

Kimberley Highlights No. 2: August 17-26, 2023

List price - \$3495

For information about our advance purchase and other discounts, see our discount page, www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/discounts

Summary. This trip consists of two sections, either of which can be done on its own. The first section is an easy paddle down the Ord River below the main dam. This allows us to acclimatise and includes a day walk visiting some nice waterfalls. Section two is a 6 day walk in the Carr Boyd range; lots of waterfalls, lots of swimming and some amazing views.



Easy paddling on the Ord

Itinerary

Note 1 Day 0 is the day before departure.

Note 2 This itinerary is subject to change.

Section 1 Ord River Canoe

List price: \$1595

Day 0 Those beginning with this section travel to Kununurra. There are daily air and bus services between Kununurra and Perth and Darwin. Connections to the eastern states are normally make through Darwin.
Pre-trip meeting, 6.00 p.m., outdoor area, Kimberley Croc Motel. **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 as arranged at the pre-trip meeting. 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.
Bus to Argyle Dam. Begin canoe trip. Bush camp.

Day 2-3 Bush camping. Canoeing and day walks.

Day 4 Finish paddle. Return to Kununurra, arriving early to mid afternoon. Drop off at your accommodation.
Those continuing on to section 2 will have a night in budget accommodation.

Section 2 Carr Boyd Range

List price: \$2195

Day 4 Those beginning with this section may meet the group the evening before the trip departs. If you wish to do this, you need to contact the Walkabouts office well in advance to find out where they will be staying.

Day 5 Pick up between 7.30 and 8.00 a.m. Pick up is from your accommodation in Kununurra provided you have given us the address at least a week before departure. Otherwise, you will have to go to where the group is staying. You will have to contact us for details. Boat to Cooliman Creek on the edge of the Carr Boyds. Begin walk, carrying full packs. Bush camp.

Day 6-9 Bush camping, carrying full packs.

Day 10 Vehicle pick up. Return to Kununurra. Trip ends.



Carr Boyd photo stop



One of the many swim stops

Now for the details

Section 1: Ord River Canoe: August 17-20

Since we first offered this canoe trip way back in 1994, those who have done it have all agreed that it was a worthy addition to our program. Using canoes allows you to carry more with less effort — a good way to carry a few little luxuries you wouldn't put into a pack. It also allows you to get closer to large numbers of birds than is normally possible when you're on foot and it helps you acclimatise before the next two sections of the trip.



Approaching our two night camp



View from the top of the main climb on our day walk

From Kununurra we are driven to Lake Argyle where we put the canoes in the river just below the main dam. The first day is a longish one. Our reward is a pleasant bush camp (even has a shower) where we spend two nights. This allows us to do an amazing day walk up into the hills where we enjoy some spectacular views as well as some nice pools and waterfalls.



Waterfall drink stop on the day walk. The flow is unlikely be that strong on this trip.



Relaxing at Herbie's Hideaway

On day 3, we paddle to a camp where Spillway Creek joins the Ord. We make a couple of stops on the way, one of which will involve parking the canoes and doing a short walk to a beautiful spot called Herbie's Hideaway where we find a big pool and nice little waterfall.

The final day used to be a long one. With little current to help us along, it could get a bit tiring toward the end. As of this year, there is a new place where we can get a pick up so we will finish there.

Terrain and difficulty (general information after section two)

Overall Level 0.

Terrain Level 1-3. There is no walking with full packs. Some of the optional side walks go up steep slopes. The Ord offers especially easy paddling with enough current to keep you going without any rapids to threaten you with a spill. Crossing Lake Kununurra on the last day, when you are accustomed to the paddle, is the only time the current lets you down. Previous canoeing experience is not necessary.

Vegetation Level 1. No vegetation to push through in the canoe but there may be a few small patches on a walk.

Hours You normally paddle and walk 4-6 hours per day.

Packs **Pack weight:** level 0. No need to carry a full pack.

Art: None that we have found.

Campsites Formed campsites with platforms for our tents, long drop toilets and kitchen facilities.

Swims Very good. You are on a permanently flowing river. It is, however, fairly cold as it is being fed from the bottom of Lake Argyle. Swims on the side walks might be warmer.

Lowlights Sore arms and blisters from paddling. Gardening gloves prevent blisters, highly recommended.

Highlights Lazy laid back time.

Wildlife This section is the best for wildlife. Paddling slowly and keeping your eyes open gives you an excellent chance to see waterbirds, freshwater crocs, wallabies and other small animals.



One of many birds we re likely to see on the Ord

Fishing Possible but not easy – lots of people try their luck on the main river so the fish are harder to catch than where people seldom go fishing.

Maps 1:50 000 Burt Range, Carlton Gorge and Deception Range.

Section 2: The Carr Boyd Range: August 21-26

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.



Steep climb near the start



Walking between the two main creeks

We begin with a boat ride up the Ord River to a drop off on Cooliman Creek. A relatively flat walk of about 4 km brings us to the first of the many waterfalls and pools we get to enjoy on this walk. The climb up is steep, but well worth it for the great views as one waterfall follows another. We make our way along the creek, onto the plateau, then overland and down another creek. Along the way we will stop to enjoy numerous swims and take time out to simply relax and look at nature around us.

We exit the range near Packsaddle Creek where we will be met by the pick up vehicle. The trip ends with our return to Kununurra.

Terrain and difficulty (general information after section two)

Overall Level 3.

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 = five night's food.

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 Boat through the Ord Everglades just after dawn (if we use the boat). Great views from the top. Waterfalls, pools and gorges.

Wildlife The boat trip at the start gives an excellent chance to see waterbirds and freshwater crocs. It also gives a good chance of seeing wallabies. There are birds on the rest of the walk but you are unlikely to see many large animals.

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



Last campsite on most trips



One of many swim stops

Terrain and Difficulty – General Information

Climate Level 3+. Although August-September is cool compared to the four months which follow, it is hot. The average daily maximum during the first half of the month is about 33°C (92°F). It is, however, still reasonably cool at night. The average nightly minimum is about 16°C (62°F). However, it once went as low as 11°C is not uncommon for the temperature to drop as low as 11°C (61°F). We recommend you bring a light sleeping bag. Rain is highly unlikely but it can get dewy at night. A fly over a mosquito net or dome can help keep you dry.

Terrain 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.



Red flowering kurrajong, one of the many plants in bloom at this time of year

Notes for all sections

Day packs are particularly useful on section one and may also be useful on section two.

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

Those doing two consecutive sections have a night in budget motel accommodation in Kununurra included in the price of the trip. They can upgrade for an extra charge. They will also have a chance to do some shopping in Kununurra between sections. Cold drinks are irresistible. Make sure you bring money for this.

Those doing more than one section will have to carry only what they need for each section. Additional food and clothing can be left in the vehicle or in Kununurra.

A restaurant meal between sections is included in the price of the trip for those doing both sections. 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.

Pre-Trip Our pre-trip meetings are held at the **Kimberley Croc Motel**. This is shown under its old name, Kimberley Croc Lodge on the map. For those joining for section two, we will try and have a pre-trip meeting the night before you start, 6 pm at the Kimberley Croc Motel.

