



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Wordlists

Wulguru

Wulguru is an umbrella term to describe several languages or dialects spoken in the Townsville Region extending from Cleveland Bay to Rollingstone. There are several dialects or related languages across the language Nation including Wulgurugaba, Coonambella, Nhawalgaba, Gabilgara and Mulgu. Wulguru has a dialectic relationship to Nywaigi in the north; there are some shared words with Bindal and the Biri language to the south.

AIATSIS has assigned Wulguru by their Language Code Y135 which is used by many collecting institutions in their catalogue descriptions.

The following list identifies everyday words from the Wulguru language and their suggested pronunciation. Sources for these words include historical materials as well as recent linguistic work undertaken by Donohue, Tsunoda, Terrill and others. Dixon in his work describes the language as Manbara.

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 | Wulguru | Pronunciation |
|-----------|------------------|----------------|
| Bird | <i>Yida</i> | Yii-da |
| Boomerang | <i>Waangal</i> | Wah-null |
| Butterfly | <i>Gulambira</i> | Gool-um-beer-a |
| Child | <i>Nalga</i> | Null-gah |
| Crocodile | <i>Maybiya</i> | May-bee-yah |
| Dilly Bag | <i>Dalun</i> | Dah-lun |
| Dog | <i>Uyu</i> | Oo-yoo |
| Ear | <i>Bina</i> | Bin-ah |
| Eye | <i>Miil</i> | Meel |
| Father | <i>Abu</i> | Ah-boo |
| Fire | <i>Buri</i> | Boo-ree |
| Fish | <i>Guya</i> | Goo-yah |
| Foot | <i>Dhina</i> | Din-ah |
| Frog | <i>Nirbany</i> | Near-bun |
| English | Wulguru | Pronunciation |

| English | Wulguru | Pronunciation |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Girl | <i>Mankara</i> | Mun-kar-ah |
| Grandmother (Mother's mother) | <i>Gamuny</i> | Gah-moon |
| Ground | <i>Warhuny</i> | War-hoon |
| Hand | <i>Mala</i> | Mar-lah |
| Head | <i>Alu</i> | Ah-loo |
| Home | <i>Wanga</i> | Won-ah |
| Kangaroo | <i>Buli</i> | Bull-ee |
| Knee | <i>Mugu</i> | Moo-goo |
| Leg | <i>Waga</i> | Wah-gah |
| Mangrove | <i>Aguny</i> | Ah-goon |
| No | <i>Ngaw</i> | Ngaw |
| Nose | <i>Wurhu</i> | Woor-hoo |
| One | <i>Yunggul</i> | Yun-gull |
| Possum | <i>Gadhara</i> | Gah-dah-rah |
| Rain | <i>Guwa</i> | Goo-wah |
| Rainbow | <i>Yamani</i> | Yah-mun-ee |
| Sea | <i>Mada</i> | Mah-dah |
| Smoke | <i>Bunu</i> | Boo-noo |
| Stone | <i>Barri</i> | Bah-ree |
| Tree | <i>Gumbayal</i> | Goom-bay-al |
| Two | <i>Yaga</i> | Yug-ah |
| Wallaby | <i>Bali</i> | Bar-lee |
| Water | <i>Gamu</i> | Gah-moo |
| Wind | <i>Wira</i> | Weir-a |
| Woman | <i>Mabura</i> | Mah-boo-rah |
| Yes | <i>Adha</i> | Ud-ah |
| English | Wulguru | Pronunciation |

Learn more about Wulguru!

Visit the Wulgurukaba Plant Trail website and learn about traditional land use for the area:
<http://wulgurukabaplantrail.creektocoral.com/index.html>

Sources and Further Reading

Words listed above were sourced from several historical texts within the State Library Collections, including the following items.

Brayshaw, H. (1990) *Well beaten paths: Aborigines of the Herbert Burdekin district, north Queensland: an ethnographic and archaeological study*. **G 306.0899915 1990**

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*. **RBF 572.994 cur**

Donohue, M. (2007) *Wulguru: a salvage study of a north-eastern Australian language from Townsville*. Munich: Lincom Europe.

Howitt, A.W. (reprint) (1996) *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*. **J 306.089 how [Online access through SLQ]**

Morrill, J. (2006) *17 years wandering among the Aborigines*. **J 305.89915 MUR**

Terrill, A. (1995) *Biri*. Munich: Lincom Europe. **J 499.15 TER**

Further Details

For more information on Wulguru and neighbouring languages: North Queensland Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for North Queensland; visit NQRCALC's website: www.nqraclc.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 Indigenous Languages Webpages: www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages

SLQ Indigenous Languages Blog: <http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/ilq/>

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