Activity sheet for Palm Island & Our People

Resources:

- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

MANBARRA (TRADITIONAL OWNERS)

Palm Island, also known as Great Palm Island, or by the Aboriginal name Brgkolman (pronounced Boog-a-mon or Boog-ka-mon) is the largest of 16 islands in the Palm Island Group.

The Traditional Owners are the Manbarra People (pronounced Mun-bar-ra) which includes the entire Palm Island Group as well as Magnetic Island. Research records that they are part of the Wulgurukaba Nation (pronounced Wool-gah-roo-kah-bah) and that Great Palm Island is known as Burgu/mah (Boor-goo-mah), in language. The islands are linked to the mainland through the creation story of the Carpet Snake or the Big Snake.

The first recorded European observations of the Palm Islands came from Captain Cook when in 1770 he sailed up the east coast of Australia. Cook sent some of his men ashore on Palm Island but they returned having nothing worth observing. It is estimated that the population of Palm Island at the time of Cook’s visit was about 200 Manbarra People.

When non Aboriginal people started to exploit the land and sea around North Queensland, life for the Manbarra People quickly changed forever. In 1883 nine Aboriginal people from Palm Island were kidnapped and taken as circus exhibits to be shown in America and Europe. The remains of one of these people Kukamunburra (Tambo) was returned to Palm Island for burial.

Activity Questions:

- Where is Palm Island?
- Who are the Traditional Owners?
- What is the Traditional Aboriginal name for this place?
Activity sheet for Palm Island & Our People

Resources:

- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
  

Activities:

- Read and discuss the ‘Big Snake’ Creation story
- Investigate other creation stories from around Australia
- Listen and respond to the online stories and photos
Activity sheet for Palm Island & Our People

Resources:

Activities:

- What do you think these items were used for?
- How do you think they were made?
- Explore and investigate what types of materials in your local area are best for making items like these.