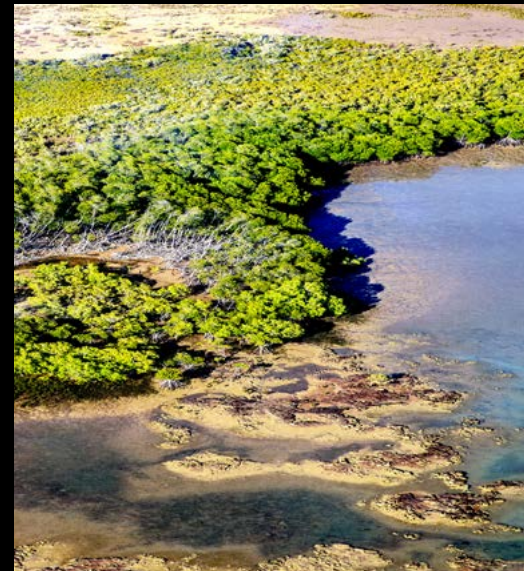




CLCAC
CARPENTARIA LAND COUNCIL
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Edition 36: July - December 2020





At CLCAC we take our responsibility to community safety in light of the COVID Pandemic seriously and operate in compliance with Public Health Directions and all restrictions on businesses, activities and undertakings.

Our staff adhere to personal distancing and other requirements as much as is practically possible.

CLCAC is a not for profit Aboriginal Corporation incorporated under the CATSI Act 2006 (Cth) and primarily funded by State and Commonwealth departments and agencies.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following organisations for their continued support:



Contents

CEO's Update	4
Native Title and PBC Update	5
Gkuthaarn & Kukatj Native Title Determination	6
Economic Development Update	7
PBC Information	8
Native Title Compensation – Part 3 Timber Creek Case ..	12
Wellesley Island Rangers Update	14
Gangalidda & Garawa Rangers Update	16
Normanton Rangers Update	18
Wernadinga Flyway Site Receives International Recognition ..	21
Human Resources/Staff Updates	22
Members Contact Information Update	23

Directory

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Rachel Amini-Yanner
 Deputy CEO/Corporate Services Manager – Trish Steineck
 Principal Legal Officer (PLO) – Kevin Murphy
 Chairperson – Thomas Wilson (Lardil)
 Director – Marlene Logan (Gkuthaarn)
 Director – Gerald Loogatha (Kaiadilt)
 Director – Donald Bob (Garawa)
 Director – Joseph Rainbow (Kurtijar)
 Director – Phillip George (Kukatj)
 Director – Murrandoo Yanner (Gangalidda)
 Director – Henry Aplin (Waanyi)
 Director – Lawrence Burke (Yangkaal)
 Contact Person – Apryl Ford



The new GRAC Board of Directors elected at the AGM

CEO's Update

Happy New Year! I hope our readers had a wonderful and safe Christmas break and we hope you enjoy reading this edition for the period July-December 2020.

Despite the ongoing Pandemic, I am pleased to say that CLCAC has continued to kick goals in the second half of the 2020 calendar year. It is also exciting to see from the Native Title, PBC and Economic updates that the Traditional Owners are working tirelessly, achieving their native title determinations, securing prospects to further enhance their living standards and create job opportunities in their communities. Our organisation will continue to provide the support and assistance to the PBCs and Native Title Holders in our region to enable them to reach their goals.

Please read the information fact sheet for PBCs included in this edition to give you a much better understanding of the roles and responsibility of your corporation.

Native Title Compensation has been a topic around the Country in the last few years and we thought some information on what that means is vital for our mob to understand when that subject is raised at your meetings.

It is always exciting to see the great work our Rangers and the Land & Environment Team have been achieving through the projects and activities carried out on country. If you want to see and hear more about what they have been doing, please follow them on social media. We are welcoming a refreshed direction

in our promotions and look forward to sharing more visuals and videos to showcase the beauty of this Country and the work we do to manage and protect it.

On page 18, we farewell two of our longest serving Rangers since the program began – Philip George and Lance Rapson, both from our Normanton Ranger Team. We thank them for their great contribution over the years and wish them all the best in their future endeavours. In Staff Updates we welcome new additions to our team.

Lastly, one of the highlights for me during this period was the Gkuthaarn and Kukatj Native Title Consent Determination held in Normanton 29 September. A wonderful and proud moment for the Gkuthaarn and Kukatj Peoples. We again acknowledge and pay our respects to those traditional owners past and present, for their valuable contribution during their native title claim process. We also remember those who are no longer with us to witness the outcome of their dedication and hard work over the years resulting in the successful determination.

The other highlight was the declaration of the Wernadinga Flyway Site. We are very proud of the work undertaken by our Normanton Rangers and staff that have all played an integral role in ensuring the nomination was a success. Read more on page 21.

We look forward to new and exciting prospects in 2021.

Native Title & PBC Update

CLCAC continues to work with Native Title Claim groups in the Gulf to progress Native Title claims by providing legal advice, project support and administrative assistance.

KURTIJAR NATIVE TITLE CLAIM GROUP UPDATE

Since the hearing of evidence on country at Delta Downs of members of the Kurtijar Native Title Group in 2019, the Federal Court heard further evidence from anthropologists in Brisbane. Subsequently the Pastoralists opposing the claim agreed that native title does exist over parts of the claim area. The Claim Group now awaits Justice Rares' decision, expected sometime in 2021, on the remaining area in dispute.

In September, at the Carpentaria Shire Council Hall in Normanton, CLCAC organised a video-linked meeting with the Kurtijar native title claim group, their lawyers and anthropologist to update the group and clarify some issues raised about membership connection within the group.

GRAC HELD FOUR MEETINGS DURING THIS PERIOD ON GUNUNA:

31 August – Directors meeting
 30 September – Directors meeting
 25 November – AGM
 26 November – Directors meeting

A NEW BOARD WAS ELECTED AT THE AGM:

LARDIL DIRECTORS:

Kyle Yanner
 Karen Chong
 Lester Ben

YANGKAAL DIRECTORS:

Lawrence Burke
 Michael Gavenor (Wilson)

KAIADILT DIRECTORS:

Christopher Loogatha
 Brett Hills
 Delma Loogatha

GANGALIDDA DIRECTORS:

Dale Amini
 Brenton Yanner
 Murradoo Yanner Jnr

Michael Gavenor (Wilson) was elected as the new Chairperson for GRAC.



Balloon cultural tours on the horizon for Burketown

Gkuthaarn & Kukatj Native Title Consent Determination

Celebrating the successful end of a long journey.

A consent determination of the Gkuthaarn & Kukatj native title claim occurred on 29 September 2020. The determination by the Federal Court of Australia recognised the group's native title connection to over 800,000 hectares of the Gkuthaarn & Kukatj traditional country.

Due to COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, Justice Griffiths delivered his decision in Sydney. Members of the Claim Group gathered at the Carpentaria Shire Hall in Normanton and received the decision via video-link.

In settling its native title claim by consent the Gkuthaarn & Kukatj native title holders have also entered into three related Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) with the Queensland State Government, the Carpentaria Shire Council and Ergon Energy. These agreements will provide beneficial outcomes for all parties. In particular, the Gkuthaarn & Kukatj, will become significant landowners in the region under grants of land from the State of Queensland under the Land Act 1994 and the Aboriginal Land Act 1991. This is in addition to the recognition of the native title rights and interests.

CLCAC was busy helping the Claim Group members prepare for the determination. A Prescribed Body Corporate (or "PBC") has been formed. The Gkuthaarn & Kukatj Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC is the prescribed body corporate through which the members of the native title group will now deal with internal and external matters relating to their native title rights and interests.

The corporation has an active Board of Directors, has appointed an accountant, opened bank accounts and received some support funding from the Commonwealth government.

It has been a long road to gain legal recognition. This journey was started by Elders years before the claim was even filed, many of whom have now passed away. But determination heralds the beginning of a new chapter for this generation and many to come.



Leanne Edwards, a key Gkuthaarn applicant speaking at the Gkuthaarn and Kukatj Peoples' Native Title Determination ceremony in September 2020.

Economic Development Update

GANGALIDDA, GARAWA & GRAC FUNDING APPLICATION

CLCAC is providing continued support to PBCs to transition to sustainable independence through identified economic and commercial opportunities. In partnership with Gangalidda and Garawa Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (GGNTAC) and Gulf Region Aboriginal Corporation (GRAC), CLCAC has applied for two Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) capacity building grants under the Commonwealth Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

We are pleased to say both applications were successful. The grants will provide funding for a range of activities over the next two to three years aimed at increasing GGNTAC and GRAC's corporate capacity and economic development.

These activities include office establishment, recruitment of key staff, strategic and business planning and a range of training opportunities for PBC directors and staff members.

Cultural Advisor to CLCAC, Murrandoo Yanner (Snr) said, "This funding is about getting our foundations right, so we know where we're going and how to get there."

YAGURLI GETTING SET TO SOAR

Following successful trial flights in August, Gangalidda and Garawa owned tour company, Yagurli Tours, is currently evaluating the feasibility of a new hot air balloon experience in Burketown.

Yagurli partnered with ballooning company, Balloon Aloft, to conduct the trial flights, which confirmed Burketown as a promising ballooning destination.

Already known for its salt flats, unique natural beauty and Morning Glory Cloud formations, Burketown boasts ideal weather conditions for ballooning, with the potential to attract adventurers, grey nomads and scientists alike.

Yagurli would also use the ballooning experience to educate tourists about the cultural significance and traditional stories of the area, making the experience a first of its kind in Australia.

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PBCs

THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF INDIGENOUS CORPORATIONS (ORIC)

The Registrar is an independent statutory office holder who administers the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations supports the Registrar. The CATSI Act guides how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations are run. The Registrar works in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build strong futures through the good governance of their corporations.

Contact ORIC on freecall 1800 622 431
(not free from mobiles)

THE CARPENTARIA LAND COUNCIL ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation is funded to carry out the roles of a NTRB under section 203FE of the Native Title Act 1993 and is referred to as a Native Title Service Provider or NTSP. Its role is to preserve, protect and promote the recognition of native title in the Southern Gulf region. It tries to resolve native title claims and support the ongoing goals of recognised traditional owners (TOs). Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation has achieved a number of native title determinations by consent and negotiated Indigenous land use agreements (ILUAs).

Contact the Carpentaria Land Council:
Cairns: 07 4041 3833
Burketown: 07 4745 5132
Normanton: 07 4775 1556

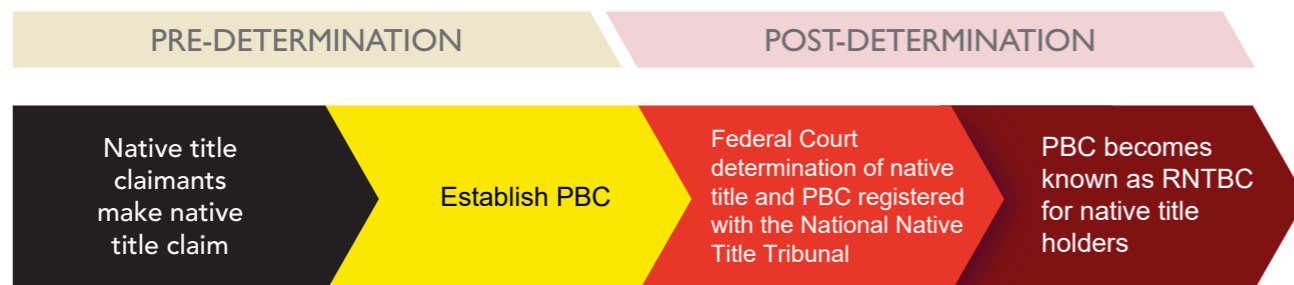
HOW ORIC HELPS CORPORATIONS AFTER NATIVE TITLE DETERMINATION

The CATSI Act and native title

If the Federal Court hands down a determination of native title then the *Native Title Act 1993* requires that the court should also determine which corporation is to manage native title on behalf of the native title holders. The Native Title (Prescribed Bodies Corporate) Regulations 1999 (PBC Regulations) require that corporation to be registered under the CATSI Act.

These corporations are known as prescribed bodies corporate or PBCs. Once a PBC is entered on the National Native Title Register it becomes a registered native title body corporate (RNTBC).

PBC is the more commonly used term to refer to both PBCs and RNTBCs. The following diagram summarises the process.



To make sure that the Native Title Act and the CATSI Act work together and don't conflict with each other, the CATSI Act has special provisions for native title and RNTBCs.

ORIC has produced a paper, *Interaction between the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the Native Title Act 1993*, which explains the policy reasons for provisions of the CATSI Act that only apply to corporations that hold or manage native title.

This paper is available on the Registrar's website, www.oric.gov.au, or by telephoning ORIC.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRESCRIBED BODIES CORPORATE (PBCS)

PBCs are corporations incorporated under the CATSI Act and determined by the court to manage native title on behalf of the traditional owners (TOs).

What the law says

When the Federal Court decides that native title exists in land, there needs to be some entity that can manage that native title for the purposes of the law. For example, when someone comes along who wants to explore for minerals, there needs to be a legal entity that they can talk to so they can enter into a legal agreement. The best entity for this is a corporation created especially to manage the native title on behalf of the TOs. Native title rights are held communally by the group (not by individuals but all TOs together).

A corporation that is set up to manage or hold native title is called a prescribed body corporate or PBC. The TOs still own the native title and manage it through their traditional laws of custodianship, but the PBC is the body they use to deal with non-Indigenous law, such as negotiating agreements or entering into contracts.

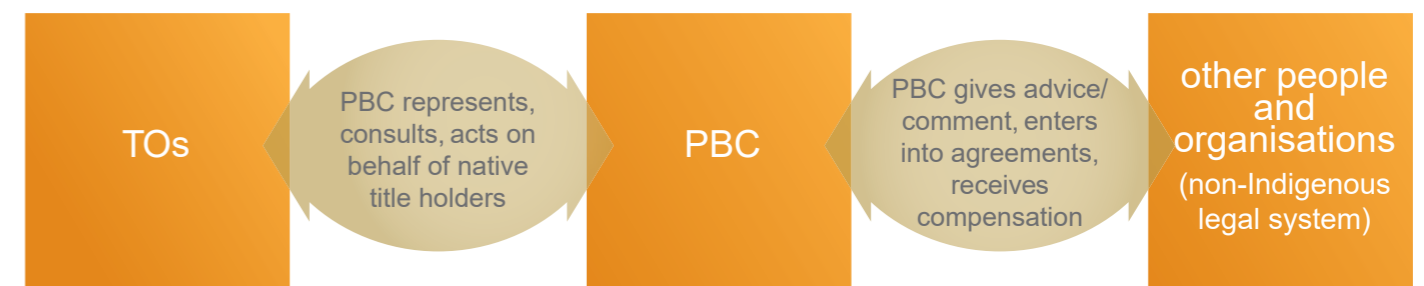
PBCs have legal responsibilities under:

- the *Native Title Act 1993*
- the Native Title (Prescribed Bodies Corporate) Regulations 1999 (PBC Regulations)
- the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*
- other Commonwealth, state and territory legislation.

PBCs mainly exist to:

- protect and manage determined native title in accordance with the wishes of the TOs
- ensure certainty for governments and other parties with an interest in accessing or regulating native title lands and waters by providing a legal entity through which to conduct business with the TOs.

PBCs are the 'go-between' for TOs when they have to deal with the non-Indigenous legal system. Through a PBC, TOs can protect their native title rights and interests.



PBCs and native title law

As a PBC looks after native title for the TOs, it has a lot of responsibilities. For example, if the Native Title Act says that a developer must give a notice to the TOs about a proposal that will affect native title (called a ‘future act’), the notice must be sent to the PBC. Generally speaking, the PBC responds on behalf of the TOs, after first talking with them and finding out what they would like to do.

All the functions and responsibilities of PBCs are described in the Native Title Act and the PBC Regulations as summarised in the following table.

PBC functions and responsibilities under the Native Title Act and PBC Regulations

Functions and responsibilities related to:*	Native Title Act	PBC Regulations
Overall functions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>managing</i> the native title rights and interests of all TOs • <i>performing</i> any other function relating to the native title rights and interests as directed by the TOs
Future acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>receiving</i> future act notices and advising TOs about such notices • <i>exercising</i> rights of the TOs, including commenting on, objecting to and negotiating about proposed future acts • <i>preparing</i> submissions to the National Native Title Tribunal or other decision-making bodies about the right to negotiate matters, including whether negotiations have occurred in good faith 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>preparing</i> and maintaining documentation as evidence of consultation and consent • <i>consulting</i> and considering the views of the native title representative body (NTRB) or a native title service provider (NTSP) such as Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, for an area about proposed native title decisions
Native title determination and compensation applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>considering</i> compensation matters and bringing native title compensation applications in the Federal Court (if the determined native title is later extinguished) • <i>bringing</i> revised or further native title determination applications in the Federal Court (if the original determination is to be varied or changed) 	
Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>negotiating</i>, implementing and monitoring native title agreements 	
Money		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>holding</i> money (including payments received as compensation or otherwise relating to the native title rights and interests) in trust for the TOs • <i>investing</i> or otherwise applying money held in trust as directed by the TOs

*There are overlaps in these categories, for example, agreements relate to determination and compensation applications, and future acts.

PBCs and the CATSI Act

The obligations of PBCs under the CATSI Act include conducting directors’ meetings, maintaining a register of members, conducting annual general and special meetings, keeping accounts and records, and lodging documents with the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.

The CATSI Act distinguishes between ‘small’, ‘medium’ and ‘large’ corporations, based on income, assets and the number of employees. The classified size of a PBC can be found on the Registrar’s website, www.oric.gov.au.

All corporations must lodge reports each year with the Registrar by 31 December. These include a general report, and in some cases audited financial statements and a directors’ report.

Functions under other legislation

PBCs may also have functions or obligations under other Commonwealth, state or territory legislation. These will vary according to requirements of the legislation and the nature of the native title rights held. PBCs that manage exclusive native title rights (in other words, native title that enables them to exclude other people from entering the land) are likely to be subject to a number of land management obligations in the same way as other land owners. PBCs may also have cultural heritage functions to perform under state and territory legislation. Funding to PBCs for these functions is sourced from the responsible state/territory agencies.

Community expectations

PBCs may also be expected to fulfil broader roles for their TOs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. For example, they may be asked to become involved in activities such as town planning, social harmony projects, cultural protocols, welcome-to-country ceremonies, interpretive and cultural signage, job creation, training and economic development. It is up to the directors and members of each PBC to decide whether they want the PBC to undertake these activities.

PBCS AND FUNDING

NTRBs, and NTSPs can apply to use Native Title Program funds to help with establishing, incorporating and registering a PBC, and may give in kind support with things such as advice or help with communications. Where necessary, NTRBs/NTSPs can help PBCs to perform their statutory functions (for example, in helping a PBC to negotiate a future act agreement, an NTRB/NTSP could fund a meeting at which the PBC consults with and seeks consent from the TOs before making a decision to agree to a future act).

Since 2006, NTRBs/NTSPs and PBCs can also apply for Native Title Program funding for PBCs to meet their administrative costs. For more information contact the local NTRB or NTSP.

PBC AS TRUSTEE OR AGENT

According to the Native Title Act, a PBC may hold native title in trust for the TOs or act as an agent for the TOs. TOs must decide whether the PBC will:

- hold the native title in trust for the TOs (known as a ‘trustee PBC’) or
- manage the native title as an agent for the TOs who own the native title (known as an ‘agent PBC’)(Native Title Act, s. 56).

Given the requirements of the PBC Regulations, the outcome is the same—the PBC has a duty to manage the native title on behalf of the TOs, including consulting them about key decisions. It is entirely up to each group of TOs to decide whether to have a trustee or agent PBC.

How much consultation?

The PBC Regulations require that a PBC (trustee or agent) must consult with the TOs and get their consent whenever a native title decision needs to be made.

At least five people must be consulted by a PBC before making decisions about native title. Note that the five people who sign the certificate must be TOs whose native title rights and interests will be affected.



Native Title Compensation

Part 3 - Timber Creek Case.

This is the final article of three on the issue of Native Title compensation. In the previous two articles the following points were made:

- Native Title rights and interests in land and waters are recognised as legally enforceable rights by the Australian legal system;
- Native Title compensation is compensation due to Native Title holders for the restriction, damage or loss of those Native Title rights and interests where Native Title rights have been recognised and Native Title holders have not agreed or consented to such restrictions, damage or loss;
- to win a Native Title compensation case for restriction, damage or loss of Native Title rights the Native Title holders have to prove the existence and nature of their rights at the time of the restriction, damage or loss; have to show how these rights were affected by the actions of others and show how that affected the lives and livelihood of the Native Title holders;
- the payment of compensation following a successful outcome in the Courts may be only marginally more than the cost of a trial;
- State and Territory governments will be the parties ordered most to pay compensation for successful claims as well as paying for their own legal costs;

- The Australian Government will most likely pay the legal costs of the Native Title parties – though this is not guaranteed;
- Given the above situations, it is recognised that settling Native Title compensation cases without going to trial would benefit most parties most of the time.

The government parties are looking at potentially hundreds of compensation claims in their State or Territory and being tied up in expensive litigation for decades and, more likely than not, having to pay out a lot of money at the conclusion of each one of those cases. The Native Title parties have to make the running in proving their cases and getting the funding to do so might not be straightforward. And if funding is available, there will be years in the Courts for a result that is never certain until a judgement is handed down.

In looking at the option of settling a Native Title claim for compensation instead of going to trial, the parties can consider settlements that include more than money. Settlement agreements could include land grants or long-term financial support for Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (or PBCs) and various other benefits that would continue to benefit the Native Title holders into the future.

But if you consider the largest Native Title settlement in Australia to date, the Noongar Settlement involving 30,000 Noongar People of south-western Western Australia and covering around 200,000 km² one can see that perhaps greater benefits can be achieved through settlements at a regional level.

The value of the Government's contribution to the agreement was approximately \$1.3 billion and included a significant land base, an agreement on rights, obligations and opportunities relating to land, resources, governance, finance, and cultural heritage. In exchange for this package, the Noongar People have agreed to surrender all current and future Native Title claims. Surrendering Native Title is a major decision and the Noongar People took years to reach a final decision.

There are other existing arrangements in place in Australia that have the potential to provide significant aspects of Native Title settlements. In Queensland's Torres Strait there is the Torres Strait Regional Authority ("the TSRA"). The TSRA is an Australian Government Statutory Authority established in 1994 under federal legislation which, among other matters, has the responsibility to:

- Formulate, coordinate and implement Australian Government programs for Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living within the region;
- Monitor the effectiveness of these programs, including

- programs conducted by other bodies; and
- Advise the Minister for Indigenous Affairs on matters relating to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal Affairs in the Torres Strait.

Could not Regional Native Title compensation settlements include the establishment of autonomous bodies for the Indigenous residents of a region?

CLCAC Director and Chairperson of the Gangalidda and Garrawa Native Title Aboriginal Corporation, Murandoo Yanner, thinks native title holders of the Southern Gulf of Carpentaria Region should be thinking of ways to get more say and control of their communities.

Mr Yanner said, "We need to create our own unique model for the Lower Gulf. One that maybe takes ideas from treaties, regional authority models and the Noongar settlement for example. It could be both a regional model and one that still recognises and equally enshrines the rights and autonomy of the nine Lower Gulf tribes."



The Wellesley Islands Ranger team counting shorebirds during the September 2020 survey.



The team setting up their first camera trap to capture images of small mammals.

Wellesley Islands Rangers Update

MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS PROJECTS

The Wellesley Island Rangers and the CLCAC Land and Environment Officer conducted the next round of Migratory Shorebird surveys in September 2020. Ornithologist Roger Jaensch was originally scheduled to participate on-ground, but due to COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, the team undertook the work independently. Data from this program is being collected to:

1. understand species and numbers of migratory shorebirds on Mornington Island and determine eligibility in listing the area as an East-Asian Flyways site;
2. establish monitoring at a selection of roosting sites;
3. build capacity within the Ranger team to deliver migratory shorebird and other threatened species surveys independently.

The team surveyed eight different sites across three days, including three sites never surveyed on-ground before.

Twelve migratory shorebird species (including six threatened species and four resident shorebirds) were recorded by the team. The surveys resulted in valuable first-ever counts from three sites and reconfirmed the importance of the Boat Point roost. Numbers of Eastern Curlew and Whimbrel recorded build the case that the whole island may be internationally important for these species.

BIOSECURITY / COASTAL SURVEILLANCE

The Wellesley Islands Rangers hosted NAQS Biosecurity Officers Harry Tamwoy and Evan Rees (Aquatic Scientist) for a week on Mornington in October 2020. As part of the visit, the team conducted scheduled biosecurity activities including Marine

Settlement Array Monitoring, Coastal Surveillance Beach Patrol and Marine Debris/Aquatic Structure inspections. The team worked with the NAQS staff to upgrade their current monitoring arrays, review the approaches to marine debris monitoring, and receive training on updated methods.

Biosecurity is a priority concern the Rangers take very seriously because invasive pests, disease and plants can threaten our native species and island environment. Reports from Traditional Owners have helped the Rangers locate and remove risks from marine debris including floating logs, ghost nets, gas bottles and foreign fishing vessels.

In November 2020, The Wellesley Islands Rangers were nominated for and received the Australian National Biosecurity Community Award, recognising the team for going above and beyond their standard duties and surveillance to protect Mornington Island.

WEED AND FIRE MANAGEMENT

In December 2020, the Wellesley Islands Rangers, with support from CLCAC's Natural Resource Management Officer, conducted weed and fire management and monitoring across four areas on Mornington Island. At Whitecliffe, the team utilised a combination of spraying and late season burning to treat seven hectares of a Rubber Vine infestation which is killing native vegetation. At Birri Lodge, nearly 3 hectares of Neem Trees were treated with a spray herbicide. Belly Ache bush was targeted for foliage spraying at Lamatha. Treating the juvenile plants at this time of the year produces the best results as this is when the plants are most active and growing, and they most readily take up the herbicide. At Old Community in town, foliage spray was used to remove large numbers of Luceana Tree which has been shading out our native plants.

Approximate Numbers of Weed Removal

- Lamatha: 9,700 Belly Ache Bush
- Whitecliffe: 2,329 Rubber Vine + Seedbank
- Birri Lodge: 11,200 Neem Trees
- Old Community: 2,200 Luceana Tree

BIODIVERSITY SURVEYS

The Wellesley Islands Rangers with CLCAC Land and Environment Projects Officer Jessica Koleck recently conducted their first Biodiversity surveys on Mornington Island. The team set up a live trapping array at three different sites, using fences and pitfall traps, funnel traps and box traps. The Rangers really enjoyed learning how to conduct these surveys and being able to start documenting what

species occur on the island. The team documented two species of frogs that haven't been recorded on the island before, along with a variety of different species of skinks (including slippery lizards). This trapping was part of a pilot study, and the team plans to conduct bigger scale surveys in the future.

The Rangers also deployed their new set of camera traps for the first time, learning how to use this technology as extra eyes across the island. These cameras are set up and left in the bush for a month and take a photo when they detect heat and motion in front of the lens. The team undertook two camera surveys, one survey used peanut butter baits to target small mammals and the other used raw chicken baits to target cats. Cameras were deployed in different habitats across the whole island.

The team is excited to retrieve the cameras and start analysing the photos to see what our native fauna is up to and identify areas where predators such as wild cats might be threatening them.



Ranger Benji Kumsing with a ute load of marine debris collected at Wambilbayi beach



A flatback turtle nesting at Gunnamulla

Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers Update

WEED MANAGEMENT

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers tackled a large number of weeds during the last six months, controlling 30,105 individual weed plants. In August the Rangers visited Gunnamulla beach, targeting control of calotrope and rubber vine. This work was aimed to improve nesting habitat for flatback turtles in preparation for the nesting season which begins in August/September. A total of 6,799 plants were sprayed. The Rangers also visited Massacre Inlet in October to work towards removing rubber vine infestations along the biosecurity control line, removing a total of 13,763 plants. The team undertook some fee for service and other opportunistic weed work around Burketown targeting calotrope, prickly acacia, coral cactus, parkinsona and rubber vine (9,543) plants.

BIOSECURITY

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers completed marine debris surveys and coastal clean ups along Gunnamulla, Beryls, Wambilbayi and Massacre beaches. Approximately 500 kg of marine debris was collected, mostly comprising wooden crates, plastic bottles and ghost nets. The Rangers also undertook biosecurity activities aimed to identify foreign invertebrates. A marine settlement array with upgrades was re-deployed at the Burketown Wharf to identify marine pests and ant surveys were completed around town to identify the presence of foreign ant species. The ant surveys identified that the invasive Singapore ant has not established in Burketown, although it has been causing damage in Normanton for years.

SCIENCE WEEK – INTERVIEW WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

Desmond Armstrong, Gangalidda and Garawa Ranger Coordinator, was interviewed by the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) during Science Week to discuss the importance of collaborative research the team has undertaken with Mangrove-Watch assessing mangrove dieback in the Gulf. Des discussed the importance of mangrove ecosystems and the mangrove dieback problem in the Gulf. During the summer of 2015-2016 a major dieback event occurred, devastating 7,400 hectares of mangrove forests along more than 1,000 km of the Gulf coastline. Des highlighted the training and support given by Mangrove-Watch which has provided the Ranger team with the skills and equipment required to independently monitor the mangroves. Check out the video here: <https://vimeo.com/448741293>

FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Ranger Coordinator, Desmond Armstrong and Head Ranger, Murrandoo Yanner Jnr have been assisting the Normanton Rangers in undertaking aerial feral animal control through a Northern Gulf NRM and State Government funded aerial culling operation. Desmond and Murrandoo provided training to the Normanton Rangers in fixed wing aerial surveys, which are used to determine relative density of vertebrate pests prior to culling and also identify high priority areas for culling. Desmond provided further assistance to the Normanton Ranger unit in aerial culling operations. The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers also completed feral aerial culling in early December on the Nijinda Durlga Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) with the successful removal of 1,387 vertebrate pests.

SALTMARSH AND MANGROVE MONITORING

As part of the “Wetlands not Wastelands in the Gulf of Carpentaria” project, the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers are undertaking three years of saltmarsh and mangrove monitoring on the Albert River and the western side of the Leichhardt River to document and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution and identify other threats pressuring these tidal wetland habitats.

In early July the Rangers selected ten saltmarsh sites along the Albert River and conducted assessments of the condition, values, and threats within the sites. The team also used the Mangrove-Watch Shoreline Video Assessment Method (S-VAM) to film and assess the condition of the mangroves along the Albert River shoreline. These surveys were then repeated in November/December. The team also joined the Normanton Rangers to survey the Leichhardt River in October. The survey data collected provides a baseline which will be used to determine change in habitat condition following the introduction of innovative threat mitigation solutions recommended by tidal wetlands and marine pollution specialists.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Storm burning was undertaken by the Rangers in December to target invasive weed species, primarily rubber vine and calotrope. Aerial incendiary was used to ignite fires in targeted locations from the Albert River to Massacre Inlet. Fire burnt in patches across an area of approximately 39,838 hectares of country. Aerial fire management is extremely important for tackling weed infestations, particularly in areas where on-ground treatment is not feasible due to inaccessibility or the size of infestation.

TURTLE MONITORING

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers completed their annual turtle monitoring and hosted a knowledge transfer camp on country at Gunnamulla. The Rangers surveyed turtles for sixteen nights identifying nesting adult flatback turtles on Gunnamulla and two neighboring beaches, Beryls Beach and Wambilbayi. A total of fifty-eight nests were observed during nest and track counts and twenty-one individual turtles monitored nesting on Gunnamulla beach. This knowledge transfer camp gives the opportunity for Rangers to transfer traditional knowledge to community members and showcase their turtle monitoring work on country.

TRAINING AND NEW QUALIFICATIONS

The Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers undertook a range of training over the past six months. All Rangers completed remote area first aid. Ranger Benji Kumsing and Support Officer Natalie Waller completed side by side training and Rangers Jimmy Kumsing, Michael Watson and Milmaja Yanner completed 1080 baiting training in Normanton. Zac Sowden attended Cairns to undertake Cert II Maritime and Lurick Sowden was awarded his Coxswain Grade 1 Near Coastal Commercial qualification which enables Lurick to drive a twelve meter and under vessel with unlimited outboard to fifteen nautical miles offshore. A number of Rangers attended Cairns to undertake the 2nd block of training for their Certificate IV Leadership and Management and Health and Safety Representative training.



CLCAC farewells Ranger Coordinator, Phillip George (L) and Head Ranger, Lance Rapson (R)



Weed management using chemical control methods plays a crucial part in the mission to protect native vegetation

Normanton Rangers Update

FAREWELL TO NORMANTON RANGER COORDINATOR PHILLIP GEORGE AND HEAD RANGER LANCE RAPSON

CLCAC and the Rangers regretfully say farewell to pillars of the community and leaders of the Normanton Ranger team, Phillip George and Lance Rapson, as they pursue new opportunities and new pathways. We are proud of their achievements and growth with the team since it first formed in 2008 and would like to say thank you to both for their twelve years of service with CLCAC. Phillip will remain on the CLCAC Board of Directors and Lance will continue his work on the Morr Morr Pastoral Board, but both will be sorely missed in the Ranger office. Congratulations are due to Hayden Tyrrell for his promotion into the Acting Coordinator position and Paul Logan, Acting Head Ranger.

SCIENCE WEEK – INTERVIEW WITH NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

Phillip George, former Normanton Ranger Coordinator, was interviewed by the Australian Government's National Environmental Science Program (NESP) during Science Week in August 2020, to discuss the importance of a collaborative research project with Griffith University funded by the NESP Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub. The Rangers and university researchers have teamed up to examine the links between Gulf Rivers and food for migratory shorebirds.

Phillip discussed the team's history of surveying shorebirds on the Gulf coast and the vast distances covered by the birds when migrating from their nesting grounds in the Arctic. Professor Michele Burford discussed the nutrient contribution of the riverflows that are essential for producing plentiful food in the sand and mud flats for the birds.

The Gulf of Carpentaria is one of the most important feeding grounds for shorebirds in Australia and a first stopover point for birds continuing south across the continent.

Check out the video here: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=32733469426719&extid=5tKlBjDbTsTNNYDA>

RIVER CLEAN-UPS, SALTMARSH AND MANGROVE MONITORING

As part of the "Wetlands not Wastelands in the Gulf of Carpentaria" project, the Normanton and Gangalidda-Garawa Rangers are undertaking three years of saltmarsh and mangrove monitoring on the Norman, Leichhardt and Albert Rivers to document and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution, and identify other threats pressuring these extensive tidal wetland habitats.

In the Gulf, mangroves and saltmarsh provide essential nutrients and habitat for crabs, fish and prawns, but also filter catchment runoff and reduce shoreline erosion, store carbon to reduce the impacts of climate change, and act as end-of-catchment indicators that reveal the effects of water flow disruptions, runoff sediments, and water contamination. These wetland habitats are important to monitor and protect.

The Rangers selected important saltmarsh sites along each river and conducted assessments of the condition, values, and threats within the sites in early July, November, and December. The team also used the Mangrove-Watch Shoreline Video Assessment Method (S-VAM) to film and assess the condition of the mangroves along each river shoreline. The results of the mangrove and saltmarsh assessments establish a baseline for comparison into the future as the Rangers partner with specialists from Earthwatch Australia and

Plastic Collective to introduce new and innovative ways to reduce threats and protect the Gulf's pristine land and water.

WEED MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF NATIVE VEGETATION

Between July and December, the Rangers dedicated seventeen days to reducing and controlling weed infestations on Delta Downs Station, Inverleigh Station and more broadly throughout the Normanton and Karumba locales. Prickly acacia infestations are well established to the west of the Norman River but are still relatively isolated to the east on Delta Downs. The team strategically targeted problem areas of prickly acacia using chemical control methods to treat existing weeds as well as the persistent seed bank. Over 39,000 prickly acacia weeds were treated through hard work with boots on the ground under the sweltering sun. Specialised support and strategic planning was provided by CLCAC's NRM Support Officer, Kevin Anderson. The team also treated significant numbers of parkinsonia (over 12,000 weeds) and rubber vine (over 16,000 weeds) in the continuing effort to protect and rehabilitate native vegetation, grazing pasture and sensitive wetlands.

BIOSECURITY

The team met with Biosecurity QLD and NAQS (Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy) representatives in September to discuss improvements to invasive pest monitoring methods and for a meet-and-greet with new staff. The Rangers deliver a wide range of early-detection monitoring and pest and disease awareness activities on a fee-for-service basis for the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

On Wernadinga Station, the team located a caterpillar—suspected to be the invasive fall armyworm recently making its way across

Australia—eating the weed and decided to gather information and photos for species identification. They sent photos to NAQS where scientists identified the caterpillars as the larval stage of the *Euclasta whalleyi* moth, a biological control agent intentionally released in the Gulf from 1988-1991 to reduce rubber vine infestations, not the fall armyworm.



During all work on country, the Rangers keep a keen eye out for strange and unusual sightings that could be a biosecurity risk.



Kelean Logan with drop torch at Lotus (Horseshoe) Lagoon as part of storm burning in November.



Normanton Rangers reviewing shoreline survey footage at Leichhardt River

Normanton Rangers Update (continued)

MARINE TURTLE SURVEYS

Marine turtles returned in 2020 to nest along the Delta Downs coastline, with the Rangers recording tracks and nests on Kelso, Smithburne, and Van Diemens beaches. The first nest was recorded in May and the peak of the nesting season arrived in late September/early October. Flatback turtles are the most common on the Delta Downs coastline while smaller numbers of olive ridley turtles also use the area to nest. The success of the nests is, however, under threat from predation by feral pigs, wild dogs, and goannas, in addition to the risks of tidal inundation and temperature stress. Major flooding in the Flinders, Bynoe and Norman Rivers in 2019 led to a significant reduction in seagrass beds—a key food source for the turtles—which may be impacting nesting activity as very few nests were laid in 2020 on the Delta Downs. Unfortunately, there is a diversity of threats impacting nesting success.

FERAL PIG REDUCTION

The feral pig is one of Queensland's most widespread and damaging pest animals. The impact of feral pigs on ecosystem health is widely acknowledged as they damage wetlands, riparian areas and cause losses to nesting birds, turtles and other ground nesting species. Feral pigs also pose a biosecurity risk as they are vectors of disease and could threaten the Australian pork industry. Feral pig management is one of the highest priorities in the Normanton Ranger program.

In 2020, aerial culling was undertaken on seventeen days between 30 August-15 November 2020 through funding secured by Northern Gulf NRM through the Queensland and Federal Governments' Disaster Recovery Funding and significant in-kind contributions from stations. Two highly trained CLCAC shooters removed 8,522

feral pigs over a vast area of approximately 14,944 sq km (1,494,359 hectares or 3,692,642 acres).

FIRE MANAGEMENT - STORM BURNING ON DELTA DOWNS STATION

The Normanton Rangers carried out storm burning on Delta Downs Station at Lotus and Leichhardt Wetlands to thin out vegetation stands and to reduce fuel load. Burning is also used as an effective control method of rubber vine, a Weed of National Significance (WoNS). Storm burning derives its name from burns happening after the first storms of the season. The Queensland Rural Fire Service also conducted Fire Fighter Minimum skills training to both the rangers and station staff.

Rangers also carried out storm burning at Wernadinga Station to help manage rubber vine infestations through the use of a fire gel torch suspended underneath a helicopter.

Rangers in Normanton utilise storm burning to prevent vegetation groups from thickening and to maintain a balanced community of different aged vegetation, which will maximise results for traditional country. A moderate intensity fire, when there is good soil moisture, provide the best initial results.

Wernadinga Flyway Site Receives International Recognition

The Normanton Rangers are delighted to announce the official designation of the Wernadinga Flyway Site to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), an international partnership aimed at protecting migratory waterbirds and their habitat, spanning from the Arctic to the southern reaches of Australia and New Zealand.

Acting CLCAC Normanton Ranger Coordinator, Hayden Tyrrell, said the Flyway Site designation is an important step towards protecting shorebird species and their habitat.

"We've lost so many animals in the past 250 years, and we're still losing them today. We want to protect these species for the future and the next generation, before another piece of our culture disappears. We're helping these shorebirds in their fight to survive another thousand, two thousand years, and into the future, and as time passes, we'll know we've done the right thing by Mother Nature".

The Rangers began migratory shorebird surveys on this section of coast in 2017 and—under the leadership of former Normanton Ranger Coordinator Phillip George and support from leading ornithologist Roger Jaensch—coordinated the nomination with the Gkuthaarn & Kukatj Peoples and leaseholder AJM Pastoral. The site received endorsements from local, state, and federal government before proceeding to the International Secretariat. This will be the third site nominated by CLCAC in the Gulf and the eighth site in Queensland.

Another great achievement to celebrate, well done Rangers!





Soft foot trapping training

Staff Updates

TRAINING MILESTONES:

A vital and ongoing process for all of CLCAC staff, recent training and professional development included:

Certificate III in Conservation Land & Management:
Maali Yanner, GG Burketown Ranger Unit

Certificate II in Maritime Operations:
Zachariah Sowden, GG Burketown Ranger Unit

Health Safety Representative Training:
Michael Watson, GG Burketown Ranger Unit
Kealan Logan, Normanton Ranger Unit

1080 Baiting Training:
Hayden Tyrrell, Normanton Ranger Unit
Zachariah Sowden, GG Burketown Ranger Unit
Jimmy Kum-Sing, GG Burketown Ranger Unit

Mon Repo Turtle Centre:
Jessica Koleck – Staff learned firsthand marine turtle monitoring and research methods from experts, building the capacity of the turtle program throughout the Wellesley Islands.

Leadership & Management:
Murradoo Yanner Jnr, GG Burketown Ranger Unit
Paul Logan, Normanton Ranger Unit

FIRST ANNUAL REGIONAL WHS WORKSHOP

As the organisation expands, so does our operational safety program. The first of what will be an annual regional workshoping event happened in November 2020. Bringing

together all our Ranger and Land and Environment teams, the three day workshop provided an invaluable opportunity to review current and proposed safety work plans and statements, address risk management processes and ensure best practice across the board. Amongst others, areas covered included: helicopter; maritime; onground fieldwork; and aerial vertebrae pest control.



First annual regional WHS workshop

WELCOME TO THE CLCAC TEAM!

CLCAC welcomes the following new staff members:

- Juwan Fraser - Ranger based at Normanton
- Connie Mills - Corporate Services and Project Support Officer based in the Cairns Office
- Janine Copland - People and Payroll Officer, based in the Cairns office

CLCAC Members Update

Has your address changed?

It is important that CLCAC can contact our Members and Traditional Owners of the Southern Gulf of Carpentaria region to keep you informed of what is happening in and around your community, and notify you of important meetings.

If you have changed your postal address or contact numbers please complete the attached form and post to: CLCAC's Contact Person, Apryl Ford, PO Box 71, Burketown Qld 4830 or request a form by email: aford@clcac.com.au.



CLCAC CARPENTARIA LAND COUNCIL
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

United we stand.

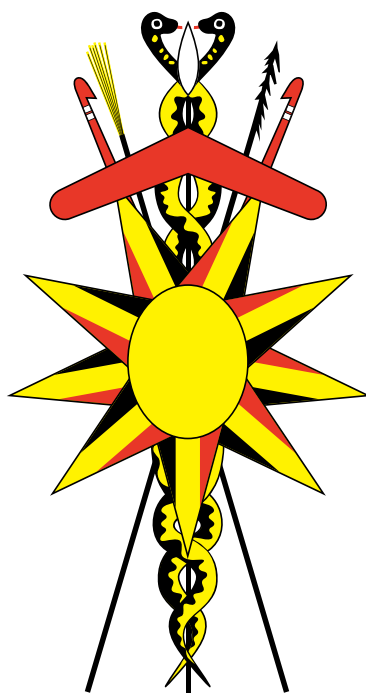
CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Personal Details	
Name:	_____
Address: (residential)	_____
Address: (postal)	_____
Home Tel:	_____
Mobile:	_____
Email:	_____

I prefer to receive notices via (please tick selection)

- Post
- Email

Signed: _____



CLCAC

Cairns Office

A Suite 2, Level 1, 104 Mulgrave Road, Cairns QLD 4870
P (07) 4041 3833 F (07) 4041 3533
E info@clcac.com.au
W www.clcac.com.au

Burketown Office

A 24 Musgrave Street, Burketown QLD 4830
P (07) 4745 5132 F (07) 4745 5204

Normanton Office

A 11 Wurrup Street, Normanton QLD 4890
P (07) 4745 1556 F (07) 4745 1569

Follow us:



<https://www.facebook.com/CLCAC/>



@carpentarialandcouncil

