

Artwork by Thomas Day

Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project

Cultural Features of the Budj Bim Landscape Wooden Implements

The Budj Bim Landscape extends from Mount Eccles National Park East of Heywood and along the associated lava flows to the coast. This is Gunditjmara country, the traditional lands of the Gunditjmara Nation. Cultural heritage and traditional ecological knowledge is very important throughout the region.

The Gunditjmara people have maintained their connection to country since European settlement. A native title claim was granted in 2007. Gunditjmara people manage ten properties in the Budj Bim area and have an integral role in managing the landscape.

The Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project has compiled examples of cultural heritage and indigenous ecological knowledge into fact sheets to share with the Gunditjmara community and the broader community. A Field Guide to Cultural Features of the Budj Bim Landscape is also available from Gunditj Mirring offices in Heywood and Glenelg Hopkins CMA offices in Hamilton.

The Gunditjmara people used wooden tools extensively. Stone axe heads were bound to wooden handles with resin and tendon. Tree bark was used as carrying trays. Acacia bark could also be bent and dried to create a water container.

The digging stick was of particular use when gathering roots and bulbs. This is a sturdy piece of wood that had been shaped or sharpened. These tools may also be hardened by placing them in a fire for a short time. It would be used by Gunditjmara women to dig for and cultivate Yam Daisy tubers and other edible roots. Also known as a muurong pole, holes were dug for many sorts of waste, usually at some distance from a campsite.

Corroborees were a major part of Gunditjmara life. Wooden music sticks were knocked together as accompaniment to singing. The music sticks are made of rounded hard wood about 20cm long and 3cm thick.



Many hunting weapons and tools were made from wood. Smoking ceremonies utilised burnt leaves from Cherry Ballart to protect newborn babies from mischievous spirits and to cleanse adults attending ceremonies of ill-will.

Contact for more Information

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