



Conservationists and Traditional Owners protecting Country and culture through new land acquisition in central Vic

National conservation not-for-profit Bush Heritage Australia and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, now trading as DJAARA, have announced the co-management of Buckrabanyule in central Victoria, a place of exceptional cultural significance.

As the home of *Mindi*, a great serpent that is the enforcer of Dja Dja Wurrung cultural law, Buckrabanyule is connected to an important Dja Dja Wurrung creation story.

With private philanthropic support, Bush Heritage purchased the 452-hectare property earlier this year in order to protect it from subdivision and development. In doing so, Dja Dja Wurrung People can access the site for the first time in many years, an essential step in walking together to *Dhelkunya Dja* (Heal Country).

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter said the relationship built between Bush Heritage and DJAARA was to be celebrated.

“Bush Heritage's care for Djandak (Country) has been significant and has ensured that many of our plants and animals continue and have safe places at the properties they have acquired. At every opportunity they involve us,” he said.

Bush Heritage CEO Heather Campbell said that partnering to manage Buckrabanyule was the result of many years of listening and learning side-by-side with Dja Dja Wurrung People.

“We are proud to be able to work together with DJAARA to care for and heal this incredibly special and culturally significant place,” she said.

“While the severity of wheel cactus is concerning, I’m confident it can be brought under control thanks to good land management, time and the ongoing strong collaboration between Bush Heritage and DJAARA.”

Bush Heritage and DJAARA’s first action as collaborative managers is to tackle the widespread invasion of invasive Wheel Cactus (*Opuntia robusta*) impacting much of the property.

Wheel Cactus is classed as a weed of national significance which has cultural, conservation and agricultural ramifications for the entire region if left unchecked. Its seeds are spread by birds and other animals and effectively controlling the cactus is resource and time intensive. The current best practice approach involves stabbing each cactus wheel with herbicide, so they are unable to spread further.



Crews of Djandak rangers have been at the site regularly over the past months, deploying a combination of chemical, mechanical and biocontrol tactics to control the weed. A targeted Wheel Cactus Control plan is under development.

Bush Heritage and DJAARA have worked in collaboration for 14 years, cementing their partnership with a formal MOU at the start of 2021. DJAARA strives to support Dja Dja Wurrung People in their self-determination and to reach the goals of its *Dhelkunya Dja* (Healing Country) Plan.

Bush Heritage owns and manages more than 1.2 million hectares of land nation-wide, including more than 2400 hectares of land across its network of nature reserves in the central Victorian region.

[Click here to download hi res images of Buckrabanyule, and DJAARA and Bush Heritage staff on site.](#)

To organise an interview with **Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter**, contact DJAARA Communications Relationships Manager Mariaa Randall on **0481 831 514**.

To organise an interview with **Bush Heritage CEO Heather Campbell**, contact Bush Heritage Australia's Media Coordinator Kate Thorburn on **0407 004 139**.

Mt Buckrabanyule quick facts

- Spans 452 hectares
- Located approximately 270 km north-east from Melbourne
- Characterised by a granite outcrop that rises approximately 314m above sea level
- The Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners *Martinga kuli* (Ancestors) have cared for this place for many generations.
- This site has important cultural significance for Dja Dja Wurrung People especially the Yung Balug clan.