



Wangerriburra Bush Tucker Garden

Canungra State School is situated on the banks of the Canungra Creek, which is within Wangerriburra country. The Bush Tucker Garden project is an extension of the Wangerriburra Cultural trail which highlights the cultural significance of the creek, and native plants and animals. The garden was installed by students and is a celebration of some of the bush foods, fibre and medicinal plants utilized by the traditional people of this region.

1. Flax Lily- (*Dianella caerulea*)

The Flax Lily is a small, upright herb up to 1 metre in height that forms colonies in a variety of plant communities. The strap-like, dark green leaves are narrow, up to 45cm long and are arranged on alternate sides of the stem. Blue flowers born on shorter spikes occur throughout Spring and Summer followed by bright purplish edible berries. Aborigines ate the raw berries and the pounded, roasted roots. The fibrous leaves were used for weaving.



Flax Lily

2. Midyum Berry- (*Austromyrtus dulcis*) *Midyum* (pronounced mid-jum) comes from the Gubi Gubbi language of the Sunshine Coast.

Midyum Berry is a spreading shrub up to 2 m with small, glossy, dark green leaves and coppery coloured, hairy new growth. It frequently occurs on sandy soils in a variety of forest types along the coastline between Grafton and Fraser Island. Midyum has round, blue-grey spotted fruits to 10 mm that are gathered and eaten fresh by Aboriginal people during the autumn months when they are fruiting. The sweet taste is prized by Yugambah people when hunting (fishing) along the coast. The berries can also be used to make a tasty jam.



Midyum Berry

3. Mat Rush- (*Lomandra longifolia*)

Mat rush is a spiky grass-like plant that forms large tussocks up to 1m. It is commonly found in a variety of habitats throughout eastern Australia. The leaves are flat, smooth and up to 15mm wide with two or more jagged tips. The fragrant flowers are borne on flattened straw coloured stems in prickly clusters from September to February. These are followed by brown seed capsules up to 5mm long. The leaves were used for weaving dilly bags and baskets, and were torn into strips in preparation for weaving. Aborigines also ate the white base of the leaves.



Mat Rush

4. Native Guava- (*Eupomatia laurina*)

Native Guava is a shrub to small tree often seen between 3-5m tall. It is native to eastern Australia and is a primitive flowering plant that commonly grows as an understory plant on rainforest edges, preferring rich, moist soils. The leaves are glossy and attractive and grow from around 7-12cm long. The edible, oval fruit grow to about 2 cm in diameter and are sweet and aromatic, however the seeds cause the tongue to tingle! Aboriginal people also made fishing line from the bark which was soaked in the sap of gum trees to avoid fraying.



Native Guava





5. Hairy Psychotria- (*Psychotria loniceroides*)

The Hairy Psychotria is a shrub to about 3 m found on the edges of rainforest and eucalypt forest . The trunk is crooked with various bumps and the bark is dark brown with wrinkles! Hairy Psychotria leaves are light green and softly hairy and grow from 6-10cm in length. Clusters of small white flowers occur on loose branching heads, followed by a creamy, small edible fruit around 6mm in diameter.



Hairy Psychotria

6. Fingerlime- (*Citrus australasica*)

The Fingerlime plant is a thorny, understorey shrub or small tree of lowland rainforest. The plant is 2-7 m in height with small, bright green leaves from 1-6cm in length. The small flowers are white and the fruit is cylindrical in shape, up to 8cm long. Fingerlimes can sometimes be curved and come in a variety of colours including pink, purple, orange, yellow, brown and green! It is suggested that the fruit was eaten by Aboriginal people and used as a remedy for colds.



Fingerlime

7. Wombat Berry- (*Eustrephus latifolius*)

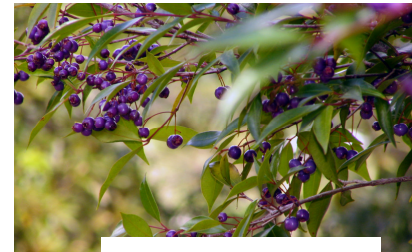
The Wombat Berry is a twining plant that may also be a scrambling groundcover. Wombat Berry is hardy in a range of soils and climates and prefers part-shade. It has linear shaped leaves up to 10cm in length and the flowers can be white or pink to mauve. Round bright orange fruit split and expose shiny, black seeds. The fleshy root tubers are edible with an earthy, sweet taste and were eaten by Aboriginal people both raw and baked.



Wombat Berry

8. Lilly Pilly- (*Syzygium sp.*)

Syzygium is a genus of flowering plants that belong to the Myrtle family and there are about approximately 60-70 species found in Australia. Most species are evergreen trees with attractive, glossy foliage. The fruits are largely edible and palatable and are popular for making jam. Brush Cherry (*Syzygium australe*) occurs along the Canungra Creek and Wangerriburra people continue to enjoy the fruit.



Blue Lilly Pilly

9. Broad-leaved Palm Lily- (*Cordyline petiolaris*)

The Broad leaved Palm Lily is an evergreen Australian shrub to 5 m tall found in warm rainforest and moist Eucalypt forests. The broad, deep glossy leaves grow from 30-80 cm in length and occur on long unrolled leaf stalks. The flowers are white and occur in large hanging clusters followed by a red berry that is 7-10mm in length. The broad leaves are traditionally used to wrap food in for cooking.



Broad-leaved Palm Lily

10. Native Ginger- (*Alphitonia caerulea*)

Native Ginger is an evergreen, perennial herb to 3 m and found in the understorey of a variety of forest types. The large, glossy leaves are up to 40 cm in length. White, tubular flowers are followed by clusters of bright, blue berries. The white pulp of the berries and young stem tips are edible with a mild flavor. The leaves are traditionally used to wrap and cook food.



Native Ginger

ALWAYS TAKE CARE! Some information about bush foods and medicines may be anecdotal. Correct identification and preparation is essential.



Acknowledgements: Photographs supplied by Craig Robbins and Jodie Clifford, Information verified by Ken Markwell, Wangerriburra Cultural Consultant.