

Ngout Ngout

This is the story about the spirit of Ngout Ngout, who long ago was kicked out of her group by the elders, because she had broken a rule of the Ngarrindjeri people.

Ngout Ngout felt that she shouldn't take the punishment that the elders had given her and wanted revenge on the Ngarrindjeri people. But she was caught and speared and her spirit was still unrested because she wanted to get revenge on the people. One of the ways the spirit Ngout Ngout gets revenge is by enchanting and deceiving people. For example, one day some children were told to go and collect wood, but not to go too far away. So they went gathering wood, but one child went off alone. The Ngout Ngout spirit saw the chance for revenge and changed herself into a flower. The child was enchanted by the flower and picked it but then another appeared just a little further away. When the child tired of picking flowers the Ngout Ngout appeared as a bird.

By this time the other children were returning to camp but the Ngout Ngout, being a wicked spirit, kept on tricking the child, until the child finally realised it was lost in the bush.

So when you go into the bush stay within the boundary where you are told to go by your parents and look after the birds and plants and animals because they could be the Ngout Ngout.

Barney Lindsay, Winkie, 1988. From *The Ngarrindjeri People: Aboriginal People of the River Murray, Lakes and Coorong: An Aboriginal studies course for secondary students in years 8–10s*, SA Department of Education, 1990