

firesticks

Winba = Fire

Banbai Fire and Seasons Calendar Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area

“Winba = Fire in the Banbai language. The Echidna is kukra and we have also got the black grevillea”
- Kane Patterson.



JANUARY

WURUPIL = KOALA, WALE / WOLE = RAIN
IWAY = TURTLE, GOBERA = KOOKABURRA
WAGAN = CROW

Fruits of the **native raspberry** are a delicious snack. Insect populations explode and eucalypts are flowering, with many animals feeding. Many wildflowers are blooming. **Koalas** are breeding. Summer migratory birds visit, including the striated pardalote, **sacred kingfisher**, rufous whistler, satin flycatcher and grey fantail. **Bracken fern** roots were processed and eaten as a staple food, young leaves were rubbed onto skin to relieve insect bites. Bracken fern is abundant after fire. After the bushfires of 2019, the **Banbai rangers** worked hard to help their Country recover.

DECEMBER

AWKENDI / GUGINBIL = WATER

Beginning in spring, **moths** migrate from the plains to the mountains. They rest over summer in the mountains and then return to the plains to breed in autumn. In the old days, many Aboriginal people gathered at the Mother of Ducks Lagoon, Guyra, to celebrate a festival of the moth. Wattleridge is home to many species of orchid, some are rare or have only just been discovered by science. These include **leek**, **midge**, **donkey**, **beard** and **onion orchids**. **Black grevillea**, ladies' tresses, buttercup, fairy aprons, crinkle bush, blue bell, native violet, **vanilla lily**, chocolate lily, native geranium, **fringed lily**, creamy candles, glycine pea, pea shrub, blue fax lily, native daisy, native iris, bulbine lily and forest goodenia are flowering. Black grevillea is a threatened species found only around the Wattleridge region. Lance beardheath, spiny-headed mat-rush and blackberry are fruiting. The roots of the vanilla lily were eaten raw or roasted. Geranium, glycine pea and fringed lily roots were cooked and eaten. Lance beardheath fruits were eaten. The **native potato** is flowering. The roots of this orchid were roasted and eaten in some parts of Australia. Aboriginal people could find the tubers by digging down where they noticed bandicoots had been scratching. Drooping mistletoe on New England manna gums are flowering, attracting eastern spinebills and New Holland honeyeaters. **Freshwater crayfish** are active after releasing their young.

NOVEMBER

BURR, INDYARA = EEL
TUK = FROG, WALMA = FLYING FOX

Sun orchid, **pink kunzea**, lemon dovetail, common buttercup, yellow buttons, native geranium, slender stackhouse, slender teatree, bell fruited mallee and other plants are flowering. The spiny-headed mat-rush is seeding. Mat-rush leaves were used to weave baskets and **eel traps**. Tea tree was used as an antiseptic and broom. **Diurus orchid** tubers (like lemon dovetail) were an important food resource in south eastern Australia, in some areas they were 'everyday vegetables for Aboriginal people'. **New England tree frogs**, common eastern froglets, spotted grass frogs, striped marsh frogs, peron's tree frogs and eastern banjo frogs are calling and breeding. **Snow gums** are flowering, attracting honeyeaters. A lot of bats are around, catching insects, including the threatened **eastern false pipistrelle**. Australian magpies are teaching their young.

OCTOBER

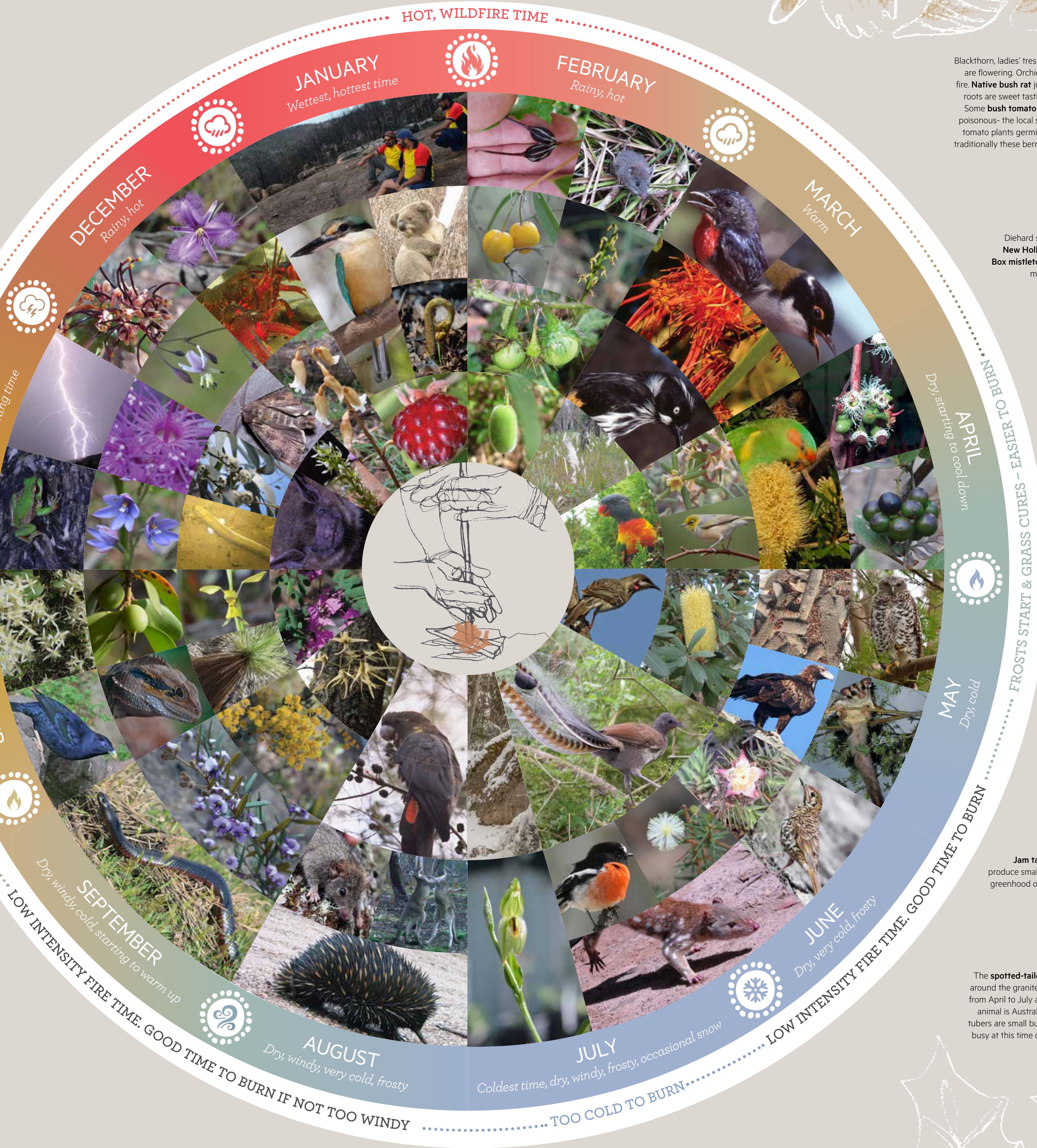
KUME = SLEEPY LIZARD,
GUNRUL = FRILLNECKED LIZARD, YURINDI = GOANNA

Geebung are fruiting. Native clematis, **lemon dovetail**, false sarsaparilla, leafy purple flag, wait-a-while vine, native violet, dusky kingfisher, Australian indigo, beard heath, grass tree and other plants are flowering. **Native clematis** leaves were crushed and inhaled to cure headache or cold. **Australian indigo** roots can be used to stun fish in waterholes. False sarsaparilla stems were used as rope or string for baskets. **Grass trees** were important for food and tools. The flower stalks were used as a base for fire drills and dry material used as tinder to make fire. Whistling tree frogs and eastern sign-bearing frogs are breeding. **Eastern water dragons** are active around Lizard Gully. **Satin bowerbirds** are active near the homestead.

SEPTEMBER

TOOLS: ILEMEN = WOODEN SHIELD, WA'GARA = TOMAHAWK, GANAY = DIGGING STICK, KUNNAI = YAMSTICK, PIKORA = SPEAR, TUA = BOOMERANG, MAWKAW = STONE AXE.

Bridal veil orchid is one of the first plants to flower as the weather starts to warm up. The beautiful purple flowers of the **hovea** shrub welcome warmer weather to the bush. Snakes are becoming active, including highland copperheads and **red-bellied black snakes**. Many **wattles** are flowering prolifically. Wattles were often indicator species which were used to let people know when to use fire, move camp or access resources. Wattles have many uses including gum, seeds (ground or eaten green), timber, bark, 'apples', grubs/insects, tools, flowers and medicine.



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AUGUST
KUKRA = ECHIDNA, WIR = BLACK COCKATOO, GINGGER = KANGAROO, MARGAN = WALLABY, NARANY = BRUSH TAILED WALLAROO, GROYMEN = MAGPIE
Kukra (echidna) are breeding - the males form lines to follow a female. Traditionally, echidnas were eaten. This culturally significant species features in rock art at Wattleridge. Day length is increasing which stimulates animals such as **brown antechinus** to start mating. Young black-cockatoos can be heard begging food from tree hollows. **Glossy black-cockatoos** are a threatened species with key habitat found at Wattleridge. She-oak cones are an important food source for them. **Eastern grey kangaroos** come in after a low intensity fire to eat the fresh green pick which made them easier to hunt. Australian magpies swooping. Brush-tailed rock-wallabies could live in the rocky areas of Wattleridge IPA. We haven't seen any yet but we have found scats (poo) that are likely to be those of the brush-tailed rock-wallaby. These wallabies are listed as threatened in both NSW and across Australia which means it is very important to look after them.

“We are trying to pass on our knowledge, hopefully it is just going to go on for years and generations to come, about the Banbai people and them being in this area”
- Lesley Patterson.



BANBAI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Thairburra una burranen ngaiya nyam ngenda dunga nguralami
The members of the Banbai Nation would like to welcome you to learn about our country. This land was walked upon, played upon & hunted upon by our ancestors. As an act of remembrance, honour and loyalty to our ancestors, we ask that you take a moment to remember them.
Our vision for our country is that it is self-sustaining for future generations where our children learn cultural values such as bush tucker and traditional practices and understand what healthy country means. Our country is a meeting place for family and community gatherings where knowledge is shared and what we see now, generations will see in the future. Healthy country, healthy people and healthy waterways will make our country self-sustaining.

BANBAI LANGUAGE

The Aboriginal language words included in this calendar are the language of the Banbai nation of northern NSW.
SUPPORT
The Banbai Fire and Seasons Calendar is supported by the Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area. The calendar is supported by the Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area, the University of New England, Rural Fire Service, Rural Fire Service Association & Northern Tablelands Local Land Services (through funding from the Australian Government National Landcare Program).
RESEARCH
This fire and seasons calendar is part of a PhD research project undertaken by Michelle McKemey at the University of New England, under the supervision of Dr Emile Ens, Dr Oliver Costello, Prof Nick Reed, Dr John Hunter & Dr Mal Ridges.

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DESIGN

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