



Artwork by Thomas Day

Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project

Cultural Features of the Budj Bim Landscape Poonyart Grass

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.

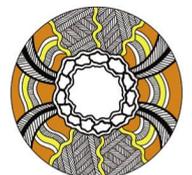
The Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project has compiled examples of cultural heritage and indigenous ecological knowledge into fact sheets to share with the Gunditjmara community and the broader community. A Field Guide to Cultural Features of the Budj Bim Landscape is also available from Gunditj Mirring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

Poonyart Grass (*Carex tereticaulis*) is one of many sedges in Australia. It is quite common throughout South-western Victoria. It grows to about 1m tall and 1m across. It grows in a dense tuft and the stems are smooth, hollow and round.

This plant was especially important to the Gunditjmara people. It was used by the women to weave baskets and eel traps.



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Poonyart Grass Seed Head

It is well suited to weaving as it is split in a particular way. The reeds could be woven green or blackened in the fire for a tougher basket. The woven eel traps were especially important as eels were a major part of the traditional diet.

The art of basket weaving was almost lost by the Gunditjmara people. In recent years, Gunditjmara elders have begun teaching the younger women how to collect, split and weave Poonyart Grass into baskets and mats. Poonyart Grass was used to make the eel baskets "Gnarraban".

By sharing their traditional knowledge, the Gunditjmara people are helping to protect the Budj Bim landscape so future generations can be connected with their land.



Poonyart Grass

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