

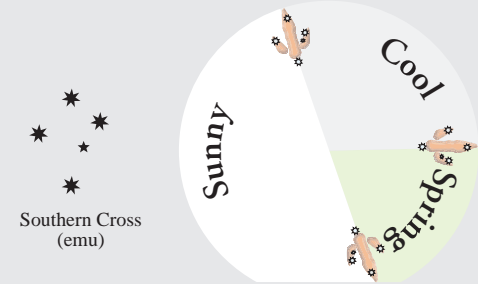
TOMAREE Seasonal Calendar

3 SEASONS

It all starts with SPRING. To make it easier to understand, the calendar below starts in January. The most dramatic changes occur in the first week of September, the first flush of SPRING. The SUNNY season begins in the second week of November and lasts for half of the year. COOL season starts in the second week of May and ends with the first flush of SPRING.

The measurement of time. It is possible to describe the Tomaree Seasonal Calendar, below, without reference to such measurements of time as week and month. Week has no equivalent in nature and no practical use. Month is nearly equal to the length of time it takes the moon to complete its cycle. The moon, however, is completely out of sequence with the regular construct of the months. In the night sky the southern cross (emu) constitutes a perfectly regular clock to mark the passage of time. The cross is vertical, as seen on the Australian flag, at midnight on the 28th of March, each year. For every night after that date the cross moves clockwise a little more, revolving around a spot in the sky (called the south celestial pole) until over the year it is again vertical at midnight of the 28th of March.

As soon as it is perfectly dark the position of the cross (emu) should be noted. It is possible then to know how far you are through each of the seasons. The diagram on the right shows the position of the emu, at sundown, at the start of each of the 3 seasons. You are facing south when looking at the southern cross, and north when you are looking at the midday sun.



Position of the emu, at sundown, at the start of each of the 3 seasons.

SUNNY

SUNNY is a time of hot days, increasing rainfall and predictable winds. After the Banksias stop producing nectar and before the dotterels arrive is the time of fewest flowers in bloom.

The yellow band is a graph of daily temperature, the more yellow the more heat in the sun.

North-east and southerly winds.

The blue band is a rainfall graph, the more blue the more water is available for drinking.

The west wind (from the mountains).

COOL

When the emu is seen walking away from the land and slightly toward the sea (as in the diagram) the wind will soon blow hard from the mountains. The air is cool, the water choppy and rain is plentiful. Mornings are dewy, gymeas are in full flower and whales are seen swimming toward the sun. COOL ends when all the males of the antichinus family die and the mackerel tuna arrive.

SPRING

When the emu is seen walking away from the sea, the winds stop blowing from the mountains and start to blow from the direction of the morning sun. The bush is colourful with the mass flowering of plants. Days get sunnier and whales are seen swimming away from the sun. Muttonbirds arrive. This is the driest part of the year.

SUNNY

When the emu is seen walking towards the land and slightly toward the mountains (as in the diagram) the long SUNNY begins. Until the christmas bush flowers fall there are lots of flowers in bloom, especially ground orchids.



January February March April May June July August September October November December

Middle of the sunny season. Christmas bush flowers begin to drop off. Plenty of nectar from Banksias and an abundance of roasted gymea lily stalks.

Sunshine wattle in bloom, start of the mullet run. Muttonbird chicks, pee wee eggs, long-necked tortoise eggs. On the darkest night prawns make their run, light a torch and scoop them up.

Fairy penguins come ashore to moult, also some chicks. Fat, Gould's petrel chicks on Boondelbah Island. Acacia gum and lots of macrozamia seeds. Calm sea conditions make it easy to spot surfacing turtles.

Still plenty of muttonbird chicks on the islands. Mullet in the bay and on the beaches. Bream on their spawning run. Native cherry fruit and lerps.

Westerly winds have come to stay, making trips on the water more difficult. Blackfish cloud the water on their spawning run, catch them in the lee of a headland. A time of heavy dew and rain, lots of fungi about. Tubers from white finger and greenhood orchids. Apple berry fruit and nectar from flowering grass trees.

Gymea lilies flowering on the hills mean that whales will be seen passing north (towards the sun), there might be a beaching. Schools of tailor, heading north, will be attracted to anything flashing in the water. Male echidnas follow females around. Pixi caps tubers and lilipilly fruit. Gulls' eggs on the islands.

Mackerel tuna in the bay. Snakes everywhere. Sour currant bush, five corners and cranberry heath fruit. Penguin eggs. Bogong moths. Any number of dying muttonbirds can be picked up from the beach. Whales now heading south (away from the sun). Super-low tides make it easier to collect mud crabs and mud oysters. Stingrays invade new sand flats on the big high tides.

Wattle seeds, baby birds, young gymea lily stalks and cicadas. Least amount of rain.

Longest amount of sunshine each day. Muttonbird eggs. Baby animals. Still plenty of wattle seeds. The time of furious winds from the mountains is over, making canoe journeys and fishing easy.

Tomaree Bush Tucker Guide

If you were living off the land your diet would change according to seasonal availability.

