mostly grasses) after dark. The Western Australian subspecies of tammar used to live throughout most of the south-west, but now only inhabits three islands and several sites on the mainland, including Boyagin. Sheoak seedlings are eaten by tammars and other small mammals. Now that there are less of these animals around (and as a result of changed fire regimes), sheoaks are becoming more prevalent in some woodlands.



Koomal

Mike Griffiths, sensor camera,
30 June 2012

Koomal

Common Brushtail Possum

Trichosurus vulpecula

"We set snares all over there years ago. Big money my Dad got, back in about 1948."

- Don Collard

Being nocturnal, koomal spend the day in a den in a hollow dead branch, tree-trunk, fallen log, rock cavity or even a hollow termite mound. Although koomal usually live alone, if numbers are high several koomal may share sleeping places. Home ranges vary from 1-15 hectares. Koomal communicate with deep guttural coughs and sharp hisses and with scent which marks areas and territory.

They eat mostly leaves, including toxic *Gastrolobium* species and some *Eucalyptus*, and flowers and fruits. Meat is eaten only very occasionally in the wild. Dingos, cats, foxes, large pythons and large monitor lizards eat koomal.

Ngwara

Western Ringtail Possum

Pseudocheirus occidentalis

Western ringtail possums, the kind you see in peppermint trees in Busselton, may have once lived at Boyagin but are now extinct there. (Or are they?! There are rumours of sightings.) Ngwara can eat leaves from kardan/marri trees (*Corymbia calophylla*) and can live in

the kind of marri and sheoak woodlands found at Boyagin.

The ngwara is nocturnal and feeds, rests and socialises in tree canopies. It is rarely seen on the ground.

In the day, it rests in a drey (a ball of sticks woven together in the branches of a tree to make a nest), or sometimes in eucalypt or peppermint tree hollows.

Euro

Common Wallaroo
Macropus robustus

A small marsupial, the euro (below) likes areas

near rocky hills and overhangs for shelter, next to grassy slopes and plains. Euros eat grass and the fleshy leaves of shrubs. They can survive without free water if there is enough water in foliage. They shelter from the heat of the day and emerge in the evening to feed. They are usually solitary animals with a fairly small home range.



Euro

Wheatbelt NRM, sensor camera
6 November 2010

Yongka

Western Grey Kangaroo
Macropus fuliginosus

Yongka eat coarse grasses, herbs and selected shrubs. This mostly coarse diet rapidly wears their teeth down.

*"Nothing was wasted. When a yonga (kangaroo) was killed, the meat, organs and bone marrow were eaten. The skin was cleaned with a bone scraper and made into a bwoka (cloak), kooda (carry bag) or shoes for the children's feet. These were sewn together using birit (sinew) from the tail and a pointed bjoorla (awl) made from the leg bone. The claws were threaded onto fur necklaces and the front teeth were used to carve decorative grooves into wooden tools and weapons."*²²

"You see, all that bush was the main thing. Oh, we loved hunting. Mallet barking, rabbits, do our work and weekends we'd [Andy and Laurie Collard] go kangarooring right across the Boodjin Rock." – Don Collard

"They used to have camps at Boodjin but not in my time. Not allowed to hunt there now because it's a reserve. They used to hunt with dogs there for roos." – George McGuire

"My Grandmother [Laura 'Demma' Abraham (nee Humes)] used to make kangaroo skin rugs. She'd sew them up with the sinews."

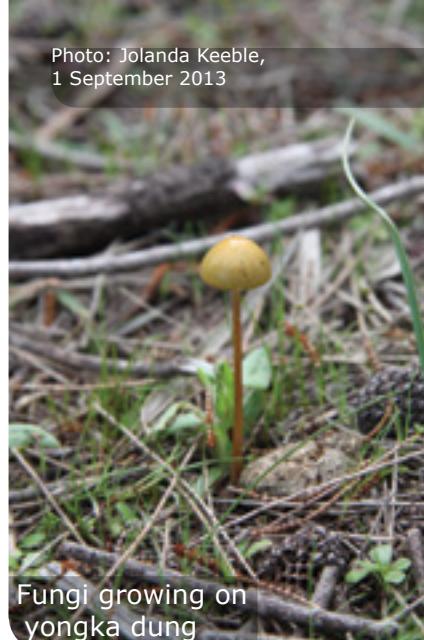
– Mervyn Abraham

"Have a couple of nights out of Noongar traditional ways of cooking a damper or making mada [shin/leg] bone on the coals.

You know. Kangaroo legs, you cut 'em off about there, and then they'd cut him there and they'd jump and that's a mada bone and you'd get all the marrow out of it, you see. It's beautiful. You could put a bit of salt on.

Get the liver out, roast it. Nothing much went to waste."

– Don Collard



Fungi growing on yongka dung

Bats

Boyagin's bats¹³ include:

- Southern Forest Bat / *Vespadelus regulus*
- Lesser Long-eared Bat / *Nyctophilus geoffroyi*
- Gould's Wattled Bat / *Chalinolobus gouldii*.

Survivors

With so many extinctions of Australian plants and animals elsewhere, how have Boyagin's survived?

- Most of Boyagin Nature Reserve is uncleared, original bush.
- The Department of Parks and Wildlife Western Shield program has controlled foxes and feral cats in Boyagin Nature Reserve.
- Some animals were locally extinct at Boyagin but have been reintroduced since feral control made Boyagin safer.
- Some cleared areas around Boyagin have been returned to bush.

Back to bush

"You know this is real central for Dotty [Dorothy Reidy] and Elvis's [Bennell] family on both sides. You look at old John McGuire: he planted them trees, and my Grandma Nellie ['Doolak' McGuire (nee Bennell)], on those two farms over there right beside each other [near Boyagin Rock]."
– Janet Hayden

"I remember west of the rock was a farm about 70 years ago. It was all cleared. It's all grown back up now."
– Don Collard



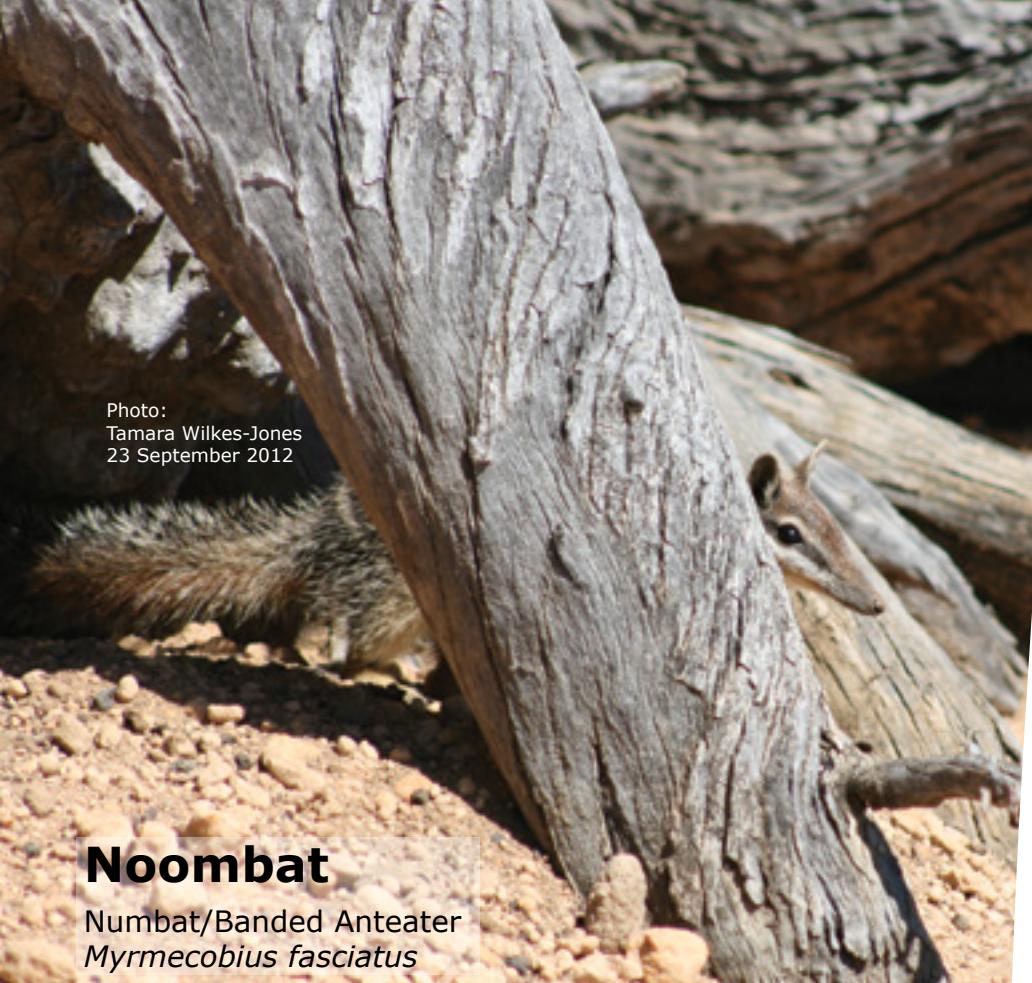


Photo:
Tamara Wilkes-Jones
23 September 2012

Noombat

Numbat/Banded Anteater
Myrmecobius fasciatus

"There used to be a lot.
Now you won't find him
anywhere." - Janet Hayden



Photo: © Numbat Task Force, March 2015

For more numbat information, photos and videos see
www.numbat.org.au and www.facebook.com/numbatTF

"Rocky Ford is coming back towards Brookton from [Boyagin], that's where there used to be a lot of noombats. Wadjalas [white people] call them numbats. We call them noombats. Footballers. Hawthorn football colours. They're hard to pull out of a log, you'd never pull them out, you'd grab them by the tail. Nearly pull the tail off they wouldn't come out of that log. Their nails stuck in. They've got good claws. We used to catch them just for let them go again [when we were kids]."

- Don Collard

Numbats eat about 20,000 termites a day, using their long sticky tongue to dip into narrow cavities in logs, leaf litter and in small holes in the ground to get termites. Numbats do not need to drink water: they get enough moisture from termites. Numbats are active during the day when it warms up enough for termites to become active. Numbats live alone because termites are small and hard to find, and numbats can not afford to share them. Numbats travel large distances to find termites so their home range is between 25 and 50 hectares in size.

The numbat, the Western Australian mammal emblem, was once found across most of southern Australia, but is now an endangered species.

Numbats are eaten by birds of prey, snakes, goannas, chuditj, foxes and feral cats. Their striped fur helps them camouflage against the woodland floor.

Numbats need hollow logs to hide from predators and for nest hollows. Numbats make burrows, especially in winter, which they line with grass, shredded bark, leaves, feathers and flowers.

If trees and logs are removed, numbats have no refuge sites and the termites die out, which leaves numbats with nothing to eat.

Katadjin / knowledge

'The Waakal gave us our knowledge about the sacred sites such as Boyagin Rock... and our relationship to them. Waakal gave us our knowledge about Nyungar and our relationships, responsibilities and obligations to one another. The Creator gave us our *katitjin* about the animals, plants, bush medicines, trees, rivers, waterholes, hills, gullies, the stars, moon, sun, rocks and seasons, and their interconnectedness in the web of life.'⁵

*"Granddad [Norman 'Doorum' Bennell] was a healer like his father [John 'Mungar/Monger' Bennell] before him and he and his two brothers told us stories about the Noongar people, taught us how to look for signs, watch the weather patterns, hunt for possum and goanna and to perform the ceremonies when we were near water or places of special significance, to acknowledge the land, our Mother, for all she provided for her people."*¹⁶

"[Doorum's] brother, Grannie Felix... his Noongar name was Boolkanitj, his name meant lightning, because he could run really fast. There was another brother, Grannie Bert [Bennell] and his Noongar name was Karaatj. They were the main three that were living in Brookton when we were growing up." – Vivienne Hansen

"...you're sitting out here [at Boyagin] with old Pop [Doorum] and Granny Felix... and they'd tell you what you can do... And I don't know how many times I got smacked across the hand with a couple of sticks cos I'd be sitting there drawing on the ground at night. We weren't allowed to draw on the ground at night. We weren't allowed to muck around with fire sticks at night, you know. And if we mucked around with a fire stick at night and Granny Felix was there or Pop Doyle [Doorum] was sitting there, you'd get a whack with a stick across the hand... You weren't allowed to whistle at night."

– Glen Hayden

Six seasons

Noongar seasons were defined by the weather and the growth and activities of plants and animals.²

"...seasons played a vital role in medicine as some plants are only available after a rainy season or need fire to regrow."
– Vivienne Hansen¹⁶

Birak
December/January



Bunuru
February/March



Djeran
April/May



Makuru
June/July



Djilba
August/September



Kambarang
October/November



Moort koorlindy / family travelling

'The changing seasons meant the *family* (moort) moved through the landscape, following in the footsteps of their ancestors who had been taught and guided by the creators who'd stocked the country with wildlife, plants, *kalleep* (places to camp) and water sources. The storylines, song-lines and Dreaming associated with creation forms the basis of the Nyungar belief system (*kundaam*). Treading in the steps of our ancestors reaffirms the beliefs and values.'²

"Our old people used to talk about Boodjin being a focus point for a lot of our old Noongars when they was travelling. The York-Williams was... a place where old Noongars used to travel... go down to Williams, down to Wandering, and all that area and back down to Beverley and Dale... Nobody lived here [at Boyagin], it was like they came here for recreation, or just for, the old people wanted to just come here and feel good about coming home here, you know?" – Janet Hayden

"The old Nyungar, the tribal Nyungar, they used to speak with their mob, and travelled with their mob. They would go across one way, then the other mob might want to go across the other way. Well, they pass through and let them go on. Noonokurt koorlindy, means they can go through. If they [stranger] make any bad trouble, they might have a big fight halfway there and the strongest team, well, they say. Ngulluk koorl koorlindy [mean they can go back]." – Tom Bennell (RIP), 1978⁵

"The York-Williams always a symbol of kinship... Those Noongar people went from Beaufort River... where my Dad was born, right back into York... from Beverley, Pingelly, Brookton, Narrogin, Wagin, that was their run. That was my Dad [Frank 'Doongy' Bolton] and Mum's run, and that was my grandparents' run on four family sides... It was always a symbol of family, kinship, getting together, new birth, all the birthing places along that river, along that road, most of the campsites along there.

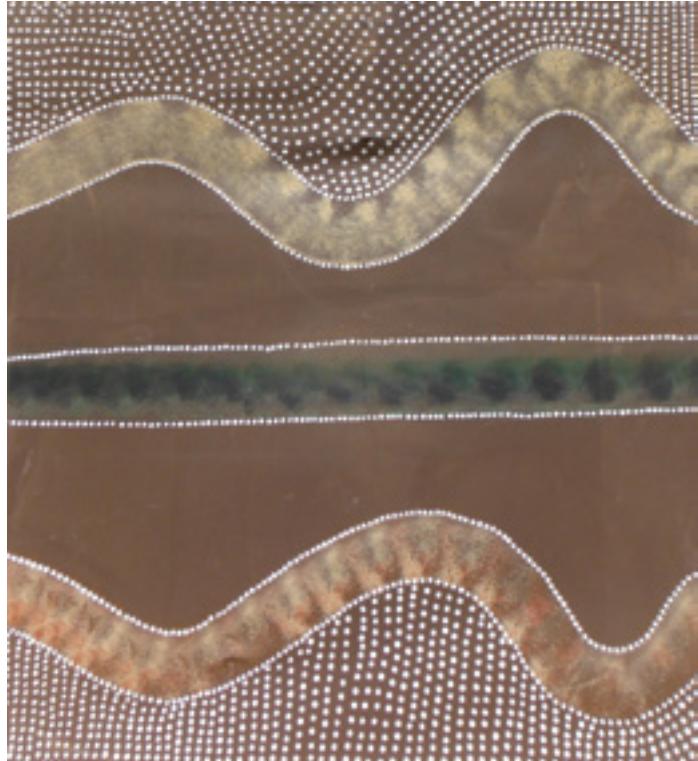
The Bennell line came out of my Grannie – her father's name was Benil... Out of that came the... Humes... Garletts... Bennells... McGuires... Collards... Ninlettes... Kearings... Michaels... Humphries... Those families lived that run. Most of them stayed in that run from York to Wagin."

– Janet Hayden, 2012⁹

"We say this is our home, this is our boodjar... this is where we always belonged."

– Dorothy Reidy

"A lot of Brookton, Pingelly. There's old Merv Abraham's lot, Collards, Littles, Nippas, Humeses, Rileys... Boltons, and Bennells, the whole lot, Reidys, I can't think of them all... Her [Don's wife Silvia Collard] Dad, Ngemung Ninayette, he lived around that area too for a long while. Haydens. Ninlettes, Cables..." – Don Collard



This painting by Gary Bennell from Pingelly depicts the hills that guide the way from Pingelly to Boyagin Rock.

Djert/birds

Noongar names² of some birds found at Boyagin¹³

Bardinaar	Western Rosella	<i>Platycercus icterotis</i>
Birrongawu	Rainbow Bee-eater	<i>Merops ornatus</i>
Boorlam	Stubble Quail	<i>Coturnix pectoralis</i>
Demokarlitz 1	Red-capped Robin	<i>Petroica goodenovii</i>
Dilaboort	Magpie-lark	<i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i>
Djidi djidi/chitty chitty	Willy Wagtail	<i>Rhipidura leucophrys</i>
Djoowi	Tawny Frogmouth	<i>Podargus strigoides</i>
Kaa-kaa	Laughing Kookaburra	<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i>
Karrkany	Brown Falcon	<i>Falco berigora</i>
Kawoor	Purple-crowned Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta porphyrocephala</i>
Kayibort 2	Dusky Woodswallow	<i>Artamus cyanopterus</i>
Kulbardi	Australian Magpie	<i>Cracticus tibicen</i>
Kwadalang	Pied Butcherbird	<i>Cracticus nigrogularis</i>
Kwiwok	Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus sanctus</i>
Moorningwilboor	Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>
Moyitj	Common Bronzewing	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>
Nyimarak	Australian Shelduck, Mountain Duck	<i>Tadorna tadornoides</i>
Waaly	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>
Wardong/wardang	Australian Raven	<i>Corvus coronoides</i>
Warlitj/warlitch 3	Wedge-tailed Eagle	<i>Aquila audax</i>
Weerlow	Bush Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>
Yaart	Australian Owlet-nightjar	<i>Aegotheles cristatus</i>
Yerderap	Australian Wood Duck, Wood Duck	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>
Yontj/mopok	Southern Boobook Owl	<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>

Ngawoo/gnow

Malleefowl/Mallee Chook/
Mallee Hen
Leipoa ocellata

"I can still remember where the mallee hen nests were [at Boyagin]." – Don Collard

Malleefowl are rare and likely to become extinct. Plans to save it include promoting malleefowl-friendly agricultural practices and the reduction of grazing pressure, predation by foxes and cats, fire threats, isolation of fragmented populations, habitat loss and road kills.

'Steel Bullet' turned into a warlitj

"The police chased 'Steel Bullet' over to the west side of Boyagin Rock. He turned into an eagle and flew away. They never caught him. Granny Berty [Bennell] and Granny Felix [Bennell] told me this story." – Mervyn Abraham

'...the legendary 'Steel Bullet', Alex Bibarn, [was] credited with all the powers of Mabarn Men, including the ability to transport himself by flight over many kilometres, and to change his body shape at will into a natural form such as a rock or an anthill.'²⁰

A mubarde/mabarn man is a spirit man or magical man.

Weerlows

"I'll never forget one night we [accidentally] caught the weerlows – the curlews. For Noongars... he was a no good bird, he was a death bird or something. When we got there I remember my younger brother, he was a year younger than me, we got them out, and when we did they went 'WEEERLOOOOW'. Well, we left the [rabbit] traps and the weerlows and we run. [Laughs.] Oh dear. Dad said 'No, you go back. Let the weerlows go and set the traps ready for a feed'. You know we'd get our feed that way." – Fay Slater

Some more birds of Boyagin¹³

<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>	Australasian Grebe, Black-throated Grebe
<i>Falco longipennis</i>	Australian Hobby
<i>Falco cenchroides</i>	Australian Kestrel
<i>Falco peregrinus</i> subsp. <i>macrourus</i>	Australian Peregrine Falcon
4 <i>Malurus pulcherrimus</i>	Blue-breasted Fairy-wren
<i>Acanthiza apicalis</i>	Broad-tailed Thornbill, Inland Thornbill
<i>Accipiter fasciatus</i>	Brown Goshawk
<i>Lichenura indistincta</i>	Brown Honeyeater
<i>Cinclosoma cruralis</i>	Brown Songlark
<i>Melithreptus brevirostris</i>	Brown-headed Honeyeater
<i>Phaps elegans</i>	Brush Bronzewing
5 <i>Calyptorhynchus latirostris</i>	Carnaby's Black-cockatoo (Short-billed Black-cockatoo)
<i>Acanthiza uropygialis</i>	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
<i>Accipiter cirrocephalus</i>	Collared Sparrowhawk
<i>Ocyphaps lophotes</i>	Crested Pigeon
<i>Neophema elegans</i>	Elegant Parrot
<i>Cacomantis flabelliformis</i>	Fan-tailed Cuckoo
<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>	Golden Whistler
<i>Cracticus torquatus</i>	Grey Butcherbird
<i>Strepera versicolor</i>	Grey Currawong
<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>	Grey Shrike-thrush
<i>Anas gracilis</i>	Grey Teal
<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	Grey-breasted White-eye, Silveryeye
<i>Microeca fascinans</i>	Jacky Winter
<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	Malleefowl
<i>Dicaeum hirundinaceum</i>	Mistletoebird
<i>Phylidonyris novaehollandiae</i>	New Holland Honeyeater
<i>Anas superciliosa</i>	Pacific Black Duck
<i>Cacomantis pallidus</i>	Pallid Cuckoo
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon
<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>	Red Wattlebird
<i>Myiagra inquieta</i>	Restless Flycatcher
<i>Climacteris rufa</i>	Rufous Treecreeper
<i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i>	Rufous Whistler
<i>Malurus splendens</i>	Splendid Fairy-wren
<i>Pardalotus punctatus</i>	Spotted Pardalote
<i>Pardalotus striatus</i>	Striated Pardalote
<i>Circus approximans</i>	Swamp Harrier
<i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i>	Varied Sittella
<i>Smicromys brevirostris</i>	Weebill
<i>Gerygone fusca</i>	Western Gerygone
<i>Anthochaera lunulata</i>	Western Little Wattlebird
<i>Platycercus icterotis</i> subsp. <i>xanthogenys</i>	Western Rosella (inland)
<i>Acanthorhynchus superciliosus</i>	Western Spinebill
<i>Acanthiza inornata</i>	Western Thornbill
<i>Haliastur sphenurus</i>	Whistling Kite
<i>Eopsaltria georgiana</i>	White-breasted Robin
<i>Pomatostomus superciliosus</i>	White-browed Babbler
<i>Sericornis frontalis</i>	White-browed Scrubwren
<i>Lichenostomus leucotis</i>	White-eared Honeyeater
<i>Acanthiza chrysorrhoa</i>	Yellow-rumped Thornbill



1



2



Yuwintj²

Barn Owl

Ninox tyto alba



3



Scarlet Robin *Petroica multicolor*

Western Yellow Robin
Eopsaltria griseogularis



4



5

Photo:
Sean van Alphen, 11 June 2015

Djurrang/reptiles

"And you'd go up on [Boyagin] rock and you'd see little lizards of all sizes and colours laying on the rock. They used to have all the little rock pools up there. It used to be just packed and moving with little *kalaris* we used to call them, little tiny lizards and that, but bigger ones too... They'd be under all the loose rock and that on the big rock, and we'd chase them around and have fun with them ...never to kill them or anything... we loved it because they were something different to be playing with as kids." – Fay Slater



Mulawa

Mountain or Thorny Devil

Moloch horridus

Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones, October 2014

"...we used to call them the mountain devils, the little ones that change colours. We'd love that, because we'd take different colours and put it near them, and as soon as they'd touch it, they'd change to that colour. They're only little tiny ones, about that long [about 15 centimetres] and they had a little horn thing up here [on their head]..."

But they used to really mesmerise us, you know, somebody would have a red dress, you'd put it near there, sure enough, before your eyes, you know. Someone else would come in with a bit of green or blue or something. Absolutely marvellous. Otherwise in their natural state, it's like the leaves, and you know, I suppose camouflage really. But as soon as they got near a different colour, they'd just change their colour." – Fay Slater

Ornate Rock Dragon/ Ornate Dragon

Ctenophorus ornatus

"You always see two or three of them together, you know. Not like the old karda. Old karda, he's on his own most of the time, but them little fellas, they're always together. Isn't that beautiful! How many of them are there? Well, I never. I could see the first three."

– Janet Hayden

Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones,
November 2010



"And around the bottom of that rock, I tell you, when I went around with old Tommy 'Buttung' [Reidy], a couple of times, there's snakes there... big wargyl, carpet snake... [A carpet snake Don saw elsewhere] was 9 foot 4, he had teeth bigger than a dog's teeth. Wouldn't like to have got bitten with it. I reckon he would have taken a piece out of you." – Don Collard

"There are two different sorts of carpet snake. If anybody ever see them, the old bush carpet, he got white marks on him.

The old water carpet snake, he is purple and oh, he is pretty. He is purple. I saw them myself. I saw them, oh, up to fourteen or fifteen feet long, very pretty.

Photo: Wheatbelt NRM, sensor camera, October 2010



But the old forest carpet snake, he is only just an ordinary old carpet snake. But the real water snake oh, he is pretty, that carpet snake. I don't think too many people

have seen him. They wouldn't know he was a carpet snake, but he is a carpet snake all right, but the Nyungar call him *Waakal*."

– Tom Bennell (RIP), 1978¹

Karda/garda/ Bungarra/Manar/Maanar

Gould's Monitor/Gould's Goanna/Sand Monitor
Varanus gouldii



Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones, November 2011

"Yeah, that's a big karda. He's like a big goanna. See the brighter colours, spots? He's the one they eat, that. Gut him there [on the side of his chest] poke wire in up through him and some wire around. I've seen a whitefella do it, he could do it better than I. True. See you've gotta do it there, otherwise you play with them, you get big gales and that. I said to my sister, 'Don't play with that, it's wara. No good'.

When you gonna kill one for us there, took about an hour, running around, and that night it blew. It blow down trees. Dinky di." – Don Collard

They can grow up to 1.6 metres long and males can weigh seven kilograms. They eat reptiles, insects, small mammals, and carrion and can be eaten by foxes when young. They are day-active and burrow under slabs of rock, hollow logs or

dense litter. They can raise themselves by their hind legs and tail. They lay eggs in a burrow to incubate.

The Yamatji Aboriginal word *Bungarra* is sometimes used for this goanna. *Manar/maanar* has been recorded as a Noongar word for it. *Karda/garda*, often used for goannas in general, is a Noongar word for the Black-headed Monitor / *Varanus tristis*.

Biodiverse beauty

Moss

8 species¹³- *Campylopus bicolor* var. *bicolor*, *Grimmia laevigata*, *Hedwigidium integrifolium*, *Ischyrodon lepturus*, *Leptodontium paradoxum*, *Schizymenium bryoides*, *Sematophyllum homomallum*, *Triquetrella papillata*

"Pink Pettycoats (*Utricularia multifida*) prefer the wetter areas on the rocks."
- Jolanda Keeble, 31 August 2013

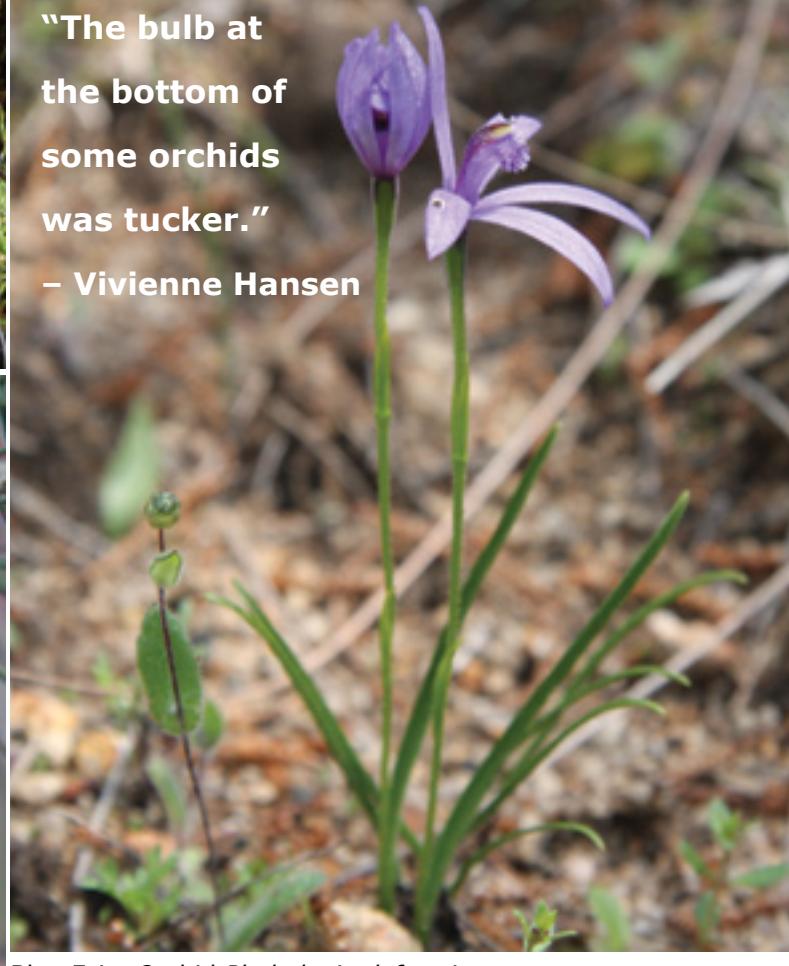
"*Calothamnus quadrifidus* grows on the rocks." - Jolanda Keeble, 10 October 2008

Photo: John Tann, November 2011, CC BY 2.0

"Caterpillar of Dryandra Moth (*Carthaea saturnioides*) probably on *Grevillea hookeriana*. The small white flecks on the flank could be eggs of a Tachinid fly, a parasite."¹⁷

**"The bulb at
the bottom of
some orchids
was tucker."**

– Vivienne Hansen



Blue Fairy Orchid *Pheladenia deformis*, Jolanda Keeble 31 August 2013

Lichen

44 types¹³ - *Amandinea punctata*, *Austroparmelia conlabrosa*, *Buellia cranfieldii*, *Cladonia aggregata*, *Cladonia corallaizon*, *Cladonia ferdinandii*, *Cladonia sullivanii*, *Cladonia capitellata*, *Cladonia capitellata* var. *capitellata*, *Cladonia cervicornis* subsp. *verticillata*, *Cladonia ramulosa*, *Cladonia rigidula* var. *acuta*, *Diploschistes muscorum*, *Flavoparmelia marchantii*, *Flavoparmelia rutidota*, *Flavoparmelia soredians*, *Haematomma eremaeum*, *Haematomma sorediatum*, *Heterodea beaugleholei*, *Heterodea muelleri*, *Lepraria dibenzofuranica*, *Lepraria sekikaica*, *Ochrolechia subathallina*, *Pannoparmelia wilsonii*, *Paraporphidia glauca*, *Physcia jackii*, *Punctelia subalbicans*, *Ramalina inflata* subsp. *australis*, *Ramboldia laeta*, *Siphula coriacea*, *Tephromela atra*, *Usnea inermis*, *Usnea scabrida*, *Xanthoparmelia antleriformis*, *Xanthoparmelia boyaginensis*, *Xanthoparmelia cheelii*, *Xanthoparmelia congensis*, *Xanthoparmelia elixii*, *Xanthoparmelia flavescentireagens*, *Xanthoparmelia furcata*, *Xanthoparmelia nortegeta*, *Xanthoparmelia notata*, *Xanthoparmelia substrigosa*, *Xanthoparmelia tasmanica*

Plants

Boyagin Nature Reserve is a haven for many species including the following¹³. Several are listed as protected or threatened species.

Acacia cuneifolia
Acacia gemina
Acacia pulchella var. *pulchella*
Astrolobia epacridis
Banksia armata var. *armata*
Banksia columnaris
Banksia nivea subsp. *nivea*
Banksia nobilis subsp. *nobilis*
Banksia squarrosa subsp. *squarrosa*
Beaufortia incana
Bossiaea eriocarpa Common Brown Pea
Brachyloma moggii
Caladenia flava subsp. *flava*
Calandrinia calyprata Pink Purslane
Calothamnus planifolius var. *planifolius*
Calothamnus rupestris Mouse Ears
Chamelaucium sp. *Dryandra*
Drosera macrantha subsp. *macrantha*
Eucalyptus accedens Powderbark Wandoo
Eucalyptus dorrienii
Eucalyptus drummondii Drummond's Gum
Eucalyptus exilis Boyagin Mallee
Eucalyptus latens Narrow-leaved Red Mallee
Kulurda, *Eucalyptus rufa* Flooded Gum
Gastrolobium parviflorum
Gastrolobium rhombifolium
Gastrolobium stipulare
Grevillea hookeriana subsp. *hookeriana*
Grevillea monticola
Hakea petiolaris subsp. *petiolaris*
Hibbertia commutata
Hibbertia exasperata
Hibbertia hemignosta
Hyalosperma cotula
Isopogon crithmifolius
Jacksonia epiphyllum
Kunzea pulchella Granite Kunzea
Lasiopetalum molle subsp. *molle*
Lasiopetalum rotundifolium
Lawrencella rosea
Lepidosperma leptostachyum
Lepidosperma resinosum
Leptospermum erubescens Roadside Teatree
Leucopogon cordatus
Leucopogon dielsianus
Leucopogon sp. Wandering
Loxocarya striata
Melaleuca tuberculata var. *tuberculata*
Petrophile divaricata
Petrophile heterophylla Variable-leaved Cone Bush
Petrophile striata
Bunjong, *Pimelea spectabilis*
Kulya, *Santalum murrayanum* Bitter Quandong
Styphelia tenuiflora Common Pinheath
Synaphea boyaginensis
Synaphea flabelliformis
Thomasia montana Hill Thomasia
Thryptomene australis subsp. *australis*
Verticordia grandiflora Claw Featherflower
Wurmbea tenella Eight Nancy

Boyagin's woodlands include Powderbark trees (*Eucalyptus accedens*) and White Gum (*Eucalyptus wandoo*).

"**Wornt**, he's the white gum."
 – Janet Hayden



Gastrolobium parviflorum



Photo: Tamara Wilkes Jones, 8 November 2008

Djiridj

Cycad/Zamia Palm
Macrozamia reidlei
 The toxic seeds needed extensive preparation before eating.



Jug Orchid
Pterostylis recurva



Verticordia sp.

Granite Kunzea

Kunzea pulchella

"A hop bush. The perfume on that is absolutely beautiful. When we went there in 2012 it was all in full bloom down in the flats there. That's a medicine bush that you use when you've got a chesty cough and colds and whatever. You just crush the flowers up and the twigs and place it on your chest, or you can just get a little twig of it and just heat it over the fire and breathe it in. Place it on your chest, but you don't want it too hot where it's going to burn you. The heat releases all the oils inside the plant and you inhale the vapours."

– Vivienne Hansen

Kulya¹³/tjak² / Bitter Quandong / *Santalum murrayanum*

The kulya is pictured below. There is also a Sweet Quandong (**Wongup** / *Santalum acuminatum* / Native Peach) that is best for eating.

"We always looked forward to going bush for the day, having a feast of gum, berries and quandongs if they were ripe. We would make jam from the quandong fruit." – Vivienne Hansen¹⁶

"Oh, we made good use of that fella, quandong. That's our jam, that's our medicine. When it's raw, you split it up when it's green, and you can rub it on your hand for cracks on your skin and that. Then all the meat goes into the pot, boil him up and make the jam. Oh, he makes beautiful jam. Mum used to chuck [the nuts] on the coals." – Janet Hayden

"Uncle Felix used to tell us they played marbles with quandong nuts." – Dorothy Reidy

"Mum... Nan [Kate Collard] and them... had the big camp ovens and we had jam tarts and we had all kind of sweet stuff but we never craved anything from the city, from the shops. My Nan was a wonderful old cook. She could cook and turn anything into a luxury meal. And you'd wonder where she got the material from. She just got it off the land and that's the kind of person that she was." – Janet Hayden⁹

"That's the bitter quandong [left]. That was growing on the road in the woodlands when you're coming in from the [York-Williams Road]. There would have been sandalwood there back in my Grandfather's days but... that was one of the first trees harvested." – Vivienne Hansen

Quandongs are part of the sandalwood family. They are partly parasitic - their roots latch on to the roots of other plants, including *Mungart* (Jam tree / *Acacia acuminata*), to get water and nutrients from them. Quandong's white-cream-yellow/green flowers appear in October to December/January and turn into red fruit about 2.5 centimetres wide.

"...we used to go and catch a lot of bardies. Witchetty grubs, whatever you like to call them, in the Jam trees out there. And I mean they're beautiful. A lot of people say 'I wouldn't eat those'. If there's a marking there, you'll see some of the whatsaname come away from the Jam tree. And if you look closely they burrow a hole into the trunk, right inside the wood. Some of them used to be big fat ones, like that [10 centimetres], you know, that long. And some of them were just little ones. But they taste very much like lovely scrambled egg." – Fay Slater



Mangart
Jam tree
Acacia acuminata

Kardan/Marri

Red gum / *Corymbia calophylla*

"The *kardan*, red gum tree, all that gums, that's beautiful medicine. I've got a little granddaughter, she's seven now. Three years ago she was only four and my grandson and his woman came... she was in tears, she said, 'Nanna, my baby, she's got all these sores!' And she was just red with rash all over her face, her little body.

So I got the gum and I boiled it up. And I said, 'Come on baby.' I sat her in that water and I washed her and let her swim. We left her there for about half an hour in this water. Then we took her out of there, wrapped her up in a towel, I said, 'Don't put her in the shower.' I got a red towel for it [chuckles]. And she went home with her mum and dad. A couple of days later her father came. 'Oh Nanna, you won't believe it,' he said. 'Baby, all her sores are gone.'

That was all *kardan* tree. Now that medicine is medicine. It's magic. It's magic." – Janet Hayden

Boort/Bark

"All the paperbark trees, they all grow where there's water, swamps, rivers, lakes, and our Granny Felix and Grandfather would tell us that, you know like snakes shed their skin... the story is that the old Wargle used to go swimming and he'd brush up against the trees and pieces of his skin fell off. And that's his skin wrapped around the paperbark trees. And we get medicine from the paperbark trees. In the olden days when people were injured or whatever they used the paperbark as a bandage. So they were wrapping the skin of old Wargle around and he heals them. They're growing around Boodjin."

– Vivienne Hansen

"A lot of old people used to boil them barks and drink the water. Mum was amazing, you know, she'd get all the different barks, boil them up. Sometimes she'd bath the babies in it, sometimes she'd make us drink it. We'd say, 'No!' But we did. And I tell you what, belly aches, they were the best medicines out. Or even if you had sores on your skin. I never knew Mum to go to the doctor, get medicine from a doctor for skin rashes, nothing. That was our medicine there. I've got a bottle of my old bush medicine at home. I keep it there in case the kids get sick. Pour it in the tub for them." – Janet Hayden



Kardan (above) and its red sap dripped onto leaf litter (below), February 2015

Dried balga stems could be used as poles for *mia mia* (huts). This *mia mia* is at the base of Boyagin Rock.

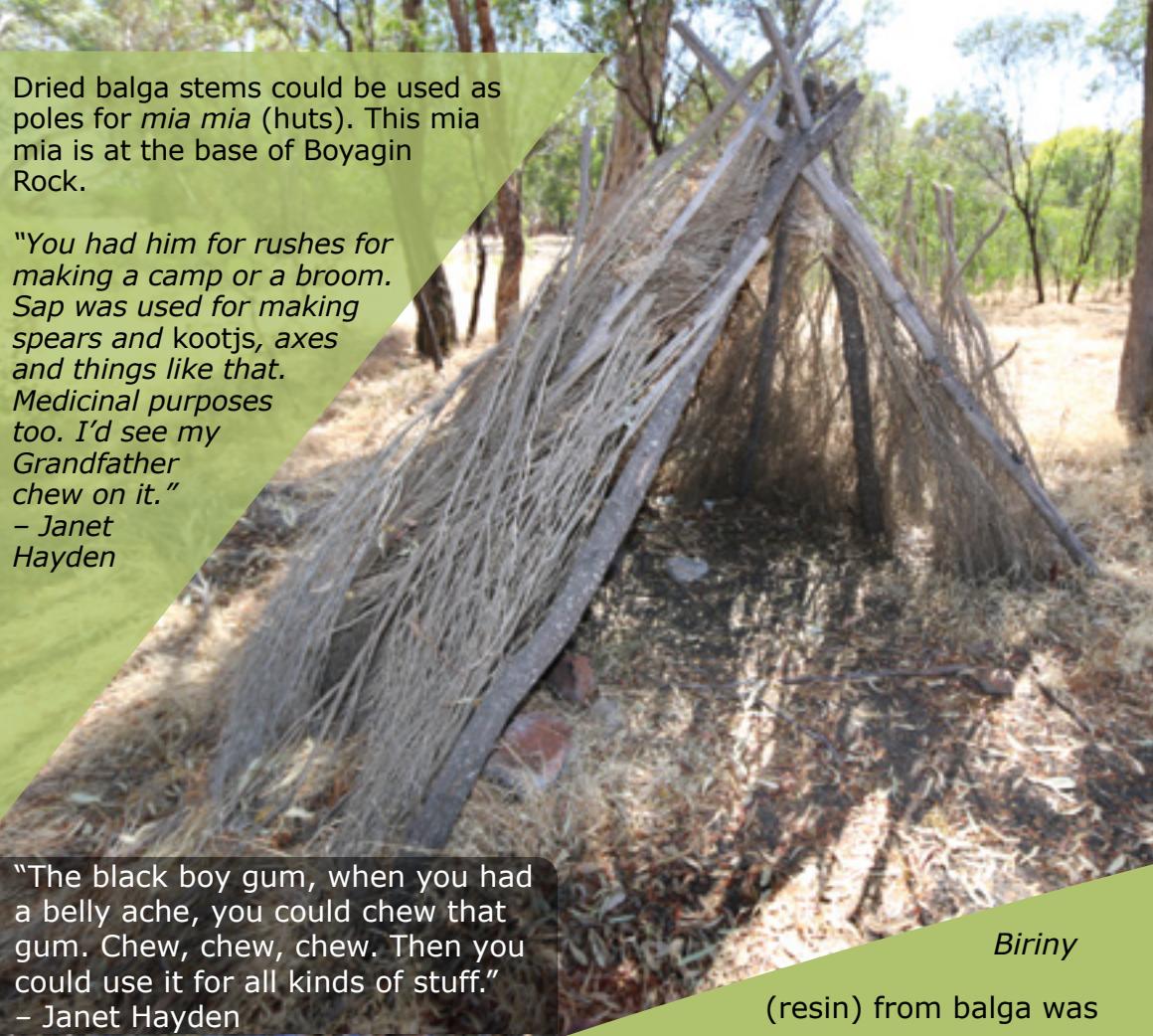
"You had him for rushes for making a camp or a broom. Sap was used for making spears and kootjs, axes and things like that. Medicinal purposes too. I'd see my Grandfather chew on it."
– Janet Hayden

"The black boy gum, when you had a belly ache, you could chew that gum. Chew, chew, chew. Then you could use it for all kinds of stuff."
– Janet Hayden



Bor/borl/balga

Grass Tree/Black Boy / *Xanthorrhoea*
The balga provides medicine, food, shelter, warmth and healing.



Biriny (resin) from balga was used in weapon and tool making. *Mirlen* (the flowering stems) gave edible gum honey. Dried balga leaves were used for fire lighting and floor covering. The dried trunk was used as fire tinder. Edible bardi/bardee grubs [the larvae of wood boring beetles] live in the plant when it's growing.²

"The smoking ceremony... helps to ward off warra wirrin – bad spirits and to bring in the blessings of the kwop wirrin – good spirits. The leaves and shavings from the balga smoulder and the smoke purifies the area..."¹⁸

"Smoking is a traditional way of healing all over Australia. Especially if it's like a spiritual illness smoking ceremony. You get certain plants and just go through the house and smoke the house out and ask the spirits to protect you and the people in your home." – Vivienne Hansen¹⁹

"Uncle Tom [Reidy] and all those dogs, that's a memory I'll never forget you know. Those 10 or 12 dogs tied around in a circle. And every one had their little bush, you know, he put the forks and that up, like little *mia mia* thing for the shade I suppose, or whatever the weather was, rain, keep it out. His big fire I can remember in the middle, that never ever went out, because he was forever roasting kangaroo meat or something there. He used to make big dampers [1 metre wide] for the dogs in the ash."
– Fay Slater

'From the time the first boatload of British colonists landed at Fremantle, the economy of the Aborigines was irreversibly disrupted. Activities such as land clearing and the introduction of livestock upset the balance in the natural environment that had previously existed and brought profound changes for the Aborigines who could neither ignore the settlers' presence nor readily become absorbed into the life of the colony. Their diet, ways of obtaining food, and the traditional food supply itself, were all affected by the changes.'²⁰

Farm work

"Farmers had plenty of work for us." – George McGuire²¹

"My dad [Fred Collard] and Gerry's dad [George Collard], they worked out here for years, sixty years plus, stripping mallet bark, and cutting down jam posts and whatever else, trapping rabbits.⁶

...used to do a lot of farm work and that there for Pechs and Evans and all those farmers around there." – Fay Slater

"You got Lou's paddock still there if you go into Pech's there at the nine mile windmill, that's Boodjin Valley... Yeah, he worked a lot there. Then old Tom Bennell, he used to do a lot of shearing there, and me brother Fred. We lived all around this hill." – Don Collard

"...the work he used to do, it was... a handshake with the wadjalas [white people]. ...they'd say 'Righto Fred, you go and walk it out'. He'd go and walk it out. Whatever, how many steps in the acre or how they used to do it. And he'd say so

much you know. And they'd say, 'Alright', and they'd shake hands...They really respected Dad out there." – Fay Slater

Camps

"My memories of this area, running through from York right through to Williams, all that area, we called it the York-Williams run. A lot of our old people did a lot of work along there. Especially my grandparents and my Mum and Dad..."

A lot of our old Noongar people had certain camp sites that they went to and they stayed there and those camp sites were like Hastings, back of Boodjin, there was birthing places along those ways, the old Bennell flats and then the Dale flats. You had all kinds of places where the old Noongars used to go back and have their meeting places.

And a lot of the farmers knew those places, the early farmers, because they knew where to pick them up and they knew where to look for their work[ers]. – Janet Hayden

"...not a lot of Noongars camped [at Boyagin Rock], because they were too frightened of... what they used to call the balyats then... but now they call them little mumaris..."

– Fay Slater

"Uncle Tom and Aunty Muriel had a camp just down the river [at Boyagin]... he'd go pick up all the young boys and bring them out here. And the two that he'd pick up all the time and bring out here used to be Dorothy's dad [Dick Reidy], he would have only been about 15 [or] 16 [years old], and my husband [Aubrey Hayden] would have been about 17, and they were the first two young fellas old Uncle Tom

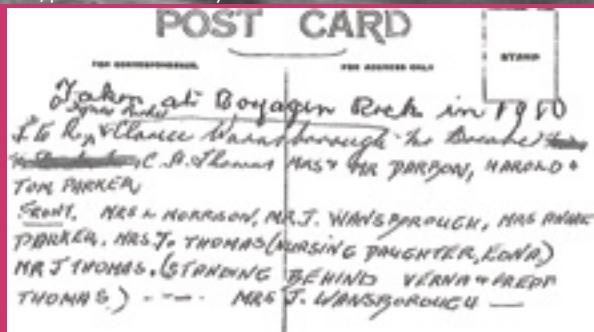


Photo from the book *Nyungar Tradition, Glimpses of Aborigines of South-Western Australia 1829-1914*, by Lois Tilbrook, University of Western Australia Press, 1983

Lewis 'Beaky' Collard (1896 – 1972) became a runner in the front lines in France in WW1, 1914.²⁰ Lou's paddock on Pech's farm is named after him.



Photo/postcard: courtesy Geoff Matthews



By a gamma on Boyagin Rock in 1910. "Locals in their fine 'Sunday best' with wildflowers in bunches. The six year old girl is Verna Thomas, my Aunt and the eight year old girl is Freda Thomas, my Mum - she married Jack Matthews." - Geoff Matthews, 2015

Matthews, and I forgot the other one's name. Those would come up around and sit around the campfire and listen to all the stories and that too, you know."

- Fay Slater

Rabbits

"People used to sell possum skins and rabbit skins. Farmers used to say if you go out there trapping come out to our crops. We used to have a rabbit buyer come."

- George McGuire

"My brothers, my sisters and myself we used to take our rabbit traps and set them where we used to see the rabbits. We'd catch our rabbits and take them home, and that would be our supper..." - Fay Slater

used to bring out here. He'd be trapping out here and he'd make the boys do their work. He never encouraged no girls. I think I was the only girl used to tag along with them because I was married then. But coming out here was always special and I felt good about it."

- Janet Hayden

"...there was old Uncle Tom Reidy and his oldest son Bill, they used to be out there [at Boyagin]. There used to be Tom Bennell and Muriel, they were the only two that I can remember out there. You know, actually working and staying there with Dad. And there was old Felix Bennell. He went out there with Dad once to do some work there. ... he was only out there a night or two and he said something tormented him all night and pulled his hair and whatever. So he blamed the little, you know [balyats].

Dad used to do a lot of work for Matthews... Bob Matthews, and Bill Matthews, and Jack



Photo from the book *Nyungar Tradition, Glimpses of Aborigines of South-Western Australia 1829-1914*, by Lois Tilbrook, University of Western Australia Press, 1983

'Janet Bolton and Muriel Bennell (nee McGuire) with their horse Ginger Bob and a catch of rabbits, Brookton... taken by Tom Bennell. Muriel would load the family's 1.37m x .76m spring cart and travel the fourteen kilometres along the Perth road to Brookton to sell the rabbits for one shilling a pair.'²⁰ "We broke the record there. And that's not all of them, we had the fence lined up with rabbits. And my baby was lying sleeping in the cart. That was early in the morning, that was before breakfast. Me and Aunty Muriel, she'd have our cart full of traps and we'd follow the men. We'd do the fence line and they did the rivers." - Janet Hayden (nee Bolton)

Future

People feel strongly that any enhancements or tourism at Boyagin must respect Noongar culture, and not diminish Boyagin's natural beauty or allow access to very sacred or environmentally sensitive sites.

Ranger and other training and ongoing employment for Noongar youth at Boyagin is a goal being pursued by various people and organisations.

New toilets and improvements to the parking and picnic area are being planned. Feedback has been sought about a potential walk trail around Boyagin Rock.

Individuals and organisations will keep working together to protect Boyagin's ecological communities and give threatened species a chance of survival.

"A lot of the old people, even today, you know, they all feel good about coming out here. I guess when you walk into a church ... and you feel a peace and that... a lot of us have that same feeling coming out here, you know, you have that peace because this is Noongar country and this is your place of just relaxing, feeling good about it. Later on these little girls will grow up and say, 'We've been there when we were little'." – Janet Hayden

"We want to keep it natural. We want it how it was when we were kids." – Dorothy Reidy



Wargal

Carpet Python

Morelia spilota subsp. imbricata

*"We [Noongars] see ourselves as part of nature and all things natural as part of us. The earth provides us with everything we need – our food, shelter and our spirituality. We repay such gifts by protecting the land... Our law reminds us that if we waste these gifts then the land will stop providing for us."*²²



Stipandra glauca

Photo: Jolanda Keeble, 31 August 2013

Pincushions
Borya sphaerocephala



Photo: Jolanda Keeble, 31 August 2013

Dookatj
Dugite / *Pseudonaja affinis*



Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones, October 2013

Contributors

In late 2014 and early 2015, Wheatbelt NRM invited people to yarn with Christie Kingston especially for this storybook.

These Noongar people accepted the invitation to contribute:

Janet Hayden
Fay Slater
Don Collard
Mervyn Abraham
Dorothy Reidy
Vivienne Hansen
Geri Hayden
Glen Hayden
Elvis Bennell
George McGuire
Liz Hayden

Yarns happened from January until June 2015 at Boyagin Rock, Brookton, Pingelly, Kondinin and in Perth, as well as by phone and email.

We apologise to people who missed the opportunity to contribute. There are many more Boyagin stories that will continue to be told within Noongar *moort* (family).

Quotes from Tom Bennell (RIP), Everett Kickett (RIP), Janet Collard (RIP), Mathew Abraham (RIP), Reverend Sealin Garlett and Gerry Collard and some images in this storybook are from other sources and are labelled and/or referenced.

Photos

Many Noongar and *wadjala* people have photos of Boyagin's people, history and biodiversity, and we thank everyone who generously shared photos: Vivienne Hansen, Tamara Wilkes-Jones, Jolanda Keeble, Graham Zemunik, Mike Griffiths, Jan James, Geoff Matthews, Numbat Task Force, Di Crystal, Sean van Alphen, Vince Holt, John Tann and Kate Raynes-Goldie.

Art

Thanks to Gary Bennell for allowing us to include a photo of his painting. We acknowledge Anne Thomas for her illustration from Eddie Bennell's book *Aboriginal Legends from the Bibulmun Tribe*.

Thanks to...

- the Department of Parks and Wildlife
- the Pingelly Tourism Group
- and especially all the many generations of ancestors who passed Noongar *katadjin* down.



Western Brush Wallaby
Macropus irma

Photo: © Di Crystal, 28 February 2015



Vivienne Hansen (with husband Mort), Sept 2007



Back: Kerry Collard, Elvis Bennell, Dorothy Reidy, Geri Hayden, Glen Hayden, Jo Turner.
Front: Christie Kingston, Janet Hayden, 24 Jan 2015



Don Collard in Kondinin, 23 Feb 2015



Fay Slater, 10 Nov 2010



Gerry Collard and George McGuire, 10 Nov 2010



Gary Bennell and Mervyn Abraham, 17 Oct 2014

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22. Department of Environment and Conservation sign at Boyagin Rock, January 2015



Above: Felix 'Boolkanitj' Bennell and Glen Hayden



Left: Fred 'Gint' Collard

Right: Bert 'Karaatj' Bennell



Above: Nanna Kate and Grandfather Norman Bennell

Above photo:
Courtesy of
Vivienne Hansen

Photos:
Courtesy
Jan James
Collection



Photo: Tamara Wilkes-Jones, 2 January 2015



Australian Government



wheatbelt
natural resource
management

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