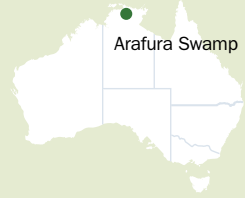


Parting shot

My happy place

Mali Djarrbal
Arafura Swamp Ranger



Djilpin unij narrakuṅ marlukun ga mar'munukun marrap unij. Nyiri narraka ṅaniwarrkun.

Djilpin is my country. It is my country because it belonged to my father and my grandfather.

Djilpin is the Goyder River, which flows to feed the Arafura Swamp and then the saltwater. If you bring your eyes and see what it looks like, you will feel the country with your mind and soul.

When I go there, I can feel the wind and I know the country is happy I am there. The country holds the song lines and relationships and when I go to Djilpin, my ancestors speak to me and give me dreams. Every year when I go there, it changes. When I walk on country, the country gives me more knowledge to understand.

When we go fishing, we say, “*Guyu guwang ṅowalayn gupurrui ṅaniwalayn djiniṅ ṅirriwataṅu ga djungayi ga wayirri wataṅu,*” which means ‘give us fish, we are the Traditional Owners and caretakers right here. Do not hide them from us.’

The women are very busy at Djilpin. We dive for *djalagu* (water yam), dig for *buyumar* (long yams) and make *dilly* bags and skirts from the inner-bark from the *djirrparr* (Kurrajong tree). It takes us one week to make a special damper from cycad nuts called *djakalangarr*, we collect and prepare *gunga* (pandanus) leaves for weaving baskets and mats, cook traditionally in a *djambal* (bush oven) and teach everything to the kids for the future generations.

Bush Heritage supports the work of the Arafura Swamp Rangers through its Aboriginal Partnerships program. See our website for more details.

