

# Scarred trees

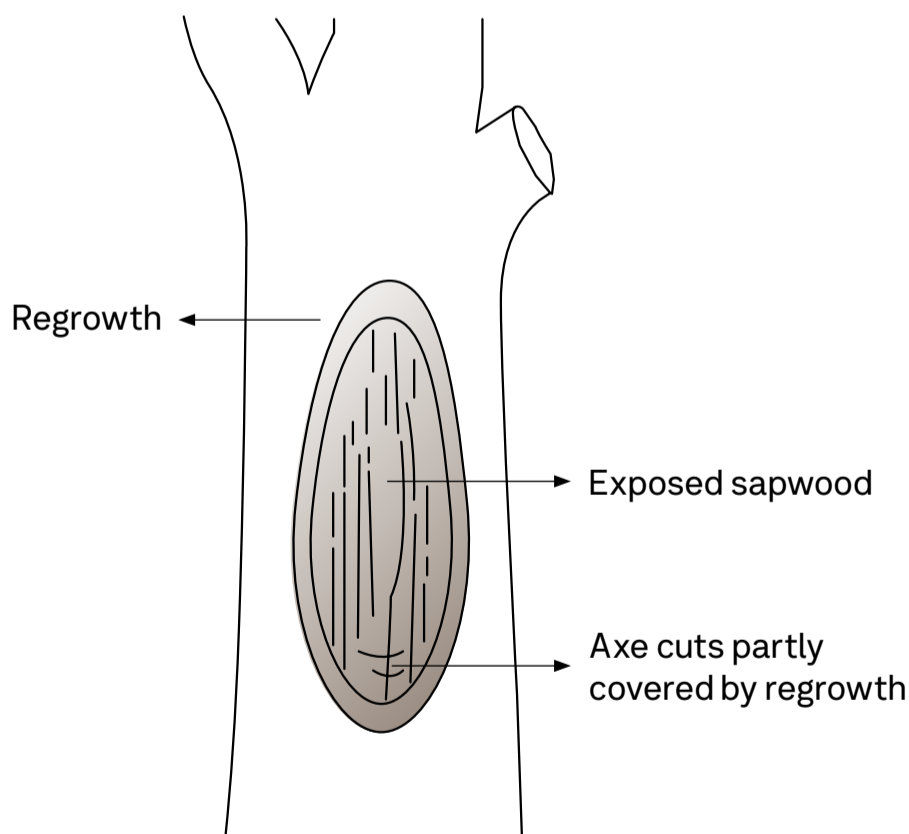
**Scarred trees are found all over Victoria, wherever there are mature native trees.**

Scarred trees provide valuable clues about the use of perishable materials by Aboriginal people. Because wood often rots away, only a small number of Aboriginal wooden artefacts have survived.





Aboriginal people caused scars on trees by removing the bark. The scars, which vary in size, expose the sapwood on the trunk or branch of a tree.

To remove bark, Aboriginal people cut an outline of the shape they wanted using axes. The bark was then levered off. Sometimes the axe marks are still visible on the sapwood of the tree, but usually the marks will be hidden because the bark has grown back.

Aboriginal people knew how to remove the bark without killing the tree. The shape of the scar is often a clue to what the bark was used for.



The bark were used for:

-  Canoe – gurrong
-  Vessel / Container/ Bowl – tarnuk
-  Shield – gayaam
-  Shelter – wilam

## Stages of shield manufacture

**A basalt axe is used to outline the shape of the shield before levering off the bark.**




Images supplied by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

**‘After removing the bark, I heated it up and stood on it for an hour to flatten it before I could make the shape of the shield. I wore boots but this would have been hard to do in the past.’**

Bobby Mullins - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder

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