What are Rock Painting sites?
These sites are where paintings and pictures are painted onto a rock surface, usually in a rock shelter or near the mouth of a cave. The “paints” used were made from materials found locally or traded from another source. Materials such as red, yellow and white ochre, white pipeclay, gypsum and charcoal were most commonly used.

Why are Rock Painting sites important?
Rock paintings are highly significant to Aboriginal people as they show tribal boundaries, hunting grounds and dreamtime stories. Rock paintings in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment are extremely rare as most have been destroyed or lost through clearing and urban development.
Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage on your property

There are many aspects of the landscape which contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. Aboriginal cultural heritage is far broader than just identifying archaeological sites. Cultural heritage values may include physical and/or non-physical and, for example, may include cultural practices, knowledge, songs and stories, art, buildings and human remains.

If you intend to carry out any environmental improvements on your land, you need to consider whether this may impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

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Funding is also available for landholders wishing to manage Aboriginal cultural sites or values on their land.

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Goulburn (02) 4828 6747 | Moss Vale (02) 4861 9010 | Windsor (02) 4587 0050 | Lithgow (02) 6350 3110 www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au

If you find an item on your property you can contact HNCMA’s Catchment Officer for Aboriginal Communities on (02) 4587 0059

The HNCMA would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Namoi CMA in developing these resources

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What are Ceremonial sites?
Aboriginal people carried out many religious ceremonies, and constructed quite elaborate places to hold them. Ceremonial grounds were cleared of trees and vegetation and often surrounded by raised earth or a stone ring. The area was often surrounded by carved trees and had figures made of earth relating to important cultural heroes.

Why are Ceremonial sites important?
Ceremonial sites were used for a number of reasons both male and female. Examples are men’s and women’s business, initiation ceremonies, hunting and tribal war dances and birth sites. Men’s and women’s sites were located in different areas due to the sensitivity of certain ceremonies.
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What are Camping sites?
Camping sites are areas of Aboriginal habitation. They are places where people lived and contain evidence of Aboriginal activities such as food debris, charcoal and implements and shells or bones.

Why are Camping sites important?
Camping sites are a window into how Aboriginal people lived. Searching through old remains of fires and fire pits can uncover evidence of what people used to eat. Using that information Aboriginal people can be traced across the landscape with their movements following seasonal plants and animals.
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**What are Scarred Trees?**
Aboriginal people removed bark from trees for various purposes resulting in scars. Bark was removed for making coolahs, canoes and in preparation for carved trees.

**Why are Scarred Trees important?**
Scarred trees provide valuable clues about the use of perishable materials by Aboriginal people. Because wood often rots away, museums have only a small number of Aboriginal wooden artefacts. Most of our information on Aboriginal use of wood comes from the writings of early settlers and explorers. Scarred trees are easier to find than many other archaeological sites.
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What are Midden Sites?
Middens are places where the debris from eating shellfish and other food has accumulated over time. They can contain: shellfish remains, bones of fish, birds, land and sea mammals eaten, charcoal from campfires, and tools made from stone.

Why are Middens important?
Middens are highly significant to Aboriginal people as they tell us a lot about Aboriginal activities in the past. The types of shells in a midden can show the type of marine environment that was used, and the time of year when Aboriginal people used it. Midden sites in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment are extremely important as a large number have been destroyed or lost through clearing and urban development.
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What are Rock Art sites?
Rock art consists of engraved outlines of figures created on rock surfaces by pecking, hammering or scraping. The sandstone around Sydney is rich in engraving sites, with a unique style of outlined figures.

Why are Rock Art sites important?
Rock art carvings are highly significant to Aboriginal people as they show tribal boundaries, ceremonial sites, hunting grounds and dreamtime stories. In the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment remaining rock art sites are extremely important as a large number have been destroyed or lost through clearing and urban development.
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What are Hand Stencil sites?
These sites are where hand prints have been outlined onto a rock surface, usually in a rock shelter or near the mouth of a cave. The “paints” used were made from materials found locally or traded from another source. Materials such as red, yellow and white ochre, were most commonly used.

Why are Hand Stencil sites important?
Hand stencils are highly significant to Aboriginal people as they record people’s presence and association with a site. Hand stencils in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment are extremely rare as most have been destroyed or lost through clearing and urban development.
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What are Stone Tools?
A stone tool is an artefact. Stone tools include finished axes, knives and digging blades.

Why are Stone Tools important?
Stone tools are an important link to identifying camping, trading and war grounds; ceremonial sites or food preparation sites. Implements such as axe heads and small cutting blades were used in these areas. Quality stone tools were highly valued and traded extensively across the country.
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What are Stone Artefacts?
An artefact is anything which has been made or modified by humans. The term “Stone Artefact” includes both the finished implement and the debris (or by-product) of its manufacture.

Why are Stone Artefacts important?
Stone artefacts are an important link to identifying camping, trading or food preparation sites. Implements such as axe heads and small cutting blades were manufactured in these areas.

Stone artefact sites can also link traditional trading grounds for neighbouring language groups.
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**What are Axe Grinding Grooves?**

Axe grinding grooves are an Aboriginal site formed as a result of the shaping and sharpening of stone implements called edge-ground axes or hatchets. Grinding groove sites are usually found on sandstone close to water.

**Why are Axe Grinding Grooves important?**

Edge-ground axe grinding grooves are important to Aboriginal people as they are used as markers in the landscape to direct people to good hunting grounds, ceremonial sites and trading grounds.
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