

VIII 2a

FOOD

Additional notes from various  
districts of W.A.

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## METHODS OF PROCURING GAME

Game is procured chiefly by the spear, barbed or stone-headed. Kangaroos are stalked, or they are hunted by the whole camp and driven into some enclosure. Where the banana gardens now are on Mounts Bay Road was a favourite cul-de-sac. Into this hollow the kangaroos were driven from the present King's Park and the adjoining district. Pits were also dug near the watering places of kangaroos. Emus were speared and the smaller animals were killed with dowak or kylee, or speared, as the opossum in their lairs. Fish were speared or caught in weirs made of saplings and boughs interlaced. Nets were never used in the South, but there is a species of wire grass much interwoven which the natives called ngoonjook and which was frequently utilized for net fishing. Fish were also driven in towards an enclosure fixed near the shores of an estuary. Ngowit and manga were the weir and enclosure.

Nalgondenjoonoo - trapping fish

Woohdongojoonoo - fishing by torchlight

Lammardumanjoonoo - laying traps across river, with bushes.

Fish are caught in the enclosures. Traps last a long time.

Wallagingoon jardal (river near Willie Ck.) posts with boughs between them. Jardal are posts.

Woornowoo - stocky and small

Yooloyocloo - small boughs.

Rarra - fish cooked in rock to keep.

Fishing

They make fishing nets of a kind of fibre obtained from a tree called kiya, growing in low flat country to a height of 20 feet.

Kangaroo Hunting

They make large fences, triangular, to catch kangaroos, and at the end of the fences, a small opening is left. Across this they place a net and then the women, men and children go into the bush and making a great noise, drive the warrangaroo towards the fences, and following these the animals at length come to the hole through which they try to pass, but are caught in the net and knocked on the head by the two waiting natives. The fence extends about half a mile on either side. The fences are called "Damar" thickets, because the animal hunted is the kangaroo they call damar.

They hunt cheetarra or Bungarra (the bungarra will be about 9' long - 5 natives will eat him) by stopping his mound holes. Several cheetarras live in one mound. Cornally says the bungarra, if hard pressed and near a waterhole will jump into the waterhole and sink right to the bottom, remaining there for some considerable time without coming to the surface. Cornally watched at one of the waterholes for over half an hour, but the cheetarra didn't come up during that time. The waterhole may be over six feet in depth.

Bardit's informationDivision of food

Bardit would give ngooljar bookal or dowel.

His sister-in-law got guong and kaat.

Kong got dowel or bookal sometimes.

Grandparents got gobbel, koort, fat and dowel sometimes.

Bardit got ngaaril and durditch.

Emu

Konk got guong and gobbul and fat.

Ngooljar got side of emu.

Bardit kept yaaaj and doondeen.

If the daaj is not divided, a fight ensues.

If a wej is killed it must be divided; brother will fight brother for wej.

When they killed a wej before they come back to the camp they shout out to their friends that they have been successful.

In parts of the Nor'West they take a feather out of the bird and show it.

METHODS OF FISHING, GASCOYNE

When going out to catch turtles at night the natives light fires on the coast to attract the turtles and the reptiles coming up towards the light are pounced upon and turned over by the waiting natives.

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Spearing was the usual method of fishing on the sea coast.

In the rivers they get a number of branches and boughs and put them across a shallow part of the river and these being knit together in a way are rolled over and over up the rivers. Some fish are caught in the meshes of the grass and branches and others are followed up towards the end of the pool and there caught.

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Another method is to form a kind of raft made of sticks about two yards square and covered with bark. (see note below, x.) Floating this on the top of the water with natives at each side and behind it the fish are driven up and in attempting to get back they jump on the raft. This method is used in deep pools where the boughs would be ineffective.

The fish in the pools are generally yellow tails and fresh water mullet.

x (A stick of dry wood is obtained about two yards long, then another of the same length is placed two yards away and these two are joined by three or four cross pieces which are fastened to the end sticks with pieces of bark. The raft is then covered with a piece of bark. The wood is called bo'-gal-ya - Sydney wattle.)

RAFTS AND FISHINGPage 13

The Gascoyne coast natives obtained a log of the Yeelbah tree, and getting astride on it they paddled with their hands. The log first got thoroughly dry and when it was dry the bark fell off. The wood then became very light and easily floated on the water. They paddled out to small islands and reefs to spear fish but they never ventured very far on these rafts. At Point Cloates they journeyed over to a small island about a mile from the shore to gather turtles' eggs. They collected the eggs in a yandee which they carried on their heads like the women. Sometimes they made

a kind of basket of a runner that grows on the Gascoyne, to carry the turtles' eggs. It was merely a temporary receptacle and was thrown away as soon as used. Thardoo-rad-jee, the land turtle.

The Champion Bay natives called the poison plant tchē. On the Gascoyne tche-gy is "shy" or "ashamed".

The poison plant which was used to stupefy the fish was sometimes taken from the roots of a species of spinifex, which was chopped up and thrown into small pools. Another poison plant was a kind of shrub bearing a small pod-like seed. The natives pounded this up and took it down in their yandees to the little pools, where it made the fish at once rise to the surface.

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Another method was to get into the pool and stir up the muddy waters, thereby causing the fish to rise to the surface, when they caught them and threw them out upon the bank.



Gascoyne district

NATIVE FOODS

Ka'la-ree, seeds of grasses or plants, all in season after rains.

Chin-te-bee " " " " " " "

Kool'the-way " " " " " " "

Ngalgoo or wad-dur-la, a small bulb

Thul-tha-wa (Eastern tribes) or boora (western tribes) - a long root of a species of runner, growing along the sides of gullies.

This long root is first roasted and then pounded and eaten. It tastes rather like a dry potato. It is somewhat similar to the warryne of the south, but the latter is soft and watery, while the boora is hard and dry.

Wan'-yoo, a seed from a species of tree.

Ngya-war-doo " " " "

Tham-ar -da, a fruit from a small species of shrub, which can be eaten raw or cooked. It is cooked between hot stones; it is a fruit and vegetable combined.

Kow-goo-la, a fruit about the size of a hen egg, growing on a runner that creeps up a tree or bush. This can also be eaten raw or cooked. It is cooked in the ashes.

Kool-yoo. The main food of many tribes. Like the warryng, it is about the size of a large potato, which it also resembles in flavour and appearance. It is cooked in the ashes.

The Irrawadjeree country is koolyoo country, also parts of Pedung, Warrawanga and Bootena, Chee-war-lee and Pinneegoora and Nooalla. It runs in through the Jakoordee and Thaawara in patches and one part of the Thadgardee tribe have a patch of koolyoo country, but it is found in most of the Eastern tribes. It is in season about September, but koolyoo will remain in the ground for 6 months. It is also a runner growing on a tree and bears a large white flower like a lily. A woman will obtain a thagga full of koolyoo from one runner.

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Nyiburda, a fruit of a runner which somewhat resembles a cucumber in appearance. These are also eaten raw, and before being eaten, they must be rolled in the sand, else they will make the natives' mouths sore, being covered all over with tiny prickles. They are about the size of a man's thumb. They are in season in the spring or after floods.

Nyoo'a, a plant which is picked and roasted in the ashes and which when cooked has a glutinous starchy taste. It is something similar in form to pig face, but is not salt; in season after rains.

Kar'ra-bad'ja, a fruit growing on a runner about the size of a Cape Gooseberry. When ripe it is yellow like the gooseberry. This fruit is also eaten raw; in season after rains.

Walgoo, the native peach or quandong.

These are the principal seeds.

The kalaree and kooltheway and chintekbee are ground between two stones. Water is sprinkled with <sup>it</sup> white grinding. A thagga is placed underneath and catches the seed as it is ground. It resembles thick porridge when finished. After it has been ground the woman makes a place in the hot ashes and pours the wet mess into the hole, covering it over with hot ashes. It is then baked somewhat like a damper. It can be eaten raw but when eaten raw it is not made so wet and when ground it is rolled into balls and eaten.

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Ngalgoo is simply cooked in the ashes without any preparation. Wanyoo or ngya wardoo can be eaten raw or cooked. When cooked they are pounded and sprinkled in a similar manner to the kalaree.

In all tribes these seeds are collected and stored for the dry season. They are either stored in a hollow tree or in caves or at the root of a tree, anywhere where the seeds will be safe from the birds and the weather. They have no fear of the things being stolen as the native in his savage state does not steal.

Collecting and preparing all the vegetable food is the work of the women. In the season of growth of these plants the women work as white people do in harvest time, the gathering of these seeds is the natives' harvest time and they have to work early and late, while the season lasts which is generally about three months.

In hunting kangaroo the natives usually left the camp singly or in twos or threes, except when they were surrounding the kangaroos.

The weearra, a species of kangaroo rat (large), is hunted as before described and the weearra driven into the enclosure. The fence is about 300 or 400 yards in width at the opening and narrows to a point, where two natives lie in wait one at each side, who kill the animal with their dowak as he struggles through the net. Cornally has seen over 20 of these animals killed. The damma thicket where the weearras or dammas feed is surrounded by the women and children who hunt them out with shouts and cries. The weearras are somewhat larger than a rock kangaroo, which is somewhat larger than a kangaroo rat.

Warrangarree, damma, weearra = a large species of kangaroo rat.

In catching emus, five or six natives built a mya close to the emus' watering place and there they lay in wait. In the old days the emus came in mobs of ten or twenty, and the natives sometimes killed five or six in this way. As soon as they killed the emus, they roasted them and taking away and eating the parts they fancied most, they left the rest, after putting them out of reach of the wild dogs, and returned to their camp. When they arrived they seated themselves in the camp and perhaps for ten minutes did not speak. Of course the women never asked them whether they had killed anything. Presently one of the natives would say, "We killed woorai (emus, a lot) at such and such a place." He spoke to no one, but at the words the women all rose and taking their thaggas were away in a moment. (P.35) When the food was brought into camp, the men who had killed it did not touch it. Some old man or someone in the camp divided it amongst the tribe. The women take the thaggas and place them before their husbands who take a bite out of each portion or perhaps only one portion and then leave it. Neither the women or children (except in the case of a very small child) will touch the food until the husband has satisfied himself. Whatever a woman cooks she must first give to her husband and he may eat all if he chooses.

The natives made a large hole and built a fire there and put stones in it until they became red hot. Then they took out the stones and having taken the wings, neck and intestines out of the emu they put the hot stones inside the bird and put it into the earth oven, covering it over with the ashes which were taken out of the hole. The neck, wings and intestines were cooked separately by them and eaten before they left the place. They might eat a whole emu before they left the place. The emu was left cooking for a couple of hours and then taken out and hidden from the dogs. Only one emu was cooked at the place of capture just the same as the emus and the native takes what he wants and leaves the rest as in the case of the emu, for his women to carry.

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Kangaroo pits are dug in the path the kangaroo takes to the water outside of the pits and still on the path fences are built and the kangaroo jumps the fence and the pit being at the other side, he goes into it. Five or six may be caught in this way. The kangaroo and the native too, always dig a hole beside the water and drink from the fresh soak, never from the pool. The kangaroos drink at night or in the early morning. A kangaroo will drink salt water as well as fresh.

When the kangaroos are caught, the natives cook and eat what portion they desire, & leave the remainder for their women to carry home.

Turkeys and smaller game caught by the natives are fastened in their mandabadgela and carried home by them.

The marrawa of the Gascoyne is a small grey animal with rabbit-like ears and with a white spot on its tail, somewhat resembling the "bilbee" of the Nor 'West. It feeds on bardees found in the taa-ma-lee tree, digging under and biting the roots until it reaches the bardees.

Nine or ten of these marrawas will live underground in a series of tunnels which they dig out sometimes for a length of fifty yards. Outside the entrance is a large mound consisting of the earth which the marrawa have tunnelled out. The tunnels are dug in various directions and apparently some tunnels are made which the marraws do not inhabit, as Cornally has frequently seen natives digging the full length of the tunnel only to find it empty. They then work in another direction and continue until the marrawa is found. They have often spent a whole day hunting for a marrawa.

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The northern natives believe that their hair will turn grey if they eat the head of the pee'-goor-da (kangaroo) which is the special food of the women.

The Champion Bay natives have a similar superstition with regard to the mopoke which is exclusively a woman's food. It may be mentioned that neither the head of the kangaroo, nor the mopoke, makes a delicate dish, and perhaps that is the reason the men abstain from it.

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Junga or nyooa, a species of pigweed.

Thamardee - a vegetable that is cooked between hot stones.

Waggaroo or walgoo - native peach.

## Questions asked of Jubyché and his answers.

173. Does Jubyché know Unguenadah (flowers from which honey is extracted?) P. 21

Mungytch - Banksia, boy-jarn, a small cup flower that holds honey, bungarra (red banksia that grows in swamps), Nyoombeed, flower of the red gum. Put these in water and make a sweet drink. Mungytch nganga, small banksia that grows in the swamps. P. 64

245. What does Jubyché call the custom of providing food for his father -in-law? P. 25

There is no special name.

246. Can Jubyché describe how he divided his food among his people? his father-in-law, etc.? Does he give to his wife's parents first? then his own? P. 26

He gave the legs to his wife's father and mother and uncles. The forequarter was kept for himself and his wife and his own father and mother. P. 74

247. When giving food did Jubyché place it on the ground before him, or hand it to the person? If the former, why? because of magic? P. 26

They each know which part to take of the kangaroo. The food is placed on the ground for Jubyché's mother-in-law, upon whom he must not look, nor must he speak to her. He "chucks" the food to his brothers and leaves it on the ground. They never pass it from hand to hand. Jubyché also states that they kissed their wives as well as their children. Kissing was in vogue before the whites came. P. 74

248. What would happen if they eat forbidden food? What food was forbidden them? and when?

If the boy eats bandicoot, which is forbidden food to him (also a big male rat), when he goes out kangaroo hunting a rat or a bandicoot will come out of the bush and the kangaroo seeing them runs away and won't let the boy catch him.

If the girls eat iguana, their babies will be bandy legged. P. 74

Bwyee nuts

Put them in the ground or in the water for a month or more until they are ripe and the outer skin gets soft. Some taste like pepper. Jubyche says that they are in the ground for two months. They must be ripe before they are eaten, When taken out of the ground they are put in the fire and cooked slightly. Great quantities are collected and buried or soaked, but both processes are not gone through, Jubyche states, either one or the other. If placed in water they are not allowed to remain so long. The Guildford tribes mostly pitted them.

Jubyche's description of Stalking a Kangaroo

Early morning time I go find an kangaroo, far away walk, long long way. By and by see um kangaroo, big fellow boomer, get um spear and miro ready, then I walk, walk (with spear poised), kangaroo eat em grass, eat em plenty. By and by he sit up and look round. He say, "Hullo, what's that? I no see im that one tree." I stop, no move, no eye, no leg, no foot, nothing move em, Kangaroo look and look and look. I move em spear little bit, quiet fellow, all the same wind blow em little fellow tree. I keep on move em move em - kangaroo he keeps on looking. "Oh," he say, "that one tree, wind blow em", look again little bit, then he feed. Then I walk and I walk quiet fellow, kangaroo look up again. I make em spear move all same before. He look, "that one nuther tree", he little bit scratch em, smell em wind, look round, I nothing move. (Kangaroo see em little fellow toe move.) "Ah," he say, "all right, tru." Then he eat grass again and I walk and I walk, I creep quiet quiet fellow, close to Jirr-r-r- got'im. He jump up, run away little bit but spear too long, ketch em in tree, nuther one spear get him all right, he tumble down. Big fellow, boomer.