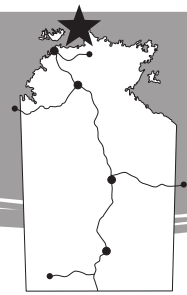


# Garig Gunak Barlu National Park



## Fact Sheet

**Pristine white sandy beaches, colourful cliff-lines and sparkling blue waters teeming with life, are just some of the drawcards of this magnificent Park.**

Garig Gunak Barlu National Park is pronounced *Gah-rig Goon-uk Bar-loo*. It was previously known as Gurig National Park and Cobourg Marine Park. Garig is Aboriginal owned land, jointly managed by a Board consisting of *Iwaidja* speaking peoples of the Cobourg Peninsula and NT Government representatives.

Garig is located about 570 km (by road) northeast of Darwin on the Cobourg Peninsula. The Park includes the entire Peninsula, the surrounding waters of the Arafura Sea and Van Diemen Gulf, and some of the neighbouring islands. It covers about 4 500 km<sup>2</sup>. It is the only area in the Northern Territory which contains adjoining land and marine parks.

The Park consists of a mosaic of sandy beaches, dunes and associated coastal grasslands, mangroves, rainforest patches, swamps, lagoons, coral reefs, sea grass meadows and rich marine life.

It protects rare species, including the Dugong and six marine turtles (Green, Loggerhead, Hawksbill, Olive Ridley, Leatherback and Flatback Turtles). Garig Gunak Barlu is also home to the worlds largest wild herd of Banteng. These Indonesian cattle are an endangered species in their native habitat.

The area has an interesting ancient and contemporary history. Archaeologists generally agree that Aboriginal people have been living in the

area for 40 000 years. Macassan traders visited the area regularly for centuries.

In 1838 the early British settlement of Victoria was established at Port Essington, and lasted ten years. Although, over the years the Peninsula has supported various industries, including pastoralism and native forestry, today pearling and tourism are the most successful.

The Park protects the first wetland to be recognised as a Wetland of International Importance under 'The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance' commonly known as Ramsar. It was registered on 8 May 1974.

There are 65 sites in Australia registered with Ramsar, including wetlands in Kakadu National Park.

There are also sites of national archeological significance within Garig Gunak Barlu National Park.

### Traditional Land Owners

The Park lies within the clan estates of the *Iwaidja* speaking peoples of Cobourg Peninsula. Custodianship is shared between Aboriginal clan groups.

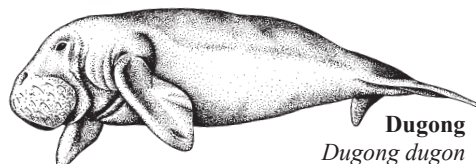
These clans have continual spiritual links with the land and sea. Their ancestors from the Creation Era (Dreamtime) created the land and all it contains. The Park therefore contains cultural landscapes which have been shaped and managed by cultural traditions and is translated as: *Garig* (a local language name), *Gunak* (land), *Barlu* (deep water).

### Safety and Comfort

- Observe park safety signs.
- No swimming anywhere in the Park due to Saltwater Crocodiles.
- Carry and drink plenty of water.
- Wear a shady hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, suitable clothing and footwear.
- Carry a first aid kit.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the heat of the day.
- Ensure your vehicle and boat are well maintained and equipped.
- Carry sufficient food and fuel.

### Please Remember

- Off road driving is forbidden. Keep to designated roads and tracks.
- Rubbish bins only available for Smith Point campers. Be prepared to burn paper or carry out recyclable materials.
- All cultural items and wildlife are protected.
- Pets are not permitted.
- Nets, traps and firearms are not permitted unless a permit has been obtained. Cast nets and hands spears are permitted.
- Take care with fire, light fires only in fireplaces provided. Keep camp fires small.
- Collect firewood before arriving at your picnic or campsite. Firewood may be collected within the Park only - not within Arnhem Land. Collect fallen timber only.
- Avoid using soaps and detergent in or near waterways.
- Generator camping area provided.
- Shells are recycled by marine wildlife - look, photograph, identify - leave on the beach.
- Check that your vehicle is not transporting pests like weeds and Cane Toads.



Dugong  
*Dugong dugon*

### Parks & Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

Black Point Ranger Station  
Ph: (08) 8979 0244

Head Office - Level 1 JHV2  
Jape Homemaker Village,  
356 Bagot Road, Millner, NT, 0810  
GPO Box 1448 Darwin NT 0801  
Ph: (08) 8999 4555



**Access by Road** - is via an unsealed road (4WD only) through Arnhem Land. The roads are only open in the dry season (May - October), depending on the rains. Roads can be closed for ceremonial reasons with little notice. If you are driving, there are several things to remember:

- Caravans and motor bikes are not permitted. Off road vans are permitted but at your own risk.
- There is no mechanical service in the Park.
- Permits do not allow for stops between the East Alligator River (Cahills Crossing) and the Park boundary.
- Alcohol may be carried but not consumed while travelling through Arnhem Land to Garig Gunak Barlu National Park
- Check tide charts before setting out. The tides at Cahills Crossing are about six hours later than Darwin tides. Some tides may prevent you crossing the river.
- The roads are narrow, dusty and

corrugated with blind corners and dangerous bends. Beware of oncoming traffic. Drive slowly, with extreme care, especially between Murgendela and Black Point.

**By Air Charter** - there is an airstrip at Smith Point, 2 km from the campground and 5 km from Black Point. There is no public transport within the Park.

**By Sea** - the Park is two days sailing from Darwin (150 nautical miles). The best time to visit is between August and October when moderating east to southeast winds prevail. Cyclones can occur between November and April. There are coral reefs and scenic anchorage for all types of boats. Do not anchor on coral reefs.

**Fuel** - fuel may be purchased at Jabiru during normal business hours. No fuel is available at Murgendela or in the Park. Visitors need to carry

sufficient fuel for their return journey from Jabiru, as well as fuel to cover recreational activities within the park. Please consider your vehicle's fuel capacity and consumption according to the following:

Darwin - Jabiru	250km
Jabiru - East Alligator	40km
East Alligator - Murgendela (Wauk) turn off	40km
Murgendela turn off - Murgendela	95km
Murgendela - Black Point Ranger Station	135km
Darwin - Black Point Ranger Station (total)	560km

## What to Bring

Come well equipped with food, water, first-aid kit, tool kit, spare tyres and vehicle parts and shade awning, fishing gear, camera and binoculars. A boat is handy too.

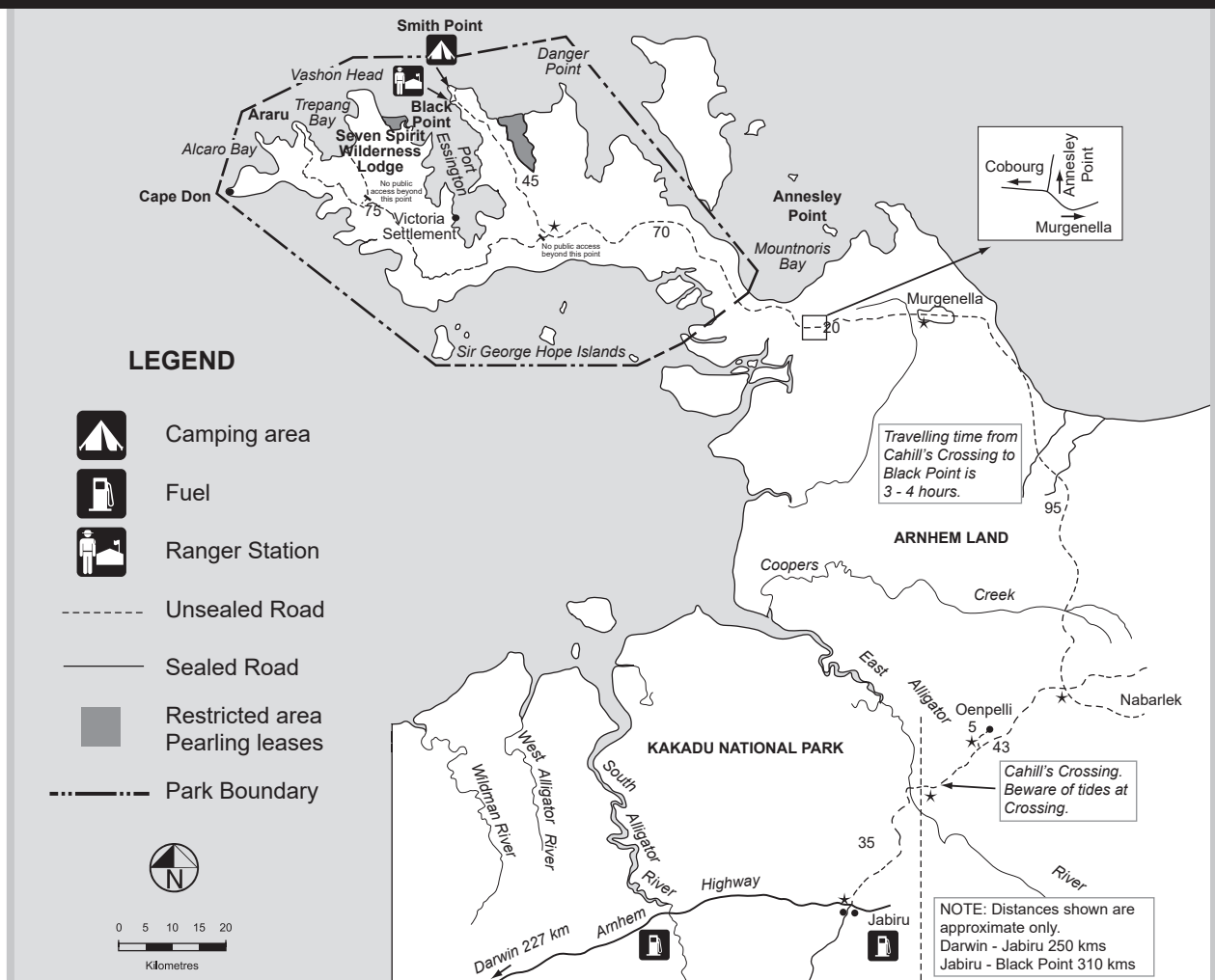


Limited bore water is available. Bring as much water as you can into the Park.



Use silent pack generators (65 decibel at 7m). Turn off by 9 pm.

## Getting There



## What to See and Do

Walking tracks, photography, beachcombing, boating, fishing, bird watching, exploring Victoria Settlement, self-drive vehicle tours and safari hunting with licensed operators.



### Black Point Cultural Centre

- features a display of the Aboriginal, Macassan and European histories of the area. The Ranger Station is located here.

*Note: there is no mobile reception in the Park - a public phone is located at*

*the Cultural Centre, but it only accepts Telstra phone cards.*



**Wetland Walk** - this walk takes you around a small freshwater wetland. Starts near the Ranger Station.



**Distance:** 1.5 km **Time:** 1.5 hrs.

**Scenic Views** - beautiful remote coastlines with sandy beaches, and clear blue seas. Check which beaches are accessible by car or boat at the Ranger Station. *Note: Sandy Islands I and II are Conservation Areas and are NOT*

*ACCESSIBLE or to be approached within 500 m.*



### Victoria Settlement -

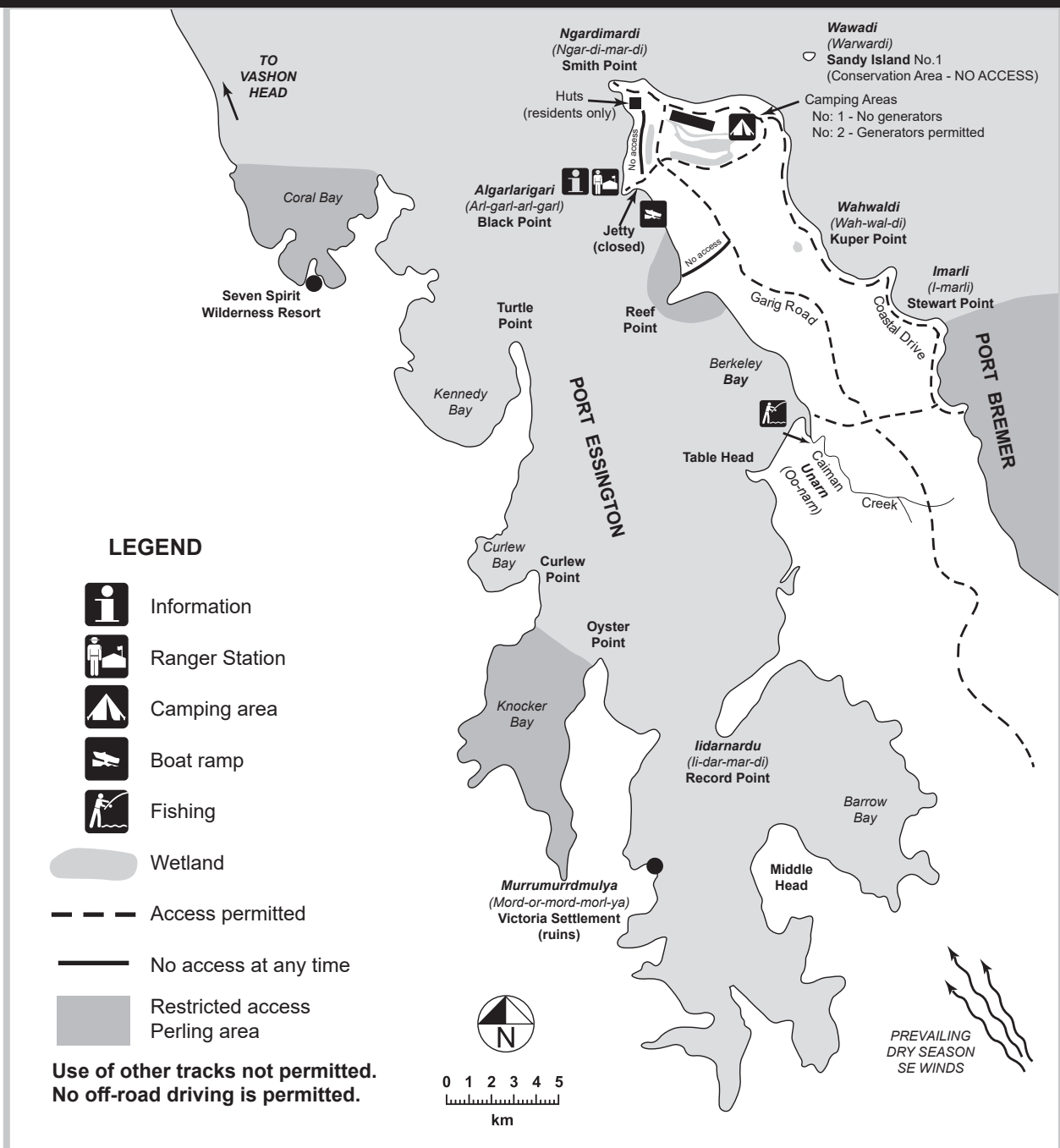
ruins of an early northern Australian settlement. Access by boat or commercial tour. You are required to notify Rangers if you intend to visit.



### Camping -

is only permitted within the designated camping areas at Smith Point. Facilities include showers, composting toilets, BBQs and tables. No powered sites are available.

## Visitor Access





**Fishing** - a wide variety of fish species inhabit these coastal waters. Visitors are only permitted to access, use and conduct activities within the Cobourg Marine Park in accordance with the Cobourg Marine Park Plan of Management. All activities must also be in accordance with the *Fisheries Act*.



**No Swimming** - Saltwater crocodiles cruise the beaches and sharks, box jellyfish, blue-ringed octopus, stonefish and sea snakes also live in these waters.



**Boating** - check local conditions. Register details of your boating trips at the Black Point Ranger Station before you set out. Launching and retrieval of boats is only permitted at the boat ramp at Black Point Ranger Station. Beach launching is not permitted. Please note, the jetty is closed and unsafe for use.

Ensure your boat meets NT Marine regulations and carries adequate spare parts and emergency equipment. Reefs are often unmarked and uncharted and easily covered by the tides. Open waters can be rough.

### Permits, Fees, Registration

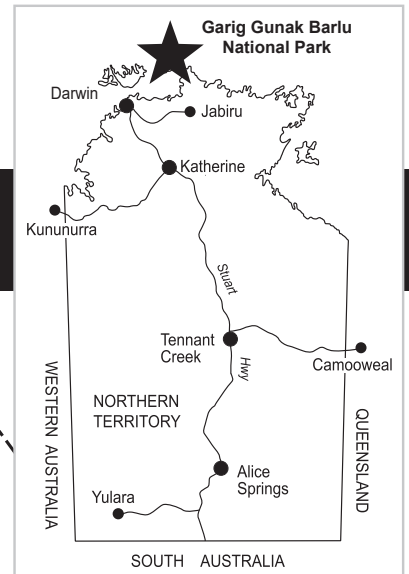
You need a permit to stay in the Park overnight on the Peninsula, whether you arrive by road, air or sea. Book well in advance especially during the school holiday periods in the dry season. In quieter times, allow two days to process permits. Supply alternative dates if you can.

**Permit Application:** Contact the Permit and Concessions Unit

GPO Box 1448  
Darwin NT 0801  
Tel (08) 8999 4814  
Fax (08) 8999 4524  
pwpermits@nt.gov.au

**Camping/Road Entry Fees** - \$232.10\* per vehicle (Camping Fee \$220 plus Transit Fee \$12.10\*). This covers up to 5 adult passengers for up to 7 nights. Extra adult passengers - \$11.00\*. A daily rate of \$31.00\* applies per vehicle for persons who wish to extend their visit. Children under 16 years - free.  
**\*All fees inclusive of GST.**

**Air and Sea Entry Fees** - camping permits are required if staying on the Peninsula overnight. Camping fees are \$16.50\* per person per night. Camp in designated camping areas only. If you are staying overnight on your vessels, please register at the Black Point Ranger Station on arrival. Skippers of large vessels, please notify Rangers of your location via VHF Channel 16.



## Garig Gunak Barlu National Park

