



# DHIMURRU

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

## 2019 – 2020



# **DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

**PO Box 1551**

**Nhulunbuy NT 0881**

**Ph: 08 8939 2700**

**Email: [permits@dhimurru.com.au](mailto:permits@dhimurru.com.au)**

**Web: [www.dhimurru.com.au](http://www.dhimurru.com.au)**

© Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation 2019

Compiled by Bernice Cox and Dhimurru Staff

Design and layout by Rachel Ehrat

## **Images:**

All photos in this report are the copyright  
of Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation  
unless otherwise stated.



## CONTENTS

Foreword: Chair .....	2
Obituary: Mr D Marika .....	2
Yolŋu Matha Spelling and Pronunciation .....	3
Our Vision .....	4-5
Dhimurru Board of Directors .....	6
Dhimurru Staff .....	7
Guiding Principles .....	8-9
Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area .....	10-11
<b>CELEBRATING SUCCESS</b>	
Tourism and Land Management Agreements .....	12-13
<b>STAFF PROFILE MANDAKA MARIKA</b> .....	14
<b>LAND MANAGEMENT</b>	
Permits and Visitors .....	16
Recreation Areas .....	17
Tracks .....	18
Fire .....	19
Weeds .....	20
Illegal Dumping of Waste .....	20
<b>SEA COUNTRY</b>	
Helping Hands .....	22
<b>STAFF PROFILE JORDAN WANGURRA</b> .....	23
<b>LEARNING BOTH WAYS</b>	
Staff Training and Development .....	25
Certificate in Land Management Graduations .....	26
Learning on Country .....	26
Yamuna Galtha Rom .....	27
<b>STAFF PROFILE MAHALIAH GAWURRIYAWUY WANGURRA-JAMES</b> .....	28
<b>DHIMURRU OUT AND ABOUT</b>	
NT Women's Healthy Country Forum .....	30
2019 Indigenous Ranger Forum .....	30
NT Landcare Awards .....	31
<b>WORKING TOGETHER</b>	
Dhimurru's Partners and Collaborators .....	33
Sea Shepherd Australia .....	34
Jawun Secondees .....	35
<b>PLANS FOR THE FUTURE</b> .....	36
<b>FINANCE CONTRIBUTIONS SUMMARY</b>	
Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation Income 2019-2020 .....	37
<b>YOLŊU MATHA ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS</b> .....	38





## FOREWORD

Banambi Wunurmurra  
**CHAIR 2019–2020**

This year has been particularly challenging one for us all. In the final months of 2019, none of us could have dreamed what the first half of 2020 would bring. Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, like many, has been impacted by the Corona Virus Pandemic in many ways.

Dhimurru was affected by the reduction in visitors due to the closure of borders; the closure of the recreation areas for three weeks; the general downturn in the economy and the uncertainty of how the virus might impact our communities should it reach East Arnhem Land.

Throughout this time the Board and staff have made changes to their work practices and continued to deliver good outcomes for the organisation. Work programs were adapted to focus more on projects that could be delivered without external support. We have made good inroads

with our weeds program, working in partnership with Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA) on coffee bush eradication in a sacred site near Yirrkala.

A significant outcome achieved this year was the signing of an Agreement between Dhimurru and the Northern Land Council/East Arnhem Land Trust. The Agreement enables Dhimurru to issue permits to those wishing to access and stay in recreation areas. The period of the agreement is up to 20 years. Many people have been involved in the implementation of this agreement, and I would like to thank the staff, my fellow Board members, and our partners for their efforts in getting this agreement in place.

At the last Annual General Meeting, our members resolved to enact a revised Rule Book that is user-friendly and provides greater flexibility in how the Board and the organisation runs. This year the Board has operated under the new book and following our next AGM, Board members will be elected for a two-year term.

This year has seen new staff come on board with Mahalia Wangurra-James and Jordan Wangurra both taking on Ranger roles. I would like to welcome them to our family. At the same time, I thank those staff who have worked consistently over the last twelve months. The Dhimurru family continues to grow strong.

Finally, I would like to thank our partners who have stood by us in these difficult circumstances. We look forward to working with you again next year.

Banambi Wunurmurra  
Board Chair

## OBITUARY

**MR D. MARIKA**

This Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Mr D Marika Director.

Mr D Marika was a friend and a colleague, who was committed to Dhimurru. He sat on the Dhimurru Board providing leadership to the organisation and its staff for over ten years. Mr Marika was strong on passing knowledge to the younger generations coming up. Mr D Marika we will never forget you, and your contribution to Dhimurru.



# YOLŲU MATHA SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

YolŲu Matha translates literally as 'the tongue of the YolŲu people'. It is a generic term describing the sixteen mutually intelligible clan languages of the Laynhapuy region of northeast Arnhem Land.

The characters used to write YolŲu Matha differ from those used for English since many of the sounds found in YolŲu Matha are not found in English. In pronouncing words in YolŲu Matha the emphasis is always on the first syllable. The following sounds are represented by letters in YolŲu Matha.

VOWEL SOUNDS	
a – as in mud	i – as in tin
ä – as in far	o – as in pore
e – as in feet	u – as in put
CONSONANT SOUNDS	
b – as in boy	nh – 'n' with tongue between teeth
d – as in dog	ny – 'n' with tongue curled behind lower teeth
<u>d</u> – retroflexed: retroflexed sounds are pronounced while the tip of the tongue curls back to roof of mouth	ŋ – as in singing
dh – pronounced with the tip of the tongue between the teeth	p – as in rapid
dj – pronounced with tip of tongue curled behind lower teeth and top of tongue touching palate	r – as in the American pronunciation of car with tongue retroflexed
g – as in ragged	rr – rolled sound common in Scottish pronunciation
k – as in bucket	t – as in tar
l – as in lump	ṭ – retroflexed
ḷ – retroflexed	th – 't' with tip of tongue between teeth
m – as in man	tj – 't' with tip of tongue curled around behind lower teeth
n – as in net	w – as in way
<u>n</u> – retroflexed	y – as in yellow
	' – apostrophe: indicates a stop in a word

This reference is taken from Raymatja Mununggiritj & Trevor Stockly, *YolŲu Matha: : An Introduction to Gumatj and Related Languages in NE Arnhemland*, Yirrkala Community School Literature Production Centre, Yirrkala, NT, 1985.

## OUR VISION

*Dhimurru's vision statement honours the memory and wisdom of those elders who inspired and founded Dhimurru.*

*Dhimurru continues to be motivated by the commitment and passion of its leaders and elders.*



Roy Dadaynja, MP, MLC, MBE

### IN ENGLISH

*(Adapted in 2013 after extensive sea country estates were included in the Dhimurru IPA)*

Dhimurru's vision is guided by the wisdom of our elders who founded Dhimurru. They have inspired us in our work. They exhorted us to look after the land for those who will follow, to protect and maintain it. In 1990 on behalf of the elders, Roy Dadaynja Marika said:

"Be firm and strong for the land, and the strength of your solidarity will sustain you in your cause.

Our country (land and sea) will exist forever. It must be protected so that it will remain the same, so that it can be seen in the same way that the elders saw it in the past. Our vision and hope is that Yolŋu will continue to use our country for all the generations to come."

The elders said:

"We the old people hope that Dhuwa and Yirritja country will continue to be looked after through the connection of yothu yindi.

All our country is Yirritja and Dhuwa. Our songs, our law, our sacred art, our stories are embedded in our country, which is the foundation of our knowledge. That's how we see our country; that is what our Land Rights Act says.

The decision-makers are the landowners, the clans that are connected through yothu yindi and māri-gutharra kinship. They have placed certain areas of our land in the hands of the Dhimurru committee, which authorises the Dhimurru rangers to manage and preserve, maintain and protect the areas designated for recreation use.

The landowners put the recreation areas in Dhimurru's hands to manage. They envisage one committee, one voice, and one body under one umbrella, Dhimurru. Only Yolŋu will make decisions for this land, not government officials or any other person who is not a land-owner.

We envisage working together with the Parks and Wildlife Commission and other IPA collaborators; we need their help in making our vision a reality. With respect to the sea country in the IPA, we are committed to working together with all relevant agencies to ensure that our sea country remains healthy, our sites and their stories are protected, and our marine resources are used sustainably. But the only people who make decisions about the land are those who own the law, the people who own the creation stories, the people whose lives are governed by Yolŋu law and belief."

## IN YOLŊU MATHA

*(As expressed by the late Roy Dadayŋa Marika MBE, with additions translated by Rarriwuy Marika)*

From dhawuru dhanu ŋaya yaka wāŋa ga hundred or more than one hundred years dhanu dhāruk ŋarru dhāya wekarram. Mā nhān yaka ŋarru yolŋuyu bāki, banhaya ŋayi generation ga generation ga generation. ŋayi yaka ŋarru dhāya, mā dhanal ŋarru nhāma banhaya ŋayi, banha yakan nhalpiyan dhanal nyenan nātjil dilak. Ga nhalpiyan dhanal yakan gatjpu'yuwan nātjil dilak. Yo—Dhuwa Yirritja, Yothu ga Yindi.

Bukmak ŋayi malanyinha yaka dhāya manikaymi, rommi, dhulanŋmi, dhāwu'mi. Banhalanŋa ŋayiŋa, dhanalingu nuku djalkiri. Bitjan nhan yaka ŋayim malanya dhāya ganunha Land Rights-ŋa dhāruk bilanya bili. Yo, decision-maker nhanbayi yana ŋayi waŋanŋu.

Narru nhan ŋarru, ŋarrunŋam goŋmurrum nhumaliŋ gurumurru, Parks and Wildlife-kura or rangerwurumurru, Dhimurruwurumurru. Bukmak ŋayi malanyinha djākawu goŋŋa Dhimurruwura. Yirritja ga Dhuwa ŋarru warkthun dhanal further development bilanya bitjan conservation ga dhal yun ŋarru protecting nhānŋuru development-ŋuru.

Ga biyalpul ŋalma ŋarru nhāma ŋoy gapu banha dhāya yaka IPA-ŋa, ŋalma ŋarru djāma rrambanŋi waripu guŋkuwunŋ agencies-wunŋ, mā ŋalmanŋingu ŋoy gapu ŋarru ŋuwakurru ŋoyya, yaka marimi dhananŋ dhukun, ŋalmalingunŋ ŋayi. ŋoyŋa gapuŋa, ga dhāwu bayikuy ŋayiwuy dhanal IPA ga ŋalma ŋarru djāka, ga ŋoywuy gapuwuy maypal, miyapunu ga waripu mala banha ŋalma bayinŋ ŋoka.

Dhanu ŋayi yolŋuwu yana, Yolŋuyu ŋarru warkthun dhāruk nhanbayi Yolŋuyu yana. Djinaŋ ŋayiwu ŋarakawu, yaka Gapmandhu wo bilanŋ yolthu waripunŋuyu ŋayinharrayy Yolŋuyu. Nhanbayi yana ŋayi-waŋanŋuyu, rom-waŋanŋuyu, wararr-waŋanŋuyu, gamununŋu-waŋanŋuyu wo manayin-waŋanŋuyu.

Narru dhārukma dhanu gunyanda bayikunŋ ŋalapalmiyu banha ŋarrunŋan ga dhanu badak nyena yaka. Narru dhārukma dhanalingu ga gatjpum badak wālŋa. Djinaŋ Dhimurruwum self developmentkum, ga self-managementkum.





## **DHIMURRU BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019 - 2020**

### **CHAIRPERSON**

Banambi Wunungmurra

### **DEPUTY CHAIR**

Lirryipya Mununggurr (until September 2019)  
Malati Yunupingu

### **LIFETIME MEMBER**

Djawa Yunupingu

### **DIRECTORS**

Banula Marika  
Natjina Marika  
Gurumin Marika (September 2019 onwards)  
Witiyana Marika (September 2019 onwards)  
Boyan 1 Yunupingu (September 2019 onwards)  
Djakapurra Munyarryun (September 2019 onwards)  
Butjarri Mununggurritj (September 2019 onwards)  
Mr D Marika (until September 2019)  
Djatjalarrma Marika (until September 2019)  
Gaylili 1 Marika (until September 2019)  
Dela 1 Mununggurr (until September 2019)  
Velda Winunuj (until September 2019)





# DHIMURRU STAFF 2019 - 2020

**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Mandaka Marika

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Christine Burke

**SENIOR CULTURAL ADVISOR**

Rrawun Maymuru

**BUSINESS SERVICES  
MANAGER**

Maureen Neil

**BUSINESS SUPPORT  
OFFICER**

Cheryl Thomas

**PROJECT FACILITATORS**

Paul Augustin  
Luke Playford  
Jonathan Wearne

**LEARNING ON COUNTRY  
COORDINATOR**

Ian Hutton

**SENIOR RANGERS**

Gathapura Mununggurr  
Grace Wunungmurra

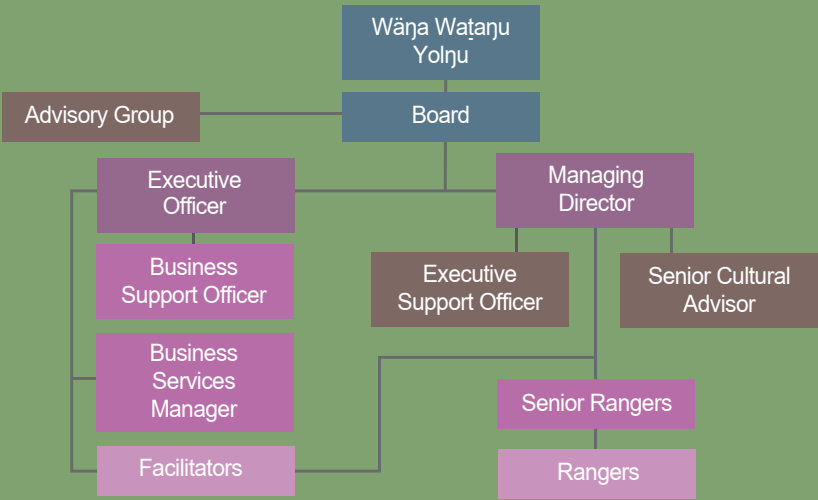
**RANGERS**

Hamish Gondarra  
Wulwat Marika  
Wangawuy Munungurritj  
Guruguru Hick  
Yama Marawilli  
Velma Munyarryun  
(until April 2020)  
Jordan Wangurra  
Mahaliah Wangurra – James

**YBE PARTNERSHIP**

Grant Maymuru

**FIGURE 1.  
ORGANISATIONAL  
STRUCTURE OF  
DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION**



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Through the wisdom of our elders, the direction set by the Dhimurru board and executive and the planning and management of our rangers in collaboration with relevant agencies, we are committed to the following principles in managing our land and sea country within the Dhimurru IPA.*



### Yolŋu control and empowerment

Yolŋu make decisions for their own country. Activities should maximise opportunities for Yolŋu as active participants in the management of their country in the IPA.

### Respect Yolŋu values

There are extensive and all-embracing values of all sites in the IPA for Yolŋu, and preserving these sites is a primary focus.

### Conserve and enhance natural and cultural values of the IPA

The use and management of the IPA must be sustainable and must protect the ecological and heritage values that are the result of generations of Yolŋu management.

### Manage both-ways

We maximise opportunities for Yolŋu to devise strategies through a mutual investigation of n̄apaki (mainstream) and Yolŋu systems of knowledge.

### Collaborative relationships

We continue to develop collaborative relationships with government agencies and other organisations in programs and research to support sustainable use and management of Yolŋu land and seas.

### N̄apaki recreation values

The goal of our visitor management is to encourage an appreciation of the cultural and natural values of the IPA for n̄apaki to promote an enjoyable experience and to ensure minimal environmental impact.

### Care for Dhuwa and Yirriŋja clan estates

We care for Dhimurru land and sea country holistically, in accordance with our cultural values, rights, practices and obligations.

### Protect sacred sites

We protect sacred sites and song cycles that contain our creation stories and link our land and sea environments together.



### Maintain healthy ecosystems

We maintain healthy terrestrial and marine ecosystems in which all species and associated cultural values can thrive.

### Harvest sustainably

We ensure that dugong, turtle, fish and other culturally and economically important species are harvested sustainably for the generations to come.

### Recognise Yolŋu rights, interests and responsibilities

We ensure that Yolŋu rights, interests and responsibilities in land and sea country are recognised and respected, together with the rights and responsibilities of other groups and organisations with a legitimate interest in our land and sea country and its resources.

### Maintain Yolŋu knowledge

We ensure that Yolŋu knowledge and practices are maintained and transmitted from one generation to the next.

### Apply Yolŋu knowledge and practices

We apply Yolŋu knowledge and practices to the management of our land and sea country.

### Use best practices

We ensure best-practice management of our land and sea country long into the future.

### Develop Yolŋu enterprises

We support environmentally and culturally sustainable enterprises.



## **DHIMURRU INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA (IPA)**

An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of land and/or sea country voluntarily dedicated by Yolŋu landowners as a non-legislated protected area. The terrestrial component of an IPA is recognised by the Australian government as being part of the National Reserve System of Protected Areas (NRSPA).

In 2000, Yolŋu landowners made a voluntary IPA declaration over approximately 101,000 hectares of their traditional country. This included 92,000 hectares of their land and about 9000 hectares of their sea country, incorporating previously registered marine sacred sites. This declaration established the first IPA in the Northern Territory and the first IPA in Australia to include both terrestrial and marine areas.

At a memorial ceremony in Arnhem Land in April 2013, Yolŋu wāŋga waṯaŋu (landowners) formally dedicated additional areas of their land and sea country to the Dhimurru IPA. This increased Dhimurru's IPA to approximately 550,000 hectares and extended the IPA's sea country boundary a further 40km from the coastline.

Each IPA is managed by Indigenous rangers and partner organisations according to protected area guidelines set by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Dhimurru's vision statement sets out Dhimurru's commitment to:

- support Yolŋu landowners in managing their land and sea country
- manage recreation areas designated for visitor use.

In collaboration with partner agencies, our rangers are responsible for the day-to-day management of the IPA, supported by the continued hands-on involvement of the Yolŋu community taking care of their traditional country. Traditional resource management practices such as the use of fire are critical to maintaining natural and cultural values of the IPA.

The Dhimurru IPA is supported by the Australian government's Indigenous Protected Areas program and the Working on Country program, which assist in funding, planning and management in return for environmental and cultural heritage management services.

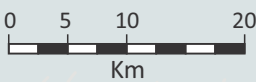
Many other government and non-government partners share their expertise and resources to help us achieve the conservation and sustainability goals of the IPA.

Our IPA is one of 75 across Australia. Together they contribute about 45 percent of the total area of the NRSPA, which also includes all of Australia's national parks and conservation reserves.



Excluded  
Mine  
Lease

- Original IPA
- Terrestrial Zone (Aboriginal Land)
- Sea Country Zone (Collaborative Management)





## CELEBRATING SUCCESS

### TOURISM AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

For over two years, Dhimurru staff and Board have worked with its members and landowners to negotiate a new Agreement between the Northern Land Council (NLC) and Land Trust. This allows Dhimurru to manage and issue permits to access and stay on designated recreation areas.

The Agreement, in place for up to 20 years, sets direction for Dhimurru and gives certainty to landowners and users of the recreation areas. The new agreement was signed in January 2020 and came into effect 1 July 2020.

The new arrangements reflect the aspirations of Yolŋu landowners who will, for the first time, receive a portion of the revenue generated from camping permits and commercial operations on their land. The revenue Dhimurru receives will continue to contribute to the management of the recreation areas and administration of permits.





Camping Permits will be required for those wishing to camp in any of the Dhimurru recreation areas. Visitor Access Permits replace General Permits. A new online booking system allows visitors to book camp sites and buy permits. Licencing arrangements for tour operators have been reviewed and a Tour Operator portal will allow operators to manage their permits online.

Dhimurru staff have worked hard to deliver on-ground changes to campsites and signage that reflect the changes. Campground assessments

have been undertaken. Where required, new facilities such as BBQs and tables, will be installed this dry season. New visitor information has been developed and the Visitor Guide reviewed.

The new arrangements align with regional strategic directions to enhance tourism opportunities in East Arnhem Land. The project was supported through a grant from Developing East Arnhem Land (DEAL) and funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency.



## STAFF PROFILE



### **MANDAKA MARIKA** **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**2019 Lifetime Achievement Award Winner  
– Territory National Resource Management**

**2020 Australia Day Citizen of the Year  
Award – Nhulunbuy**

In November 2019 Mandaka was recognised for his commitment to Dhimurru and Yolŋu landowners. He was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Territory National Resource Management Conference held in Darwin. Mandaka Marika has spent over 26 years working with Dhimurru, helping to implement the vision of the founders.

Chosen by his Rirratjinu clan to be one of the first rangers in 1992, Mandaka has played an important and pivotal role in Dhimurru's development and success. His commitment and progression from Ranger to his current position as Managing Director is evidence of his lifelong passion for his people and his country.

Mandaka's life work has been about supporting Yolŋu to control and manage the land by following Yolŋu tradition and culture. He is a role model for Yolŋu and all Indigenous Australians to manage their land in accordance

with culture and conservation. His leadership and mentoring skills motivate, enthuse, and educate Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu colleagues, whether new junior or experienced senior staff. He works between Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu to enhance and improve relationships. This ability to navigate the cross-cultural political landscape and maintain harmonious relations has been key in his achievements.

His ability to guide, mentor and support both cultural and scientific outcomes through his skill as an expert communicator and negotiator is evident in the day to day operations at Dhimurru. Mandaka's commitment to two-way learning is demonstrated in his role as a Rirratjinu elder and cultural representative and through his study of and graduation in a certificate of Conservation and Land Management, both of which he applies through his work.

Dhimurru has been a leading light in the management of Indigenous Protected Areas for over 25 years and Mandaka has been a key player in this process and an agent for the delivery of land management outcomes for Traditional Owners.

To mark his successes, Mandaka was also named the Australia Day Nhulunbuy Citizen of the Year at a ceremony held at Yirrkala in January 2020.



## **LAND MANAGEMENT**







**PERMITS AND VISITORS**

Due to Corona Virus Pandemic (COVID-19) restrictions causing the closure of recreation areas for several weeks, ongoing border restrictions, and loss of all commercial tourism operations to the region, there was a substantial reduction in visitor numbers this financial year. The number of annual permits issued remained steady.

Permit compliance was monitored through regular ranger patrols and permit checks. Permit breaches were dealt with appropriately through sit down meetings with perpetrators. Educational information on social media, fact sheets, local radio and the Dhimurru website was also provided to the general public.

In 2019-20 permits were issued as follows:

<b>General permits (annual and six month)</b>	<b>2,535 people</b>
<b>Visitor permits (two months, seven-day, one day)</b>	<b>1,704 people</b>
<b>Special permits</b>	<b>1,772 people</b>

Dhimurru issued four commercial operator licences for the 2019 dry season. No licences were issued in 2020 due to COVID19 restrictions.

The permit system was disabled on 30 June and was replaced with the new online booking system 1 July, 2020.



## RECREATION AREAS

Managing designated recreation areas in the IPA is a large part of Dhimurru ranger activities. Rangers undertake weekly patrols and compliance checks, visiting all recreation areas. Ongoing maintenance including mowing, brush cutting, infrastructure repairs and maintenance, signage installation and track access clearing is conducted. Planting of native vegetation to help prevent erosion was carried out at Wathawuy (Goanna Lagoon and Latram), Middle Beach, Lombuy, Wirrawuy, Gäluru and Baṇambarrṇa.

A new Remote Recreational Servicing Unit (RRSU) with a high-pressure cleaner was bought with funds from NTG Aboriginal Ranger Grants. This portable unit has helped the rangers to clean toilets and campground infrastructure more efficiently.

An assessment of designated recreation areas was completed as part of the new NLC Tourism and Land Management Agreement implementation.

Campsite infrastructure was assessed and new or replacement barbeques were built where required. Identification posts were also installed at each site. These will help visitors to find their booked site as selected through the online permit booking system.

As part of the infrastructure preparation an additional camp site was formalised at Baṇambarrṇa (Rainbow Cliff). Historically campers used the site but there was no infrastructure. To cater for the increase in campers, barbeques and tables were installed. This area is popular due to its location close to Nhulunbuy township.







### TRACKS

Management of the road and track network throughout the IPA is a priority to ensure safe access for visitors and rangers. To maintain the network Dhimurru relies heavily on funding from partners, such as Rio Tinto Gove Operations or National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) grants.

This year major track maintenance and repairs were undertaken by YBE (2) Pty Ltd in preparation for the wet season. Recreational access tracks at Wathawuy, Gapuru, Banamburrnja, Lumbuy, Garanhan and Njumuy all sustained damage during the previous wet season that required attention.

A new 10-metre section of corduroy at the commencement of the Wanuwuy track has been completed. The remoteness of the site made this a major undertaking. Continual improvements in corduroy design to minimize damage means less time spent on repairs and maintenance.

Rangers were helped by Learning on Country students from Yirkala School to replace damaged corduroy.

Reforming rollovers for effective drainage at the Datjula lookout escarpment, the main access to the Wanuwuy recreation area, was also undertaken. Reflective posts were installed along the main access track to direct visitors

safely to the northern campsites in the dark. They also minimise use of undesignated tracks and aid in the prevention of erosion.

At Djulpan, Rangers had an opportunity to work with a Rio Tinto Gove Operations archaeologist on the protection of two culturally significant shell middens. Subsequently the access track was realigned to protect the middens. The realignment allows Dhimurru vehicles to get closer to the beach to minimise double handling of marine debris collection.

Yalanbara is a beach of immense cultural significance to the Rirratjinu people. A 60-metre section of corduroy was installed to protect this fragile environment. Yolngu landowners and Dhimurru staff now have easier access to assist in the management of this special place. Dhimurru secured funding for materials from the Gumatj Sawmill to improve the existing management track through an NTG Aboriginal Ranger Grant.







## **FIRE**

Dhimurru is focussed on protecting infrastructure and visitors to recreation areas from the risk of fires. One method of achieving this is by conducting cool burns at the beginning of the dry season. A cool burn is when a fire can move through country without creating significant risk to lives and the environment.

Dhimurru works in partnership with Yolŋu traditional owners and custodians to support a fire management program perpetuating the importance of fire in the relationship of people and country.

Rangers worked quickly and effectively in the limited weather timeframe of July and

August in 2019 to conduct burns. By doing this, infrastructure is protected from hotter fires later in the year.

Due to the current pandemic there were fewer opportunities to engage with elders (other than those working for Dhimurru) in 2020. The dry season program started in late June with infrastructure and cultural site protection burns taking place. This year Rangers targeted more remote historical sites in the Yalanbara area.

Discussions were held throughout the year with neighbouring fire managers (including the local fire service and Yirralka Rangers) to work together to manage fire in the East Arnhem Region.



### WEEDS

Dhimurru has continued to work with North East Arnhem Region (NEAR) weeds group to organise and manage weed eradication across the IPA. COVID-19 restrictions have impacted the amount of work undertaken during the year.

Dhimurru's work eradicating Coffee Bush will continue via a new partnership with ALPA/CDP program in Yirrkala launched this year. Rangers have been training and working alongside 15-20 Yirrkala CDP workers on Coffee Bush infestations in an exceptionally large area of a listed Sacred Site adjacent to Yirrkala.

Treatment of Coffee Bush on Dhambaliya was postponed due to the travel restrictions under COVID-19 and the importance of keeping visitors away from homeland communities.

Weeds were treated and sprayed in the growing season in early 2020. Due to measures put in place to enable Rangers and staff to work through the COVID-19 pandemic safely, the weed program was prioritised. It could be undertaken in small groups or individually, not requiring contact with the public. A substantial amount of weed spraying was done by Rangers and Facilitators focussing on key areas including recreation areas, roadsides and other identified hotspots.

### ILLEGAL DUMPING OF WASTE

The illegal dumping of waste has always been an issue within the IPA but over the past year Dhimurru Rangers have identified a significant increase in the amount and variety of items being dumped.

These items include car bodies, household items, tyres and garden waste – particularly weeds. Illegal dumping causes pollution of land and waterways, spreads noxious weeds, and is expensive to remove and has both financial and environmental impacts.

As part of Dhimurru's land management strategy, staff have developed a waste tracking application (App) for use in the field. This App allows Rangers to take a survey of illegally dumped waste before removing it. Information including the type of waste, where it is found, photos can be instantly uploaded onsite, added to a map and collated to decide if more work at the site is needed.

The App has been added to the Dhimurru GIS management (Geographical Information System) system. Data collected can also be shared with other partners to find solutions to manage this growing problem.





# SEA COUNTRY





### HELPING HANDS

Dhimurru has worked hard to develop good partnerships over the years, resulting in great outcomes for the country we manage. This is particularly true for marine debris management in the IPA. Dhimurru has 70 kilometres of coastline to manage. With increasing rates of marine debris deposited on our shores it is more than the Rangers can manage on their own.

The annual Wanuwuy Marine Debris Survey was held in September with the assistance of Datjala Work Camp and community volunteers. Rangers and Datjala volunteers worked diligently for two weeks collecting, sorting, weighing and recording each item of debris. Dhimurru now has research data from over 17 years and can track the change in density of debris over this time.

In recent years, Dhimurru has received much community and volunteer support to clean the beaches of the IPA. Support has been through school participation, visitors donating holiday time and most significantly a team of local volunteers who formed the community group - Arnhem Coast Clean Up.

In addition to the annual survey, six community clean-up events organised by Arnhem Coast Clean Up has greatly assisted in removing marine debris from our beaches. This group has grown in membership and is currently working with Keep Top End Coasts Healthy to screen

marine conservation films to improve community education and promote participation in clean-ups.

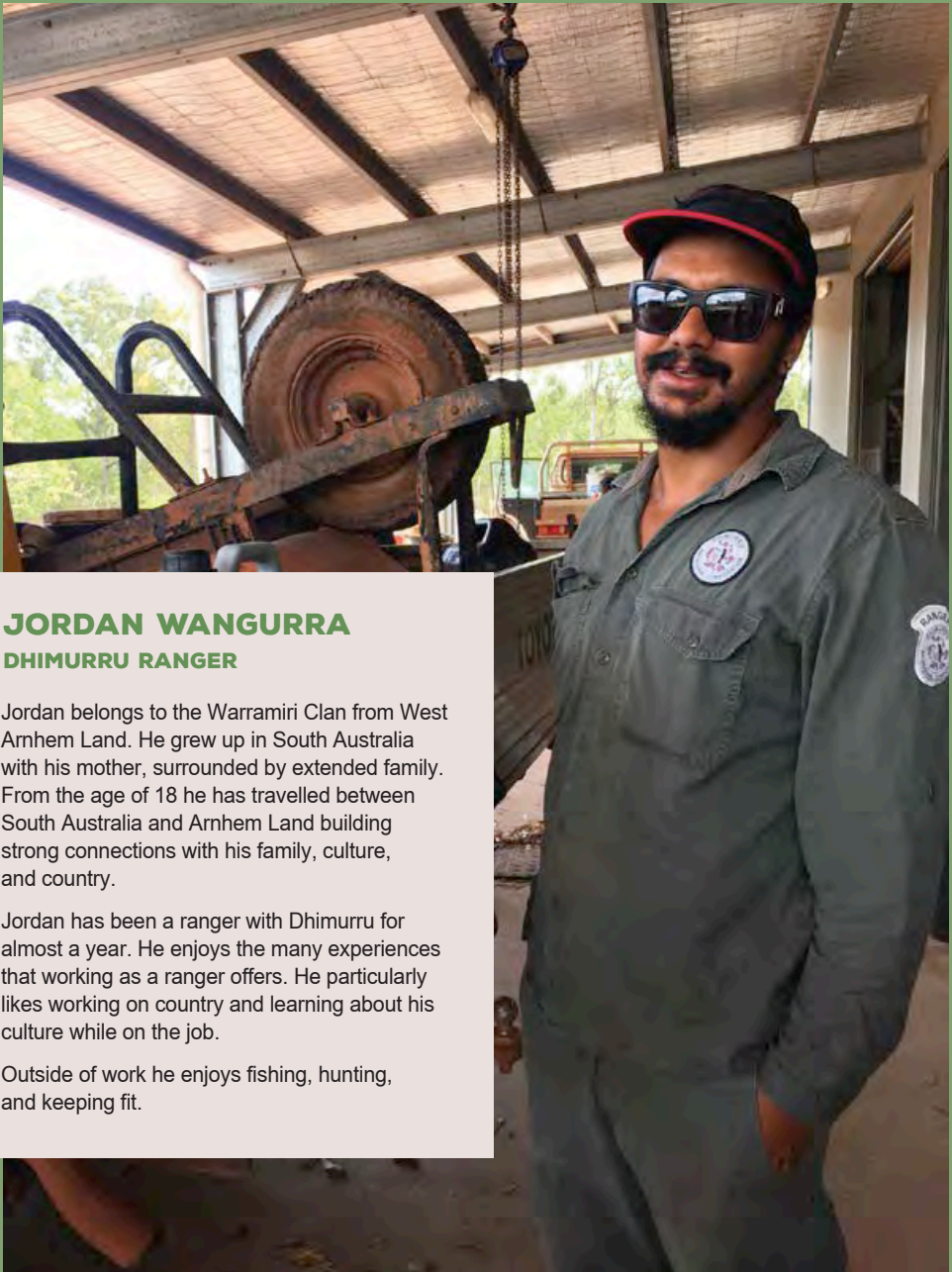
At least 284 volunteers attended community led clean-ups and more than five tonnes of debris was collected and removed. Additional clean-ups were planned but were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The collaboration between Sea Shepherd Australia and Dhimurru continued with a two-week clean-up at Djulpan in November 2019. Upgraded track access improved efficiency and over 12 tonnes of debris was removed from eight kilometres of beach.

The documentary "Untrashing Djulpan" Sea Shepherd filmed during the 2018 Djulpan project is a high-quality production that highlights this issue to the world, and hopefully will help in gaining further government support for marine debris management both locally and internationally.



## STAFF PROFILE



### **JORDAN WANGURRA** **DHIMURRU RANGER**

Jordan belongs to the Warramiri Clan from West Arnhem Land. He grew up in South Australia with his mother, surrounded by extended family. From the age of 18 he has travelled between South Australia and Arnhem Land building strong connections with his family, culture, and country.

Jordan has been a ranger with Dhimurru for almost a year. He enjoys the many experiences that working as a ranger offers. He particularly likes working on country and learning about his culture while on the job.

Outside of work he enjoys fishing, hunting, and keeping fit.



**LEARNING  
BOTH WAYS**





## STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Dhimurru works to support the aspirations of staff to develop and improve their work skills in managing country and their own personal growth.

As part of Dhimurru's commitment to building a resilient workforce and the pursuit of personal growth, Yolŋu staff were offered the chance to attend a Mental Health Workshop called: Building Strong Minds. The three-day workshop encouraged self-learning about the best way to look after yourself and others around you. The attendees praised the structure of the workshop, enjoyed the company of staff from other workplaces and the overall learning. The face to face workshop was followed up with a short online based review. Rangers were awarded Statements of Attendance for this national course.

Dhimurru annually holds a staff workshop, facilitated by Paul Josif, at the beginning of each year. The workshop reviews the outcomes for the previous year, sets the tone and identifies key directions and actions to be taken during the next year. The outcomes of the workshop are a valuable two-way collaborative approach which underpins the success of the organisation.

Several staff members enrolled in a skid-steer course to work towards being proficient in operating small earth moving equipment. This will contribute to managing small project based construction activities that Dhimurru undertakes on the IPA.

Dhimurru enjoyed the opportunity to update their snake bite first aid skills by calling on the expertise of the local St Johns crew. The session covered the most recent application of appropriate first aid for snake bite casualties.

In house training also has a ongoing focus on safely managing the fleet of four wheel drive vehicles. Rangers contribute to this process by completing weekly vehicle safety assessments and checklists.

Rangers received formal search and rescue training conducted by the NT Police to enable Dhimurru to assist in inter-agency response to local rescue events. The training followed a search and rescue event where the Rangers worked with Police to locate a missing person. This program has strengthened relationships with local Police and provided staff with skills in search and rescue.

One of the highlights of pre Christmas and the end of the year was a 'Staff learning' exercise at Wanuwuy. This was a fun and rewarding day for all staff to learn more about the inter connectedness of people and the land.





### **CERTIFICATE IN LAND MANAGEMENT GRADUATIONS**

The Dhimurru Board and staff congratulate our Rangers who have successfully completed their studies and attained the Certificate in Land Management. They received their certificates in front of proud family, friends and work colleagues at a graduation ceremony at Dhimurru offices in November 2019.

#### **Certificate III**

Gathapura Mununggurr - Senior Ranger

#### **Certificate II**

Rrawun Maymuru - Senior Cultural Advisor

Wulwat Marika - Ranger

Guruguru Hick - Ranger

Georgina Gellett - Ranger

Yama Banu - Ranger

### **LEARNING ON COUNTRY**

The Learning on Country (LoC) Program and partnership between Dhimurru Rangers and Yirrkala School continued to develop and grow. The LoC program supports students engaging with education, in the class room and beyond. The intergenerational knowledge transfer is a key focus, allowing a Yolŋu led curriculum to be seen as a highlight in the students broader education.

The LoC Program includes regular activities in school, assisted by the Rangers. This work includes studying units of competency from

the Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management (CLM).

To aid in the transition of students out of school and into employment, Dhimurru Rangers participated in a small Careers Expo for Yirrkala school students. This was held in Nhulunbuy and showcased numerous businesses in the region. Students were encouraged to ask pre-prepared questions to workplace representatives about their particular workplace. For some of the students this was the first step towards seeking future employment.



### YAMUNA GALTHA ROM

The showcase term three Galtha was held near Yirrkala in the area known as Yamuna. The cultural connection to the area in the north of Yirrkala was explored during the 2019 Galtha. This activity revolved around a section of a much larger story, with this component focusing on Ngathu (Cycad). The galtha forms part of the broader merri string story.

During term four a joint Galtha, saw a small contingent of Yirrkala school students join with Yirrkala Homelands School students and several small outlying homelands such as Mapuru and Dhondji, for a Galtha at Djarrakpi, the birth place of the clans.

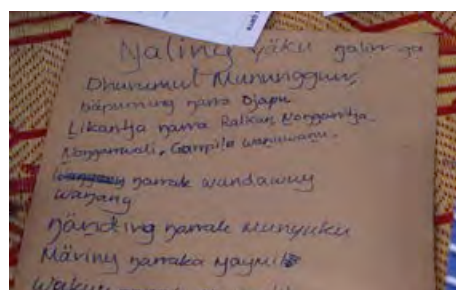
Dhimurru's Senior Cultural Advisor played a significant role in this highly acclaimed event. Life long associations and memories were formed.

The showcase Galtha for Semester 1 in 2020 saw the evolution of a Galtha at Binydjarrnja (Daliwuy Bay). The theme was Yol ṇarra – Who am I?

This event focussed on developing the cultural understanding of each student's place in the Yolṇu landscape. After listening to elders discuss and describe the history of the student's name and their lineage, the students transcribed these details into their workbooks and then read them out and shared them with their peers and elders.

The LOC Program is funded by the NIAA and managed by the Northern Land Council.

We would also like to thank the Cotton On Foundation for their ongoing support with cultural activities at Dhimurru.





## STAFF PROFILE

### **MAHALIAH GAWURRIYAWUY WANGURRA-JAMES DHIMURRU RANGER**

Mahaliah recently returned to Nhulunbuy after seven years living with her father's family in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Gawurriyawuy is a place of significance in the Wessel Islands and this name was given to Mahaliah by her Nathi (grandfather), who is the traditional owner of the English Company and Wessel Islands.

Passionate about protecting the environment, looking after, connecting and learning about country, Mahaliah began volunteering at Dhimurru. Before long, she transitioned into a fulltime Miyalk Ranger role and is a new member of the Dhimurru team.

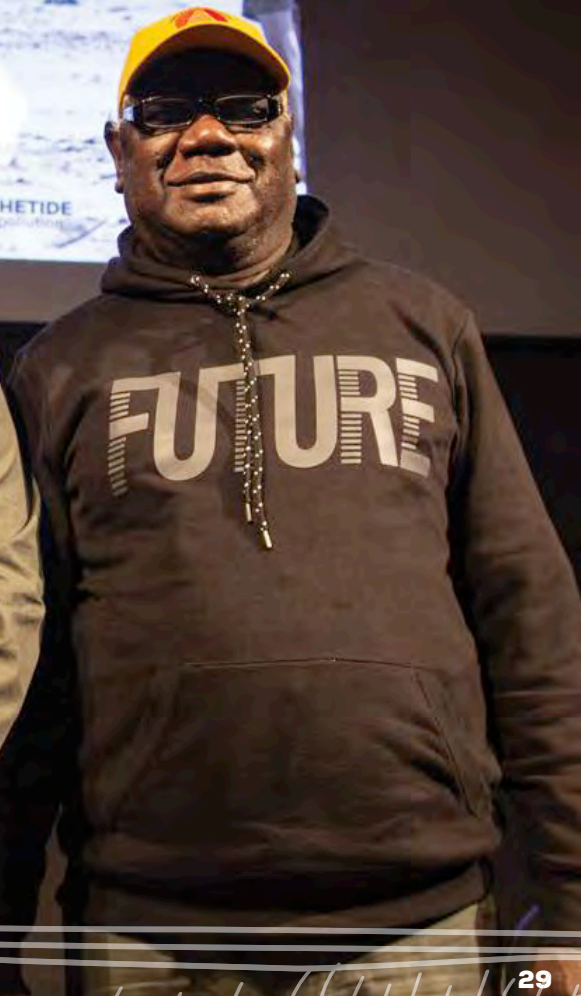
She enjoys listening, learning and taking part in the Learning on Country program. Her goal is to continue her education and work towards obtaining the Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management qualification.

Previously, Mahaliah was employed as a Sport and Recreation officer with East Arnhem Regional Council.

Away from djama (work), Mahaliah is a mother of two boys and enjoys spending time hunting, fishing and camping with her family.



**DHIMURRU  
OUT AND ABOUT**





## NT WOMEN'S HEALTHY COUNTRY FORUM

Dhimurru Miyalk Rangers, Grace Wunungmurra and Wänga Munungurritj, attended the NT Women's Healthy Country Forum held at Bawurrbarnda outstation in Central Arnhem Land in early September 2019. The forum brought together over 120 women representing 26 ranger groups from across the Northern Territory.

Over three days the forum focused on improving practices when caring for country. The rangers exchanged knowledge and individual experiences and identified common needs. Participants were able to identify professional challenges and raise confidential concerns with other rangers.

The forum participants formed the first network of women working in land and sea management, to support Miyalk Rangers in their roles.



## 2019 INDIGENOUS RANGER FORUM

Hosted by the Kenbi Rangers, the three day Indigenous Ranger forum was held in early September at Mandorah near Darwin. Organised by the Northern Land Council, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment the forum had a core focus on biosecurity. Indigenous rangers play a key role as the eyes and ears of biosecurity management and compliance across northern Australia.

Dhimurru was represented by Rangers, Guruguru Hick and Yama Marawilli and Facilitator, Paul Augustin. They were joined on the final day by Senior Ranger, Gathapura Munungurr.

The rangers took part in over 25 workshops on a diverse range of topics, including aquatic biosecurity, microplastics and macro debris sampling, turtle monitoring and threat mitigation strategies, bäru management principles and practice and biocontrol of weeds and insects.

For Guruguru and Yama this was their first opportunity to attend a conference and they enjoyed sharing knowledge with their peers.







### NT LANDCARE AWARDS 2019

The Australian Marine Conservation Society nominated Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation for the 2019 NT Landcare Virgin Coastcare award for our work on marine debris. The award ceremony was hosted by Territory Natural Resource Management in Darwin. These annual awards highlight and celebrate the achievements of groups and individuals who have made a significant contribution to the environment, sustainable farming practices and natural resource management.

Dhimurru was proudly represented by Senior Ranger Gathapura Mununggurr and Sea Country Facilitator Luke Playford at the award ceremony. Dhimurru were honoured to be awarded NT Virgin Coastcare award and is the NT finalist for the 2019 National Coastcare award.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions the national award ceremony has been postponed until 2021.





## **WORKING TOGETHER**

# DHIMURRU'S PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Dhimurru has developed and sustained partnerships with a wide variety of organisations over the years. We work together with Yolŋu organisations, government agencies, educational institutions, researchers, NGOs and corporate businesses on a range of programs, sharing knowledge, expertise and resources, investing in activities, and providing training. By extending and strengthening these partnerships Dhimurru seeks to develop mutual understanding and commitment in looking after country; *ŋilimurru bukmaŋ djäka wäŋawu*—all of us together looking after country. This is often referred to as Dhimurru's 'both-ways' approach where contemporary ŋäpaki expertise is sought to help inform Yolŋu decision-making.

## DURING 2019–20 DHIMURRU'S PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS INCLUDED THE ORGANISATIONS LISTED BELOW:

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA)  
Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA)  
Aerolens  
Arafura Marine  
Arnhem Coast Clean-Up Community Group  
Australian Border Force (ABF)  
Australian Defence Force — Norforce  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)  
Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)  
National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)  
• Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)  
• Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA)  
• Ranger Employment  
• Learning on Country (LOC)  
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources  
— Biosecurity  
Department of Employment Education and Workplace Relations  
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs  
Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities  
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)  
Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS)  
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)  
BirdLife Australia  
Buku Larrgaj Mulka art and multimedia centre  
Centre for Aboriginal Economic and Policy Research,  
Australian National University (CDU)  
Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA)  
Cotton On Foundation  
Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL)  
Earth Collective  
East Arnhem Land Tourist Association (EALTA)  
East Arnhem Shire Council  
Ghost Nets Australia  
Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation (GAC)  
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)

Jawun Corporate Partnerships  
Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation and Yirrkala Rangers  
Lirrwi Aboriginal Corporation  
LJ Hooker Foundation — Culture College  
Marine and Coastal Community Network (NT)  
Mathakal Rangers  
Marjarr Resource Centre  
Melbourne University  
Miwatj Employment and Participation (MEP)  
Miwatj Health  
NFP Industry Pty Ltd  
Nhulunbuy Corporation Limited (NCL)  
North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)  
Northern Land Council (NLC)  
NT Department of the Attorney-General and Justice  
— Correctional Services—Datjala Work Camp  
NT Department of Education through the LoC program  
NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics  
NT Department of Primary Industry and Resources  
— Fisheries  
NT Department of Tourism, Sports and Culture  
• Parks and Wildlife Commission  
• Tourism NT  
NT Police and Marine Enforcement Unit  
NT Seafood Council  
Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination and the Indigenous Coordination Centre — Miwatj Region  
PEW Foundation — Country Needs People  
Regional Ranger Groups  
Rio Tinto Gove Operations (RTGO)  
Rirratjinu Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuwat Investments (RAC)  
Rotary Club Nhulunbuy  
Seagrass Watch  
South Australian Museum  
Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM)  
Threatened Species Network (NT)  
The Christensen Fund  
University of New South Wales (UNSW)  
Yirrkala Business Enterprises 2 (YBE 2)  
Yirrkala School  
Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF)





### SEA SHEPHERD AUSTRALIA AND DJULPAN

Sea Shepherd and Dhimurru have been collaborating on a marine debris project, since 2018. Volunteers from Sea Shepherd marine debris program assisted Dhimurru to clean Djulpan, one of the IPA's many culturally and environmentally significant beaches.

The group joined Dhimurru Rangers for the Djulpan clean-up and survey project in 2019. It was pleasing to see the return of familiar faces with a few new participants. The clean-up ran for two weeks.

The Djulpan project also contributes additional survey data to document the annual density of marine debris. Sea Shepherd Australia's scientists analyse these results. Using the data, they can extrapolate statistics for the entire Djulpan beach, and combined with other beaches they survey around Australia provide better information on the impact of marine debris across Australia.

A documentary made during the 2018 visit, called "Untrashing Djulpan", documents the collaboration between Sea Shepherd Australia and Dhimurru Rangers.

Dhimurru Ranger, Yama Marawilli, and Board Member, Lirripiya Mununggurr represented Dhimurru at the world premiere held in Perth in September 2019. Yama and Lirripiya took part in

media interviews and a school visit, highlighting the marine debris issue facing East Arnhem Land and Dhimurru's role and ongoing efforts to manage this growing problem for coastlines and sea country.

Dhimurru hosted two public screenings of this film in Nhulunbuy and Yirrkala. Each screening was followed by a question and answer session with the Sea Shepherd Australia crew and Dhimurru staff. Public events like these promote Dhimurru's work locally and educate people on the marine debris issue and the threat it poses to marine fauna.

The partnership has been a win-win for both organisations in highlighting the marine debris problem in North East Arnhem Land, the rest of Australia and the world. We hope to continue the relationship for many years to come.





## JAWUN SECONDEES

### July 2019 – Catherine Styles

Catherine provided support in finding companies that use online booking systems and identifying those most suitable for Dhimurru. Her work was instrumental in helping us choose a system for Dhimurru's requirements.

She started the process of developing interpretative documents for the new permit system which were the forerunner to the information we have now.

Catherine also worked at Garma, helping the Rangers to simplify the process of setting up interpretative displays for Garma and providing general support.



### September 2019 – Shona Curvers

Shona spent five weeks reviewing Dhimurru's existing Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting Improvement plan (MERI) and recommending improvements to make the system more user friendly and useful in understanding and measuring Dhimurru's performance. Relevant staff were briefed on the project to understand the MERI process and plan. Shona developed tools to make the process simpler for staff to access the information.

She also reviewed the Dhimurru Management Plan in line with the MERI framework to ascertain how Dhimurru is tracking against it.



## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

### DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Dhimurru will be engaged in several strategic projects over the next couple of years. In 2022 the current plan of management expires and will be replaced with a new plan. The Dhimurru Board will review the current plan of management prior to developing a new one and will work with Dhimurru staff and its members to reflect their views. It is expected that work will start on reviewing the plan of management in 2021.

### RENEGOTIATION OF RANGER EMPLOYMENT FUNDING

Over the next twelve months Dhimurru, along with other Ranger groups will be engaged in a consultation process with the National Indigenous Australians Agency for a new seven-year, Ranger employment funding contract.

The Ranger Employment Program (formerly known as Working on Country) has achieved remarkable outcomes with Rangers managing country and supporting organisations such as Dhimurru, to manage their IPA.

The consultation for the new contracts has begun and it is hoped that funding agreements will be in place well before July next year. This is an important process for Dhimurru to be involved in and we are hopeful of a good outcome.





## FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS SUMMARY

### DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION INCOME 2019-2020

INCOME SOURCE	PROJECT	AMOUNT
National Indigenous Australians Agency	Ranger Employment Grants (formerly WOC)	\$972,972
	Indigenous Protected Area program	\$345,988
Northern Territory Government:		
Department of Environmental and Natural Resources	Indigenous Protected Area Marine Debris Management	\$24,000
Cotton On Foundation	Learning on Country	\$70,000
Landowners Sea Country Management Contribution	Sea Ranger Program	\$104,680
Rio Tinto Gove Operations	Dhimurru Partnering Agreement	\$100,000
Developing East Arnhem Ltd	Permit System	\$18,488
Australian Government:		
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation	Marine Vessel	\$64,522

## YOLŲU MATHA – ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

YOLŲU MATHA	ENGLISH
bäru	crocodile
bukmak	everyone
buŋgul	dance
dhäwu	story
dhimurru	east wind
djama	work
galtha rom	both-ways learning workshop
manikay	songs
merri	string
miyalk	women
ŋäpaki	people other than YolŲu
ŋatha	food
ŋilimurru bukmak djäka wäŋawu	all of us together looking after country
rom	law and/or belief
wäŋga waŋaŋu	landowners
yapa	sister

### DESIGNATED RECREATION AREAS AND PLACE NAMES

Baŋambarrŋa	Rainbow Cliffs
Bariŋura	Little Bondi
Binydjarrŋa	Daliwuy Bay
Dhamitjinya	East Woody Island
Gaḍalathami	Town Beach
Gälaru	East Woody Beach
Gaŋami	Wonga Creek
Ganinyara	Granite Islands
Gapuru	Memorial Park
Garanhan	Macassan Beach
Gumuniya	Buffalo Creek
Guwaŋjurumurru	Giddy River
Łombuy	Crocodile Creek

Maŋaŋgaymi	Scout Camp
Nhulun	Mount Saunders
Dumuy	Turtle Beach
Waŋuwuy	Cape Arnhem
– Räŋjura	– Caves Beach
– Gayŋaḍa	– Twin Eagles
– Łurrukurru	– Oyster Beach
Wathawuy	Latram River and Goanna Lagoon
Wirrwawuy	Cape Wirrwawuy







# DHIMURRU

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

PO Box 1551

Nhulunbuy NT 0881

Ph: 08 8939 2700

Email: [permits@dhimurru.com.au](mailto:permits@dhimurru.com.au)

Web: [www.dhimurru.com.au](http://www.dhimurru.com.au)

