

Park Notes



Nourlangie



Welcome to Nourlangie.

The art sites and archaeological sites of Kakadu National Park illustrate and reveal information about the development of Aboriginal culture through times of great change.

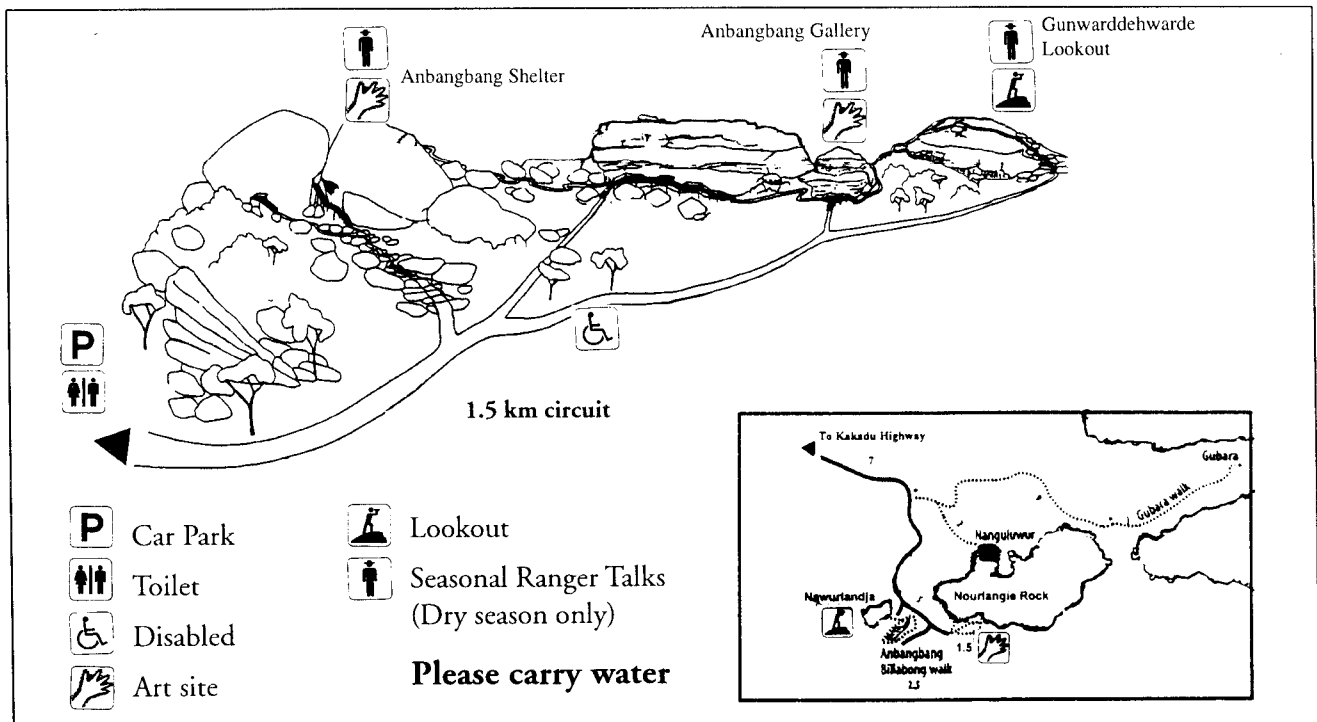
The name 'Nourlangie' is an anglicised version of the word 'Nawurlandja' and refers only to a portion of the whole area. The higher parts of what is commonly called 'Nourlangie Rock' is called 'Burrungui' by the Gun-djeihmi speakers who own this land. The lower areas are called Anbangbang.

At Nourlangie you can walk to an ancient living shelter, a variety of art sites and a lookout. Signs along the way will tell you more about the area.

Explore a moderately steep climb to Gunwarddeharde lookout and view the impressive Nourlangie Rock and Kakadu escarpment.

In the Dry Season it is also possible to walk around Anbangbang Billabong and to the top of Nawurlandja. There is a 12km bushwalk in the area but for your own safety, please contact staff at Bowali Visitor Centre before attempting this track.

During the dry season (May to Sept) Seasonal Rangers conduct (15 minutes) daily art site talks at Nourlangie. For further information on activities in the Park pick up a 'What's on Guide' from Bowali Visitor Centre.

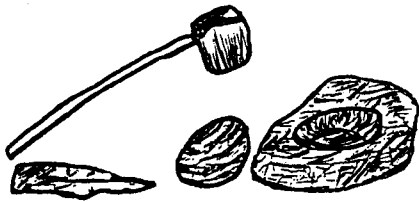


Anbangbang Shelter

Aboriginal people have been coming home to this shelter for about 20,000 years. Archaeological research in this area shows that the shelter was occasionally used between 6,000 and 20,000 years ago. Since then however, the shelter has become more popular because the surrounding environment slowly changed to provide more food resources.

Objects discarded by people using this shelter have mounted up for about 20,000 years to form the floor of the shelter.

The excavations in this shelter revealed organic objects rarely preserved in tropical Australia because of the hot wet climate which promotes quick decay.



Stone tools

Anbangbang Gallery

Both this gallery and the painting of Nabalwinjbulwinj were painted by Nayombolmi, known as Barramundi Charlie by Balanda (non-Aboriginals). Nayombolmi worked many years for Balanda and returned to paint the designs shortly before his death. Repainting of designs was a traditional practice. However, the designs, especially of mythological figures and events were not repainted at random.

British naturalist and film producer David Attenborough visited the Anbangbang gallery in 1962, before the present paintings were done in 1964. He found similar although much more faded designs.

Namondjok - a dangerous spirit (top central figure).

Namarrgon - lightning man.

The lightning man is depicted by the lines joining his head and feet. The objects attached to his head, elbows and knees are garramalg (stone axes). Namarrgon makes lightning and thunder by striking those axes against the ground or clouds.

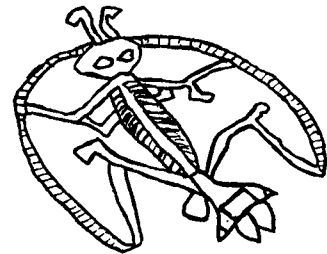
Barrginj - wife of Namarrgon (white figure below Namondjok).

Guluibirr - Saratoga fish (*Scleropages jardini*), Family groups of men and their wives on their way to a ceremony.

Conservation

Rock art is extremely important to the Aboriginal owners of Kakadu. The art is also an important historic and scientific record of human occupation of the region.

Some of the paintings are extremely fragile and can be damaged by water, large animals, insects and people. Water washing over the surface or filtering through the rock is diverted away from the art by silicon drip lines. Prior to the reduction of their numbers, buffaloes damaged the art by rubbing against it and by stirring up dust. Wasps building mud nests, and other insects constructing tunnels across the rock surfaces can also damage the paintings.



Namarrgon

Note: Because the spelling system for Gundjeihmi language has been only recently updated you may notice slight variations in the spellings on this leaflet and other Kakadu publications.

How you can help

The thousands of people who visit Nourlangie each year are the greatest potential threat to the art. To protect the paintings please:

- Do not touch the paintings or interfere with the silicon drip lines.
- Keep to the walking tracks and keep behind the fences.
- Do not enter prohibited areas.

Any person defacing or damaging an archaeological site or artefact is liable to a fine of \$5000.

Further information on rock art is available from the Bowali Visitor Centre and the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

For more information contact:

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KAKADU NATIONAL PARK
is a World Heritage Area