

Artwork by Thomas Day

Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project

Cultural Features of the Budj Bim Landscape Black Fish

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 River Blackfish (*Gadopsis marmoratus*) is a relatively small fish, common to the Glenelg Hopkins region and the Murray Darling Basin. They are found in waterways with plenty of instream cover such as wood and rock debris. In the south of their range they are usually less than 300 mm long and weigh around 1 kg. They can be found bigger in Southeast Victoria. They are somewhat territorial with a small 20 m home range. The female lays eggs inside a hollow log in the late spring or early summer. The male guards the eggs and larvae against predation until they disperse. Blackfish are ambush predators of other fish and insects.

The Gunditjmara people caught Blackfish in great numbers for eating. The extensive water management systems around Lake Condah helped them to catch good sized examples and corral smaller fish into specific ponds to grow to be caught later. Blackfish are described as being quite good eating with soft white flesh.

Blackfish are still a common species in Victoria. They are susceptible to siltation in small streams. Increased turbidity from common agricultural practices has limited their preferred habitat. Text

Contact for more Information

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