

## History of Tea Tree Oil

*"The legendary Princess Eelemani of the Bundjalung people was the Johnny Appleseed of tea tree oil. In the legend of Eelemani we learn of a beautiful princess who has to leave her true lover and travel through the bushland of coastal New South Wales. The journey was long and the forest trail was unknown to Eelemani. She was concerned that the return to her loved one and family would be difficult. Eelemani was no ordinary princess and so she spoke to the Gods of the earth and planets and was rewarded with special seeds that were to be sown along the trails.*

*As Eelemani walked through the forests, the bell birds called reassuringly and willie wagtails followed protectively through their territory. The special seeds were scattered on the moist, fertile forest soil. Falling to the ground, they grew roots and shoots and flew towards the sunlight. So remarkable were these trees that their beautiful white paper bark stood out from all the other trees. At night the polished sheen reflected the light of the moon showing the trail. Eelemani felt so safe knowing that the Gods had given her such a powerful marker to protect her on her journey.*

*And so the trees of Eelemani flourished and over the aeons of time the Bundjalung people came to learn of the magical properties: Just as the trees had protected Eelemani, the leaves were found to protect against infection and skin ailments.*

*It is difficult to know the truth of the story that Banks, the Endeavour botanist brewed some tea from a 'tea like' plant and hence created 'Australian Tea Tree'. Certainly the story of Eelemani is more credible - especially if you have tasted tea made from either Leptospermum or Melaleuca spp."*

**From the opening speech by Dr Alan Twomey at the 1995 Tea Tree Oil National Conference - from folklore to fact in August 1995**