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## FACT SHEET 6

# Lakes and Coorong Commercial Fishery

## Indigenous Heritage

### The Ngarrindjeri

Historically there were five Aboriginal tribal groupings living on The Coorong. Still known as the Ngarrindjeri people, they made bark and reed canoes, weaved beautiful and practical designs and lived on the fish and molluscs in the area, and built shelters against the cold Southern Ocean winds.

The original aboriginal residents of the Coorong region traditionally fished the rich marine, estuarine and freshwater resources of this highly productive ecosystem. This population is believed to have been the largest historical population of aboriginals in Australia.

The Ngarrindjeri fished in the rivers, lakes and sea. Hauling nets and fish traps were common fishing gear of the Ngarrindjeri people, as were spears and specialist boomerangs. Mulloway were the most common target species followed by Bream and Yellow-eye Mullet. Goolwa cockles were also important to the regular diet in their culture.

They used several different fishing nets. Some were made to catch single fish like the Murray cod. Others, several metres long, were used to catch schools of smaller fish. Fishing nets were made from the stems of sedges or from string made of bulrush-root fibre.

When fishing they used basketry scoops to collect fish caught in nets and traps. Women also used scoops to collect small fish in the shallows. Ngarrindjeri fishermen used spears to kill the larger fresh- and salt-water fish, like Murray cod and mulloway.

For detailed information use this link

<http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/orig/ngurunderi/nghome.htm>

For the story about bony bream (or Thukeri) check out the Australian Museum link

<http://www.dreamtime.net.au/thukeri/text.htm>

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***Parnka Midden Site***  
*illustrating the depth of cockle shells dating*  
*back approx 1600 years*

*Photo by SA Museum*

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