Darwin’s oldest Milkwood Tree – which dates back pre-European settlement – has been heritage listed, Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour announced today.

This is the first tree to be listed primarily due to its natural significance, Ms Scrymgour said.

“This Milkwood is a rare remnant of the original vegetation of the Darwin peninsular prior to European arrival in 1869, and it is probably the oldest and largest example of its type in the Darwin region,” she said.

“While the Government has heritage listed trees before, this is the first time we have listed one primarily due to its natural significance.

“It is also valued by the community for its age and beauty.”

Ms Scrymgour said Milkwood trees played an important role in Indigenous life prior to European settlement, with the wood of the trees used for carving, and to make dugout canoes and paddles.

The sap was also used in the treatment of small sores and for ceremonial paint, while the milky liquid from the tree was applied to the breast of nursing mother because it was believed to improve milk supply.

“I believe there is something special about a tree which was part of the landscape long before European arrival, when Indigenous people occupied the land,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“What’s also important on this occasion is the widespread support we have received for the heritage listing of this tree – it indicates the value that the community places on our trees.”

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