



**JULUWARLU**  
**GROUP** Aboriginal  
Corporation

# YINDJIBARNDI COUNTRY

Cross Cultural Awareness Training with  
Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation



## Wanthiwa!

*We stand before you on Yindjibarndi Country.*

*Not just with a welcome, but with a promise of partnership  
and action to further improve on our relationship.*

*Our lives are shaped by what we learn from our history,  
and what we take from the past to what we leave for our future.*

*We need to constantly reflect on the footprints we've left behind  
to choose the best path ahead that leads towards a better world  
and a society we can be proud of.*





## Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation

Juluwarlu is an Aboriginal owned and operated not for profit organisation first established in 1998 on Ngurrawaana Community. Our purpose is to collect, sustain and promote Yindjibarndi language, religion, cultural practices, our Country and all the life forms it supports, our social history, and the wisdom and knowledge held by one of world's oldest continuous living cultures.

We do this to sustain our identity as Yindjibarndi people, our self-esteem, and the core values of respect and caring that are vital to our lives, our well-being and our cultural future. Most importantly, we do this for our children and for future generations so they too can know and live their rich and unique heritage and in turn be inspired to offer this gift to the multicultural fabric that makes up the Australian community and identity.

Maintaining a strong connection with our Country is at the core of everything we do to sustain our culture, country (Ngurra) and our people. On-Country trips inspire our artist Ngurra provides the opportunity for important cultural knowledge to be passed down to the next generations. We record and preserve this knowledge through photographs and film, writing, song, spoken narratives, documentaries and radio broadcasts. This deepens cultural knowledge, respect for culture, and language skills among our young people, and also allows us to share Yindjibarndi culture with a broader audience of our Nation.



## **Biyumagayi Ngurra & Wuthurrunga: *Greeting Country & the Water Ceremony***

Yindjibarndi people perform the wuthurrunga ritual each time we enter our Country, especially when visiting permanent waterholes. Doing this lets the Country and its spirits know we're here and we don't mean any harm – and don't want any harm to come to us! We also ask the Ngurra for permission to remain in this spot to fish, swim and to take other necessities.

This ritual is performed by scooping water from a pool or other water source into the mouth, spraying it back out before calling out:

**Ngurra ganggangarrinha yingu buluyugayi birbiwarni wa  
nggayi thurdud mirda nyantharri biyiyarri...**

**[Country, we come here today to visit you and talk straight...  
please don't get angry and harm us]**

Once this occurs, the Country recognises us and gives us the feeling we are at one with the land – we don't have to worry or feel threatened.



## ***Buyulhugu: Smoking Ceremony for Welcoming onto Ngurra Manjangu***

When welcoming manjangu strangers (people from elsewhere) onto Yindjibarndi Ngurra and to make sure that there are no bad or wrong intentions as they are being welcomed to Ngurra – or at times when our people have been away – we perform a smoking ritual to cleanse any lingering bad energy or spirits. We do this to reconnect our souls to the land, so it in turn can cleanse, heal and renew our spirits and transfer its strength, vitality and wisdom so that we never lose sight of our obligations and our responsibility to protect Ngurra.



# Special sites you will visit

## **NGURRAWAANA COMMUNITY**

Ngurrawaana means 'coming back home'. Yindjibarndi Elders Woodley King and Long Mack fought for Yindjibarndi to have access back to our Ngurra. This is the only place where Yindjibarndi people can live on their Country, and the community was created to be a place for Yindjibarndi to return to our Ngurra.

## **JIRDA – Ceremonial Site for Native Seeds**

A series or complex of sites where ceremonies are held to create an abundance of edible seed plants including native millet, desert riceflower, crumbweed and pigweed. Part of the site is a distinctive white hill covered in powdery chalk. The Jirda is also sung in our Burndud ceremony when we put our young boys through their initiation. The site and the songs are connected to how Yindjibarndi men must conduct themselves when performing the seed ceremony so that the women can gather the seeds in harvest.

## **BARGUNYJI THALU**

Ceremonial Site for the Pilbara Olive Python (*Liasis olivaceus barroni*).

The site is the vertical rockface of a hill overlooking the Fortescue River, near Gregory Gorge. It's close to (pool) Wuyumarri. If a claims hill and then goes swimming in the river the Bargunji olive python will grab them.

A ceremony is held here to boost the population of this local python, which used to be hunted in the old days for food. Endemic to the Pilbara, these pythons grow 2.5m on average, and individuals up to 4m have been recorded, but whose numbers have been plummeting in recent years around Millstream.

Currently listed as rare and likely to become extinct.

## **MANGGURLA THALU**

Fertility Site. The ceremonies performed here by Elders have had great success in helping couples having trouble conceiving. The manggula thalu is to ensure the Yindjibarndi population continues to grow and stay sustainable.

## **GUMANHA MARNDA**

Gumanha Marnda is a hill of Wuyumarranha, it is here where Minkala, God, handed over responsibility for the Land, Culture & Law to the people and Yindjibarndi our Ngurra.





## **WUYUMARRI**

The part of the Fortescue River which runs from a couple of kilometres to the west of Gregory Gorge (where we will camp overnight), to the easternmost end of the gorge.

## **BIIGUNHA**

Two large rock holes (including Drillers Hole) located at the top of Gregory Gorge. The site includes dozens of rock engravings, a gorge, creek and hill. These rock holes were formed during Creation times when Barrirmirndi the Water Snake briefly surfaced from underground while in his search for the two law breakers.

## **BAYARRA**

This large, banded-ironstone hill overlooks Gregory Gorge from the northern bank of the Fortescue River. Back in the time of Ngurra Nyjunggamu, When the World Was Soft, two men fought here after one had entered this area without seeking permission. There's a song, story and dance about the events that took place here.

## **BIRLINBIRLIN**

Site of the First Law Ceremony.

This part of the Fortescue River where the bedrock is smooth and flat holds enormous significance for Yindjibarndi people. Back When the World Was Soft, two Marrga made the first Law ground here and formed a dancing circle, called the Burndud, leaving the Law for us to follow where boys are initiated into being men. Marrga men and women first danced and sang the Burndud songs which we still sing today.

In more recent times, Birlinbirlin was a meeting place for neighbouring tribes, who'd follow the Fortescue River in to Birlinbirlin for big Law ceremonies.

Along with the first dancing circle, Birlinbirlin encompasses other important sites including ceremonial sites for making the sun and moon shine more brightly. Embedded within the rock here you'll see white quartz formations which depict Barndurrarna (Venus, the morning star) and Jurlurrunha (the first star to rise in the morning). Sprinklings of quartz represent smaller stars and Wanawurra (the Milky Way).

There's also an impression of Bargunyinha (a crescent moon), and the image of the mischievous Creation spirit called Nyyalurl, whose face was forever trapped in the bedrock when the world became hard. He causes trouble for anyone who happens to wander too close.

Many rock engravings carved by Marrga surround this site, and not far off in the hills is a ceremonial site for mawarn, supernatural powers, which only men are allowed to visit.



Dampier

Karratha

Roebourne

NORTH WEST COASTAL HWY

WARLU RD

NORTH WEST COASTAL HWY





FORTESCUE RIVER

FORTESCUE RIVER

MILLSTREAM  
CHICHESTER  
NATIONAL PARK

Ngurrawaana  
Community

Millstream

▲ Birguna  
(Driller's Hole)

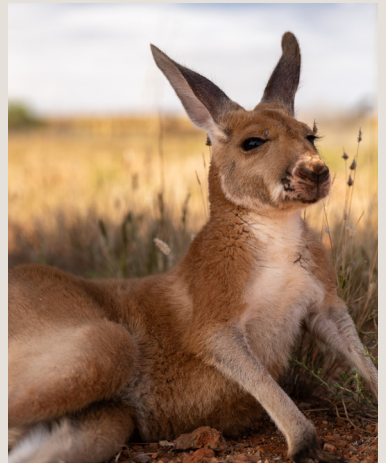
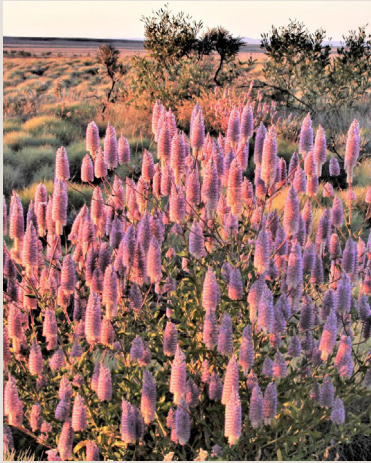
▲ Wuyumarri Camp  
(Gregory Gorge)

WARLU RD

WARLU RD

ROEBOURNE-  
WITTENON RD

ROEBOURNE-  
WITTENON RD



# Yindjibarndi wordlist

**Barrimirndi:** Powerful Water Snake who, during Creation times, made many features in Yindjibarndi Country including the Fortescue River and associated pools and rockholes.

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**Galharra:** Yindjibarndi relationship system that guides our way of life which is made up of four groups: Banaga, Burungu, Balyirri and Garimarra. All things in the world belong to one of these groups and share kinship with all others of the same Galharra, including plants, animals, the sun, rain, sacred sites and people. All elements, living beings and the land share relationships with one another.

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**Jami:** Medicine made from native plants.

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**Jirndawurrunha:** Lilypond near the Millstream Homestead.

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**Marrga:** Creation spirit/who inhabited the earth while it was still soft and before humans were given responsibility for the land and Law. During this time, the Marrga made many of the features and landmarks we see today.

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**Ngaarda:** Aboriginal person / **Ngaardangarli:** Aboriginal people

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**Ngurra:** Homelands/land/country/earth/ground

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**Ngurra Nyujunggamu:** When the World Was Soft. Creation times when Marrga inhabited the earth.

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**Thalu:** Sacred place where a ceremony is performed to regenerate a natural resource such as plant, animal or element.

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**Wuyumarri:** Gregory gorge

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**Yarndanyirra:** General name for the Fortescue River. Many different parts of the river have their own name.

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**Yinda:** Permanent waterhole

## Your time on country

Yindjibarndi people have lived and been the caretakers of this land for over 65,000 years, and the customs and culture we shall be discussing are those derived and handed down from then, for fortunately, we have not lost that knowledge.

We'll be camping overnight at Wuyumarri (Gregory Gorge). The drive to Wuyumarri takes you deep into Yindjibarndi Ngurra, on a slow and rocky 4WD track from Ngurrawaana Community. Towards the end of the drive, vehicles cross several creeks as we enter the gorge.

Our trips on-Country are an opportunity to share with you our way of life.

You'll sleep in a swag, camp bed or tent near a yinda (permanent waterhole) – we have some spare swags, camp beds and sleeping bags, but if you have your own please bring it along. Please bring your own pillow, sheet and blanket/sleeping bag, and let us know if you need to borrow anything. Please note that between July and September it can be quite cool in the evenings, thermals, a beanie or an extra blanket will keep you warm!

### **WE PROVIDE**

Lunch, afternoon tea, dinner, breakfast and morning tea. All all utensils and general camping equipment, satellite phone, first aid kit, camper/trailer, groundsheets, portable toilet, toilet paper.

### **YOU SHOULD BRING**

Personal items, shorts, t-shirts, camera, hat, pillow, sheet and sleeping bag, sleeping attire, bathers, towel, jumper or jacket, torch, reusable water bottle, sunscreen, insect repellent, personal medication, and any personal favourite snacks.

### **PLEASE BE AWARE**

Liquor Control Regulations prohibit bringing alcohol onto Ngurrawaana Community, and this is strictly an alcohol-free field trip.

## WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Our artists will invite you to learn the art of weaving and participate in a large weaving wheel. We'll provide everything you need.
- Corroboree, dance Nhunda.
- Learn about bush plants in the area.
- Stories about Yindjibarndi and Wuyumarri.
- The five Yindjibarndi principles:
  - Galharra: Relationship between Yindjibarndi and Ngurra.
  - Nyinyart: Reciprocity obligation between Yindjibarndi and Ngurra.
  - Wangka: Language a verbal contract between Yindjibarndi and Ngurra.
  - Birdirra: Law, lore and culture responsibility where all Yindjibarndi have to participant.
  - Ngurra: The only body all Yindjibarndi fear, respect, obey and serve.



## WHAT YOU'LL TAKE AWAY

As you learn about how we have cared for the land and about the rich cultural history and traditions we hope you go away from the experience understanding more about the land and the people in which you work, live or travel.

Whenever visiting our Country, we ask you to adhere to certain responsibilities based on our values of Nyinyart:

When driving in convoy, look out for the car behind you. If you don't see them, wait.

Be aware and keep an eye out for all people on the camp, we travel together.

Our Elders are held in the highest esteem – they're the first to be offered a seat or some food at mealtimes.

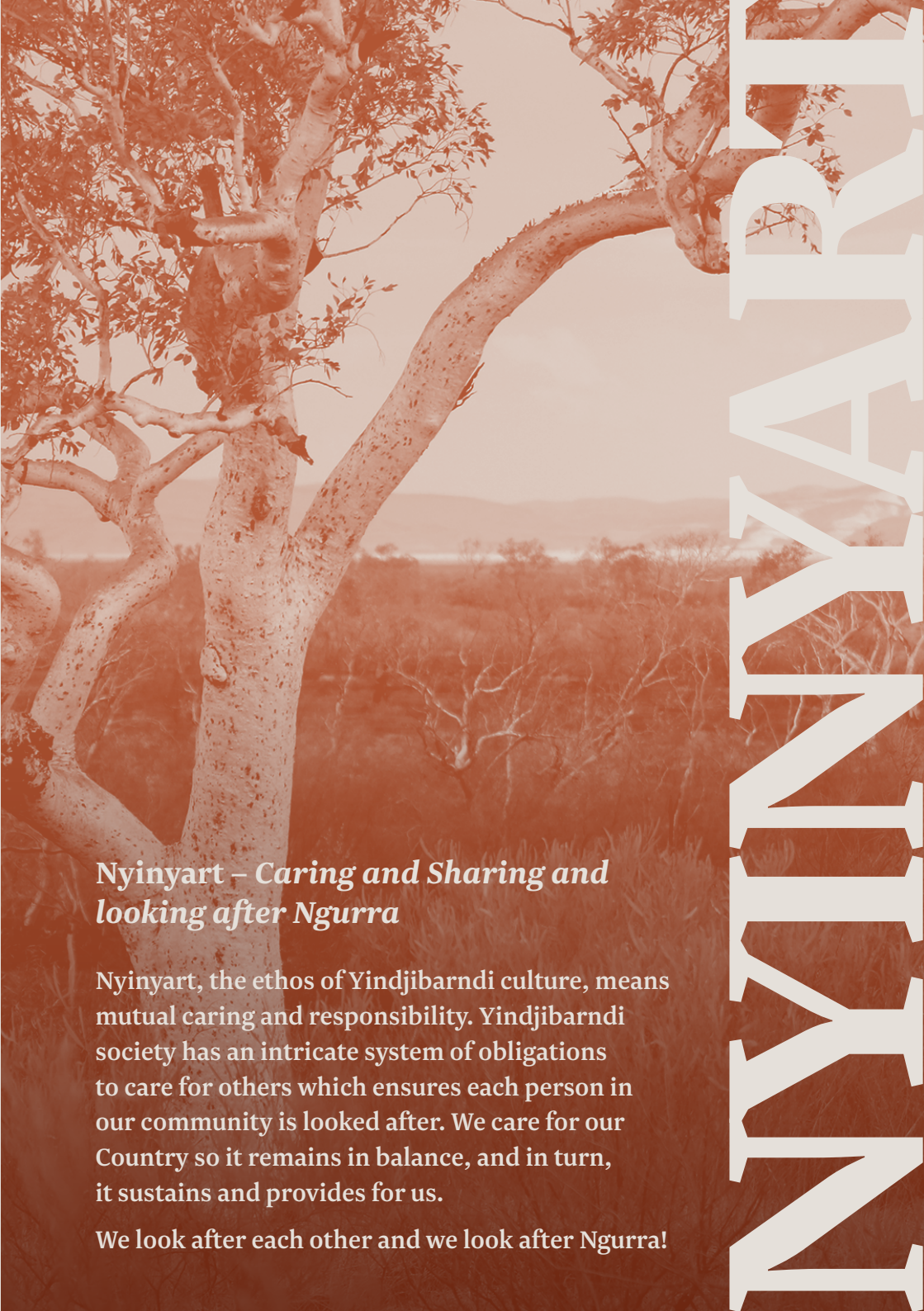


## Thanks!

Attending these camps has direct social, cultural and environmental outcomes for our community and Country. These camps help us to create employment opportunities for Yindjibarndi people, and any profits are directly invested back into Ngurrawaan and Juluwarlu projects.

As a token of our appreciation, we'd like to gift you a sample of the artist merchandise we produce through Juluwarlu Art Group. These products provide a snapshot of the beautiful apparel and homewares we create using original artworks by the artists, designed to further share our art and culture with more people and create alternative streams of income for the artists through royalty payments.

To read our artists' bios, learn about our art projects and see the other great things we create, head to [juluwarluartgroup.com.au](http://juluwarluartgroup.com.au).



## *Nyinyart – Caring and Sharing and looking after Ngurra*

Nyinyart, the ethos of Yindjibarndi culture, means mutual caring and responsibility. Yindjibarndi society has an intricate system of obligations to care for others which ensures each person in our community is looked after. We care for our Country so it remains in balance, and in turn, it sustains and provides for us.

**We look after each other and we look after Ngurra!**

To find out more or book your camp, get in touch:

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