

kakadu[®]

NATIONAL PARK



Welcome to the Aboriginal Lands of Kakadu National Park,
a jointly managed Commonwealth Reserve.

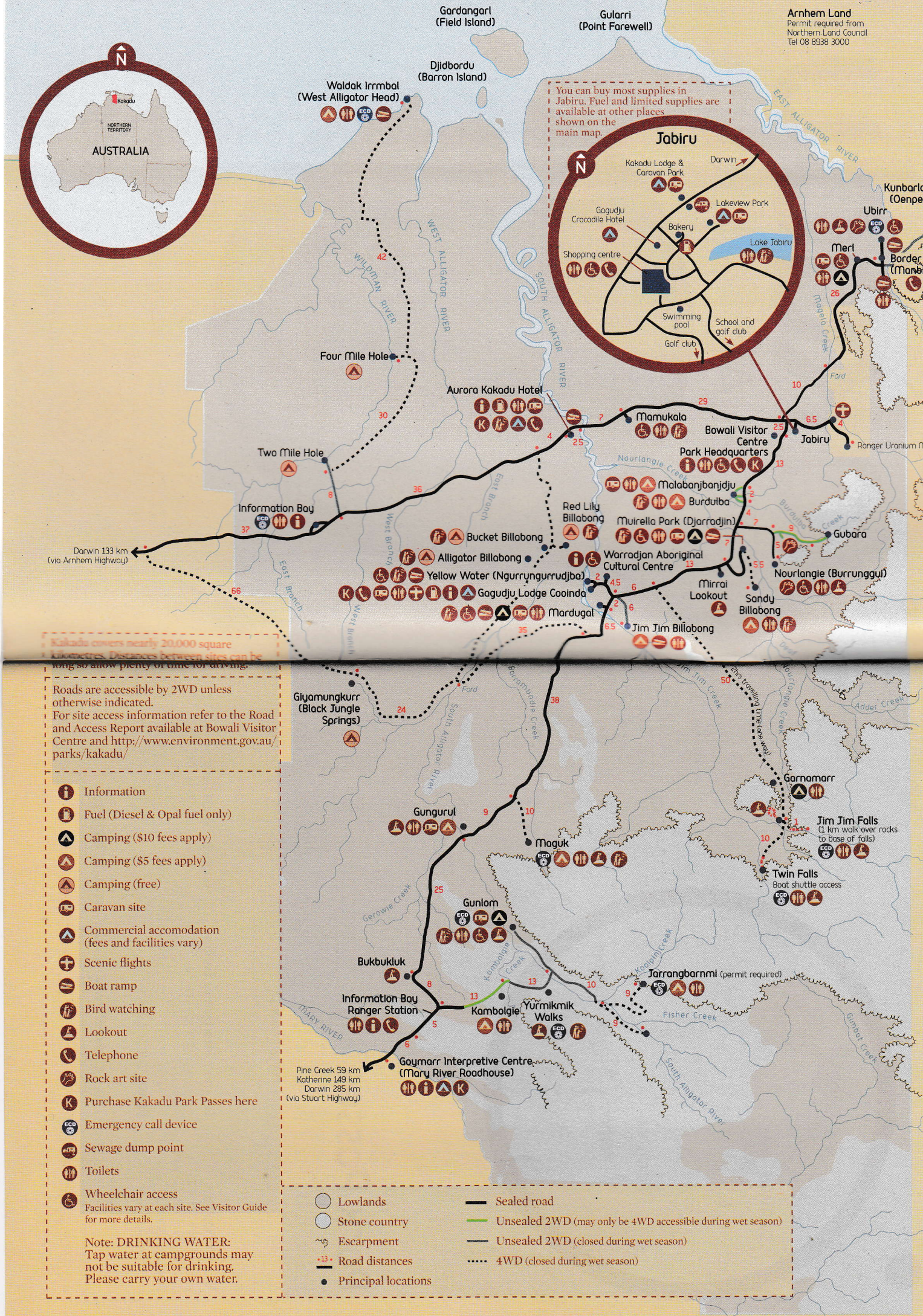


Australian Government
Director of National Parks



VISITOR GUIDE

14 day Park Pass \$25 per person



Kakadu covers nearly 20,000 square kilometres. Distances between sites can be long so allow plenty of time for driving.

Roads are accessible by 2WD unless otherwise indicated.
 For site access information refer to the Road and Access Report available at Bowali Visitor Centre and <http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/kakadu/>

- Information
- Fuel (Diesel & Opal fuel only)
- Camping (\$10 fees apply)
- Camping (\$5 fees apply)
- Camping (free)
- Caravan site
- Commercial accomodation (fees and facilities vary)
- Scenic flights
- Boat ramp
- Bird watching
- Lookout
- Telephone
- Rock art site
- Purchase Kakadu Park Passes here
- Emergency call device
- Sewage dump point
- Toilets
- Wheelchair access
 Facilities vary at each site. See Visitor Guide for more details.

Note: DRINKING WATER:
 Tap water at campgrounds may not be suitable for drinking.
 Please carry your own water.

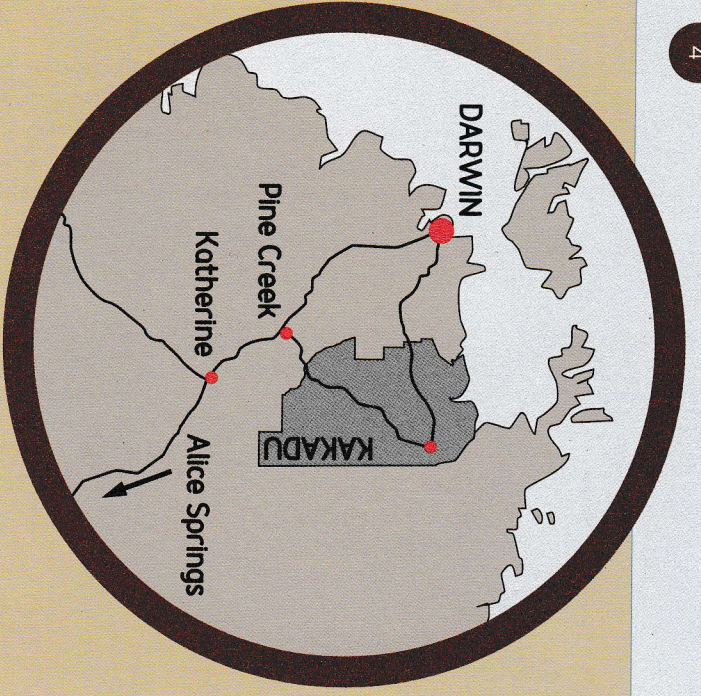
- Lowlands
- Stone country
- Escarpment
- Road distances
- Principal locations
- Sealed road
- Unsealed 2WD (may only be 4WD accessible during wet season)
- Unsealed 2WD (closed during wet season)
- 4WD (closed during wet season)

You can buy most supplies in Jabiru. Fuel and limited supplies are available at other places shown on the main map.

Pine Creek 59 km
 Katherine 149 km
 Darwin 285 km
 (via Stuart Highway)

Jim Jim Falls
 (1 km walk over rocks to base of falls)

Twin Falls
 Boat shuttle access



Park Passes

Entry is by Park Pass for \$25 per person, valid for 14 days
Under 16 years and Northern Territory residents are free

Park Passes may be purchased at:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Tourism Top End
Cnr Bennett and
Smith Street Darwin
Aurora Kakadu
South Alligator | Goyarr Interpretive Centre
Mary River Roodhouse
southern entrance to Kakadu
Bowall Visitor Centre
Kakadu National Park | Gogudju Lodge Cooinda
Kakadu National Park |
|---|--|--|

Or purchase online at <http://www.kakadu.com.au/ticket.html>

Park Pass checks take place throughout the park and penalties apply for non payment



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The Aboriginal people of Kakadu are known as Bininj/Munggy. Bininj (pronounced bin-ning) is a Kunwinjku and Gun-djehmi word. Munggy (pronounced Moong-goy) is a Jawoyn word. Both are similar to the English word "man" and depending on the context can mean man, male, person or Aboriginal people. Balanda means non-Aboriginal people.

The name 'Kakadu' comes from an Aboriginal floodplain language called Gagudju, which was one of the languages spoken in the north of the park at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although languages such as Gagudju and Limilngan are no longer regularly spoken, descendants of these language groups still live in Kakadu. Aboriginal languages used in the Park today include Kunwinjku from the north-eastern region, Gun-djehmi from the central region and Jawoyn from the southern region.

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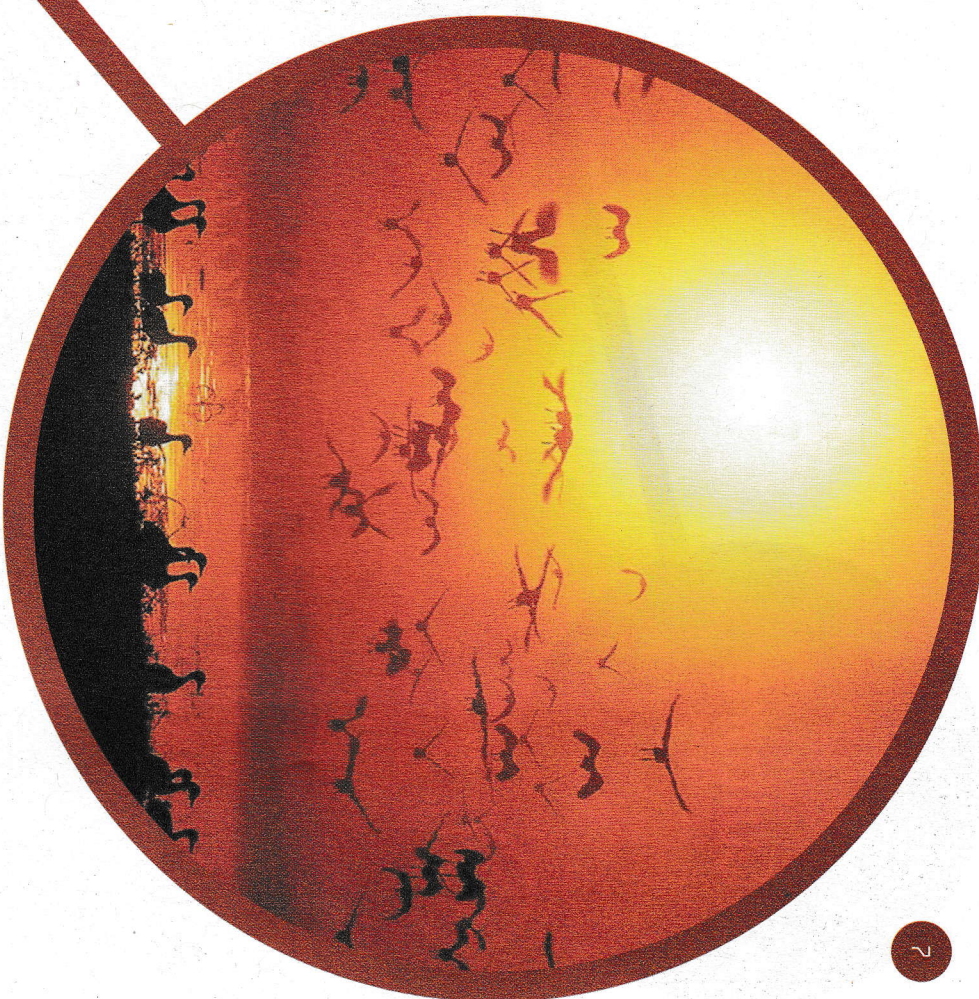
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"Our land has a big story. Sometimes we tell a little bit at a time. Come and hear our stories, see our land. A little bit might stay in your hearts. If you want more, you can come back..."

JACOB NAMINGUL
MANILAKARR CLAN



Welcome to Country

The Aboriginal traditional owners welcome you to Kakadu National Park. We are happy and proud to share this special place with you. We hope you take the time to look, listen and feel the country, to experience the true essence of this land. Take care and return safely to your family and friends and share the memories and stories you will learn from our country.



The Rainbow Serpent

The Rainbow Serpent was a major creator being. She created passages through rocks and formed waterholes in the Kakadu landscape. She split rock faces and created ranges of hills, helping form the habitat for all beings.



1 The Kakadu National Park logo is a traditional image used to depict the Rainbow Serpent. This cultural design was chosen to represent the local Aboriginal traditional owners and the broader Aboriginal community. It symbolises cultural unity across many clans and many languages throughout the region. The serpent's image is a constant reminder of her power and presence in the landscape. More importantly, she is a reminder to Bininj/Munggy custodians and the next generations about their obligations to care for country.

2 Artwork by Gabriel Marahgurra

3 Artwork by Gershon Garringar

4 Artwork by Abel Naborhborlh



1 The Rainbow Serpent is a powerful ancestor, known by many Aboriginal groups throughout Australia. The Rainbow Serpent played an important role in the conception of Bininj/Munggy and their cultural obligations to care for country. She is also part of the life cycle of plants and animals and the seasonal changes.

2 The many stories and sites associated with the Rainbow Serpent are often linked to water and places where she travelled across country, leaving behind features in the landscape. Bininj/Munggy believe she is still present today, resting, and should never be disturbed.

3 Along with the Rainbow Serpent, Creation Ancestors came in many different forms. Other important beings include Bula (Jaywyn Ancestor), Namarrgon (Lightning Man) and Warramurrungudji (Earth Mother).

4 In the Kakadu region alone, the Rainbow Serpent has many different language names. To the north of the park she is known in Gun-djeihmi as 'almudj' and in Kunwinjku she is 'ngalyod'. In Gagudju she is referred to as 'namardeedjurr', further south Jaywyn speakers say 'bolung', and to the north-west she is known in Limlingan as 'lulydjidjan'.

1
Creation Ancestors feature prominently at the Ulirri rock art galleries

Rock art

Mimi spirits were the first of the Creation Ancestors to paint on rock. They taught some Bininj how to paint and other Bininj learned by copying Mimi art. At the end of their journeys, some Creation Ancestors put themselves on rock walls as paintings and became djang (dreaming places). Some of these paintings are andjamun (sacred and dangerous) and can be seen only by senior men or women; others can be seen by all people.

Bininj/Munguy artists continue to paint on bark, paper, canvases and fabric. In some cases, the act of painting puts artists in touch with their Creation Ancestors — a powerful experience.

Kakadu's rock art (gunbim) represents one of the longest historical records of any group of people in the world.

More than 5,000 art sites tell of the Creation Ancestors and the changes in the landscape over thousands of years. Look for naturalistic paintings of animals, for traditional X-ray art, and for paintings of the first European contact.

The act of painting is generally more important than the painting itself, so many older paintings are covered by younger ones.

"In Dreaming painting, use special paint, ochre, blood. Come back with that feeling. Ceremony painting is not for everyone to see. Top business you can't see it. Go through your body and give you knowledge. Dreaming. You might dream. Good one."

BILL NEIDJIE BUNDI CLAN



Environment



- 1 The beautiful pink blooms of the Wurrarnning lotus lily
- 2 Galawon Yellow-spotted monitor seeks refuge from the floodwaters
- 3 Ngalmnykorlo male Gouldian finch

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of life – the different plants, animals, insects and all other life forms, and the ecosystems of which they are a part. Kakadu's stunning biodiversity is internationally recognised in its listing as a World Heritage Area.

Covering nearly 20,000 square kilometres, Kakadu is one of very few places World Heritage listed for both its cultural and its natural values. Its enduring natural values stem from its exceptional beauty and unique biodiversity, its variety of landforms, habitats and wildlife.

The protection and conservation of biodiversity is an important part of the management of this special place.

Kakadu is home to 68 mammals (almost one-fifth of Australia's mammals), more than 120 reptiles, 26 frogs, over 300 tidal and freshwater fish species, more than 2,000 plants and over 10,000 species of insects. It provides habitat for more than 290 bird species (over one-third of Australia's birds). Its internationally important wetlands are a major staging point for migratory birds.

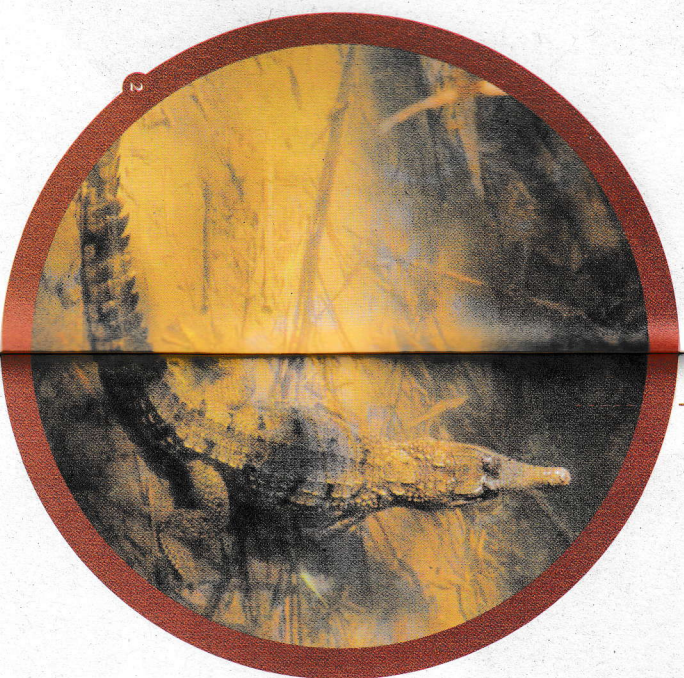
Some of these species are threatened or endangered. Many are found nowhere else in the world and there are still others yet to be discovered.

The Creation Ancestors gave Bininj/Munguy a kinship system linking people to all things and the cultural responsibility to look after them all. They have always understood the biodiversity of country and their traditional ancestral knowledge is a vital part of managing Kakadu's rich environment.



Crocodiles

Crocodiles are the world's largest living reptiles. They are also one of the most ancient, having existed unchanged for nearly 200 million years. There are more than 20 species of crocodilians in the world. Two species occur in Australia: the freshwater and the estuarine (saltwater) crocodile.



"We still hunt our turtle, goanna or file snake. We used to swim in the water, but not this time because the croc's everywhere. ginga."

YVONNE MARGARULLU
MIRARR CLAN

1 Ginga Estuarine crocodile

2 Madjarrki Freshwater crocodile

FRESHWATER CROCODILES
Freshwater crocodiles (Madjarrki, *Croodylus johnstonii*) are only found in Australia, where they live in freshwater rivers, creeks and plunge pools, such as Maguk and Gunlom. Freshwater crocodiles are usually shy animals but can become aggressive if disturbed, so do not approach them.

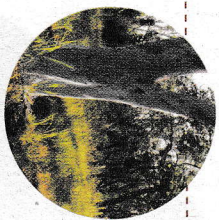
ESTUARINE (SALTWATER) CROCODILES
Estuarine crocodiles (Ginga, *Croodylus porosus*) are also found in India, South East Asia and Papua New Guinea. Often called 'salties', they live in freshwater and estuarine areas, such as floodplains, billabongs, gorges, rivers and coastal waters. Estuarine crocodiles are aggressive. They have attacked and killed people in Kakadu. For your safety, please obey all crocodile warning signs – do not enter the water and keep away from the water's edge.

INCREASING CROCODILE NUMBERS
Between the 1940s and 1960s, crocodiles were hunted to near extinction for their skins. By 1971, both species were fully protected. The estuarine crocodile population has recovered dramatically and they continue to move further inland into freshwater rivers, billabongs and creeks in search of new territory. This has changed how Biningj/Munguy live on country and has also increased the risk of visitors interacting with a crocodile. In some visitor areas access is only available after park staff have trapped and removed any estuarine crocodiles that have moved in during the wet season. These areas, known as crocodile management zones, are extensively surveyed at the start of each dry season to ensure the risk for visitors is reduced. Traps remain in place for the entire dry season as estuarine crocodiles may move in at any time. Detailed crocodile safety information is on page 48. Please read the crocodile warning signs, consider their information carefully and obey all safety directions



Landscapes and habitats

Within the vast landscapes of Kakadu, there are 6 main landforms. Each landform and the habitats it contains has a range of plants and animals. As you move through Kakadu, take the time to explore and appreciate the diversity of the areas you visit – each one is truly unique.



1 A towering cathedral termite mound

SAVANNA WOODLANDS

Woodlands make up nearly 80 per cent of Kakadu. Appearing to consist mostly of eucalypts and tall grasses, they may seem lifeless at first glance. However, the woodlands support a greater variety of plants and animals than any other habitat in Kakadu.

MONSOON VINE FORESTS

Monsoon vine forests occur in small, isolated patches. Fruit-eating birds and flying foxes connect the plants in these isolated pockets by dispersing pollen and seeds as they move from pocket to pocket.

SOUTHERN HILLS AND RIDGES

The hills and broken ridge lines in the south of Kakadu are the result of millions of years of erosion, creating a diversity of habitats and the presence of plants and animals that do not occur anywhere else.

STONE COUNTRY

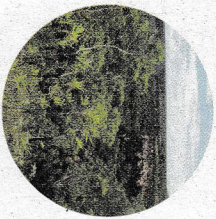
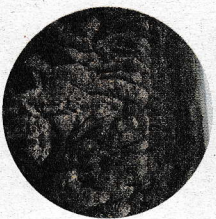
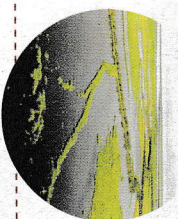
The dominant sandstone escarpment of the Arnhem Land Plateau ranges from 30 to 300 metres high, and includes the rock shelters and outliers around Ubirr and Nourlangie. In some areas the escarpment erodes by up to 1 metre every thousand years.

TIDAL FLATS, MANGROVES AND COASTLINE

Almost 500 square kilometres of coastal and estuarine areas, most lined with mangroves, form important nurseries for many fish including barramundi. These wetlands, including floodplains, billabongs, rivers, coasts and estuarine areas, are recognised internationally as being significant for migratory birds.

FLOODPLAINS, RIVERS AND BILLABONGS

Floodplains undergo dramatic seasonal changes. Following wet season rains, a sea of shallow freshwater spreads out for hundreds of square kilometres. As the floodplains start to dry, waterbirds and crocodiles seek refuge in the remaining wet areas such as Yellow Water and Mamukala wetlands.



To experience the real essence of Kakadu please slow down, take your time, absorb our relationship with the land, and embrace nature the way we do.



Yegge:
Cool weather time, May to June
The wetlands are carpeted with water lilies. Drying winds and flowering Darwin woolly butt tell Bininj/Mungany to patchwork burn the woodlands to encourage new growth.

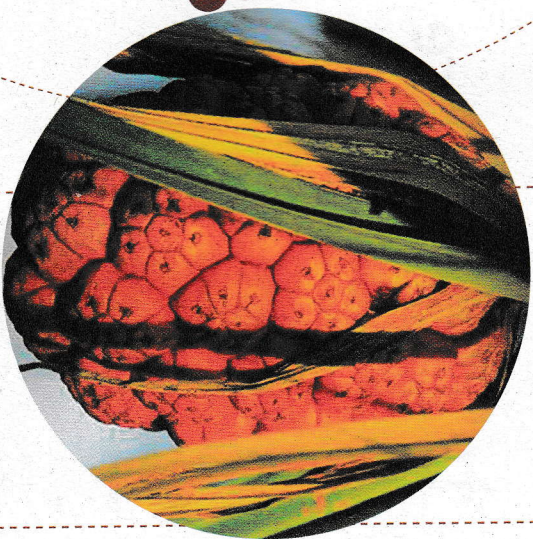


Banggereng:
Harvest time, April
Clear skies prevail. The vast expanses of floodwater recede and streams start to run clear. Most plants are fruiting and animals are caring for their young.

Gudjewg:
Monsoon, December to March
The heat and humidity generate an explosion of plant and animal life. Spear grass grows to over 2 metres tall and creates a silvery-green hue throughout the woodlands.



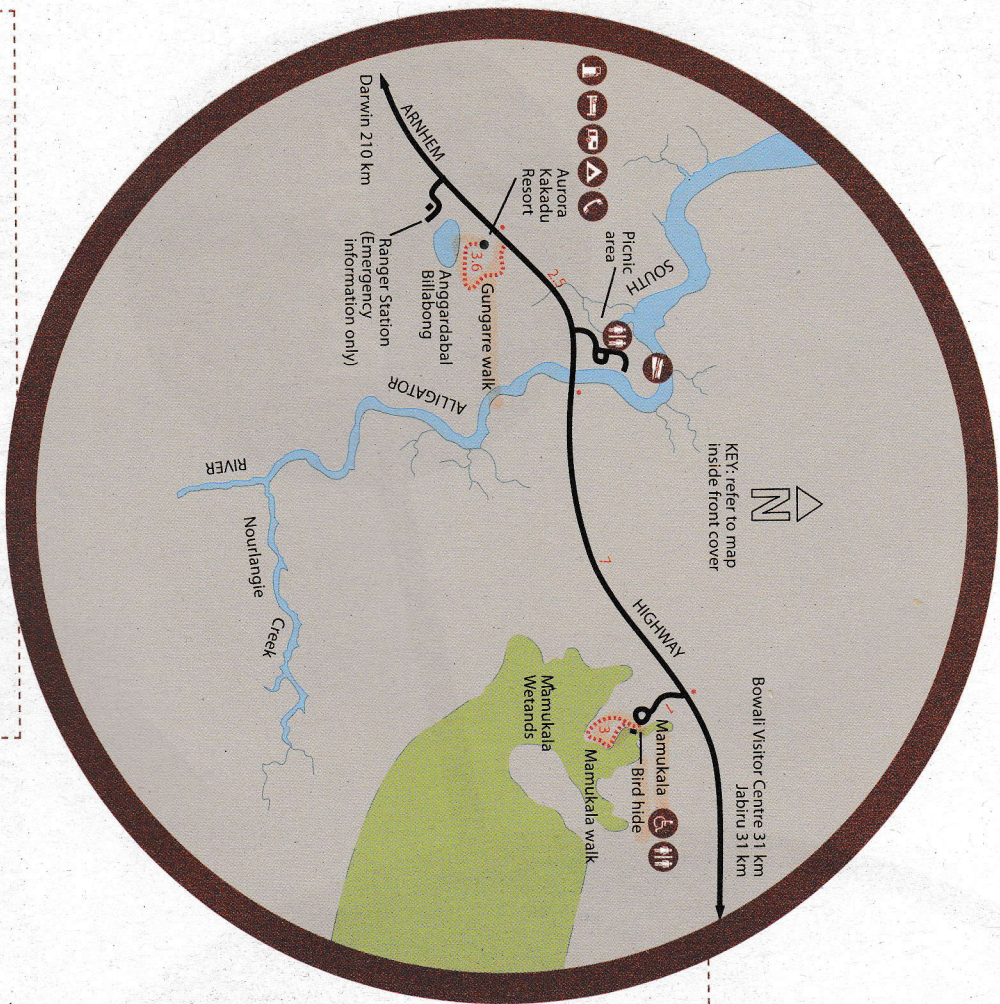
Wurrng:
Early dry season, June to August
Most creeks stop flowing and the floodplains quickly dry out. Magpie geese, fat and heavy after weeks of abundant food, crowd the shrinking billabongs.



Gurrueng:
Hot dry season, August to October
Hunting time for file snakes and long-necked turtles. White-breasted wood swallows arrive as thunderclouds build, signalling the return of Gunumeleng.

Gunumeleng:
Pre-monsoon, October to December
Streams begin to run, water birds spread out as surface water and new growth becomes widespread. Barramundi move from the waterholes downstream to the estuaries to breed.





South Alligator region

Central to this area is the South Alligator River. The entire river and its catchment are contained and protected in Kakadu National Park.

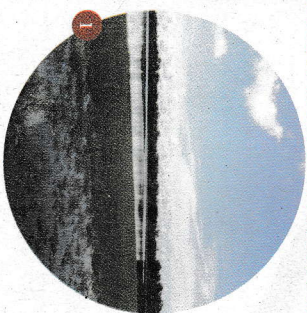


3

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

South Alligator River and picnic area: Picnic tables and barbecue areas near the South Alligator bridge on the Arnhem Highway and boat ramp at the northern end of the carpark. (See page 31 for more boating information).

Off the highway: (Dry season only) There are 2 major four-wheel drive tracks in the area: the Waldak Irrmbal (West Alligator Head) track (which accesses Two Mile Hole, and Four Mile Hole) and the Red Lily Billabong, Bucket Billabong and Alligator Billabong track. Both tracks lead to destinations suitable for boating, bird watching and camping. **Please read the crocodile information on page 48.**



1

ACCOMMODATION

Aurora Kakadu Resort: Motel rooms, tent sites, powered and unpowered van sites, restaurant, store and guest pool. Reservations recommended. Tel: (08) 8979 0166

Bush Camping Areas: \$5 fee (adults) collection box.

Basic toilet facilities at Waldak Irrmbal (West Alligator Head), Free: Two Mile, Four Mile Hole, Red Lily Billabong, Bucket Billabong and Alligator Billabong. No toilet available. Check seasonal access. Drinking water is not available. Rubbish bins are not provided, so please bring rubbish out with you.

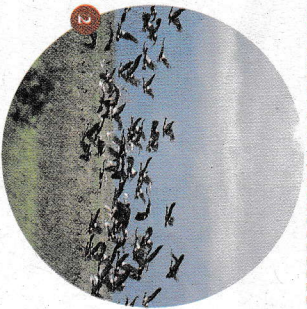
SERVICES

Aurora Kakadu Resort store: Sells petrol, diesel, food and souvenirs.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

Mamukala (Mar-moo-car-lar) wetlands: Check wet season access. Mamukala is beautiful all year but at its most dramatic in the late dry season (September – October) when thousands of magpie geese congregate to feed. An observation platform allows you to view the birdlife and a mural illustrates the seasonal changes that occur through the year. There is also a 3 km walk adjacent to the wetlands. Allow 1 to 2 hours for the full walk.

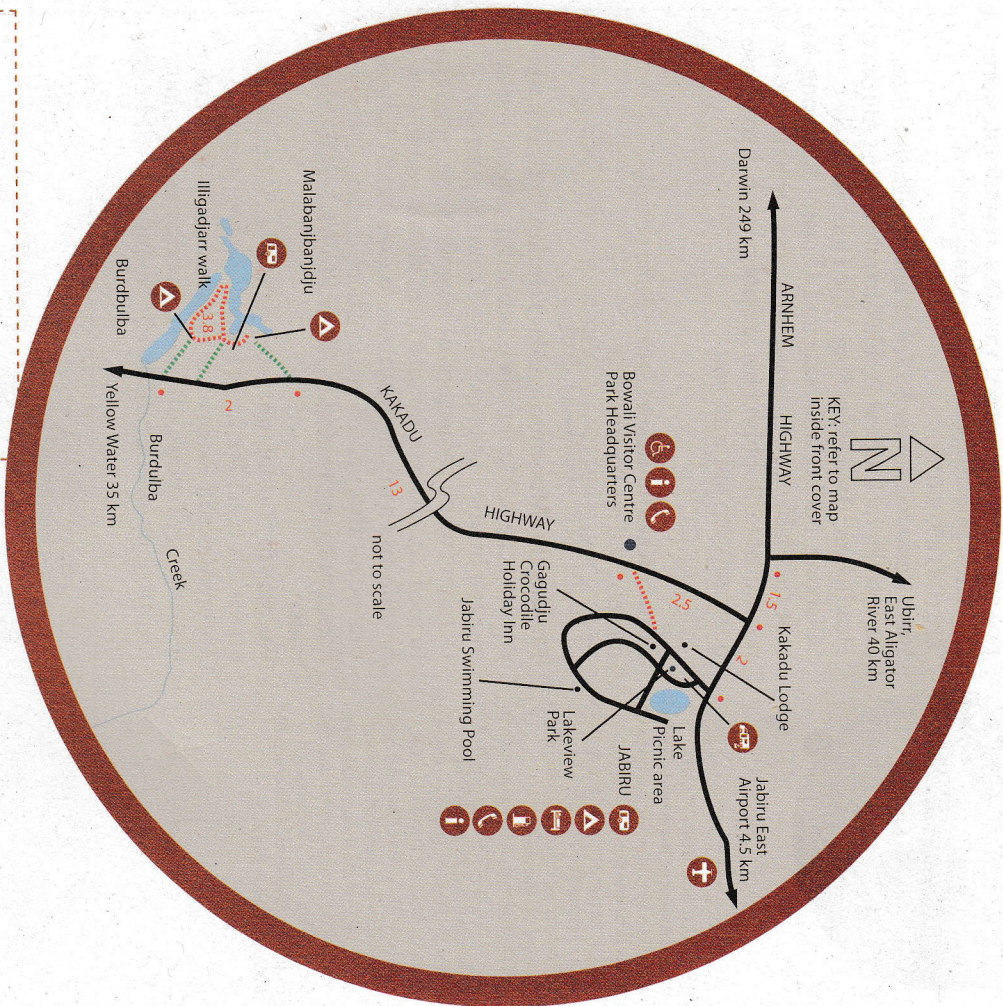
Gu-ngarre (Goong-narr-ee) walk: Check wet season access. Starts at the large banyan fig tree near the Aurora Kakadu Resort and features a 3.6 km circular walk through monsoon forest, woodlands and along the margins of Anggardabal Billabong. Allow 2 hours.



1 Mamukala wetlands

2 Bamarru magpie geese mass on the floodplain

3 Red Lily Billabong (4WD access only)



Jabiru region

Jabiru is the main township in Kakadu, providing a range of essential services for visitors, and a gateway to all parts of the park and Arnhem Land.



1 Bowali Visitor Centre



2 Experience Kakadu from the air

ACCOMMODATION

Gagudju Crocodile Holiday Inn: Hotel rooms (air conditioned), restaurant, gift shop, guest pool and bookings for commercial tours. Reservations recommended. Tel: (08) 8979 2800

Kakadu Lodge: Budget accommodation, air conditioned cabins, tent sites, powered van sites, barbeque facilities, camper's kitchen. Bar/bistro for guests and visitors. Tel: (08) 8979 2422

Lakeview Park: Bush bungalows, cabins and air-conditioned rooms. Reservations recommended. Tel: (08) 8979 3144

Bush Camping Areas: \$5 fee (adults) collection box. Basic toilet facilities at Malabjanbanjju and Burdubla. Drinking water is not available. Check seasonal access.

Please read the crocodile information on page 48.

SERVICES

In Jabiru there is a service station, supermarket, newsagent and post office (Commonwealth Bank agency), Westpac Bank, travel agent, medical centre and chemist (Tel: (08) 8979 2018), police, public telephones, swimming pool, library (internet), hairdresser, golf course, restaurant, café and bakery.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

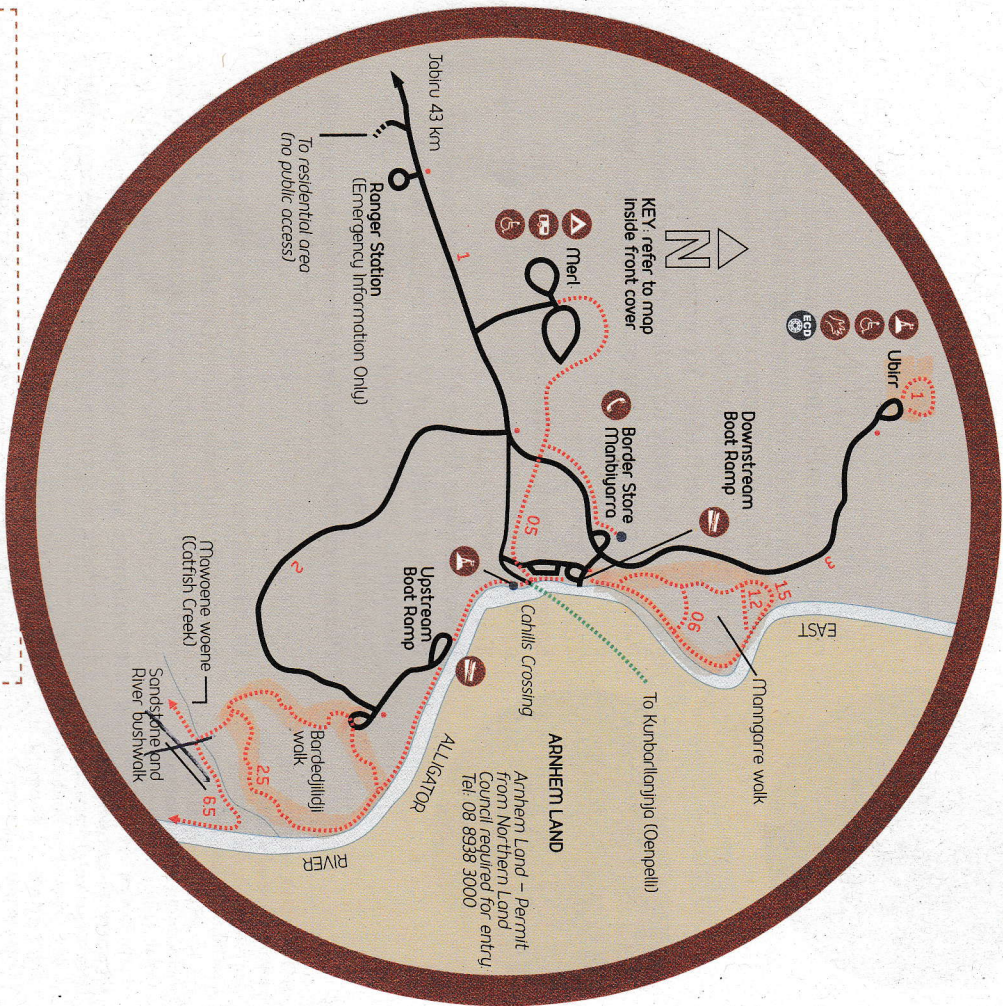
Bowali Visitor Centre: The Bowali Visitor Centre contains a wealth of information about Kakadu including a theater, library and interpretive display. Staff are available to help you plan your visit. Open daily: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Tel: (08) 8938 1120.

The Marrawuddi Gallery: Stocks Aboriginal arts and crafts, books and gifts. Refreshments available from the Anmak An-me Café. Open daily from 9:00 am-4:00 pm (wed) / 8:30 am-5:00 pm (dry).

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

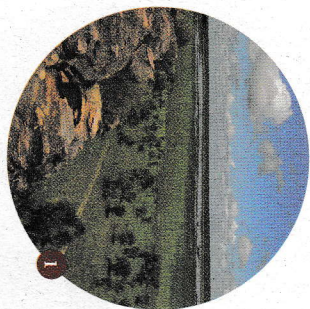
Bowali bike and walking tracks: Starts opposite the Gagudju Crocodile Holiday Inn in Jabiru. A 4 km return rammed earth path winds through woodlands to the Bowali Visitor Centre. Allow 30 to 45 minutes each way.

Iliqadjar (Ily-gar-jarr) walk: (Dry season only.) Starts at the Malabjanbanjju or Burdubla Camping Areas and features a 3.8 km circular walk across a small grassy floodplain and along Burdubla Billabong. Allow 2 hours. **Tours:** Several land-based tours depart from Jabiru. Scenic flights, which depart from both Jabiru East and Cooninda, provide an awe-inspiring bird's eye view of Kakadu and its many and varied habitats. See page 29 for tour booking information.

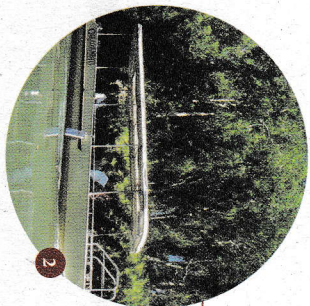


East Alligator region

In the shadow of the magnificent Arnhem Land escarpment, discover rainforest, stone country, rock art, extensive floodplains and the beautiful East Alligator River.



1 View from Ubirr over the Nadab floodplain in the dry East Alligator River



2 Gulyambhi boat cruise on the East Alligator River

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

Bardedjildji (Bar-de-jill-ee-d-gee) walk: (Check wet season access.) Starts at a small carpark 500 m from the upstream boat ramp and features a 2.5 km walk through layered sandstone outcrops. One of Kakadu's most interesting short walks. Allow 2 hours.

Munggarre (Marn-narr-ay) rainforest walk: (Dry season only.) 3 circular walks, from 0.6 km to 1.5 km, through monsoon rainforest beside the East Alligator River. Allow 1 hour for the 1.5 km walk.

Cahills Crossing picnic area: (Check wet season access.) Features riverside picnic tables and a viewing platform over the East Alligator River.

Sandstone and river bushwalk: (Dry season only.) Starts off the Bardedjildji walk and features a 6.5 km marked circular walk which takes you past Cahills Creek, floodplains, billabongs, sandstone outcrops and the East Alligator River. Allow 4 hours.

ACCOMMODATION

Managed Camping Area: \$10 fee (adults) collected on site. Showers, toilets and generator zone at Merl. Check seasonal access.

SERVICES

The Border Store: Sells food and drinks, fishing gear, souvenirs and takes bookings for commercial tours. Open during the dry season. Tel: (08) 8979 2474.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

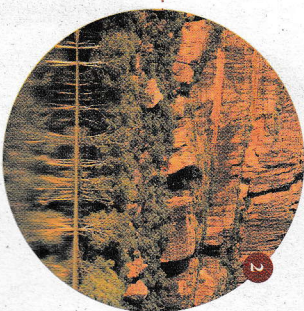
Ubirr (Oo-beerr): (Check wet season access and opening times.) A 1 km circular track takes you past several fascinating Aboriginal rock art sites. A moderately steep, 250 m climb takes you to the top of a rocky lookout that offers superb views over the Nadab floodplain, particularly beautiful at sunset. Allow at least 1 hour. Open April 1 to Nov 30 from 8.30 am – sunset. Dec 1 to March 31 from 2.00 pm – sunset. During the dry season, rangers provide informative talks about Aboriginal art and culture several times a day. See the *What's On Guide* for details.

East Alligator River: (Check wet season access.) Just east of Merl Camping Area and the Border Store, a tidal river forms the boundary between Kakadu and Arnhem Land. The Gulyambhi boat cruise operates during the dry season and on Magela Creek during the wet season. Guides explain aspects of local Aboriginal culture while you travel slowly along the waterways. See page 29 for tour booking information. Boat ramps are located upstream and downstream of Cahills Crossing. See page 31 for more boating information.



Nourlangie region

Burrungui (Boor-oon-goy) is the Gun-djeihmi name for the upper section of Nourlangie. Anbangbang is the name for the lower section of the rock and surrounding area.



IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

Bubba (Boop-bar) walk: (Dry season only) Starts at the Djarradjin (Muirrella Park) Camping Area, featuring a 3.5 km circular walk through several wetland habitats. Allow 2 hours.

Mirral (Mir-eye) Lookout walk: A moderately difficult 2 km return walk to a platform lookout on top of Mount Cahill. A steep climb. Allow 1.5 hours.

Sandstone Barkk walk: Branching off the Nourlangie lookout track, just past the main gallery, this is a difficult 12 km walk through the sandstone country of Nourlangie, past the Nanguluwur art gallery and back to the Nourlangie car park. See the Barkk Walk Park Note available from Bowali Visitor Centre. Allow 6 to 8 hours.

Please read the crocodile and dehydration information on page 48.

Rock art at Burrungui (Nourlangie).

2 Burrungui and Anbangbang Billabong

ACCOMMODATION

Kakadu Culture Camp: Night cruise and cultural experience with a local Aboriginal family at Muirella Park (Djarradjin). Reservations essential. Private bookings only. See page 29 for booking information.

Managed Camping Area:

\$10 fee (adults) collected on site during the dry season. Muirella Park (Djarradjin) has showers, toilets and is a no-generator zone. Check seasonal access.

Bush Camping Area: \$5 fee (adults) collection box. Basic toilet facilities beyond Muirella Park (Djarradjin) at Sandy Billabong. Check seasonal access. 4WD recommended. Drinking water is not available.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

Nourlangie (Burrungui): Features a 1.5 km circular walk that takes you past an ancient Aboriginal shelter and several outstanding art sites. A moderately steep climb to Gun-wardelwardde Lookout provides impressive views of Kakadu's escarpment and Nourlangie.

During the dry season, rangers provide informative talks several times a day. See the *What's On Guide* for details. Open daily until sunset.

Kakadu Culture Camp: Operates during the dry season at Muirella Park. Night spotlight boat cruise on Djarradjin Billabong with interactive cultural activities. Bookings 1800 811 633.

Anbangbang (Arn-barrag-barrag) Billabong: (Check wet season access.) A 2.5 km dry season circular walk with Nourlangie forming an impressive backdrop, this is one of Kakadu's most attractive billabongs. Allow 1 hour.

Nawurlandja (Now-oo-larn-ja) Lookout walk: A 600 m climb up a moderately steep slope offers views of the escarpment, Nourlangie and Anbangbang Billabong. Allow 40 minutes.

Nanguluwur (Narrg-oo-loo-war) art site walk: A 3.4 km return walk through woodlands leads to a quiet Aboriginal rock art site. Allow 2 hours.

Gubara (Goo-bar-rar) Pools walk: (Check wet season access.) A 6 km return walk past sandstone cliffs to shady monsoon forest pools. A pleasant place to spend the heat of the day. Allow 4 hours.