

## Significance of the bunya pine

Many plant species are important to Australian Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and are cared for, protected and treated with great respect. This ensures the plants continue to survive.

An example of this is the bunya pine shown below.



i

Bunya pines can grow to be very big and very old.



ii

Bunya pine trees have sharp thorny leaves.



iii



iv



v

Every year they produce cones that can be as big as soccer balls!  
These cones contain nuts known as 'bunya nuts'.

For thousands of years, many Aboriginal groups have had feasts to celebrate the ripening of the bunya nut. Approximately every three years the trees drop a heavy crop of bunya nuts. This is celebrated by the Wakka Wakka peoples of South-East Queensland with a festival in the Bunya Mountains, recognised as the Bunya Festival. Bunya Festivals are not only a time for celebrating and eating the nuts, but also a time for ceremonies, sharing stories, renewing friendships, and other community activities. Some Aboriginal groups travel long distances to attend the festivals, which can last for several months.

The mature nuts are roasted, while the younger nuts are soft and juicy enough to be eaten raw.



vi



vii

The bunya pine tree is considered sacred and laws exist (both western and traditional) to prevent people from harming them.

- i. Tatters, *Bunya pine*, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/62938898@N00/3322063565> CC BY 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)
- ii. Tann, J, *Bunya-bunya*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/31031835@N08/3083890831/> CC BY 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)
- iii. Smith, J, *Raindrops on my bunya*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/26085795@N02/5359932262/> CC BY 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)
- iv. Tatters, *Bun-bun, I will eat you*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/tgerus/3259671067/> CC BY-NC-SA 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)
- v. Baker, J, *Bunya cones*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mezuni/3235323947/> CC BY 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)
- vi. brewbooks, *Bunya pine cone showing Bunya nuts*, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr\\_-\\_brewbooks\\_-\\_Bunya\\_Pine\\_cone\\_Showing\\_Bunya\\_nuts\\_\(1\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr_-_brewbooks_-_Bunya_Pine_cone_Showing_Bunya_nuts_(1).jpg) CC BY-SA 2.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en)
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