

Noongar Seasons: Nature in Transition

Karri Karrak (formerly South West Boojarah) Area

Interpretation of the Six Noongar Seasons

The six Noongar seasons - Birak, Bunuru, Djeran, Makuru, Djilba and Kambarang - are signified by changes in nature including local plants and animals and the weather. Each season lasts for two full moon. This table identifies changes specific to the Karri Karrak area and indicates some of the animal and plant resources that are plentiful at those times.

Season	Months	Colours	Food	Plants	Animals/ Tools	Time
Birak (First Summer) Hotter Days	Dec-Jan	Green Blue Orange Yellow	Bain (pigface), tjunguri tubers (fringe lily), kara (milkmaid), reptiles – norna (snakes), lizards, karda (goanna - meat and oil), djiljit (fish), shellfish (abalone etc), booyi (tortise), tadpoles turning into frogs, crabs	Moodjar (Nuytsia floribunda), yorla/bewel (paperbark), banksia	Balga resin used in glue-making for patching water containers and tool making.	Coastal
Bunuru (Second Summer) Hottest Season	Feb-Mar	Yellow Orange Red	Salmon, marron, djiljit (fish) - herring, shellfish (abalone etc), kumuk fruit (Australian Bluebell), burning yanget (Typha) ready to get the rhizomes for pounding up and eating. Djiriji (zamia palm) seeds turn red and are collected and treated by leaching - also used to stun fish	Hibbertia (Buttercup), Marri (red gum), red flowering gum (Corymbia ficifolia) and coastal bottlebrush all flowering, banksia		Coastal
Djeran (Autumn) Cooler Nights and Damp Mornings	Apr-May	Red Brown Grey	Yanget rhizomes, kumuk (Australian bluebell), booyi (tortoise), bardi, kooyar (frogs), possum (koomal), quenda (bandicoot), woylie, kangaroo, boyu (zamia palm nuts) eaten after treatment	Sheoaks (qwel) – seed cones (condil) and red rust on leaves tell that kangaroos and possums are fat, red flowering gum (Corymbia ficifolia), djiriji (zamia), banksia		Coastal to Inland. Preparing to move inland, reinforce mia-mia with paperbark to waterproof.

Season	Months	Colours	Food	Plants	Animals/ Tools	Time
Makuru (Winter) Cold and Rainy	Jun-Jul	Grey Black Blue	Yonga (kangaroo) – using meat (food), skins (warmth), sinews (sewing, tying), bones (tools, carving), Weitj (emu) - using meat and oil, saving feathers for decoration, koomal (possum) - meat and skins, cobbler, born (Haemodorum), mangaard (Dianella blueberry lily), komma (blue flag)	Hibbertia (Buttercup), Hovea blooming, djiriji seeds, egg and bacon (Eutaxia), banksia, wattle	Maali (swans) and ducks on lakes pairing up and nesting. Whales migrating to warmer waters.	Moved inland - building and repairing mia-mia - waterproofing with yorla/bewel (paper bark tree) bark
Djilba (First Spring) Less Rain	Aug-Sep	Yellow Blue Green	Eggs and meat of water fowl, ducks, maali (swans), booyi (tortoise), koomal (possum), yonga (kangaroo), doonart (parrots), kooyar (frogs), djubak (orchid bulbs), kumuk fruit (Australian Bluebell), kara tubers (Burchardia), born bulbs (Haemodorum)	Hibbertia (Buttercup), Hovea, wattle, purple flag (Patersonia), tassel bush (Leucopogon), blue creeper (Pratia Puberula), clematis, red coral vine, boronia, collect marri gum, wonnil (peppermint trees) start to flower, balga, spider and cowslip orchids, pimelia, sundews, egg and bacon (Eutaxia)	Magpies swooping. Waitj (emu) and waterbirds nesting.	Inland gradually to the coast
Kambarang (Walkabout time) Becoming Warmer	Oct-Nov	Blue Yellow Red	Groper, shellfish (abalone etc), kooya (frogs), booyi (tortoise), noorn (snakes), karda (goanna), ducks, djiljit (fish), marron, djubak bulbs (orchids), kara tubers (Burchardia), tjunguri tubers (fringe lily)	Hibbertia (Buttercup), kangaroo paws, netic, wonnil (peppermint trees), crowea, orchids – (spider, cowslip, donkey, beak, potato), banksia (mangatj) used to make djilia water (a sweet drink) and nectar sucked from flowers. Moodjar (Nuytsia floribunda or Christmas tree) flowering means heat is on the way, egg and bacon (Eutaxia), blue creeper, (Pratia Puberula) purple flag (Patersonia), Balga flowering (very prolific after fire). Balga is a very important plant used for torches, firesticks, mia-mia, friction sticks, bardi grubs, flowers for sucking nectar, soft white shoots can be chewed/eaten and the resin is made into glue to patch water containers and also for making tools (spears, kodj [axe]).	Whales and calves migrating south. Wottan/wattie (Warren River Cedar - Taxandria juniperina) collected and traded for gidji (spears). Silcrete collected, traded and worked into tools and spearheads.	Moving to the Coast. Other tribes visiting from inland for trading. Corroborees and ceremonies held.