

Kakadu Highlights No. 7: 23 August - 5 September 2026

List price - \$5495

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

Summary. This trip consists of two separate walks both of which visit areas we don't visit on any of our other walks. Lots of swimming, waterfalls, Aboriginal art and some amazing geological formations. You spend a night at Cooina, do an Aboriginal cultural tour if available and a Yellow Waters cruise between walks.



On the track to Graveside. The adventure begins even before the walk starts.

Itinerary: Kakadu Highlights No. 7

Note 1 Day 0 is the day before departure.

Note 2 This itinerary is subject to change.

Section 1 Graveside Plus List price: \$4295

Day 0 **Pre-trip meeting, 6.30 p.m., Pool Side Bar & Restaurant, Hilton Gardens, 122 The Esplanade.** There are two Hiltons next door to each other. The correct one is closer to Daly Street, the taller of the two. **This meeting is important.** If you cannot make the meeting, please advise us well in advance.

Day 1 7 to 8 a.m. pick up as arranged at the pre-trip meeting. Drive to Kakadu. Begin walk carrying full packs. Bush camp.

Day 2-9 Bush camping, carrying full packs.

Day 10 Return to car. Drive to Cooina and check into campground. Aboriginal cultural tour if available.

Day 11 6.45 a.m. Yellow Waters Cruise. Trip finishes. Those ending here catch a tour bus back to Darwin.



The pool above the main

Section 2 Dinner Creek List price: \$2595

Day 10 Those beginning with this section catch a bus to Cooina. The cost of getting to Cooina is not included in the cost of the tour. At the time these notes were written, the only way to get to Cooina was on an AAT Kings tour. (You could book the transport without the tour. That may or may not still be possible.)

Day 11 6.45 a.m. Yellow Waters Cruise. Drive to Dinner Creek. Begin walk, carrying full packs. Bush camp.

Day 12-13 Bush camping, carrying full packs sometimes, day packs at others.

Day 14 Walk back to the main track and back to the vehicle(s). Return to Darwin, drop off at your accommodation sometime that evening.



The Yellow Waters cruise is the only place you might see a croc like this.

Now for the details

Section 1: Graveside/Bilkbilkmi Plus: 24 August - 3 September

This walk combines a portion of our normal Graveside route, part of our Kakadu Circle route and a gorge which we do not visit on any other trip. You see a variety of landscapes, deep gorges, beautiful swimming pools and cascades as well as a number of little known Aboriginal art sites.

The drive from Darwin to the start of the walk is over 300 kilometres, including about 45 kilometres on a 4WD track which is so rough that it can take over two hours on its own. A relatively flat walk of about 5 km brings us to our first camp. We'll stay here for two nights.

The two main gorges at Graveside contain some of the nicest monsoon forest in Kakadu. We plan spend the second day



exploring the gorges, enjoying the shade and relaxing in and around the large pools. There is lots of wading so be prepared to get wet.

A short, steep climb the next morning gets us onto the plateau where we have a look at the upper reaches of the two creeks we explored the day before. At this time of year, the flow is often

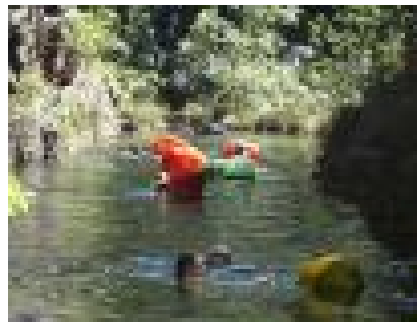
down to a trickle but there are still plenty of pools where we can cool off and relax in the midday heat. From here, a flat three kilometre walk through the open woodland of the plateau brings us to Cascades Creek.



We plan to spend two nights at this or another nearby campsite – a good pool below and another one with a small cascade just above.

Wading through the side gorge

The walk down the four kilometre gorge is a slow one. There are a few places where you have the choice of edging along narrow rock ledges (close to water level, no big drops), floating your pack through the creek or climbing up and around. (You can waterproof your pack by lining it with two garbage bags, one inside the other.) On many trips, some people choose to swim while others choose to climb. The two photos at right show the alternatives.



Cascades Creek pack float



As hard as it gets. On this trip an 8 year old had done the same step a few minutes earlier.

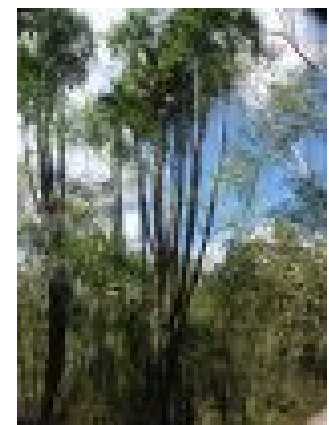


Age 8 or 80, almost no one we've taken past the slide can resist having at least one go. Most have several.

The pools and art sites are too nice to pass by, so stops are frequent as we make our way down to the cascades for which the creek is named. The last 500 metres often takes two hours or more as the deep pools and a natural water slide are much too inviting to rush past.

Unlike our other Graveside trips where we return to the vehicles straight after the Cascades, we have an extra couple of days to explore a bit of Gronophylum Creek with its unusual multi-trunked palms,

beautiful, sandy camp sites and deep, clear pools.



Multi-trunked Gronophylum



Rugged landscape near Gronophylum Creek

The rugged landscape away from the creek is reminiscent of central Australia with its red rock and spinifex covered hills. A short, steep climb to the top of one of the hills presents us with an incredible panorama. Following the creek, you might walk three kilometres in an hour. Following a straight-line compass bearing, the landscape is such a jumble of broken rock that three kilometres might take you three days. We'll stick to the creek, find a

nice camp site and do a day walk up to Gronophylum Gorge and Falls.



Gronophylum Falls

A relatively flat walk on the final full day brings us down the main valley to our final campsite. A short walk the next morning gets us back to the vehicle. We then drive out to Cooina where we check into the campground and meet those who are joining the trip for the second section. Opportunity to wash clothes and have hot shower. If available, we'll include an Aboriginal cultural tour. Bring towel and toiletries and money for drinks.

This section finishes with the 6.45 a.m. Yellow Waters Cruise the following morning. The cruise gives you the opportunity to see the wetlands wildlife at close range, far closer than you could approach on foot. The early hour ensures you see more of the wildlife than those who do the midday cruises.

For more information, see our Graveside page <https://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/graveside>

Maps. 1:50 000 Koolpin. The 1:250 000 Kakadu park map shows all areas but is not suitable for navigation.

Terrain and difficulty

- Overall** Level 3.
- Climate** Level 3. The average maximum temperature is 32-34°C. And the average nightly minimum is about 17-19°C. It is, however, possible for the temperature to drop as low as 10°C (50°F). Occasionally it goes lower still. Sleeping bags are essential. Rain is highly unlikely.
- Terrain** Level 3. The terrain ranges from open woodland to narrow rainforest gorges. Parts are flat and easy. Other parts require scrambling over river stones of a variety of sizes. There are a few steep, but short climbs. You walk through almost every type of terrain that it is possible to encounter in Kakadu.
- Packs** **Pack weight** - level 3. You need to carry 9 days food. This will include about 2-3 kg of the evening meals. You need a sleeping bag but are unlikely to need a tent.
- Vegetation** Level 2-3. 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 may be some slow sections where you will have to pass through thick scrub. The vegetation can vary from year to year depending on when last burnt. At this time of year, the spear grass has finished seeding and dried out.
- Hours** Generally 4-6 hours. One or two days might be longer.
- Art** We visit a variety of art sites, some of which are in excellent condition.
- Campsites** Mix of sand and rock ledges. Most sites are excellent. You are unlikely to see anyone else at most of the campsites.
- Swims** Most creeks are still flowing well and the swimming is excellent. We will have good pools at almost every campsite and lunch spot.
- Lowlights** The very long drive to the start of the walk.

- Highlights** Perfect weather. Aboriginal tour if available. Great swimming holes. Aboriginal art sites.
- Wildlife** Birds are always present but spread out at this time of year. You are unlikely to see many large animals.
- Fishing** Not permitted on this walk.

Note for section one. Some groups might do the walk in the reverse direction. The guide will make the decision based on the conditions at the time.

Section 2: Dinner Creek: 2-6 September

This section overlaps the first and includes the bistro meal, night at Cooina and Yellow Waters cruise. If seats are limited, those who have done the first section have priority.

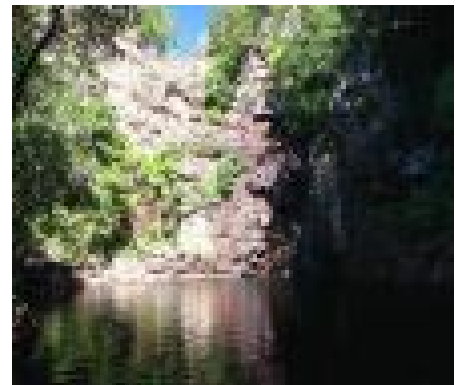
The drive from Cooina to the start of the walk is more than 100 km, about half of which is on a gravel road. To reach Dinner Creek from where we leave the vehicles, we have our choice of a five kilometre walk along an old 4WD track or a somewhat longer but shadier walk along the South Alligator River. Another easy two kilometres brings us to the first of the large pools on Dinner Creek.

Unlike the rest of the pools we find on this section, this first pool could conceivably be home to a large crocodile so we continue up the main gorge to a base camp, a shady area next to another refreshing pool. No crocs here so swimming is fine.

Dinner Creek is an environmentally sensitive area so group size may be limited to a maximum of nine people. Traditional Aboriginal beliefs restrict visits to the period from April through September. It is also one of the very few areas in Kakadu where it is possible to do interesting one-day loop walks.



High view, Dinner Creek



Main falls & pool, Dinner Creek.

One of these loops will bring us to a high point from which we get some excellent views. The other brings us to one of the most interesting geological features in Kakadu, for some, a truly special place. No photo can possibly do it justice, so we will not publish one, either in our trip notes or on our website.

For more information about Dinner Creek see

www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/kurrundie.shtml#dinner If that doesn't take you straight to the Dinner Creek section, scroll down the

page.

Note on section 2. The number of groups visiting Dinner Creek is limited. We cannot book our walk until we have bookings. If we do not get early bookings, we may have to substitute a different walk.

Terrain and Difficulty (more info in the general description)

- Overall** Level 2.
- Terrain** Level 2. The first part of the walk is along a 4WD track; the next two km along flat ground. There is some rock hopping along the creek further up but the climbs are normally done with out full packs, making this one of the easiest trips we offer.
- Vegetation** Level 2. Mostly open woodland or open areas along the creek. There is one section of fairly dense forest on one of the daywalks.
- Hours** 4-6 hours most days.
- Packs** **Pack weight** - level 2. You need to carry three days food.
- Art** There are a couple of minor art sites on this route. There is an interesting stone arrangement nearby.

Campsites	Sand or rock ledges. Excellent sites near the water. We should have most or all of them to ourselves.
Swims	Swimming is excellent. Good pools at the main campsites.
Lowlights	Relatively long drive at the beginning, walking along the old 4WD track.
Highlights	Gorge scenery and an amazing rock formation. Great pools for swimming.
Maps	1:50 000 El Sherana

Notes for both sections

It is a good idea to have a change of clothes and a towel to take advantage of the hot showers at Coinda. You should have enough money to pay for your drinks at the pub.

You should keep a water bottle, your lunch and some money with you in the car during the drives as it may be difficult to get into your pack during the journey.

Those doing both sections will have to carry only what they need on each section. Additional food and clothing can be left in the vehicle during the walks.

A day pack is useful as we will have at least two, possibly three two night camps.

On the evening where we eat in a restaurant, your meal is included in the trip price. Your drinks are not.

Most of the possible Aboriginal cultural tours depend on one person and could be closed for cultural reasons. At the time these notes were written, we could not be sure what would be available.

Terrain and difficulty - General Information

Little or 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 either section is more of an endurance test than the pleasure most people experience. Although both walks are level three, the lighter pack and shorter duration on section two make somewhat easier.