

# WELCOME TO MANINGRIDA



**NORTHERN  
LAND COUNCIL**  
*Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life*

*Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*

**THIS IS ABORIGINAL LAND**

Penalty for entering Aboriginal land without  
a permit is \$1,000

**PLEASE PRESENT YOUR ENTRY  
PERMIT ON REQUEST**

## Don't leave home without...

**A big water bottle** // You'll need to drink at least two litres of water a day.

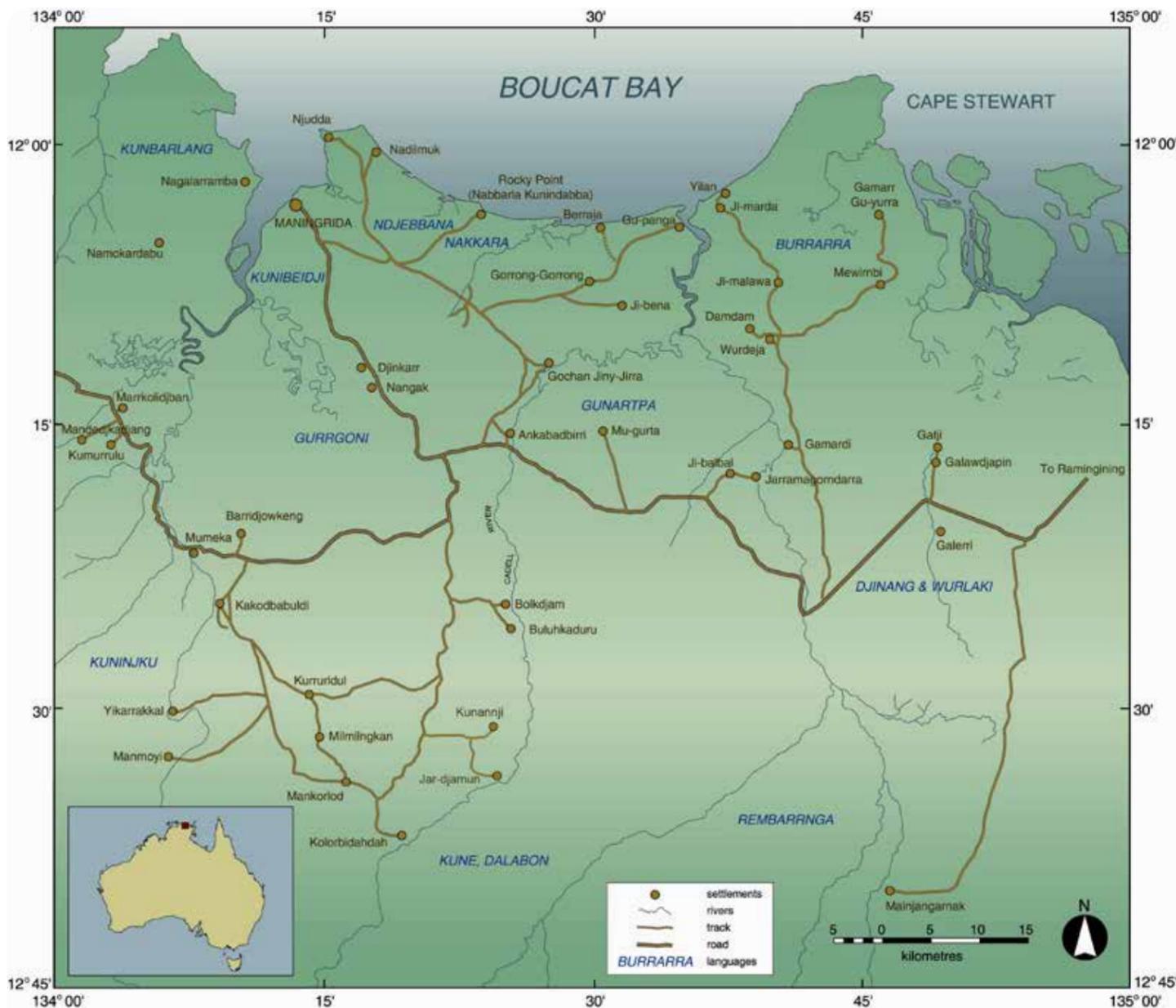
**The right clothes** // Light-coloured, lightweight clothing that covers tummies, bottoms and legs. Aboriginal people are very conservative and for women, exposing skin below the waist and above the knees is considered inappropriate.

**Sturdy walking shoes** // The rocky terrain can be very challenging.

**Insect repellent** // Mosquitoes are big and active around sunset, so repellent with a DEET base is important.

**Thinking of your pet** // Pets aren't allowed in any NT National Parks or in Arnhem Land. Boarding facilities are available in Darwin and Katherine.

**An open mind** // Your visit to Arnhem Land will definitely be enhanced by leaving all preconceived notions behind.



## Access

### Year-round air access

Air North runs a daily passenger service.

### Weekly barge services

Darwin to Maningrida freight service docks each Thursday.

### Road access

**Dry season (Apr–Nov):** most roads open.

**Wet season (Dec–Mar):** The river crossing at Cahill's Crossing, East Alligator River, is usually impassable. Local roads are subject to flooding. 4WD vehicles are essential.

species of birds flock to the skies and the word "remote" takes on fresh meaning.

White visitors are referred to as a "balanda", "managa", or more provocatively, "seagulls"<sup>1</sup>, and witness a profoundly different lifestyle to that they are familiar with.

Maningrida is the major service centre for surrounding homelands or outstations, with a school (Preschool to Year 12), health clinic, convenience store and cafe, two supermarkets, police station, crèche facilities, community arts centre and a tarmac airport with daily commercial flights to Darwin.

Recreation facilities include a 25-metre swimming pool, fishing, boating, hiking, arts and craft, sports ovals and basketball courts.

Small-scale tourism ventures, including cultural tours and fishing expeditions, also operate out of Maningrida.

West Arnhem Regional Council provides a range of services to the town including local government services, sport and recreation programs, rubbish collection and removal, parks and gardens maintenance, as well as other services on behalf of government agencies.

<sup>1</sup> White, flies in, makes a lot of noise, shits on everything and then flies out.

## Australia's final frontier

Maningrida is one of the largest remote towns in the Northern Territory, located approximately 500km east of Darwin.

At the mouth of the Liverpool River, Maningrida is in the heart of west Arnhem Land, where the landscape of the rocky escarpment country meets sprawling flood plains that feed meandering river systems. It's largely comprised of monsoon woodlands intermingled with billabongs and riverine habitats turning into one vast wetland during the wet season. Maningrida is a centre for 34 Aboriginal homelands (outstations), home to 2,600 people, and fosters more than 800 artists through Maningrida Arts and Culture.

Many people in Maningrida survive in atrocious poverty living in overcrowded housing (average of 15 people per two bedroom house), in tents set on balconies, or in permanent town camps. Children in Maningrida have the highest known rates of rheumatic heart disease in the world. Other medical problems are rife.

The majority of the region's inhabitants continue to live a traditional lifestyle on isolated homelands. The connection to Country is strong, and traditional hunting and gathering activities are practiced there.

The name Maningrida is an Anglicised version of the Kunibeidji name *Manayingkarirra*, from the phrase "*Mane djang karirra*", meaning

"the place where the *Djang* (Law/Dreaming) changed."

A permanent settlement was first established at Maningrida in the late 1940s, originally as a ration station for Aboriginals in the area. It became a Welfare Department settlement from 1957.

In the dry season Maningrida is about an eight-hour 4WD trip from Darwin. [Note that permits from the Northern Land Council are required to travel in Arnhem Land.] In the wet season Maningrida is only accessible from Darwin by air.

The Traditional Owners (TOs) of the Maningrida area are the Kunibeidji, although people from a number of different Arnhem Land groups also live there now, including Burarra, Djinang, Eastern Kuninjku, Gunnartpa, Gupapuyngu, Gurrongi, Kunbarlang, Nakkara, Rembarrnga and Wurlaki.

Over 10 different languages are spoken and most people can speak three or four of these languages. Four main clans—Kurulk, Kardbam, Dangkorlo, and Kulmaru—constitute the 300 strong Kuninjku-dialect community.

## Maningrida Arts & Culture

Owned by Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, Maningrida Arts & Culture (MAC) works with a large number of local artists, some of whom have international reputations. MAC runs a local gallery, website and cultural centre.

Local Indigenous art and religious life is powered by *Djang*, an ongoing, eternal, life-giving transformative power that accounts for every aspect of existence. It also refers to the creation ancestors, the country where spirit resides, and to ceremonial designs and songs that represent these beings.

## Township and surrounding region

In Arnhem Land, where there are not four but six seasons, raging rivers run wild, savannah woodlands teem with remarkable wildlife, primeval wetlands brim with fish, crocodiles and exceptional marine animals, more than 260

