

# COMING SOON: Magabala February Release

## Powerful traditional story of the sacred Rainbow serpent

*The Mark of the Wagarl* is the popular new edition of a traditional story from the Nyoongar people of the south-west of Western Australia. Based on Maadjit Walken, the Sacred Rainbow Serpent - the mother spirit and creator of Nyoongar Country.

Maadjit Walken formed the landscape and the waterways, and made her first child Maadjit Wagarl, the Sacred Water Snake, the guardian spirit of all the rivers and fresh waters.

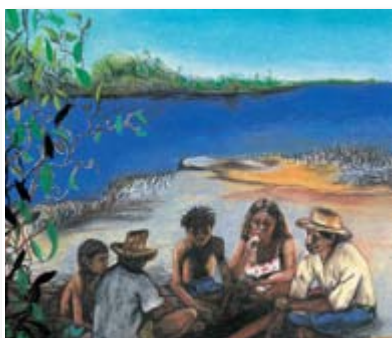
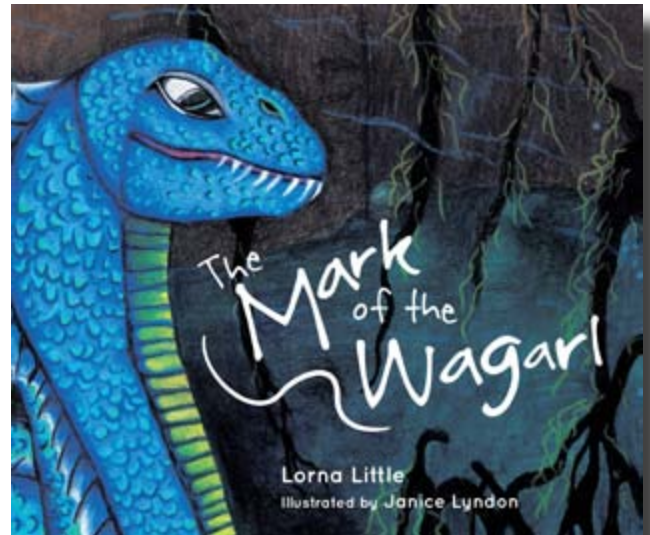
*The Mark of the Wagarl* is the story of how a little boy dared to question the wisdom of his elders and why he received the Sacred Water Snake for his totem.

Lorna Little was born in 1935 in Meekatharra, Western Australia. Her family moved to Pinjarra, her ancestral home during WWII where she learnt the Nyoongar language and stories of her people. Lorna is an elder of the Bindjareb Nyoongar community and enjoys passing on cultural knowledge to her grandchildren.

Nyoongar artist, Janice Lyndon, was born in 1965 in Pinjarra in Western Australia. She draws her inspiration from her elders and the environment, and has participated in several group exhibitions. Janice has a Diploma of Aboriginal Visual Arts.

*The Mark of the Wagarl* will be available from February 2012 in bookshops and online from Magabala Books ([www.magabala.com](http://www.magabala.com)) for \$17.95.

Launched in 1987, Magabala Books is a not-for-profit Indigenous publishing house, based in Broome, that aims to promote, preserve and publish Indigenous Australian culture.



This is a story about the Wagarl, the sacred water snake who inhabited the waterways in the country belonging to the Nyoongar people. It is also the story of how a little boy received the Wagarl for his totem.

The old people would tell the stories about the Wagarl. As the waterways he would travel up a country keeping the water sweet.



Preview *The Mark of the Wagarl* on the Magabala Books YouTube Channel



From that time on, Baardi looked after all the snakes. He picked them up and stroked them and he never got bitten because the Wagarl had put the mark of the snake on him. Baardi never spoke again because of his promise. The only sound he made was the sound of the snake-hsssss!

According to legend, at the spot where the Wagarl touched Baardi's leg, a mark appeared in the shape of a snake. Baardi had this mark for the rest of his life. The same mark appeared as a birthmark on one of his children and so it was passed on from generation to generation.

Whoever had the birthmark was given the Wagarl as their totem and so became the spiritual brother or sister to the sacred water snake.

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