

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:04

I feel really connected to the region I live in, around Deloraine.

00:00:07

I didn't grow up on Flinders Island, I didn't grow up on Cape Barren Island.

00:00:12

My connection to an area is here.

00:00:14

This is where I came and shot the kangaroos, this is where we came and hunted, we got the possum for the skins, and this is where I grew up with my grandfather and my Dad and all that showing us all the great stuff in the bushes, and I guess this is my patch of land now, and I class it as my little bit of home I suppose, yeah.

00:00:33

We've got the Quamby Bluff right here, we've got up above us, we've got what we call *kooparooka niara*, the non-Aboriginal community refer to that as Great Western Tiers.

00:00:41

I'm travelling around other parts of Australia, and they ask me where home is, I always say *kooparooka niara*, so yeah, I guess this is home for me.

00:00:52

Use of fire was a huge management tool that created those bush tucker areas that we could go and gather food in.

00:00:58

Your common ones was your kangaroos and wallabies, snakes, wombats, possums.

00:01:02

They were the easy bush tuckers, gathered every day, pretty quick.

00:01:06

It was the vegetable tucker foods that was probably the hardest to gather, knowing where those vegetable foods could be sought was very important, because you couldn't just live on the protein foods on their own, you had to have roughage, which was that vegetable matter, so gathering those was important.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Practice

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:02

As a young fella we grew up with the standard ones, we eat kangaroos and wallabies and rabbits and stuff like that growing up.

00:00:08

But to explore that further and have a look at the real cultural foods that we've been eating for 50,000 years or more, that was the exciting part, getting out in the bush, picking those berries and finding the grasses, and seeing how they really tasted.

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Reading about it is one thing, but actually to experience and taste those bush berries and see how the bush peppers change the flavour of your meat when you're cooking, I think that's the exciting part about it, that's the beauty about it.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Flavours

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:05

Bush tucker's quite bland in taste.

00:00:07

They're not like a produce that have got sugars and sweeteners and everything like that.

00:00:13

Our bush tuckers don't have any of that.

00:00:14

So quite often the taste is quite bland.

00:00:16

Here we have one of the berries.

00:00:17

These would be abundant and coming out stronger in the spring time.

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As you can see these bushes are just full of the red berries, and of course they can be collected and eaten.

00:00:29

But there is different textures and different flavours during the different berries, depending on the time of the year and the amount of water, and of course what we're getting here up in the middle of the highland area is certainly a different taste to the berries you'd be picking down at say the coast level.

00:00:42

The berries are really starting to come out.

00:00:45

Another couple of weeks and springs, all berries will be full on, it will be fantastic.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Culture

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:04

When you get back out and connect with that Country, you've got ochre on your body, sitting on the ground and eating the natural foods, and gathering those natural resources from Mother Earth, you appreciate the catch and its worth, and you appreciate Mother Earth for providing those foods and those resources.

00:00:22

It tells me what's there, it shows me what's there, and if I look after the bush and the land, it'll keep providing for me.

00:00:29

That's the big part of the culture, I think.

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And we've got to be sitting on that Country and we've got to be connecting to that Country to find out the true lessons and stories about our culture.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Seeds

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:00

This one's gone, the seed's gone, it's dried up and gone out of that one as you can see now, there's no seed left in it.

00:00:05

But all of a sudden the new growth coming on with spring just starting, so we're going to get a whole new growth of seeds coming all the way up, each of those husks will be full of seeds.

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Now what we'll do then is wait until they get really flush towards the middle, end of spring.

00:00:19

The women made woven baskets, the young ladies then will start collecting these with the elderly women each day, they were to be taken back, all the seeds would be taken back, stripped off those husks, laid out into the sun on a nice flat dry rock, really warm area, once those seeds dry then they'll start grinding them down to a powder, and that's what we'll be making our damper with.

00:00:40

It was just a flat, pita bread type of thing.

00:00:43

Once you'd made a ball out of it, raked the hot coals aside, whack the ball in, then you'd go back when you knew the time was up to be cooked.

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Now, what we had was a really black charcoaly outside crust.

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You'd break that off, and inside was nice, flush, beautiful soft bread.

00:00:56

But yeah, gathering it mate, would have been a big job I tell you, you wouldn't have done that in 10 minutes, you would have been wandering around the bush for hours.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Homemade

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:00

It's always been a tradition of my Mum's and myself and my family that every morning we get out of bed, we make a nice little damper.

00:00:07

It only takes me a half hour or so to throw a damper together and put it in the oven, and by the time I've sort of pottered around and get ready to go to work, my damper's cooked, and we have it for toast and through the day for lunch, and nibble on it.

00:00:19

It's not like a normal bread, it doesn't go stale on you.

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There might be a blackwood seed, or maybe the myrtle's adding seed, or the waratahs, depending on what sort of season it is, you crush those seeds up and add them to your damper as well.

00:00:32

And as my sister says, if I tell you the recipe, then I've got to spear you.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Trade

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:01

Quite a lot of them would have been living through here, so they would have burnt this quite regularly to keep it clear.

00:00:06

So that way the young ones could have run through and the elderly could have walked through here quite comfortably without tripping over things.

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And it's quite evident here, that they've had fires through here.

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This particular region, the Meander Valley, Mersey Valley, were a trade route.

00:00:19

What we mean by that was it was a passageway that was used by just about every group of Aboriginal people.

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You know, a southern nation, or a northern, western, they would traverse through this area, so it was used heavily.

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Bush foods that could be gathered and collected along the way was abundant through certain times of the year, knowing your seasons, and of course the trade route was quite important to be used for people accessing and ochre from around the area, also the cedar gums on the Central Plateau, and also those other bush medicines that were sought for was quite important.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Nomadic

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:03

You would be moving, because collecting the berries here for a week means you're going to have to start walking five kilometres to get another bunch of berries this morning.

00:00:10

So instead of doing that you move your camp five kilometres, and you'd be camped there in another area.

00:00:15

But look, there was an abundance of food.

00:00:18

And what better to be eating, fresh produce every day?

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So only gather enough that you need to get your food today.

00:00:23

There's no waste in that, and of course you're not being disrespectful to your environment and Mother Earth by wasting things, and the next day you can go out and collect a whole heap of brand new, fresh produce that you had made on the day, so why would you want to store it when you can just go and get it fresh every day?



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Musk

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:01

It's something that we didn't know much about, but it's the musk tree, and a lot of people refer to it as a smelly bush.

00:00:07

But traditional times the ladies used to see this as a perfume tree like it would make you smell pretty.

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And they would adorn themselves with it, and scent themselves up with the musk.

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Also too it's quite good to have some of this musk scattered around your rock shelter at night time, because it helps get rid of the mosquitoes and the flies as well.

00:00:26

So every plant's got a use, hasn't it?



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Pepper

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:01

This is quite a large bush pepper tree.

00:00:04

So it's a native pepper, it's naturally growing throughout Tasmania, the wilderness.

00:00:07

And of course it produces a real strong, quite a hot pepper.

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This time of year you can still use this tree, because if you just take the leaves themselves, pepper leaf then could be put underneath the skin of a kangaroo maybe.

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The flavour of the bush pepper is going right through the whole meat, so it's absolutely beautiful.

00:00:27

Now, if you want to wait until probably February, towards the end of February, then you can collect the actual bush pepper itself, the seed itself, try that out and put it in your pepper grinder at home.

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Also too, look, if you struggle a little bit and you need to get rid of some of those winter chills, this would actually help get our body temperature up.

00:00:45

For some reason it seems to build your immunity against some of those bugs and actually get through the colder winter months, it just keeps you pumped up a bit, yeah.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Bush Tucker → Guidance

Video Transcript

Hank Horton

00:00:01

Jessy's been with me for several years now, and I guess that's traditional.

00:00:06

We would have learned it traditionally by being on the land with our Elders, them verbally telling us the stories and telling us the Dreaming, the connection to that, and why this plant's important or that plant's important, or that animal.

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That's a very strong theme of our culture, and we must get back to that style of teaching.

00:00:23

Every opportunity that I get, I grab my grandson and he comes out with me on the bush, and he hopefully gets to learn those great skills.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Provider

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:05

This is the bottom end of Trumpeter Bay on Bruny Island.

00:00:09

This is one of the places on the coast here where our families could come through here, along this flat, and fish along here where we are today, so it's a significant area for our communities to be able to come here and fish here, and take food.

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You know, we'll have a look around, see what's there, and how many abs are there, and you know, we'll just get a feed to take home and share with the family tonight, hopefully, yeah.

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It's a very important job to provide the food for the family, and if you're still doing that, I think that's, you know, you still hold a certain amount of currency within your family by doing that.

00:00:47

With our food, it's alright talking about our food, but you've got to catch it, you've got to eat the food to play the role in it and provide it, that's the important role of any person that does this in the family.

00:01:06

You're providing the best food they can have.

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This is the food our family's been eating for 40 or 50,000 years, and I'm still doing it, I'm still doing what our ancestors done.

00:01:19

This is part of who you are, it's a part of who I am.

00:01:23

This is my job, and this is what I do.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Recollection

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:05

There's other things going on when you're catching fish, and you've got to watch what the rest of nature's doing around you.

00:00:12

I think they're important steps, knowing what the moon's doing, where the tide is, what seas have been in, what time of the year it is.

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This time of the year there should be some good big fish around up on top of the rocks for us, so it's understanding all those issues.

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But you're also competing with the professional fishermen, who fish this area.

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We try and use snorkels here as much as we can to keep as close to our way of fishing as possible.

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We wear wetsuits now, we don't use fat, so our culture has changed a bit over the years, just like everyone else's culture has changed.

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And if it doesn't change you can lose your culture.

00:00:58

The principle of just being able to snorkel and get the fish is you can only go out so far and catch so many.

00:01:05

So the fish that's out here in the deeper water keep coming in closer.

00:01:09

That principle, if you take all the fish out here, you've got none to come in.

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So that way, that Aboriginal way of catching the fish, people don't understand that, so they ignore it.

00:01:23

I learnt off my older brothers to catch a feed of fish.

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We used to go down at low tide and get the fish.

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And this is how it's evolved in my lifetime.

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We used to be able to walk out and get the fish just with a screwdriver years ago.

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You can no longer do that, you've now got to use a wetsuit.

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So in my lifetime fishing practices have changed, and if you don't - change, you don't get the fish.

00:01:44

So that's how our culture has changed in my lifetime.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Change

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:05

That's what he is.

00:00:08

About 137 mil.

00:00:11

Our families have fished here for thousands of years, so they know a lot about this area.

00:00:17

They would have just walked along the shore here, and they would have duck-dived here and just got out here and got the fish, because we know this area was fished a lot, because it's one of the few areas where they can get to the coast here, because the rest is a cliff that way and a cliff that way, so it's very hard to get round.

00:00:33

But we know there's a lot of rocks along here.

00:00:36

The abundance of food and how easy it was to catch, to live, to live from day to day, like I don't expect anyone to understand that today, but our people lived a pretty healthy and strong life, and ate good food.

00:00:49

It sounds alright.

00:00:50

It's a good way of living, and you know, they probably spent an hour a day catching food, and the rest was the day.

00:00:59

How good's that?

00:01:01

Pretty good.

00:01:02

I reckon.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Indicators

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:02

The foods that's here, there's the warrener, and he's pretty close to the shore, and he's up on the rocks usually, and he's around, he hangs - around with the abalone a bit.

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They're pretty good food, just throw them in the fire, and they cook and then you just pull them, you just pull them out.

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It looks like a bird's had a go at this one and broke the back out of it and pulled him out.

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But you eat a dozen of them, you're right for the day.

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There's a few reasons we know there's abalone here, because of the history of our families, but also you walk along the shore and you pick up the shells, so you know this is the food that's here.

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You have a look along the shore, and you see that green weed, that lettuce leaf that the abalone eat, so you know they're here.

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These are young fish and they're strong, and they're healthy.

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They're on good food, they're quick growing fish.

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When we clean them here on the shore, we leave them sitting up for the sea eagle out on the rock, so when they come in, they can have a feed of the guts that's left in there.

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It's a bit of a relationship you have with the bird, the bird gets a feed out of your feed, so everyone gets a feed.

00:01:01

This is a piece of a scallop shell, and we know by looking at the bottom of that shell that it's travelled a long way.

00:01:09

The shell's pretty thick, so it's come out of deep water, so that's, that shell could have travelled out of probably 100 foot of water.

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There is scallops out off here somewhere, but they're in deep water.

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So we know by the indicators what's here, and then when you get in the water you've got to look at how many fish is there as to how many you can take.

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You sort of try and come often, rather than take a big lot in one go, so that you're not overtaxing the fish, you're making sure that there's - enough there for when you come back next time.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Fish Stock

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:00

Our belief, the stocks of the fish had to be really high.

00:00:05

Wider societies believe that the fish can be down to 20%, so it's just the difference.

00:00:11

We worry that if any disease gets into the fish that you need a high lot of stocks to keep some.

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We've seen what happened to the scallops in the Channel when they've got disease in them in the Channel.

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We had a lot of scallops there, there's none there now.

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So you've got to allow to keep so many to keep the stocks of those, and you've got to understand that you need so much breeding stock to do that.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Fresh Water

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:04

Here's the fresh water running out of the bank and running into the sea.

00:00:08

And people don't understand how important the fresh water is to the ocean.

00:00:13

Like the fresh water is like the lungs to the ocean, it cleans the water and keeps the water healthy.

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For years people, all they wanted to do was dam the water and use it for something else, because they thought it was a waste, running into the ocean.

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But it's actually a very important part of the food in the water, how it breaks down.

00:00:31

So I don't think we should ever underestimate where the fresh water is.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Coastal Gathering → Swell

Video Transcript

Rodney Dillon

00:00:01

You can't compete with the ocean, it's a powerful thing.

00:00:05

You've got to work with it, not against it.

00:00:10

I reckon that's what society has never learnt to do.

00:00:12

The swell brings up all the food for the fish, all the fish that we eat; the warreners, the scallops, if you didn't have the swell moving, you don't move the food around in the water.

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So with these particles breaking off this, some of the things will eat the particles off this, and then something will eat them.

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It's the cycle; this is the beginning of the cycle.

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It's beautiful, and being fresh like that, that's only been broken off in the last couple of days, so the swell's been big here.

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You get to understand the environment as well, there's a whole lot in it, it's not just taking the food.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Everyday

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:03

My family come from the Dolly Dalrymple descendancies, and they have predominantly lived on the North West Coast for generations.

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My professional background has been nursing for many years, and from nursing I've gone into the university, and from the university I've continued on to do further studies with natural wilderness and environment.

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I just grew up very immersed in environmental knowledge, about having to fit in the landscape of everyday living as well.

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Eating the native food was something that we actually did because we had a low income, and it was before I guess it got trendy.

00:00:47

So we used to use a lot of the resources.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Native

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:01

I call it native food, because it's not just in bush.

00:00:05

Bush food kind of gives the context that it's separate from who we are, it kind of gives the context that it's far away in some other place.

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Whereas I use native food because it's what's here and what's now and what's today, and it's a whole ecology of the food, not just separate, located in the bush.

00:00:23

To reconnect with the food, what I've done is to actually eat native food only, and I've eaten native food for over a period of a month.

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I'd found that I reconnected with the food, I reconnected with Country, I understood the intricacies of food, I understood the landscape a lot better, I understood where food grows and what it requires, and I also understood the restrictions, and the sustainability, and the access, and how much we've lost of our native food.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Hall Point

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:02

So this is called Hall Point, it's where I've had a few family generations in this area.

00:00:09

It's now a popular overnight stay for caravans.

00:00:12

And here's the place where I resource a lot of native food as well.

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The area is small in itself, so on average one person would need two square kilometres to have a complete native food diet.

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So when you look at myself just being in that small area, that area is just enough for one or two people.

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So the sustainability's really important.

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So if people go and try native food, they have to keep that in mind.

00:00:42

So this is pigface, or cunagong, and this is a great resource for both food and medicine.

00:00:49

So if you get bitten by something, you break off a leaf, and you see it's got the juicy bit in there, you pulp it and rub it on the bite site, so it takes away the sting.

00:01:02

The whole plant's edible, but the sweetest part of the plant is when it's in season, it has a fruit on it, and the fruit is edible.

00:01:11

It has a unique taste.

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But it's full of little seeds and it's quite juicy, and fruity, and sweet.

00:01:18

If you want to taste it, you can, but consider it's also a food resource for a lot of animals, so just be sustainable, eat it with sustainability in mind.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Inspiration

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:02

In my lifetime I've seen so much disappear, just not in one big swoop, but little bits being taken away all the time, little bits of land, little bits of natural forest or coastal reserves, little bits being taken away.

00:00:18

The more I see taken away, I notice the less there is access to actually have food.

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It was disappearing.

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So I wanted to find out one, what is the food, and two, how to actually tell everyone about it.

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And I guess to wake up the consciousness of what is native food, to wake up the consciousness of what we're actually losing, and to look at the preservation for long-term cultural preservation as well as Tasmania and its self-preservation of native food.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Variety

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:01

There's an incredible abundance of coastal food here.

00:00:04

You've got the sheoak tree, which is usually found at most Aboriginal sites, as well as fresh water, so it's a good indication that this is a living site.

00:00:13

You've got your native geranium.

00:00:16

You've got your saltbushes.

00:00:20

Food resources which we won't eat, which are penguins, and also the fat was used as a resource as well.

00:00:26

You've got your samphire which is just down by my feet.

00:00:29

Not to mention the wide variety of seafood that you'd have available as well.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Preparing

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:01

By eating native food for a whole month, there was a lot of preparation that went into that.

00:00:06

So to start off with I had to get the permissions.

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And I say that tongue in cheek, because it's actually quite hard to realise how far we've gone from our own cultural rights to eating native foods.

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I also had to do a lot of preparation in myself.

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So I had to wean myself off sugar, and all non-natural products, because I knew that the taste palate would change.

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So we're so conditioned to introduced sugars into our diet, to go from a food that is pre-packaged and pre-cooked, to go to something that's quite native, the taste differences are quite severe, so the native food doesn't have a great taste, or is actually quite bland or sour to taste.

00:00:58

Other things I had to do was to look for my food resources, so I had to go and look around what landscape was around, what was available, coastal and bush, to find out what I could access and where and how, permissions to go on properties, I had to resource all that information.

00:01:18

And then to actually eat the native food.

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So there was a lot of preparation on finding out what the native food is, because even though there is an abundance of native food, there are food processes that you have to do prior to eating food.

00:01:34

So there's processes that you have to do to some foods to remove toxins, and to actually make it so it is edible, and there's seasons that you have to be aware of for types of food as well.

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So there was a lot of research into that knowledge of what you could and couldn't eat.

00:01:50

Once all that preparation work was done, it was just a matter of going out and sourcing the food.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Colonial

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:02

So this is what I would describe as a living site.

00:00:06

You're surrounded by an abundance of resources.

00:00:10

You've got fresh water.

00:00:12

You've got kangaroo apple, just right beside us.

00:00:15

You've got the blackwood trees, you've got the boobiallas, saltbush, you've got your watercress here.

00:00:22

It is an amazing resource of food.

00:00:24

The interesting part is though is you now have a lot of weeds that are creeping in, you've got your nasturtiums, your ivy, that's strangulating this area, and it will eventually take it over.

00:00:39

Again we've got the old Bass Highway running along beside us, and a few houses, and we've got a few businesses here as well.

00:00:47

So it's about finding a way to live with that, with all the other competing colonial hangovers that we still have, and that concept of dominating an area that we're in.

00:00:58

It's about finding a way of living with that as an Aboriginal person in a contemporary context.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Seaweed

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:02

Seaweed is a great resource of food, and it's particularly important for Tasmania, because our soil doesn't contain a lot of iodine.

00:00:12

And seaweed does, seaweed is incredibly rich in iodine.

00:00:15

So seaweed was a food resource that was eaten, and it's literally just a sea pod and crunch away.

00:00:22

If you can imagine here, you don't need to go, you don't need to travel anywhere.

00:00:27

We weren't nomadic.

00:00:29

Everything's here on site.

00:00:30

It's all such an abundance in such a small area.

00:00:34

Everything native here is edible.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Separation

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:02

The British people who came to Tasmania, they brought their own food, they brought introduced food.

00:00:08

They were comfortable with the food, they knew the food.

00:00:12

So they gave the Aboriginal people the foods, they gave them the sugars, the flours, the alcohol.

00:00:20

And from that Aboriginal people eventually got separated from their food.

00:00:26

Because of the association of Aboriginal people being beneath or below in status, the food was seen as a last resource.

00:00:36

It was seen as poor food because of the racist associations.

00:00:40

That's where the separation of our native food began, and because the colonial food was something that they were comfortable with and knew, to eat native food became forgotten.

00:00:56

So we know more about Aboriginal people, inclusion and culture and equality, and we've made changes for more Aboriginal inclusion and education.

00:01:07

But we've not done that with native food.

00:01:09

So there's such a disparity.

00:01:12

So Aboriginal equality has risen, but native food has always stayed the same.

00:01:18

And we've never re-investigated or re-ignited that as Tasmanian people.

The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Protected Area

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:05

This is a great site to show the coastal vegetation and the coastal resources.

00:00:13

So as far as food goes you've got an abundance of food, you've got a freshwater creek really close by, so you're going to have an incredible amount of food, you don't have to go a far distance to find anything.

00:00:25

You've got amazing resources from the ocean, you'd have abalone, crayfish, all sorts of amazing seafoods here.

00:00:33

You can probably see by all the animal tracks on the beach, so you'd have wallaby, there'd be penguins, other bird life, you can see lots of birds on the little island behind me, so it's an incredible food resource just all jampacked into one area, and it's literally just off the highway.



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The Orb → Living Cultures → Foods → Native Foods → Significance

Video Transcript

Sharon Dennis

00:00:03

Most of the people that travel that highway would go past here to and from work on a regular basis, and they would not even know this area, let alone the story behind this area.

00:00:13

So it's very much taken for granted, but in a way that's good, because it's made the area pristine.

00:00:21

As an Aboriginal person I'm very grounded in the connection to Country, in my place, I feel very responsible for it, I want to look after it, I want to know the stories behind it, I want to be able to share those stories, but I also want people to know what is here, so that they know what to look after.

00:00:38

So it's not that assumption of just taking for granted that this area's not significant, because it is.

00:00:46

All the coastal vegetation is particularly significant, and significant for Tasmania.

00:00:51

We're an island.



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