

Gulmoerrgin Seasons



OCTOBER

Dalirgang – Build up

Dalirgang is the hot and very humid 'build-up' season. Box jelly-fish are now seen and Dawirba (thunder and lightning) can be heard in the distance. King tides occur and the wind blows mainly from the north-west. The Red Flowering Kurrajong tells you Malagujimba (sharks) are fat. Gillinggimba (Flying Fox) eat the fruiting mangoes.

SEPTEMBER

Dalirgang – Big wind time

From all directions, the wind seems to come from all sides. The end of this season... Freshwater mangroves are ready for harvest. Gokk Kingga (Magpie Goose) is a time to hunt on the floodplains. Ngamamba (Cycad nuts) are ready for harvest.

AUGUST

Gurruwa bulgi – Big Wind Time

The flowering of wattle tells you that directions: the north-west wind stings are fat and plentiful. The flowering of eucalypts are flowering. Native bees use the flowers of the rebrin and eucalypts as Deyngwa (Ironwood or Turkey Bush).

JULY

Dindjanggama – Heavy dew time

Dindjanggama means 'heavy dew time' of the year and the ideal time to burn grass. Damjumba (kangaroos) and Mula (Wallabies) rely on Damjumba (bushfires) for regrowth and green grass. The floodplains are starting to dry and Dambilingga (Magpie Coos) are feeding with their young.

NOVEMBER

Baliba – Rainy season

Baliba is the season of the first rains. Dawirba (electrical storms) are common. Gulppula (Green Tree Frog) brings the rain and people say Baliba gulgi bigarrk, 'Big rain coming'.

Favourite shellfish are collected now from Moedoelma (the mangrove forest) including Periwinkles and Dala (Mangrove Worm). Damugula (Mud Mussels) and Danjjarra (Long Bums) are collected on the mud flats as they become exposed by rain.

The start of the wet season brings on fruiting of Moerrma (Cherry Plum) and Milky Plum. Later in the season we collect Plum (Green Plum) and Black Plum.

The Cocky Apple (possum tucker) drops a carpet of white flowers. Their sweet scent signals that the build up has arrived.

Boewitjba (Bush Potato) is collected now and can be found by its small bell-shaped flowers.

Banimadla (Long-necked Turtle) spend time under the ground waiting for the rains.

Dambijba (Barramundi) move down stream from the floodplains to the seawater. Salmon are plentiful and are caught at the mouth of estuaries. Many saltwater fish have toe and Red Claw yabbies are plentiful.

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We eat the seeds from Dambijba (Barramundi) in the morning. Fires burn during the night. Heavy dew dampens the grass.

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Woolybutt and Stringybark eucalypts are flowering. Native bees use the flowers of the rebrin and eucalypts as Deyngwa (Ironwood or Turkey Bush).

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Many plants begin to flower in the dry season and the temperature is cool and dry. Woolybutt, Manjurrma stringybark and Damjumba (kangaroos) are in full bloom.

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JUNE

Dambijba – Barramundi & bush fruit time

The skies are clearing and the clouds are high. When there is a cold wind, old people say that flowers are calling. The cold weather that throughout the year except when they are mating and laying eggs. Strict laws decide when Doeditra can be hunted.

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APRIL

Mayilema – Speargrass, goose egg & knock 'em down season

The flowering of Mayilema (Speargrass) signifies the start of Binyiba (goose egg) collection on the floodplains. As the Speargrass heads turn down the eggs hatch, marking the end of the goose egg season. Knock-em-down storms knock the Speargrass over and mark the end of the wet season.

After the late rains we await the first sign of Binyiba (goose egg) collection on the floodplains. We collect eggs responsibly, with only a few taken from each nest.

The Red Die Plant is fruiting. It is used to dye natural fibres such as Bynamanna (Pandanus) and Gwiltimiba (Sisal Palm) to make Denele (string bags and Malarramamba (pandanus mats).

Bush Currant is fruiting now. They are very sweet and a favourite of children.

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LARRAKIA, DARWIN – NORTHERN TERRITORY – AUSTRALIA