

# Gary Shuttleworth



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### Waiting for the Rain

This submitted artwork, titled "Waiting for the Rain", is about the relationship between the Indigenous Peoples of the Tweed region and the bond they have to the Tweed River. The river has always been a natural resource of the Tweed region and to the Traditional owners, water was life. In dry times, fresh water was of the utmost importance. It sustained important plants on riverbanks, wetlands where fish and turtle's breed and was the hub for drinking, fishing, and washing. The Tweed River and its surrounding creeks and waterways was central to intergenerational knowledge, cultural transfer, and time with family. This is still true to this day and there are thousands of years of memories in these water places. Aboriginal People have carefully managed our waterways for thousands of years, and keeping our rivers healthy is vital to healing our country. This painting depicts the deep blue of the Tweed River that runs through the centre of the painting with wide sandy beaches on either side. It shows various campsites on these banks which moved regularly as they waited for the rains to come, for the river to swell up high and be rich with mullet, turtles, stingray, and flathead again. The top circles show larger camping spots by smaller watering holes that feed into the river. These have dwindled from the lack of rain but are used instead of hunting in the shallow waters of the dry river, allowing it to recover before the rain. The banks of the river below meet the dry bushy landscape of the Tweed that will soon once again become rainforest. Overlooking are the volcanic mountains of the Northern Rivers including the highest of these, Wollumbin.