

Tea time at the right time for WA youth

By MEL WILLIAMS

CONNECTION to country is of vital importance to the Noongar people, who consider themselves to be the custodians of the lands, waters and skies of Noongar Boodja.

This encompasses the entire South West region of Western Australia.

As One Nyitting is a Noongar group that has formed to help its people develop a deeper connection to this country and keep its youth away from the justice system.

Its vision is to have more young people taking pride in caring for the land and its culture.

The As One Nyitting group was formed 10 years ago by Rob and Zoe Davis under the cultural authority and guidance of Rob's father and Elder, Trevor Davis.

It now involves their whole family, who are passionate about the environment and want to make a difference in their community.

Mr Davis said, as custodians of the lands, waters and skies of Noongar Boodja, the Noongar people had a responsibility to care for country.

"Country is our ancestor, our kin and when country is healthy, we are all healthy," Mr Davis said.

"Together we need to build a greener, safer environment for all living creatures."

As One Nyitting provides opportunities for Aboriginal children to connect to ancient Noongar culture through practical educational cultural programs.

These programs are also designed to strengthen their sense of pride, respect, self-determination, resilience, leadership, honour and self-esteem.

Mr Davis said First Nations people have been living and practicing ancient ways for about 3000 generations and it was hugely important to connect first nation children to the land through cultural customs, protocols and knowledge.

He said teaching them to care for country involved showing respect for the whole ecosystem and safeguarding nature.

"This includes bringing back lost species, restoring waterways, understanding the rich soils and building natural spaces for fauna to thrive," Mr Davis said.

Stemming from its environmental work with students, As One Nyitting has now branched out into the production of Australian bush teas.

Trading as Djilz Bush Tea, Mr Davis said the idea was to bring the unique tastes of Noongar and Nimanburu country to carefully crafted bush tea blends, safeguarded through DreamTime Bush Tea Alliance.

"What sets us apart is our commitment to sustainably sourcing and preserving the traditional methods of preparing bush tea, which is known as Djilz," he said.

"Our tea is harvested and blended to honour the traditions of the lands around Perth and Broome."

The Noongar and Nimanburu tea leaves are used and blends include signature, madjar, wildberry, wildfruit, wildflower honey, lemon myrtle, jilungin and Kakadu plum.

As One Nyitting recently received a State government Value Add Investment Grant to expand its range of bush teas.

These grants are about investing in the future of WA's agrifood and beverage sectors and there were eight recipients to share a funding pool of \$437,000.

Mr Davis said the grant would help to grow the Djilz business, with its revenue flowing back to As One Nyitting for the important work it was doing with Aboriginal youth and cultural empowerment.

"Every one of our teas supports our community," he said.

"And we use sacred recipes, giving many of our blends healing powers."

Mr Davis said the teas all had Noongar ingredients and flavours associated with country.

He said from tree to tea, As One Nyitting controlled the process of tea production.

The Noongar people collect the leaves for the tea on country and, to date, these have been processed to tea by hand using traditions of the elders.

The organisation is in the process of securing a mechanised processing plant.

The Noongar Tea Leaves are collected from As One Nyitting's Gidgegannup property, which is 170 hectares of pristine bush on the Darling Scarp.

Some of this area is land that has been regenerated and preserved through As One Nyitting cultural and education programs.

"It is a real biodiversity hotspot and we get all the ingredients we need from this area of bush," Mr Davis said.

"We are very focused on preserving this important country and making sure we are healing the country as it

heals us."

In line with this healing philosophy, As One Nyitting is working with ChemCentre WA to analyse the health, safety and medicinal qualities of its teas to benefit consumers.

"Our tea blends have been around for a long time and the ingredients are well-trusted," Mr Davis said.

"We have a tree-to-tea model, where we do all the preparation and processing."

"Our goal is to propagate ingredients for bush tea, prepare and preserve country and heal the areas of the bush that have been over-used."

Djilz Bush Tea can be found online, www.djilz.com

Mr Davis said there had recently been a major rebranding of Djilz Bush Tea, with new packaging and a re-designed label.

This was showcased at the 2025 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development/Buy West Eat Best Meet the Buyer trade show initiative.

Mr Davis said the As One Nyitting group strived to maintain the authenticity of Djilz Bush Tea and protect it from being copied.

He said, to this end, it has intellectual property rights over the product.

Mr Davis said Djilz Bush Tea was a unique niche product that was finding markets across Australia, backed by the message that it was a safe and healthy product with traditional medicinal and health benefits.

□ More information: Go to asonenyitting.com



□ Rob and Zoe Davis are the driving force behind Djilz Bush Tea, which is packaged and processed by Noongar people and funds programs for Aboriginal youth.