

**BATHHURR
GURTHA NHALTJAN
DHU BATHAN NATHA**



**FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE
WORDLIST**



BATHURR GURTHA NHALTJAN DHU BATHAN NATHA

Food, Cooking and Fire Wordlist

Prepared by Melanie Wilkinson and Linda de Veer

Revisions by Fred Munyirinyir (2021).

Illustrations by Paul Biyarranydjarrwuy © 1982

First published in 1982.

Reprinted in 2021.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise without the written permission of the publisher.

Published by Shepherdson College, Literature Production Centre.
Galiwin'ku, Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia

Shepherdson College, PMB 74, Winnellie, NT 0822
www.lpc.elcho.org

**BATHURR
GURTHA
NHALTJAN
DHU BATHAN
ŲATHA**

FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE
WORDLIST



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Earlier books in this series:

Body parts and Products

Ganyu, Gäḍany and Guḍa

Ground work for part of the section "Food, Cooking and Fire" of this book comes from the work of Wanymulu 1 and Melanie Wilkinson in 1980. Over 1981/82 many people from Galiwin'ku have further contributed to the information in this booklet and I would like especially to mention Galpagalpa 1 and his wives, the Yolḡu teachers at school, Garrinḡa, Warrayak and other friends at the hospital and Gulipawuy.

If you think I have misunderstood any of the words, or if you think there are important words missing, etc., please let me know or write them down in the book itself. Thankyou.

L. de Veer

We Acknowledge the Aboriginal Arts Board Contribution



FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

ηatha **food** - general term

This word may be used in the specific sense of "carbohydrate foods": root foods, damper, bread, some nuts that can be made into breads, e.g. cycad nuts

borum **fruit** - general term

Describes both local and introduced (excluding cycad nuts)

gonyil
ηāηarr-yal
matha-bira'
merrpal'

meat - general term

Used for all animal meat, shellfish and eggs, and is associated with bringing a fresh taste to your mouth after eating yarns, root foods etc.

murnyan'
mudhunay'
dhäkəqətj
ηayanay'

plant-based food
- general term

Used for all plant food: root foods, breads, grains, fruits, etc.

djukurr'
djana'

fat, fats

ηanak
dhāηgu

flesh

meat as opposed to the fat



THE TERMS FOR THE VARIOUS ANIMAL GROUPS CAN ALSO REFER TO THE MEAT FROM THOSE ANIMALS:

Just as these general terms for classes of animals include the idea of their being eaten, those animals that cannot or are not eaten, may not be included in the group by some people. For example, those shellfish that are not eaten may not be called 'maypal' by some speakers; stingray that can't be eaten may be said to be " not 'maranydjalk' " etc.

buliki warrakan' wäyin	red meat - general term Used for beef, lamb and other european red meats
warrakan' wäyin	birds, goannas, lizards snakes, land mammals
maranydjalk reny wapiti wapidi	stingrays and sharks
miyapunu yimanhdhi mirrinyu	turtles, dugongs, whales porpoises
ṅarirri' guya buriritj	fish Does not include sharks, stingrays, shellfish.
maypal	shellfish, mangrove worms, crayfish, crabs, prawns.

mapu'
lanyarr
lawutji'

eggs - general term

Used for, chicken, turtle, goanna
eggs etc.

barawiyal

freshly laid eggs

rowuk

older eggs

when the baby is developing

gapu

water - general term

also colloquial for 'beer' 'petrol'

wiyika
weka

**juices, gravies, oils,
liquids**

Used for oils both edible and
non-edible and liquids
thicker than water and often
liquid by-products (of meats.,
fruit/nuts, of some plants)

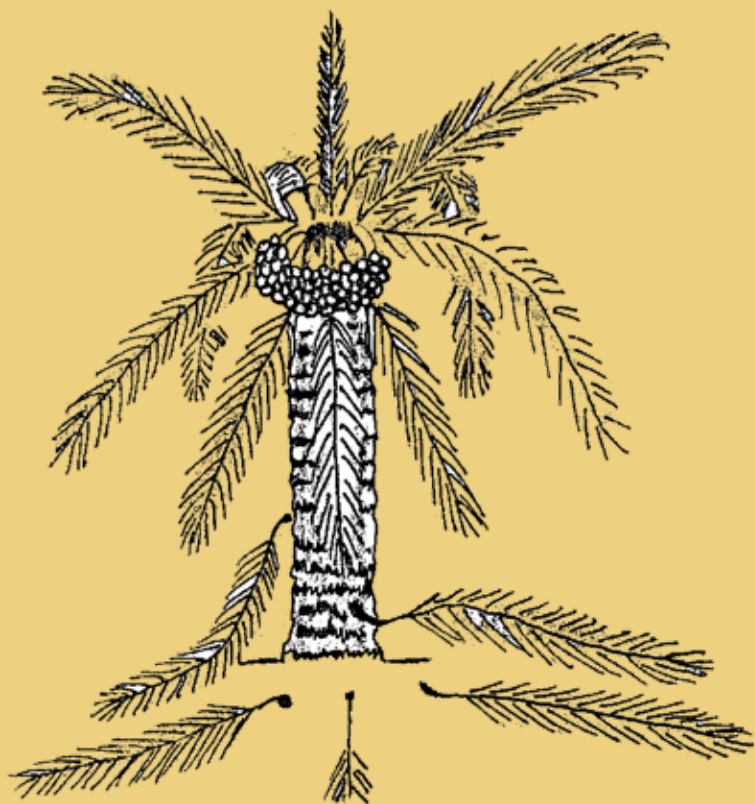
girrikirri

traditional tea

boiling hot water and part of the
stringybark tree mixed and
traditionally, drunk only by
women at specific times

lurrya'

**juice from the soaking
and pounding of the
cycad nuts**



FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

boluku' **flour**

meal made from yams etc

bi_layin **small loaf of bread**

made from cycad nuts

ḡurrumirr **longer loaf of bread**

made from cycad nuts wrapped in paper bark, and tied with string at the two ends; for ladies

Buku – _umbak **largest and squarest loaf of bread**

made from cycad nuts which, cannot be broken up by hand but must be sliced with a stone knife, can only be eaten by men.

ḡurruk **crushed cycad nuts**

when they have been pounded

rarrakrarrak **soaked cycad nuts**

before kneading and baking but after they have been soaked

djepi' **flour or oats mixture**

mixed with cold water and boiled up, stirring all the time

FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

gätuwata **hot flour mixture**

cooked with hot water

ḍobu'-ḍobu **dumplings**

guku **native sugar-bag,**
wuṇay' **wild honey**
guṇbala

includes the hive itself

guku/wuṇay'
munhatha' / garminyḍjarrk **sugar** - colloquial

dje'la **salt**

berratha' **rice**
lanyipi
lanyḍjarrga

maṇutji ṇatha **grains** - general term

birrali **corn**

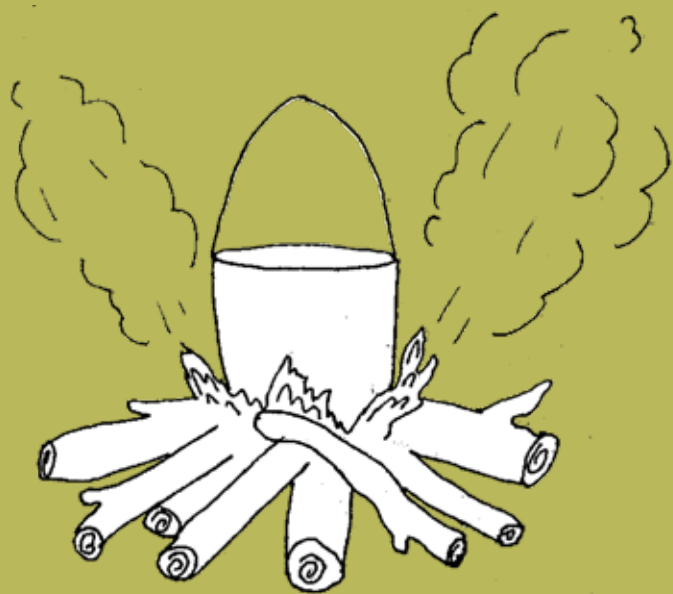
gopi **coffee**

sometimes used for both coffee
and tea

läli **lolly**

dämba' **damper**

sometimes used for flour



FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

bitata **potato**

bāwag

european potato
(bāwag although most people
understand this as a specific native
potato)

māṅgu **mango**

gatji

wun'thiṅ **banana**

galuku **coconut**

ṅupuyṅa

gurtha **fire, firewood, matches,**
wunakina **lighter**

ṅäṅarr – gurtha **flame**

matha – gurtha

ṅilṅilṅ' **spark**

merrku' **thin, light twigs used as**
 kindling

man'pili **paperbark**

dharaw'

dhanay'

when used for lighting fires, or for
torches

ḍuttji **firesticks**

FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

ṅawulu' **smoke, steam**
- general term

bälakuli **dense smoke
(translucent)**

that you can't see through - as from
a bush fire

gawulḡawul **dense smoke (opaque)**

that blocks out the sunlight

yiwarr **smoke that goes straight
up**

a thin line of smoke

ḡirrgi'
ḡirwi'
ṅurrṅgitj
gurrṅan'

black ashes, charcoal

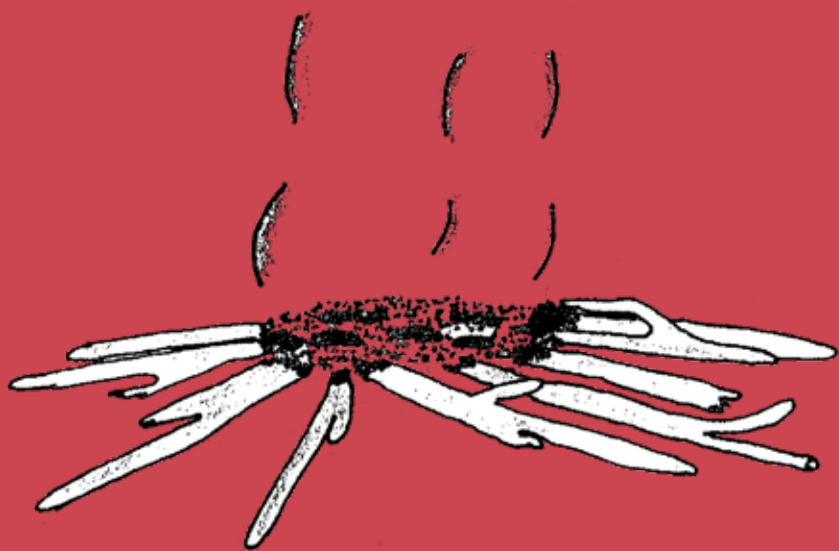
ganu'
muṅa
dhurrmurul'

hot sand, fine hot ash

sand under which you can place food
for baking, fireplace

gurtha wakinṅu **bush fire**

naturally occurring, started by itself



FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

gu_lay_nu **burning branch**

burning at one end only; the smouldering logs and branches left after a fire (branches of ranan' and gudirri are especially long burners and may burn for weeks)

gunguyu
wurr_nattja **burnt grass**

terrain after a fire

worrk **grass fire**

lit for a purpose – to clear away undergrowth for hunting, for looking for honey, (the smoke also tells you if the hive is still alive) or to drive out small animals/snakes into the open or into holes where they are trapped

dhur_rmurul'
rirriwul gurtha **fireplace**

remains of an old fire

gun_dirr/mudhandi
gun_da **cooking with hot stones,
antbed**

bar_n **heating with hot stones**

heating water by placing in the water itself - only for specific occasions

FOOD, COOKING AND FIRE

dhirrimul (Yirritja) **egg shaped white stone**

specifically used for crushing cycad nuts (although nowadays the stone may not be white)

rarrala **specific stone used for**
wil'wil' **sharpening**

lamarra **flat stone**
dhapanbal

used for pounding nuts





HONEY

guku'
wunay'
gunbala **native-bee hive, native honey**

dawurr
guku' **bee**

guku'djana'
djana'
djukurr'
wiyika / weka **honey**

ṅurru **beehive entrance**

which sticks out from the trunk of the tree

djini/djini
dhapi-wiyin' **very long beehive entrance**

protruding from the tree (perhaps typical of some species of bee - nyarrwa-nyarrwa)

gurak **inner entrance to hive**

“hallway” inside the tree to the hive

gonydjuj' **bees wax**

used as a weaker type of glue for fixing blades onto spears or knives, for putting feathers onto string bands

Some people may also use the word "galanyin", although the preferred meaning for this is the sap from the ironwood tree used for the same purpose.

HONEY

mu|mul
ṅatjali **honey mixed with pollen balls**

mapu' **yellow pollen balls**

gu|a' **non-edible, smaller round balls**

found in the hive, the faeces and rubbish

SPECIFIC BEES YIRRITJA

milnhiri **bee (mangrove)**
- specific term

its hive found very high up in the mangrove trees

niwuda
ṅiwuda **bee (stringybark)**
- specific term

gämu
ṅäṅa

its pollen balls are not so sweet and whose hive is large. The bee itself is fierce and has pale markings on the head. The hive is often found in the forks of branches of Stringybarks in valleys and stoney places

barṅgitj **bee (tree-stump)**
- specific term

hive may be found in the base of a tree, or in the ground or tree stumps

SPECIFIC BEES

DHUWA

goŋ-gurthamirr **bee (savage)**
yirrkamhar - specific term
yirrkamhayŋu

a specific savage bee that can be found half-way up the tree

yarrpany **bee (top of trees)**
- specific term

hive is found right at the top of trees, often in small branches and dead wood high up. The honey is thick and pollen balls sweet.

bayarrak **bee (father of 'yarrpany')**
ŋalkawar' - specific term
lirrawar'
yarrpany 2

sometimes said to be the father of 'yarrpany'. The hive is found lower down in the tree than 'yarrpany'.

nyarrwa-nyarrwa **bee (hive entrance sticks out from the tree)**
dhapi-wiyin' - specific term

is found higher up in the trees and whose hive has an entrance which sticks far out from the tree.

This last name probably refers to the type of entrance on the hive but can be extended to cover the bee itself. Some say that "nyarrwa-nyarrwa" is the same as "yarrpany 2"

WATER

gapu
ṅarkula

water - general term

used for fresh or salt water (also colloquial for 'petrol', 'alcohol')

gapu raypiny

fresh water

gapu moṅuk

salt water, the sea

galimiṅdirrk
dhäkay-murrkthuna

brackish water

still drinkable

mithuk
gädany

dew

muṽmuṽ

foam, froth, bubbles

maṅutji
mel
ganydjuṽa

well, soak

milminydjarrk

a spring

permanent source of fresh water

riyala

stream

permanent source of fresh water

djurryurr'
ṅarryala

water rivulet

temporary source of fresh water

WATER

mani **river, creek**
mayan
djarngulk can be salt or fresh water - channel
 e.g. between islands

dowu **wave**

djiwatjiwa **ripples on the water**

djatja **current**

mimarr **very strong current,
whirlpool,
dangerous undercurrent**

dhulmu gapu **deep water, sea**
gapu milkuminy

wulan **open sea, ocean**
bänhdharra

girrkirr **ocean**

far away from the mainland

bandany' gapu **shallow water, shallows**
bandany'

dhanan gapu (most common) **high tide**
bawitj

WATER

rakaṅay **very low tide**

e.g. at spring tide when the beach is very broad and it is a good time to look for oysters, etc.

more commonly said as:
"Gapu ṅurruthin" (The tide is in)
"Gapu raṅithin" (The tide is out)

rāṅ **high tide mark,
high water mark**

e.g. in a billabong

waltjaṅ **rain, storm**

(also used for counting years, wet season)

nyika **fine rain**

not drizzle but large 'slow' dops

djāri **rainbow**

gaṅaṅathala **flood-plain**

temporary fresh-water, where you can not drink the water

guḷun' **billabong, swamp**

temporary or permanent.
Fresh-water only





WATER

gärriyak **dry billabong**

place where reeds and waterlily leaves have dried out , the name for the leaves themselves

Also the name of the homeland for L̄iya-gawumirr people

ruyu **wake**

tracks in the water of animals, boats, fish etc

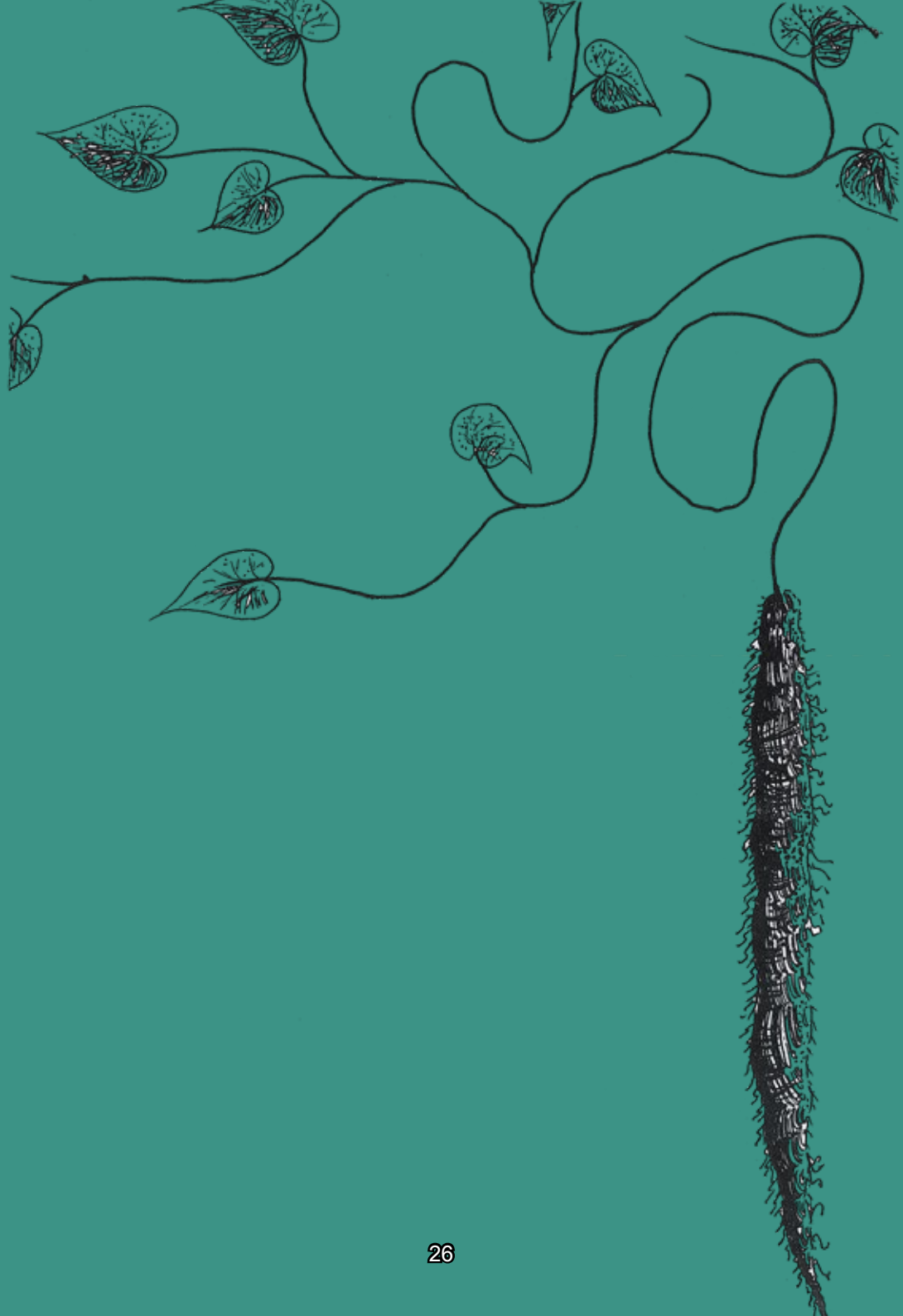
birirr **wake (dugong at night)**

garrakiyarr **crossing in a river or stream**

shallow part of the river

dhä (dhä-mani) **mouth of a river**
dhurrwara (dhurrwara-mani)

gupa (gupa-mani) **source of a river**



ROOT FOODS

ganguri **yam** - general term

Specific yam whose name may sometimes be used as a general label for all yams

ganguri
gulaka
gawatha **yam (native)** - specific term

Species of yam which is dhuwa,
Grows very long, can be eaten
Raw or cooked and which is found
In the 'retja' (monsoon forest)

Names used by speakers from
other regions for this yam:

bältji
baljunda
maṅmunda

ḍuyṅa
mawuka
ḍuyṅambi **yam (white flower)**
- specific term

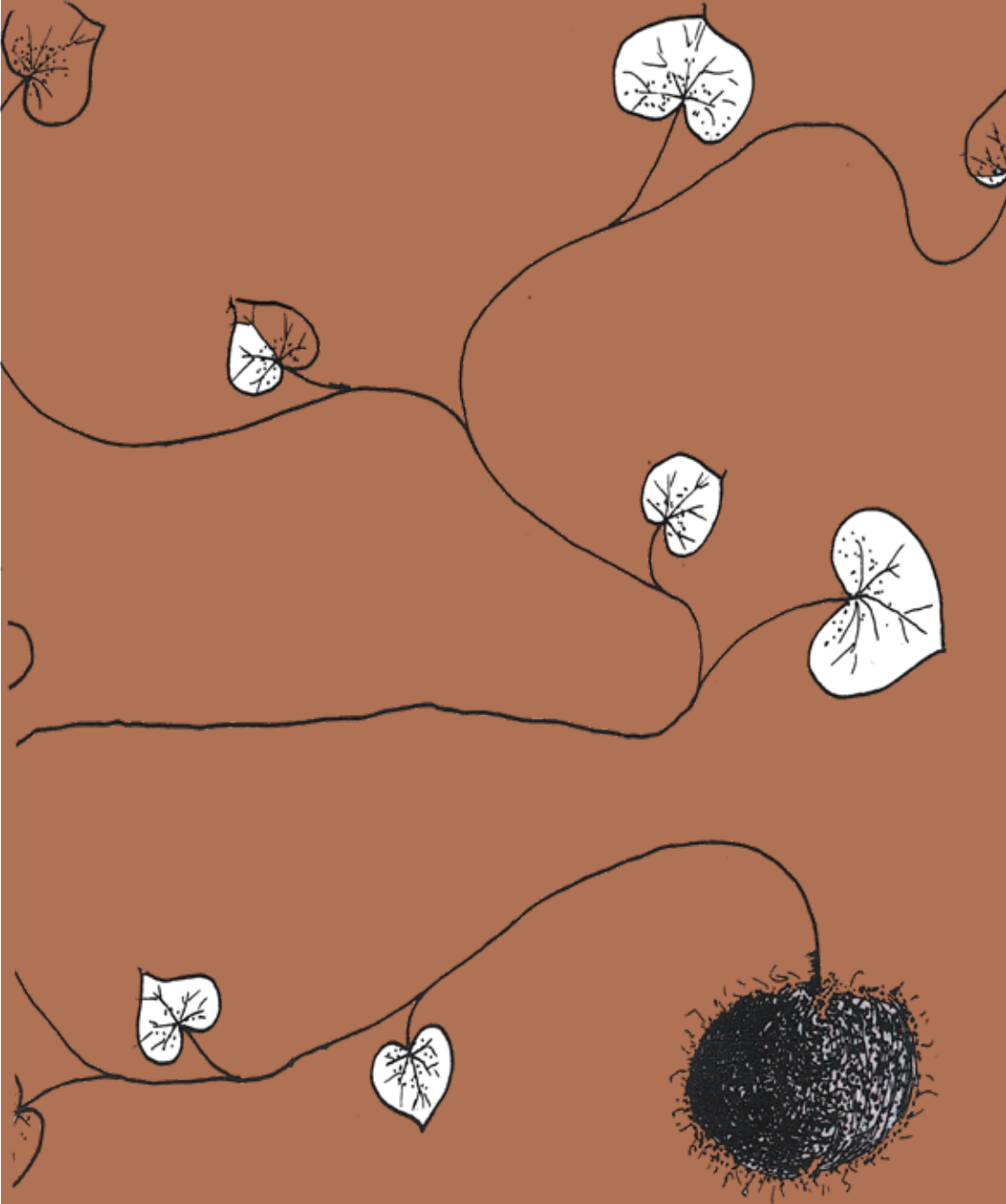
species of yam (Dhuwa), which has
a white flower, called 'baṅbalarri',
and long narrow leaves that often
twine around cycad palms (warraga)
in the open bush and which can be
eaten raw or cooked

wanydjarrpu **yam (red skin)**
- specific term

species of yam (Dhuwa) which has
needles on the stem of the plant and
has a red skin ("maṅgu'mirr") that
you peel off before eating. This yam
can be found in the open Bush-land
and must be cooked

ROOT FOODS

biyuṅu	yam (grassy leaves) - specific term
djalpinyṅu djalpiṅu	yam (boggy) - specific term species of yam found in boggy, fresh-water places (Yirritja)
ḍilkurrunṅu	yam (hairy) - specific term species of yam which is similar to “djalpinyṅu” but which is Dhuwa, larger and hairier
djirambulk	yam (special taste) - specific term species of yam which is long, goes deep into the ground and has a very special taste (Yirritja)
runḍi riny'tjanṅu yilpa (galṅa-yilpamirr)	yam (heart-shaped) - specific term species of yam - the root is small and heart - shaped and has a red skin, like "wanydj arrpu" which you must peel off before eating (Dhuwa)
djitama	yam (round) - specific term Species of round yam which must not be eaten raw but prepared very carefully by boiling, grating and leaving to soak in water over night



ROOT FOODS

galun **root food (nut-like)**
yokaḁa - specific term

specific roots foods (Dhuwa) that has
Fine roots coming from a larger
nut-like root

dharruma **root food**
ḡatjaḡaḁal **(succulent-type)**
wurrawu - specific term

specific root food, which is tiny
“succulent-type” creeper that you
can see on sand dunes (Yirritja)

dhum'paḡa **root food** - specific term

walaḡari **root food**
(cooked till black)
- specific term

species of edible root food with
a small round root which must
be cooked till black, pounded up
and eaten, but which becomes
chewy, like gum, so should not
be chewed too much

biḡḡiyaḡu **root food**
(longer walaḡari)
- specific term

root food which is similar to
“walaḡari” but longer





ROOT FOODS

muliyaṅarr **root food (sticky)**
- specific term

species of yam which is sticky or gooey, can be eaten raw or cooked, but has to be peeled first

ḍirru
nindan **root food**
(yellow when cooked)
burpa - specific term

a root food of the swamps and billabong. The plant is similar to a water-lily although the leaves are smaller. The root is round and must be cooked before eating. Cooked, it turns yellow

rākay **fresh water reed root**

edible root

dhatam
nyamnyam'
dhirraṅ **water-lily root**

with the large flower and large leaves which can be eaten raw, if cleaned and peeled.

The flower of this can also be eaten when young and this is often called "wāk wak". The stalk can also be eaten.

golunḷu **root food (black soil)**
- specific term

specific root food-a creeper found in the bush in "proper black soil country"

ROOT FOODS

yilangi **root food (sand dunes)**
- specific term

root food which you can find growing along sand dunes, with a red “string” or trailing stem along the ground with few or no leaves and a thin root species of yam which is sticky or gooey, can be eaten raw or cooked, but has to be peeled first

yukuwa **wild cow pea**

species of vine whose root is edible (Yirritja), can be found in the open bush (and around the mission) and has a flat purple flower

luwiya
ganaparra
bidila **root food**
(prepare carefully)
- specific term

species of vine (Dhuwa) with a root which is edible but only after preparing very carefully, cooking two or three times. Don't chew too much when eating it!

rowu
murukun'

goats foot creeper

species of the beach “creeper” with large purple flowers, the root of which can be eaten



ROOT FOODS

nhumurray
ŋuthumu

Polynesian arrowroot

The root is poisonous when raw, but can be eaten if you cook it well, leave it over night (Dhuwa)

gupuru

root food (peanut)

- specific term

small grass-like plant that has a peanut-sized round root you can eat and grows along the sand dunes

dharrangulk

kurrajong

root of the young red flowering kurrajong

garku
winikamu

ferns - general term

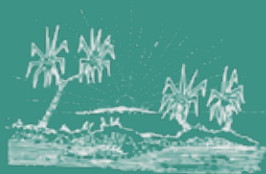
some of which are edible

ŋärriyal
wapulkuma
djamulu

root food - specific term

root food that grows near water, that looks like a grass. You must cook the root before eating; tastes like a nut





CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF LITERATURE PRODUCTION
BLOWN ISLAND