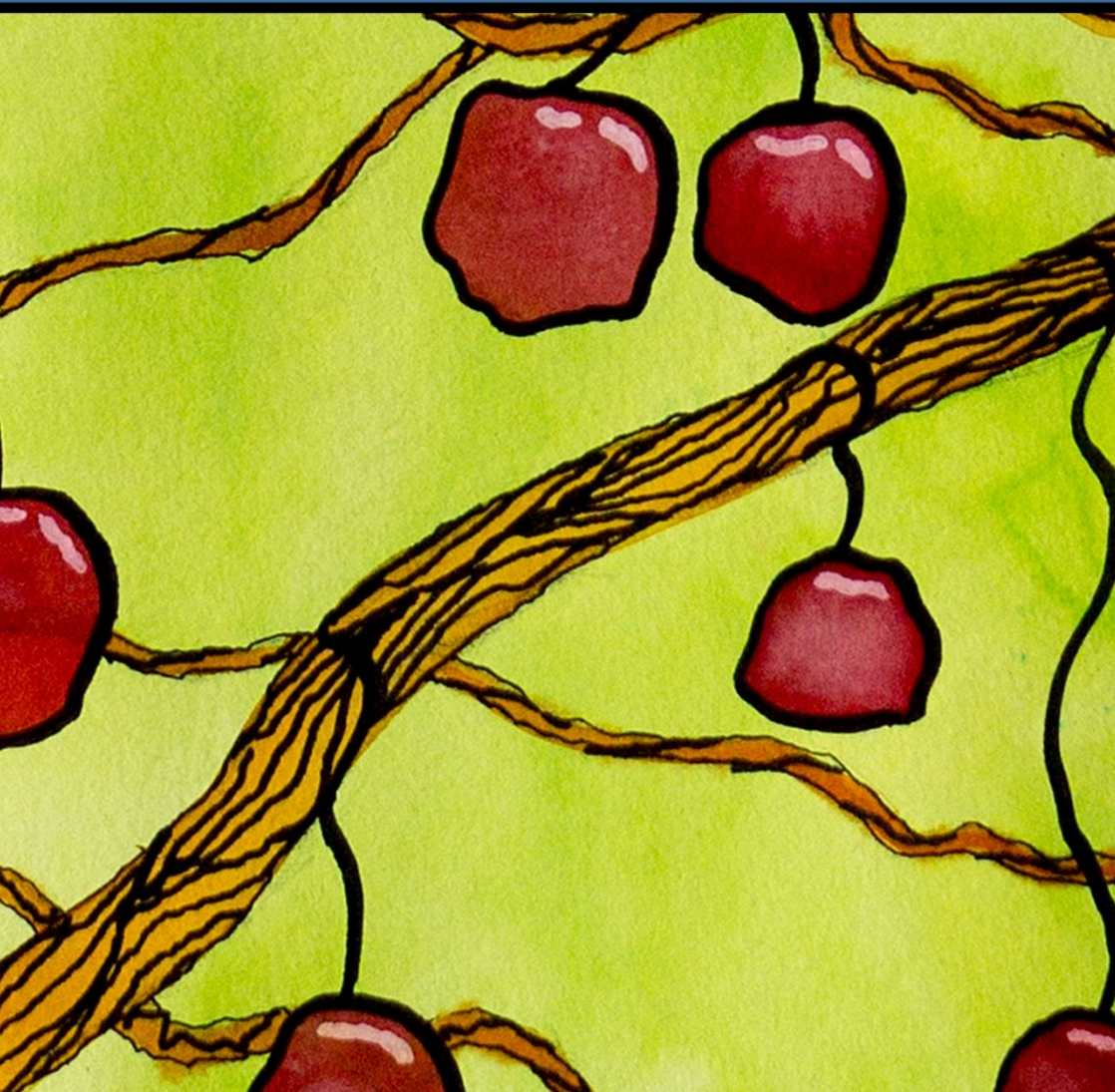




Six Seasons Journal





Take time to notice
all the plants and
animals around you

Draw the changes
in the weather

Write a poem about
the birds in the trees

Watch as nature
works her way
through the seasons

Learn about the
traditional Noongar
way of life

Feel a deeper connection
with this ancient land.

The City of Mandurah acknowledges and pays respect to the Bindjareb people, who are the Traditional Owners and First Peoples of this land. We pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the continuing contribution they make to the life of this City and this region.

The Six Seasons Journal is for you to record your thoughts, observations and responses as the seasons change around you.

Use this journal throughout the year to connect with the environment around your school or home. Observe the weather, the plants and animals and see how nature changes with the seasons.

You can study a section of bushland or just watch a single tree for 12 months. Count and identify the birds in your garden or see how many different animal tracks you can find.

Attach sketches and photos, press flowers between the pages and capture a year of our boodjar (country).

“The complexity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the oldest living culture on earth, shouldn’t be Australia’s secret history, but common knowledge that is shared and celebrated. It’s time to acknowledge this truth and pay homage to the people who cared for this land and for themselves for millennia before [European] settlement.”

<https://www.commonground.org.au/>



BIRAK

This is the season of bright daylight and warmth, with hot dry weather and easterly winds beginning. Mood-ga (Australian Christmas tree) is in full bloom and wattle seeds, *Dianella* berries and pigface fruits are ready to harvest.

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.



Approx. Dec - Jan





BOONAROO

The hottest time of the year with little or no rain. Local gum trees (marri, tuart) are flowering. Across millennia, this is a great time to be fishing and enjoying the coastal lifestyle.

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.

Approx. Feb - Mar



DJIRAN

Finally a break from the really hot weather, with cooler, dewy nights. Djiran means 'fat', traditionally the time to prepare for the coming winter, when the first rains of autumn washed the mullet down river to the Barragup Fish Trap.

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.



Approx. Apr - May



MOOKAROO

The coldest and wettest part of the year, it's time to dust off your raincoat and enjoy those puddles. This is the best time of year to plant natives – why not start your own local bush tucker garden?

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.



Approx. Jun - Jul



DJILBA

The transitional time between winter and spring with a mix of wet and warm days. Magpies start swooping as the parents protect their young and the wildflowers begin to bloom.

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.



Approx. Aug - Sep



KAMBARANG

This season heralds the beginning of warmer weather. Colour abounds with wildflowers in full bloom, *Banksia* flowers full of sweet nectar and quandongs ready to harvest.

Use these pages to record your own observations about the weather, plants and animal activity in this season.



Approx. Oct - Nov





Guide for Educators

The following pages contain suggestions for classroom activities for each of the six Noongar seasons. These tasks are designed for Kindy to Year 6 students, with teacher discretion to modify each to suit the group of children being taught.

Background information and links to additional resources for these activities is available in the free Educators Pack.

Educators Pack

The Six Seasons Educators Pack provides information about Mandurah's local ecology and traditional Noongar culture in relation to the six seasons. Additional activities and links to the Western Australian school curriculum are also included.

Register your contact details to hear about updates to this Pack and other Six Seasons Journal Project initiatives throughout the year.

To register or to download the free online version of this Journal and the Educators Pack, visit:

artspace.smandurah.com.au/Cultural-garden



BIRAK Activities

Safety and bushcraft

- Discuss how to stay safe in the bush during the holidays. Make a checklist of things to do before you leave home and what to take with you.
- Learn bushcraft skills to navigate, collect water and find shelter.

Controlled burning

- Explore the current and traditional methods of burning native vegetation. How and why was it done in the past by Noongar people?

Wattles (*Acacia*)

- Explore the diverse species of wattle in your area. Draw the pods and seeds from different types of local wattles. How can you identify each species by their fruits?
- Research the history of uses of wattle in Australia over time.

Snakes and bobtails

- Draw spirals on paper and cut to create a hanging display of snakes.
- Find out about these amazing creatures. Which species of snakes occur locally? How are they beneficial to nature and how can we live harmoniously with them?
- Create a safety poster about snakes and how to treat snake bite.



BOONAROO Activities

Warm colours

- Explore warm colours using paint and fingers to mix. Cut shapes from these paintings to create flames, red-eye wattle (*Acacia cyclops*) seeds and marri gum. Collect and incorporate natural materials (sticks, leaves, bark, stones) for lines, shapes and texture. Display together to discuss the natural indicators of this season.

Fish Anatomy

- Make fish drawings or prints, looking at details of the scales and skeleton. Explore and compare skeletons of fish and crabs, discuss internal and external skeletons.
- Research Aboriginal art depictions of animals.

Noongar Trading

- Discuss how Mandurah got its name and the different Noongar groups who came to trade. Divide pupils into 4 groups and allocate them each one of the Noongar trading groups. Each group can research then present information about what they would trade at a Mandjar.

Frogs

- Research the local species of frogs and their lifecycles.
- Build a frog pond and surround it with native plants to provide food and protection.



DJIRAN Activities

Mookaroo is coming!

- Use a rain gauge to measure increasing rainfall in this and coming seasons.
- Discuss the transition in weather that occurs now and the preparation Noongar people needed to make for the cooler months ahead. Compare to our modern life – how do the changing seasons affect what we do?

Barragup Fish Mungah

- Locate the Fish Mungah on a map. Track the Serpentine River from the hills to the ocean and explore the ecology of sea mullet.
- Work individually or in groups to research and make a diorama/model of the Barragup Fish Trap. Use natural and recycled materials.
- In the tradition of Noongar message sticks, use dried or paper leaves to create invitations to friends and family to attend a presentation of student Six Seasons work and serve fish-themed food.

Sheoak (*Casuarina*) trees

- Spend some time sitting under a sheoak (*Casuarina*) tree. Listen to the wind in the branches. Write a poem in response to this experience.
- Draw the structure of sheoak leaves and research the traditional Noongar uses of sheoaks.
- Paint the woody sheoak fruits in a range of colours to create a counting set, with each colour representing a different unit of measurement.



MOOKAROO Activities

Swans and other local waterbirds

- Explore the colours and patterns of local bird eggs. Play with various art techniques (straw blowing, sponging), edicol dye and ink to create egg paintings. Display your eggs in their natural habitat made from organic and recycled materials.
- Discuss the importance of protecting these nests from pets and feral animals.
- Research the ecology of swans. Why was this season a good time to catch swans? Discuss why it was so important to the long term survival of the Noongar people to catch and eat animals in an energy-efficient and sustainable way.

Natural adaptations

- How do emus help seed dispersal and germination?
- Research other adaptations in local plants, to help them survive in the Australian environment e.g. responses to fire, beach Spinifex seedheads spread by the wind and waves.

Mia-Mias

- Make a mia-mia (full scale or miniature). Compare and contrast this traditional Noongar structure to contemporary housing.

Fire

- Collect old *Banksia* cones and add red cellophane flames. Use these firesticks to explore traditional Noongar skills.
- Why was fire so important to the Noongar people?



DJILBA Activities

Magpies

- Research magpie behaviour. Find out what they eat. Why do they swoop in this season? Create a poster or presentation about your findings.

Crabs

- Move like a crab.
- Learn about the blue swimmer crab, their lifecycle and how to catch them. What are the local rules for crabbing and why do we have these rules?

Chootas (bags)

- Think about the contents of the Noongar women's chootas. Try to infer the purpose of each object.
- Survey the significant women in the lives of the pupils in the class. Ask them to list 20 things they would carry in a bag to feed and support the family. Compare and contrast the contents.

Edible Roots

- Many of the fruit and vegetables we buy in shops originally came from wild plants. Compare the edible roots of local native plants to root crops we eat today.
- What cultural practices did the Noongar people use to encourage sustainability and how does this compare to contemporary farming practices?



KAMBARANG Activities

***Banksia* flowers**

- Observe the individual flowers on a *Banksia* cone opening over time. How long does it take to fully open? Write a detailed description of this process and accompany with a sketch/watercolour painting.
- Write a procedure for safely collecting nectar without damaging the tree.
- Find out about the local insects, birds and animals that also feed on *Banksia* nectar. Can you see any signs of their presence? Draw or describe what you see.

Noongar bidi (paths)

- In the Educators Pack, Pindjarup Oral Historian Joe Walley describes a traditional Noongar bidi along the Swan Coastal Plain. On a map, try to follow this path – how much is still bushland? If the average walking speed is 5km/hr, how long would it take to walk this path and back again?
- Look for bidis around your school, where people have worn a track in the grass or bush from constant use. Where do they start and finish? Create a contemporary bidi map for your local area.

Mood-ga (*Nuytsia*, Australian Christmas tree)

- Research the cultural significance of the Mood-ga tree to the Noongar people.
- Why is it known as the Australian Christmas tree?
- How does this plant obtain its food?

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