



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Wordlists

Djabugay Everyday Words

Djabugay is the name of one of the languages spoken in the Cairns region extending along the hinterland and ranges from Mt Molloy towards Atherton and along the Upper Barron River. Linguistic research suggests there are several dialects in Djabugay including: Yirrgay, Guluy, Nyagali, Bulway and Djabugay (sources identify the term as a dialect as well as a language name). The Djabugay language was spoken and understood by Aboriginal groups in the region, including neighbouring groups of Yidinji, Gunggay, Dyirbal and Yalanji.

Djabugay is also written as Tjapukai, Tjapukandji, Djabuganjdi, Dyaabugay etc. AIATSIS have identified Djabugay as the standardised spelling and assigned it Language Code Y106 which is used by many collecting institutions in their catalogue descriptions.

The following list identifies Djabugay everyday words and their suggested pronunciation. Some of these words may still be used in North Queensland communities.

Note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages were oral-based; there may be several variations in spelling and pronunciation. The following list should be seen as a guide – check with local language speakers as to the preferred local pronunciation.

English	Djabugay	Pronunciation
Barramundi	<i>Wuban-barra</i>	Woo-bun bar-rah
Cairns (placename)	<i>Gimuy</i>	Gim-eye
Cassowary	<i>Bunda:rra</i>	Bun-dah-rah
Children	<i>Bibunbay</i>	Bib-un-bye
Crocodile	<i>Ganyarra</i>	Gah-na-rah
Ear	<i>Bina</i>	Bin-ah
Eye	<i>Djili</i>	Jill-ee
Father	<i>Nyumba</i>	Num-bah
Fire	<i>Biri</i>	Beer-ee
Fish	<i>Guyu</i>	Goo-yoo
Foot	<i>Djina</i>	Jin-ah
Girl	<i>Gumba</i>	Gum-bah
Ground	<i>Bulngan</i>	Bull-nun
Hand	<i>Mara</i>	Mah-rah
Head	<i>Bada</i>	Bah-dah
Home	<i>Bulmba</i>	Bulm-bah
Horse	<i>Yarraman</i>	Yah-ra-man
Kangaroo	<i>Gan.gula</i>	Gun-goo-lah
Knee	<i>Bunggu</i>	Bun-goo

Need further information?

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English	Djabugay	Pronunciation
Kuranda (placename)	<i>Ngunbay</i>	Nun-bye
Moon	<i>Gindan</i>	Gin-dun
Mother	<i>Mudjam</i>	Mud-jum
No	<i>Gari</i>	Gah-ree
One	<i>Nyiwul</i>	Nee-wool
People	<i>Bama</i>	Bum-ah
Pretty	<i>Djarrawi</i>	Jah-rah-wee
Rain	<i>Bana</i>	Bun-ah
Rainbow Serpent	<i>Gudjugudju</i>	Good-joo-good-joo
River	<i>Wuru</i>	Woo-roo
Scrub Turkey	<i>Wawun</i>	Way-won
Shield	<i>Dagurr</i>	Dah-gurd
Shoulder	<i>Binda</i>	Bin-dah
Speewah (placename)	<i>Guwulu</i>	Goo-woo-loo
Spider	<i>Garra</i>	Gah-rah
Stinging Tree	<i>Gayam</i>	Gay-um
Stone	<i>Walba</i>	Wal-bah
Sugarbag Honey	<i>Wunba</i>	Won-bah
Sugar Glider	<i>Walburri</i>	Wal-boo-ree
Sun	<i>Bungan</i>	Boon-gun
Sword	<i>Wagay</i>	Wag-eye
Telephone	<i>Djala gara-barra</i>	Jah-lah gah-ra-bah-ra
Today	<i>Yalungunda</i>	Yah-loon-under
Turtle	<i>Badjigal</i>	Bud-gee-gull
Two	<i>Mulu</i>	Moo-loo
Wallaby	<i>Dulbil</i>	Dool-bill
Wind	<i>Guyurru</i>	Goo-yoo-roo
Yes	<i>Yiy</i>	Yii

Learn more about Djabugay!

Listen to Michael Quinn talk about the revival of Djabugay language as part of ABC Open's *Mother Tongue* Project: <https://open.abc.net.au/explore/83977>

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Sources and Further Reading

Words listed above were sourced from several historical texts within the State Library Collections, including the following items. There may be variations in spelling and/or pronunciation across the region due to dialectical differences.

Brim, W. and Eglitis, A. (2005) *Creatures of the rainforest: two artists explore Djabugay country*. **CLG 591.99436 2005**

Curr, E. M. (1887) *The Australian Race: its origins, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent*. John Ferres Government Printer: Melbourne. **RBF 572.994 cur**

Meston, A. (undated) Archibald Meston Papers Undated. **OM64-17**

Quinn, M. (1992) *Djabugay: A Djabugay-English Dictionary*. **P499.15 qui**

Quinn, M., Averis, M. and Johnson, K. (1992) *Djabugay: an illustrated English-Djabugay dictionary*. **P499.15 dja**

Further Details

For more information on Djabugay: North Queensland Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for North Queensland; visit NQRALC's website: www.nqralc.com.au/

State Library of Queensland

For further information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages at the State Library of Queensland, please contact:

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SLQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Webpages:

www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages

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