



The Tarwin River walk

A self guided walking trail

**Including plants and
animals of significance to
the Kurnai community**

NOTE and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All QR codes are also hyperlinks that can be accessed by clicking on the image in the online document. Please let us know using the contact form on the web page if any codes or links are broken.

All images are taken in the park by volunteers except the crayfish on page 6 by Andrew Allen CC BY 4.0

The Friends of Mossvale Park are grateful for the help and guidance of Aunty Linda Mullett and Aunty Cheryl Drayton, Elders of the Kurnai people. This would not have been possible without their knowledge. We are privileged to be able to share it.

Warning!

The park is located on a flood plain and can get very wet and slippery.

There are steep slopes in the park and these can be very slippery due to fallen leaves, especially in winter.

The river banks can be steep and slippery so caution must be taken. The river is full of submerged branches and snags so entering the water is dangerous.

Do not wade through flood water at any time.

Wear appropriate footwear and use walking poles / sticks to help you if necessary.

Always watch for snakes in warmer weather. Do not approach or try to handle snakes. Turn the other way and retreat.

Be aware of wombat diggings and other uneven ground.

Be aware of falling branches, especially in windy or stormy weather

The Friends of Mossvale Park recognise Kurnai cultural authority and cultural intellectual property

Bratowoloong Knowledge, Technology and Caring for Country

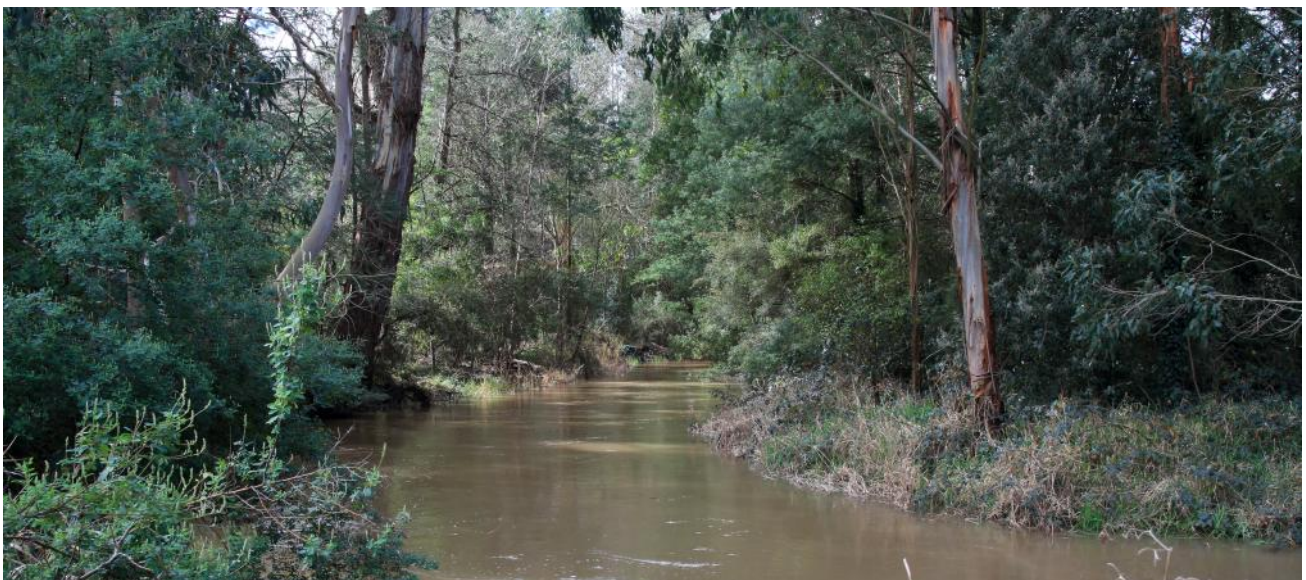
For the Bratowoloong people of the Kurnai, Country provided food, medicine and the natural materials needed for everyday life. Our people understood how to use these resources carefully and respectfully so that Country could continue to provide for future generations.

Plants and smaller foods were gathered according to the seasons and what was available. Men hunted animals such as kangaroo and wombat to provide food for family and clan. Only what was needed was taken, and food was shared. This helped ensure that plants could grow again, animals could continue to breed and there would be food for the generations to come.

Bratowoloong people also developed technologies from the materials provided by Country. Bark and timber were used for canoes and other implements, while plants and fibres were used to make baskets, string, mats and fishing equipment. Coolamons and other containers were made to carry food and water, and digging sticks, shields and other tools supported gathering, hunting and everyday life.

These technologies were part of caring for the Country. They allowed our people to gather, hunt, fish, travel and carry what was needed while using the natural resources of Country with knowledge and respect. Nothing was wasted, and knowledge about when to gather, what to take and what to leave was passed from one generation to the next.

For Bratowoloong people, caring for Country meant making sure that Country could continue to care for our people.



Let's explore the plants and animals on the banks of the Tarwin River in the park.

The riverbanks of the Tarwin River that surrounds Mossvale Park have been substantially restored using plants that would have naturally grown in the riverine environment.

When work was done to restore the riverbanks in 2009 to 2011, weedy suckers of poplar and elm and tree weeds including cherry plum were removed. Rampant blackberry and other noxious weeds were controlled. Trees, including many London plane trees, golden poplars and a few original eucalypts were left in place.

Many of the endemic plants that were planted and recovered after the work were used by the traditional owners—the Bratowoloong people of the Kurnai nation. For tens of thousands of years Aboriginal people have taken care of country. This trail showcases indigenous flora that was used by the Kurnai for food, utility and medicine.

Strzelecki gum

Manna gum



2009 work to clear the banks of weeds and suckers next to the Gould shelter.

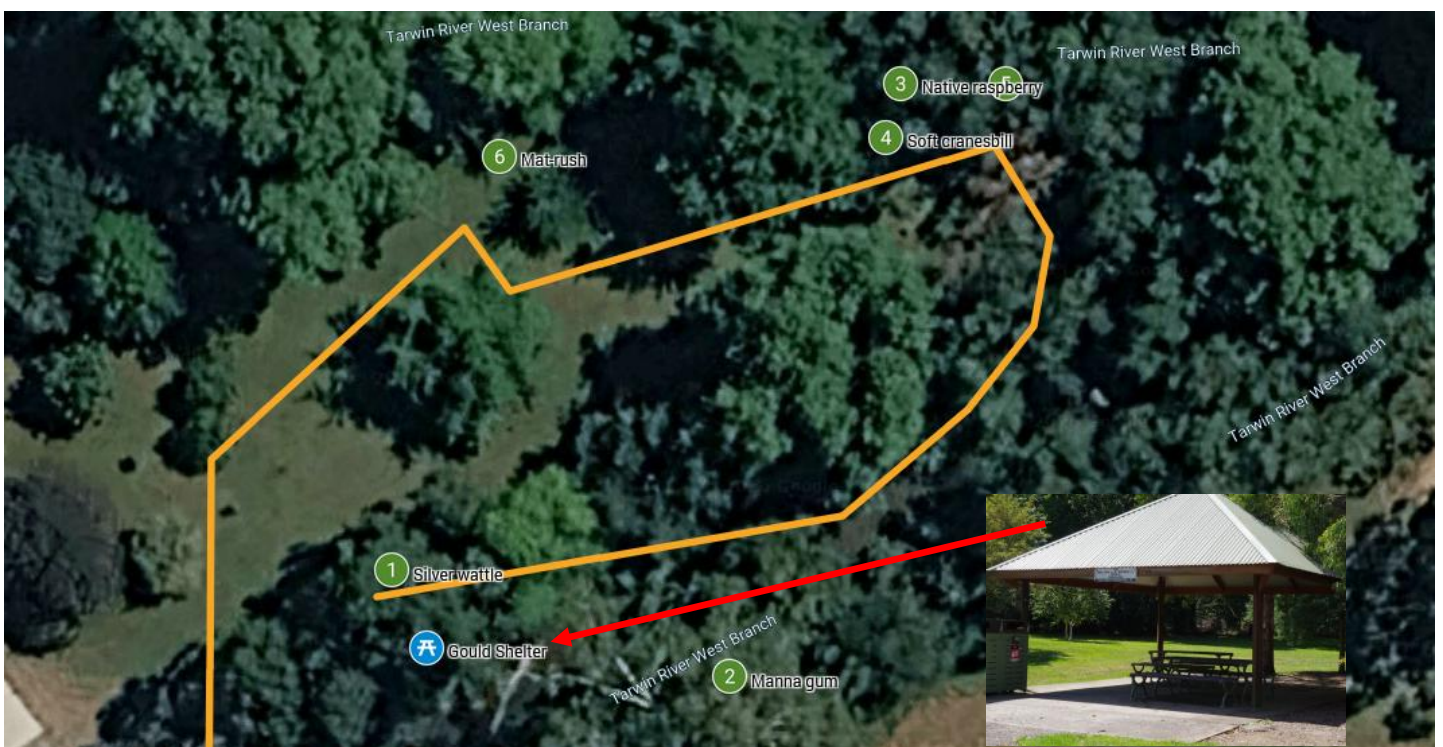
2026 the banks have been planted with wattles, gums and understory. Many *E. strzeleckii* have regenerated.

We are going to walk around the park and look at the plants on the riverbank. Look for the plant tags that tell you all about the river plantings. Use the QR code to learn more about the plants. Trail plants are marked with trail numbers.



Follow in the footprints of **Naroot** the wombat to find the plants highlighted on this trail.

The walk starts at the Gould shelter.



These are the first four plants in this walk. Use this map for guidance or use the interactive map

The Google map is available for your phone, and you can easily follow the trail. Each numbered tree and point of interest is clickable with a photo and information attached. Otherwise use this brochure and follow the trail using the photos to identify the highlighted trees. We have also provided QR codes to scan with your phone in the booklet and on the tree tags if you would like further information on any of the trees.



This QR code launches the interactive map

The first plant on the trail is a silver wattle. There are many of these trees around the park. It is a fast-growing (short lived, typically <20 years) evergreen tree or shrub growing up to 30 m tall, typically a pioneer species after fire or disturbance in the forest. The leaves are bipinnate, glaucous blue-green to silvery grey. The flowers are produced in large clusters. The fruit is a flattened pod approx. 10cm long and 10 mm broad, containing several seeds.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Silver wattle is known as MART. The seeds were ground to make flour for damper or steamed and eaten whole. Gum was eaten or mixed in water and allowed to ferment. The bark was used medicinally, with a decoction used as a treatment for diarrhoea, haemorrhage, heavy menstrual flow and other conditions. The wood was used for handles for implements and the inner bark was made into string.

The Australian national museum notes ‘There are over 1,000 different wattle species in Australia, and many of them were used by the Aboriginal people. In many areas wattle gum was an important food as well as a cement.’

We have 11 species of wattle in the park, and they are mostly found in the river plantings. As you walk around Goulds’ glade, you may notice other wattles especially in late winter / spring when they are flowering. Wattles are generally short lived making them difficult to catalogue as they die in one spot then pop up in another.



Silver Wattle	<i>Acacia dealbata</i>
Latitude	-38.4016025
Longitude	146.0544395
Catalogue no.	4.00



While you are looking at the plants be on the lookout and listening for the birds and animals that you might see in the park.

Walk around the glade looking at the plants and watching and listening for birds. Also look down, as there are signs of animals in the park even if the critter is hidden.



A Mossvale park wombat taking a lunchtime stroll.



A burrowing crayfish hole, some have soil 'chimneys', Use the QR code to find out more.



The next tree we are going to see is a very large very old manna gum. It is in Mossvale park but it is on the other side of the river from where you are standing. It is probably 100's of years old and part of the original forest. It is hard to see amongst the forest but look for the white trunk. It is 45 metres tall so look up! It has smooth white to pale brown bark that is shed in long ribbons, sometimes hanging on the upper branches, and sometimes with rough, fibrous bark on the lower trunk, lance-shaped to curved adult leaves, flower buds in groups of three or seven, white flowers and cup-shaped or hemispherical fruit.

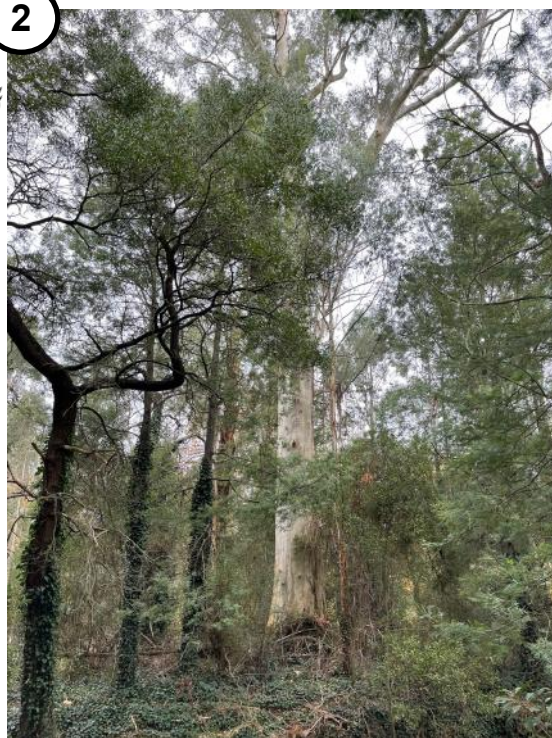
2

Significance to the Kurnai community

Manna gum or BALOOK, was common in the Kurnai area and the wood was used for flat shields with burrs being used to make water containers. Leaves were used as medicine with smoke inhaled to lessen fever. Lerps found on the leaves were eaten and manna, a sugary substance exuded by the tree, was mixed with water and drunk, or eaten in lumps.



Manna gum	<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>
Latitude	-38.4016854
Longitude	146.0547765
Catalogue no.	62.00



This part of the park is rich in bird life. You may already have noticed some birds in the bushes or heard their calls. When we were preparing this trail we spent some time listing the birds we heard and saw. We noticed 20 species in just over an hour. Here are a few we saw.



Top left; Kookaburra Top right; Brown thornbill Bottom left; Grey fantail and Bottom right; Sulphur crested cockatoo.



Next, on the other side of the glade we will be looking in the bushes for two plants you may think of as weeds. They are not—both of these species are native and belong here. They are growing here in close proximity. Native raspberry is a species of plant in the rose family. It is a scrambling shrub up to 2 meters tall with arching branches armed with curved prickles. It looks a lot like a small leaved blackberry. The leaves are pinnate with 3 to 5 toothed leaflets. Flowers are numerous, in clumps at the end of stems, and have red or pink petals. The red fruit is 1 cm wide. Soft cranesbill is common in moist sheltered locations. It grows to 60cm, and can take root from the leaf nodes to form extensive clumps. The leaves are green and are round to kidney-shaped and divided into wedge-shaped segments. The roots consist of a thick multi-branched taproot system. The flowers are a white to pale pink.

Significance to the Kurnai community.

Native raspberry is known as YALABAN and the fruit was eaten.

Soft cranesbill has a thick taproot which was pounded and cooked to remove tannin before eating. Young roots are less bitter.

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Native raspberry	<i>Rubus parvifolius</i>
Latitude	-38.4012227
Longitude	146.0549469
Catalogue no.	254.00



4

Soft cranesbill	<i>Geranium potentilloides</i>
Latitude	-38.4012645
Longitude	146.0549327
Catalogue no.	none



And because we know you love them as much as we do, here are some more birds.

Left; Grey shrike thrush, Right; Crimson rosella.



Now, slightly to the east of the raspberry and geranium we find the large bindweed plant which is an introduced plant regarded as a weed by gardeners. It is a perennial herbaceous plant that twines in a counter-clockwise direction to a height of up to 3 m. The leaves are arrowhead shaped. The flowers are white, sometimes tinged pale pink, produced from late spring to the end of summer. The open flowers are trumpet-shaped, 3–7 cm in diameter. After flowering, the fruit develops as an almost spherical capsule, which is hidden by the bracts. The plant thrives in hedges, fields, borders, beside water, on roadsides and woodland edges.

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Significance to the Kurnai community

This plant, known as NGURUNG has tough starchy roots which were steamed in baskets and kneaded into dough.

Large bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Latitude	-38.4012226
Longitude	146.0550513
Catalogue no.	none



Walking back towards the road still looking on the northern bank of the river and about twenty metres from the raspberry, look for a strappy leafed plant. Spiny-head Mat-rush or Basket Grass, is a member of the Xanthorrhoeaceae family. Leaves are glossy green, shiny, firm, flat. They can grow from 40cm up to 1m long and 8-12mm wide and are usually taller than the flowering stem. Leaf bases are broad with yellow, orange or brownish margins and the tips of the leaves are prominently toothed. The inflorescence is usually a panicle of clusters of flowers. Each cluster has a sharp, slender, straw-coloured bract at its base, which gives it a dense spike-like structure. The heavy-smelling nectar on flowers can attract pollinating beetles. Flowering in warm temperature (late winter/early spring), fruiting occurs 1-2 months after flowering.

Significance to the Kurnai community

The tender white bases of the leave were chewed for food with the flowers also being eaten. Flowers were soaked in water to make a drink. The drink was used medicinally to treat diabetes. The leaves were woven into baskets and dilly bags.



Spiny headed mat– rush	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Latitude	-38.401791
Longitude	146.054548
Catalogue no.	215.00

Let’s move out of Goulds’ glade and walk along the road southeast towards the park entrance. Be aware of traffic as this road is surprisingly busy. There is a wide grassy verge to walk on next to the river. Always be aware of unstable bank of the river but here and there you can get closer to the water safely. This stretch of the Tarwin River is reputed to have a platypus resident, which is sometimes seen.

We have five species of plants to look at along this part of the riverbank. They are all on the north side of the road or left if you are walking from the Gould shelter to the entrance. The last two are just over the entrance bridge.



Hop Goodenia is a species of flowering plant and is endemic to south-eastern Australia. It is a shrub with sticky, often varnished foliage, toothed egg-shaped to elliptic leaves and racemes of yellow flowers. It comes up readily in disturbed areas and in the park is planted extensively along the riverbanks. Look for more specimens whilst you are on your walk.

Significance to the Kurnai community

The roots of this plant had reputed medicinal properties.

Hop goodenia	Goodenia ovata
Latitude	-38.4019962
Longitude	146.0543794
Catalogue no.	204.00



The next tree in this section a couple of metres along is the example of blackwood we are using to describe on this walk. You have probably seen more of them already on your walk. It is a very common species in this part of the world, and grows happily on moist riverbanks.

Blackwood is an wattle species indigenous to south eastern Australia. The tree is one of the most wide ranging tree species in eastern Australia and is quite variable mostly in the size and shape of the phyllodes. The tree can grow to a height of around 20 m and has a trunk that can reach 150 cm in diameter. Like most species of wattle it has phyllodes rather than true leaves. The smooth, glossy, leathery, dark green to greyish-green phyllodes have a length of 4 to 16 cm and a width of 6 to 30 mm with a variable shape. Blackwood blooms between July and December. The spherical flower-heads have a diameter of 5 to 10 mm and contain 30 to 50 densely packed pale yellow to nearly white coloured flowers. Following flowering smooth seed pods form. The twisted pods have a length of 4 to 12 cm and a width of 5 to 8 mm and contain longitudinally arranged seeds.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Blackwood was known as YANUN OR YOMAN. The bark was used medicinally, with a decoction used for soaking joints as a treatment for rheumatism, and used to make fishing lines. The wood was used for boomerangs, shields and coolamons - with bent roots and branches favoured for boomerangs. Bark and twigs were used as a poison for fish, leaves as soap.

Blackwood	Acacia melanoxylon
Latitude	-38.4020839
Longitude	146.0545252
Catalogue no.	5.00



The third plant in this section surrounds the blackwood we have just looked at. You can see it in the picture of the blackwood. Tasman flax lily is a herbaceous strappy perennial herb found in southeastern Australia including Tasmania. It has leaves to 80 cm, and a flower stem to 1.5 m. Blue flowers in spring and summer are followed by violet berries. Unlike other *Dianella* species, its fruit is toxic. We have the related blueberry lily or blue flax lily (reputedly edible) in the park by the fence on the other side of the entrance bridge. We will get to it next.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Tasman flax-lily reportedly had edible roots (don't eat them unless you have knowledge about safe preparation). The leaves were used for basket making.



Tasman flax-lily	<i>Dianella tasmanica</i>
Latitude	-38.4021038
Longitude	146.0545667
Catalogue no.	196.00



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Continue walking down the road and cross the bridge at the entrance. Again be very aware of traffic on the one lane bridge. There is a post and rail fence on the northern side of the road. Against this is where you will find the blueberry flax lily.

The blueberry flax-lily is widespread in Australia. It is a tufted, perennial herb with grass-like leaves and blue or violet flowers with six petals and sepals, and stamens with bright yellow filaments and pale brown to almost black anthers.

Significance to the Kurnai community

This flax-lily is found in open forests. Kurnai people may have eaten the berries when ripe. The leaves were split and twisted into strong string.



Blueberry flax-lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i>
Latitude	-38.4024655
Longitude	146.0558108
Catalogue no.	197.00



10



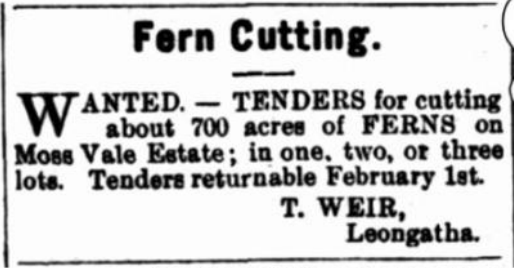
Before we move on, have a look around this entrance area. You may notice some bracken fern or Austral bracken. This is also a native plant which Kurnai people have used for food.

When Mossvale park was farm land however it was not particularly valued as it is poisonous to livestock. It is also poisonous to humans unless properly prepared. Even so, there are health risks.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Austral bracken is known as GEEWAN. It grows as a perennial ground cover in forests, gullies, and disturbed areas. Whilst it is native, it often acts like a weed because its underground stems (rhizomes) spread fast and can crowd out other native plants. These rhizomes were eaten roasted and the young fronds and stems were bruised and rubbed on insect bites. The rhizomes with their brown skin removed could be boiled to make a decoction used for pain relief. Leaves and stalks were made into a drink to treat rheumatism.

Bracken fern	<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>
Latitude	-38.4025133
Longitude	146.0559039
Catalogue no.	none



Great Southern Star, Friday 14th January 1914, pg3



Now we are going to look at four plants on the main drive and around the back of the Forrester lodge. Again be very aware of traffic and stay off the road itself.



Before you get to the Forrester lodge and quite close to the electrical junction box on the south bank of the river is an example of a prickly currant bush. They come up everywhere in the park because the seeds are spread in the fruit—currants— that birds readily eat. There are quite a few in this area. These specimens have been planted to restore the riverbanks with typical understory that would have naturally been here. Prickly currant is a hardy, upright shrub common in shaded areas of damp local forests, growing 2 to 4 meters tall with fine, sharp spines on its slender branches. It produces small, edible bright red or orange-red berries in summer that are enjoyed by both native wildlife and people although it has a large seed to flesh ratio.



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Prickly currant	<i>Coprosma quadrifida</i>
Latitude	-38.4029214
Longitude	146.0540532
Catalogue no.	52.01

Significance to the Kurnai community.

The fruit were eaten when ripe.

Now walk towards the Forrester lodge. A row of Tasmanian pepper berry bushes can be found on the riverbanks.

Mountain pepper is a shrub native to south-eastern Australia. The shrub varies from 2 to 10 m high. The aromatic leaves are glossy and have a distinct pepper taste as do the black, round berries which appear in autumn. There are separate male and female plants.

Significance to the Kurnai community

May have been used for flavouring cooking. Other traditional uses for the berries have been noted including;

- People crushed the berries or leaves with water into a paste and applied it directly to the mouth to ease tooth pain and treat gum infections.
- Antiseptic and Anti-inflammatory: The high levels of active compounds and antioxidants helped soothe skin discomfort and calm inflammation.
- Digestive Complaints: Traditional knowledge points to the plant being used to treat stomach aches, colic, and digestive issues.



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Mountain pepper	<i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i>
Latitude	-38.403056
Longitude	146.0539146
Catalogue no.	253.00

Now walk towards the toilet block. Planted around the facility are a number of soft tree ferns. This species can grow to 15 m in height, but more typically grow to about 4.5–5 m, and consist of an erect rhizome forming a trunk. The large, dark green, roughly-textured fronds spread in a canopy of 2–6 m in diameter. The fronds are borne in flushes, with fertile and sterile fronds often in alternating layers. The "trunk" of this fern is merely the decaying remains of earlier growth of the plant and forms a medium through which the roots grow. The trunk is usually solitary, without runners, but may produce offsets. As tree ferns are true ferns they do not produce flowers or seeds as they reproduce from spores that form on the underside of their fronds.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Soft tree fern is known as GARAG. The top 50cm of the trunk was split with an axe to obtain the pith, which was eaten raw or cooked on hot stones, along with the shoots.

Soft tree fern	<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>
Latitude	-38.4033006
Longitude	146.0537589
Catalogue no.	56.00

14



We are now going to walk about 50 metres further down this loop of the river and look at some kangaroo apples. There are two growing here at the moment. They are short living and turn up all over the place. They are spread by birds eating the ripe fruit.

Solanum laciniatum is similar to *Solanum aviculare*, with which it shares the common name kangaroo apple. The common name refers to the likeness of the leaf shape to a kangaroo paw print. This plant is currently being cultivated to produce corticosteroid drugs. The shrub typically grows to a height and width of 1 to 3 m and blooms between January and February, producing purple blue flowers.

Significance to the Kurnai community

This kangaroo apple is widespread but not common in the Kurnai region. The ripe berries are yellow to deep orange and were eaten, but only when fully ripe. The very similar *Solanum aviculare* is more common but the berries were considered too poisonous to eat.

Kangaroo apple	<i>Solanum laciniatum</i>
Latitude	-38.4033482
Longitude	146.0539214
Catalogue no.	266.00



It's time now to turn around and walk back to the carpark and to the northwest beside the ephemeral waterway, the long lagoon. While we are on our way let's have a short critter break.



Top left; Galah Top right; welcome swallow

Bottom left; Emperor gum caterpillar Bottom right; pobblebonk frog spawn in the long lagoon. Pobblebonks are **Tidelek** in the Kurnai language.





We are going to be looking in the river bank planting for a big graminoid, (this just means a strappy leafed plant) This is the first plant in this last section.



Red-fruit saw sedge, can form very large clumps 1.5 to 2 metres in diameter with flowering stems reaching 3 metres. The flowers occur in spring and summer at the ends of the stems in long clusters (panicles) and are black in colour. The flowers are followed by shiny, red-brown seeds about 4 mm long.

Significance to the Kurnai community.

The red fruits (nuts) were crushed and ground before eating. The leaf bases are also edible. Strong leaves and stems were utilized to make items like baskets, string, and mats.

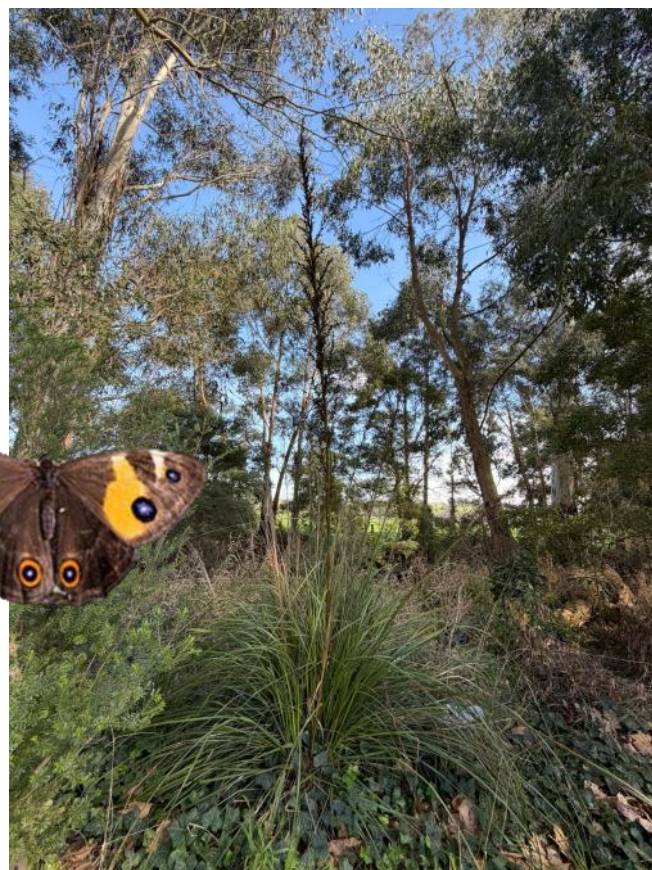
The razor-sharp, serrated margins of the leaves functioned as natural knives or cutting tools, though they required careful handling to avoid deep paper-cut-like injuries.



Red fruit saw sedge	<i>Gahnia sieberiana</i>
Latitude	-38.4028043
Longitude	146.0522226
Catalogue no.	100.00



The rare Sword-Grass Brown butterfly, *Tisiphone abeona*, is found on gahnia plants.



We are going to continue to walk along the river plantings in a north westerly direction. Another few metres along the bank is a specimen of native hemp. This plant is a dioecious (male and female flowers on separate plants) flowering shrub in the family Malvaceae, endemic to south-east Australia. It grows to 3 m in height, has long heart shaped leaves and has white or cream flowers.

Significance to the Kurnai community

The stems yield copious fine fibre which was used for string, bags and binding.



Native hemp	<i>Gynatrix pulchella</i>
Latitude	-38.4025299
Longitude	146.0520388
Catalogue no.	206.00



Another few metres along the bank still heading north west are some Austral indigo plants. It is an attractive species of leguminous shrub in the genus *Indigofera* (family Fabaceae). The genus name *Indigofera* is Neo-Latin for "bearing Indigo" (Indigo is a purple dye originally obtained from some *Indigofera* species). *Australis*, from the Latin, means not "Australian" but "southern", referring to the geographical distribution of the species. It is an upright, to 2 m high shrub, with flexible stems. The leaves are pinnate, openly spaced on the stems, around 10 cm long and velvety smooth to the touch. The flower color is purple. The flowers are smooth, in short spires in the leaf axils, freely produced from mid-September. Planted in 2021 in a group of four.

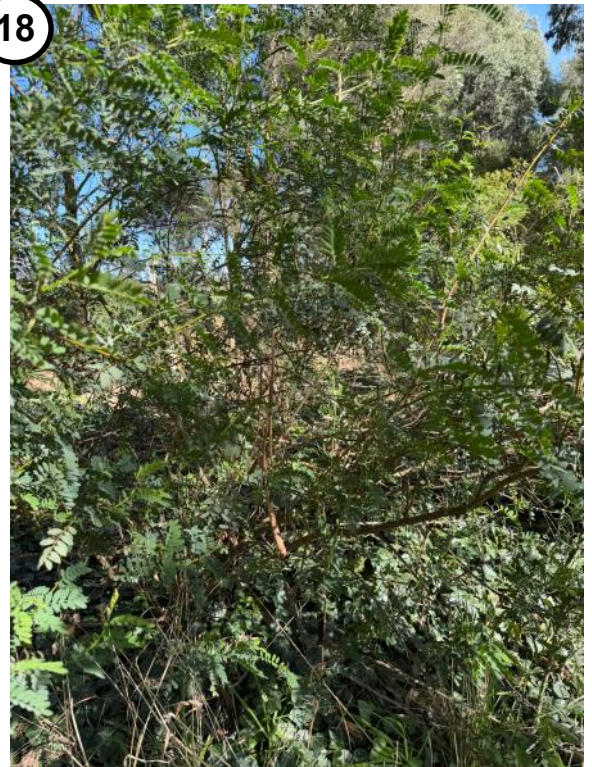
Significance to the Kurnai community

The roots of Austral Indigo were pounded to make a fish poison.

Austral indigo	<i>Indigofera australis</i>
Latitude	-38.4024835
Longitude	146.0519731
Catalogue no.	219.00



18



The last plant in this short section of the riverbanks we are going to focus on is a woolly tea tree. This plant is at the back of the planting and closest to the river. It is safest to observe it from the edge of the planting because unfortunately the ivy is rampant here and the footing is very uneven. Woolly tea-tree is a medium shrub to about 3 metres. Leaves are grey-green to dark green with dense, small hairs. The white, 5-petalled flowers are circular with numerous small stamens surrounding the central stigma.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Woolly tea tree is known as BALUNG. Twigs and branches are used for spears and digging sticks. Leaves used as medicine for breathing difficulties also as a topical treatment to soothe and heal scabies and skin irritations.



Woolly tea tree	<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>
Latitude	-38.4024833
Longitude	146.051863
Catalogue no.	214.00



19



We are going to continue walking along this bank of the river until we come to a specimen of messmate. This eucalypt is ubiquitous in South Gippsland. Messmate stringybark or messmate, but also known as brown top, brown top stringybark, stringybark or Tasmanian oak, is a species of tree that is endemic to south-eastern Australia. It has rough, stringy or fibrous bark on the trunk and larger branches, lance-shaped to curved adult leaves, base usually oblique, flower buds in groups of seven to fifteen or more, white flowers and cup-shaped or barrel-shaped fruit.

Significance to the Kurnai community



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Messmate is known as KATAKATAK and is common in forests in the Mossvale Park area. the dry outer bark was used for starting fires and making fishing torches, for night fishing. The inner bark was made into coarse string and this string was used for making nets and bags. The string was also used for tying canoe ends and ceremonial clothing.



Messmate	<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>
Latitude	-38.4023596
Longitude	146.0512275
Catalogue no.	59.00



The river at this point bends and flows essentially due west. We will follow it until it changes course again turning 90° to flow north. On this corner of the park is growing an austral mulberry, which is a shrub or small tree. Leaves are alternate, toothed, ovate to lanceolate with a pointed tip; 8 to 20 cm long. The leaf veins are easily noticed. Greenish flowers form on a raceme like cyme in the months of August to October. The fruit is a fleshy yellow drupe, ripening from December to January. Right next to it and growing through the mulberry is a prickly tea tree which is a slender, straggling shrub that has sharp-pointed, narrowly egg-shaped leaves, white flowers arranged singly in leaf axils and woody fruit that remains on the plant when mature.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Austral Mulberry is found in moist gullies. The shoots from the base of the plant were used as fire drills and were a valuable trading item.

Prickly tea tree is known as KARIK and a decoction of leaves was used for treating chest and breathing disorders. A bathing treatment for scabies was made with the same decoction when the water turned yellow.



21



22



Austral mulberry	<i>Hedycarya angustifolia</i>
Latitude	-38.4024182
Longitude	146.0508817
Catalogue no.	77.00



Prickly tea tree	<i>Leptospermum continentale</i>
Latitude	-38.4024833
Longitude	146.051863
Catalogue no.	212.00

Follow the river to the north along the edge of the planting. We will be walking to where the river leaves the park, flowing along a meandering course to Leongatha. At this corner of the park, the boundary goes up the hill but we will look at one last plant down on the flat, before following the fenceline.



In this swampy corner grows a stand of swamp paperbarks which are tall, dense shrubs, sometimes trees growing to a height of 9 m with pale white or brownish papery bark. The leaves are dark green and narrow. The flowers are creamy-white, arranged in spikes on the ends of branches which continue to grow after flowering. The spikes are up to 20 mm in diameter and 25 mm long and contain 10 to 40 individual flowers. Flowers appear from October to November and are followed by fruit which are woody capsules arranged in oblong cylinders along the stems.

Significance to the Kurnai community

Nectar from the flowers was made into a drink and the papery bark was made into fishing floats. Stems were used for clubs and digging



Swamp paperbark	<i>Melaleuca ericafolia</i>
Latitude	-38.4015747
Longitude	146.0507751
Catalogue no.	89.00



To get to the last tree on our trail, you need to climb a rustic dirt track to the top of the bank.

Now the next bit is a bit tricky. Take lots of care. In wet times this is very slippery and there can be flood water around the culvert. If you are in any doubt turn around and go back the way you came and access the back of the park from the carpark near the Gould shelter.

Once you reach the top of the bank walk along the fence until you get to the black she-oak. It is only a few metres past the oak at the top of the track. This is the only part of the park that does not have a river boundary. Black she-oak or river black-oak, is a medium-sized Australian tree (usually up to 8 metres, but sometimes to 15 metres). This evergreen casuarina tree is noted for its modified branchlets - the 'needles' 5–8 cm long and narrow ~ 4 mm, with the true leaves rarely larger than 1mm occurring on the tips of the modified branchlets.

Significance to the Kurnai community

The black she-oak is found in coastal woodlands and scrub and heathlands. The timber was used for making shields, boomerangs and other implements. Black she-oak cones are not eaten due to their astringency.



Black she-oak	<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>
Latitude	-38.4013401
Longitude	146.0515452
Catalogue no.	24.03



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You have now reached the end of the Tarwin River walk. We hope you have enjoyed exploring some of our trees. We occasionally lead walks in the park, so follow our Facebook page if you are interested. We will advertise any guided walk days on this page. Thanks for your interest and we hope you enjoyed your walk.

Contact the Friends of Mossvale Park

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Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mossvalepark>

www.mossvalepark.com