

# Re: Eating "Naturally"

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.nutrition/2006-03/msg00345.html>

---

- *From:* "TC" <[tunderbar@xxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:tunderbar@xxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* 16 Mar 2006 13:47:44 -0800
- 

George Cherry wrote:

Here's my take on what's "natural" for humankind to eat. I'm talking here about our GENOME, which was formed a long time before domesticated animals, agriculture, and supermarkets. My ancient, ancient ancestors (whose genome was very, very similar to mine) were hunter-gatherers who successfully gathered a greater deal more than they successfully hunted. It's really hard to down an ungulate with a stick or a rock, especially when the deer or antelope can run 3-4 times faster than you. So these Paleolithic guys and gals ate lots of stuff that they could pull out of the ground or off trees or pick off bushes. I channel a Paleolithic guy named Geeorgius who assures me he ate mostly veggies, fruits, nuts, and seeds. The most sophisticated food preparation thing he did was soak grains overnight in water in a hollow gourd so that he could chew and digest them. He got to eat meat about once or twice a year when he got really lucky throwing a rock at a rabbit or chasing a coyote away from an antelope it downed. I have science to back me up. The only essential vitamin or mineral found only in meat (not in plant foods) is vitamin B-12. The human body can store B-12 for many years. So if you eat meat about once every year, you're all set with respect to what you need from meat. As for milk, I agree that it's unnatural for human adults to drink it. However, my ancestors did gather eggs. BTW, there's plenty of protein in nuts, seeds, legumes, and grains. So, I'm a "near vegan", which accords well with my desire not to cause any more suffering than really necessary.

George

[http://www.mcguinnessonline.com/australia/aussie\\_people\\_aboriginals1.htm](http://www.mcguinnessonline.com/australia/aussie_people_aboriginals1.htm)

## Re: Eating "Naturally"

### Their Food & Diet

Hunting is a word that is used to identify the practice of catching and killing 'game' either as a sport or as a source of food. Gathering is the collecting of food such as plants, berries, eggs or insects. Fishing is another method of obtaining food.

The Aborigines who lived in areas which included waterways such as rivers or were on the seacoast, made canoes from bark or tree trunks.

The Eora / Dharawal made canoes which carried up to three or four people. In other areas, the canoes were much larger and included dugouts and outrigger types. They were made from tree trunks (not just the bark).

Aboriginal men and women who lived in coastal regions or in areas where there were rivers, caught and collected food by fishing. Males usually used spears, while females used hand lines with hooks made from shells and rocks as sinkers. Fish species were also caught by the use of fish traps. Some traps were made from rocks in the form of a pen. At high tide fish could swim in and out of them, but some were trapped within the rock walls at low tide. Traps were also constructed from sticks and tree branches across rivers to make a dam. When sufficient numbers were trapped the people would enter the water, scoop up the fish in their hands and throw them onto the river bank to be collected for cooking.

Males hunted animals such as kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas and possums. But also reptiles (snakes and lizards) and birds such as ducks, swans and parrots. They used spears and boomerangs to hit, catch and kill – but also climbed trees to get their food. Sometimes they hunted in parties or groups and each person shared the catch. On these occasions some of the men acted as 'beaters' driving animals towards another group of men who were armed and waiting to spear the animals that were driven towards them. Sometimes they used fire to drive the animals forward.

Aboriginal woman (often carrying babies on their backs) and assisted by young children left the camp on a daily basis searching and collecting berries, yams and other sources of food.

Some writers have suggested that 'gathering' provided the bulk or main source of food for the Australian Aborigines. It has also been said that some tribes people were mainly 'vegetarians' because 'meat' was not readily available in some areas. It is also a fact that some Aboriginal people ate more marine life (fish, oysters and mussels etc) because these food items were predominant in the area in which they lived.

## Re: Eating "Naturally"

Survival was highly dependent upon knowledge of the life-cycle of flora and fauna and it is certain that the Aborigines had excellent understanding as they learned to track, hunt and gather food from when they were young children.

In 1972 Australian Anthropologist, Kenneth Maddock, said: "Australia is the only continent to have been populated until modern times exclusively by hunters and gatherers..." (The Australian Aborigines. A Portrait of their society). He also quoted statistics showing that in 10,000 BC all human beings (100%) were hunters and gatherers; by 1,500 AD this had reduced to about 1% because mankind had generally developed skills in the cultivation of crops and domestication of animals. By 1960 only 0.001% of the world's population were hunters and gatherers.

The fact that the Australian Aborigines did not cultivate land to grow crops or domesticate animals, they have often been portrayed as being a backward race.

However this can be disputed. After all, the Aborigines did harvest crops in the sense that they made a form of flour from various types of flora. Domestication of animals was not possible due to the type (or perhaps kind) of animals that roamed the continent of Australia. For example kangaroos, wombats, possums and snakes.

Sheep and cow were introduced by Europeans. But there is evidence to suggest that the Aborigines of the Cowpastures district (Campbelltown area) herded and killed cattle that had escaped from the Port Jackson area circa 1788 and found there way to that area.

These cattle had been transported from Africa and before vandals destroyed it, there was a cave in the Campbelltown area that was called Bull Cave, because of the drawings of cattle on the walls.

Those Aborigines who lived in coastal regions or near waterways caught fish and eels in a number of ways. Males often used a spear but are known to have also built fish-traps by making rectangular areas with rocks, that stood above the water at low tide. This meant that fish could swim into the traps at high tide and were trapped as the tide receded.

In the Illawarra district the Aborigines were often observed barricading (blocking) rivers with tree branches and logs. As fish swam down the river towards the sea they were trapped behind the dam where they were scooped up and thrown onto the shore. The Aborigines also fished from rocks and beaches using hand lines made from plants and hooks made from shells. Stones were used as sinkers.

Aboriginal people had to catch and collect their food, each and every day of their life. They were successful at doing this because they had an intimate knowledge of food-chain cycles, the migration patterns of birds and of the habitat where they lived. No doubt there were times

## Re: Eating "Naturally"

when there were food shortages. But the essential point is that the Aboriginal people had a complete understanding of the flora and fauna within their tribal territory. They also engaged in land management practices – mainly burning grass and weeds.

Their totemic practices protected species because a person could not eat his own totem and others needed permission to catch another person's totem on his land. For example, a man whose totem was a waterfowl would not eat that bird (otherwise it would be a form of cannibalism). Other members of the tribe could not hunt the bird in the territory that belonged to another man. This provided a safe environment for different species.

\*\*\*\*\*

TC

.