

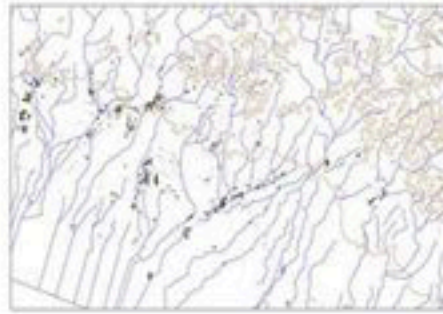
Sites, archaeological landscapes, which reveal Aboriginal land use best?

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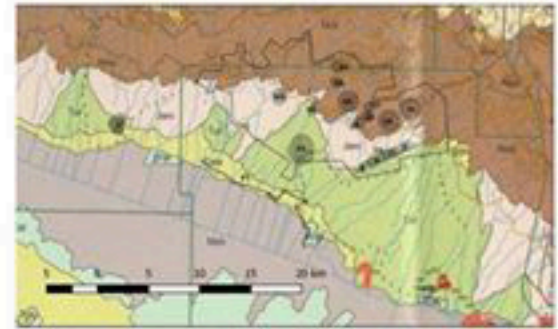
An area encompassing more than 400 km² in the semi-arid region of the inland Pilbara was completely surveyed for sites, as a part of a compliance archaeology consultancy.



Location Map— Eastern Chichester Range Study area shown



Archaeological record comprises more than 2000 sites. Surface artefact scatter is most numerous site type, and 45 rock shelters (13 had cultural deposits) found in the ranges

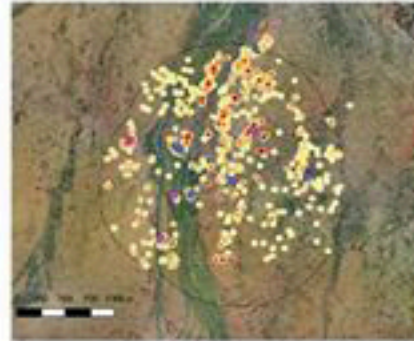


Ten groupings of sites analysed, with each group being about 3 km². Six were located in the ranges, four on the plains. [Base map shows range-land landforms; brown indicates hills and ranges]



Ranges Group 1 – concentric circles around rock shelter shown at 500 & 1000m. Cultural remains mostly appear in association with creek systems. Density of cultural remains is low at most localities while overall site richness is high.

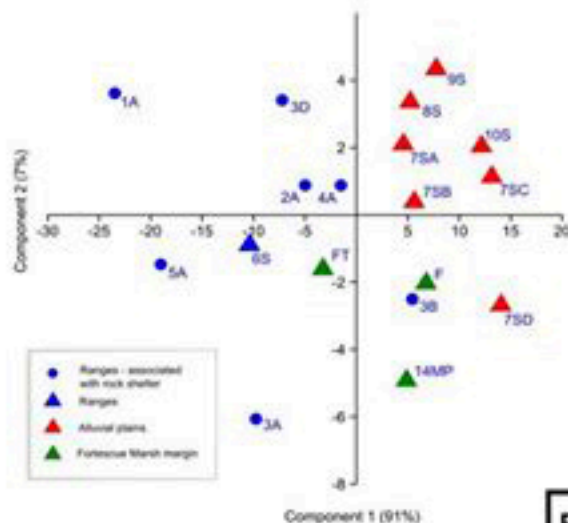
- flaked stone [shown as 'hot spots', with red - 20 flakes within 400m²]
- muller
- millstone
- iso retouch
- walled enclosure
- scarred tree



Plains Group 8 - Locality is characterised by low density flaked stone artefact scatters with greatest concentrations toward the centre and in the west. Millstones and mullers are most often found near creek lines.

Attributes	Ranges	Plains
% cortical	36	61
Cortex Types Riverine: Terrestrial	0.3	1.29
Flakes: cores	14	8
Mean length complete flakes (mm)	26	39
% retouched	12	5

Table comparing ranges v plains surface scatters, demonstrating distinct differences in the assemblages.



Toward a regional pattern—multivariate plot illustrating variability among surface scatters—plains (red), ranges (blue) and near Fortescue Marsh (green). [1st component = artefact length & % cortex; 2nd component = flake : core ratio & artefact length.]

The plains groups generally form a tight cluster that is distinct from Marsh and ranges groups, which separate relatively well.

NB As shown in other analyses, this pattern is not influenced by the availability of different raw material types across the region.

RESULTS—change the scale

Shifting from a site to locality and then to a regional perspective brings out patterning in the archaeological record. Several ethnographic studies have informed this view for quite some time, in particularly O'Connell (1987) and Pickering (2002)

A landscape perspective offers a better means to assess and communicate our data to a wide variety of stakeholders.

Acknowledgements

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References

- O'Connell JF 1987. Alywara site structure and its archaeological implications. *American Antiquity* 52(1): 74-108.
- Pickering M 2003. Modelling hunter-gatherer settlement patterns: an Australian case study. *BAR International Series* 1103, Archaeopress, Oxford.