Ngan'gi Seasons

Nauiyu - Daly River

NORTHERN TERRITORY – AUSTRALIA

Yerrwire (woollybutt) flowers during **Wirirr marrgu**, attracting **akerre** (the native honey bee).

Yerrwire flavoured **fungguli** (native honey) is found in tree hollows, old ant nests and in ground hives during this time.

At the **first sounds of thunder** old people feel sad for those who have passed away over the year. The first rain is seen to wash away the footprints in the sand of those who have died and is a time of healing and looking to the future. It is a good sign if a baby is born, takes its first steps or says its first word as the first thunder sounds.

Mudskippers are seen until the first rains.

Awin (black bream) favour **migemininy** (bush apple) when it falls into the River.

During **Wurr bengin derripal** you can hear the **atalmerr** (barramundi) 'chomping' on baitfish that have swum down the creeks into the River.

Ngambaty is the tide – 'a big arm herding the fish upstream', replenishing food resources in the River.

Anganisyi (king brown) mates during **Lirrimem**.

The seed heads of **minimindi** (waterlily) and **miwulngini** (red lotus lily) are collected from billabongs during the dry season months.

Fungguli (native honey)

Wurr bengin tyerrfal

Start of wurr panangalan (speargrass) cycle. The time when speargrass seeds begin to shoot.

Amisyawuni (stick insect) comes out. Misyawuni (bush potato) available for gathering. River is clear.

Anganifinyi (echidna) and anganfepinimbi (rock python) fattening up.

Turtles start moving after being in hibernation – 'happy to be going back into the water'. Still fat – still good hunting.

Mimuy (long yam) digging time and throughout the wet season.

Anganni (magpie geese) laying eggs on floating wurrfugar (wild rice) grass mats.

Wurr wirribem dudutyamu

The season when wurrmuy (speargrass seed heads) are swollen and hanging heavily. Taddo is when the wurrmuy knock together and open up – telling you rainfall is nearing the end. The River is at maximum height – come into Nauiyu by boat.

Awarrapun (saltwater crocodile), anganifinyi and anganfepinimbi sometimes found sharing the same burrow. Anganifinyi and anganfepinimbi hunting time.

As the big wet subsides there are lots of angangurr (prawns) in the river and creeks.

Wudupuntyurrutu

Wurrmuy are puffing open. 'When the river rises it's time to collect fruit.' Good fruiting season.

Fruits ready for gathering: midamurri, mimeli (black currant), miwerrmisya, miwisamuy (white currant) and mundupan (bush cucumber).

Wurr wirribem filgarri

That time of the year when speargrass stalks start to die and turn a reddish colour – a sign the dry season is coming. Seeds are still intact.

Wurr bengim miyerr

Seeds are brown and start to fall. Wind starts blowing from the east. Dry season is starting.

Ayiwisi (dragonflies) arrive to greet the new season and tell people the dry season is coming. Ayiwisi also tell people it's a good time for barramundi fishing.

Minimindi (waterlily) opening up – the smell of the lily on the wind clears, cleans the air and the spirit.

Agurri, the big black kangaroo that lives in the hills, wakes with the arrival of ayiwisi and sings the wind, blowing it from the east.

Aniyen (sand frogs) burrowing as awerrbawurr (antlions) build their nests.

Wurr bengin derripal

All the seeds have fallen from wurrmuy. Electrical 'knock em down' storms knock down speargrass.

Wadat (flying fox) babies are seen clinging to their mothers.

Awunytyerryin'gini (baby catfish) are seen around wunytyerr (cane grass) – the two are thought of together. Good time for catfish.

Anganni egg collecting.

Anganggurr (cherubin) carrying eggs.

Wurr tisyari

Speargrass is dead and dry and ready for burning.

Angankurinimbi (water goanna) about.

Anganni eggs hatching.

Awuyi (possums) and efekimi (bandicoot) hunting all through the Dry.

Wirirr marrgu

Dry season and burning grass time. Black ash from the first fires is on the ground. 'Good feeling' about going hunting and looking for turtle as you don't get too hot.

Angantyamu (bush turkey), emengginy (goanna) and tyirraty (wallaby) hunting time.

Dagum – the fog and dew that are present in the mornings. The fog is a good sign to go fishing.

Young birds are seen. Eperrperr (Burdekin ducks) are seen walking in single file with their young.

Good turtle hunting

Good fishing time – awin (black bream), epelen (archer fish), adilmi (mullet), anganggurr (cherabin and prawns) and creek fishing for atyalmer (barramundi).

Duny (*Terminalia microcarpa*) flowering

Wayarrfiriny (paperbark) flowering.

Collect minimindi (waterlily), miwulngini (red lotus lily), midugu (water chestnut), mifetyen (peanut-like seeds) and mibuymadi (bush banana).

Afurra (mussel) and amurriyi (crab) collecting.

Wangi

Time of the north-westerly sea breeze. A 'peaceful' wind that brings good fishing and turtle hunting in the evenings.

Afungi (mosquitoes) and angannisyi (king brown) emerge with the sea breeze.

Awayirrwurr: the migration of dany (short-necked turtles) and malarrgu (long-necked turtles) on the full moon, from the smaller billabongs as they dry up, to the larger billabongs and River.

Walkity denta

Yerrwurumbi and yeninggisyi (red kapok) flowering – collect ewerrmisye (fresh water crocodile) eggs which are being laid now.

Ngunguwe

Ngunguwe means 'mirage'. It is very hot and humid with no rain. A heat shimmer can be seen during the middle of the day. Burrowing animals retreat to their holes – telling people Lirrimem is coming.

Pods of yeninggisyi are brown and cracking open – ayerrsyinge babies starting to hatch.

Yerrwurumbi (ghost gum) bark starts peeling – sharks are fat and ready to catch. When the River is really low – good time for adany (shark), emelpe (stingray) and sawfish.

Very good turtle hunting

Yirrng (pig-nosed turtle) is laying eggs. Memenyirr is the season name that refers to yirrng constantly lifting her feet as she lays her eggs in the hot, burning sand.

Duny fruiting

Lirrimem

Very humid period of 'build-up' just before thunder is heard. River water is warm. Afiti (circadas) singing/calling out for rain.

Munggun munggunnyi (whirlwind) season.

'Miringgi marrgu' ('new leaves' = newborn ewerrmisye).

Ewerrmisye (freshwater crocodiles) hatch with the shoots of new tree leaves and leave the nest for their first feed.

Migaga (fig tree) fruiting and yirrng eating it.

Yerrmanggi (freshwater mangrove) flowering.

Kudede

First rains, very start of monsoons and the wet season. Angaga (tree frog) comes out.

Mundupan (green ant queens) ready for eating.

Ngalwangga (short-necked turtle) and yirrng eggs hatch with the first rains while atyalmerr sink down into the river as they know the storms are coming.

TRaCK Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge

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