

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND

100 MOST ENDANGERED SITES, 2008

For millennia, the Aboriginal peoples of the Dampier Archipelago in northwestern Australia carved petroglyphs into the region's numerous rock faces and outcroppings. Collectively, these ancient renderings constitute the largest corpus of rock art in the world, containing between several hundred thousand and one million engraved images.

Although the rock art complex on the Burrup Peninsula-part of the Dampier Archipelago-has been listed as an endangered site by the National Trust of Australia, the planned expansion of an industrial complex that would eclipse more than a third of the rock art area poses an urgent threat to the site. The Australian Rock Art Research Association and the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations are lobbying for the relocation of the industrial development, and are seeking to have the entire Dampier Rock Art Complex designated a national park. Their efforts have sparked an advocacy effort to "Stand Up for the Burrup" that has gained international support. While the initial Watch listing of Dampier in 2004 forced the state government to take a closer look at the site and initiate a four-year study on the deterioration taking place there, the threat has not been alleviated. The site has been re-listed for the purpose of continuing to draw local and international attention to its endangered status.

Dampier Rock Art Complex

Location of Site: DAMPIER, Australia

Date of Significance: 10,000 B.C.-Present

Years on Watch List: 2008, 2006, 2004

Primary Threats: Industrial development

