



Torres Strait Islander zugubal (constellations)

Mura Gubal Gedira project

This star map was produced in 2007 by Education Queensland's Indigenous Schooling Support Unit (ISSU) Far North Queensland as part of the Mura Gubal Gedira Torres Strait Cross Cultural Framework. It is reproduced with kind permission.

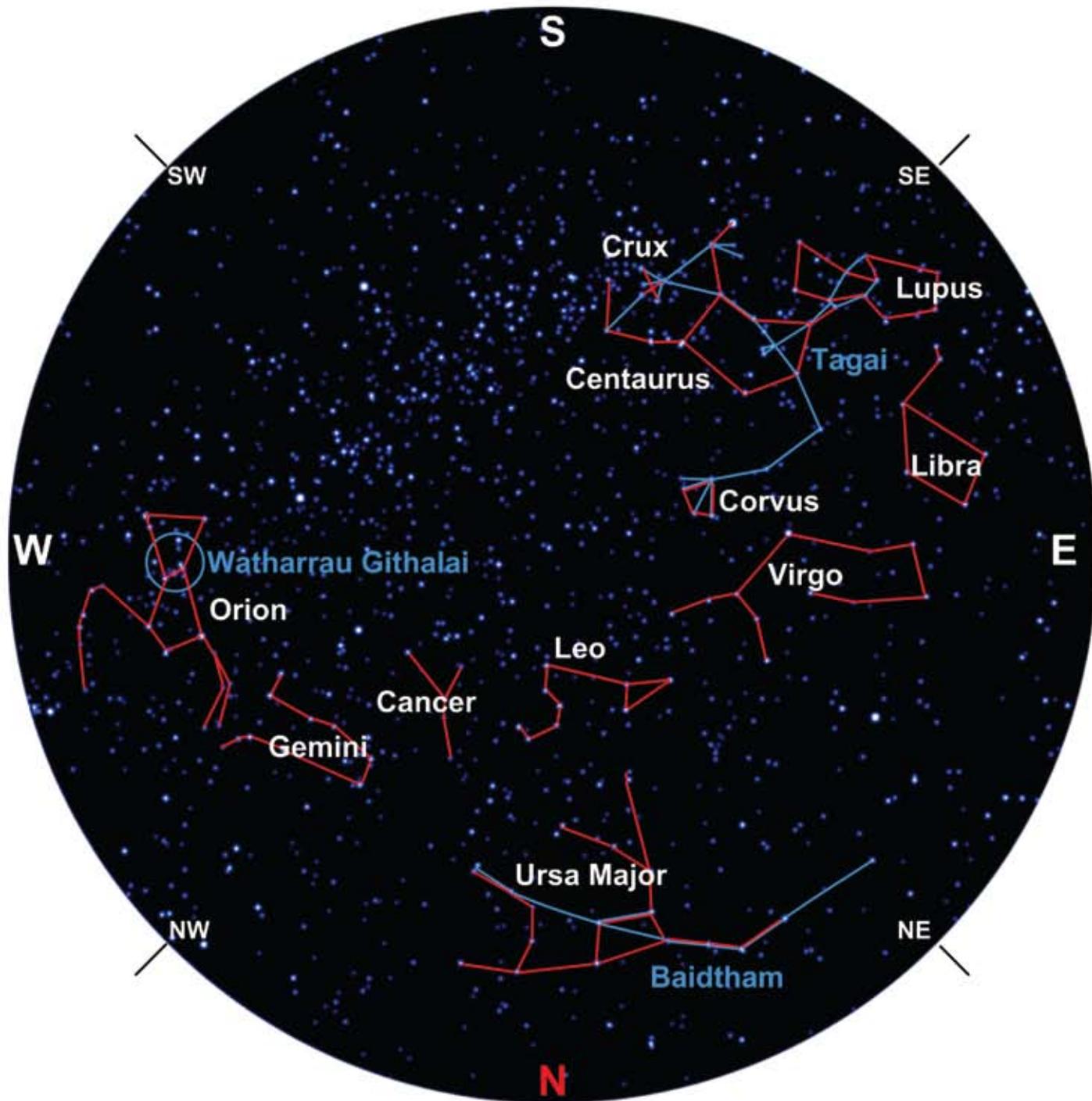
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The star map on the next page needs to be printed in colour to clarify the shapes of the Torres Strait Islander zugubal, shown in blue, and the Western constellations, shown in red. The zugubal are powerful spirits who influence the seasons, winds and waters, and who can be seen in the sky as stars.

This information, and much more, will be available in 2008 as part of the Mura Gubal Gedira Torres Strait Cross Cultural Framework CD.

For further information contact Leigh Schelks, Principle of ISSU FNQ, by phone on (07) 4044 5600 or by post to PO Box 268 Cairns 4870. Or look online at either the ISSU site <www.issu.com.au> or the Indigenous Education and Training Alliance (IETA) site <www.ieta.ash.org.au>. As of January 2008 these sites were undergoing some redesign, but the most likely path is Projects > Crossing Cultures.





Torres Strait Islander Zugubal

Zugubal (constellations) were very important to the Islander's lives. They governed when they planted, hunted and when they held certain ceremonies. The best known of these Zugubal was Tagai. His form is huge in the sky, and actually includes stars from several different constellations - Crux (The Southern Cross), Centaurus (The Bull), Lupus and Corvus (The Crow). His position foretold the monsoon and was an aid in navigation.

Also important was the position of the Milky Way. It could be used to gauge currents, critical to the survival of Torres Strait Islanders. To the left is a star map, where Zugubal are shown against well-known constellations (taken at 10pm 1-4-2005). Note the unusual orientation used by astronomers with their star maps.

