



## The language of the Adelaide Plains **Kulurdu Marni Ngathaitya! Sounds Good to Me!** A Kurna Learner's Guide

**ROB AMERY AND JANE SIMPSON, ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANNE BEST**

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Few resources exist to assist the learner of Kurna, the language of the Adelaide Plains, South Australia. This Kurna Learners' Guide, *Kulurdu Marni Ngathaitya!*, has been developed as a step-by-step guide for learning to speak the language and to assist those teachers of Kurna language. It assumes no previous knowledge, though of course many Kurna people will know some of the language already.

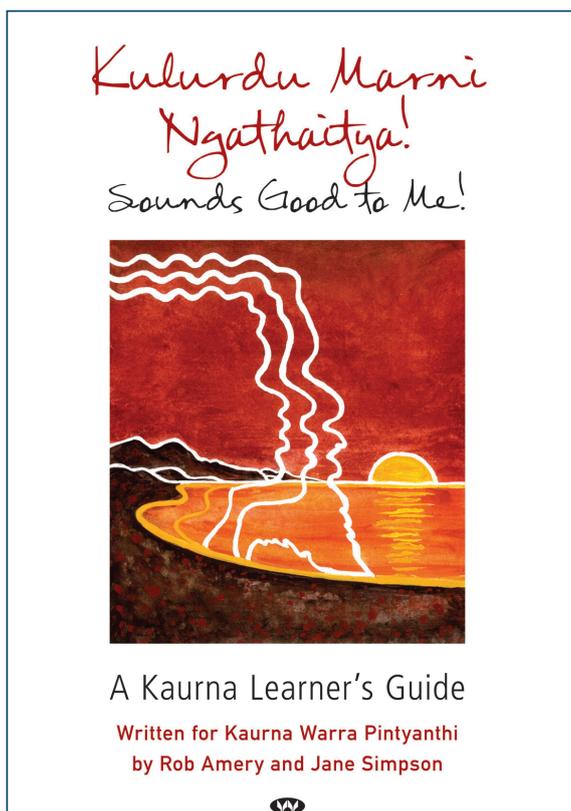
Organised into two main sections, part one (chapters 1–16) introduces common words and expressions for use in a range of contexts on topics that are often spoken about, allowing the learner to dive straight into the language. Part two (chapters 17–25) guides the learner through various aspects of Kurna grammar and sentence construction and provides more detailed explanation. Language learning is rewarding. Learning Kurna can provide insights into Kurna culture and the way of thinking of Kurna people as they lived in the nineteenth century.

'[W]hen I first looked at [this book], it almost brought tears to my eyes, I liked it so much ... This book is a great model for an extremely useful set of materials for people trying to learn a 'sleeping' language.'  
– Professor Leanne Hinton, Professor Emerita, Linguistics, University of California – Berkeley

'Awakening a sleeping beauty tongue is a remarkable achievement of ethical, aesthetic and utilitarian significance. This textbook is an exquisite contribution to Revivalistics, a new field emerging in the wake of greater concern about intangible heritage, intellectual sovereignty, human wellbeing and social justice. *Kulurdu marni ngathaitya!*' – Professor Ghil'ad Zuckermann, Chair of Linguistics and Endangered Languages, The University of Adelaide

**Rob Amery** started working with Kurna in 1989 and began running Kurna language workshops in the early 1990s. He then studied the language intensively for a PhD which was published in 2000. Rob has published widely on the Kurna language and efforts to reclaim it and has been instrumental in setting up programs in schools and universities. Working together with Kurna people, he continues to research many aspects of the language. In 2002, together with Kauwanu Lewis and Ngarpadla Alitya, he set up Kurna Warra Pintyanthi to plan and develop the language and to establish a process to deal with numerous requests for names and translations.

**Jane Simpson** studied Linguistics at ANU in 1975–76 where she undertook a major assignment on the Kurna language, tracking down old sources. She has taken a keen interest in Kurna and other closely related Thura-Yura languages ever since. In 1991 she made the handwritten Teichelmann (1857) Kurna wordlist available in typescript and electronic form.



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