

Yurlu Muda – Transcript

Living in a place called Kalkapana was Yurlu the Kingfisher man. He was the leader of all our ceremonies. At Kalkapana, Yurlu could look south across all the Adnyamathanha Yarta (Country).

Everyone was gathering at Ikara - the Gathering Place (Wilpena Pound), waiting for Yurlu to lead an initiation ceremony. They grew tired of waiting for Yurlu, and sent a smoke signal that Wala, the Wild Turkey Man, would lead the Ceremony if Yurlu did not come.

Yurlu was worried that Wala would not perform the ceremony properly so he began to travel south. He arrived at a huge forest which he lit up with a fire stick. The smoke sent a signal to the people at Ikara, telling them he was coming to lead the ceremony. While the fire was burning, he cooked a couple of muku mai (ceremonial damper). But it wasn't only the people who read the smoke signals.

Two Muda serpents who were living at Akurra Awi (Serpents' Water Hole) read them as well. They decided to follow Yurlu down to the ceremony ground. The Akurra (serpents) rested near where the town of Copley is today. Curling around themselves they formed two mountains there. The Arkurra Miru (male serpent) formed the small hill to the west. The Akurra Artu (female serpent) formed the big hill to the east.

Just then, people looked up and saw bright shining stars over the hills. That meant it was time to begin the initiation ceremony. But what they thought were stars were actually the eyes of the Akurra shining bright, looking down at them.

When Yurlu went past, the two Arkurra (serpents) started to follow him. He knew they were on his trail, so he went quickly. He carried on until he reached Pukartu ochre pit which was on flat land then. He picked up arlku (ochre) there because he was taking it for the ceremony.

It was a very sacred place and a very special ochre.