Kayap Keeleeng
(The First Lake)

The Meaning of the Story

The Turkey Bustard is constantly moving through the forest understorey scratching up leaves to reveal the insects and grubs it feeds on. It occasionally locates small waterholes that are often hidden from other high flying birds and larger animals.

The Brolga and Magpie Lark are always seen in or close to, a large body of water. Gunditjmara would follow the flight path of these birds which would in most cases lead to a wetland. The wetlands are a source for a wide variety of foods such as plants, insects, grubs, fish, reptiles, birds and their eggs. Wetlands were a very significant area for Aboriginal people.


Western Victorian Wetlands

Despite its dry climate, the western region also supported half of the wetland area and 65 percent of the naturally occurring wetlands in Victoria at the time of European settlement. Although many of these are short-lived, these wetlands explode into life after heavy rains. They are a vital part of the landscape, but their share of the land has been greatly reduced by drainage and conversion to farmland.

http://environmentvictoria.org.au/content/western-victoria

The Wetlands of South-West Victoria are a Vital Part of our Region’s Health

The Western District is covered in thousands of wetlands. Most are small, ephemeral (only wet some of the time) and on private, agricultural land. These wetlands are vitally important. They have unique plant diversity and are habitat to many birds, such as the brolga, as well as frogs, reptiles, fish, and insects.

Tyrendarra Indigenous Protected Area

This region is a traditional meeting place and camping area for the Gunditjmara people - the land is part of major Dreaming trails and an important ceremonial site. Tyrendarra is owned and managed by the Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of the Gunditjmara people.


Search for Information on other Western Victorian Wetlands

- Tower Hill
- Lake Yambuk
- Lake Condah
- Lake Pertobe
Protocols for Classroom Activities

Classroom activities must be facilitated by local Aboriginal people to whom the stories belong. These stories are the cultural heritage of the Gunditjimara and require local cultural knowledge and authority to articulate them accurately.

Aboriginal Studies is a requirement for all curriculums nationally and schools should incorporate these activities as part of their cultural education program. Engaging local Aboriginal people to facilitate these activities will in most cases require a payment (at least equivalent to casual teacher rates) for their services. Please see Aboriginal Community contact details below.

Local Aboriginal Community Contacts

Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation – Heywood

Gunditj Mirring Aboriginal Corporation – Heywood
T: 03 5527 1427 W: http://www.gunditjmirring.com/

Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative – Warrnambool
T: 03 5559 1234

Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation – Warrnambool
T: 0419 132 471 E: easternmaar@gmail.com

Kuyaang Maar Aboriginal Corporation – Warrnambool
T: 0407 391 888

Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly Citizens (DWEC) - Portland