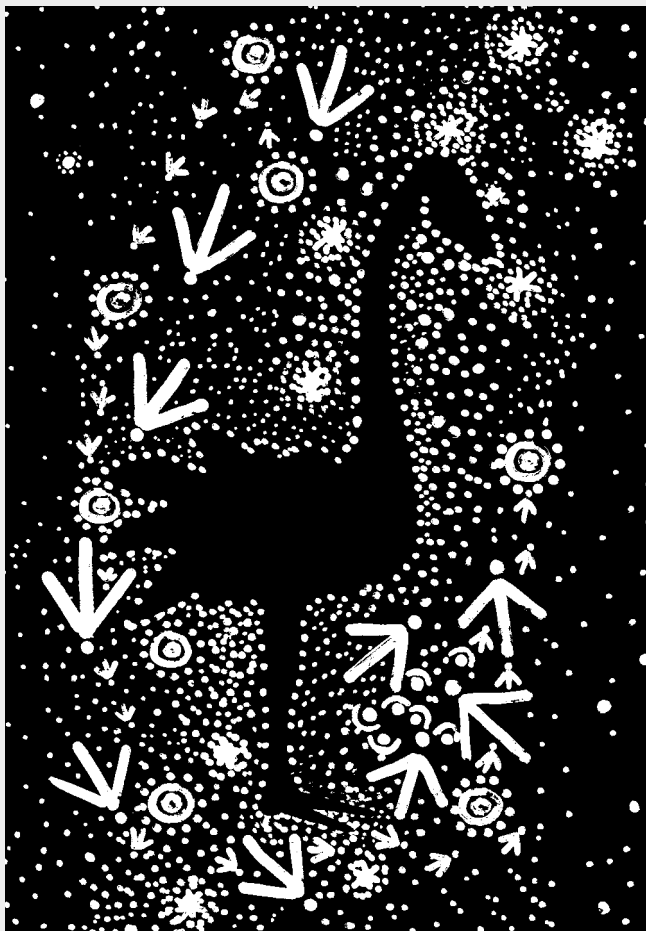


HERITAGE TRAIL

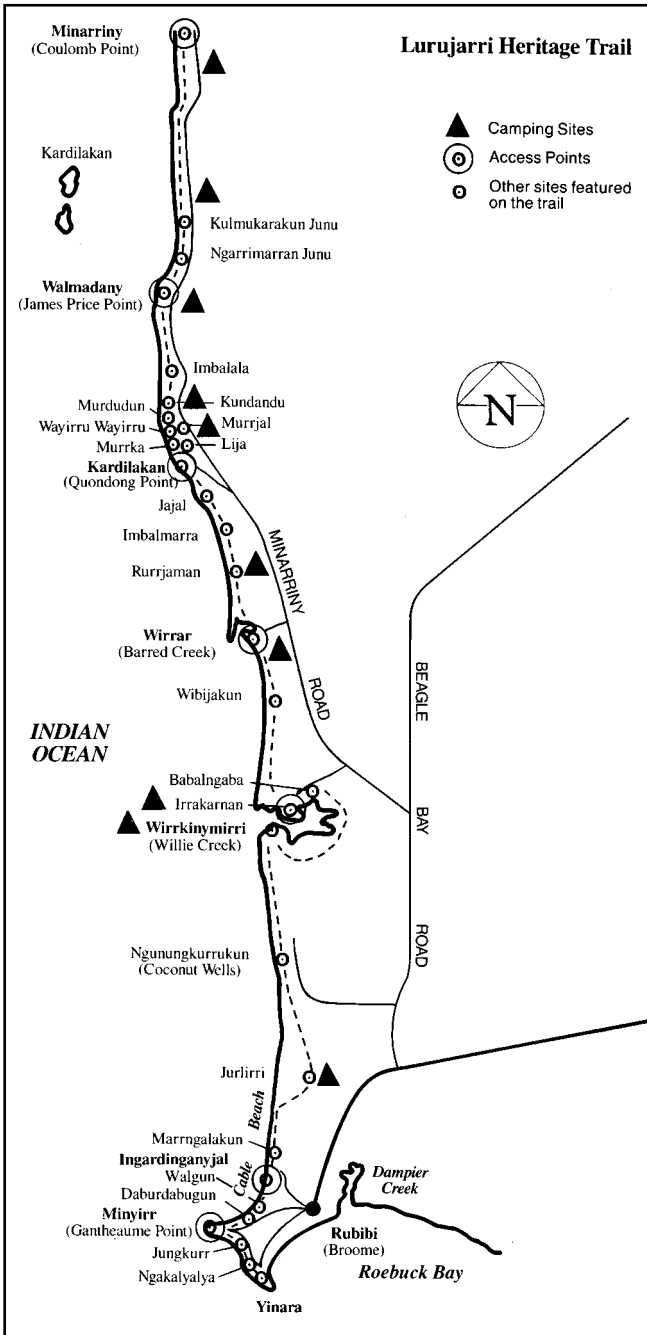


– LURUJARRI –

Retracing the Song Cycle from Minarriny to Yinara



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Broome is located 2,200km north of Perth via Great Northern Highway (National Highway 95) or 2,352km via North West Coastal Highway (National Route 1). The trail starts at Minarriny, about 80km north of Broome. Access is via Beagle Bay Road and Minarriny Road (Quondong Road) at the turn-off for Willie Creek.

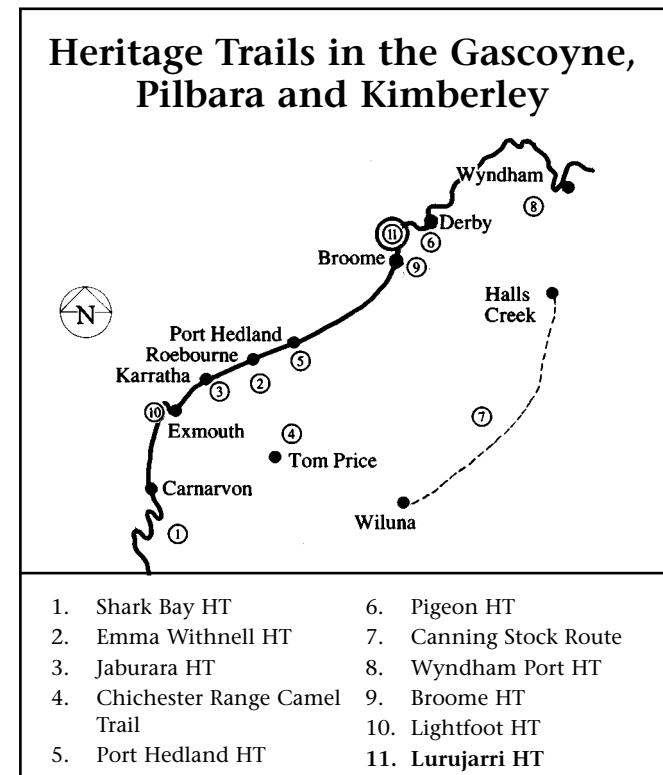
Please note:

- The estimated walking time is based on an easy pace. Take your time and enjoy the living quality of the country.
- The best time for walking is during new and full moon phases when tidal variation is greatest. Cross the tidal inlets at Wirrar (Barred Creek) at low tide only. Do not cross Wirrkinymirri without a guide. Please follow the tidal plain around the creek via Babalngaba, as crocodiles have been sighted.
- Carry sufficient water and food to last your walk.
Fresh water is hard to find.
- Make sure someone is notified as to when and where you are walking. Preferably have someone back you up with a vehicle carrying water.
- Camp only at the places marked with Heritage Trails Network symbols. They have been selected because they have been tested and tried over many generations of Aboriginal experience.
- Treat the trail with respect. It holds knowledge older than human life.
- Do not wander off the trail, as it is easy to get lost in the bush.
- Do not leave burning camp fires behind. They can cause severe damage to the environment.
- Take nothing except photographs, and leave nothing but footsteps.
- Aboriginal sites are protected by the **Aboriginal Heritage Act**. Please do not harm them in any way. Do not remove objects from these places. Leave them as you find them.
- Do not gather bush food without proper knowledge of what is safe to eat.
- As the trail does not return to the starting point, arrangements should be made to have a vehicle at your finishing point.
- Persons using this Heritage Trail do so at their own risk.

The **Lurujarri Heritage Trail** is part of the Heritage Trails Network, a project for community participation originally devised by the Western Australian Heritage Committee (now known as the Heritage Council of Western Australia) in commemoration of the 1988 Bicentenary.

The Heritage Trails Network which was jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments under the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Commemorative Program was established to provide the Community with a Statewide network of "Heritage Trails" - routes designed to enhance awareness and enjoyment of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

The map below indicates Heritage Trails in the Gascoyne, Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Western Australia.



The **Lurujarri Heritage Trail** follows part of a traditional Aboriginal song cycle which originated from the Dreamtime Ancestral Beings who are believed to have created the landscape, humans, animals and plants, all of which are interconnected by the same life spirit.

Lurujarri, meaning coastal dunes, is the Aboriginal name which generally describes this stretch of country, while the red pindan cliffs are known as Yanijjarri.



The red pindan cliffs known as Yanijjarri, between Minarriny and Kulmukarkun Junu (courtesy Pam Farrell).

Since Aboriginal Law originated from the north, the trail follows the coast from Minarriny (Coulomb Point) to Minyirr (Gantheaume Point), a distance of about 72km. It is divided into six sections with seven starting points which can all be reached by vehicle and where trail information signs are located. Any section of the trail may therefore be selected for a day's walk, if not following the whole song cycle. All walks pass old Aboriginal camping grounds, unmarked burial places, former water soaks and a wide variety of seasonal sea and bush foods. Places of special interest are listed in each section.

By walking along this age-old trail, you are sharing in the Dreaming, an ongoing state which draws together past, present and future. For at least the 6,000 years that the coastline has been at the level it is today, Aborigines have walked, foraged and camped at the places featured on the trail.

Aboriginal Law and the Song Cycle

The Dreamtime Beings set patterns for all their creations to follow. Known as the Law, these are encoded in the song cycle and ceremonially passed on from one generation to the next. The song cycle is used to convey from one generation to another a detailed description of the land and how it has been shaped. These songs are still sung today by tribal Aborigines in the area.

Because the Law originated from the north, places with special environmental and mythological significance are sung in sequence from north to south. This sequence also influenced the pattern of an age-old route of trade and exchange which originated in the Kimberley and extended as far as Uluru (Ayers Rock).

All the special places named in the songs, many of which are passed on the trail, have their own character or feeling, known as Le-an. The Le-an is believed to be alive and affects people both positively and negatively. It can make you feel happy and elated, or sad and thoughtful.

Aborigines maintained the ancient Dreamtime laws which regulated their lifestyle and tuned their attitudes to the environment so effectively that today, 40,000-60,000 years after the Aborigines first settled Australia, this natural heritage of immense beauty can still be enjoyed and appreciated. More than one hundred years of colonial settlement and cultural change have so far left this trail unchanged.

Please respect the country at all times, and ensure that future generations are given the same opportunity to participate in the Dreamtime that is enjoyed today.

Mythology

There are many stories about the Dreamtime characters whose activities and adventures created the features and contents of the landscape. They also created the pattern of living which people should follow. These are but three examples of the great complex of myths.



This picture illustrates the story of two Naji women who came ashore at Ngakalyalya to look for Njarri Jarri (bush onion). Unfortunately they were defiled by a bushman and turned themselves into rocks while their spirits took flight in the form of ngakalyalyas (white mountain cockatoos). The two sisters are known today as Walu Bungu and Nyarriy Yarri Bungu (Fire and Onion Women) and can be seen as two stars (top right and left respectively) separated by a snake near the constellation Hydra. The fire and onion are depicted at the bottom of the drawing beneath the bushman's feet. Drawn by Jo Manjun.



These three stones at Lija are permanent reminders of the three Dreamtime sisters, Lija, Udang and Birmarra (courtesy Pam Farrell).

Myth 1.

The Three Sisters (Murrjal)

Three Dreamtime sisters, Lija (the bosswoman), Udang and Birmarra, travelled from the north to the south, creating parts of the landscape as they went. When they reached the beach at Murrjal they found an ant-bed which was full of sweet ants. They dug up the ant-bed with their digging sticks, and sifted the ants from the earth by shaking them rhythmically from side to side in the wooden coolamon dish they carried. The ants all separated out to one side of the dish, and the chunks of ant-bed to the other. The sisters ate the ants, but threw the pieces of hard ant-bed on the beach. These can still be seen along the beach as a line of piled-up stones like a giant wall which is called Wayirru Wayirru by local Aborigines.

The three sisters threw away their digging sticks which then grew into bushes suitable for making more digging sticks. Not far away, standing stones on the beach are a reminder of the bosswoman Lija and her two sisters. The sisters continued on their creative journey south, finishing on a beach at Unguneanguru, east of Dampier Creek, where they were all turned to stone.

Myth 2.

Kundandu Burru and the Snakes (Kundandu)

One of the Dreamtime Creator Beings turned himself into a powerful and vicious snake in order to maintain Law during troubled times. This snake became the symbol of one of the

kinship groups which control social relationships. The Dreamtime ancestor passed on to his descendants his power to control snakes and thus to control society. The last man who inherited this special power over snakes died in the Derby Leprosarium within living memory. He had no descendants and since then the snakes have been without any form of control.

The area where the snakes have their source is **Kundandu Burru** which is passed on the trail. Local Aborigines feel apprehensive in this area, and do not camp overnight in the vicinity.

Myth 3.

Marrala and the Nadi Women (Minyirr)

A Creator spirit called Marrala—commonly referred to as Emu man—made his appearance at various points along the coast, creating features and aspects of the Law as he went. South of Minyirr (Gantheaume Point) he saw seven Naji women, Yinara and her six daughters, who were spirits from the sea. The girls had been warned by Yinara not to take any notice of anyone on the land, but they disobeyed and watched the emu man. The result was that, as he walked past and tried to touch them, Yinara turned herself and her daughters to pillars of stone, which can be seen today, the mother standing taller than her daughters, at what became known as Yinara. Nearby, at Minyirr, Marrala's three-toed footprints can also be seen.

Marrala composed a song about this incident which is still sung, and which makes Minyirr an important place in the Law. Minyirr (Gantheaume Point) is also much visited by tourists who come to see the three-toed footprints from Yinara to Minyirr point, which European scientists believe to be those of a dinosaur. In the Aboriginal belief system, Marrala, the Law-giving Emu man, is also represented by three stars which rise before the morning star, and his shadow may be seen in the Milky Way, his head laying next to the Southern Cross.

1. Minarriny to Walmadany (Walk of 15km)

Minarriny: Old camping grounds, shell middens.

Kardilakan (Black Rock): Marks fresh water source attainable only at low tide.

Rich food area of low-growing vegetation.

Kulmukarakun Junu and **Ngarrimarran Junu:** Two dry creek systems which lead to inland water sources.

2. Walmadany to Kardilakan

(Walk of 10km)

Walmadany: Old camping grounds marked by buried shell visible as a layer in the pindan cliff face.

Kundandu: The Place of Snakes, associated with mythology (See Myth 2).

Inbalala: Disused bore hole sunk over former Gila (sacred water source from the Dreamtime) with Kumbur trees.

Wayirru Wayirru: Wall of stones on beach with mythological origins (See Myth 1).

Lija: Standing stones representing mythological women (See Myth 1).

3. Kardilakan to Wirrar

(Walk of 10km)

Jajal: Gravel area. Associated snake mythology, with track heading inland. Unfortunately, upright stones representing snakes were blasted for gravel to construct the Broome Jetty which was completed in 1966.

Inbalmarra: The song cycle includes reference to sea splashing against rocks. There is an important Aboriginal Law Ground here.

Rurrjaman: Large camping ground in open dune area protected from east wind. The only shade is under a clump of Pandanus growing in the sand.

4. Wirrar to Wirrkinymirri

(Walk of 10km)

Wirrar (Barred Creek); Tidal creek and natural limestone jetty. Excellent fishing.

Wibijakun: Where the bushland meets the tidal plains. The commencement of small island camps amongst the mangrove marshes.

5. Wirrkinymirri to Ingardinganyjal

(Walk of 17km)

Ngunungkurrakun: Rocks denoting an important power place for both creation and death. No touching please: photographs only.

6. Ingardinganyjal to Minyirr

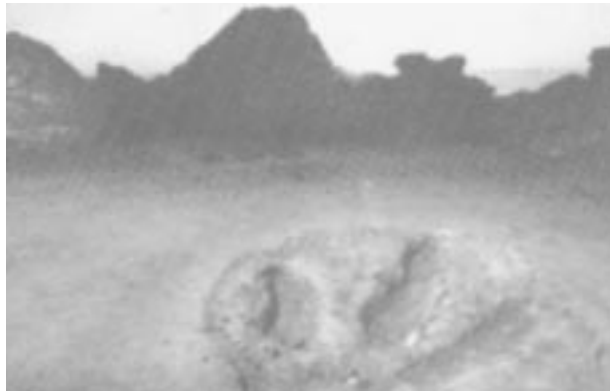
(Walk of 10km)

Walagun: The main living area for Jukun people.

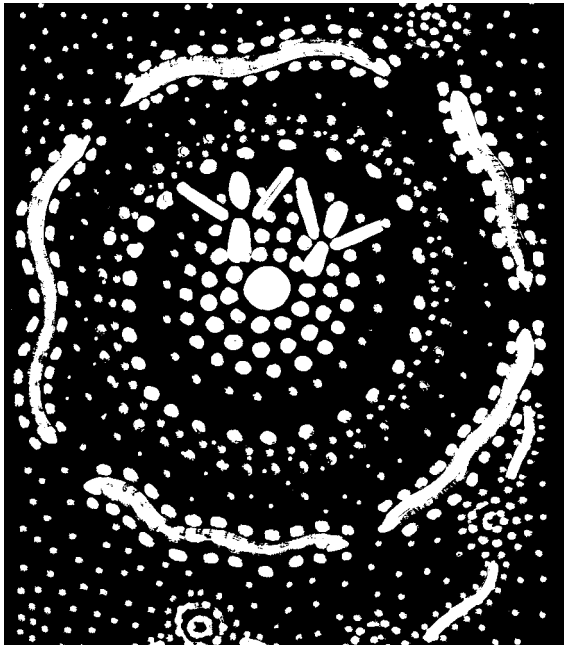
Minyirr: The song cycle place where Marrala left his footprints in the Dreamtime. (See Myth 3).

Ngakalyala: Where the Naji sea spirit women became stone pillars. (See Myth 3).

Yinara: Marrala's place of entrance.



Marrala's three-toed footprints at Minyirr (courtesy Mr J.J. Syllebranque, J.P. Sylgo). (See Myth 3).



Two boys who captured a lungurd (blue-tongued lizard) are shown disappearing like quicksand after being spellbound by it. The lungurd tracks are illustrated around the outside of the two boys. Drawn by Jo Manjun.

The **Lurujarri Heritage Trail** was made possible by its Guardian and Law-Keeper Paddy Roe, who as its Custodian would like to share this living walking and foraging trail, and by its Guardian Spirits of the Jabirjabirr, Jukun and Ngumbarl peoples.

The trail would not have been possible without the contributions of the following people:

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- Patrick Roe
- Ronnie Roe
- Teresa Roe
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- Tim Willing

and the following organisations:

- Broome Basic Communications
- Broome Botanical Society
- Broome News
- Department of Aboriginal Sites
- Kimberley Law and Culture Centre
- Lurujarri Council
- Magabala Books
- Mamabulanjin Resource Centre
- Recreation and Tourist Committee, Shire of Broome

- | | |
|---|---|
| Roe, Paddy
Muecke, Stephen | Gularabulu
(Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1983) |
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Muecke, Stephen
Benteraq, Krim | Reading the Country
(Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1984) |
| Lands, Merrilee
(Ed) | Mayi - Some Bush Fruits of Dampierland
(Magabala Books, 1987) |

Further Information:

For further information and guided tours contact the Lurujarri Council at the Mamabulanjin Resource Centre in Broome on (08) 9192 1662 or the Kimberley Law and Cultural Centre on (08) 9191 5317.

Front cover: The story of Marrala and the Naji women at Minyirr by Jo Manjun. Marrala's shadow is shown inside the Milky Way, his head near Jinna (eagle's claw) or Southern Cross and his neck along Gwuraarra (naala or hitting stick), otherwise known as the Pointers. The seven Naji women are shown as • near Marrala's feet. The large tracks depict Marrala's journey from Yinara to Minyirr Point while the smaller tracks depict the sites he created along the way (see Myth 3). Drawn by Jo Manjun.

