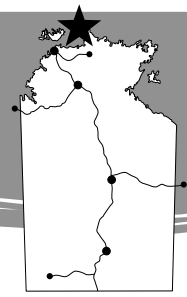


# Garig Gunak Barlu National Park



## 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. It 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 sq. km. Cobourg Peninsula 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 (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 an international agreement called 'The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance' commonly known as Ramsar. It was registered on 8 May 1974.

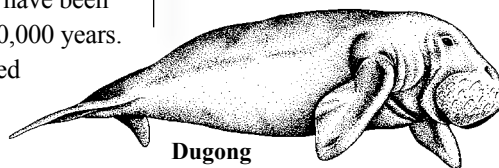
There are 65 sites in Australia registered with Ramsar, including wetlands in Kakadu National Park.

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).



**Dugong**  
*Dugong dugong*

### Safety and Comfort

- Observe park safety signs.
- No swimming anywhere in the Park due to Estuarine (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

- Permits are required.
- Keep to designated roads and tracks.
- Camp only in designated camping areas.
- 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.
- Take care with fire, light fires only in fireplaces provided. Keep camp fires small.
- Collect firewood before arriving at your picnic or campsite.
- Collect fallen timber only.
- Avoid using soaps and detergent in or near waterways.
- Generator camping area provided.
- Observe restrictions on fishing catches and areas - see Rangers for more information.
- 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.

### Parks & Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

Black Point Ranger Station  
Ph: (08) 8979 0244  
Fax: (08) 8979 0246  
www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks

Head Office - Goyder Centre  
25 Chung Wah Tce PALMERSTON NT  
PO Box 496 PALMERSTON NT 0831  
Ph: (08) 8999 4555



## Joint Management

The Park is managed jointly by the traditional owners and the Parks & Wildlife Service.

## Permission to Enter

Permits are required to enter the Park. See Permits, Fees, Registration on page 4.

**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 Arnhemland to Garig Ganuk 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.
- Fuel is available at Jabiru. Be sure to carry sufficient fuel to cover the 640 km round trip through the park and fuel required during your stay. **Fuel is currently not available in the Park.**

**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.

## What to bring

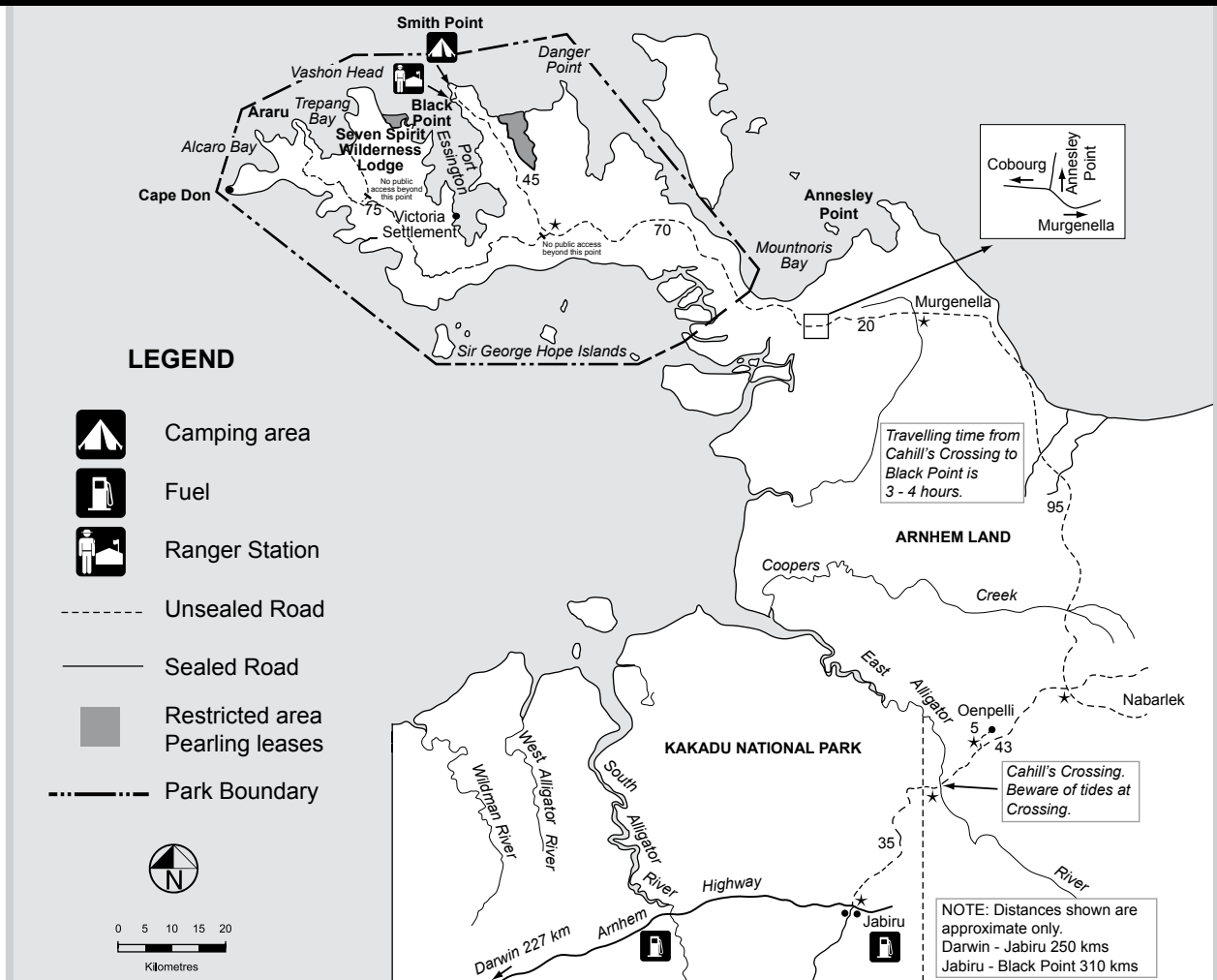
Come well equipped with food, fuel, water, first-aid kit, tool kit, spare tyres and vehicle parts and shade awning, fishing gear, camera and binoculars. A boat is handy too.



Limited bore water is available.

Bring as much water as you can into the Park.

# Getting There



## What to see and Do



### Black Point Cultural

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



**Wetland Walk** - this walk takes you around a small freshwater wetland, which may still show damage from Cyclone Ingrid. Starts near the Ranger Station.

**Distance** - 1.5 km    **Time** - 1.5 hr.



### 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.



### Victoria Settlement

- ruins of an early northern Australian settlement. Accessible by boat or commercial tour. An Information Sheet is available at the Ranger Station.

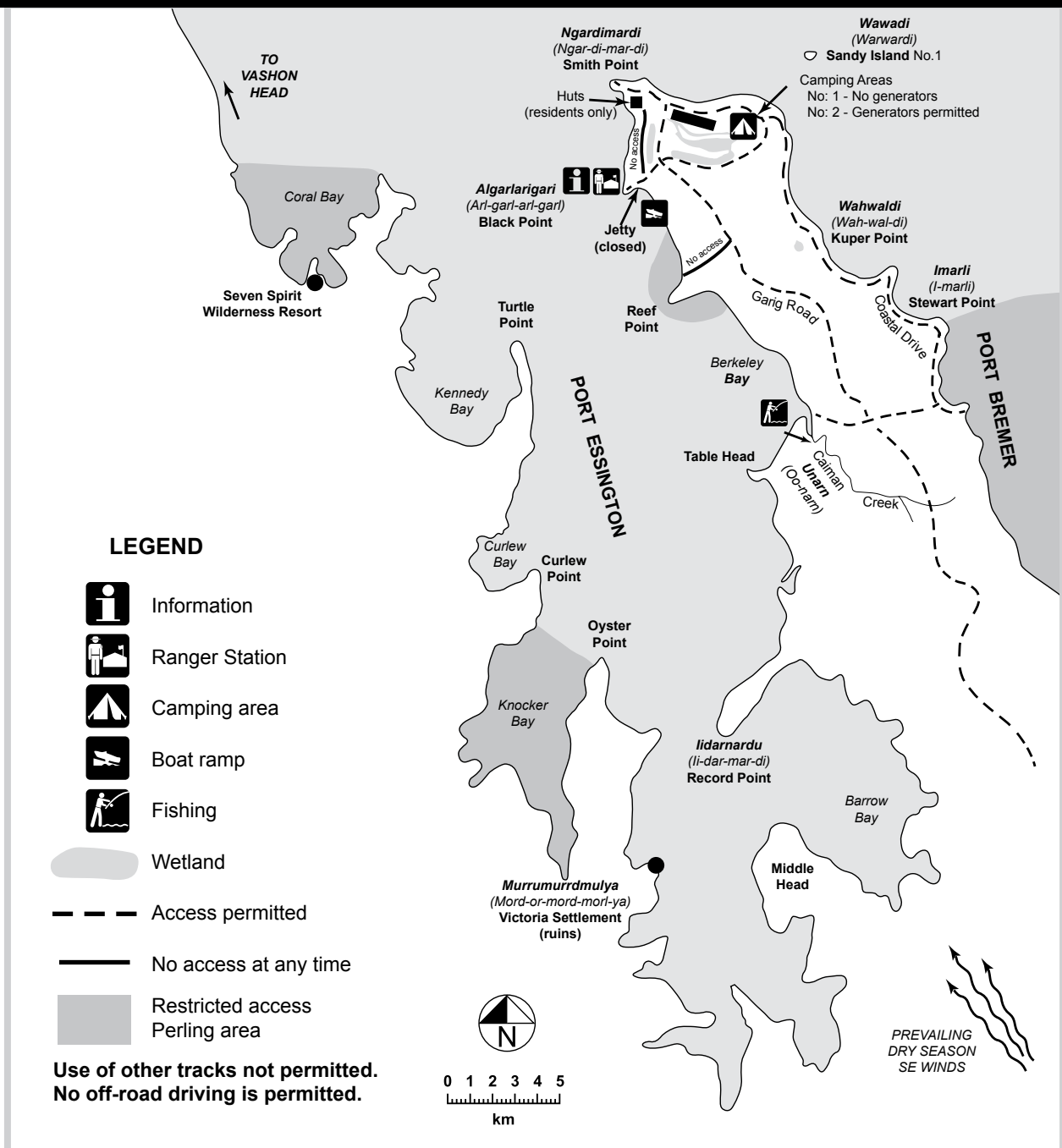


### Camping

- there is one main camping area in the Park. **Smith Point**: campground 1 is for campers without generators and campground 2 is for those using generators. Camping areas have showers, composting toilets, barbecues, tables and limited amounts of bore water. Use water sparingly though (no washing boats or cars). No powered sites available. Camping fees apply, see details under Permits, Fees, Registration.

**Generators** - Silent Pack (65 decibel at 7m) preferred. Turn off by 9.00pm.

## Visitor Access





**Fishing** - a wide variety of fish species inhabit these coastal waters. Please release large fish including Mackerel and Coral Trout. See the Rangers for further information.



**No Swimming** - Estuarine (saltwater) Crocodiles cruise the beaches 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 Ranger Station before you set out. 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.

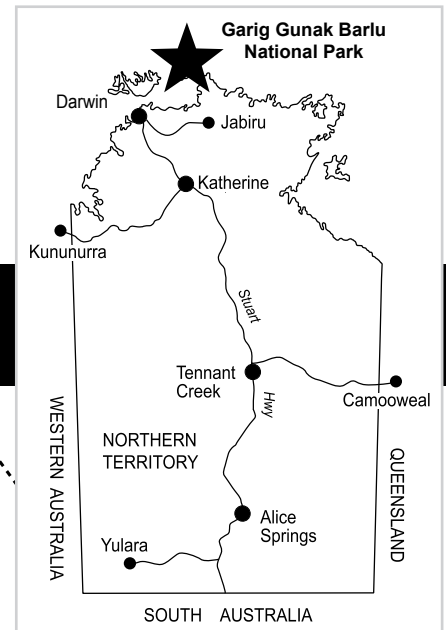
## Permits, Fees, Registration

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 Applications -**  
 Contact the **Permit Officer**  
**Cobourg Peninsula**  
**Sanctuary and Marine**  
**Park Board.**  
**PO Box 496**  
**Palmerston NT 0831**  
**Tel (08) 8999 4814**  
**Fax (08) 8999 4524**

**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. Children under 16 years - free.

**Air and Sea Entry Fees** - camping permits are required if staying on the Peninsula overnight. Camping fees of \$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

