Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation
Curriculum Resource

Resource Title	Bush Medicine
Aboriginal Protocols	
Person	Aunty Julie McHale
Mob Group/Country	Aunty Julie is a Trawlwoolway woman of the Palawa nations.
Content Country	This resource was created on Djaara country of the Kulin nations.
Curriculum Area	• Science VC2S8H02
Year Levels	• 7 - 8, Secondary
Pedagogies	• The 8 Ways, Community Links
Ways of Assessing	
First Nations Education Academics that back your reasons	
Any other info / comments	

KALLARA



Tea Tree

(*Melaleuca alternifolia*)

There are many types of melaleuca and most were used in a similar fashion to the **anternifolia.**

Crushed tea-tree (or paper bark) leaves are applied as a paste to wounds as well as brewing it to a kind of tea for throat ailments. In the 1920s, scientific experiments proved that the tea-tree oil's antiseptic potency was far stronger than the commonly used antiseptic of the time. Since then, the oil has been used to treat everything from fungal infections of the toenails to acne.

Tea tree is also used for insect bites, often immediately soothing itching or stinging.

PATANGA



Eucalyptus or Gum Tree
(*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Perhaps the most well known bush remedy of all, eucalyptus oil can be inhaled for respiratory problems, throat and viral infections as well as for the common cold. Indigenous Australians used the gum itself to treat toothache and drunk it with water to treat diarrhoea. A similar mix can also be applied to the skin as a disinfectant.

Although numerous eucalypt species can be used to extract the powerful oil, it is the oil from the peppermint gum (Eucalyptus dives) which has been scientifically proven to be the most effective for clearing sinus and catarrh. Eucalyptus leaves can be infused for body pains and fevers and chills. Today the oil is used commercially in mouthwash, throat lozenges and cough suppressants.

Murunga



Billy goat plum/Kakadu plum
(*Terminalia ferdinandiana*)

The world's richest source of Vitamin C is found in this native fruit from the woodlands of the Northern Territory and Western Australia. The plum has 50 times the Vitamin C of oranges, and was a major source of food for tribes in the areas where it grows.

Due to its exceptional **anti-oxidant composition**, it is believed that Kakadu Plum could provide the most powerful Alzheimer's treatment to date. Celebrated for its medicinal properties and is a known **antibacterial**, **antifungal** and **antiviral** agent.

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Bulundari



Desert mushrooms

(*Pycnoporus sp.*)

Some Aboriginal people suck on the bright orange desert mushroom to cure a sore mouth or lips. It has been known to be a kind of natural teething ring, and is also useful for babies with oral thrush.

"They'd get the baby to chew on it when it was dry...and interestingly the substance you buy in the chemist shop has got the same chemicals in it."

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Varti-varka



Emu bush

(*Eremophila sp.*)

Eremophila species were regarded by many Indigenous groups as their "number one medicine".

Most Eremophila species have characteristic smells which were key to their selection by Indigenous healers. The leaves of the emu bush (*E. longifolia*) in particular were placed on hot embers for traditional therapeutic use. The resultant wet steamy smoke possibly inhibited bacterial or fungal pathogens, as well as providing a stimulus for milk let-down in women after childbirth.

The same smoking procedure was used to prepare surgical tools for circumcision.

It also had medicinal uses such as to treat colds and headaches, and was used to cleanse and strengthen new-born babies.[13]

Concoctions of emu bush leaves were used by Northern Territory Aboriginal tribes to wash sores and cuts; occasionally it was gargled. In the last decade, leaves from the plant were found to have the same strength as some established antibiotics. South Australian scientists want to use the plant for

sterilising implants, such as artificial hips.

Witjuti



Witchetty grub

(*Endoxyla leucomochla*)

Witchetty grubs, also a good source of bush tucker, are crushed into a paste, placed on burns and covered with a bandage to seal and soothe the skin by some people in Central Australia.

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Ngalyipi



Snake vine

(*Tinospora smilacina*)

Communities in Central Australia crush sections of the vine to treat headaches, rhumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory-related ailments. The sap and leaves are sometimes used to treat sores and wounds.

Girran-Girraa



Sandpaper Fig

(*Ficus opposita*)

A combination of two plants are used in northern coastal communities to relieve itching. The rough leaves of the sandpaper fig are crushed and soaked in water, the rubbed on the itch until it bled. The introduced stinking passion flower is then crushed and the paste is smeared over the itch. Sandpaper fig leaves have also been used to treat fungal skin infections such as ringworm, sometimes in combination with the milky sap.

The fruit is eaten.

Quenna



Kangaroo apple

(*Solanum laciniatum* and *Solanum aviculare*)

The fruit was used as a poultice on swollen joints. The plant contains a steroid which is important to the production of cortisone.

The red fruit are used for Women's business.

The kangaroo apple fruit is highly toxic until it is dark red (it is a member of the deadly nightshade family). Even then, you need to know what you are doing.

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Goat's foot

(*Ipomoea pes-caprae*)

For pain relief from sting ray and stone fish stings, mobs from northern Australia and parts of New South Wales, crushed and heated the leaves of the plant, then applied them directly to the skin. Goat's foot is common near sandy shorelines across Australia. It can be eaten but is poisonous if not prepared correctly.

Gukwonderuk



Old Man Weed/Sneeze Weed

(Centipedia cunninghamii)

Old Man Weed has a long history of traditional use by Australian Aboriginals for wounds, infections and inflammation. Traditional methods of use most commonly involve binding leaves of the plant directly to the forehead or other parts of the body, so that body heat may release the plants oils which are then absorbed into the skin. It may also be taken orally, sometimes mixing it with emu fat or boiling/soaking it in water to create a tea. In cases of oral ingestion, traditional medicinal authorities have cautioned to carefully regulate the dosage as the plant may be toxic if taken in large amounts.

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Gumby Gumby



Cattlebush or Native Apricot
(Pittosporum Phylliraeoides)

Hundreds of test cases have substantiated that Gumby Gumby is highly effective in treating many forms of cancer, from those in the initial stages of development right through to terminal situations. In many cases the regular taking of Gumby Gumby has been very supportive in the recovery from these cancers and ongoing treatment has kept recurrence of the disease at bay. Whilst tests to date have only been successful in some forms of cancer, there is no reason to believe that Gumby Gumby would not be extremely beneficial for all cancer sufferers. However, there is no claim from medical researchers yet, that Gumby Gumby is a proven alternative to current medical cancer treatments. It is however, without doubt, complimentary and beneficial. Research and tests have shown that the Gumby Gumbycontains Saponins, Tannins and Flavonoids. Saponins have many health benefits. Studies have illustrated the beneficial effects on blood cholesterol levels, cancer, bone health and stimulation of the immune system.Some of the activities attributed to flavonoids and tannin include: anti-allergic, anti-cancer, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-viral. In the past few years tannins have also been studied for their potential effectsagainst cancer through different mechanisms.

Gumby Gumby appears to have the following properties: anti-pruritic, anti-spasmodic, anti-viral and detoxification and galactagogue, and it has shown to improve circulation, blood pressure regulation and boosting of the immune system.

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