



# FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES



***Landcare Australia is proud to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which we live and work. We value and respect their deep and continued spiritual and cultural connections to the land, waters and seas, and pay our respects to their Ancestors, and Elders past, present and future.***

## **Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage**

For First Nations people, Country is a living entity, an interconnected web of the physical, cultural, and spiritual landscape, present across space and time. There are features of Country that are intangible and unseen, with other aspects illustrating the deep connections to the culture that has been nurtured by it for countless generations.

In many places throughout Australia, the physical aspects of cultural heritage seen in Country today are only a small, tangible reminder of the vibrant and rich culture of First Nations peoples. For areas across the continent, experiencing colonisation to different degrees, the presence of material culture in Country enduring the effects of time, such as stone, trees, and sheltered sites, may still be found. The existence of other materials, made from bone, shell, resins, clay, paint, rope, feathers, and fur has mostly not survived the ravages of time.



Physical features of Country that can still be seen, often referred to as Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, include:

- Living places, such as meeting places, open campsites, hearths, rock shelters and middens;
- Art and spiritual places, which include sacred and ceremonial sites, rock art, engravings, carved trees and burial sites; and
- Areas of industry consisting of tool making sites, grinding grooves, scarred trees, and raw material resource places.

In various places in Australia, especially in urban or disturbed areas, there have been great and lasting losses in the remaining cultural heritage. Despite this, throughout

the continent, the intangible cultural heritage values such as lore, knowledge, cultural practices, languages, dances, songs, stories, and the connections to the tangible values of Country, remain or are being reclaimed and renewed. It is important to acknowledge the profound connection between the tangible and intangible values for First Nations peoples, being a strong legacy and an integral part of their ongoing identity. To learn more about and respect for cultural heritage in Country in your local area, contact the Traditional Owners, Elders or First Nations organisations.

**For other useful resources please visit this Landcare Australia web page:  
[www.landcareaustralia.org.au/culturallandmanagement/](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/culturallandmanagement/)**

*Source: Appropriate words & terminology for First Nations topics - Creative Spirits <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/media/appropriate-terminology-for-aboriginal-topics>*

*Source: Demonstrating inclusive and respectful language – Reconciliation Australia Plan <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/inclusive-and-respectful-language.pdf>*

*Source: Narragunnawali - A Guide to Using Respectful and Inclusive Language and Terminology*

*The content for First Nations Perspectives was developed for Landcare Australia. The purpose of this information is to provide a useful introductory resource for educators using Junior Landcare resources, for landcare groups and other environmental community groups, and for individuals. This is dynamic content and we understand that some information may change from time to time. Please contact us if you would like to provide additional information that we can include in this important resource.*