



all yours

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Wordlists

Gunggay Everyday Words

Gunggay (aka Gunggandji & Koo-gun-ji) is a language group centred on the Yarrabah, Cape Grafton Peninsula region of Far North Queensland. The area includes the Yarrabah, and surrounding areas.

The following word list identifies Gunggay everyday words – some of these words may still be used in Far North Queensland towns and communities.

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

English	Gunggay	Pronunciation
Ant	<i>Wolo</i>	Woh-low
Bad	<i>Djungun</i>	Chun-gun
Canoe	<i>Badji</i>	Bah-ji
Cassowary	<i>Kindaja</i>	Kin-dah-jar
Ear	<i>Bina</i>	Bin-ah
Eye	<i>Djilli</i>	Jill-ee
Fire	<i>Boora</i>	Boo-rah
Frog	<i>Koondang</i>	Koon-dung
Good	<i>Ngappi</i>	Nap-ee
Hand	<i>Malla</i>	Mar-lah
Kangaroo	<i>Kangoola</i>	Kan-goo-la
Leg (Shin)	<i>Bala</i>	Ba-la
Mother	<i>Moochang</i>	Moo-chung
Night	<i>Bokar</i>	Bo-kah
Possum	<i>Marpi</i>	Mar-pee
Rain	<i>Karpan</i>	Kar-pan
Snake (generic)	<i>Djamma</i>	Jah-ma
Spear	<i>Kala</i>	Ka-lah
Stingray	<i>Woola</i>	Woo-lah
Torres Strait Pigeon	<i>Nyoonkolo</i>	Noon-ko-lo
Tree (generic)	<i>Tan-do</i>	Tan-doh
Wind	<i>Yawi</i>	Yah-wee

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.

Dixon, R. M. W. (1991) *Words of our country: stories, place names and vocabulary in Yidiny, the Aboriginal language of the Cairns-Yarrabah region*. St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press. **G 499.15 1991**

Gribble, Rev. E. R. B. (1900) "Linguistics of the Koo-gun-ji Tribe: Chief Camp at Cape Grafton, Queensland," in *Science*, September 22, 1900.

Roth, W. (1975) *Reports to the Commissioner of Police and others, on Queensland Aboriginal peoples 1898-1903*. (Microfilm) Material drawn from Queensland ethnography: bulletin, nos. 11-18 / by Walter E. Roth. **FILM 0714**

Further Details

North Queensland Aboriginal Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre (Cairns)

This language centre looks after languages across North Queensland from Cooktown to Sarina and West to the Gulf.

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State Library of Queensland

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SLQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Webpages:

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

SLQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Blog:

<http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/ilq/>

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