



## Tourism Industry Update – 28 August 2009

### Forecasted opening times for key visitor sites PLUS Latest news from Kakadu

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#### STONE COUNTRY BURNING PROGRAM

Kakadu's Traditional Owners and staff recently completed the annual Stone Country burning program on the Arnhem Land Plateau. The plateau is culturally and biologically significant. It supports a number of endemic plants and animals and is arguably the most important and most threatened habitat in Kakadu. The major threat to this vulnerable habitat is hot and uncontrolled wildfires that occur late in the dry season.

The Stone Country burning program has been successful in stopping the spread of a number of late season wildfires. Following traditional burning practices, break and mosaic burns are established on and around the Arnhem Land Plateau early in the dry season. Break burns made in creeks and rivers dissect the plateau while mosaic burns break up fuel loads by time and space. Traditional owners have been reconnecting with the stone country by walking these traditional routes conducting the burning program.



Above: Traditional owners and park staff burn and look after country as part of the Stone Country burning program.

#### COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Operators and guides are reminded to ensure that they are familiar with and carry a copy of their permit and the associated conditions in their vehicle while in Kakadu. These conditions are in place to manage visitor safety and protect Kakadu's natural and cultural values. Tour operator compliance checks are continuing around the park. Operators found breaching their permit conditions should be aware that they may be contravening the federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000*.

We would like to acknowledge the many operators who have supported their guides to complete the Kakadu Knowledge for Tour Guides course. The tourism industry has embraced the program, with many operators now incorporating the course into their staff training and induction programs.