

## Bush Food (Bush Tucker)

Aboriginal Bush Tucker

### Aboriginal Bush Foods



Quandong

(Santalum acuminatum)  
Quandong trees have large round fruit, other bright red to blue in colour. The fruit is dry but sweet and is eaten straight from the tree.  
The seeds have a rough texture. These are stung and used as body ornaments or as part of instruments. Some fruits have a bumpy kernel that can be pounded to remove the oil - to smooth the face, hand and body.



Water Ribbons  
(Tigechin procera)

This plant may be found in standing water or in flowing water. Depending on where it is found the tubers will differ.  
They are found in swamps, billabongs and creeks. Tubers from swamps and billabongs are white, larger, softer and less fibrous. The tubers are sweet when steamed.



### Honey Ants

Store honeydew in their swollen abdomens. Women in Central Australia dig deeply to uncover them in their underground nests. They are particularly plentiful around Papunya, which means "Honey Ant Dreaming".

### Wild Honey/Sugar Bag Honey

There are many types of native bees found in South West Queensland. A careful eye and great tracking skills enable Aboriginal people to follow native bees back to their nests high in hollow trees. The tree was usually chopped down and all the contents of the hive were removed and placed in a paperbark container.

The contents include honey, wax, yellow pollen balls and dead bees. Honey was seen as a much prized bush food and is often given as gifts. Large quantities of honey and pollen mixed with water is used to clean the gut.



### Nectars Grevillia

Nectar-bearing flowers like bottlebrush, grevillia, banksia, hakea and the grass tree were sucked for their sweet nectar and taste. By immersing the flowers in water, a sweet tasting drink is made. Often this is done when the dew was still on the grass and plants.

Blossoms of some plants were collected and kneaded in a coolamon. The flowers are then removed and water is mixed with the residue to make a sweet drink.

Fruits, vegetables, minerals and animals all come from the bush. Traditionally these were hunted and gathered in various ways by different people.

There are many distinct processes involved in selecting and preparing animal, vegetable and

mineral products for use.

Over many thousands of years Aboriginal people have perfected the skill of obtaining and preparing these natural materials into edible foods

*Sources: Sue White, Community member, Sunshine Coast Region, Charlie Waters, Cultural Research Officer, South West Region, Tami Dreise, Project Officer, South West Region.*