

Wadeye

Top End Region

Community Profile

Pronunciation: Wad-air

Alternate names: Port Keats

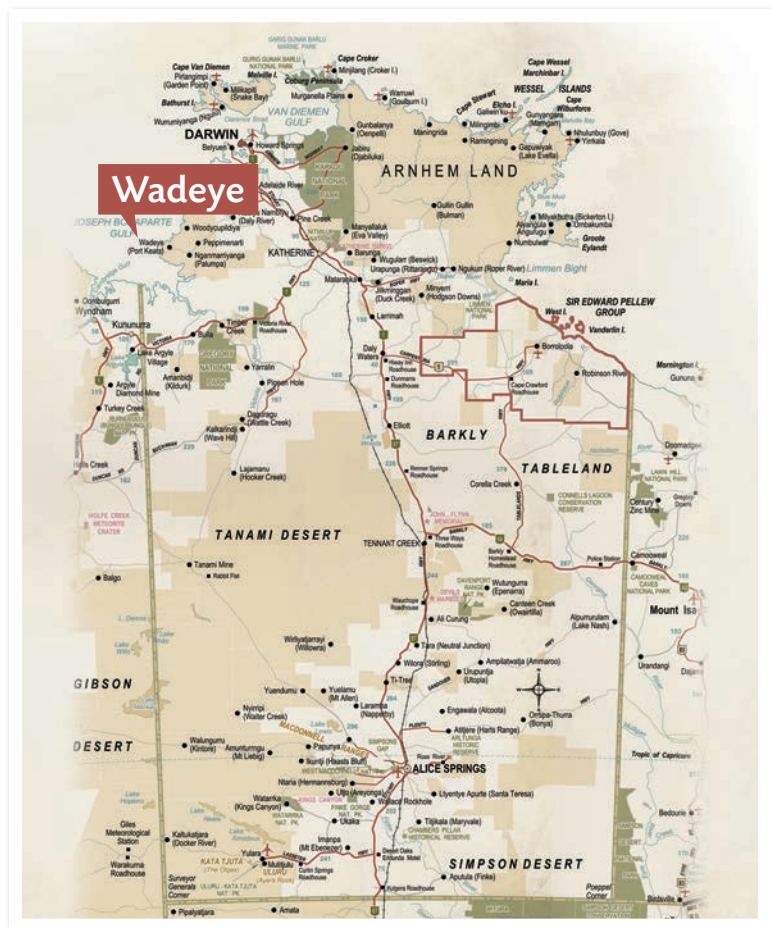
Location: 417km south west of Darwin

NT region: Top End West

Population: 2100 approx. (2011 Census)

Access: By road from Darwin via Adelaide River 550kms, 7 hours. The road is impassable during the wet season

Language groups: Murrinhpatha, Larrakia and Kriol



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

Wadeye (also known as Port Keats) is a remote Aboriginal community situated 420km south-west of Darwin. Wadeye is the 6th most populous town in the Northern Territory and the largest Indigenous community. The Kardu Diminin people are the Traditional Owners (TOs) of the land on which the Wadeye township is situated. Wadeye was founded as a Roman Catholic mission in 1935, which was originally located at Werntek Nganayi (old Mission) from 1935. The town was relocated to its current location in 1938 due to the lack of water and space for an airstrip.

Wadeye is only accessible by road during the dry season and is the central 'hub' for many outstations around the area.

Once you leave Wadeye township you are on Aboriginal Land and need permission from the Traditional Owners of the land you intend on visiting / passing through next. The Traditional Owners of Wadeye are the Kardu Diminin people and there are twenty different clan estates within the area. There are five languages and four different dialects spoken in Wadeye, with Murrinhpatha one of the most common. The clans of Wadeye region banded together to form the Thamarrurr Council which has subsequently be subsumed into the larger regional Victoria Daly Shire. The community owned

Thamarrurr Development Corporation undertakes a variety of commercial and government services in the community. Generally, the community is fairly well serviced compared to other remote communities given that it has daily commercial flights and an all-weather air strip. Wadeye is very gender segmented and an individual needs to be aware of this when working or visiting the community. Community members in Wadeye are passionate about football and sports in general.

Nym Bunduck was the first painter in Wadeye who had international interest. He was asked by Bill Stanner, a renowned Anthropologist who had come with Richard Docherty in 1935, to produce pieces explaining traditional law, which he made after he saw a map produced by Stanner. He produced many bark paintings of the dreaming which informed Stanner's research. Today in Wadeye Mark Crocomb follows in the footsteps of Stanner collecting history and languages before they are lost. Following in the tradition of Nym Bunduck is Richard 'Skunky' Parmbuk. He is one of many artists filling the space left by Nym in Wadeye.

Community Life

Description of community:

Robinson River was formerly part of The community lays either side of the main road. At one end, the airport and road to Darwin, the other, the wharf where the barge docks. There are two

smaller communities 10 minutes out of Wadeye which are still considered a part of Wadeye.

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

How is it affected by seasons: Road access is typically cut off during wet season.

Major landmarks or cultural factors: There are several nice beaches 10 minutes out of Wadeye. No swimming allowed.

Local industry/mine: Eni gas plant.

Tourism: None.

Arts/crafts: There are several artists in Wadeye. They often visit the clinic with their paintings and didgeridoos for sale. There is also a shop in town that sells hand printed designs from local artists.

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

Resources

Bowden McCormack,
Lawyers + Advisers
[www.bowden-mccormack.com.au/
resources/research](http://www.bowden-mccormack.com.au/resources/research)

Thamarrurr Development Corporation
www.thamarrurr.org.au

Governance

Local Government

Victoria Daly Shire

Telephone (08) 8972 0777
Web www.victoriadaly.nt.gov.au

Outstations

Several outstations including Kuy, Fossil Head, Yedder, Ditchi and Old Mission

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 Wadeye is through Northern Land Council (NLC)

Web www.nlc.org.au

Infrastructure, facilities and services

Community

Church: Catholic services

Community Halls and Sheds: Sports and Recreation Hall

Workforce Skills or Training Facilities: Community Development Employment Program (CDEP)

Post Office: Monday to Friday 8am-4pm, Saturday 9am-12pm

School: Lady of the Sacred Heart School

Library: Monday to Friday 8am-12pm

Council Office: Centrelink

Women's Centre: Children's Services Support Unit (CSSU) Safe House

Childcare Centre: CSSU Children and Family Centre

Banking: Traditional Credit Union

Community store

Murrinpatha Nimmipa Store

Telephone (08) 8978 2350

The store stocks a small range of groceries including fresh fruit, veg, milk and meat. They receive weekly fresh deliveries via QAL service

- **Opening hours** Monday to Friday 8am – 4.30pm, Saturday 8 – 11.30am

Other food outlets

There are two take away stores. One has the same operating hours as the grocer

The second has recently opened in the service station selling Asian meals and limited groceries.

- **Opening hours** Monday to Sunday 11am – 2pm and 4 – 9pm

There is also a butchery

Food orders

Bush orders can be made through Coles and Woolworths Supermarket in Darwin and will be delivered by QAL Transport

Coles Darwin:

Telephone (08) 8941 8055

Woolworths Darwin:

Telephone (08) 8919 8308

QAL Transport:

Telephone (08) 8901 7022

Recreational facilities

Football field, basketball court and swimming pool with limited public hours:

- **Opening hours** Monday to Friday 7am – 8am
Tuesday and Thursday 5 – 6pm
Saturday 11am – 12.30pm

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

Commercial accommodation	Thamarrurr Development Corporation Motel	Telephone (08) 8978 2111
Mechanic	There is a workshop with resident mechanic	
Police station	Yes	Telephone (08) 8978 2366
Alt. police contact	Emergency only	Telephone 000
Other	Community Night Patrol	Telephone (08) 8972 0777
Telephone/internet/mail		
Mobile phone²	Telstra 3G coverage is available	
Internet	Internet access is available at the Health centre for reasonable personal use. A Telstra NextG or 3G dongle is the only reliable wireless network	
Other	Each house has a landline	
Mail	Mail comes in on a daily basis	
Alcohol		
Alcohol – not allowed³	Wadeye is a dry community. This applies to everyone, including visitors	
Road		
	Darwin (7 hours⁴): 550kms via the Stuart Highway to Adelaide River and then on the mostly unsealed Daly River Road. The Daly River Road is generally closed during the wet season	
	Bush / Other services: Shore Barge provide a fortnightly barge service	
Air		
	Facilities: There is a high quality, all weather airstrip at Wadeye	
	Darwin (50 mins): The town is remote and situated on the western edge of the Daly River Reserve approx. 220km by air southwest of Darwin	
Regular passenger transport	Murin Air schedules two flights a day to Wadeye from Darwin	

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

Health Centre

Health service

Department of Health (DoH)

Telephone (08) 8978 2360

Web www.health.nt.gov.au

Email wadeyclinicmgr@nt.gov.au

Staff

- Manager 1 (and RAN)
- Remote Area Nurses 10
- Medical Practitioner 2
- Aboriginal Health Worker 7
- Aboriginal Community Worker 3
- Administration Officer 4.5
- Driver/Gardener/Cleaner 4.5
- Other 1

Facilities

10 consulting rooms, Men's and Women's waiting areas, Dental Surgery, Hearing room, X-Ray lab and Emergency room

Operating hours

Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm

On call

On call rostered as required by the Health Centre Manager amongst the numerous staff

Services

- Antenatal care
- Growth Assessment and Action (GAA) program for infants and children under 5
- Childhood and adult immunisation
- Healthy school aged kids program
- Preventable Chronic Disease (PCD) program
- Well Women's and Well Men's screening,
- Infectious and communicable disease prevention and control.

Medical Records System⁵

PCIS

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

Two GPs are allotted to the Health Centre

Visiting services

- Podiatrist
- Dental Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Audiologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Midwife
- Maternal, Child and Youth Health Team
- Dentist
- Nutritionist
- Speech Pathologist
- Women's Health Educator
- Men's Health Worker
- Social Worker
- Remote Sexual Health Team
- Optometrist.

Acute care

Acute emergencies are evacuated to Darwin by Careflight

⁵ Training should be arranged before your arrival in the community

Accommodation

Accommodation Either a free standing house or single occupancy demountable “Donga” style. Communal kitchen and shared ensuite

****Note: Sharing of facilities may be required**

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 – March), 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.

Canberra Office

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Darwin Office

Level 4, Darwin Central Offices, 21 Knuckey Street, Darwin NT 0800
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