

Prince Regent National Park and the Moran River

20 June- 10 July 2021

Garimbu Creek, Moran and Roe River Area

Notes written by Cassie Newnes

This area has something for everyone, magnificent scenery, stunning waterfalls, plenty of swimming, some fishing opportunities, sandy beach camps and flat rock ledges. The highlight of the area is Garimbu Creek Falls and gorge. In modern times, this area is considered to be incredibly remote as there are no roads in and we require helicopters for access. However this area has been significant to people for thousands of years, and continues to be. We are fortunate this year to have two Traditional Owners travel from Derby to Welcome us to Country on Country. This will provide a rich opportunity to be Welcomed and also to hear directly from people who have Custodianship for this land how they wish for us to approach places of particular significance to them, such as rock art sites.* Please only book on this trip if you are willing to respect the strong spiritual beliefs within indigenous culture and behave accordingly.

During our three weeks here we will visit the Roe River, Moran River and Garimbu Creek. Each is quite different for a number of reasons.



The Roe is filled with beautiful pools and waterfalls. Each with its own unique beauty. These falls are close to where our food drop will be.

The Roe is a wide, meandering river. It has a combination of stunning waterfalls with flat rock ledges to camp on and beautiful sandy sections with paperbark trees and birdlife.

*Please note that unexpected events such as a funeral can impact on the ability of Traditional Custodians to meet with us.



A gorge along the Moran River. While we can not swim freely here, as there is no definitive saltwater croc barrier, there is plenty of shallow, rock pools where we can cool off.

The Moran has deep gorges. There is no definitive barrier between the section of Moran where we are exploring and the ocean so we will only swim in side creeks here. Because some of the gorges are deep and narrow we do a lot of day walking in this area so we can return the way we came as the only other option would be to swim through. We have included this section because it is so different from the other sections. It is also possibly the hardest section. Fortunately a lot of exploring will be done in this area with day packs and we will often return the way we came so there is also the option to rest at camp or next to a pretty pool on a side gorge while the group continues.

By the time we come to Garimbu you will most likely be wondering how it could possibly get more magnificent. Yet, it does. It is humbling in its beauty. There is no doubt you will be in awe and this is why we move very slowly through this section. There is a LOT to take in.





This trip is truly a journey back in time. Once the helicopter leaves it is just us and our backpacks immersed in an ancient and magnificent landscape. As this area is very hard to access we have the privilege of experiencing it in the quiet and gentle manner of remote area bushwalkers.

Itinerary: Roe- Moran- Garimbu

Note 1 Day 0 is the day before departure.

Note 2 This itinerary is subject to change.

Day 0 Pre-trip meeting, 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.

We begin with an hour and a half light aircraft charter to the Mitchell Plateau airstrip where we meet the helicopters which will take us to the start of our walk on the Roe River. Along the way we will do a food drop. To be absolutely certain that our food is still there when we need it, we plan to leave it in 20-litre metal drums which we will have to collect on our way out.

We start our walk close to the site where Bradshaw first saw Gwion Gwion paintings, naming them 'Bradshaws'. There is some interesting art in this area and lots of beautiful waterfalls.

Day 2-5 Bush camping carrying full packs some days, day packs on others.

Day 7 Arrive at food drop for resupply. We will camp near food drop.

Day 8-13 We leave the Roe River and head over to the Moran. This is the place that people keen to fish are most likely to catch something. The Moran is much harder to explore than the other systems as many of the gorges become narrow and would require swimming to pass through. While it would be unlikely to find a saltwater crocodile here we can not guarantee it so will take all necessary precautions. We will possibly do a combination of double camps and day walks. There will also be the option to take our packs and explore some areas we have not yet visited. We will see what will suit the group the most at the time.

Day 13 We return back to our food drop on the Roe River and resupply. We will camp near our food drop.

Day 14-20 We continue down the Roe River camping two more nights along the Roe before cutting across to Garimbu. We finish the trip with a double and then a triple camp as there is so much to explore in the area with daypacks

Day 21 Helicopter back to Mitchell Plateau airstrip. Fly back to Kununurra. Drop off at your accommodation.

Terrain and Difficulty

Overall Level 4

Climate Level 2. Average daytime max about 30°C (86°F), average nighttime min about 11°C (61°). It has been known to drop to near freezing. Generally low humidity.

Rain very unlikely but possible.

Terrain Level 2-4. Although much of the walking is relatively easy, the trip does include substantial amounts of rock hopping. Some short sections will be quite rugged. People without bushwalking experience are likely to find it more difficult than those who have had such experience.

Vegetation Level 2-3. Can vary from year to year depending on when last burnt. It is likely that you will spend some time pushing through some fairly thick scrub or grass. At this time of year, the spear grass has finished seeding and dried out. It may be necessary to push through thick spinifex in some places. This is mainly when exploring for art sites and there is the option, in many of these situations, to stay by the river swimming if you prefer.

Hours Generally 4-6 hours. Some days may be longer. We plan to have a number of days where we only carry day packs and others where you need carry your pack for only a couple of hours after which you can rest or explore without packs.

Packs On Section One and Two you need to carry 6 days food. On Section 3 you need to carry 8 days food. You need a sleeping bag and should bring a tent. If you decide to bring only a mosquito net, you need to carry something like a plastic painters drop sheet you can use for shelter if we do get rain.

Campsites Mix of sand and rock ledges. Most sites are excellent. You are unlikely to see anyone else at any of the campsites.

Swims There will be lots of good pools and there should be several opportunities for swimming each day. On the Moran we need to be careful where we swim because of the risk of saltwater crocodiles. This is a very low risk however we will still make sure we only swim where there are definitive barriers.

Lowlights Hard for many people to think of any. Possible scrub and rough terrain in some places. Cattle.

Highlights Waterfalls and beautiful gorge scenery. Perfect weather. Great swimming holes. Aboriginal art sites. Helicopter flight. More wildlife than many other areas. You see a variety of birds along the river and have a good chance of spotting freshwater crocodiles. Double and triple camps.

Fishing Excellent on the Moran. The main fish we caught were sooty grunter. There were others like mangrove jack in the lower reaches of the Moran. Bring a line if you enjoy fishing.

Maps 1:50,000 3967-2 Nyimandum (short bit near Garimbu Falls), 4067-3 Moran River. We can provide both maps but may have to order them in.

Birds. The variety of environments through which we will travel makes this a particularly good trip for birdwatchers. We will see a wide selection of birds, both common and relatively rare. A 2011 expedition looking at Aboriginal art sites also recorded the birds they saw 71 different species.

Notes

- Some items may be left at your accommodation in Kununurra during the walk.
- You should have packages containing your breakfasts and lunches for section two and three ready to give to the guide at the pre-trip meeting. Do not include anything perishable.

Section One It is likely we will arrive at our food drop by lunchtime on Day 7

Food drop 2 We will leave the drums on the morning of Day 8 and return to them Day 13. I recommend having Day 13 lunch with you just in case we are travelling slowly.

Food drop 3 We will leave the drums on the morning of Day 14

You may wish to also pack a light lunch in the drums to eat at the airstrip on Day 22.

- While we plan to leave the drop in sealed metal drums, we could save money by using heavy duty plastic bags. If, however, something did get into the food, it could mean aborting some or all of the second section. This would also mean that you would have to carry all your rubbish from each section and any spares that you had in the drop.
- There is a possible pack float on the third section on the Roe and also on Garimbu. Please have something to waterproof your pack in the third food drop