

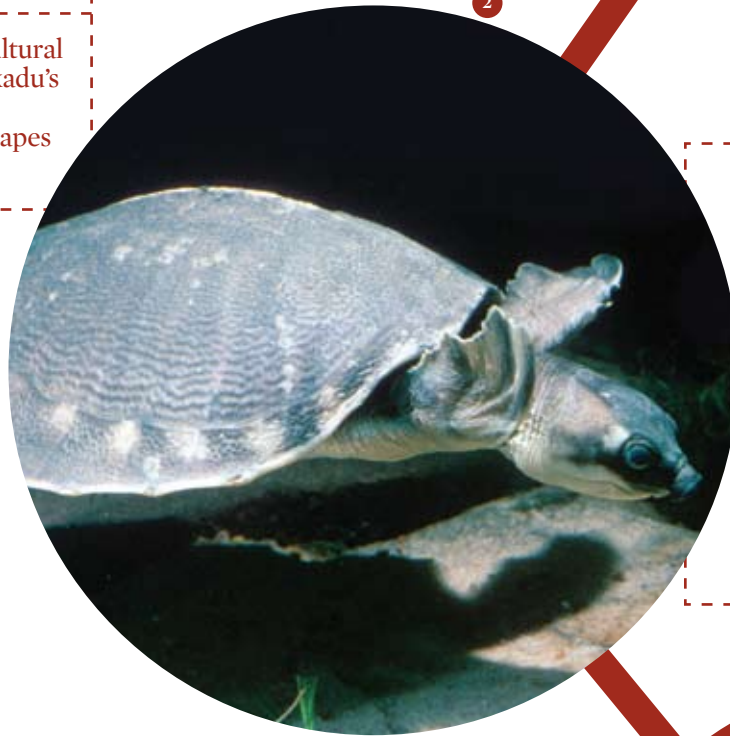


**kakadu**<sup>TM</sup>  
NATIONAL PARK

# Visitor centres

Warradjan Cultural Centre and Bowali Visitor Centre.

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre shares the culture of Kakadu's people, while the Bowali Visitor Centre shows visitors the landscapes and wildlife of Kakadu.



2

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre and the Bowali Visitor Centre have galleries with local arts and crafts for sale.

The fittings in the Warradjan Gallery were made by Ironwood Furniture, inspired by the weathered and sculptured ironwood trees of the Northern Territory.



Australian Government



PARK NOTE



1

- 1 Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
- 2 Warradjan (pig-nosed turtle) inspired the shape of the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre building.
- 3 Great care was taken collecting and constructing the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre display features.

3



# Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre

Ngurrim-rei nguddi-nan dja nguddi bekgan ngaddberreh gun-bolk dja culture  
Come, look and feel our culture.

We tell you stories that have been told to us by our old people. They go on and on. The passing down of stories is our Bininj book.

Traditional owner, Murumburr clan

## THE CONCEPT

It came from Aboriginal people. The Bininj/Munggy traditional owners of Kakadu National Park wanted to tell their story for a long time.

People from Murumburr, Mirrar Gundjeihmi, Badmardi, Bunitj, Wurrkbarbar, Mardin, Bolmo, Girmimitjba, Manilagarr, Worgol and other clans contributed to the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre project.

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre lies within the Murumburr clan estate where the Gun-djeihmi language is spoken. Gun-djeihmi is the main language used in the Centre, although Jawoyn and Gagudju also appear.

Through the displays and exhibits you can gain an understanding of the relationship Bininj/Munggy have with their families and their land. Bininj/Munggy and their country are inseparable.

It is hoped you find visiting the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre an exciting and memorable experience.

## SITTING IN CIRCLES

In the early stages of the cultural centre project, Bininj/Munggy came together to discuss the building design, its role and its facilities.

At most Bininj/Munggy gatherings, people sit in circles. During an early meeting Bininj/Munggy decided that a circular building would reflect this way of communication. It was decided that the cultural centre needed to be round like people sitting together.

At later meetings Bininj/Munggy saw the round shape as being like a warradjan (pig-nosed turtle). So the building design developed into the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

Discussions about the design started in 1989, with specific planning beginning in 1992. The architects were Australian Constructions Services of Darwin, with display and gallery designed by David Lancashire Design. After comprehensive consultation and research involving traditional owners, Parks Australia staff and authorities such as George Chaloupka, the display was completed in 1995.

## THE DISPLAY

Bininj/Munggy, park staff and the designers, worked closely together to determine exactly what Bininj/Munggy wanted to say and how they wanted to display their story.

During the process Mandy Muir made a key statement "Our land is our life". This became the theme of the display. It all began to take shape after many drawings, plans, models and drafts of the text were considered.

In the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre Bininj/Munggy have displayed many of their important stories, especially those from the creation era when the Nayuhynggi (first people) created the land, plants and animals and gave people laws to live by.

Culture can't wash away. It can carry on,  
just pass it on.

Nawadgadji Nabadmardi, Badmardi clan

Visitors are invited to move through the display as a rainbow serpent creation ancestor moves through the country travelling first through the lowlands during the dry season, then into the stone country during the wet.

All the artefacts that you see were made by Bininj/Munggy. Great care has been taken collecting and constructing display features such as the goose hunting platform, dilly bags, pandanus baskets and paintings.

Gamuk, ngurrdi-nang  
ngardberre culture.  
Wanjih ngardberre gun-bold  
ngarddinahna.

It's good you looked  
and felt our culture.  
Look after our  
country.



# Bowali Visitor Centre

We Aboriginal people welcome you to our country. This visitor centre tells you about our country.

Yvonne, Nida, Melanie, Annie, Junior and Valerie Gangali  
Mirarr Gundjeihmi clan

At Bowali visitors are invited to journey through Kakadu's habitats as the South Alligator River meanders through the landscape from source to sea.

Bowali Visitor Centre presents two views of Kakadu, the Gukburleri (Aboriginal) and Guhbele (non-Aboriginal) views. It is hoped that visitors will leave the display understanding more about the park and realising that we all have a responsibility to look after this country.

Bowali lies within the Mirrar Gun-djeihmi clan estate and is named after the creek which drains the area.

Ngad arri bolknahnan

Look after this country

## THE BUILDING

The architects, builders and display designers worked closely with traditional owners and Parks Australia staff to create our visitor centre. Two years were spent on consultation, planning and design. It then took one year to build.

We're very sympathetic to one another. One idea is another person's idea, is my idea, is their idea.

Glen Murcutt, Glen Murcutt Pty Ltd, talking about the joint project with Troppo Architects

Rammed earth walls, ironwood floors and natural stone features help blend the 168 m long Bowali Visitor Centre into Kakadu's landscape. A formalised billabong and creek bed are incorporated in the Centre to catch and drain the monsoonal rains.

Wide verandahs offer a close relationship with the bush setting and generous shade. The roofline and alignment encourage air flow.

It's a building that prompts you to move through and around. Along the way there's a bit of water to accompany you. It's like Kakadu.

Phil Harris, Troppo Architects

The building is constructed from local materials sourced by the Djabulukgu and Gagudju Aboriginal Associations and park staff. No rainforest or imported timbers were used.

Our aim was to provide a building which blended in with the environment and encouraged visitors to use the park sensitively.

Peter Wellings, Park Manager - (late 80 - 90s)

We tried to capture the excitement of the park in the display. It was important to use as many natural materials as possible.

David Lancashire, David Lancashire Design

The building won numerous awards when officially opened in August 1994:

1994 - Northern Territory Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects - Tracey Memorial Award and People's Choice Award

1994 Royal Institute of Architecture - 'Sir Zelman Cowan Award' for National Award for Civic Building

1994-1995 BHP Sheet and Coil Products and Metal Building Industries - Award of Excellence

1995 Northern Territory Brolga Award - Tourism Development Projects.

5

Along the way there's a bit of water to accompany you. It's like Kakadu.

5



Culture is important because it keeps us in touch with our country and other Aboriginal people throughout the region.

Sandra McGregor

In Bininj/Mungguy culture, it is often not appropriate to display the names or images of deceased people.

Some displays may contain labels that cover the name/s and images of people who have passed away.

Please respect the wishes of Kakadu's Aboriginal owners and leave the names and images covered. These protocols can vary from area to area and family to family. In some cases family members may provide permission for the names and images of the deceased to be displayed after a period of time.

Bininj/Mungguy – please be aware that at Bowali and Warradjan there may be names or images of deceased people. These names are only displayed with family permission.

Gamuk (thank you).

Please do not take photographs inside Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre.



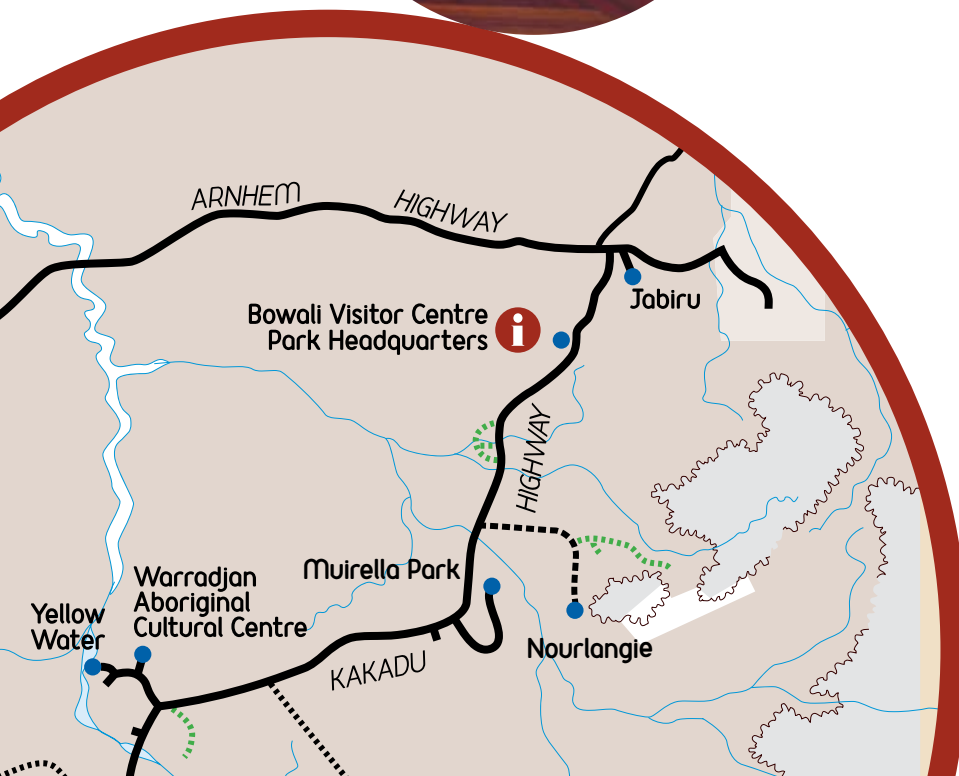
6

Different habitats are represented in the Bowali Visitor Centre display.



7

Kakadu's people share their story in Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre.



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