



# KARAJARRI PEOPLE CARING FOR COUNTRY

## RANGERS AND INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA FACTSHEET



"Karajarri is unique: our country, people, language and culture. Karajarri carry the responsibility to keep country good for our future generations. This is recognised from Pukarrikarra (Karajarri Dreaming) and in our native title rights. Under our law it is our responsibility to look after our traditional lands, our country. Our vision is to look after our country as we have done for thousands of years."

### Karajarri country

Karajarri Traditional Owners have been caring for their biologically rich and diverse country for thousands of years. Karajarri country is located along the southwest Kimberley Coast from Eighty Mile Beach in the south to Roebuck Bay in the north and east into the Great Sandy Desert. It covers more than 30,000 square kilometres of Jurarr - coastal areas and Pirra - inland areas.

The coastal region contains extensive beaches, tidal creeks and marshes, bays, reefs and sea-grass beds. Some of these

areas have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and are breeding and feeding grounds for threatened and migratory water birds. Sea turtle species such as the Flat Back, Hawksbill, Loggerhead and Green Turtle use these areas to breed and lay eggs. Dugongs and Snubfin Dolphin also inhabit the near shore areas.

The eastern desert country stretches from the coast, inland towards the Great Sandy Desert. Pirra is an arid landscape that is sparsely vegetated and comprised of red desert dunes and species rich wetlands. It is home to many rare and nationally endangered species such as the Gouldian Finch, Marsupial Mole, Northern Quoll, Princess Parrot and Greater Bilby.

### Karajarri people

Karajarri people believe all forms of life and ecological processes, including the landscape, people, language and customs are connected to Pukarrikarrajangka ± the Dreamtime.

Karajarri people caring for country

Karajarri country is the source of spirit, culture and language. Karajarri people are born with a binding and unbreakable responsibility to care for country and it is where their spirits return when they die.

Traditionally, they live by the seasons, reading the signs to know when and where they should go to harvest the resources of country.

Karajarri people today live in a modern world that is underpinned by their cultural values and traditions. In the face of European domination that took their land and affected their lives, the Karajarri people fought hard to stay on their country. In 2002, the Karajarri people were recognised as having native title rights and interests across their traditional lands.

### Karajarri Rangers

The Karajarri Traditional Lands Association teamed up with the Kimberley Land Council to start the Karajarri Rangers in 2006. The ranger group has flourished to become a professional and capable land management team.

The group undertakes a diverse range of activities including weed and feral animal management, biodiversity surveys, fire management, cultural heritage site protection, traditional ecological knowledge education and training, visitor management, coastal patrols and biosecurity work with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service.

The Karajarri Rangers undertake two-way learning to enhance their skills and further their expertise. They work with senior elders to learn about cultural heritage, traditional ecological knowledge and language while also receiving formal qualifications through the Kimberley Training Institute in conservation and land management. The Karajarri Rangers are working with the KLC in the delivery of a regional land management regime that

incorporates best practice methods using a combination of modern science and traditional knowledge. The ranger team receives strong community support and has forged strong partnerships with Kularri Regional Communities Incorporated.

### Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area

The Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area was declared on May 7, 2014 to manage biodiversity hotspots and protect some of the Kimberley's most vulnerable and threatened species.

The IPA covers 24,797 square kilometres and includes parts of Frazier Downs pastoral lease and inland areas towards the Great Sandy Desert.

Having an IPA is the preferred land management model of the Karajarri people as it ensures they are at the forefront of managing their country.

Indigenous Protected Areas are an initiative of the Australian Government and Karajarri Traditional Owners worked with the Kimberley Land Council, the Nature Conservancy and Pew Charitable Trusts to develop the Healthy Country Management Plan. The plan sets out the long-term conservation targets and strategies for the management of the IPA and includes:

- Protecting natural and cultural values including important sites, species and their habitats
- Continuously strengthening governance
- Recording and mapping traditional knowledge
- Managing and mitigating ecological threats

For more information about the Kimberley Rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas, visit [www.klc.org.au/land-sea/kimberley-ranger-network](http://www.klc.org.au/land-sea/kimberley-ranger-network) or contact the Kimberley Land Council on (08) 9194 0100

