

National parks

Many of the natural attractions of the East Kimberley are managed as National Parks or Nature Reserves. The Department of Environment and Conservation has the responsibility of managing WA's National Parks, Conservation Parks, Marine Parks, and Nature Reserves.

Walk trails and camping areas are provided in most parks and for your safety please stay on marked trails and only camp in dedicated camp sites.

In the Kimberley, **visitor fees apply** to the following **National Parks** and **Conservation areas**:

- Mirima NP
- Purnululu NP
- Windjana Gorge NP
- Tunnel Creek NP
- Bell Gorge and Silent Grove in the King Leopold Conservation Park

This is an entry fee only and does not include camping fees.

Camping is available in numerous WA National Parks and a camping fee may apply.

All current National Parks fee rates are available in brochure form at the **Kununurra Visitor Centre** as are the Holiday, Annual and Concession park passes. If you intend to visit numerous National Parks while in WA, these passes will save you a few dollars.

For all your WA National Parks info contact Kununurra Visitor Centre.

K1 Mirima National Park (Hidden Valley)

Located just minutes from Kununurra, Mirima is a small park with sandstone ranges, cliffs and valleys, similar in appearance to parts of the Bungle Bungle. The 350 million year old sandstone features within Mirima are subject to some striking colour changes due to sunlight variances and the area is known for its spectacular photo opportunities.

Mirima is the name given to the area by the local Miriung people and retains many sites of significance.

The area was declared a National Park in 1982 to conserve the natural features and the associated Miriung sites. Refer to map on page 58.

◀ Jabiru (photo courtesy Tourism WA)

National parks (cont.)

Access

Access is via a sealed bitumen road

Mirima Facilities

An entry fee applies and facilities include an information shelter, tables, toilet and car park.

Camping or fires are not permitted at any time within Mirima National Park.

Walks

Three short walk trails are available within Mirima.

The Derbde-Gerring Banan or “lookout walk” takes you to the top of the range and provides spectacular views over the Ord Valley and surrounding sandstone ranges. This 800 metre return walk is a Class 4 – moderate to difficult.

The “Looking at Plants” walk is a 400m return loop walk with trailside signage to help you get to know some of the local plants and their Traditional uses.

“The Demboong Banan walk trail”. Demboong means gap and Banan means trail in the local Miriwung language. This 500 meter return walk rewards you with a spectacular view of Kununurra through a gap in the eroded sandstone.

Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve

The wetlands of this Nature Reserve provide an important feeding and breeding area for many birds including some migratory shore birds from as far away as Siberia. Parry Lagoons has been listed on the Register of National Estate, and is a Ramsar wetland of International significance.

In addition to the wetland of the Ord River flood plain, this 36,000ha reserve includes grasslands, woodlands and rugged sandstone outcrops and ranges.

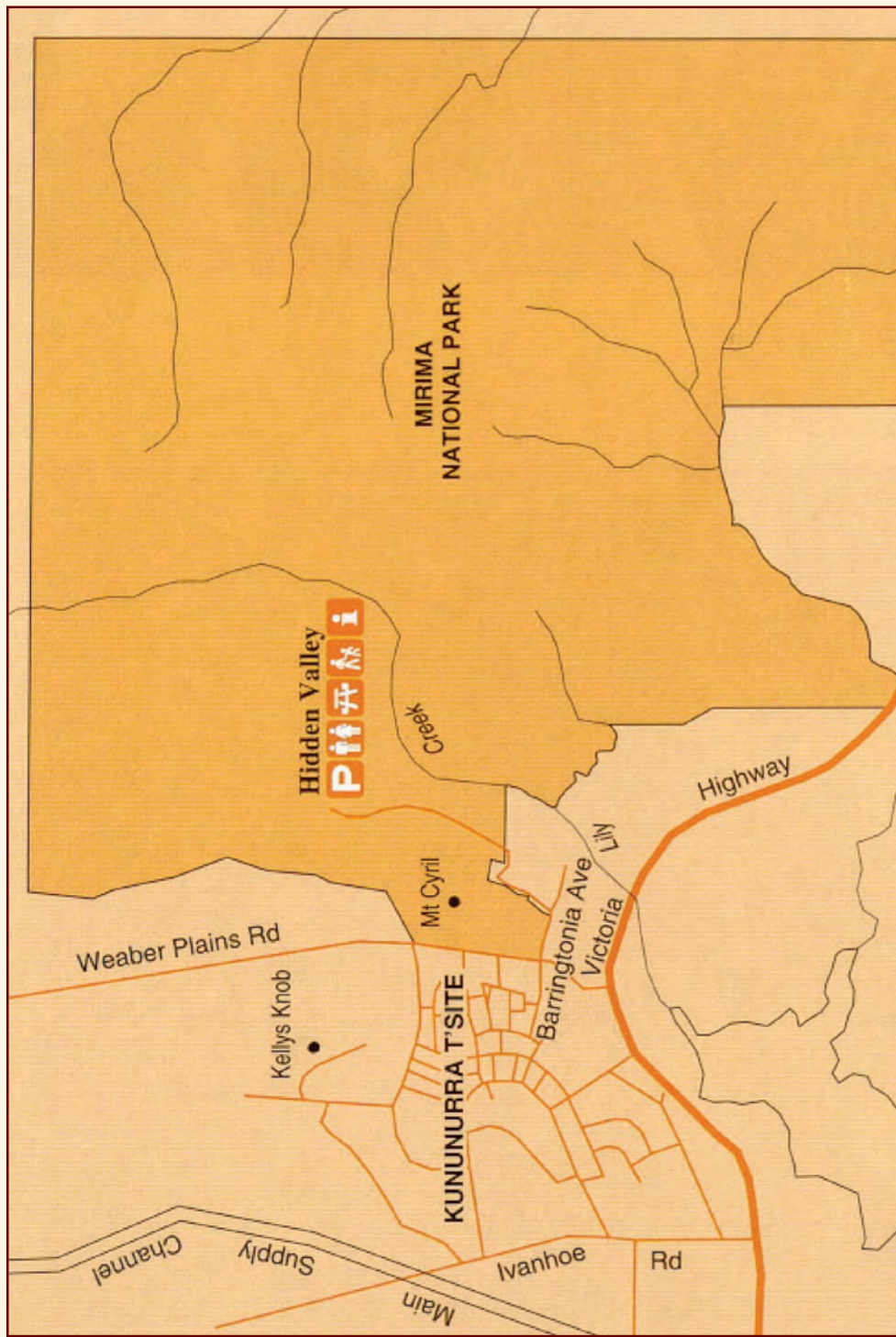
Access

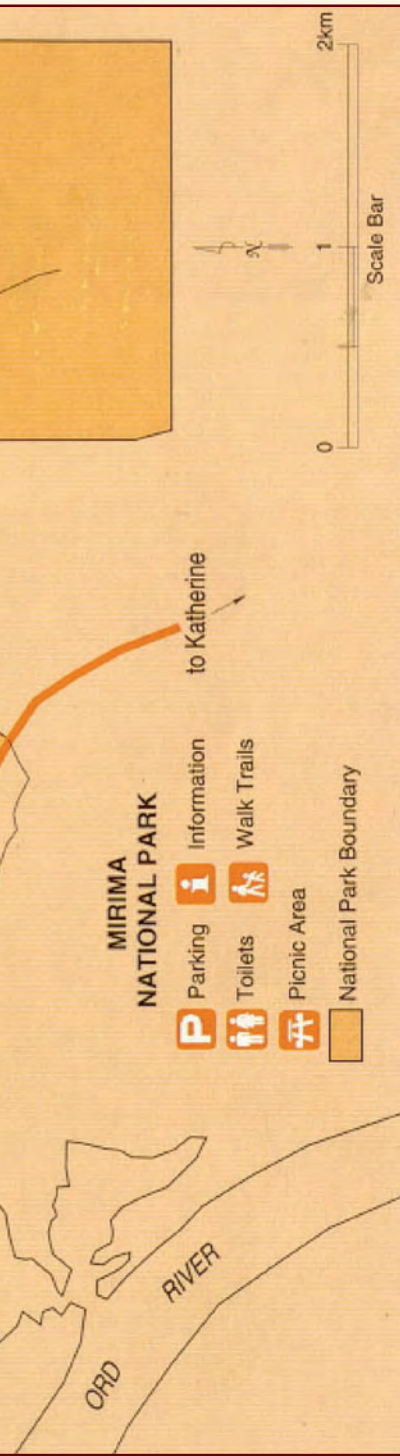
The main access road into the Reserve is approximately 15km south of Wyndham, off the Great Northern Highway. From the highway the road into the Reserve is gravel, corrugated and during the wet season prone to flooding. The Parry Creek Rd also passes through this reserve. These roads may be closed without notice due to unseasonal rains.

Traveller's tip

Always wear a hat, apply sunscreen, wear the appropriate clothing and footwear, and carry sufficient drinking water.

Mirima National Park





◀ Mirima National Park (photo courtesy Tourism WA)

National parks (cont.)

Parry Lagoons Highlights and Facilities

Marlgu Billabong, part of the Reserve, features a boardwalk and shaded bird hide that allows the traveller to take in the sights and sounds, the birds and maybe even a crocodile, without disturbing the tranquillity of the area. Interpretive display boards assist visitors in identifying their surroundings and help them to appreciate the importance of this wetland area.

Purnululu National Park (Bungle Bungle)

The Bungle Bungle Range is renowned for its striking sandstone domes, striped with orange and grey bands. Purnululu is the name given to the sandstone area by Aboriginal people and covers an area of almost 240,000 hectares.

The Bungle Bungle has been a tourist destination since 1983 and was granted World Heritage status in 2003.

Access

Purnululu is open from the 1st of April until mid December depending on weather conditions. The park may also be temporarily closed due to fires or unseasonal rain.

Access is restricted to **4wd access only** with strictly **no caravans or 2wd's** permitted.

Off-road trailers are permitted at owner's risk.

Geology

The Bungle Bungle

- Are an estimated 360 million years old.
- Rise over 200 metres high.
- Formed during the Devonian age.
- Carved over 20 million years through erosional forces.
- The grey banding is formed by cyanobacteria.

▼ Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve (*photo courtesy Tourism WA*)



National parks (cont.)

- The Orange banding is the result of oxidised iron compounds within the layers.

Visitors must register at the Dept. Environment and Conservation Visitors Centre on arrival. Both camping and entry fees are applicable

Facilities

There are two DEC campsites with basic amenities such as bush toilets, water and firewood. Visitors are advised to boil water prior to drinking . Campsites are non-powered.

Tour companies operate within the park offering a range guided walks, 4wd transfers safari stays, accommodation and helicopter flights. Scenic fixed wing flights are available from Kununurra.

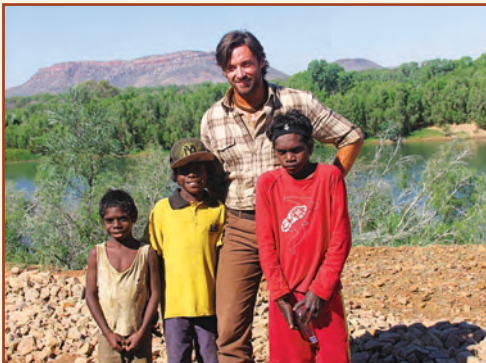
All tours can be booked through the **Kununurra Visitor Centre**.

Ngauwudu Management Area (Mitchell Plateau)

The Ngauwudu Management Area (Mitchell Plateau) is located in the far north of the Kimberley and is extremely remote. Visitors need to be completely self-sufficient as the area has few facilities It is important to ensure that you carry sufficient water, food and fuel supplies .

Camping fees apply

It is one of the most biologically important areas in the Kimberley. The landscape around the laterite-capped plateau varies from mangroves and swamplands, to woodlands and lush rainforest pockets. The area has a rich diversity of wildlife, with many rare animals,



Faces of the East Kimberley

Lyle Newry, Sebastian Bilminga & Darry Jessyl with Hugh Jackman

Courtesy KJ Olawsky on behalf of the Mirima Language Centre

Home grown local stars with Hugh. Lyle was an extra in the movie, Sebastian a stand-in for movie character Nullah and Darren is a Traditional Owner for the area and was visiting the set.

Traveller's tip

If you enjoy bird watching, the Kununurra Visitor Centre has a selection of local bird identification booklets.

National parks (cont.)

such as the Monjon (smallest rock wallaby) and the black grass wren.

The area contains many aboriginal cultural heritage sites and features fine examples of the various forms of rock art.

Access

The Ngauwudu Management Area is restricted to 4wd vehicles only, via the Kalumburu Rd and the Port Warrender track. The 85km Port Warrender track is narrow, winding and at times extremely rough with numerous washouts and corrugations.

Only Dry season access to the plateau is permitted. It is recommended that you contact the Kununurra Visitor Centre prior to departure to gain the up-to-date road reports in this region.

Aerial access is available from Drysdale River Station, Wyndham and Kununurra by way of numerous scenic flights.

Ngauwudu Highlights and Facilities

The Mitchell Falls are formed by a series of spectacular cascades and are best viewed just after the wet season, (May – July) when maximum water is falling. The falls normally flow all year round but by the late dry season (Sept-Oct) can be reduced to only a trickle.

The total height of the falls are 150m.

There are numerous walk trails within the area and most are considered moderate to difficult walks. These walk trails take you to the Mitchell Falls, Merten's Gorge and into Surveyors Pool.

Campsites are located at the Plateau and also at the King Edward River. Both have basic toilet facilities. One private safari style tented camp is also available near the airstrip.

4wd ground tours and aerial scenic flights (helicopter) are also available.

Scenic fixed wing flights can be arranged by the **Kununurra Visitor Centre** staff who can also advise of tour schedules and bookings if required.

Traveller's tip

Sorry – **NO PETS ALLOWED** within WA's National Parks.

The Bungle Bungle Range

Purnululu National Park

The Bungle Bungle Range is renowned for its striking sandstone domes, striped with orange and grey bands. Purnululu is the name given to the sandstone area by the Kija Aboriginal people and covers an area of almost 240,000 hectares.

The Bungle Bungle has been a tourist destination since 1983 and was granted World Heritage status in 2003. Refer to map on page 64.

Access

Purnululu is open from the 1st of April to the 31st December pending weather conditions. The Park may also be temporarily closed due to fires or unseasonal rain.

Access is restricted to 4wd access only with strictly no caravan or 2wd's permitted.

Off-road trailers are permitted at owner's risk.

Geology

The Bungle Bungle

- Are an estimated 360 million years old.
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- The grey banding is formed by cyanobacteria.
- The orange banding is the result of oxidised iron compounds within the layers.

Facilities

Visitors must register at the Dept. Environment and Conservation Information Centre on arrival.

There are two DEC campsites with basic amenities such as bush toilets, water and firewood. Visitors are advised to bring their own drinking water and required food items. Campsites are non-powered.

Tour companies operate within the park offering guided walks, 4wd transfers, helicopter and fixed wing aircraft flights. All tours can be booked through the **Kununurra Visitor Centre**.

Accommodation is also available offering bed and breakfast style or overnight stay, and can be booked through the **Kununurra Visitor Centre**.

Traveller's tip

The Spring Creek track is 53 kilometres into Purnululu. Due to track conditions, travellers need to allow at least 2 hours for one way travel.

East Kimberley and beyond

Savannah Way

The Savannah Way is an adventure drive trail from Cairns in Queensland, through the Northern Territory into Western Australia, ending in Broome. Along the 3699km journey the traveller will experience a diverse and unique Australian landscape that can change and transform around every corner and along every remote stretch of outback road. Places like the Undara Lava Tubes and the town of Normanton, the Nitmiluk and Gregory National Parks and the famous Gibb River Road and Lake Argyle are just to name a few.

Keep River National Park

Located about a 40 minute drive east of Kununurra are the spectacular ranges and geological formations that make up the Keep River National Park. Featuring the Nganalam art site, numerous walk trails and two camping areas, the Park is the region's best kept secret.

Parry Creek Road

The back road to Wyndham as it is locally known, follows the Ord River part of the way offering easy access into parts of the river for fishing and camping. Always seek permission if entering private property. The road also provides access into Parry Lagoons and Marglu Billabong, RAMSAR rated areas of international importance for the conservation of wet-land inhabitants. A birdwatcher's paradise!

Duncan Road

Is a 429km gravel road that criss-crosses the WA/NT border from the Victoria Hwy to Halls Creek meeting up with the Buchanan Hwy 140km east of Halls Creek. The drive takes the traveller through some spectacular outback scenery to the east of Lake Argyle.



◀ Blue-winged Kookaburra
(photo courtesy Tourism WA)

Into the Northern Territory

Great places to spend a day or more in the NT are the Keep River National Park and the Gregory National Park or try a bit of barra fishing on the Victoria River, all within a couple of hours drive from Kununurra.

Fuel is available at Timber Creek and at the Victoria River Roadhouse.

Katherine is 526km from Kununurra and is about 5-6 hours travel time.

The **Katherine Visitor Centre** is located at the southern end of town on the Stuart Hwy. The friendly staff at the Katherine Visitor Centre are there to assist with all your accommodation, tours and local travel advice and offers a wide variety of brochures and souvenirs.

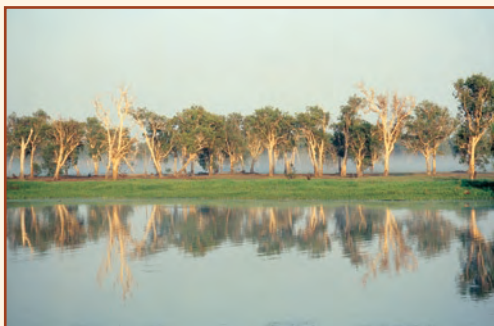
Phone: 1800 653 142
Email: information@krta.com.au
Web: www.krta.com.au

If you are travelling north to Darwin allow yourself approximately 3-4 hours for the drive. Better still, take your time and experience all the region has to offer from the world heritage listed Kakadu National Park, the old gold mining town of Pine Creek, the Douglas Daly region, Adelaide River township and Litchfield Park.

The city of Darwin having survived the bombings of World War II and Cyclone Tracy in 1974 is today a modern city that boasts all the services and facilities required of a population of around 120,000 people. With an international and domestic airport and a national rail link, Darwin offers a wide and varied accommodation and tour options with easy access to the iconic Territory destinations.



Lookout at Katherine Gorge (Nitmiluk) ▲
(photo courtesy Tourism NT)



▲ Yellow Water Billabong, Kakadu National Park
(photo courtesy Tourism NT)

Traveller's tip

When travelling from Kununurra, east into the Northern Territory please be aware of the change in time zones and adjust your watches and clocks accordingly.

Into the Northern Territory (cont.)

Tourism Top End

6 Bennett Street, Darwin

Phone: **(08 8980 6000) 1300 138 886**

Email: info@tourismtopend.com.au

Tennant Creek Visitor Centre

Battery Hill Peko Road, Tennant Creek

Phone: **1800 500 879**

Central Australia (Alice Springs Visitor Centre)

Gregory Terrace, Alice Springs

Phone: **1800 645 199**

Email: visinfo@catia.asn.au

Distances to:

Darwin - Katherine	324km	Katherine - Tennant Creek	687km
Tennant Creek - Alice Springs	505km	Alice Springs - Kulgera	274km
Darwin - Kakadu (Jabiru)	254km	Alice Springs - Uluru	448km



◀ Katherine Gorge ▶
(Nitmiluk)
*(photo courtesy
Tourism NT)*

