Kimberley Highlights 2: Aug-Sept 2013

Section 2: The Carr Boyd Range

Day 1. The first section of the trip had been a relatively easy acclimatisation to the late dry season in the Kimberley. Now it was time for some serious walking. We were picked up early in the morning and taken upriver by boat, past our first camp on the canoe trip and into Cooliman Creek.

On the boat to the drop off

Walking on the flat

We put on our packs and headed off. There are no trails here. It was map and compass navigation for the whole walk. The first part was relatively easy, flat and following the cliff line on our right.

We had a break in the shade after about an hour, then moved on to the pool below the first falls on "Many Falls Creek". After a relaxing swim it was time to climb and climb some more. It was steep and slow, but not too bad. There were other climbs to come, but this was the longest. We stayed high finally dropping down not far below the fifth falls where there is a decent campsite and pool. We got in about 1 pm and called it a day.

On the first climb

We had a leisurely lunch after which some did a little exploring, back to the top of the last waterfall for some great views back toward where we'd come from.

Day 2. We were up with first light and moving about 7. At this time of year, there was relatively little water coming over the falls so it was easy for us to cross the creek and climb up next to it. From the top of the waterfall, we headed roughly north, up and down as we crossed a number of small valleys.


First climb, day 2, looking back to the pool where we'd camped on day 1

Looking down into one of the valleys we had to cross

September is a relatively dry time of year but we had no problem finding water in most of the small creeks as we continued up one ridge and down the next, finally reaching the main valley of Packsaddle Creek in time for lunch. After lunch, we moved upstream and set up camp next to a nice pool just downstream of some cascades.

Flat rock camp where we spent two nights
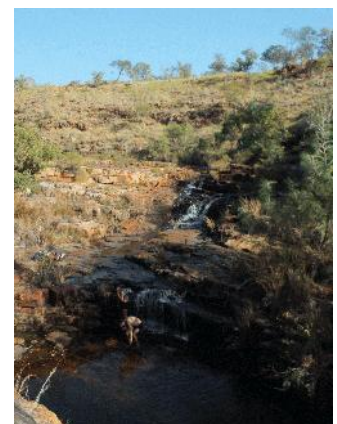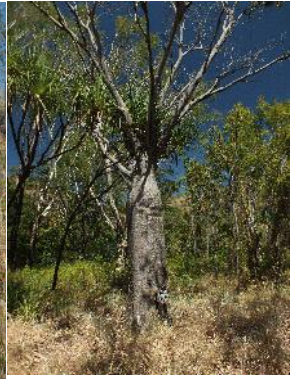

Cascades above camp

Day 3. We had just had two fairly hard days, so it was time for an easy one. We left our packs and did a day walk up the creek. The best way to describe it is to let the photos speak for themselves.

Cascades above camp

Crossing the creek near another cascade

Standing by a boab

There was a little bit of climbing, a bit of scrub and some nice flat rock. We got to the point where two creeks joined to make the one we were on. Both branches were dry above small waterfalls, but the creek was spring fed and flowing below those falls. Three of the many pools in the valley are shown below.

With all those pools, it was, of course, impossible to resist stopping for several swims.

Day 4. We were up with the first light and moving by 7. The sun was on the camp and it was already quite hot. We crossed the creek and headed downstream. The terrain was fairly flat and not too difficult all the way to where we dropped packs and did a nice walk up 'Birthday Creek'. Slightly bad timing; one of our group had her birthday on the following day.

Open walking along Packsaddle Creek

Packsaddle rapids
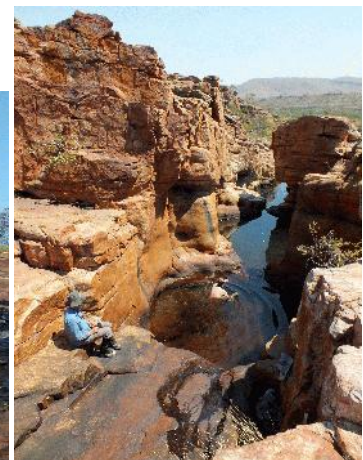
Birthday Creek swim

We had an early lunch where we'd left our packs, then moved on downstream, crossing the creek and camping on a sandy patch between two pools.

Day 5. Once again, we headed off at 7, arriving at another campsite we sometimes use at 8:30. The pool there was too good to resist so we had a long break while everyone had a swim.

Campsite day 4

First swim stop, day 5

Small waterfall, Packsaddle Creek

Big pool on Packsaddle bend

From there, we continued downstream past a number of small to medium waterfalls and rapids until we got to the final bend and one of the largest pools on Packsaddle. From here it was a short distance up and over to our final camp.

Our last campsite by a big boab next to a long pool.

Day 6. From camp it was a short walk out to the track where we met the vehicle which brought us back to town, arriving about 11 am.

Note. This report describes the walk we did in 2014. Every trip is different. While we follow the same basic route, we may use different campsites depending on the conditions at the time as well as on the fitness and interests of those taking part.