

Artwork excerpt: *I Am Because We Are* 2019, Safina Stewart, Wuthathi Country (QLD) and Mabuig Island (Torres Strait Islands).

RAP UPDATE APRIL 2025 - KIYANGANYIN (WE ARE ALL TALKING) RECONCILIATION

Significant reconciliation dates to put in your calendar

NATIONAL SORRY DAY 26 May

National Sorry Day is a time to reflect on the impacts of past actions and policies on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Every year, the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network hosts an event to come together in support of the First Nations community on Bass Coast. This year we will gather at Cape Paterson Surf Lifesaving Club at 10.00 am, all welcome.

Sorry Day is closely followed by **National Reconciliation Week** from **27 May to 3 June** 2025 and this year's theme is 'Bridging Now to Next'. The Bass Coast Reconciliation Network are currently planning for both events and you can find details on what's happening at Reconciliation | Bass Coast Shire.



**Bridging
Now to
Next**

NAIDOC WEEK 6-13 July

NAIDOC Week is 6 to 13 July 2025 and the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network, in partnership with Barrihbarrih Gathering Place Steering Committee and the First Nations Community, are proud to present the first community-led event, **Ngangga** on Milawul (Phillip Island) in honour of NAIDOC Week on Sunday 6 July 2025.

To listen
To hear
To understand

SAVE THE DATE:
NAIDOC WEEK COMMUNITY EVENT
SUNDAY, 6 JULY 2025 | BERNINNEIT (COWES)

CALL OUT FOR CREATIVE MOB
Artists | Performers | Presenters
Musicians | Makers | Creators

Like to be involved? Register NOW!
Applications close 6 April.

Reconciliation Action Plan progress

Our new RAP has been in action for eight months now and we've already made some great achievements for reconciliation and recognition including:

- Approval to use Boonwurrung language and updated words list published in our Writing Style Guide.
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy* published.
- RAP Impact Survey submitted to Reconciliation Australia.
- We've supported First Nations employees career development aspirations for progression within the organisation.
- Our Community Impact Manager attended the Reconciliation Australia Conference in November, representing the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network on a panel about 'place-based reconciliation' models.
- Retail sales in the Speciality Store at the Penguin Parade made up 12.5% of total sales year to date of Indigenous products.
- Our Reconciliation Advisory Committee met in November and February and have had input into the *10 Year Strategic Plan*.
- Bunurong Land Council's Strong Country team continues to support various land management activities on Bunurong Country.
- We hosted Reconciliation Australia's Board and Executive in August.

Working together on Country

The successful fairy tern breeding season is a great example of conservation success resulting from working together with Bunurong Land Council's Strong Country team.

With **the first sightings of fairy terns in November** where **25 birds** were roosting by the water's edge of Phillip Island Ramsar coast at Observation Point, and the number of fairy terns slowly increased to **over 100 individuals with courting behaviour**, mating and aerial displays being recorded.



Some nests were lost to high tides, yet the nesting site continued to grow and we recorded a **total of**

136 eggs across 69 nests for the season. This is a testament to the collaborative efforts of everyone involved.

The Strong Country team and the Nature Parks staff completed the following on-ground works throughout 2024:

- **31 days** of habitat, weed control and monitoring.
- A fairy tern **monitoring induction** hosted by Birdlife Australia.
- **5.2 hectares** of weed control of marram grass and sea spurge conducted **over 131 hours**.
- Installation of **30x 4G cat monitoring cameras**.
- **Three cats removed** from the site in response to camera sightings.
- Rabbit management to reduce impacts on the native habitat (spinifex grass) along the sand dunes.

For more information on our conservation success, read the [Threatened-Species-Report-2024](#)



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and waters of Milawul, the Bunurong. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

CONTACT US:
E community@penguins.org.au
W penguins.org.au/reconciliation

RAP UPDATE APRIL 2025 | LET'S TALK RECONCILIATION

Boonwurrung language changes

The community team worked with the Nganggak Ngul Language Working Group at Bunurong Land Council to revise the Boonwurrung language words that we have used in signage and written documents as part of their language revitalisation project.

Bunurong Elders and Knowledge Holders provided an updated list of words with the correct spelling and pronunciation which we have incorporated into the [Writing Style Guide](#).

Excitingly, we now have Boonwurrung language for 'penguin' which is **kuyup bandin-mandin**, pronounced as KOO-yup BARN-din-MARN-din, which literally means 'mother-father bird', coming from the fact that the fathers help incubate the

eggs, this is something the Elders wanted to reflect in language.

Another change worth noting is the spelling for the name for Phillip Island to **'Milawul'** with the same pronunciation of 'mee-lowl'.

Joshua van de Van, Linguist from the Bunurong Land Council said 'further research has revealed that words previously provided were not entirely correct. An ongoing consequence of colonisation is the devastating losses to Boonwurrung language and sharing our updated knowledge of Boonwurrung language reflects the fact that reawakening Boonwurrung is a dynamic and challenging journey.

It is important to recognise that Boonwurrung language is not static, and that words change over time as we continue to recover from colonisation. This is an exciting journey, and one we are glad to be sharing with Phillip Island Nature Parks!



Cultural experiences program

The RAP Leadership Group have been exploring options for cultural experiences for staff as part of our cultural learning program. We wanted to know what kind of experiences staff are keen to have and a survey on The Burrow provided us with the top three preferences as cultural walks, bushtucker tours and Indigenous sports.

We're looking forward to delivering two cultural experiences annually for staff and invite any First Nations owned businesses or individuals that are interested in being a part of the program to email community@penguins.org.au

We look forward to sharing stories and photos of the experiences in future updates.

Sea Country T-shirts

The Sea Country t-shirts have been popular with staff and have allowed them to have conversations with visitors about our commitment to reconciliation as an organisation and significant dates for First Nations communities. The most recent opportunity was National Closing the Gap day on 20 March.

The artist is Kylie Armstrong and the story behind the beautiful artwork is:

'Phillip Island Nature Parks honour the natural environment as the caretakers of four wildlife and educational

experiences and managing 1,805 hectares of land. Our community walk together to care, respect and nurture the beautiful Country we have the privilege to experience every day. Our shared goal creates a thriving community that is united regardless of our individual journeys.

As we walk on Country, we admire the beautiful blossoms and use our senses to smell the distinct scent of the gum, the food source of the koala. We feel the sand under our feet as we walk in the steps of the little penguin. There is the distinct taste of the salt water as we enjoy the cleansing and invigorating waters that surround us, home to our seals and mother whale.'



Yani (come along) on a cultural learning journey

The Nature Parks worked with Bunurong training providers on the cultural awareness and cultural safety training sessions for board, leaders and staff in June - August as part of the learning and development program. Here are some suggestions for how you can learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.



WHAT TO WATCH: National Film and Sound Archive of Australia features a series of First Nations Short Films to highlight short films made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander filmmakers including Wayne Blair, Beck Cole, Ivan Sen, Catriona McKenzie and Warwick Thornton. Check it out at [Short Films by First Nations filmmakers | National Film and Sound Archive of Australia](#)

The Yoorrook Justice Commission have engaged with about 9,000 First Peoples as part of Victoria's first formal truth telling process and you can read and/or listen to the 1,300 submissions that were recorded. 'The True Path Forward' invites all Australians to listen and learn from the powerful evidence Yoorrook has heard. Check it out at [Submissions Library - Yoorrook Justice Commission](#). This content can be emotionally heavy so take care before proceeding.



WHAT TO READ: Pack of eight First Nations Classics: Series 1 - a gathering of our most prominent Indigenous voices who continuously, as they have always done, revive the literary landscape of this continent. The tote bag features eight classics by Herb Wharton, Doris (Nugi Garimara) Pilkington, Tony Birch, Ellen van Neerven, Ruby Landford Ginibi, Archie Weller, Jeanine Leane, and Graeme Dixon. [Pack of eight First Nations Classics: Series one | UQP](#)



WHAT TO COOK:

Aunty Lizzy Dalton makes a range of delicious jams, chutneys, and jellies using native bushfoods. Get in contact on [Facebook](#) to order some of these delicious native foods.



Try this yummy lemon myrtle cake for your next morning tea. View the recipe [here](#).



Dates of Significance

20 January

Tunnerminnerwait Maulbouyheenner Commemoration

13 February

Anniversary of National Apology to the Stolen Generation

20 March

National Close the Gap Day

26 May

National Sorry Day

27 May to 3 June

National Reconciliation Week

3 June

Mabo Day

7 to 14 July

NAIDOC Week

4 August

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

9 August

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

4 September

Indigenous Literacy Day