

## Kakadu Day Walks: August 1-7, 2021

**List price \$2195.** For information about our advance purchase and other discounts, see our discount page, [www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/discounts](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/discounts)

**Summary.** Kakadu has dozens of short marked trails. We will choose a variety to try and give you a good overview of the park. We will use our bushwalking permit to take you beyond where other day walkers can go.

We will stay in accommodation some nights, campgrounds on others. Some of the walks we do would not be practical without camping. For others, camping is a potential problem.



An off-track of less than a kilometre gets us to pools like this that we have all to ourselves.

### Kakadu Day Walk Itinerary

This is a **DRAFT** itinerary. A very good or very poor wet season could mean that we have to change some walks. Or, we may find something special that wasn't available when these notes were written.

**Day 1: 1 Aug** Pick up will be from 7 am from your accommodation in Darwin.



Crocodile on the East Alligator

We drive to Ubirr in Kakadu. There are three walks of differing lengths: the Manngarre Rainforest Walk (up to 1½ km and up to an hour, the last part of the walk is restricted to women only), the Bardedjilidji Sandstone Walk (2½ km, about 2 hours) and the Sandstone and River Walk (6½ km, about 4 hours). Depending on the time we arrive, we expect to begin with either the Mangarre or Bardedjilidj walk. We need to be finished before 11 am so you can join the free Ranger guided walk at 11 am at Ubirr. (2hrs, 1km loop).



Guluyambi guide demonstrating how to produce pigments used in rock art

If we have any time to spare, you can do the short walk that you've missed before joining the 3 pm Guluyambi Cruise on the East Alligator River which gives you an even better appreciation of the local people and their culture. For more information, see [www.kakaduculturaltours.com.au/index.php/guluyambi](http://www.kakaduculturaltours.com.au/index.php/guluyambi)

After the cruise, you return to Jabiru and your accommodation at Anbinik [www.anbinik.com.au/](http://www.anbinik.com.au/)

We plan to have dinner at the nearby Jabiru Social Club or the BYO Thai restaurant at Anbinik. Local licensing regulations mean that you need to have photo ID with you if we go to the club.

**Day 2, 2 Aug** We will do the Ilgajarr and/or Bubba Wetlands walk, then the Mirray Lookout before going to Cooinda for lunch. We finish the day by driving to the Garnamarr campground near Jim Jim Falls.



On the Ilgajarr walk, early morning

**Day 3, 3 Aug** We drive the 4WD track to Twin Falls where we do a walk to the top of the falls going beyond where the normal day walk finishes. If time permits, we may be able to visit the bottom of Twin Falls.

After the walk, we drive about 2½ hours to get to the Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp which is run by some of the local Aboriginal people. See <http://www.kakadubillabongsafaricamp.com.au/>



Walking above Twin Falls, it's not all this flat, but there are lots of swims available.

**Day 4, 4 Aug** Cultural tour or tours at the Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp. From there it is a relatively short drive to the Cooinda campground. Those who prefer accommodation can have a bed for an additional cost.

At Cooinda we can replenish our supplies and visit the Warradjan Cultural Centre. If anyone wishes to do the double Yellow Waters cruise (recommended but some prefer to just relax) we can organise that for an additional cost.

**Day 5, 5 Aug** We begin with the 6:45 am Yellow Waters cruise, buffet breakfast included. For a short video about the cruise, see <https://www.kakadutourism.com/tours-activities/yellow-water-cruises/>

After breakfast, we drive to Maguk and do a walk up above where the day trippers can go. We'll have lunch next to our own private pool before returning to the car and driving to either the unserviced Kambolgie campground or serviced Gunlom campground in the southern part of the park (few people at Kambolgie, hot showers and crowds at Gunlom).



Pool above Maguk.

**Day 6, 6 Aug** If we haven't already done it, a short drive from Kambolgie brings us to the Gunlom campground and the start of the walk to the top of Gunlom.

After a look at the top of the falls, we continue upstream a short distance to where we can enjoy our own private pool. From there, we continue upstream, possibly as much as 4 km, before returning to the vehicle. Exactly how far we travel will be determined by the wishes of the group. If some want a long walk while others prefer to rest by the pool, no problem. The guide and walkers will collect them on the way back.

Overnight at the Gunlom campground, or, if people prefer, at the Mary River Roadhouse where you have the choice of accommodation or camping.

**Day 7, 7 Aug** Return to Darwin, possibly stopping at Ikoymarwa (Moline Rock Pools) for one final swim.

## What's Included

All transportation, the guide, park fees, camping fees, the Guluyambi and Yellow Waters cruises, the Injalak tour, the cultural tour at the Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp, all meals we cook.

## What's Not Included

**Accommodation.** Different people have different preferences. Rather than force everyone to make the same choice, we allow you to choose for yourself. Once you have decided, we will book it for you.

**Restaurant meals and drinks.** There is such a variation between what people choose that it would not be fair to charge everyone the same amount.

## Terrain and Difficulty

**Overall** Level 1

**Climate** Level 3. By August, it is normally starting to heat up. The humidity is usually fairly low, but this cannot be guaranteed. The maximum temperature on most days will average 33-34°C. The average nightly minimum is about 18-20°C (65°F), but it has been known to drop as low as 10°C. If you bring a sleeping bag, you won't need a heavy one. Rain is unlikely but possible so you should have something to use as shelter if we do get rain.

**Terrain** Most of the walks have a few steep climbs, none of which is over 200 m. As short as they are, these climbs are strenuous. Some may require using your hands to hold on as you climb up or down. 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.

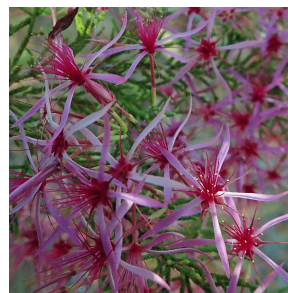
The creeks are low enough so that swimming across with packs is will not be necessary. It may, however, be necessary to wade across slippery rocks through waist deep water. Your guide can help if you need assistance.

While most of the walking is on marked trails, if we do the longer walks, some will be completely off-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 in these notes 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.

**Vegetation** Level 2-3. 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 may be some slow sections where you will have to pass through thick scrub. The vegetation can vary from year to year depending on when last burnt. At this time of year, the spear grass has finished seeding and dried out. There are always some flowers in bloom.



Turkey bush (*Calyrix extipulata*) is commonly seen at this time of year.

**Hours** Generally 4-7 hours, none of which will involve carrying a full pack.

**Packs** **Pack weight** - level 0. Day packs only. However, if we camp, whether you bring a sleeping bag and/or tent is a matter of personal choice. But, if you don't bring a sleeping bag, you should bring something like a set of thermals in case we do get a cool night. Similarly if you don't bring a tent, you should bring something you can put over yourself to keep yourself dry in case we get a storm.

**Art** We will see some of the commonly visited art sites. We may visit sites that other day walkers will never get to see.

**Campsites** Managed or unmanaged campgrounds.



**Swims** Less than on most of our trips but there will be opportunities for swims in the pools at Anbinik and Cooida. In addition, you will have your own private bush pool on a number of occasions on days 3-6.

**Lowlights** Possible tourist crowds at the beginning and end of all the walks.

**Highlights** Good weather. Great swimming holes. Aboriginal art sites.

**Wildlife** Birds are always present and are beginning to concentrate near the waterholes as the land dries out. This would be an excellent walk for keen birdwatchers. You are unlikely to see many large animals.

**Fishing** Not permitted on this walk.

**Maps** The 1:50,000 Jim Jim Falls shows where we walk at Jim Jim and Twin Falls; the Goodparla map shows where we walk at Maguk and Gunlom. Walking tracks are not shown and, in any case, some of our walking will be off-track. 1:250 000 Kakadu park map shows all areas but is not suitable for navigation.



## Fitness Note

While this trip is easier than any of our pack-carrying trips, we must emphasise some of the points make on our How Hard page, [www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/how-hard-are-the-trips](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/how-hard-are-the-trips)

**The absolute minimum level of fitness required for our easiest trips is to be able to comfortably walk 10 km in 2½ hours on level ground while carrying a small pack.**

You will not have to walk this fast on this trip but your ability to do so is a good indicator of whether or not you are fit enough to cope with the conditions you will encounter.

This test is not enough. Some of our walking may be off-trail. If you have done little or no off-track walking in rough conditions or you have not done extended walks in hot conditions, you need to study our information on rock hopping and climate before deciding to try one of our trips.

Links to this information are at the bottom of our How Hard page, [www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/how-hard-are-the-trips](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/how-hard-are-the-trips)

## General Notes

You can leave food and clothing in the vehicle during the walks.

Make sure you keep some money and a water bottle with you during the drives. It is unlikely that you will be able to easily get things out of your pack during the day.

A daypack will be useful on all walks. If you don't have a day pack, we may be able to rent you one. First come, first served.

Most of our vehicles are registered as self-drive hire cars and may be driven by those taking part in the tour. All are manual shift Landcruiser troopcarriers with three rows of forward facing seats.

You can see a list of all the marked day walks in Kakadu at <https://parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu/do/walks/>

If we stay in accommodation, we will probably choose to eat in a restaurant. If we camp, we will cook.

## **Cooinda and the Kakadu Wetlands**

Cooinda is a resort situated in the heart of the Kakadu wetlands. This is an area noted for its wildlife — and mosquitoes. The former make it a great place to visit, the latter make it an uncomfortable place for an overnight walk. The attractions at Cooinda include the Yellow Waters cruises, the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre and a short dry season nature walk along a marked trail.

Warradjan and the Cooinda hotel all offer a variety of souvenirs for sale. Bring extra cash or a credit card if you think that you might wish to purchase anything beyond the drinks, ice creams and lunches that most people purchase there.

## **Kakadu is Aboriginal Land**

Many traditional owners still live in the park. Their culture and some of their languages remain strong. It is not possible to understand the park without understanding something about the indigenous culture. Our visit to the Warradjan Cultural Centre and the Kakadu Billabong Safari Camp will give you a greater understanding of that culture as well as allowing you to meet some of the traditional owners.

If you would like to learn more, we recommend a leisurely browse of the official Kakadu website culture pages, <https://parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu/discover/culture/>