

Why Mankind tells Stories

by Trevor Walley

IN the dreaming, representatives gathered at Kittaceetch for a meeting to decide who was to become the spokesperson. Five beings were there - Wagyl the rainbow, Yonger the kangaroo, Kaarda the goanna, Weitch the emu, and Mankind.

After a long discussion, Wagyl had enough of the meeting and left, his paths filled with water and some became rivers.

Yonger the kangaroo left and eventually came to the Stirling Range. An emu killed him and his burial place is now known as Yongermeer Peak.

Kaarda the racehorse goanna said "I am going" and promptly left for Koorda.

Weitch the emu spoke: "Let me be the spokesperson to take on the responsibilities! Look at my legs, which can carry me fast. My tracks can be seen on the ground and on the mountains." To this



day, many places are named after him - Wagin, Wagerup, Wayachinicup.

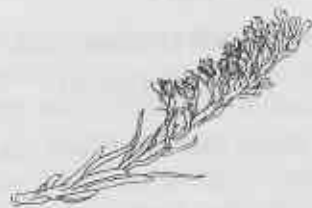
Mankind stood up and said "I can represent everyone. Look at my

thumb, it represents Wagyl. My thumb and finger on the end indicates the footprints of Yonger the kangaroo, and my thumb and next two fingers is the footprints of Kaarda the racehorse goanna, my middle fingers represent the prints of Weitch the emu."

After some discussion, Mankind became flesh form, and plastered his hand prints onto mountains and caves for all to see, that now we have to give a hand and care for all the plants and animals.

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The story of Muja



MUJA, the WA Christmas tree, flowers throughout the birak (summer) period.

Muja is important for the spirits, as it is home to the recently-departed, before they finally leave this place. They sit on the tree's branches. When the tree is in flower they can leave, and my people celebrate their release.

Unwedded girls use the branches and flowers to decorate their hair. Young men hang flowering branches over the mya-mya (hut).

When the tree has finished flowering, the leaves and branches are not used as the deceased are sitting there awaiting the next flowering time to be released to the dreaming in kwobberup (the good place).