

Chapter Seven

Seeding

Conclusion



Change is a non-linear process that involves people in constructing new and sophisticated information. Simply applying rigid models or reproducing a single conceptual map is not the way to promote change. A reification and recipes approach to knowledge rarely leads to capturing of hearts and minds essential to engender change and innovation (Bamford 2006:27).

Learning is the process by which we change. (Alison McConnell Imbriotis 2013, pers. comm. December 8)

Previous page. Poster for WAVE 2013. Design by Deirdre Korobacz and produced by Joshua Rushton. (Shearwater archive)

The aim of this thesis is to offer ways to make a difference to the experience of learning.

Following forty years of my engagement with unfolding new and sustainable ways of learning, ways that seek to have no exclusive conditions, that offer inclusive opportunities to accommodate multiple pathways of learning, ways that meet the needs, capacities and engagement of all the peoples and all the individuals among all peoples, I believe that sensitivity to place that informs place conscious education has something important to contribute to contemporary educational practice.

The self-harming cutters, anorexics, bulimics, the junk food consuming obese, the computer gaming hermits, youth binge drinkers and those with suicidal propensities are what practicing Sydney psychologist Karla Cryer identifies as symptomatic of the psychological illnesses besetting young people that are characterising the crisis of the twenty first century

I see up to thirty of these young people every week and could see thirty more if time allowed (K Cryer 2014, pers. comm., May 17).

Driven by a globalised economy that measures growth and prosperity in terms of material wealth, education is being increasingly determined and controlled by centralised agendas. They seek to meet short-term commodity needs, rather than offering an education that attends to the cultivation of inner flexibility and creativity that would solve problems at another level of consciousness than that which produced the problems.

This thesis examines educational practices that relate to cultivating place consciousness that have been developed in Shearwater The Mullumbimby Steiner School and some of the other schools where I have worked. In doing so, and by way of

example, the thesis includes the journey of my learning experience. The stories I selected set out to illustrate the nature of my learning and its connectedness to place.

My initial research question was:

What can we learn about place conscious education when we look at the establishment of Shearwater the Mullumbimby Steiner School?

This question implicitly challenges conventional models and understandings of mainstream education.

Since commencing my research, the world population has continued to grow, as has the rapid industrial development of China and India with the accompanying increase of carbon emissions. With sophisticated advances in IT and the emergence of a generation of children who spend exponentially less time outdoors, I recast the question in the following way: How can we cultivate allegiance to place and educate children and adults in the twenty first century to be firstly at home in their bodies and secondly to become place makers who are mindful and responsible for the places they inhabit? The educational intention is to have the second ideal follow on seamlessly in a meaningful way from the first; because we cannot be place-makers until we are ourselves embodied beings. The virtual world is leading us outside of ourselves for increasing amounts of our time. Virtual experience is replacing embodied life experience.

Place and Language

Where we live (place) and how we communicate (language) are commonalities that we share as human beings. However alienated, everyone lives in a body, in a place and, unless impaired, everyone shares the capacity to communicate through the spoken or written word. Both have a strong influence in determining our identity and both reciprocally respond to change wrought by human interaction. When studied, the multifaceted nature of place and language invites multi-disciplinary interests, which adapt to multiple methodological approaches. Their taken-for-granted ubiquity makes

them susceptible to continuous interpretation, which can swing from being innocuously inconsequential to being profoundly meaningful.

Place and story became inextricably intertwined in the writing of the thesis. Their chameleon nature to sympathetically respond to my writing demanded that I continually make decisions about and take responsibility for its structure, form, shape and direction. To avoid amassing inconsequential detail on one hand and becoming profoundly reified on the other, I went in search of meaning. Through the reflective pathway of contemplative inquiry, I found an inner space from which considered on-going decision-making could proceed. From this inner perspective, I had to take into account the mutability of the self/selves, which was also in a continuing state of becoming.

With naive confidence, I commenced writing about place out of my own experience and the important part it plays in shaping identity. I proceeded to describe ways in which it could be formative in the education of children. In Chapter two *Place of Convergence The Establishment of Shearwater The Mullumbimby Steiner School as a Centre of Place-Conscious Education*, I examined the establishment of Shearwater to make visible to the reader both the place and the people involved. I had intended to give a coherent account of the place and the process of establishing a school employing traditional methods such as geographic descriptions, oral histories, published written material (books, articles). I then discovered that writing about place lent itself to telling stories: about people as place makers (including myself) and our relationship to places, and of place itself, its multi-layered past and its relationship to people. In the intersection of our lives and our stories, place allowed us to create a zone of social convergence where we shared ideals and created a vision.

In Chapter 3, *A Call to Mindful Action*, I traced the origins of Steiner Education in Europe, its context and its emergence in Australia. Building on the learning of the previous chapter, I sought to keep place at the centre of the writing. The voice of place wanted to have its story heard and the writing fell almost naturally into being arranged

by place. In so doing, I discovered that in following various themes of enquiry, there was an uncanny resonance between events and circumstances in Europe and Australia. Rather than following a melody of sequential tones, they harmonized like a musical chord. When I spoke of one place there was an echo of another time, and of other places.

In considering my European origins and those of Steiner Education, I was forced to confront the nature of colonisation. It was at this point in Chapter Four, *Knowledge of the World and Self-knowledge. How do I know the world and how do I learn? New ways of Learning* that I wanted to explore the epistemological question that has significant implications for how we educate.

What became evident to me was a clear echoing of four essential components in the establishment of Steiner Education in Europe and in Shearwater. These are: a crisis requiring ethical action; the struggle to allow the possibility of spirit; diaspora; and the creation of foundation schools that saw, as their critical work, the nurturing the teachers (before and with students) as creative people.

In Europe the Free Waldorf School was a response to the crises of Central European identity and the call for ethical action: in Australia the Lorien stream of Steiner schools was established as a response to the crisis of place (place blindness and the destructive ways of Western development); a crisis of identity (an increasing number of children at risk and a growing number of children with mental health issues); and also a call for ethical action to address these issues. During the early decades of the twentieth century, Steiner struggled with how to admit and communicate the possibility of Spirit in philosophy; while in Australia we struggle with the acknowledgment of the Indigenous understanding of country, in which spirit and place are indivisible.

The fourth mentioned essential component concerns the nurturing of the teachers as free creative agents. In the Free Waldorf School the teachers were encouraged to transform a philosophical idea into a living school and that became the impetus and model for the creation of other Steiner Schools. In Australia the nurturing of the teachers in the first of the Lorien stream of Steiner schools enabled those teachers to go out to other places and create new schools.

The third component is the fascinating nature of diaspora. It brings into question the morality associated with the consequences of colonisation, especially the erasure of existing life practices and culture. Can the seeds of inspiration and the ‘cuttings’ from cultural institutions, which might be seen as appropriations, be successfully transplanted to other continents? Can what is being brought as cultural diversity and new ways of learning to a place that is other, harmonise and adapt to a new environment? Does place enhance and transform a plant cultivated in another climate?

Intertwined with these questions is the story of my life and those of my parents who carried their culture and experience of place with them as post-war immigrants. I too have moved from one place of learning to another within Australia, and through my songlines I continue to trace the process of diaspora.

The early drafts of Chapter Five, *Looking After Place, Defining Place Conscious Education, Place Making*, took the form of a literature review, in which I sought to explore the concept of place. During the editing process of this work, I discovered that theorising and philosophical discourse lead to an erasure of place and a loss of immediacy in the text. I then decided to integrate the story of place making at Shearwater, which was initially written as a separate chapter. Place was important in the establishment the Free Waldorf School in Stuttgart, and the Lorien Novalis School where I commenced my journey as a teacher. As a contributor to the founding of Shearwater The Mullumbimby Steiner School, I was acutely aware that place and its relationship to education was fundamental to its development. The story of the school not only attempts to illuminate research into place making and place conscious

learning but also serves as a foundation of data from which further understandings of place making and place conscious learning can evolve. By integrating the two chapters I also sought to ignite the immediacy of place, demonstrating its essential role as an important element of the writing.

I struggled with trying to evoke the place itself, and to keep place in focus. It was only when I started to move away from a coherent account and started to insert my personal experience in place, photographs and plans, lyrical descriptions, journal entries, letting them jumble up and disrupt the account, that the sense of that particular place started to live more in the chapter. Our living connections to place are not linear but multidimensional, defying systematisation and typologising, folding time, space and breath into one other.

I discovered that the activity of establishing a school is a serious social undertaking, involving the conscious effort of place making by contributing place-makers. I found that even though there was a community of people with an intention to form a school the act of conscious place making only really commenced when the community made a commitment to a particular place, when the land was found and bought. The school had become embodied and it was at that point that the school started its journey as a place of intentional place making and place conscious learning.

In the process of focusing on education in place I discovered that within its deceptive simplicity lies a complex world of geographical, social and cultural interactions in which we as human beings participate. As such, place provides an immediacy of multiple learning opportunities for not only young people but also adolescents, teachers and adult learners. By immersing myself in the study of place making as education, it emerged that in the establishment of the Shearwater School, education was not simply the transference of information and knowledge. Education is, or can be, an endless opportunity to communicate in diverse, meaningful, and imponderable ways in what the theologian Martin Buber (1971) described as occurring in the I – Thou relationship, in the inner space between I and you.

I found that place provided a secure site, which stimulated and contributed to exchange. I discovered that working consciously with place and its silent ways demanded proactive, collaborative and creative responses that opened pathways for new ways of learning and provided opportunities for personal transformation.

In Chapter Six, *Welcome to Country, Place Conscious Learning Practices, Working Artistically in Place*, I examined the detail of place conscious learning practices at Shearwater that were integral to developing a successful place conscious education and developing students as place makers. I returned to examining the education content and practices of colonisation, not only materially (the introduction of cloven hooved animals - sheep and cattle – and pasture grasses and food crops for example) but also culturally. These are the religious, commercial and social practices that constitute the stories of other places that the European settlers brought with them.

I recounted how the new stories and educational practices were cultivated at Lorien Novalis in Sydney. By way of example, I related place stories and plays written and performed for and by the children. This was followed by an account of the origins and evolution of *WAVE* at Shearwater.

I went on to describe how place learning and learning in place (excursions, field trips) were cultivated at Lorien Novalis and developed at Shearwater and how this approach provided children with opportunities to cultivate a love for the world and with it a strong sense of self in place.

In this process, I found myself again amassing detail and creating a seamless narrative with my voice as the sole narrator. Once more place was slipping away. The living quality of the school was missing.

This problem made itself evident by considering the reader. How could I make space for their participation in the text as part of an ongoing collaborative narrative? As it was, the possibility of Spirit, as referred to by Steiner, or the presence of the full dimension of Country were not only missing but any possibility of them having their voice heard in the narrative was being prevented.

In order to disrupt the meta-narrative, I looked at the text and took a lesson from the students. Their joy came in the collaborative experience of putting together *WAVE*. The voice of the school, of place, the students, teachers, parents, those of the community and of informed researchers, needed to be heard. I experimented with the crafting of the writing, to find ways of capturing fleeting moments without holding them or allowing them to dominate the work. I used a variety of texts and voices: snippets of activities, images, storylines, practices from Lorient that had informed practices at Shearwater, narrative theory, descriptive accounts of living art events and places in which the practices of place making were learnt and through which our student place makers had momentarily inhabited and passed through.

Place can only be experienced in place. In order to convey place to others not in place, or dis-placed from that place and perhaps their own, the juxtaposition of the texts, narrative styles and voices created discontinuities and spaces in to which the reader is given the possibility of inserting him/herself to become a collaborative participant in the process of knowledge making/sharing. In the act of reading, in the act of imaging and thinking, the body in time and in place, together with the contextualized narratives find themselves living in the present, in place, from one moment to another in a conscious experience of becoming.

What emerges from the chapter was that the activity of place making is something innate and the children were engaged in place making from the outset. The school's learning program found an immediacy of application by the students greater than was initially expected. We discovered that place making is not something that needs to be manufactured, nor does it require theoretical preparation but thrives

through stimulating engagement, encouragement and positive modeling by teachers who are themselves intentional, active and conscious place makers.

What emerged from the writing was that I began to allow it to mirror the place making practices of the school, that the form of the writing reflected its content. Just as Shearwater allowed the possibility of spiritual experience for students and staff through engagement in artistic activities that were grounded in place, I sought to recreate the possibility of experiencing spirit and place in the silences, the gaps between the narratives, in the meeting of place and body and art.

Inserted as a folio between the chapters, is a personalised account of my relationship to place and learning. I have entitled this section as my *Songlines of Learning*. Their order is arranged to reflect the content and discourse of the chapters. Through this autobiographical approach, I acknowledge the way in which life experience and personal learning is subtly intertwined with vocation and the learning of others.

In the creation of this work, I have been encouraged to allow the process of writing to unfold and reveal strategies, approaches and methods that seek to create spaces for new ways of communicating, seeing and understanding. This included assembling a collection of metaphysical artefacts: auto ethnographic stories of place, people, events, conversations, philosophical and anthroposophical readings, theories, education and art practices. Despite writing from a particular time and space, in my current embodied state, that is bound to a particular temporal location, with a unique set of histories of Indo European origin and as an Australian male, I seek to embrace the personal limitations of my story. Through the transparency of its telling and sharing, I seek to enter more consciously into that state of being that involves "... inhabiting a universe of becoming ..." (Ben Aharon 2011: 3) and participate in reflexive contemporary discourse and action.

In writing this thesis, I have come to realise that no handbook or a list of instructions to ‘unpackage’ can ensure a successful implementation of place conscious education. As Bamford (2006:27) clearly articulates: ‘a reification and recipes approach to knowledge rarely leads to capturing of hearts and minds essential to engender change and innovation.’

You cannot capture an authentic place experience or an epiphanal moment in writing by simply appealing to the decontextualised mind; you can only experience it through the body, in non-writing. You therefore cannot commit them to a curriculum document. At best you can provide a multitude of diverse, conflicting, juxtaposed experiences that always keep place present and so allows the possibility of spirit.

It is creative place makers and place conscious educators who are willing to make their peripheral places a centre that will allow new ways of learning to emerge.

In the following table I have attempted to create a compass, a guide to study, activity and reflection that embraces a changing world that would inspire prospective place conscious educators and place makers.

TEACHER LEARNER

The teacher as life-long learner inhabiting a universe of becoming, taking into account the considerations listed below. A reflective thinker, self-motivated initiator and creative collaborator (Participatory Action Researcher) with collegial responsibility. This has implications for the development of learning content, curriculum and evolving teaching practises

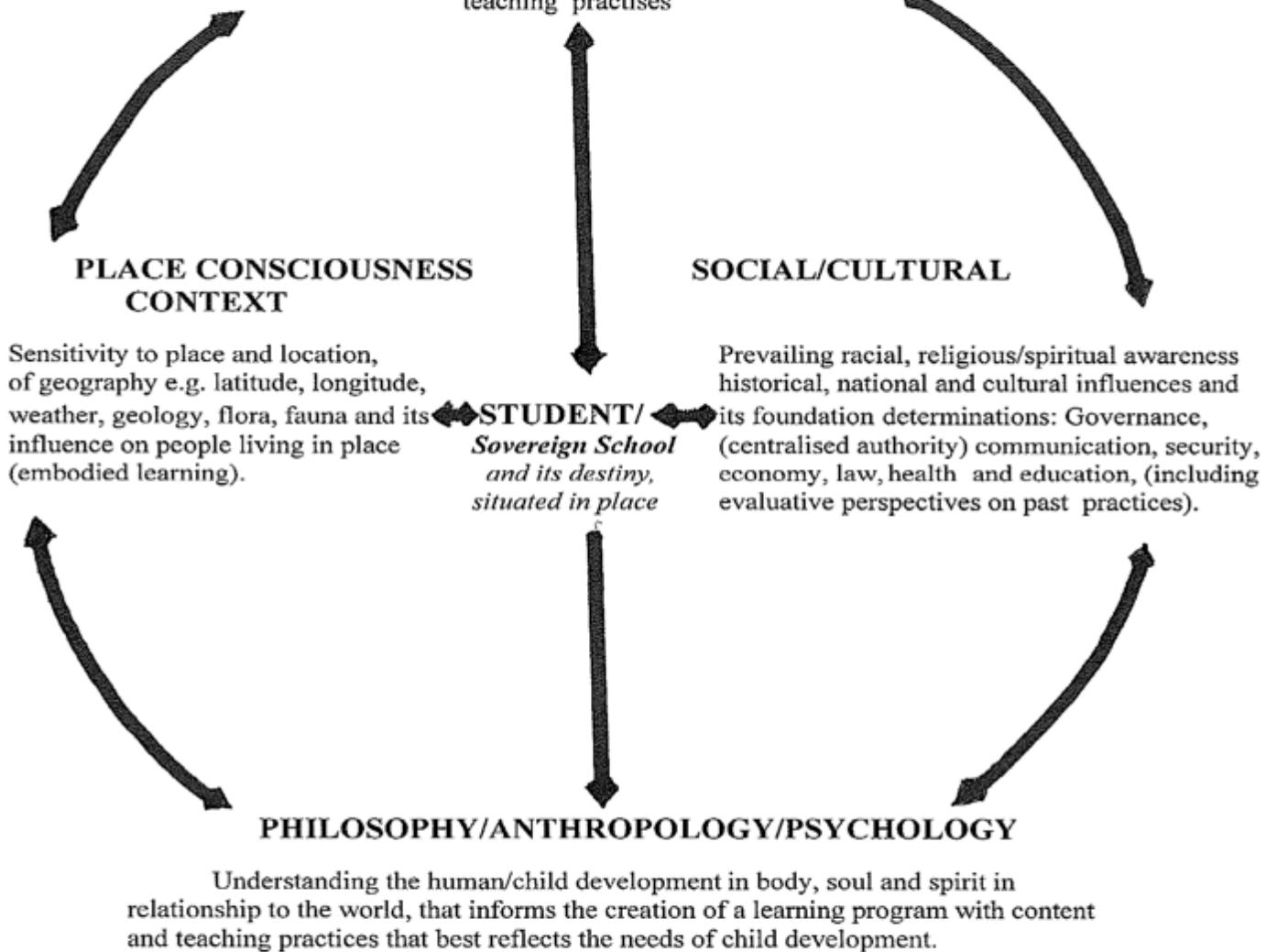


Table 5. A mandala of interrelated factors to be considered in developing schools that are place conscious, culturally aware and that allow the possibility of spiritual activity.

Afterword

2012 saw Shearwater resolve its staff leadership problems. After ‘... the disastrous failure of the Board’s ill-conceived policy of making outside appointments to fill the gap of leadership ...’ (R Tomlinson 2011, pers. comm. May 17), Greg Parkes was appointed as Head of School. (Ironically, as one of Greg’s referees, I was interviewed by the selection panel). Greg was one of the school’s foundation teachers and place makers and was well acquainted with its values and ethos. ‘In the face of an adversarial board he fought long and hard to uphold the independence of the College and its educational integrity’ (D Korobacz 2012, pers. comm. January 8). The school is recovering its equilibrium and beginning to thrive once more.

It is January 2014. I have been invited back to Shearwater as the keynote speaker for the year commencement teacher learning conference. I take leave to stroll through the buildings and grounds of Shearwater. The place has developed and grown: The rainforest regeneration program has yielded luxuriant growth and the wetlands area has extended deep into the western side of the property; a complex of aesthetically designed buildings weave through the landscape in a conversational way and a new generation of students and teachers have joined the school community. I find that I too have changed.

Shearwater continues to evolve as an immensely engaging place to gather, where new intersections of communication and networks of social relationships find exciting and potent opportunity to meet. In May Shearwater will host the Steiner Education Australia (SEA) national Governance Leadership and Management (GLaM) conference with international guest speakers. I am reminded of Doreen Massey’s (1994) understanding of place as open-ended and becoming, rather than something permanent and bounded.

APPENDIX 1

Morning Light

I wake up to the morning light,
See the Sun come shining bright,
Eagle soars on thermal heights,
The waves crash on the shore.
The waves crash on the shore.

From sweeping bay to river mouth,
Broken headland to the south,
Tumbling falls and peaks abound,
Dragon winds, a fearful raging roar,
Dragon winds, a fearful raging roar.

On stony ridge with fig tree tall,
In ferny glade, a waterfall.
Hear her song, the lyre-bird's call,
Dappled light on rainforest floor,
Dappled light on rainforest floor,

Down mountain face, through cloudy veil,
Falling mist on palm tree trail,
Through spray and mist, the curlew's wail,
Flooding creeks and swirling waters pour,
Flooding creeks and swirling waters pour.

I wake up to the morning light,
See the Sun come shining bright,
Eagle soars on thermal heights,
The waves crash on the shore.
The waves crash on the shore.

© (Korobacz 1993:1)

APPENDIX 2

FLORA

RAINFOREST FRUITS - EDIBLE (& INEDIBLE) TUBERS ETC.

January

Macadamia Nuts ripe

Silver Aspen Fruit ripen

Creek Sandpiper fig black, hairy skin, sweet, ripens January and June Blueberry Ash mass blue fruiting (inedible) January to March

February

Smooth Davidson's plum (only lives in Mullumbimby area) ripens Feb to April - Fruit purple, black skin hairy, pulp red, juicy.

Black Beans nuts, brown in large pod ripen Feb. to April, poisonous but sliced, ground, washed in running water several days and baked as bread by Koori people.

Firewheel Tree, whole tree covered in bright red wheel-like clusters (February to March) 2 trees, at southern tip of school (inedible)

March

Plum pine (one outside Class 2) blue-black ripens March to July.

Blue Lilly Pilly covered in blue berries, succulent pulp, March to August

Native Yam or Long Yam - important food item for Koori people, large underground tuber on edge of rainforest dug out March to August

April

Brush cherry (Red) ripens April to August

Bolwarra Fruit ripen (April to June)

Green Silver Aspen fruit ripen April to May

Hairy Davidson's plum ripen April to October fruit blue black, hairy skin

Lilly Pilly white to purple berry ripens April to July

Pink Foambark Tree - very common, fine fern-like leaves with candle like spikes of

red flowers covering top of tree

Native Teak - Star-shaped with five large boat-shaped brown woody capsules with blunt spikes falling April to Sept.

Sour Cherry Trees covered in white blossoms April to June

May

Finger limes fruiting (May to June) Fruit yellow elongated up to 20cms long

Walking Stick Palms fruiting (small red apple like)

Native Ginger Fruiting (blue berries)

June

Coolamon Tree Fruits (white & green) ripen June to August

White fig (Pink to white fruit with red spots) ripens June to August

Native Gardenia, fragrant white flowers June to November

July

Red Cedars begin new leaf growth, tree pink - red leaves

Native mulberry, white, sweet, juicy ripens July

August

Sweet Pittosporum flower white, fragrant August to October

Blue Quandong drop large numbers blue fruit on ground near creeks (August to October)

September

Red Bopple Nuts ripen (September to January)

Sour Cheery Trees covered in red berries (Sept to January)

Native Hibiscus yellow flowers Sept to February along coast

Blueberry Ash mass white flowering Sept to November

Sally Wattle or Blackwood, pale yellow heads cover tree Sept to January

Small Bolwarra first flowering plant on earth, cream highly perfumed September

October

Silky Oaks covered in orange-yellow flowers Oct to Nov.

Native Frangipani flowering yellow, fragrant.

Flame Tree - turns bright red as leaves fall and scarlet flowers open, October to January
Native Rosella Hibiscus - white flowers with red centre - October to February

Pink Hibiscus Howers rose-pink October to December

Blackbean mass flowering yellow and red October to November

November

Peanut tree bright red fruit with edible black seeds November to January

Beach and scented Acronychia ripen white to yellow fruit

Pink Kurrajong or Lace bark, large pink flowers November to January (One near oval on slope)

Bat's wing Coral tree - covered in orange red flowers

Weeping Lilly Pilly and Blue Lilly Pilly - abundant flowering white along creeks, November to January

Tree Waratah, whole tree covered in red waratah flowers Oct/Nov to Jan

December

Fairy's Paint Brush (Fragrant also known as Lace Flower and as Butterfly tree because many attracted), Brush-like white with red tips Dec. to March.

Coolamon Trees, old branches, covered in dense pink-red flowers December and January.

Sweet myrtle, almost extinct, one at Shearwater school, very fragrant Dec & Jan.

Ribeny (*Syzygium Luehmannii*) Red berry Dec. & Jan.

Kangaroo grass seeds ripe December to March ground up and baked into bread by Koori people.

APPENDIX 3
SEASONAL SYNOPSIS for MULLUMBIMBY AREA

FAUNA

January

Laughing Kookaburras laugh all year.

Grey breasted silver eyes arrive from Tasmania

Jabiru (or black necked stork) breeding

Sooty Owls start giving their whistling scream.

Brush Turkeys hatching from their egg mounds and can already fly and look after themselves, never know Mum *or* Dad.

Largest number of insects about.

Blue Tiger Butterflies migrate in millions down the coast from North Queensland.

Richmond River Bird-Wing Butterflies, *our* largest species flying and laying eggs on native Dutchman's pipe vine as rains arrive.

February

Dollarbirds (large blue-green birds that perch on telegraph wires fly back to northern Australia, loud yapping calls and swooping flight.

Sooty Owls start nesting, laying 2 eggs

Giant earthworms, 1 metre long emerge at night in rain

Common migrant butterfly migrations, millions flying south, Other common butterflies are Blue Triangles, Green Triangles, Macleay's swallow tails, four-bar sword tail, orchard swallowtail, common egg fly, wanderer, evening brown, common crow.

The largest most beautiful *of* the skippers, the Regent Skipper butterfly flying along rainforest creeks, very rare.

Rhinoceros Beetles active.

March

Top Knot Pigeons arrive in flocks to feed on fruiting Bangalow Palms

Glossy black cockatoos start nesting

Yellow tailed Black Cockatoos start nesting

Rainbow Bee Eaters leaving for northern Australia

Forest Kingfishers departing in March for Northern Australia.

All the wading birds on our mudflats fly back to the Arctic circle including Eastern curlew (the largest) also Whimbrels, Turnstones, Sandpipers, Tatler's, Snipe, Godwits, Knots, Stints, Green Shank.

Channel-Billed Cuckoos with loudest bird-call fly back to Indonesia.

Rufous Fantails live in Rainforest, leave for New Guinea.

Black-faced Monarch fly catchers leaving for Northern Australia.

Endangered Regent Honey Eater arrives from southern inland N.S.W.

Sea Turtle hatchlings appear

April

Short-tailed Shearwater - The most abundant Australian bird that has a tireless gliding flight just above the waves with one wingtip always shearing the water. Dark brown feathers and a wingspan of almost 1 metre. The entire population leaves Australian waters in April, flying to the North Pacific for their northern summer via New Zealand & Japan.

Ringtail possum babies (usually 2 to 3) being born.

Brushtail possum babies (1) born.

Pademelon Babies being born.

Little red Flying Fox babies being born

Dingo babies being born

Eastern Spinebill Honey Eaters arrive from South to spend Winter as does Grey Fantail

Sacred Kingfishers leave for Northern Australia.

Spine-tailed Swifts and Fork-tailed swifts leave for Himalayas and Siberia.

Adult eels migrating down creeks - rivers to lay eggs near New Caledonia.

May

Baby tiger quolls being born (up to 5)

Scaly-breasted lorikeets start nesting

Koels (males are black) cuckoos with very loud persistent "Coo-ee" calls leave for
New Guinea Spectacled Monarch flycatchers leaving for Northern Australia

Satin Bower Birds start re-building their bowers

Baby Sooty Owls giving loud demonic screams for food.

Powerful Owls begin courtship display and loud "whooo-hoo" calls and laying eggs

June

Last year's baby koalas leaving pouch after 7 months.

Hump back whales migrating north to breed

Top Knot Pigeons and White headed pigeon flocks arrive for the fruiting of camphor
laurel trees. Prince Albert's Lyrebirds calling, dancing & nesting

Sea Mullet congregating in huge schools near the coast before egg laying.

Bottle Nosed Dolphins previously chased the fish onto the beach so that the Koori
people could spear them and snare them with the dolphins.

July

Echidna chains, several (up to 6) males follow a female.

Wonga Pigeons start calling "Wong-Wong-Wong" for long periods and start nesting.

Galahs, sulphur-crested white cockatoos start nesting.

Tawny Frogmouths start calling with soft drumming "oom-oom-oom" calls and
also weird soft drumming laughter.

Marbled Frogmouths start giving explosive gobbling laughter and "Koo-Loo" calls in

rainforest along creeks.

Humpback Whales giving birth.

Fresh water prehistoric lungfish start pairing off and egg laying.

Giant Great White Sharks migrate up from Tasman Sea.

August

Echidna mothers laying one egg into pouch

Platypus mothers now laying eggs in nesting burrow

First hump back whales swimming south

Tiger Quoll babies now grown up and independent

Sugar Glider babies being born

Satin bower birds start displaying at their bowers

Rainbow lorikeets start nesting

Baby Black Cockatoos screaming after parents now

Channel-Billed Cuckoos arrive from New Guinea and Indonesia to lay their eggs in nests of hawks, magpies, crows, currawongs - has the loudest shouting and laughing calls of all our birds, huge beak, larger and flies faster than a crow, grey feathers.

Boo Book Owls start giving their "Mo-Poke" calls

September

Short-tailed Shearwater returns via the West Coast of America across the Pacific and down our coast in September. Nests in burrows on islands off Southern NSW, Southern Australia and Tasmania. Egg laying (1 large white egg) always laid between 19th November and 1st December. Incubation 55 days, chicks in nest 94 days. Feed on surface living marine life.

Last year's Echidna children now independent

Antechinus active

Tawny Frogmouths nesting

Brush Turkeys building nesting mounds

Butterflies begin to appear as do Cicadas

Brown Pigeons start breeding

Kookaburras nesting

King Parrots, Crimson Rosellas and Eastern Rosellas nesting

Rainbow Bee Eaters and Sacred Kingfishers arrive from Northern Australia

Koels arrive from New Guinea and have noisy "Coo-ee" calls.

Wading birds arrive from Siberia, Asia, Arctic Circle as follows:

Eastern Curlew (the largest), Whimbrels, Turnstones, Sandpipers, Tattlers, Snipe, Godwits, Knots, Stints, Green Shank.

Black Faced Monarch, Spectacled Monarch and White Eared Monarch Flycatchers arrive from Northern Australia

Fireflies look like dancing lights or fairies at dusk - forested areas

Cicadas start calling in large numbers as Summer arrives.

The following species are common here: Black Prince Cicadas, Flourey Bakers, Double Drummers, Green Grocer, Yellow Muindays, Razor-Grinders, Green Bottle Cicadas, Bladder Cicadas with green leaf wings and fat bodies have distinctive drumming calls at dusk.

Lady Bird Beetles appear now until April

Tree Goannas dig out holes in termite nests to lay their eggs

Blue Tongue Lizards give birth to live young

Land Mullets and Major Skinks - sun themselves Spring time to Summer therefore seen more in these times in the rainforest and adjacent wet sclerophyll. Both species give birth to live young. Land mulllets have up to 6 young spring/early summer.

October

Male Koalas giving their grunting territorial calls

Grey Headed Flying Foxes being born

Black Flying Foxes being born

Hump Back Whales common along coast swimming south

Paradise Rifle Birds of Paradise displaying and nesting

Fork-tailed swifts and spine tailed swifts arrive from Himalayas and Siberia, they never stop flying on their visits to this continent, sleep at high altitudes as they circle and land and go back to breed in Asia

Rufous Fantails, a rainforest beauty, arrives from New Guinea.

Dollarbirds arrive from Northern Australia and perch on wires

Grey-Breasted White Eyes (Silver Eyes) return to Tasmania

Endangered Regent Honey Eaters leave for southern inland NSW

Regent Bowerbirds building bowers (males) and displaying to females

Snakes, lizards now active, sunbaking, mating, laying eggs

Carpet Pythons males search out for females actively in springtime. The species is egg laying, producing 12-50 eggs in the Summer

Green Tree snakes, brown tree snakes

Venomous snakes all active

Long neck tortoise - Overland journeys are through the summer months (the wet season). Nesting takes place Spring/early Summer with clutches of up to 24 eggs (after 3-4 months hatchlings will appear)

Koori people taught us that when the silky oaks have their bright orange flowers in October to November the fresh water tortoises are fat.

November

Yellow bellied fluffy gliders being born

Little Red Flying Foxes forming large camps in trees

Grey Headed flying foxes forming large camps in trees

Topknot Pigeons arrive in flocks and feed on fruiting fig trees

Wompoo Fruit Pigeons calling "Wom-Poo" and nesting

Brolgas dancing display and nesting

Regent Bower Birds nesting

Boo Book owls nesting

Most birds now calling and nesting

Frogs calling and laying eggs, Forest Frogs, Striped March Frogs calling "Poc - Poc"

Great Barred Frogs "Wuk - Wuk"

Green Tree Frogs a loud grating call

Baby Eels (elvers) migrate from ocean up rivers and creeks

Sea Turtles come up onto the beaches to lay their eggs

December

Young Koalas now independent (last years babies)

Grey Kangaroo babies being born

Golden Christmas Beetles flying about and eating gum leaves and foliage of young trees - flying into houses. Occur mostly in sclerophyll forests

Satin Bower Birds nesting.

Powerful Owl - young now independent

White-Throated Nightjars giving their wonderful spooky laughing calls at night (lasting about 6 seconds) "Wow - Wow - Wow - Ho - Ho - Ho - Ho" and are nesting on the ground on dry eucalyptus forest ridges

Bush Stone Curlews nest on ground and have loud spooky wailing calls at night 'Kooo - Loooo'

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