



**kakadu**<sup>®</sup>  
NATIONAL PARK

**Garri-djarrkdurkmirri**  
Working together

# TOURISM INDUSTRY UPDATE

YEKKE SEASON

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## Park Manager's Message

The Park continues to look amazing. Unfortunately the reasons as to why are the ones that continue to cause delays in site openings – roads and swollen rivers. More on this below.

We recently met with the Kakadu Tourism Consultative Committee. The committee, established under the Kakadu Board of Management, meets four times a year to talk all things tourism. Its primary role is to represent the interests of all those involved in Kakadu tourism and put forward issues, ideas and recommendations (through the Chair) to the Kakadu Board of Management. If you are not familiar with the Committee visit our website to find out more and get involved – it's your committee and your voice.

This time around, the Committee took some time to talk about the most recent events and angst around Park openings and communication. We settled on a few ideas including better systems to monitor the status of roads and key visitor sites leading up to the Park opening, a review of the dates for dry season tariffs and an 'industry get together with Park staff', including Rangers to talk through some of the finer details around Park Management.

And speaking of Rangers – a word of appreciation and support for the guys who work flat out to keep the weeds down, maintain campgrounds and infrastructure, deal with angry ferals and delight tourists with information and stories about our past and present.

Pete

## Facebook

Check out our Facebook page  
to see the latest info on the  
park

[https://www.facebook.com/  
KakaduNationalPark](https://www.facebook.com/KakaduNationalPark)

## Crocodile Management – Keeping Kakadu Safe for Tourists

Crocodile surveys – continued monitoring of crocodile numbers, size and behaviour is necessary to provide accurate information as a basis for assessing and managing the risks of adverse interactions between crocodiles and people. During the wet season estuarine (saltwater) crocodiles disperse over a wide area, travelling upstream and downstream along flooded creek and river systems and onto adjacent floodplains and associated watercourses. Since protection in the early 1970's there has been a rapid increase in estuarine crocodiles in the Top End of the Northern Territory. In more recent times Kakadu's crocodile population has neared its peak. As a result estuarine crocodiles are now found in areas where crocodiles were not seen during the 1970's to mid 1980's, but are actually returning to numbers seen at the time of first contact by the early explorers.

If a sighting was made, it was a rarity for these places in the 1970's and the 1980's, particularly where people regularly swam like escarpment base plunge pool areas. Since the early 1990's, estuarine crocodiles have moved all the way upstream during periods of wet season flooding to the pools at the base of the Arnhem Land escarpment. At the start of each dry season (April – May), Park staff intensively survey and remove any estuarine crocodiles detected in or near plunge pools that the public visit. This is done before any of these areas are opened to the public for the dry season visitor period. It is very important to mitigate the risk of saltwater crocodile interaction with visitors in these areas as much as possible.

It is very important to constantly evaluate the risks of these plunge pool areas where people and saltwater crocodiles may interact. Twin Falls was a very good example of where it was no longer acceptable to allow people to continue to swim up the main gorge area due to the risk of a saltwater crocodile entering the area undetected, even after all surveys and mitigation measures (traps etc) had been undertaken and put in place.

Prior to and since intensive pre-visitor opening management practices (1994- surveys, trapping, detection measures) were put in place for these areas over **74** estuarine crocodiles ranging in size from 1m to 4m plus have been removed from the Kakadu plunge pool management zones. The average sizes of these crocodiles over that time were about 2.66m and most were male.

Crocodiles as large as 4.5m have been sighted in these areas (Old Jim Jim Falls Campground Pool), but these animals departed before they could be captured.

On the 16.10.2014 a 2.98m male saltwater crocodile was detected and later trapped and removed from Gubarra swimming area, this is the first known record for a saltwater crocodile being present in this area.

Garry Lindner – Field Supervisor, Crocodile Management and Coastal Patrol



Gubarra: 2.98m male, removed 16 October 2014



Maguk: 3.9m male 19 April 2016



## The Threatened Species Commissioner gets to know our Toad Savvy Quolls.

Good news on Australia's toad-smart and cat-savvy quolls which I helped release last night with Traditional Owners Bessie Coleman and Mick Markham and their families, [Kakadu National Park](#) rangers, scientists from [the University of Technology Sydney](#), [University of Melbourne](#), and [Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission](#) staff.

We released the quolls after dark and I slept out in a swag with them on Elder Bessie Coleman's country, in the morning. Early signs were that the quolls training had worked. The scientists and Kakadu rangers came back and we confirmed using radio tracking that none of the quolls had eaten a cane-toad and all had found safe hiding places for the day.

When I asked Bessie how she felt before she went home, she said, "I'm happy today, it's good to have the quolls back". I'm feeling a similar sense of deep satisfaction. But also tremendous gratitude and pride for the terrific staff at Kakadu National Park and the scientists and Territory Wildlife Park staff who are all doing their best in the fight against extinction. – Gregory Andrews, Threatened Species Commissioner, Department of Environment.



## What's On in Kakadu

Weekly Activities – 2016 DRY SEASON					
MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
9.00 - 11.00 am <b>Burrungkuy Rock Art Talks</b> Burrungkuy (Nourlangie) art site <i>Nourlangie Region</i>	8.00 - 10.00 am <b>Seasonal Changes in Kakadu's Wetlands</b> Mamukala Walk & Bird Hide, Easy 3 km loop <i>South Alligator Region</i>	9.00 - 11.00 am <b>Burrungkuy Rock Art Talks</b> Burrungkuy (Nourlangie) art site <i>Nourlangie Region</i>	8.00 - 10.30 am <b>Connecting Through Time with Rock Art</b> Nanguluwur Walk, Easy 4 km return <i>Nourlangie Region</i>	8.30 - 10.00 am <b>Welcome to Kakadu</b> Bowali Woodlands & Visitor Centre Walk (meet at Bowali Visitor Centre) Easy 1.5 km return <i>Jabiru Region</i>	8.30 - 10.00 am* <b>Creation, History &amp; Biodiversity</b> Gunlom Lookout Walk Steep 2 km return <i>Mary River Region</i>
	8.30 - 10.00 am* <b>Creation, History &amp; Biodiversity</b> Gunlom Lookout Walk Steep 2 km return <i>Mary River Region</i>	9.30 - 11.30 am* <b>Ubirr Rock Art Talks</b> Ubirr art site Easy 1.5 km loop <i>East Alligator Region</i>	8.30 - 10.30 am* <b>Explore Riverside Stone Country</b> Bardedjildji Walk Easy 2.5 km loop <i>East Alligator Region</i>	9.00 - 11.00 am <b>Burrungkuy Rock Art Talks</b> Burrungkuy (Nourlangie) art site <i>Nourlangie Region</i>	10.00 am - 12.00 pm & 1.00 - 3.00 pm (Fortnightly from 14 May) <b>Traditional Painting</b> Bowali Visitor Centre <i>Jabiru Region</i>
1.00 - 3.00 pm* <b>Traditional Weaving</b> Merl campground <i>East Alligator Region</i>	9.30 - 11.30 am* <b>Ubirr Rock Art Talks</b> Ubirr art site Easy 1.5 km loop <i>East Alligator Region</i>		11.00 - 1.00 pm* <b>Traditional Painting</b> Cultural activities Merl campground <i>East Alligator Region</i>	9.30 - 11.30 am* <b>Ubirr Rock Art Talks</b> Ubirr art site Easy 1.5 km loop <i>East Alligator Region</i>	
5.00 - 6.30 pm <b>Linking Billabongs &amp; Stone Country</b> Nawurlandja Walk Steep 1.5 km return <i>Nourlangie Region</i>	9.30 am - 1.00 pm <b>Cultural Activities</b> Bowali Visitor Centre <i>Jabiru Region</i>		1.00 - 2.00 pm <b>Caring for Kakadu</b> Bowali Visitor Centre (Meet near Bowali theatre) <i>Jabiru Region</i>	10.30 am - 1.30 pm <b>Cultural Activities</b> Bowali Visitor Centre <i>Jabiru Region</i>	Look out for weekend cultural activities at Gunlom Day Use Area* <i>Mary River Region</i>
7.30 - 8.30 pm* <b>Southern Kakadu Stories</b> Slideshow Gunlom Day use Area <i>Mary River Region</i>	7.30 - 8.30 pm <b>Wildlife, Behind the Scenes or Seasons</b> Slideshows Aurora Kakadu Lodge Jabiru (By the pool) <i>Jabiru Region</i>	7.30 - 8.30 pm <b>Rock Art Through the Ages</b> Slideshow Crocodile Hotel Jabiru (In the Jim Jim Room) <i>Jabiru Region</i>	5.00 - 6.00 pm <b>Croc 'n' Tell Ranger Talk</b> Crocodile Hotel Jabiru (in the Escarpment Restaurant) <i>Jabiru Region</i>	7.30 - 8.30 pm* <b>Mary River Histories</b> Slideshow Gunlom Day use Area <i>Mary River Region</i>	
Look out for cultural activities at the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre (Yellow Water Region)			Dates:		
Please Note: Activities may be cancelled for reasons beyond our control.			1 May - 30 September - Jabiru, Nourlangie and South Alligator Region activities		
			*1 June - 30 September - East Alligator and Mary River Region activities		

## Avoid the Crowds – Plan Your Trip Around Cultural Activities and Ranger Guided Talks

These activities are typically designed for FITs who don't have the benefit of travelling with a knowledgeable tour guide. So, if you are bringing a large tour group into the park, please try to avoid these activities so that both your group and the ranger-guided group can enjoy these sites without congestion. It would be a shame to get stuck in a crowd at Australia's largest terrestrial national park. If you have a small group, you are welcome to ask the ranger to join in.

Full program details can be downloaded [here](#).



## Happening right now;

Site	Expected Opening Date	Croc Management	Notes
<b>Gunlom</b>	Further rain has delayed road works on the Gimbat/Gunlom Roads by Department of Infrastructure. Road works have recommenced 13/5/2016	Monitoring water levels for additional survey requirements.	Campground manager on-site preparing visitor amenities.
<b>Jarrangbarnmi (Koolpin Gorge)</b>	Site opening preparations complete.  Gimbat Road repairs commencing 13/5/2016.	Monitoring water levels for additional survey requirements.	Site will open once road work and crocodile surveys complete.
<b>Jim Jim/Twin Falls</b>	As per article below. Additional rainfall has caused delays in forecast site opening 3 June.	Awaiting water levels to recede prior to installing crocodile trap. Site will be reviewed mid next week.	Installation of infrastructure and boats at Twin will take place after the croc surveys completed at Twin (approx 2 weeks after Jim Jim Falls area).



## Myrtle Rust

“Myrtle rust” is a new disease in the Top End, but for now it’s restricted to Darwin and the Tiwi Islands. If it makes it out to Kakadu, it could affect some of our native species (e.g. paperbarks, allosyncarpia..) – so please keep your eyes peeled (especially field staff), and report anything suspicious (without touching it)!



If you think you’ve seen myrtle rust in your garden or in the bush:

- 1: DO NOT TOUCH IT OR REMOVE IT. It can easily get onto your clothes and spread.
- 2: Record its location and take a photo.
- 3: Call Anthony Mann our Threatening Processes Officer, on 89381175

## Jim Jim Falls -- Update

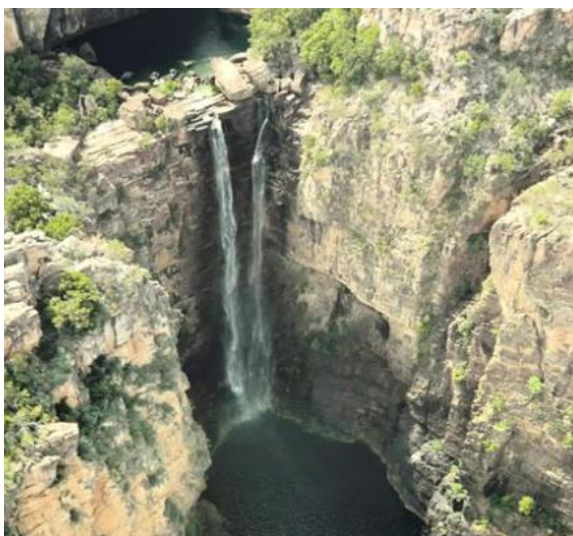
A week in Kakadu is long time, the photo on the left was taken on a scenic flight on the 4 May 2016.

Since then we had some late rain right across the park with up to 60mm in places. The photo on the right was taken by Katherine Wilson, Team Leader South, on the morning of 11 May, showing Jim Jim in a completely different light.

Kathy sent us the following update :

Jim Jim Rangers went in to Jim Jim Falls on 11 May to install croc traps, but could not access all of the sites. The recent heavy rain and associated run off in the catchments has caused minor flooding with water levels now too high for the traps to be effective.

We will monitor the situation and possibly install the traps mid next week.



## African Big-Headed Ant

Please keep your eyes out for signs of the African Big Headed Ant, which has just made a comeback in Kakadu. The IUCN ranks this as being in the top 100 most unwanted pests in the world!

It's been discovered in Kakadu before (2002, and 2010, I think) but presumed eradicated each time. Now they've returned, having been confirmed in Jabiru and Cooinda

<http://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Environment/Biodiversity/Threats/Invasive-species/African-big-headed-ant>

(Whilst they're called the Big Headed Ant, only about 1 in 100 ants have the big head, the others look like a pretty standard sort of small ant). I've attached a fact sheet, and some photos of a nest found in Jabiru last week.

If you find anything suspicious, or want any more info, please contact [anthony.mann@environment.gov.au](mailto:anthony.mann@environment.gov.au)



## Maguk Looks Great

60 mm of rain fell in the southern end of the park on Monday, 9 May 2016 – what the...?!

Bushwalkers and campers were caught out in a big way, however temperatures and humidity have since dropped to normal dry season levels and it is a great time to get out and explore the park.

Maguk opened on the 8 May, flowing nicely, below photo taken last Monday (9 May).

Photo credit: Sugarbag Safaris



We would like to know what you are interested in learning about regarding Kakadu.

If you have any suggestions as to what you would like included in a future edition of the Industry Update, please forward your suggestion to [Kakadu.permits@environment.gov.au](mailto:Kakadu.permits@environment.gov.au)

For more information about Kakadu National Park contact Bowali Visitor Centre on (08) 8938 1120 or visit our websites.

Visitor Information

[www.parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu](http://www.parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu)

Useful forms and information

[www.environment.gov.au/resource/tourism-operators](http://www.environment.gov.au/resource/tourism-operators)