

Autumn/Winter April to July 2013

# xplorer

experiment discover create



## liftout for young scientists



### ACTIVITIES

talk to the animals  
bush damper



### INTERVIEW

indigenous education officer  
charlotte galleguillos



### COLLECTOR'S CARD

dingo



### INFO

woomera  
menagerie



# BUSH KNOWLEDGE

# TALK TO THE ANIMALS

**Indigenous people have survived in the Australian landscape for as long as 60,000 years.**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people use their knowledge of the land, plants and animals to find food and water, even in the harsh desert environment.

The Emu caller is a good example of Aboriginal technology that required knowledge of animal behaviour and ecology.

It is a musical instrument and hunting tool made from a hollowed-out piece of wood, often decorated. In hunting, it was used by hitting one end with the flat part of the hand. The unusual sound it produced would attract the Emu away from its nest so that its eggs could be collected for food.

Emus lay between 5 and 15 eggs, and the Aboriginal hunter would usually leave some eggs in the nest. Why do you think they did this?

The **answer** is on the back page.

**On the cover** Indigenous people have accumulated a vast store of knowledge about using plants and animals for food and medicine. Styling by Jeremy Austen. Photo by Carl Bento.

## FUN FACT

A woomera is a type of spear-thrower invented by Aboriginal people. The woomera acts as an extension of the thrower's arm and as a simple lever to increase the speed of the spear and the distance it travels.

## MENAGERIE

See how Indigenous artists view animals through their art, and discover their relationships to place, identity, culture and survival.

*Menagerie* now showing in the *Indigenous Australians* gallery, Level G.



*Emu*, 2007 by Laurie Nilsen, barbed wire, steel and aluminium, 158 x 72 x 148 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Fireworks Gallery.

## SCIENTIST FOR A DAY

17 & 18 April Alexander the Warrior

23 & 24 April Alexander and the Animals

Come join in the fun and meet Museum scientists with behind-the-scenes tours and hands-on activities.

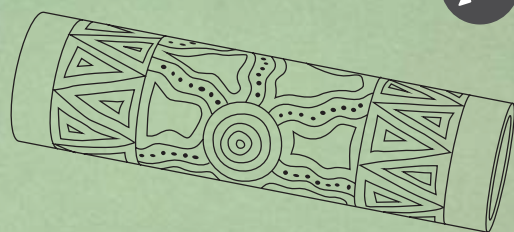
Ages 8–12 years

### Bookings

t 02 9320 6389

e [scicom@austrmus.gov.au](mailto:scicom@austrmus.gov.au)

For the complete school holiday program, visit [www.australianmuseum.net.au/whatson](http://www.australianmuseum.net.au/whatson)



## MAKE YOUR OWN EMU CALLER

You will need an empty cardboard tube, paint or pens.

Decorate your cardboard tube to tell a story, such as how your Emu caller will attract Emus.

Slap the end of the tube using the flat part of your hand to make a sound.

Try using different-sized tubes (wider or longer). Does the sound change?



## MAKE BUSH DAMPER



This recipe uses self-raising flour so you won't need to collect and grind your own seeds as Aboriginal people used to do! Use mountain pepper and macadamia oil for a real bush flavour.

**You will need:**  
2 cups self-raising flour      250 ml buttermilk  
1 teaspoon pepper              1 tablespoon oil  
   milk for brushing

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C.
- 2 Sift the flour and pepper into a large bowl and make a well in the centre.
- 3 Shake the buttermilk well, mix it with the oil and pour it into the well.
- 4 Mix quickly and lightly into a soft dough.
- 5 Turn the dough onto a clean, floured board and knead it until smooth (see below).
- 6 Shape it into a ball and place it onto a lightly oiled baking tray.
- 7 Brush it with milk and bake for 40–50 minutes.
- 8 When baked, it should sound hollow when tapped.
- 9 Allow to cool slightly before serving.

### HOW TO KNEAD DOUGH

- 1 Press the heels of your hands firmly into the dough, pushing forward slightly.
- 2 Fold the far edge of the dough upwards and towards you, and press it into the middle of the ball.
- 3 Repeat steps 1 and 2, rotating the dough slightly each time, until dough feels firm.



## FOOD SCIENCE



**Indigenous people have developed an intimate understanding of Australian plants, animals and ecology.**

The land is not just the soil or rocks or minerals, but a whole environment that sustains, and is sustained by, people and culture. Indigenous people have accumulated a vast store of knowledge about using plants and animals for food and medicine. There is a huge variety all over Australia for people who know where to find it.

Traditionally, Aboriginal people live a hunter-gatherer lifestyle, eating a wide variety of foods for a healthy (and tasty) diet. The men hunt larger animals such as kangaroo, emu and turtle, and the women and children hunt smaller animals and collect seeds, fruits and plants. On the coast and waterways people caught fish and collected many types of shellfish including mussels and oysters.

European colonisation brought very rapid changes to Aboriginal society and dramatically affected Aboriginal land and the ways people lived.

Just about every part of the animals and plants was eaten or used to make things such as clothing, baskets, tools and weapons. Groups would only stay in one area for a certain time before moving on. This prevented overharvesting and ensured there would be plenty of food for the following year.



**Each issue of Xplorer includes a collector's card for you to cut out and keep!**

**xplorer**  
collector's card

26



Dingo



## MORE TO LEARN

**Museum educator Charlotte Galleguillos tells Bella Bushby, a Year 10 student at Randwick Girls, that there's always more to learn.**

**BELLA: What would a typical day be like here in your job?**

CHARLOTTE: We have a lot of schoolchildren come through and we teach them in our dedicated learning spaces. So, sometimes we'll have a workshop on Aboriginal art where we'll paint boomerangs, talk about symbols and tell stories. Or I might take a science class, where it's primary schoolchildren learning all about mini beasts – insects and spiders – or dinosaurs, so it's pretty varied.

**BELLA: How long have you worked here and what's your favourite thing about working in the Museum?**

CHARLOTTE: I've been here for two years, and my favourite thing is that initial reaction the children have when we tell them all about what their day will entail and they get really excited.

**BELLA: How does what you've learnt at school and uni help you with your job here?**

CHARLOTTE: I think the social science I did for my Bachelor of Arts degree has really helped me understand people from different backgrounds and engage with the range of children who come here.

THIS EDITION OF XPLORER COMPILED BY CHARLOTTE GALLEGUILLOS

### Dingo

The Dingo, *Canis lupus dingo*, arrived in Australia at least 4000 years ago from South-East Asia, probably through trading between Aboriginal people and Indonesian seafarers.

Aboriginal people across mainland Australia kept dingoes as companions, hunting aids and bed-warmers and, sometimes, for food. The dingo never became established in Tasmania and was eradicated from many parts of south-eastern Australia by European settlers to protect their sheep.

Dingoes rarely bark but they howl at night to keep the family group together and warn others to stay away. They also hunt mainly at night, either alone or in packs. Dingoes breed once a year and produce litters of around four to six pups.



Photo © Lyn Watson.

**BELLA: What's the worst thing about working here?**

CHARLOTTE: Hmm ... that most five year olds seem to know more about dinosaurs than I do! [laughs] No – that there's always more to learn – no, wait, that's a positive thing ...

**BELLA: If I were to do your job, what tips would you give me?**

CHARLOTTE: My job is really suited to enthusiastic, outgoing people. So perhaps if you were thinking about wanting to be a teacher and you really love museums, this would be a good job. When you're a schoolteacher you have the class for a year, but at the Museum, you only have them for an hour.

So every class is a new class here, and you need to be adaptable. But it doesn't matter where they're from, all young children like to play and engage and learn!

Charlotte and Bella in the Members lounge.  
Photo by Chanele Moss.



### ANSWERS from previous page

#### Talk to the animals

Aboriginal hunters would leave some eggs in the nest so that there would always be Emus for the future.