

Bungle Bungles - Carr Boyd Charter: July 2-15, 2017

Section 1: Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park: July 2-8

In mid 2003, Purnululu joined the list of Australia's World Heritage locations. Here's what the Department of Environment and Heritage has to say. "Famous for the 45 000 hectare Bungle Bungle Range, with its huge expanse of striking banded beehive structures, sandstone cliffs and towers, Purnululu has been listed as an outstanding landscape that is a superlative natural phenomenon, revealing the history of its formation over hundreds of millions of years. Purnululu National Park has such outstanding universal natural values that it enriches the world and should be conserved for the benefit of all people. Before 1982, when aerial pictures were first released, it was virtually unknown except to pastoralists, scientists and the local Aboriginal community. It is now seen as one of the scenic jewels of outback Australia."



There are many tours which will take you to Purnululu. No other tour will allow you to experience as much of the park in as intimate a fashion as ours.

Where would you rather be – here with a small group or in a dusty campground with dozens of others?



Easy day walk.

The start of our walk is about 330 kilometres from Kununurra, the last 80 kilometres of which is a 4WD track. The drive takes most of the day but we should arrive in time to walk the first few kilometres up Piccaninny Creek.

The next day we continue upstream to a base camp about 12-13 kilometres up Piccaninny Gorge, where sheer red cliffs are silhouetted against the clear blue skies of the dry season. Piccaninny is by far the largest gorge in the Bungles. We spend three or four nights there using the days to explore the many fascinating side gorges. These gorges offer a variety of delights — some are palm filled, some are very narrow and require swimming, some have caves which require the use of a torch.



Looking down Piccaninny Gorge from near the top.

There is at least one gorge that allows us to reach a high point. (We cannot climb to the actual top as climbing up the domes themselves is not permitted because of their exceptionally fragile nature. We can, however, follow watercourses as far as they will take us ... and that gets us some amazing views.) No words can do justice to the beauty of the area. The only way to appreciate it is to come and see it for yourself.

This section finishes with the drive back to Kununurra. Those continuing on to section 2 have a night in budget accommodation included in the cost of the tour.

Terrain and difficulty

Overall Level 3.

Climate Level 3. Usually very dry, average daytime max 29°C, average nighttime minimum is 12°C but can get down below freezing. The all time record July low is -8°C. Rain is unusual but we have had moderately heavy rain in June on two occasions since 1986.

Terrain **With packs** - level 2-3. The long walk up the Piccaninny Gorge, mainly over pebbles and sand can be quite tiring for many people. Walking through the upper reaches of the gorge requires some clambering over large rocks and includes edging along at least one narrow ledge several metres above the creek bed. On some trips we do this with day packs, on others we carry full packs and make our base camp beyond the first rough section. flat,

Daywalks without packs - level 4: includes serious boulder scrambling, steep climbs and at least one walk through a cave.

The climb up one gorge is particularly strenuous. Many groups don't have had every member reach the top. See the photo on the next page.

If you don't wish to do the rock scrambling, you need to be prepared to relax and enjoy their surroundings while the others continue. Keen birdwatchers often find this especially pleasant. Some people become uncomfortable in the absence of the rest of the group. Please keep this in mind when choosing this trip.



This photo shows one of the more difficult rock scrambles. Look closely and you can see two people.

Vegetation

With packs - level 1: minimal vegetation

Without packs - level 2-4. Some walks include pushing through sharp and/or sticky spinifex, gaiters essential, long trousers recommended.

Hours

You normally walk 4-6 hours per day.

Packs

Pack weight: level 3 = one week's worth of food plus stove fuel. However, you do not normally carry a full pack on three of the days.

Art:

Two minor sites, may not be seen by all groups.

Campsites

Mostly on sand, might include rock ledges on some nights.

Swims

Generally very cold and not much water but there are always some pools. If you get past the difficult part on one of the walks, there is a compulsory swim of about 30 metres through a small section of the gorge.

Lowlights

Helicopters intrusive most of day, aircraft early and late.

Highlights

Incredible and spectacular gorge scenery; each gorge very different from the others.

Wildlife

Birds are often a highlight for those who sit quietly and watch. You are unlikely to see large animals.

Fishing

No

Map

1:50 000 Bungle Bungle or 1:100 000 Turkey Creek..

Notes for Section 1. Those who wish to do a helicopter flight over the Bungles will have an opportunity to do so either on arrival or just before departure from the park. Which time we choose depends on when we arrive. The 2017 prices are \$289 for a 18 minute flight, \$399 for 30 minutes and \$499 for 4 minutes. For further information please see their website: <http://www.helispirit.com.au/tours/bungle-bungle-helicopter-flights-from-purnululu-national-park/>

The track into the Bungles normally opens in early April. Exceptional weather can, however, close it at any time. If the road is closed, the group will have the choice of paying extra for a flight or going somewhere else.

As we wish to allow as many people as possible to combine the Bungles with one or more other sections, we may limit the number of places available for those wishing to do only this section.

All this area is a stove only area. Campfires are not permitted.

Section 2: The Carr Boyd Range: July 9-15



Waterfall view, much easier without packs. Look closely and you can see someone, centre left.

Located south of Kununurra, between Lake Argyle in the east and the Dunham River in the west, the peaks and cliffs of the Carr Boyds will be familiar to anyone who has visited the region. From the roads they present a forbidding face, dry and barren, rugged beyond belief. Up close, they can show a different nature. Even after the driest of seasons, spring fed creeks trickle through deep, cool gorges and lovely pools bounded by a lush vegetation which stands in stark contrast to the dry plains outside the range.

We begin with a helicopter flight to a drop off on the creek we call 'Many Falls'. Here we will set up a base camp while we spend the rest of the day exploring downstream. If time and the inclination is there, we may explore upstream as well.

The route between the two main creek systems takes us over two low ridges. Although we could camp along the way, we normally go straight through in a day so we can have more time to enjoy what lies beyond.



A long day's walk takes only 20 minutes.

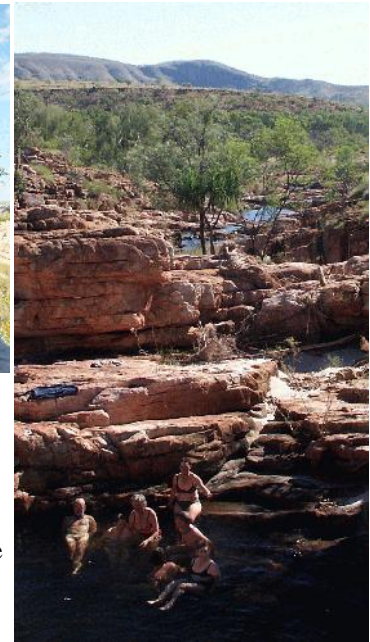
Some of the walking is as easy as anything you'll encounter on any of our trips. One side trip, sometimes done as a day walk, sometimes as an overnight detour, takes us to a spectacular spot where one of our former guides got married some years ago. He couldn't think of anywhere else he'd rather have been.

There are several possible side walks we can do without packs. Which ones we choose will depend on how fast we are travelling and on how much water there is. Water levels on some of the smaller creeks can vary dramatically from year to year so this is a decision we can't make until we are actually there.

Our final campsite may be above the last set of waterfalls at the pool there or it may be at another pool below. In either case, we will almost certainly have it to ourselves in spite of being less than 20 km in a straight line from the centre of town.



Enjoying a view, midway between the two main creeks.



Swim stop above one of the many Carr Boyd waterfalls.



Coming down a rocky section of Packsaddle Creek.



Enjoying a swim just below the rock ledges in the photo at left.

On the final morning, we follow the creek down to a road where we are met by the vehicle which brings us back to Kununurra.

Terrain and difficulty

Overall Level 3.

Climate Level 3. Usually very dry, average daytime max 30°C, average nighttime minimum is 14°C but can get down below 5°C. Rain is very unlikely but possible.

Terrain Level 3. Much of the walking is through relatively flat, open woodland with a grassy understorey. Some short sections of grass may hide a broken rocky surface where you will have to be particularly careful. There are few steep climbs, none of which is over 200 m. None are technically difficult. None require ropes or other special equipment. There will be some places where you have to step from stone to stone as you walk along the edge of a creek.

Vegetation Level 3. This can vary dramatically from year to year. There are usually some sections of thick grass and/or spinifex which make for slow going. Gaiters essential, long trousers recommended.

Hours You normally walk 4-6 hours per day.

Packs **Pack weight:** level 3.

Art: Very little. Some groups don't see any.

Campsites Can be dry river bed, rock ledges, sandy patches or grassy open areas. Some sites have a mix.

Swims Excellent. There are a many good pools and most camp sites will be next to a swimmable pool.

Lowlights Thick grass (most years).

Highlights Helicopter ride. Great views from the top. Waterfalls, pools and gorges.

Wildlife There are birds on the walk but you are unlikely to see many large animals.



Dawn breakfast.

Fishing Possible only at the very end of the trip. Sooty grunter and catfish are the most likely fish to be caught.

Maps 1:50 000 Deception Range or 1:100 000 Kununurra.

Notes for both sections

Day packs are particularly useful on both sections.

Keep a water bottle, your lunch and some money with you during the drives, especially going to and from the Bungles, as it may be difficult to get into your pack before the vehicle has stopped for the day.

Those doing both sections will have a chance to do some shopping in Kununurra between sections. (Both supermarkets are open fairly late.) You should allow extra money for this. (Cold drinks are almost irresistible.)

Those doing both sections will have to carry only what they need for each section. Additional food and clothing can be left in Kununurra. It may be possible to leave a few small items in the vehicle.

For those doing both sections, the price of the trip includes budget accommodation in Kununurra between sections. Motel type accommodation is available for an extra charge.

Restaurant meals are included in the price of the trip where you spend the night in town accommodation. Your drinks, however, are not included in the price.

Bringing fresh fruit, vegetables or honey into WA is illegal whether you come by road or plane. (You cannot even bring in boxes or other containers that once contained fruit or vegetables.) Bags are checked both on the highway and at the airport. There will be time to do some shopping in Kununurra.

Special note. We can provide free transport from Darwin to Kununurra leaving early on the morning of 1 July, arriving in Kununurra that evening. We will also be able to provide transport from Kununurra to Darwin at the end. This will probably mean leaving Kununurra on the day the trip finishes and stopping somewhere en route so that we can arrive early the next day. Please contact us if you are interested in this.

Terrain and Difficulty — General Information, all sections

Rain is very unlikely, but it is possible. If you wish to keep your pack as light as possible, leave your tent fly at home. If you wish to be absolutely certain that you won't get wet, bring it.

Almost none of the walking is on a marked trail. If you have never done any off-track walking through moderately rough terrain, nothing we can say can adequately describe the experience. The photos on our website, www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au, can give you a partial picture, but they cannot substitute for the real thing. Most of those who have not had any off-track walking experience find it more difficult than those who have done it before.

Anyone who does not regularly (average twice a month) go bushwalking carrying a full pack would benefit from doing some pre-trip training. Do this and you will almost certainly enjoy the trip. If you are not an experienced off-track bushwalker and you don't do any training or any other form of strenuous physical exercise, you might feel that the trip is more of an endurance test than the pleasure most people experience.

Itinerary: Bungles - Carr Boyd

Note 1 Day 0 is the day before departure.

Note 2 This itinerary is subject to change.

Section 1 The Bungle Bungles

Day 0 Pre-trip meeting for everyone doing the Bungles section, 6.00p.m., outdoor area, **Kimberley Croc Lodge**. **This meeting is important.** If you cannot make the meeting, please advise us well in advance.

Day 1 Pick up between 7.30 and 8 a.m. Pick up is from your accommodation in Kununurra provided you have given us the address at least a week before departure or have made other arrangements at the pre-trip meeting. If you are unable to notify us where you are staying, the pick up is from in front of the Kununurra Visitors Centre.
Drive to the start of the walk.
Begin walk, carrying full packs. Bush camp.

Day 2–6 Bush camping. Carrying full packs some days, day packs at other times.

Day 7 Return to vehicles. Helicopter flights if not already done. Drive back to Kununurra.
Late afternoon drop off at accommodation for those finishing here.

For those continuing, overnight in budget accommodation. Opportunity to do laundry and shopping. Bring toiletries to take advantage of hot showers.

Section 2 Carr Boyd Range

- Day 7** Those beginning with this section may meet the group the evening before the trip departs. If you wish to do this, you will need to contact the Walkabouts office well in advance to find out where they will be staying.
- Day 8** Morning pick up for those beginning with this section. Pick up is from your accommodation if you have notified us where you will be staying at least a week before section one departs. Otherwise pick up is from in front of the Kununurra Visitors Centre sometime between 6 and 8 a.m. Helicopter to the start of the walk. Set up camp near drop off. Exploring the creek and waterfalls with day packs for the rest of the day.
- Day 9-13** Bush camping. Carrying full packs on most days, day packs at other times. There will be several half to full day walks without packs.
- Day 14** Finish walk. Drive back to Kununurra. Drop off at accommodation for those finishing here. Begin drive back to Darwin for those wishing to do so.
- Important Note** **Air North**, the main airline currently operating into Kununurra uses some relatively small aircraft with an official baggage allowance of only 13 kg on some flights. See the Getting Here page on our website or contact Air North for more details. Phone: 1800 627474 or (08) 8920 4001; email: reservations@airnorth.com.au
If you are coming from Perth, it's worth checking Virgin Australia as well.

- Pre-Trip** We have changed the venue of our pre-trip meetings from the Kimberley Croc Backpackers to the **Kimberley Croc Lodge**. If anyone is joining after section one, we will try and have a pre-trip meeting the night before you start, 6 pm at the Kimberley Croc Lodge.

