

Lockhart River Bush Tucker Nutrition Project ‘Kuyulu Ngampulungku Mayi’

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In partnership with the Lockhart River Community and various organisations the Royal Flying Doctor Service facilitated the Bush Tucker Nutrition Project—Kuyulu Ngampulungku Mayi’ project in Lockhart River Community, a remote Indigenous community in Cape York Peninsula, Queensland. This project was a joint initiative funded through the Queensland Community Partnerships Grants Program. Key to the planning and implementation of this project was the involvement, advice and direction provided by members of the Lockhart River community.

This project was initiated through conversations with community members regarding the importance of strengthening cultural identity and keeping the knowledge of nutrition and bush food strong. A key component of this project was the engagement of individuals and community groups in facilitating the development of cultural resources and recording of stories around the nutritional value of bush tucker as well as where to find, where to collect and how to cook it.

The filming and collection of bush foods in Lockhart River happened in two parts—the Wet and Dry Season—and involved members of different clan groups sharing stories and knowledge from their homelands. A highlight of the program was the cultural transmission that took place between the younger and older generations in the collecting and cooking of the bush foods that contributed to the younger generations knowledge of bush food and its nutritional value and role in maintaining culture, health and wellbeing.

During the project, filming took place in Lockhart River region, Chilli Beach and Portland Roads. Some of the bush tucker collected included turtle, lemon, wongi plum, peanut fruit, oyster and sugar bag.

A core outcome of this program was the opportunity for stories and photographs from the project to be downloaded onto HITnet’s interactive touchscreen kiosks, which are located in community clinics (www.hitnet.com.au). These touchscreens are designed to improve community access to information on Indigenous health issues through projects that are created, narrated and produced by local community people. The Lockhart River Bush Tucker nutrition story will also be made available on CD-ROM and DVD to be used as a learning tool in classrooms and workshops.

Currently RFDS is working with partners in completing a project evaluation and consulting with community members on their ideas for continuing the transfer of culture through a similar project around bush medicine.