

Gapuwiyak

Arnhem Region

Community Profile

Pronunciation: Gap-oo-wee-yack

Alternate names: Lake Evella

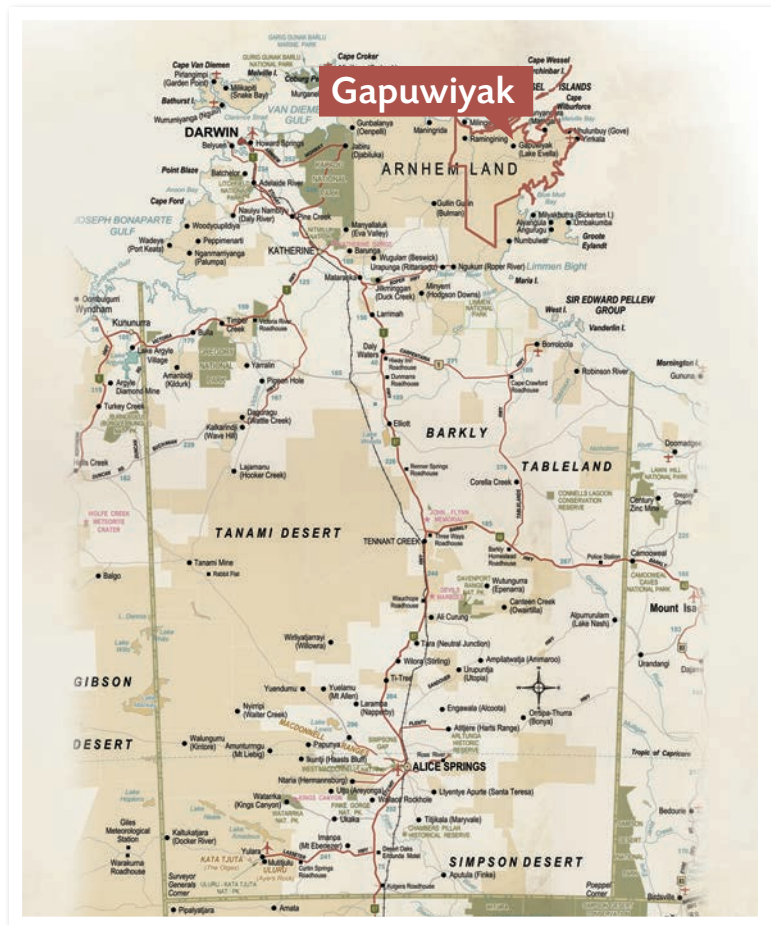
Location: Gapuwiyak is on the shore of Lake Evella in north-east Arnhem Land

NT region: North East Arnhem

Population: Approx. 1000; 200-250 in outstations

Access: Darwin (air), Katherine (road, air)
Nhulunbuy (road, air)

Language groups: Djambarrpuyngu (a dialect of Yolngu Matha)



Climate (Top End)

Season	Description	Temp. Range
Winter dry season (May to September)	Cooler and dry	15°C to 33°C
Humidity Range 20% – 50%.	Fine weather with no rain and much lower humidity than wet season and a possibility of becoming cold by Territory standards during June/July.	
Summer wet season (October to April)	Hot and humid	22°C to 35°C
Humidity Range 30% – 95%.	The build-up occurs from September with building humidity, intermittent lightning storms and downpours. Rains typically arrive December/January with regular heavy downpours and the possibility of cyclones.	



History

Aboriginal people have inhabited this region for 40,000 years. Lake Evella was seen by Harold Shepherdson from his aeroplane the Miles Hawk in 1935 and he named it Lake Evella after his wife Ella and Eva the wife of a fellow missionary Rev. T.T. Webb.

The Gapuwiyak community was established by Methodist missionaries in the late 1960s to supply timber for missions in the region.

Timber workers came from the surrounding areas of Burrum, Raymangirr, Bunhanura and Balma, and from Galiwin'ku.

Those from Galiwin'ku returned to their own country when they were not working but those from the surrounding areas stayed near the timber mill and established the Gapuwiyak community. In the 1970s the mission ended and Gapuwiyak became Aboriginal land under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.

In 2008, Gapuwiyak became part of the East Arnhem Shire and the Shire took responsibility for local government for the community.

Community Life

Description of community:

Gapuwiyak is a mainland community located in north-eastern Arnhem Land, 25kms south of the head of Buckingham Bay and about the same distance south-west of Arnhem Bay. Gapuwiyak means "brackish water". (Gapu water - Wiyak salty). It is adjacent to Lake Evella.

Gapuwiyak is now a thriving, culturally rich, independent community.

Changes in population: Population figures are estimates, as several factors impact on movement. These include seasonal changes and ceremonial activity and movement between outstations.

How is it affected by seasons:

During wet season, road access to Gapuwiyak can be cut off for several days. Movement between Gapuwiyak and surrounding communities can be dependent on seasonal changes.

Major landmarks or cultural factors:

The tribal and clan groups are Yirritja: Dhalwangu, Gupapuyngu, Munyuku, Gumatj, Rittarrngu, Madarrpa and Guyamirrili. Dhuwa groups are: Marrangu, Djambarrpuyngu, Galpu, Djarrwarrk, Wakilak and Djapu. There are 14 homeland centres in the region.

Local industry/mine: Market garden and Timber Mill for cypress pine.

Tourism: Art Centre.

Arts/crafts: Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts Aboriginal Corporation. The unique cultural traditions of Gapuwiyak life are celebrated in their arts and crafts. The artists are renowned for their traditional fibre crafts producing beautiful baskets, mats, placemats and dilly bags all made from natural fibres and dyes. They are also highly regarded for their bark and canvas paintings, spears, didgeridoos,

carvings and woomeras.

The Art Centre is open throughout the week and sells coffee and cake on Saturday mornings.

Websites: www.gapuwiyak.com.au

****Please check with the Health Centre on arrival for sacred sites to avoid and health or social issues to be aware of.**

Governance

Local Government East Arnhem Shire Council **Telephone** (08) 8970 1103
Web www.eastarnhem.nt.gov.au/gapuwiyak

Community or other governance structures Northern Land Council **Telephone** (08) 8986 8500
Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA) **Telephone** (08) 8944 6444
Mala Leaders

Outstations Yalakun, Raymangirri, Balma, Burrum, Donydji, Dhupuwamirri, Mirrngatja, Bunhanura.
Population approximately 200-250.

Permit System¹ All visitors must obtain a permit from the appropriate authority for the duration of their stay. Permits may be required for any person visiting the community including activities such as fishing, camping and visiting certain beaches.

Permit application for Gapuwiyak is through Northern Land Council (NLC).

Web www.nlc.org.au

Infrastructure, facilities and services

Community

Church: Services combine a mixture of the Uniting Church and Assemblies of God.

Community Halls and Sheds: Yes, Recreation Hall.

Workforce Skills or Training Facilities: Literacy and numeracy training for Indigenous employees through the Workplace English Language and Literacy Program. Remote Apprenticeships in the Bush program.

Post Office: Yes

- **Opening hours** Monday to Friday 8am – 12pm and 1pm – 4.30pm

School: Pre-school, Primary, Secondary to year 10.

Library: At the school.

Council Office: East Arnhem Shire service delivery centre, Community Development Employment Projects, Job Services Australia, Centrelink.

Women's Centre: Yes

Childcare Centre: Yes and also crèche. Communities for Children Committee, set up by Anglicare.

Aged Care Centre: Provided by Shire.

Banking: Traditional Credit Union, ATM and Eftpos at the store.

Community store **Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA):** **Telephone** (08) 8987 9107

Owned and managed by ALPA. Basic groceries including fresh milk, fresh fruit and vegetables and frozen meat are available. Also, hardware, personal items, CDs and DVDs, kitchenware and clothing.

It is advisable to bring any specific grocery items as they may not be available in a remote store.

- **Opening hours**

Monday to Friday	9am – 5pm
Saturday	9am – 12pm
Sunday	11am – 2pm

Other food outlets Takeaway store, open until 9pm most nights.

¹ RAHC HPs are not required to obtain permits for their placement as they are exempt under legislation related to the Emergency Response.

Food orders	Food orders can be made from Woolworths or Coles online delivered to Fly Tiwi at least one hour before flight departure. Contact Fly Tiwi to arrange payment of your freight. Coles: Web www.shop.coles.com.au Telephone (08) 8941 8055 Woolworths: Web www.woolworthsonline.com.au Telephone (08) 8995 9317 Fly Tiwi: Web www.flytiwi.com.au Telephone (08) 8928 9300
Recreational facilities	Sportsground, AFL, basketball (at Recreation Hall), fishing and camping.
Commercial accommodation	None
Fuel	Opal and diesel available at service station.
Mechanic	Yes
Police station	Three police officers Telephone (08) 8987 9318
Alt. police contact	Nhulunbuy Telephone (08) 8987 1333
Other	Community Night Patrol Telephone through police station
Telephone/Internet	
Mobile phone²	No mobile service in the region.
Internet	Internet access is available at the Health centre for reasonable personal use.
Other	Landlines throughout community and in the GPs house.
Alcohol	
Alcohol – not allowed³	Gapuwiyak is a dry community. This applies to everyone, including visitors.
Access	
Road	Katherine (8-10 Hours⁴): 550km of unsealed road from Katherine to Gapuwiyak. This road is 4WD only and is called the Central Arnhem Road. This road can become cut off during the wet season. Please check road conditions before driving. Nhulunbuy (3-4 Hours): 220km of unsealed road from Nhulunbuy - Central Arnhem Highway. Road may be impassable for long periods during the Wet Season, but generally passable in Dry Season. Other services: All freight for the store is barged to the community by Toll Shipping (formerly Perkins Shipping) on a weekly service. The barge landing is located 20km north west of the community on the banks of the Buckingham River. The barge road is gravel and is accessible all year round.
Air	Facilities: Lake Evella Airport Darwin (2.1 hours): Fly Tiwi fly's directly to Gapuwiyak (Lake Evella) twice weekly. Elcho Island and Nhulunbuy: Charters and Doctors flights. Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) charters Phone (08) 8987 2777

² Telstra 3G/Next G are typically the only mobile services that work in more remote parts of the Northern Territory. See link - <http://telstra.com.au/mobile-phones/coverage-networks/our-coverage/>

³ It is an offence to consume or bring alcohol into a dry community in the Northern Territory

⁴ Approximate travel time one way

Regular passenger transport Fly Tiwi from Darwin twice per week.

Health Centre

Health service

Department of Health (DoH)

Telephone (08) 8987 9150

Web www.health.nt.gov.au

Email gapuwiyak.clinicmgr@nt.gov.au

Staff

- Managers 1 (and RAN)
 - Remote Area Nurses 4
 - Medical Practitioners 1 (visiting DMO)
 - Aboriginal Health Workers 1
 - Aboriginal Community Workers 2
 - Administration Officers 1
 - Drivers/Gardeners/Cleaners 1
 - Others. 1 (Mental Health / AOD Worker)
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Facilities

Five treatment rooms and an emergency room.

Operating hours

Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm

On call

RN on call after hours and weekends.

Services

Gapuwiyak Primary Health Care Centre provides acute and core primary health care program services which include antenatal care, Growth Assessment and Action (GAA) program, Healthy under 5s program, childhood and adult immunisation, Healthy School Aged Kids program (HSAKs), preventable chronic disease (PCD) program, Well Women's and Well Men's screening, infectious and communicable disease prevention and control and mental health and well-being.

Medical Records System⁵

Communicare

Vehicles

The health centre maintains a Toyota Troop Carrier that has been converted for use as an ambulance.

****Note: All Troop Carriers are 4WD, manual and take diesel fuel**

GP

District Medical Officer (DMO) based at Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH).

Visiting services

- Dental Program
 - Paediatrics
 - Dietician (on referral)
 - Women's Health Nurse
 - Physiotherapy (on referral)
 - Audiologist
 - Family, Youth and Community Services
 - Communicable Disease Officers
 - Occupational Therapist (on referral).
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Acute care

Emergencies evacuated to Gove or Darwin hospitals.

Other

Pregnant women birth in Gove.

⁵ Training should be arranged before your arrival in the community

Accommodation

Accommodation For GP - Two bedroom, one bathroom elevated house with secure yard. Fully furnished. Nurses house has much the same.

Facilities Usual domestic amenities including microwave, fridge, oven/stove, washing machine, TV and split system air-conditioning.

Linen Provided

Vehicles

Vehicle No vehicle is provided for personal use.

Policy NT DoH has a strict policy on vehicle use. Any non-clinical use is not acceptable.

What to pack for placement

Clothes Possibility of cool nights in middle of year, so light warm clothing is useful. In wet season (October – April), clothing for very hot, humid days – loose cotton clothing.
Please refer to this website for information on appropriate clothing to wear whilst out in a community.
http://ntgpe.org/wp_site/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Appropriate-Clothing-2.pdf

Supplies Bring any specialty foods and a small quantity of fresh food.
****Note: Please be mindful of weight restrictions on plane travel.**

Personal effects Bring a hat, sturdy shoes, insect repellent, sunscreen and toiletries.

Other tips or relevant information

Other tips/relevant information Be prepared for variable standard of accommodation in communities. A sleeping bag sheet insert is a good idea for protection against biting insects.

Disclaimer

This information is prepared in good faith and to the best of our knowledge at the time of printing. However, Aboriginal communities, like any community, can change as the population shifts and people move on. Please contact the RAHC Regional Coordinator or the Health Centre Manager to confirm any key issues or concerns you may have ahead of your RAHC placement. RAHC also values any input and up to date information or photos you can provide to improve our Community Profiles.