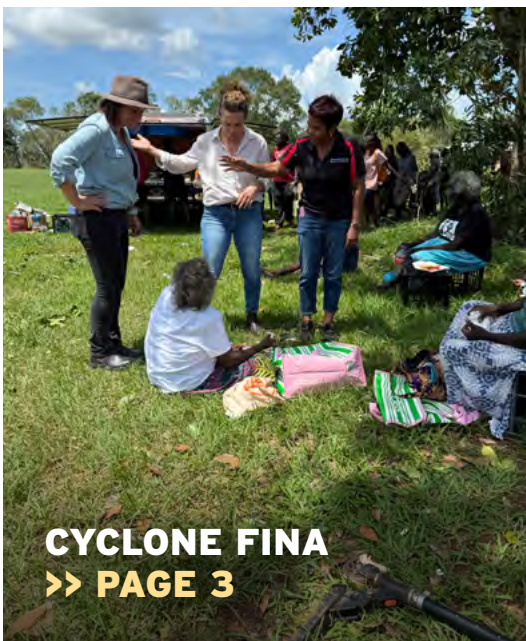




[Good] [Tiwi News]

Pupuni Ngirramini

December 2025 | tiwilandcouncil.com



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EDITORIAL

Pupuni Ngirramini is published by the Tiwi Land Council for the Tiwi People

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by Glenn Campbell

Message from the Tiwi Land Council Chair

Earlier this year, the Northern Territory's four Aboriginal Land Councils stood together at the front of Parliament House in Darwin. I was proud to be there with other members of our Executive, representing the Tiwi Land Council and standing strong for our people. The joint Land Council meeting was an important opportunity to reaffirm our shared priorities across the Territory. Together, we called on the NT Government to work in genuine partnership with the four Land Councils, who collectively represent and support more than one third of the Northern Territory's population.

I'm also very pleased to share some good news for the Tiwi Islands: the Australian Government has agreed to dedicate the Tiwi Islands Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and has endorsed our IPA Management Plan. This outcome comes after five years of consultation with Tiwi people, and it is an important

achievement. It provides us with a strong and lasting foundation for the ongoing care and stewardship of our country. On behalf of the Council, I extend my thanks to the IPA Committee, Tiwi Resources staff, and all Tiwi Land Council members, who have contributed their time, knowledge, and energy to this important process. The next steps will be to celebrate dedication in December and strengthen the role of the IPA Committee in guiding the management of this important initiative.

Finally, as we reflect on the last financial year, it is clear that 2024/25 was a landmark year for the Tiwi Land Council. We have seen the launch of several new initiatives, significant progress across many of our projects, and a big increase in staff numbers to meet our growing responsibilities. I want to sincerely thank all our staff for their commitment and hard work during

this exciting and important time for the Council.

Together, we are building momentum for the future of the Tiwi people and the protection of Tiwi country.



Warm regards,
LESLIE TUNGATALUM
Chair, Tiwi Land Council



Message from the CEO

Awana mamanta!

As we prepare to print this newsletter, our Tiwi communities are recovering from the impact of Cyclone Fina.

In Wurrumiyanga, there has been damage to houses caused by fallen trees. People have been without power and water and lost a lot of food. At Tiwi College, there has been damage to buildings and to the water tank, forcing everyone to evacuate. Fallen trees have cut off access to the College, Takampirmili, Ranku and Condor Point.

But despite this damage, it has been encouraging to see Tiwi people and organisations working on the clean-up together. From the moment the storm cleared, there have been crews working hard to remove fallen trees, clear roads, restore power and water and provide much needed food and assistance to affected families. I want to thank everyone involved in the recovery efforts.

As a Council, we have reflected on

the cyclone and how lucky we were.

That people were not injured and that there wasn't more damage to our houses and critical infrastructure. We are now working actively with the Tiwi Islands Regional Council to secure funds for cyclone shelters in our communities (which we have been asking for over many years) and remove dangerous trees that could cause more damage when the next cyclone comes through. These are the messages that we took to Canberra in early December, as staff and Council members once again travelled to Parliament House for a Senate Estimates hearing.

In the lead up to Christmas, we are excited to celebrate dedication of the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over the Tiwi Islands on 10 December. The event will be hosted by our IPA Committee, supported by Tiwi Resources and the Tiwi Land Council. We thank the Australian Government for supporting

dedication, following a five-year consultation process with Tiwi people.

I hope you and your family stay safe over the Christmas break and look forward to seeing you again in 2026!

Mana



BRENDAN FERGUSON
CEO, Tiwi Land Council

Tiwi Land Council and Tiwi leaders make urgent call for cyclone shelters

The Tiwi Land Council and Tiwi leaders have stressed the urgent need for the building of purpose-built cyclone shelters in Tiwi islands communities.

The council and Tiwi leaders expressed strong concern about the lack of shelters when Commonwealth and Territory ministers visited the islands after Cyclone Fina tore across communities in November.

The group included NT Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro.

The council welcomed the visits and used the opportunity to advocate strongly and directly for practical, long-term solutions to severe weather risks rather than short-term responses.

The council expressed concern about the lack of shelters in the three main Tiwi communities –Wurrumiyanga (Nguu), Milikapiti, and Pirlangimpi.

Unlike many mainland communities, Tiwi residents cannot easily evacuate to neighbouring towns or regional centres when cyclones approach.

Limited transport options, sea conditions, and infrastructure constraints mean that people must shelter on the islands.

Tiwi leaders say the impact of Cyclone Fina on the islands has underscored, once again, the vulnerability of Tiwi communities to severe weather events and the urgent need for resilient infrastructure across the islands.

While the Tiwi Islands were fortunate that no serious injuries or loss of life were recorded, Cyclone Fina caused significant disruption.

Strong winds and heavy rainfall resulted in damage to housing and community infrastructure, widespread power outages, fallen trees and restricted access across communities

and homelands. In several areas, debris and damaged roads made movement difficult during and after the cyclone, highlighting long-standing challenges associated with limited transport and emergency infrastructure.

In the immediate aftermath of the cyclone, the Tiwi Land Council worked closely with local organisations, service providers, and emergency response agencies to support community safety and recovery.

Council staff assisted with coordination on the ground, including clearing access routes, supporting community-led clean-up efforts, and helping to ensure residents had access to food and essential supplies.

These efforts reflected the strength of Tiwi community cooperation and local leadership in times of crisis.

The Tiwi Land Council has made it clear to both the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments that dedicated cyclone shelters are not a luxury but an essential piece of life-saving infrastructure.

Well-designed shelters would provide safe refuge for families during severe weather, reduce pressure on existing buildings not designed for cyclone conditions and improve emergency preparedness across the islands.

Cyclone Fina and other extreme weather events have reinforced the reality that as climate events become more intense remote island communities face unique risks.

The Tiwi Land Council will continue to lobby both levels of government for the necessary funding and commitment to deliver cyclone shelters and broader resilience measures for the Tiwi Islands.



Mega weekend of festival and footy a huge success

What a fantastic weekend for the Tiwi Islands!

The Tiwi Cultural Festival on Saturday 19 July and the Tiwi football grand finals the following day are emerging as the biggest weekend for Tiwi islanders and visitors each year.

Hundreds of visitors packed ferries, boats and planes to converge on Wurrumiyanga, near Stanley Tipiloura Oval, for the festival organised by the Tiwi Land Council with the help of other Tiwi stakeholders.

The legendary grand finals drew thousands of people to Wurrumiyanga Oval on Sunday to see the men's Imalu Tigers and women's Muluwurri Magpies claim victory in the 2025 Tiwi Islands Football League grand finals.

For many fans the Tigers' win was an emotional victory and an unexpected outcome given the Magpies were unbeaten all season.

The festival activities kicked off at midday on 19 July with the opening of the Expo, which included a range of stalls, workshops and activities.

Among them were Border Force and Australian Defence Force displays.

United States Marines also sent a delegation, signalling warm relations between the US force and Tiwi islanders after the 2024 Osprey helicopter crash that killed three marines.

At 4pm came the Welcome to Country, official opening and speeches, including by Steve Edgington, the Northern Territory's Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Health and local member Manuel Brown.

This was followed by the launch of the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), an important initiative that will help preserve the cultural values of the Tiwi Islands for generations.

The IPA will allow Traditional Owners to manage their land for biodiversity



conservation with government support.

The Tiwi Islands, comprising Melville and Bathurst Islands, are recognized for their significant biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Alice Munkara, the Chair of the Tiwi Resources Board, which manages the Tiwi IPA, the Tiwi Rangers and the Junior Rangers, on behalf of all Tiwi people, told the crowd the islands have many challenges.

"We worry about keeping our land and sea country healthy. We worry about the loss of culture and knowledge and

we worry about our kids," Alice said.

"But our IPA can help us with these challenges and that makes us all feel more positive about the future," she said.

"Tiwi first started talking about an IPA in 2017 and we started the Consultation Project in 2020. It's taken a while, but we are almost there."

The IPA Plan of Management was approved by the Tiwi Land Council in June and is now in Canberra with the government.

"We expect it to be dedicated next month," Alice said.

"The IPA vision is for healthy Tiwi country that is cared for by Rangers with the support of Traditional Owners and strong Tiwi culture making our lives better," she said.

"Our Islands and our customs continue to provide the strong foundations for our health, happiness and economic wellbeing.

"We are all working together to make sure our vision is achieved.

"We are proud of our IPA and it's good that we can all be together here at this Festival to celebrate."





Ron Poantimilui and Karen Tipiloura, Deputy Chairs of the IPA Committee, said "it has taken a while to get our IPA dedicated but we have already started work and have some good achievements, including:

- The Junior Ranger Program – kids working with rangers and elders. This will set our kids up for a better future.
- The Tiwi Fire & Carbon Project – this is now a successful carbon farming business, 100% owned and operated by Tiwi.
- Better management of weeds and feral animals - so we can keep country healthy.
- More support for keeping culture strong – like this festival!

From 4.45 pm the Tiwi Dancers were a prelude to hours of top-class entertainment.

A highlight of the dancing was when a group of US Marines joined in the festivities.

Brendan Ferguson, the Tiwi Land Council's Chief Executive Officer said "it was a big weekend and the feedback from Tiwi people was overwhelmingly positive."

"We were able to showcase and promote Tiwi culture and facilitate an exchange with other communities from across the Top End," Brendan said.

"We brought Tiwi service providers and stakeholders together to share information and connect through the Expo," he said.

"We demonstrated that the festival and the grand final can be held on the same weekend with significant opportunities to further strengthen and combine the two events.

"And we were even able to get the attention of the NT Government, including a productive meeting between our Executive and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (who attended both days) and an appearance from the Chief Minister."

Brendan said "the event was only possible because of the hard work and contribution of many staff and it was pleasing to see the whole organisation get behind the festival and that was on display all weekend."

Organisers of the weekend say they are confident the festival and grand final weekend will grow to become one of the top events on the NT tourist calendar.

Accommodation and event packages quickly sold out, indicating the need for more local accommodation facilities and upgraded transport to cater for visitors in the coming years.

The Tiwi Land Council acknowledges outstanding performances from the Tiwi Dancers, Red Flag Dancers, participants of the Fashion Parade, the Tiwi Womens Choir, Stanley, Nathan Fejo, Same Blood, Ngulmiya and Yilila.

The council thanks the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Steve Edgington and the Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro for their support for both the festival and grand final day.



Tiwi Cultural Festival





Historic agreement land and culture



The Tiwi Islands has become the newest Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), adding more than 700,000 hectares of land to Australia's national parks and reserves system.

The historic IPA agreement will see Traditional Owners manage and preserve their land and culture for generations.

It will provide jobs on country and empower Tiwi people to manage their future.

The agreement with the Australian Government was signed in Wurrumiyanga on December 10.

Among those celebrating the signing were Traditional Owners and friends including Marion Scrymgour MP, Member for Lingiari, Ricky Archer, Director of National Parks DCCEEW and Manuel Brown MLA, Member for Arafura.

‘Having this IPA will leave something for the future. We will have this IPA our whole lives, we can pass it on to the next generation,’ said IPA Committee member John Wilson

‘They will have it for their whole lives too. This is very good - good for country, good for culture, good for Tiwi,’ he said.

Tiwi Resources Board Chair Alice Munkara said Tiwi first started talking about an IPA in 2017 and the Consultation Project started in 2020.

‘It’s taken a while, but now we are there...our vision for our IPA is to have healthy country and strong culture – this will provide the foundation for our future health, happiness and economic wellbeing,’ she said.

‘We are proud of our IPA and are talking together to make sure our vision is achieved,’ she said

The Tiwi Islands are a biodiversity haven supporting a high diversity of plant and animal species, including many not recorded anywhere else in the world.

This rich and unique diversity includes 19 threatened plant and 33 threatened animal species and healthy populations of small mammal species – for example Wuruwataka, Brush-tailed Rabbit-rat (*Conilurus penicillatus melibius*) - that have undergone recent dramatic declines on the mainland.

The Tiwis are a NT Government Site of Conservation Significance.

The IPA Plan of Management was developed through consultations with all eight clans – Jikilaruwu, Mantiupwi, Wurankuwu, Malawu, Munupi, Wulirankuwu, Yimpinari, and Marrikawuyanga - and workshops with a Planning Committee and Tiwi Rangers.

IPA Committee Deputy Chair Karen Tipiloura said it was good working together on the Plan.

‘We talked about the things we worry about and how we can make things better for our people, for country, for



future generations,” she said.

“All of that went into our Plan. Now we will have more support to look after country and culture. The future looks good for us.”

The Tiwi Islands IPA is the 93rd IPA to be dedicated by the Australian Government and will add 718,463 hectares to the National Reserve System.

Gibson Farmer Illortaminni was the TLC Chairman (2012 – 2024) during the IPA Consultation Project.

He said an IPA will help Tiwi people to

continue to look after country and culture for all the generations to come.

“Just as Tiwi traditional owners understood and cared for our land when we used it for the traditions in the past, the new generations of Tiwi land managers need to understand and care for it now and into the future,” he said.

“To keep our country healthy, our people healthy and our culture strong, we need to bring together our knowledge of the past with new ways of doing things today.”

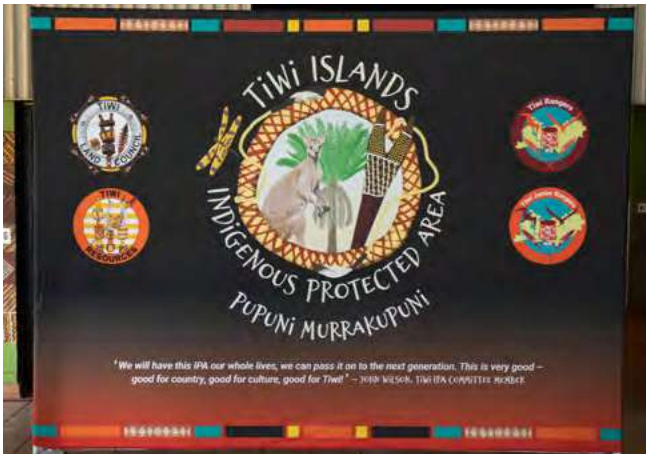
Photos: David Hancock and Helen Daiyi

to preserve Tiwi for generations



Photos: David Hancock and Helen Daiyi

IPA DEDICATION



Photos: David Hancock and Helen Daiyi

Research underway to protect rare and important Tiwi turtles

Marine turtles are extremely important to the Tiwi people.

They feature in dreamtime stories and dance, are totems and are a valued food source.

Tiwi Ranger Dominic Tipiloura said four species of turtle nest on the Tiwi Islands - Green, Hawksbill, Flatback and Olive Ridley.

"These turtles are all very important for us...they are one of our main sources of food from the sea but we are mostly working on Olive Ridleys," he said.

Olive Ridley Turtles are very rare but Imalu Beach on Melville Island is one of the largest nesting sites in Australia.

However many of these endangered turtles are being taken by predators and nests are being washed away by high tides due to sea level rise and coastal erosion.

Dominic said a lot of animals are eating turtle eggs and hatchlings.

"Animals like pigs, goanna, crocodiles, dingoes and bandicoots are all a problem. Birds eat them too," he said.

Feral pigs in particular pose a significant threat to the survival of marine turtles.

Tiwi Rangers and Traditional Owners are working with scientists from the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS), Sydney Institute of Marine Science and Charles Darwin University to protect the Olive Ridley turtles nesting at Imalu.

AIMS Senior Scientist Dr Michele Thums said it was worrying that the team did not see any hatchlings but saw a lot of predation and inundation of turtle nests.

Dominic said rangers are also worried.

"We need to protect the turtles, protect the eggs in the future, that's why we're working with the AIMS people, doing the research."

Rangers and scientists recently conducted a two-week survey at Imalu where they deployed cameras and nest loggers to monitor nest predation, erosion rates, and nest temperatures.

Dr Phillipa Wilson, also from AIMS, said the temperature of the nest impacts the sex of the hatchlings.

"Warmer temperatures produce more females, and cooler temperatures produce more males, so with climate change, there is concern that we will only get female hatchlings," Phillipa said.

"And if nests get too hot or wet, it can also affect how many eggs survive. We also see a change in temperature if predators dig up the nest so we can learn a lot from these loggers," she said.

"By monitoring sand temperatures, we will better understand these risks to Tiwi turtles."

The team also deployed special satellite tags on turtles to track them, a job the rangers particularly enjoyed.

"We can see with the tags where they go, how far they swim from the islands, where they're going to feed, and where they are nesting," said Dominic. "It's really interesting, we're learning a lot about turtles."

The satellite tags also record turtle diving behaviour as they search for food, and log sea temperature, depth, and salinity.

IMOS Animal Tracking Lead Prof Harcourt said "the information provided by these tags is making an essential contribution to our understanding of oceanography in Northern Australia and



is providing crucial observations needed to assess and forecast storms and cyclones."

The project's next phase will involve digging up marked turtle nests to see how many hatchlings survived.

Information from the cameras and nest loggers will be downloaded to identify predators and assess nest damage.

Scientists and rangers will be able to develop strategies to protect nests and hatchlings, and ensure turtles are around for future generations.

The project, which was funded

by the NT Aboriginal Ranger Grants Program and supported by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, will provide training to enable ranger-led turtle monitoring in sea country, thus ensuring long-term benefits beyond the life of the project.

"By working together, we can learn from each other and share knowledge. Combining traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific research methods will strengthen outputs and provide important information to help us look after Tiwi turtles," Michele said.

Tiwi Rangers training to be good communicators

Tiwi Rangers are keen to share their stories about looking after land and sea country but presenting at meetings to large audiences at conferences or talking to the media can be daunting – for anyone.

To help them feel more confident and relaxed about speaking up in public a two-day Communication Skills training workshop was held at Wurrumiyanga earlier in the year.

Rangers chose the topics they wanted to talk about and learnt how to prepare and structure presentations.

Videos are a great way to tell stories and they learnt new video production and editing skills.

They also practiced their media skills by interviewing each other on camera.

The rangers particularly enjoyed spending time together away from normal work activities to learn new skills and share knowledge and stories.

They liked hearing each other's presentations and acknowledged how important it was for everyone to have equal input.

For Stanley Tipungwuti it was the second time he had done the training.

He feels he's made significant progress since last time.

"I'm a lot more confident, last time I was very shy, but now I'm so much better, all that practice helped, I can talk more easily, it's great."

It was also the second time for Derek Puruntatameri, but he found the extra training worthwhile.

"We're learning new things all the time and we're getting better, it's very good for us" he said.

The rangers are keen for the next generation to be trained as well.

"We definitely want the Junior Rangers to do this type of training, it would be so good for them," Derek said.





ASIC engages Tiwi community with two-way learning and relationships-first guiding principles

Community Quick Response Grants

APPLICATIONS OPEN!

Aboriginal Investment NT provides grant funding to Aboriginal organisations, businesses and communities across the NT.

Applications for the **Community Quick Response Grants** are **open** and **assessed on a rolling basis**. There is up to \$10,000 available to support stand-alone, one-off community or cultural events or the purchase of goods and services.

These grants are quick turnaround and get smaller community projects off the ground quickly. Project examples include:

-  Cultural or community celebration days
-  Community barbeques
-  Purchase of local sports team uniforms or equipment
-  Community training or skills workshops
-  Art, cooking, music or dance classes
-  Small community infrastructure

For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.aboriginalinvestment.org.au>



Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) Commissioner Kate O'Rourke travelled to Wurrumiyanga on Bathurst Island on 11 July as part of a community outreach visit focused on financial inclusion, access and consumer protection in remote First Nations communities.

Joining her were two financial counsellors with deep connections to the region.

They were Paddy Heenan, a Tiwi Islander and financial counsellor with HK Training & Consultancy in Darwin, whose work spans remote communities across West Arnhem and Toni Cork, a financial counsellor with CatholicCare NT, who brings more than 13 years of experience supporting individuals and families across the Top End.

Their presence was integral to the outreach which included community meetings, one-on-one conversations, and shared meals with Traditional Owners, cultural knowledge holders, and local organisations.

"The purpose of our visit was to listen and learn from Tiwi community members about their experiences navigating the financial system – what's working,

what's not, and what they hope could be different," Commissioner O'Rourke said.

"While ASIC has long engaged with remote communities we are always learning how to do so with greater respect, humility and effectiveness," she said.

"Two-way learning and relationships-first remain our guiding principles.

"Travelling with experienced financial counsellors was extremely valuable and gave me deeper insight into the banking, superannuation and regulatory challenges remote communities face.

"I want to thank the Tiwi community members who were so generous with their time in meeting with us."

Commissioner O'Rourke said "we are already exploring opportunities to return with CatholicCare NT to deliver community education sessions on personal budgeting, superannuation and wills – the topics community members told us they most want to hear more about.

"Financial counsellors are vital partners in ASIC's work, helping identify issues and share knowledge in ways that truly support First Nations consumers."



Paddy Heenan with ASIC Commissioner Kate O'Rourke

Strong together: Territory land councils will be respected



The four Northern Territory (NT) land councils have gathered for the first time since 2020 to warn against making decisions about their people – more than a third of the Northern Territory's population - without them.

Meeting in Darwin on 24 July, the executive committees of the Northern, Central, Tiwi and Anindilyakwa land councils have reminded decision makers that they are strong together and here to stay.

"Many people come and go. Our people are not going anywhere," said Matthew Ryan, Chair of the Northern Land Council.

"Economic growth for all Territorians can only happen in genuine partnership with our people," he said.

"Federal funding for our people props up the NT's budget.

"The Australian government needs to hold the NT government accountable and make sure its laws and policies match the intent of that funding – to help our communities.

"Between us we own more than half of the Territory's land and 85 per cent of the coastline."

Tiwi Land Council Chair Leslie Tungatalum said "any government that ignores and harms our fast-growing population may win an election or two but it has no future."

The 650 Aboriginal corporations in the NT benefit all Territorians by offering skilled jobs and economic development on country.

Aboriginal people manage

vast areas for national security and biosecurity, creating industries such as tourism, fisheries and aquaculture.

In 1976 the federal government set up the NT land councils with statutory powers and functions to support Aboriginal decision-making about land and waters.

They have a strong record of facilitating consensus and informed consent across groups that creates the certainty needed for all Territorians to thrive.

Anindilyakwa Land Council Chair Cherelle Wurrailya said the land councils will not be sidelined.

"Everyone will suffer if governments keep punishing and neglecting our people, but we will all gain when governments work with us.

Just look at the big drop in crime we achieved on Groote Island since we took control of delivering justice."

The NT's justice and police racism crises were high on the agenda of the joint meeting.

The land councils called for an independent police misconduct body and for the publication of an implementation plan based on all the recommendations of the Kumanjaya Walker coronial Inquest.

"The findings and recommendations of the inquest must inform the NT Police Anti-racism Strategy, even if this delays the release of the strategy," Central Land Council Chair Warren Williams said.

"There must be full public consultation of the review of the Youth Justice Act."



WHY ARE WE DOING THIS REVIEW?

Tiwi Land Council (TLC) is undertaking a 12-month review of the permit system led by an independent consultant. The review will examine how permits are applied for, assessed and managed, and how effectively the current system serves Tiwi people, service providers, businesses, government agencies, visitors, fishers, journalists, researchers, and other users.

This review is about making sure the permit system works for Tiwi people first, and is also clear and fair for non-Tiwi visitors.

WHAT WILL THE REVIEW DO?

Over the next 12 months, we will:

- Talk with Tiwi landowners about how they want access to Country managed.
- Listen to Tiwi families, clans and leaders about what's working and what needs to change.
- Hear from visitors, lease holders, businesses, researchers, and others who use the system.
- Check other land councils' permit systems for good ideas.
- Recommend improvements to permit categories, rules, and the online portal.
- Help update signs, forms and information so they are easy to understand.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TIWI PEOPLE?

- **Your voice matters.** Tiwi landowners will guide decisions on how permits work.
- **More control.** The system will better reflect Tiwi authority over Country.
- **Clear rules.** Everyone – Tiwi and visitors – will know what is allowed and what is not.
- **Easier to use.** The permit process will be simpler for both Tiwi people and visitors.

How can you be involved?

- Share your views with Leslie or the TLC Land Use team.
- Fill out a survey.



Survey - Tiwi people



Survey - Other Stakeholders

Timeline

- Aug – Early 2026: Talking to Tiwi landowners, clan groups, and permit users.
- Early to mid 2026: Draft updates to the permit system.
- Mid 2026: New system rolled out with support, signs, and clear information.
- July 2026: Final report handed back to Land Council.

Contact: Leslie Pyne ☎ 0428 800 929 📧 leslie.pyne@tiwilandcouncil.com 📍 TLC Office, 116 Reichardt Rd, Winnellie

Tiwi islands play critical role in saving Australia's rarest bird of prey

In July, researchers from BirdLife Australia visited Melville Island as part of a groundbreaking project to monitor the endangered Red Goshawk (*Erythrorhynchus radiatus*)—Australia's rarest bird of prey.

This project is funded by the Australian Government's Saving Native Species Program through a \$770,000 investment and delivered by BirdLife Australia.

The BirdLife Australia team, including Richard Seaton and Jessica Rooke, is leading the development of a national monitoring program to determine how many Red Goshawks remain and where they are still surviving.

The Red Goshawk is a priority species under the Australian Government's Threatened Species Action Plan (2022–2032), identified as requiring urgent conservation action.

While on Melville Island, the BirdLife team was supported in the field by Tiwi Plantations Pty Ltd (TPPL) employees Christopher Brogan and Kahlisha Austral, who assisted with local knowledge, logistics, and access to key habitats.

Their contribution highlights the critical role Tiwi people and organisations are playing in protecting this iconic species.

"The Tiwi Islands monitoring program is the only long-term monitoring effort on Red Goshawks that has ever been conducted," said Richard Seaton. "This is vital work, as the species have already



disappeared from much of its historic range in eastern Australia."

The team not only conducted surveys to determine the current distribution of the Red Goshawk but also collected breeding data to understand how successfully these birds are reproducing.

With expert local support and knowledge from TPPL staff and Tiwi community members, the team was able to access key habitat areas, improving the quality and accuracy of the data collected and providing a better understanding of how the management being implemented on the Tiwi Islands are helping these special birds.

This information will be essential for tracking population trends going forward and informing conservation priorities for this, Australia's rarest bird of prey.

"The Albanese Government is proud to support this important program to monitor and better understand the Red Goshawk," Federal Member for Lingiari, Marion Scrymgour said.

"The local Tiwi people know their community better than anyone else and play a crucial role in supporting our native wildlife and their habitats."

Beyond data collection, BirdLife Australia is committed to empowering Indigenous Rangers and communities



across northern Australia. To date, the project has delivered training in bird of prey identification, survey techniques, and data collection—from the Kimberley to Cape York Peninsula.

"This isn't just about scientists doing the work. It's about building local capacity, recognising Traditional Custodians and supporting the people who are on Country every day," Richard added.

To learn more or get involved in the Red Goshawk monitoring program contact:

redgoshawk@birdlife.org.au
birdlife.org.au

Oyster trials showing potential for long-term economic growth

The Blacklip Rock Oyster trial on Bathurst Island has reached an exciting stage with early strong results showing potential to support long-term economic growth for coastal Tiwi Islanders.

The project is creating new jobs, building local knowledge and developing sustainable aquaculture practices.

The Northern Territory's CLP Government is backing the growth of the Blacklip Oyster industry.

The progress was showcased at a community field day at Wurrumiyanga on 19 June.

The Oyster Farm Field Day brought together local community members, industry participants and research partners to celebrate the trial's success

and the shared commitment to establishing a commercial oyster industry led by Aboriginal communities.

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries Gerard Maley said the Territory's investment in the project is "removing barriers to commercialisation and laying the groundwork for an industry that is culturally appropriate, environmentally sustainable and locally led."

The trial site at Apsley Strait, operated by the Mantiyupwi Aboriginal Corporation, is one of several involved in the project, alongside sites on South Goulburn Island, Groote Eylandt, and at Wadeye.

"This is a strong partnership between the Northern Territory Government,

the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCDNA), and four Aboriginal organisations across the Top End who are leading the way in driving aquaculture opportunities on country," Mr Maley said.

The Blacklip Rock Oyster is native to northern Australia and is well suited to local conditions.

Research through the Darwin Aquaculture Centre, operated by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, is building the technical and community capacity needed to grow a reliable, high-quality product and get it to market.

"From the farm trials to the hatchery, we're seeing strong results and building

the skills and systems that will support a long-term, Territory-grown oyster industry," Mr Maley said.

This work aligns with the government's Rebuilding the Economy; NT Economic Strategy 2025, with one of the CLP Government's key priorities being to unlock regional growth - leveraging the strength of regional communities, business and industry, particularly across priority sectors such as energy, defence, agriculture, mining, and tourism.

"This is another way our government is delivering on our commitment to rebuild the economy, empower regional communities, and create opportunities for future generations," Mr Maley said.



Xavier Catholic College graduation ceremony

Xavier Catholic College is very proud of our Graduating Class of 2026. Cameron Kantilla, Shinae Tipungwuti, Thomas Tipiloura-Kerinaia, Martina Kelantumama, Jake Winston, Peter Puruntatameri, Paul Tipungwuti and Lionel Puautjimi all completed their schooling this year.

The group were excellent leaders all year, as they studied hard and were role models for our younger students.

They now leave us to embark on further studies or into the workplace,

where they will continue to be stars.

We were lucky enough to have two Graduation celebrations - in Darwin at the Hilton Hotel and on Island at school. Both were memorable and wonderful occasions.

Thank you to all Xavier and MCPS staff who have contributed to our Graduates education and personal development over their school years.

Most importantly, thank you and well done to the families for all their guidance, support and love.

Tiwi Plant Names

M K I I I A N U J N L R I A M A I W
A A L I A N A A W I I Y A N P A K M
L J U P I R L A M U N G A R A R A G
I I N M I G Y A K I N R U W N K W R
K R G I I A Y U R A A I A J J J I N
I A I R A K I P R Y R M I R W A L M
N U A J A A A U A L I M P U N G A J
I I A A U W M R A A I G Y A M A J Y
N A A U N R A U K J L A I L N W N U
A K R R U N A K I K N A I R U K G R
N N U I I L I N J K A M A R G R U M
A P M R N N G W U J M W R W Y A I W
R L N A L A Y M A A P A N A A A L N
M N I P U A W I I U N N A A N A A U
W N U U I A M P W Y G J A A L R I N
I A W A N A G A A U A I R A I U A A
R N K I L A G J G L W N P A I J U Y
K U J A K W A U I R U P I N Y A M A

- Alimpunga

Kurlama

Wurranya
- Pinyama

Jaliwaki

Malikini
- Jimijinga

Muranga

Yankumwani
- Pirlamunga

Wupwarna

Wurnika

Biosecurity Matters

Since our last issue we have been working with contractors and suppliers of bulk materials to ensure that they are aware of the biosecurity standards for the Islands. This process is undertaken by an inspection of the original source ie the quarry and then following the chain of supply to the end to ensure that it is contaminant free the whole way.

Understanding that it is sometimes hard to get certain bulk materials on the islands we are doing our best to ensure that there are multiple suppliers for this material in Darwin so that contractors and stakeholders can choose from several different suppliers. We appreciate everyone working with us through this process as we are aware it can sometimes be frustrating and seem arduous, but it is a process that is needed to ensure that the Islands are kept free from a range of different pests and weeds. For a full list of approved suppliers please contact the Tiwi Land

Council Quarantine and Biosecurity Officer at biosecurity@tiwilandcouncil.com

There have been over 200 inspections completed since I have come on board and it is great to be able to work with all the community members, contractors and stakeholders to ensure that we work together to keep the Islands free from weeds and pests that do not currently inhabit the Islands and minimise already existing ones.

Please remember, if you wish to take machinery, vehicles, or luggage to the Tiwi Islands, they must be clean, free from all seed, plant materials, dirt, cane toads and other pests. If they do not meet these standards, your goods will not be allowed to travel to the islands until they are thoroughly cleaned and inspected. For any queries or guidance, please contact Tamara the Quarantine and Biosecurity officer on 0483 210 298.



Wildfire Training Boosts Local Fire Response Capabilities

A group of Tiwi-based fire responders, including members of Tiwi Plantation Pty Ltd's (TPPL) fire crew and four Tiwi Rangers recently completed a wildfire training program delivered by Brett Stephens, Director of North Australia Bushfire Solutions.

The training focused on wildfire behaviour, suppression strategies, and crew safety in remote and high-risk conditions.

The sessions were coordinated in partnership with the Tiwi Islands Training and Employment Board (TITEB).

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the practical relevance of the content and Brett's clear, professional delivery.

"We'd like to thank Brett for his excellent facilitation and TITEB for supporting the program," said a TPPL spokesperson.

"We're looking forward to continuing this collaboration for future training needs."

The program supports the development of skilled local responders prepared for the upcoming fire season and reinforces the community's proactive approach to bushfire preparedness.



Margot Livsey

Executive Officer

We are pleased to welcome Margot Livsey to the Team in the position of Executive Officer.

Originally from North Queensland, Margot moved to the Territory in 2018 with her husband Chris and her two boys, Noah and Harrison. They initially spent over 4 years in Kakadu, where she had the privilege of working for the Mirarr Traditional Owners – an experience that gave Margot a deep appreciation for the strength of community, culture, and connection to country.

Since moving to Darwin in 2022, Margot has worked with NT Major Events and most recently with Regional Development Australia, Northern Territory where she focused on stakeholder engagement and supporting economic development initiatives across the Top End.

Across these roles, Margot has developed a strong foundation in executive support, strategic planning, governance coordination and cross-sector collaboration.

Margot is excited to step into the role of Executive Officer and hopes to bring a collaborative and respectful approach to supporting



the important work of the Tiwi Land Council. She is looking forward to learning from the Tiwi community, working alongside the team and contributing to the continued success of the organisation.

Outside of work, you can find Margot cheering the kids on from the sidelines at rugby on a Saturday, gardening, bush walking, or exploring the National Parks. Margot and her family love the lifestyle here in the Territory and she is truly looking forward to working with the Tiwi Community and the team at TLC.

Welcome to the team, Margot

Riley Habraken

Supervisor, Access to Country

Riley Habraken has started in the position of Supervisor, Access to Country based in Wurrumiyanga.

"I was born in Canberra and spent most of my childhood exploring the rivers and the mountains in the surrounding landscapes. After finishing school, I moved to Victoria and started working in the bush as a forest firefighter in the Victorian High Country, where I gained a whole lot of invaluable experience that has helped me through the rest of my career. Later, I moved to Wilson's Promontory National Park, about 3 and a half hours east of Melbourne where I gained experience as a Ranger for the last 4 years. The role has been extremely diverse, involving pest plant and animal control, asset construction, track maintenance, education programs and lots of work with a variety of stakeholders and awesome people.

Other than work, I finished a Botany degree at the end of last year and am very passionate about native plants. In my free time I love any activity that gets me in the bush, as well as woodworking, playing basketball and getting



creative in the kitchen. I feel very fortunate to be able to move to Wurrumiyanga with my partner Emilie, who will be working as the Women's Ranger Coordinator for Tiwi Resources.

I love working in the bush and am thrilled to be working with the TLC to support Tiwi communities, help people get out on Country, and keep learning from the land and the people who know it best."

Welcome to the team, Riley

Nicola (Nikki) Flook

Senior Policy and Development Officer

Please join me in welcoming Nicola (Nikki) Flook, our newest Tiwi Land Council member, who joins us as our Senior Policy and Development Officer, reporting to Brenton.

Originally from Melbourne, Nikki recently moved back to Darwin after spending three years in Alice Springs, where she worked at the Central Land Council.

Although Nikki will miss the desert she is looking forward to continuing her land council policy work and getting to know Tiwi people and the Islands.

Nikki has worked in a number of policy roles in the NT and Victoria that have focused on trying to improve government policy to better peoples' lives.

Her role at TLC will focus on the council's priorities, including homelands, economic development and social and emotional wellbeing.

Nikki loves the ocean and spending time in nature, making things (like pottery and painting - even if they're not very good!) and learning languages.

She has recently re-started



learning Portuguese after a trip to Brazil and is looking forward to learning some words and phrases in Tiwi!

Nikki will be in the office from 15 July.

Please make her feel welcome.

– Mandy Konatic
People and Capability
Manager, Tiwi Land Council

Edward Bitnar

Anthropologist

TLC is pleased to announce that our new Anthropologist; Edward Bitnar has recently started.

Originally, from the United States, Edward made the move to the Northern Territory in 2019 and began a brief but, memorable stint in Alice Springs before heading to Darwin. Prior to coming to Australia, Edward studied Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and lived in the Czech Republic.

Edward has previously worked for the Northern Land Council mainly in the Darwin/Daly region and in the Kakadu National Park.

Edward is genuinely excited to join the Tiwi Land Council and has heard nothing but, wonderful things about the Tiwi Islands and the community. He is also looking forward to contributing to land management efforts and getting to know everyone.

We welcome Edward to the TLC Team.



Dramatic scenes at grand for Tiwi islanders and



The 2025 Tiwi Islands Football League season came to a dramatic conclusion in front of a capacity crowd at Stanley Tipiloura Oval in Wurrumiyanga, with the Muluwurri Magpies and Imalu Tigers crowned premiers in the women's and men's divisions, respectively.

This year's grand finals were staged alongside the Tiwi Islands Cultural Festival, an exciting collaboration between the TIFL, AFLNT, and the Tiwi Land Council, offering a vibrant celebration for both locals and visitors.

The Muluwurri Magpies opened Grand Final day in style, producing a dominant performance to claim the women's premiership over the Walama Bulldogs.

After a tense opening few minutes, Hilda Moreen broke the deadlock for Muluwurri four minutes in, before Freda Puruntatameri doubled their advantage shortly after.

Walama responded through their first major 11 minutes in but a late goal to the Magpies saw them take a two-goal buffer into quarter time.

The Bulldogs sparked hopes of a comeback when Jelena Tipungwuti reduced the margin to six points early in the second quarter.

However, the Magpies soon reasserted control, piling on three goals through Arthurina Moreen, Hilda Moreen, and Layla Cooper to stretch the lead to 26 points at the main break.

Walama had the better of the early third term, controlling possession and creating opportunities before Reharnee Kantilla finally converted.

But late goals to Raechel Puruntatameri and Martha Desantis undid the Bulldogs' efforts and effectively ended the contest.

Fittingly, Hilda Moreen kicked the first goal of the final quarter and Freda Puruntatameri iced the game with the final two goals, sparking celebrations in the Muluwurri camp.

Moreen finished with four goals in a best-on-ground display while Arthurina Moreen was also superb, earning the Best on Ground Medal.

In the men's grand final, the Imalu Tigers ended a 12-year premiership drought, defeating the Muluwurri Magpies in a pulsating encounter to lift



the Maurice Rioli Cup.

The Magpies struck first through Robert Tipiloura just seconds into the match before Kaleb Brogan-Rioli answered for the Tigers.

A back-and-forth opening saw Cecil Puruntatameri-Dunn and Mitchel Geruola hit the scoreboard but it was Nathias Miller who produced a moment of brilliance late in the quarter to give Imalu a two-goal buffer.

However Magpies duo Michael Lorenzo and Nicholas Daniels struck back to level the scores by quarter time.

Muluwurri surged in the second, with early goals to Timothy Babui, Justin Puruntatameri and John Tipiloura helping them edge ahead.

Imalu clawed back through Jordan Bourke and although Peter Simon and Cecil Puruntatameri narrowed the margin to one, a late goal to Geruola gave Muluwurri a seven-point lead at halftime.

But the Tigers wasted no time in the third.

Brogan-Rioli reduced the margin to one within 20 seconds of the restart

and the Tigers began to dominate field position.

Despite a steady goal from Lorenzo, Imalu finally broke through with consecutive goals to take an 11-point advantage into the final change.

Cecil Puruntatameri extended the margin to 17 points early in the last quarter.

While the Magpies mounted a late charge with three quick goals the Tigers responded with two of their own to seal a 16-point win.

Supporters flooded the ground in celebration as the final siren sounded.

Cecil Puruntatameri was the hero, finishing with seven goals in a commanding performance that earned him the Brother Pye Medal for best on field.

AFL Northern Territory would like to thank the Tiwi Islands Regional Council, Tiwi Land Council, and all sponsors, volunteers, and committee members that have supported the 2025 TIFL Season.

– Report courtesy AFLNT



finals on big weekend hundreds of visitors



Muluwurri Magpies and Imalu Tigers crowned premiers

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