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### **BUSH REMEDIES – BEYOND THE BLACK STUMP**

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For over 40,000 years the Australian Aboriginal has depended entirely on their environment for sustenance, protection and comfort. The flora and fauna of this harsh, but bountiful land are unique and because of its remoteness, the first European settlers who landed at Botany Bay in 1788, quickly became dependent for their very survival on their observations of the healing practices of the indigenous people.

This paper will discuss the way in which some of our bush remedies have evolved from the use of materials from plants and animals and how they have been promoted using the techniques of the quacks and medicine men of the old world for centuries.

In Australia, various species of reptiles and snakes link the two popular remedies used as examples and the tantalising question is then asked if the performance of these outback “snake oil” practitioners could have led to greater benefits in treating bites from venomous bush creatures.

Pharmacy has traditional links with snakes. From the goddess Hygiea and the universal antidote Theriaca to such intriguing tales of viper and serpent grease used in Albinola’s ointment, which reputedly became the famous Holloway’s Ointment.

The stories of J.C.Marconi and his Goanna Salve, and Alfred Eichorn and his remedy, are equally as fascinating,