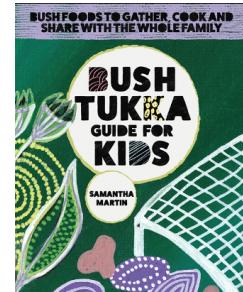


# Bush Tukka Guide for Kids

Samantha Martin

Teacher notes by Bec Kavanagh

Recommended for ages 8+, year levels 3–6



## SYNOPSIS

*Bush Tukka Guide for Kids* is the kid-friendly guide to Australia's bush foods.

Adapted from the bestselling book, *Bush Tukka Guide*, 'Bush Tukka Woman' Samantha Martin shares her knowledge of bush tukka as taught to her by her mother and Aboriginal Elders. Learn basic survival skills, such as how to hunt, gather and forage, in this guide that is user-friendly and engaging for young readers.

First Nations People have cared for and lived off Country for tens of thousands of years. Australia's flora and fauna are not only sources of food and drink, but tools and medicine too. Learn how to spot a ripe Davidson's plum, discover how mountain bush pepper has been used to treat toothaches, explore how sandpaper fig can soothe itchy symptoms, and find out how to grow your very own bush tukka garden for your home or school. You'll also find tasty kid-friendly recipes for foods, such as lemon myrtle damper, kangaroo burgers, crocodile nuggets, and caramelised cluster figs and ice-cream.

Whether cooking with the family or learning in the classroom, *Bush Tukka Guide for Kids* is the must-have guide to discovering Australia's bush food.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Samantha Martin is a proud descendant of the Jaru people from the East Kimberley region of Western Australia, deeply rooted in her Indigenous heritage. From an early age, she cultivated a profound passion for and expertise in the nutritional properties and natural health benefits of Australian bush foods. Samantha is committed to educating and inspiring diverse audiences to incorporate native foods into their everyday kitchens by sharing her extensive knowledge on the ethical hunting, gathering, preparation and cooking of traditional bush ingredients. Renowned for her engaging four-part documentary series, *My Bush Tukka Adventures with Samantha Martin*, which aired on SBS/NITV, she has earned the affectionate title of the 'Bush Tukka Woman'. Her latest achievements include hosting *Taste of the Tropics: Iconic FNQ* as well as featuring with prominent chefs and food experts on SBS Food and Channel 7+ *Cook Up with Adam Liaw* and *Taste of Australia*. Through her work, Samantha actively promotes cultural appreciation, sustainable food practices, and the revitalisation of Indigenous culinary traditions across Australia.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

*Bush Tukka Guide for Kids* is a non-fiction guidebook that introduces kids to the world of traditional bush foods in Australia. It is divided into four main sections. The first section is largely text, weaving



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background and context together with the author's personal experience. This section is divided into eight shorter sub-sections that introduce readers to the book's key concepts. This is followed by three more practical illustrated sections. In the first two – 'plants' and 'animals' – the author goes over the different plants and animals used for traditional bush tukka, showing their location and introducing Aboriginal name/s (where known) and botanical/scientific names. The book's final section includes a number of easy and delicious recipes for readers to try at home.

## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

**Learning areas:** English; Humanities and Social Sciences (History); Science.

**General capabilities:** Literacy; Personal and Social Capability; Ethical Understanding; Critical and Creative Thinking; Intercultural Understanding.

**Cross-curriculum priority areas:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

## THEMES

### Theme 1: Bush foods

In the book, bush tukka refers to traditional foods hunted and gathered by First Nations People: 'Bush tukka is not just plants. We must also acknowledge the Ngarla (meats) of our primary bush foods.'

The philosophy of bush tukka is sustainability – nothing goes to waste. The author writes: 'My people gain nutrients from the proteins of the food. We eat everything, and nothing goes to waste.'

And later, 'The men would only return when they could bring back enough food for the whole tribe, and they only took what they needed from the land – nothing more. Every part that could be eaten was eaten. Nothing went to waste. They used everything the animal provided, including the fur, bones, sinew, teeth, feathers and claws for costumes and weaponry.'

Bush tukka, referred to elsewhere as 'bush tucker', reveals a more holistic approach towards food – one which considers our responsibility to ourselves, the Country we live on and the animals we share it with.

### Theme 2: Cultural knowledge

One of the author's goals is to 'preserve cultural knowledge'. She writes: 'My people, the Indigenous people of Australia, lived and survived for tens of thousands of years using great hunting, gathering and foraging skills. They learnt what is in season in their areas, when it's a good time to go hunting, and how to read the signs of the landscape and the moon cycle to work out when it's the best time to hunt certain animals.'

While the focus of this book is traditional bush foods, the cultural knowledge shared is steeped in story and tradition. The author acknowledges the 250 Indigenous language groups in Australia, each with their own Dreaming story. Use this map (<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>) to see all of Australia's Indigenous language groups. Who are the traditional owners of the land you go to school on? Do you know, and can you find out their Dreaming story?

### Theme 3: Survival

'A simple but very important tip my mother taught me was never eat something without putting it to the tip of your tongue first, because it's easier to treat an itchy or stingy tongue than an extremely upset stomach.'

How do you know whether something is safe to eat? How would you avoid eating something poisonous if you had to survive in the bush for several days or weeks?



The author writes that 'understanding the different environments in Australia is one of the most important survival skills you need.' Why do you think this might be? How might the challenges facing someone surviving in the southern half of Australia be different to the challenges facing someone in the northern regions?

Discuss why the information contained in this book might be useful, not only for individual survival but for the survival of the planet.

## TEACHER PREPARATION & CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure you are using the most up-to-date and appropriate terminology when referring to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Use the Narragunnawali Terminology Guide as a starting point and seek advice from your local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.
- The AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia is a great visual resource that helps students (especially young students) understand that there are hundreds of First Nations language, social and nation groups. Please note that this map shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from the eighteenth century–1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed

## COMPREHENSION

### Before reading

- What do you think bush tukka is?
- Is this book fiction or non-fiction? Which details from the blurb or cover tell you what category this is?
- Read aloud the section titled 'Dear Bush Tukka Explorers'. What is the most important thing to remember when looking for bush foods?

### After reading

- Why might people be interested in traditional hunting or foraging methods when it's easy to buy food from the supermarket?
- Who do you think would benefit from this book? What three things would you tell them about it to encourage them to read it?
- What are the main differences between rainforest people and saltwater people?
- Which three bush foods are you most interested in trying and why?

## WRITING ACTIVITIES

- How can you play a part in preserving cultural knowledge? Where can you find evidence in your school or community of cultural knowledge being preserved? Consider the role that storytelling plays in preserving tradition and wisdom. Write a short passage in which you share a piece of knowledge or wisdom passed down to you by someone in your family or community.
- Close your eyes and have your teacher read aloud the following passage:

*Imagine you are in your town, but there are no houses, no cars, no schools, no shops, not a building in sight. There are just lots of trees, bushland and animals. Then, I want you to imagine that you are very hungry and that you really need to eat – but remember, there are no shops!*



Open your eyes. Using the knowledge you've gained from the book, write a response to these two questions:

- How would you feel?
- What do you think you would do?
- Use the format of the book as a template to better understand an ingredient that you use frequently. Take a photo of it and write an accompanying description. Include the common name, the scientific name, a short paragraph describing where you might find it and another paragraph describing the various things it can be used for.
- Adapt your own recipe. What's your favourite food? Write out the recipe for your favourite meal as you normally make it. Which ingredients could you substitute for bush foods?
- What's the difference between fiction and non-fiction? This book is non-fiction, but could you share the same information through fiction? How? Choose three facts that you've learnt from the book and see if you can weave them into a short fictional story.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Create a bush tukka map.** Print a map of Australia (you can find a free template here: <https://worldmapblank.com/blank-map-of-australia/>). Colour in the three zones outlined in the book – equatorial, tropical and subtropical. In the corresponding locations, draw a picture of one bush food that can be found in each climate.
- **Go on a bush tukka walk.** Either individually or as a class, take a walk around your local area. What kind of climate do you live in? What bush foods might you expect to find here? As you walk, record any bush foods you find in a journal by drawing what you see, and making note of where and when you found it. Reflect on some of the things you come across that might support or hinder the growth of traditional bush foods.
- **Cook up a feast.** Choose one of the recipes from the back of the book and cook it for your family and/or friends. Imagine that you're a food critic and write a short review of the dish. What did you enjoy about it? What surprised you? What would you do differently next time? Invite your guests to share their feedback as well.
- **Grow a bush tukka garden.** Where could you plant a bush tukka garden? Consider where you've got space and think about what kind of plants would survive in the climate. Draw a plan to show what you might plant and where. See if you can get the support of your school or community to go ahead and turn your garden into reality.
- **What am I?** In the table below, work out which bush food the clues refer to and write or draw your answer in the box provided.

CLUE	ANSWER
I am a bright blue fruit I grow up to 2cm in diameter I can keep you hydrated for hours	
I am a small desert plant There are 100 species of me in the wild, but only six are edible My roots can be used to treat a toothache	
The Noongar tribe call me 'purngep', 'pining' and 'binga' I can be found all across Australia You can crush me up to add a strong salty flavour to your food	



CLUE	ANSWER
I grow on tall thin trees up to 20m high My fruit is considered a delicious treat I am full of vitamin C .	
My neck can grow up to 30cm long My dark-brown colouring helps me to hide from predators I am most active during the dry season	
My body is yellow and I have a green abdomen I have a tangy citrus flavour I am considered a delicacy in countries like Thailand and Indonesia	
My shell features markings similar to the rings inside a tree's trunk You can find me by looking for a large black shell sticking out of the mud I have high levels of protein, zinc, iron and vitamins	

## RELATED READING

### Books

*Ask Aunty: Bush Survival Skills*

Aunty Munya Andrews

Illustrated by Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

*Ask Aunty: Seasons*

Aunty Munya Andrews

Illustrated by Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

*Looking After Country with Fire*

Victor Steffensen

Illustrated by Sandra Steffensen

*The Trees*

Victor Steffensen

Illustrated by Sandra Steffensen

*Deadly Science: Life Cycles*

Corey Tutt (editor)

*Adventures on the Dreaming Path*

Paul Callaghan

*Caring for Country*

Bruce Pascoe and Bill Gammage

*giwang*

Belinda Bridge

Illustrated by Peta-Joy Williams

*Lessons From Our Ancestors*

Raksha Dave

Illustrated by Kimberlie Clinthorne-Wong

*Aussie Native Plants A-Z*

Joey Farrell

Illustrated by Jocelyn Gibson



*Napangardi's Bush Tucker Walk*

Lyndall Stavrou

Illustrated by Jann Forge

*Walking with the Seasons in Kakadu*

Diane Lucas and Ken Searle

*Collecting Colour*

Kylie Dunstan

*Crabbing with Dad*

Paul Seden

*The Sugarbag*

Nola Turner-Jensen

Illustrated by Dub Leffler

*The Toast Tree*

Corina Martin

Illustrated by Fern Martins

*Going Fishing with Nana*

Frances Haji-Ali and Lindsay Haji-Ali

Illustrated by Karen Briggs

*Going for Pippies*

Wilaaran Hunter Laurie

Illustrated by Tori-Jay Mordey

## Websites

Seedmob

[https://www.seedmob.org.au/donate?gad\\_source=1&gad\\_campaignid=19924331734&gbraid=0AAAAAoP3ljcxvzy7MCbf8V\\_kP0pgfqwRx&gclid=CjwKCAiAu67KBhAkEiwAY0jAlafN9FZLJkT\\_OR77JpEAKzQFVfzSIHencISwKOLcpmXq9sOatO\\_BAxoC8iAQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.seedmob.org.au/donate?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=19924331734&gbraid=0AAAAAoP3ljcxvzy7MCbf8V_kP0pgfqwRx&gclid=CjwKCAiAu67KBhAkEiwAY0jAlafN9FZLJkT_OR77JpEAKzQFVfzSIHencISwKOLcpmXq9sOatO_BAxoC8iAQAvD_BwE)

Mabantua Gallery Cultural Library

[https://mbantua.com.au/bush-tucker/?srltid=AfmBOorCT7ApQMkhUlBDhuOpFjfr6\\_jLkGskSlwxot7ZCYK2a5vdaFm](https://mbantua.com.au/bush-tucker/?srltid=AfmBOorCT7ApQMkhUlBDhuOpFjfr6_jLkGskSlwxot7ZCYK2a5vdaFm)

Welcome to Country

<https://www.welcometocountry.com/blogs/culture-stories-2/first-nations-foods-of-australia>

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

<https://uluru.gov.au/discover/culture/bush-foods-and-tools/>

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/about-aiatsis>

