

Welcome to Country Language Resource - 1.

Our people have been doing Welcomes to Country for many thousands of years, in fact there is archaeological evidence that suggest that our people have been here in Australia for at least 65,000 years, so that's how long we've been doing it.

Welcomes to Country are meant to signify acknowledgement and respect. Sometimes a Welcome to Country was not only a verbal welcome, but sometimes included singing and dancing, and sometimes ceremony.

Welcomes To Country today, are usually mostly, but not always, verbal and are done by a Traditional Owner. The Traditional Owner often comes out and welcomes non Traditional Owners and visitors to the local area or location. They usually acknowledge the Country, Elders and Traditional Owners past present and future. This acknowledges country and people. It was also a time for non-Traditional Owners to state their business and acknowledge people and country and pay their respect.

Acknowledgement of Country is something that happens when there are no Traditional Owners present. It also acknowledges and pays respect to Country and people. Usually this is done by the person chairing a meeting or the person leading the function, gathering or meeting, and sometimes another speaker.

How do you say, 'Welcome to country' in Wamba Wamba / Wemba Wemba?

Our language is a wonderfully expressive language allowing us to communicate very clearly. Things can be quite different to English however. Here is a one sentence welcome.

'Puthekaty larnangurruk telkuk-min.'

'We welcome you to our country for a good visit'

Pronunciation – puth/e/kartch larn/arn/gurruk tell/kuk min.

Literal English meaning

'You (plural) are coming in to our (inclusive) camp or home, very good.'

This sentence can be shortened to:

'Puthekaty larnangurruk.' Welcome to our country.

Derivation

Putheka – to come in Puthekaty – you plural come in

Lar - camp, home Larnangin - your camp

Larnangurrakang - our camp (exclusive 'our' eg 'this is our camp not yours)

Larnangurruk - our camp (inclusive 'our')

Telkuk – good. Telkuk-min – very good.

Puthekaty | larnangurruk | telkuk-min.

You (plural) are coming in to | our (inclusive) camp, home, | very good.

Alternatives:

You might also say 'Puthekal larnangurruk' but here the literal meaning is more likely 'follow into our camp' and does not include the 'you plural' content of 'katy'.

'*Warakaty larnangurruk*' (You are walking onto our country or home) might also be used but, according to the dictionary, 'Wara' – to walk or to come, might only be used for phrases like 'nyaka wari' - Come here! It might be good to leave this use for that purpose.

Adding detail:

'Puthekaty kiluwity larnangurruk Wamba Wamba Perrepa Perrepa kuli, telkuk-min.'

(We welcome you today into the country/camp of the Wamba Wamba and Perrepa Perrepa people.)

The welcome might also include what the visitors might do on country. This might include sitting and talking, feasting and celebrating, sharing songs and dances etc. You can find the Wamba Wamba / Wemba Wemba words for all of these, and more resources like this one, on 'Wurrenkangurruk' the Deniliquin Indigenous Language database at www.culture.yarkuwa.com.au .

Sourced from 'WembaWemba Dictionary' and the Wurrenkangurruk website for Deniliquin Indigenous Language Project by Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, 2016