

Bruce Watson



22 Tynan St. West Preston Vic 3072

0407 898 168

jandbwatson@gmail.com

www.brucewatsonmusic.com

Lake Bolac Eel Festival 2026

Songs of Eels & Country for ukulele



We will be playing and learning a selection of easy songs about eels and Country while also learning some ukulele techniques and skills.

You can download a copy of these workshop notes either via this QR code, or by putting your name on the mailing list



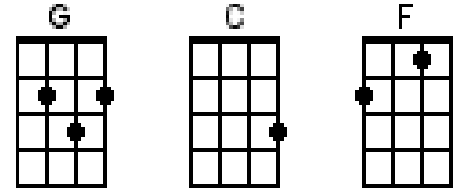
All arrangements by Bruce Watson
For educational use only
Not for Sale



WE HONOUR THE LAND – Acknowledgement of Country

by Laura Brearley

Repeat every line



G **C** **G**
 We honour the land that we're living on (*We honour*)

F **C** **G**
 We honour the Country and the Old Ones

G **C** **G**
 We sing up Country and we sing it up strong

F **C** **G**
 For we are all connected as one

G **C** **G**
 We honour the Ones who have gone before

F **C** **G**
 We honour the wisdom of the ancient lore

G **C** **G**
 We sing up Country and we sing it up strong

F **C** **G**
 For we are all connected as one

G **C** **G**
 We honour the Earth and the Sea and Sun

F **C** **G**
 We honour the living and the life to come

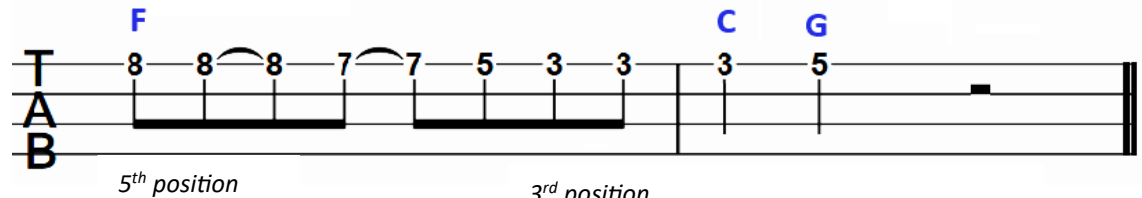
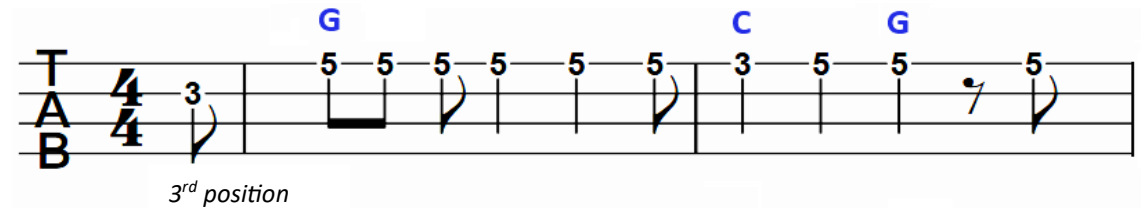
G **C** **G**
 We sing up Country and we sing it up strong

F **C** **G**
 For we are all connected as one

Strumming Pattern:

Something like this, but on the C chord, just 2 downstrokes.

1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&	1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&		
↓		↓		↑		↑	↓	↑	↓		↓		↑		↑	↓	↑



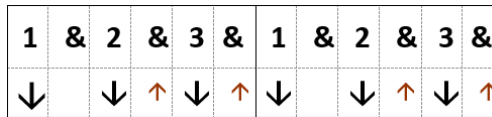
3rd position
 (or stay in 5th position and play 8 on E string instead of 3 on A string)

NALANIMINA

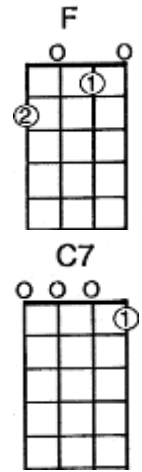
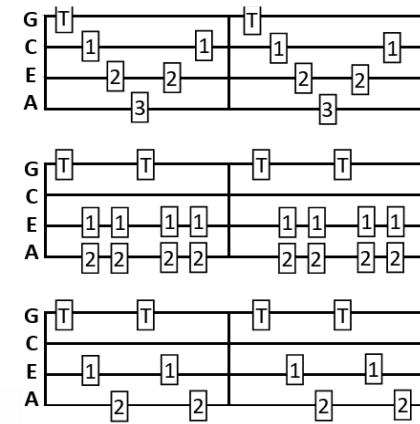
From Jim Everett, *Iutruwita*/Tasmania



Possible strumming pattern:



Possible picking patterns:



F F

4/4

TAB

0 0 0[•] 3 1 0 0 0[•] 3 1

TAB

3 3 3[•] 1 0 3 3 3[•] 1 0

Na la ni min - a Na la ni min - a

5 C7 F

TAB

3 3 3[•] 1 0 0 0 0[•] 3 1

TAB

1 1 1[•] 0 3 3 3[•] 1 0

Na la ni min - a Na la ni min - a

Nalanimina: Means both "I honour the Mother in everything I see" and "Be like bending grass" in *palawa kani*, the re-awakened language of *Iutruwita*/Tasmania.

KUYANG SONG

Kooyang is a Gunditjmara word for eels

© by the Nalderun Meeting Place mob on Djaara country, with Fay White, adapted by Bruce Watson

CHORUS:

[C] *Kooyang is a travelling fish – long journey* [G] *swum*
From the [F] *Coral* [C] *Sea* [G] *way up* [C] *north*
To the rivers down south they [Am] *come,*
To the [C] *rivers down* [G] *south they* [C] *come*

[C] Hatching out of tiny eggs in the [F] warm [C] water of the [G] Coral [C] Sea
[C] Rise up, little fish larvae – [F] float [C] on the [G] water like [C] leaves
[C] Travel down south on the [F] ocean [C] current, carried by [F] ocean [G] tides
[C] Grow as you [G] go, [C] little glass eels, [F] swim [C] and [G] wriggle and [C] glide *(repeat underlined words)*

[C] Travel on down 'til you come to where [F] fresh [C] water [G] meets the [C] sea
[C] Dash through the waves with a splash and a quiver [F] into the [C] river [G] estua[C]-ry
[C] Find fresh food there, [F] feed and [C] feed and [F] feed till you get much [G] longer
[C] Swim up [G]-stream, [C] crawl overland, grow [F] bigger & [C] clever & [G] strong[C]-er *(repeat underlined words)*

CHORUS

[C] Imagine all the ancestors – [F] travelling to the [C] rivers in [G] Kooyang [C] time
[C] Camped by the rivers when eels are plenty, [F] getting to[C]-gether for a [G] good [C] time
[C] Weaving fish traps, [F] setting [C] stones, [F] channelling fish in the [G] water
[C] Catching [G] just [C] enough to eat, [F] smoking [C] some for [G] la[C]ter *(repeat underlined words)*

BRIDGE: But [F] watch how they [C] let the [G] big ones [C] go

[C] – Change is [Am] coming

Those [F] great big [C] mama and [G] papa [C] eels

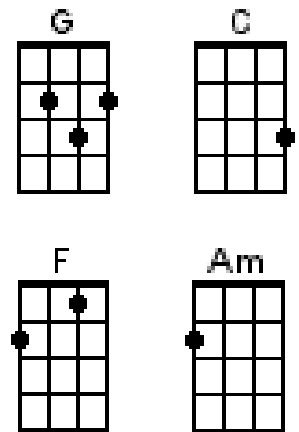
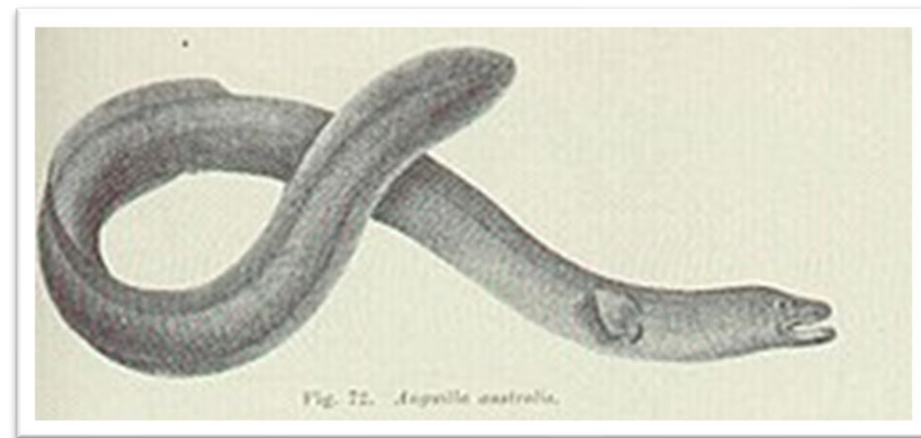
[C] – Change is [Am] coming

[F] Stomachs shrivel [C] up - and they [G] eat no [C] more

But they [F] start making [C] eggs [G] inside [C] them

And they [F] wanna get [C] back to the [G] salty [C] sea

And [F] nothing is [C] going to [G] stop [C] them



So, [C] eels get ready, eels get steady, your[F] long, [C] long [G] swim is [C] now
[C] All the way back up the watery track, [F] four [C] hundred [G] metres [C] down
[C] Four hundred [F] metres [C] down, four [F] thousand ks and [G] then
[C] Lay those[G] eggs in the [C] Coral Sea and [F] die.
— Then it [C] starts all [G] over [C] again

CHORUS

OLD T.I.

T I is Thursday Island [Waiben]
Sung by Seaman Dan

[G] Why are you looking so **[D7]** sad, my dear
Why are you looking so **[G]** blue?
Are you thinking of someone so **[D7]** far away
In that beautiful place called T.**[G]** I.?

CHORUS:

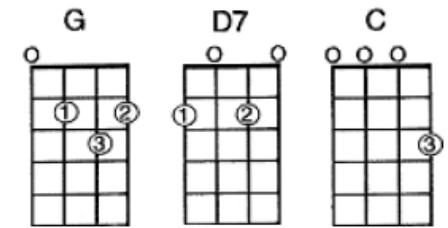
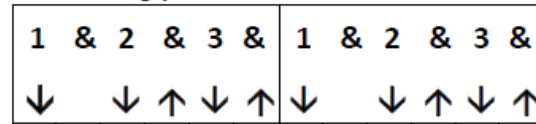
[G] Old T.I. my beautiful **[D7]** home
It's the place where I was **[G]** born
Where the moon and stars that **[C]** shine
Makes me longing for **[G]** home
— Old T.**[D7]** I. my beautiful **[G]** home

Take me across the **[C]** sea
[D7] Over the deep blue **[G]** sea
Darling won't you take **[D7]** me
Back to my home T.**[G]** I.

CHORUS

[G] Old T.I. my beautiful **[D7]** home
It's the place where I was **[G]** born
Where the moon and stars that **[C]** shine
Makes me longing for **[G]** home
— Old T.**[D7]** I. my beautiful **[G]** home

Strumming pattern



T.I. my beautiful **[C]** home,
[D7] T.I. my home sweet **[G]** home,
I'll be there for**[D7]**ever **[G]**
In that beautiful place called T.**[G]** I.

CHORUS

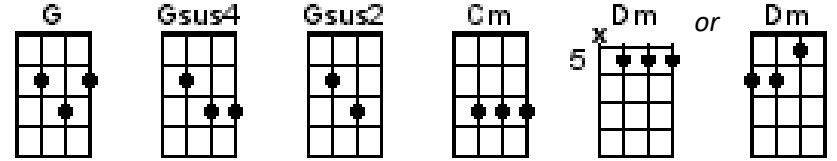
[G] Old T.I. my beautiful **[D7]** home
It's the place where I was **[G]** born
Where the moon and stars that **[C]** shine
Makes me longing for **[G]** home
— Old T.**[D7]** I. my beautiful **[G]** home



YIL LULL Joe Geia

'Yil lull' means 'Sing or 'Everyone sing'' in Guugu Yimithirr – North Qld

INTRO: G / Gsus4 alternating ('hammer' onto Gsus4)



G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
I sing for the black and the people of my land
G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
I sing for the red and the blood that's been shed
G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G sus4
Now I'm singing for the gold and a new year for young and old



CHORUS: G Gsus2 G Gsus2 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
Yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay
G Gsus2 G Gsus2 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
Yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay, yil lull lay

G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
I sing unto Him of the most high
G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
And I sing so much praises, just makes me want to cry
G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4 G Gsus4
Now I'm singing just for you, so all can recognize

CHORUS

BRIDGE: Cm Dm
I'm singing for the black, singing for the red
Cm Dm G Gsus4
I'm singing for the black, singing for the red, and the gold
G Gsus4 G Gsus4
Stories told for young and old

CHORUS

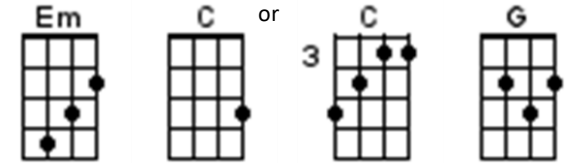
CHORUS a capella

TREATY

Yothu Yindi (Written by Mandawuy Yunupingu, Kellaway, Williams, Gurrumul Yunupingu, Mununggurr, Marika, Paul Kelly, Peter Garrett)

Suggested strumming pattern (can add more strokes!)

4	&	1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&	1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
↓	↑	↓		↓		↓		↓	↑	↓	↑	↓		↓		↓	↑



INTRO: [Em]

Well I [Em] heard it on the radio

And I saw it on the television

[C] Back in 1988

All those [Em] talking politicians

[Em] Words are easy, words are cheap

Much cheaper than our priceless land

[C] But promises can disappear

Just like [Em] writing in the sand

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now

This [Em] land was never given up

[Em] This land was never bought and sold

[C] The planting of the Union Jack

Never [Em] changed our law at all

[Em] Now two rivers run their course

Separated for so long

[C] I'm dreaming of a brighter day

When the [Em] waters will be one

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now x4

[G] Promises - Disappear - Priceless land - Destiny

Well I [Em] heard it on the Radio –

And I saw it on the Television

[C] But promises can be broken

Just like [Em] writing in the sand

[Em] Treaty Yeah Treaty Now

Treaty ma, Treaty ma, Treaty ma, Treaty ma