

# AARDBULAARDOO NGAYEYE

## WELCOME EVERYONE TO DAMBEEMANGADDEE COUNTRY



## **DAMBIMANGARI VISITOR GUIDE | 2024**

*We have made this brochure to welcome you, and help you understand who we are, our Country and Culture. We hope you feel safe, welcome and enjoy your time on our beautiful Country!*



"We would like all people to respect us and ask permission to come to visit us and our Country. We welcome visitors who really want to know"

- J Oobagooma



Woddordda boss Wandjina - Namaralay

Dambeemangaddee Country stretches along the Kimberley Coast from the Robinson River, just north of Derby, all the way to the Prince Regent River area in the North Kimberley. It has been our home for many thousands of years.

Through our Law we have cultural responsibilities to look after people when they visit our Country.

## OUR COUNTRY, PEOPLE & COMMUNITY

Dambeemangaddee are part of the **Wandjina Woongudd** community. **Wandjina Woongudd** Culture is shared by the **Ngarinyin**, **Woddordda** and **Wunambal** People.

We all share a unique body of beliefs and cultural practices going back to **Lalai**, the dreaming when the creator beings **Wandjina** and **Woongudd** helped shape the earth.

The **Wandjina** and **Woongudd** made the law for us and all the land, sea, heaven, and all living things in our Country. They set out how we must look after Culture, plants, animals, people, and Country to keep them healthy.

During our fight for land rights, our traditional homeland was separated into three Native Title claim areas: Dambimangari (**Woddordda**), Wilinggin (**Ngarinyin**) and Uunguu (**Wunambal-Gaambera**) Native Title Determinations. The Dambimangari Native Title Claim was determined in 2011 covering 16,040 square kilometres (sq km) of land and 11,896 sq km of Sea Country, including more than 700 islands.

**We say that our Country is our dambeema. Our home. When we say we are Dambeemangaddee People that means, the people from this Country. Our dambeema include Malandoom, Woonbanggoo, Loolim, Yowjab, Ilan, Jilan, Ganboo, Oomeday, Laddinyoom, Gooral and Oongaroongoo.**

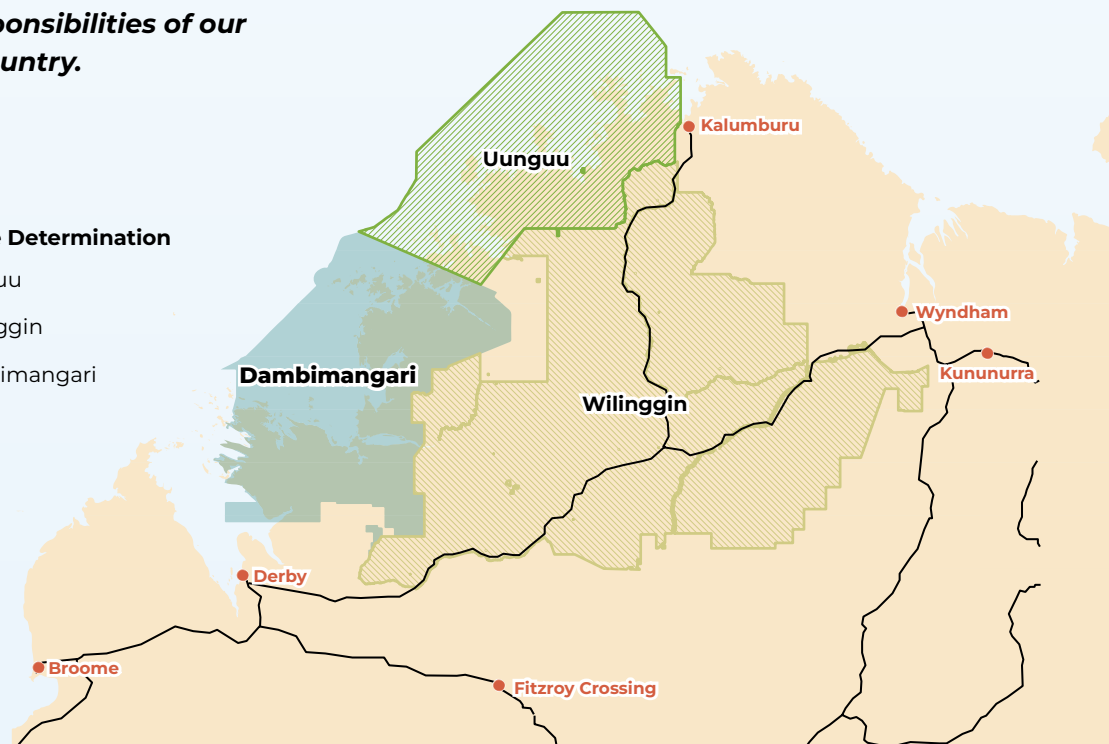
**We carry the cultural responsibilities of our ancestors to look after Country.**

### Legend

- Towns
- Roads

### Wandjina Wunggurr Native Title Determination

- ◌ Wandjina – Wunggurr Uunguu
- ◌ Wandjina – Wunngurr Willinggin
- ◌ Wandjina – Wunngurr Dambimangari



**Ngarinyin** boss Wandjina is **Wanalirra**

**Woddordda** boss Wandjina is **Namarlay**

**Wunambal** boss Wandjina is **Rimijmorro**



“The land is your Culture; it’s the land that gives you your Culture. It is something that is very special and was given to us by our Old People.”

– D Woolagoodja

## OUR CULTURE – LALAI, WANDJINA, WOONGOOD

### LALAI

“Lalai is the biggest story”

– D Woolagoodja

Country, the rules of living and all the stories come from Lalai.

Lalai is creation and our governance. It is more than a set of beliefs; it is the foundation for our daily life and shapes who we are, how we belong and how we understand Country. Lalai is passed from generation to generation.

“We still look after the Lalai. Freshening the images keeps the Wandjina happy, alive and they look after us too then.”

– D Woolagoodja

Lalai is the beginning and the end. It is our history of Wandjina and Woongoodd creating the Country. They showed us food, water and the rules for how to live in and care for Country. You can see Lalai in paintings in caves and stone arrangements, the tides, sky, islands and rivers. The names of special places come from what happened in Lalai. Events of Lalai are part of our oral traditions, songs and stories.

All of our Country holds meaning. It is more than just a place with specific features, plants, fish, creeks and animals. It is a very special place, rich in cultural sites. We have sacred sites and stories everywhere. There are special places for ceremony, burial sites, middens, engravings, stone arrangements, sites where ochres and clays were collected, fish traps, law sites with restricted access, tools, story lines connecting clan estates, seasonal camping areas, tidal flows and trading routes.



Stone arrangements from Lalai



## WANDJINA

**Wandjina** are our spirit ancestors. They came from the sky and created all living things.

**Wandjina** feature strongly in **Lalai** stories. They left their images as paintings in their shelters to remind us of our history and Culture. We have to visit them to look after them, refresh them and keep our connection alive and healthy.

*“Wandjina and Woongudd work together to create rain and cyclones: sometimes they can be dangerous like a punishment if people do the wrong thing; other times they create cyclones and rain to make sure there is plenty of bush tucker to eat”*

*- D Woolagoodja*

*“With beauty lies danger”*

*- Pete O'Connor*

## WOONGUDD

**Woongudd** are the essence of all living things including **Wandjina**, humans, animals and plants.

**Woongudd** also refers to the creator Snake. **Woongudd**, working with other **Lalai** beings like the Crocodile and **Jimbididj** (Rock Cod) carved up waterways, lifted-up Country and created the sea, islands and reefs. You can see their creations in boulders, rocky outcrops, rivers and gorges. **Woongudd** is powerful and potentially dangerous in whirlpools, waterholes and places like **Garaan-ngaddim** (Horizontal Falls).





### 'RIGHT WAY' VISITATION

We have to work together with **Wandjina** and **Woongudd** in a respectful way to make sure that we as Dambeemangarddee People are safe, and visitors to our Country are safe. There are different ways to make sure that visitors are safe, like when we welcome you and smoke your body and when people ask for permission to visit the Country.

**Wooloowa** is a type of smoking used when you are visiting or leaving Country, to welcome and cleanse you. It is a respectful custom that is

important to our people. It is a protection and cleansing mechanism for people coming to Country.

We can't always be on-Country to provide **Wooloowa**, but by purchasing our Dambimangari Visitor Pass your tour operator is asking permission for you, their passenger, to visit our approved visitor locations.

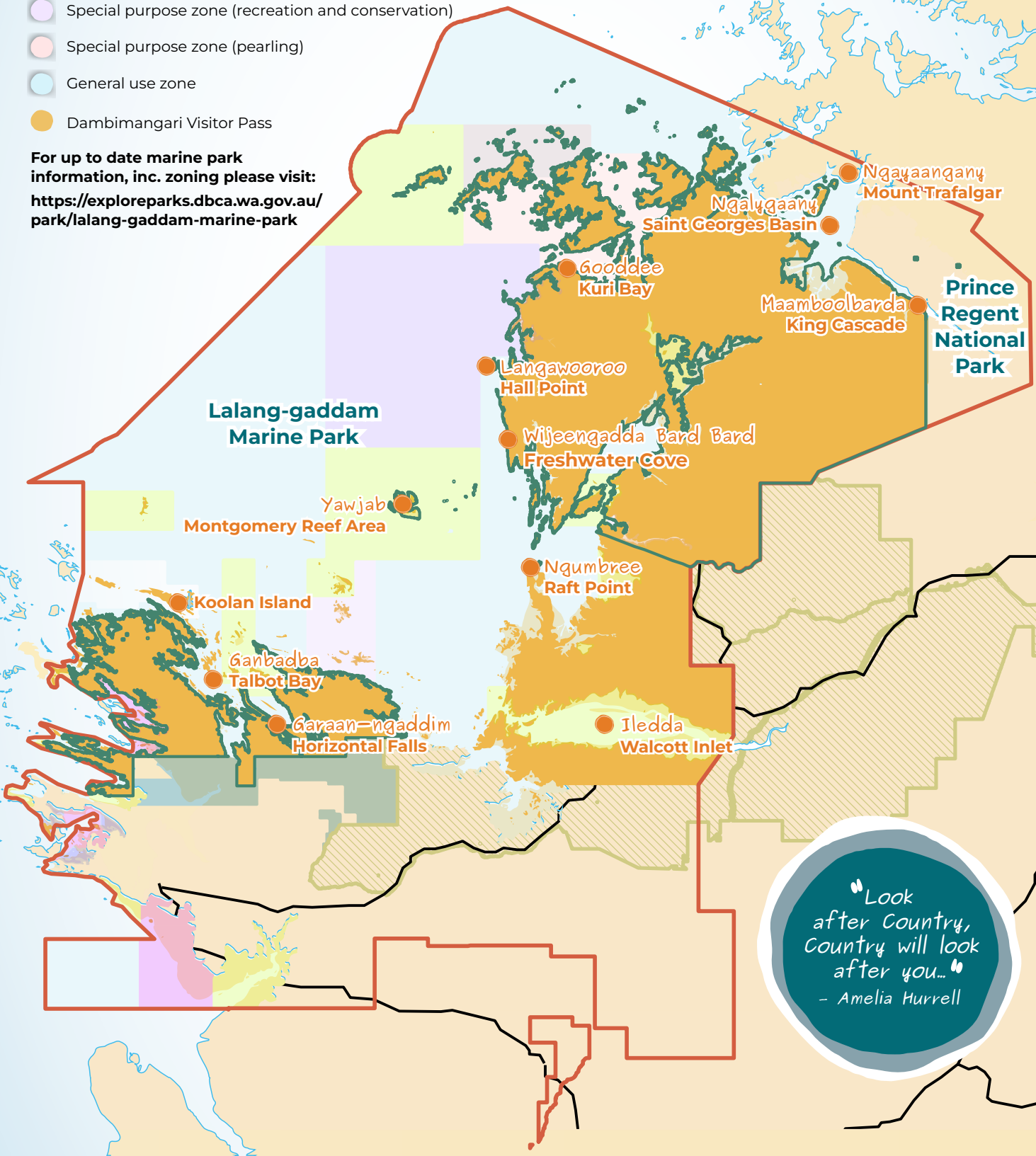
It is important that when you are visiting our Country, you have permission, and come with a free spirit.



# DAMBEEMANGADDEE COUNTRY

-  Dambimangari Native Title Determination Area
-  Dambimangari IPA
-  Sanctuary zone
-  Special purpose zone (cultural protection)
-  Special purpose zone (biocultural conservation)
-  Special purpose zone (whale conservation)
-  Special purpose zone (wilderness conservation)
-  Special purpose zone (recreation and conservation)
-  Special purpose zone (pearling)
-  General use zone
-  Dambimangari Visitor Pass

For up to date marine park information, inc. zoning please visit:  
<https://exploreparcs.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/lalang-gaddam-marine-park>



“Look after Country, Country will look after you...”  
 - Amelia Hurrell

● Derby



*"This world is a different place from when I was growing up, and the young ones today have to connect with their ancestors and Country first to make sure that they can make a future..."*

*- D Woolagoodja*

## OUR HISTORY

We have a very long history. As our Elders have always told us: it is not about dates; it started from **Lalai**. When there was no beginning of time, it was when the world started. European archaeological records show that our ancestors have been here for more than 56,000 years. **We have been here from the beginning.**

In the early 20th century Dambeemangaddee People were moved off our homelands and into missions in remote locations including Walcott Inlet, Kunmunya and Wotjalum.

In 1956, Wotjalum Mission was closed, and our people were moved away from their homelands to Old Mowanjum community and then in 1979 to new Mowanjum, just outside Derby, where many of us still live today. By then, Mowanjum was no longer a mission and was governed by its own Corporation. In the early 1980s, after several unsuccessful attempts, we established a small community at Yaloon (near Cone Bay).

## TODAY

Today, there are more than 1,500 of us. Most members live in Mowanjum and Derby, but we have also moved as far as Broome, One Arm Point, Port Hedland and Perth. It is difficult for us to access our remote Country. Many of our Elders have passed away, and only a small number of people speak **woddordda**.

We live a different life from our ancestors, but we remember where we come from and how to look after our Country.

Since being moved off our Country, we have witnessed the damaging impacts of wildfires, weeds, feral animals, unmanaged visitor access, mining & industrial development. We are deeply concerned about the future of our youth, who continue to experience the negative consequences of what has happened to us for more than a hundred years.







## SALTWATER COUNTRY

We are Saltwater People. Saltwater is a powerful living force. It is **Woongudd**. Our Sea Country includes the presence of **Woongudd** such as coral reefs, powerful whirlpools, rugged cliffs, sandy beaches, and more than 700 islands. Dambeemangaddee Country is home to powerful places like **Garaan-ngaddim** (Horizontal Waterfalls) and important reefs like **Yowjab** (Montgomery Reef).

Huge semi-diurnal tides range up to 11 metres. As currents, which we call legs, move between narrow passages and islands, they create powerful tidal streams and dangerous whirlpools. This Country can be dangerous, but our Old People used to travel on their rafts following the legs of the tide from the mainland to islands and bays. They travelled along the coast and among the islands in double-log rafts called **meeyalba** by **Woddordda** (also known as galam), and in dugout canoes called **baddawara**.

Our Sea Country is very rich in **waddaroo** (reef), **juloom** (seagrass) and **jindirm** (mangrove). These are important habitats for migratory marine animals like **waarlee** (green turtles), flatback turtles, **waliny** (dugong), **ngunubany** (whales) & **jigeedany** (dolphins) who come to come to our Country to feed and to breed.

**Waddaroo** (reefs) are important hunting grounds. Many of our creation stories feature **jaiya** (fish) and other saltwater animals.

*"We are proud of how far we have come. Now we have to work hard to keep our Culture strong and Country healthy for future generations. It is still a long road ahead."*

*- Kirsty Burgu*





# VISITOR LOCATIONS

These are the locations that our members have approved tourists to access on our land. Some sites are open access, others can only be visited with a Traditional Owner Guide or have other restrictions. **Any area that is not listed is closed, and we ask visitors to respect this.**

### Visitor Pass Locations

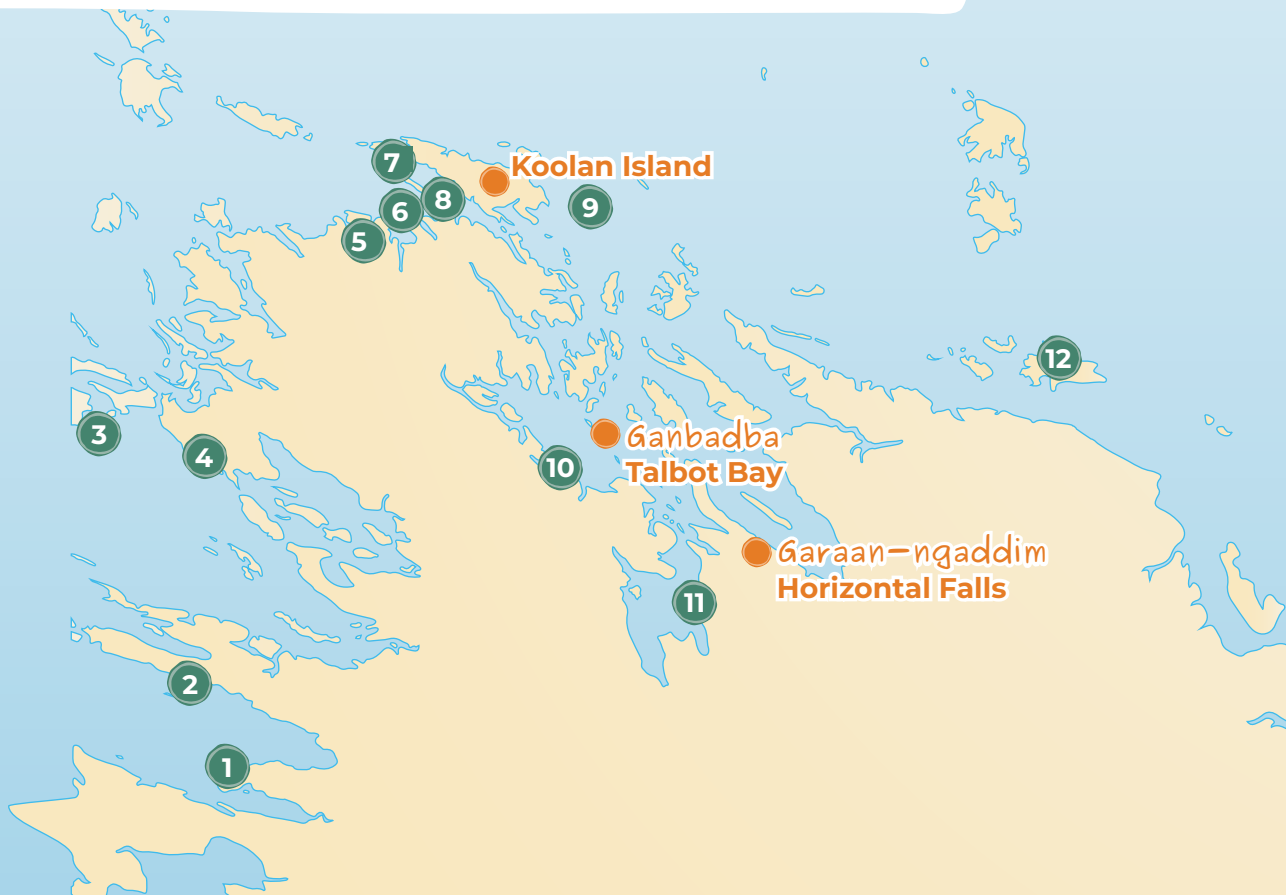
- 1 Cone Bay
- 2 Guger's Camp
- 3 Dunvert Island
- 4 Strickland Bay
- 5 Crocodile Creek
- 6 Beach – West of Silver Gull Creek
- 7 Nares Point – North
- 8 Nares Point – South
- 9 The Sisters Island
- 10 Talbot Bay Creek incl. Falls
- 11 Banyan Creek – Dugong Bay
- 12 Traverse Island
- 13 Beach – NE of Rankin Island
- 14 Ngumbree (Raft Point) – Beach only
- 15 Little Ruby (Sapphire) Falls
- 16 Ruby Falls
- 17 Wijeengadda Bard Bard (Freshwater Cove) – Guided Tours available by advance booking only
- 18 Sampson Inlet
- 19 Sheep Island Cemetery
- 20 Camden Harbour Settlement – 1864-5
- 21 Nyumbaraguj (Degerando Lighthouse)
- 22 Nimaamba (WWII LORAN Radar Base)
- 23 High Bluff Beaches
- 24 High Bluff – North
- 25 Hanover Bay

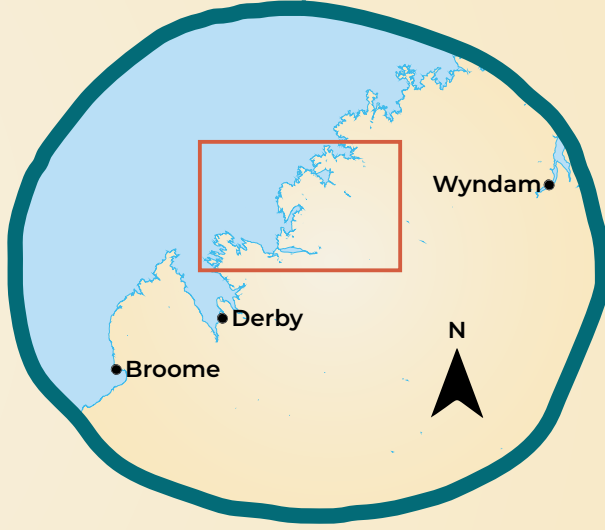
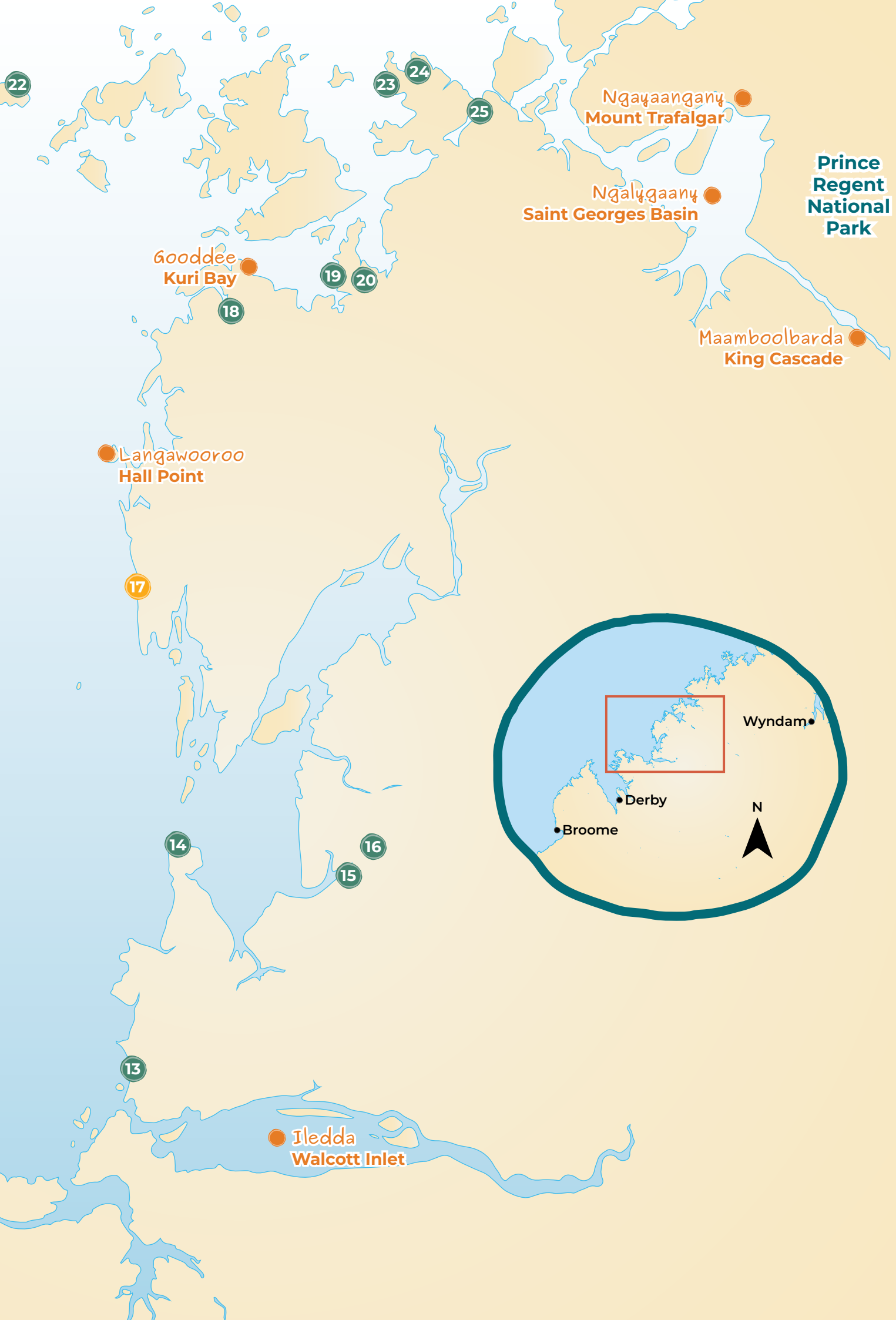
-  Approved Visitor Site
-  Access with Traditional Owner Guide Only

**Note that our Visitor Locations are due to be reviewed in 2024. Check for the latest updates at [www.dambimangari.com.au](http://www.dambimangari.com.au)**

Lalang-gaddam Marine Park

Yawjab Montgomery Reef Area







## KEY ATTRACTIONS – OUR STORIES

### MAAMBOOLBARDA – KINGS CASCADE

#### Jimbididj (Rock Cod) and Ngalygaany (Baler Shell)

Woongudd carved out the bed of the Prince Regent River during Lalai. Jimbididj (Rock Cod) and Ngalygaany (Baler Shell) swam upstream, opening up the Country and creating the bays and creeks. After Ngalygaany became tired and made her home in St George Basin, Jimbididj keep swimming upstream until she reached Maamboolbarda (Kings Cascade) where she came across Jooweebanj (Bowerbird) who stopped him. Jimbididj then put on her brakes with such force that the soft mud piled

up against the bank of the river, creating the waterfall steps at Maamboolbarda.

Today, you can see Jooweebanj in the waterfall there, the Yellow Snake on top, and Jimbididj is at the bottom with the Crocodile.

*Adapted from J Oobagooma, 2017, Barddabardda Wodjenangorddee, p185*

Jimbididj and Ngalygaany are also seen in the logo of the Lalang-gaddam Marine Park.

### LANGAWOOROO – HALL POINT

Each year, three species of ngunubany (whales) visit our Country as part of their long journeys, especially in irooli (cold, dry time) and middeengan (build up) seasons. Humpback ngunubany are the main species found in Lalang-gaddam. They are the largest population of humpbacks in the world. We have many stories about ngunubany. When our Old People lived out on Kunmunya mission they built ngunubany sculptures for joonba. Langawooroo (Hall Point) is the ngunubany dreaming place. Camden Sound is an important breeding and calving ground.



## WIJEENGADDA BARD BARD – FRESHWATER COVE

Wijeengadda Bard Bard takes its name from the **woddordda** word for the Northern Quoll **Wijeengadda** and the physical act of shaking, **bard bard**. A number of important events happened here during **Lalai** which led to the creation of a permanent freshwater source and the sandy beach. The social practice of **baran**, where newly widowed women blacken their bodies and cut off their hair, is also associated with **Lalai** events at **Wijeengadda Bard Bard**.



### WIJINGARRA TOURS

Wijingarra Tours provides Traditional Owner guided cultural immersion tours at Freshwater Cove (**Wijeengadda Bard Bard**). Their business supports our vision to see our people working on their traditional Country, looking after their **dambeema** and creating sustainable employment for future generations.

Visit [www.facebook.com/freshwatercove/](https://www.facebook.com/freshwatercove/) for more info and bookings.

## NGAYAANGANY – MOUNT TRAFALGAR

The mountain is the source of lines that signal **dambeema** and their country groups.

**Ngayaangany** (Mt Trafalgar) was once located in the large bay of **Ngalygaany** (St George Basin) adjacent to the mouth of the Prince Regent River. After **Ngalygaany** (Baler Shell) became tired and made her home in St George Basin she says “I think I’ll stay here, at the foot of Mt Trafalgar”. The presence of Mt Trafalgar in the basin makes it difficult for Baler Shell to make this place her home, so a number of **Wandjina** in the form of the Blue Crab, Monkey Fish and Flat-headed Fish decide to lift up the mountain and move it north to its present location to make room for the Baler Shell. The big hole left behind is **Ngalygaany** (St Georges Basin) and the Baler Shell is now manifested as **Goomalamala** (St Andrew Island).

*Adapted from J Oobagooma, 2017, Barddabardda Wodjenangordee, p161*





## YAWJAB – MONTGOMERY REEF

Montgomery Island complex is an important part of the area that is called **Yawjab**. There is a total of 8 islands including the 5 High Clifty Islands.

During the dry season **Yawjabai** ancestors carried water on their rafts from the mainland using baler and conch shells with leaves wadded up and stuffed over their openings to prevent the water from spilling.

**Yawjab** (Montgomery Reef) is a particularly significant reef for hunting for **julawadda** (turtle), **walinu** (dugong) and **jaiya** (fish), and an important foraging ground for **walee** (green turtles).

*“When it is a new spring tide you can see the deep hole in the reef where the Woongood comes from. She is watching you with her eye.”*

*– J Oobagooma, Barddabardda pg 54*



## NGUMBREE – RAFT POINT

At **Ngumbree** some of the Saltwater **Wandjina** became fish and remained at **Ngumbree** along with the boss **Wandjina Yoomooroo**, the Moon **Wandjina Goong-ngooloo**, and the powerful early lightning **Wandjina Malngerddyn**.

## GARAAN-NGADDIM – HORIZONTAL WATERFALL

### The Woongudd snake & the creation of Garaan-ngaddim

Garaan-ngaddim was created by the writhing body of the **Woongudd** woman, the spiritual snake.

The **Woongudd** crawled along, creating places by using her tail to hit or strike the Country as she moved. She dug holes for fresh water; she stood up and she looked about, creating other features. She went, and returned again, splitting up the Country, modifying the land and seascape.

The path of the **Woongudd** through Country can be seen on the rocks and land formations around **Garaan-ngaddim** and throughout Dambeemangarddee Country.

**Woongudd** is powerful, a sacred life force. This power is in the tides, the waves, the islands and the reefs. **Woongudd** is the whirlpools at **Garaan-ngaddim**. **Woongudd** is moving and creating when the salt waters are moving. When the tide slows, **Woongudd** is at rest.

**Garaan-ngaddim** is **mamaa**, a powerful, sacred place. Our people lived there all year round, and we still feel their presence. It is a quiet, calm place. But it can be dangerous. You don't rush through it. We've seen how Country responds when people don't respect its power. We ask visitors to be quiet at **Garaan-ngaddim**, respect our cultural obligations to care for Country and Culture, and keep you safe.



## VISITING DAMBEEMANGADDEE COUNTRY

### THE DAMBIMANGARI VISITOR PASS & CODE OF CONDUCT

The Dambimangari Visitor Pass (DVP) is a permit system that enables visitors to enjoy our Country and supports us to manage increasing tourism pressures on our remote coastline.

The DVP provides a list of sites that our members have approved tourists to access on our land, and a Code of Conduct outlining cultural protocols when on Country. Some sites are open access, others can only be visited with a Traditional Owner Guide or have other restrictions. **Any area that is not listed is closed, and we ask visitors to respect this.**

The DVP aims to promote culturally appropriate, respectful, and sustainable access to our Country. It helps protect cultural and heritage values, reduces biosecurity risks and the impacts of invasive species, and keeps people safe when visiting Country. Visitor Pass fees are also an important source of income that feeds back into the Corporation to support our Healthy Country, economic development, and cultural programs.

**All commercial and recreational visitors who want to access Dambeemangaddee lands must have a Visitor Pass and follow the Visitor Pass Code of Conduct. If you are on a Tour Boat, your Operator should include your pass in your ticket.**

We ask that all Visitors

- Tread lightly & leave no trace
- Be safe! Come prepared for extreme heat, big tides, powerful currents, dangerous wildlife and rough terrain, carry plenty of water & emergency communications
- Respect cultural sites & access restrictions – closed means closed
- Do not touch, move or collect cultural objects
- No camping or fires, including on beaches
- Protect wildlife: Let animals feed themselves, report anything unusual to the Dambi Rangers

**Thank you for helping us promote respectful, culturally appropriate access and look after our beautiful Country for future generations!**

For more details please visit our website  
[www.dambimangari.com.au](http://www.dambimangari.com.au)



*Dambimangari Rangers preparing fire for Wooloowa (smoking ceremony)*



## SEASONS

We have two big seasons, wet and dry. What is happening, how we experience and feel them, and how the seasons slide into each other, the “in-betweens” and transitions, that is how we

know. You know by what you experience and feel. How Country, plants and animals respond. This doesn't fit neatly in four seasons.



Dambeemangaddee Seasonal Calendar 2023. Artists Leah Umbagai & Cissy Umbagai

## LANGUAGE

Our people spoke many different languages, but over the years many of these have been lost. The main **wularn** (language) still spoke today is **woddordda**. Sometimes it is spelt Worrorra or Worora. We have different dialects and pronunciations from different areas. And both

light and heavy accents. Writing and spelling **woddordda** is an evolving process.

This Guide uses lots of **woddordda** words. We hope you can spend some time learning our names and stories for the important places, animals and values on our Country.

# CARING FOR COUNTRY – LAND & SEA MANAGEMENT

## DAMBIMANGARI RANGERS

The Dambimangari Rangers started working on Country in 2012. The program provides jobs for our young people that support them to work on Country, reconnect with Culture and build their professional skills. The Rangers are strong role models for young people in town. In 2023, the Rangers have grown to a team of seven full-time and ten casual rangers, both men and women.

We all work together to manage both Land and Sea Country, with partners like Australian Wildlife Conservancy and Parks & Wildlife (DBC), Fisheries, WWF and other Researchers.

Our Rangers rely on finding diverse, long-term funding to ensure the future of our program.

The Rangers work hard to protect the key Targets in our Healthy Country Plan:



**TARGET 1**  
**Law & Culture**



**TARGET 2**  
**Cultural Sites**  
Dambeem Mamaa



**TARGET 3**  
**Reefs, Beaches & Islands**  
Waddaroo, galardba & mordu



**TARGET 4**  
**Saltwater Resources**  
Lalang-gaddam  
Jaiya



**TARGET 5**  
**Migratory Marine Animals**  
Walee, walinu,  
ngunubany & jigeedany



**TARGET 6**  
**Freshwater Places**  
Aaqu



**TARGET 7**  
**Important Native Animals**  
Banardee



**TARGET 8**  
**Bush Fruit & Medicine**



**TARGET 9**  
**Right Way Fire**  
Weearnoo  
gadjarjarna



**TARGET 10**  
**Strong Community & Strong Corporation**  
Aqilwodda mamangal  
ngaddeem





## THE DAMBIMANGARI INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA

The Dambimangari Indigenous Protected Area was dedicated in 2013 and now covers 617,211 hectares of exclusive possession Native Title land and islands. This was an important decision that brings greater recognition for Traditional Owners as landowners and managers for our Country.

## LALANG-GADDAM MARINE PARK

The Lalang-gaddam Marine Park spans 1.3 million hectares of Dambeemangaddee Sea Country. It is gazetted as a Class A Reserve and will soon be jointly vested with Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation.

The marine park is jointly managed by DAC and the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (DBCA). We work together and share responsibility for management decisions through a Joint Management Body.

Joint management combines traditional knowledge and practices with western techniques to achieve the cultural, ecological and social objectives set out in our joint Management Plan. This includes more regular ranger presence on Country through joint marine park patrols.

You might see our wonderful Rangers on patrol in the park. Feel free to ask them any questions!

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Help conserve the unique values of the marine park for future generations!

- Follow anchorage guidelines in LGMP Visitor Plan
- Do not walk on exposed coral reefs
- Be Crocwise
- Know your zones and fish for the future

For up to date information, please visit <https://exploreparcs.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/lalang-gaddam-marine-park> or [fish.wa.gov.au](https://fish.wa.gov.au)



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Books & Films about our Culture & History

Keeping the Wanjinās Fresh: Sam Woolagoodja and the Enduring Power of Lalai (2005)  
Barddabardda Wodjenangorddee: We're Telling All Of You. The Creation, History and People of  
Dambeemangaddee Country: (2017)  
Mowanjum: 50 Years Community History (2008)  
Lalai – Dreamtime (1972 Film)  
We Are Coming To See You: Nyara Pari Kala Niragu (Gaambera), Gadawara Ngyaran-Gada  
(Wunambal), Inganinja Gubadjoongana (Woddordda) (2018)  
Yornadaiyn Woolagoodja (2020)

### Reports & Management Plans

Dambeemangaddee Healthy Country Plan 2023  
Lalang-gaddam Marine Park Management Plan and Visitor Plan:  
<https://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/lalang-gaddam-marine-park>

**Visit Mowanjum Aboriginal Art & Culture Centre, near Derby**  
[mowanjumarts.com](http://mowanjumarts.com)

Or visit our website  
[www.dambimangari.com.au](http://www.dambimangari.com.au)



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