

## HOW THE OPOSSUM GOT HIS BEAUTIFUL SOFT FUR.

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Lan-goer, the Opossum, and Jal-bu, the Native Cat, were womba (men).

Langoor always "ate himself," -- he killed plenty opossums as he liked opossum meat better than any other. He used to pluck the ban-dal (fur) off the langoor he killed, and put it in their stomachs to keep it nice and clean. When he had a big bundle of fur, he put it on a slab of paper-bark (baggal) or in a bark vessel, and mixed it up with ashes. Then he beat, and beat, the ashes and the fur with a fire-stick to make the fur nice and soft and white.

He made the fur into won-dong-oo (forehead bands), koon-dil, (arm-bands), min-jil and jirr-ji (aprons) and bindi-al (belts). It was Langoor the Opossum who first made all these things.

Jalbu, the Native Cat, was jealous because Langoor's fur was so soft and clean, and jealous when he saw Langoor spinning the fur so easily, for when Jalbu tried to spin his hair into string, it was too stiff and hard. He became very sulky, and one day he fought Langoor.

They fought with fire-sticks. Langoor had a good crackling fire-stick of boon-der-ung wood, and he hit Jalbu with it, and made Jalbu's hair so stiff and straight that it could never be strung. Jalbu had a fire-stick of jag-gal wood, which he picked up by mistake, but when he hit Langoor with it, it only made Langoor's hair more soft and white.

When Langoor hit Jalbu, he said, "You can't make anything, and you can't sleep in a tree, as I can. All the trees I sleep in will always make something, but your baa-loo (trees) can't make anything."

Langoor showed the jaj-jala womba (Broome-country men) how to make won-dong-oo, koon-dil (head-bands, arm-bands) and all the fur string and puffs and balls for their nooloo (dances), so the jajjala womba never used any other but Langoor's fur.