



Camping In The Shadows Of A Coral Reef

The Long Wait Is Over

If you've ever longed to travel through the Kimberleys, you'll be pretty excited when you finally turn onto the Gibb River Road. It's a bit surreal - you're finally here! The first 50 km or so is tar, then it's dirt - woohoo!



WE FINALLY MADE IT, AFTER YEARS OF DREAMING!



LOTS OF DIRT ON THE GRR.

First stop was Windjana Gorge. The Lennard River has cut through the Napier mountain range to form a spectacular gorge. This is a great spot for viewing freshwater crocodiles. They just love lazing in the warm pools and sunning themselves on the muddy banks.



WE FOLLOWED THE WALKING TRACK, THEN SUDDENLY THERE THEY WERE - LOTS OF FRESHWATER CROCODILES SUNNING THEMSELVES IN THE LENNARD RIVER.



A FRESHIE DOING ITS BEST LOG IMPERSONATION.



TIME FOR A NAP AND SOME SUN BAKING.

Freshies are quite a bit more “user-friendly” than [saltwater crocodiles](#). Simply put, freshies don’t eat people! But don’t corner them - like any creature, if freshies feel threatened then they’ll fight back.

A Coral Reef On Land - What’s The Story?

The mountain range is unlike any mountain range you’ll ever see. It was actually a coral reef! Originally 2km high and over 350 million years old, it stretched all the way north into the ocean then looped back around to the coast near the WA/NT border. It would have been huge.

Consequently, the campground is unique - and quite beautiful. Watching the sun rise over an ancient coral reef is not something you’ll experience every day!



THE DELIGHTFUL WINDJANA GORGE.



YOU CAN WALK UP THE GORGE IF YOU'RE SO INCLINED. TAKE PLENTY OF WATER.



PARADISE!



SO PEACEFUL.



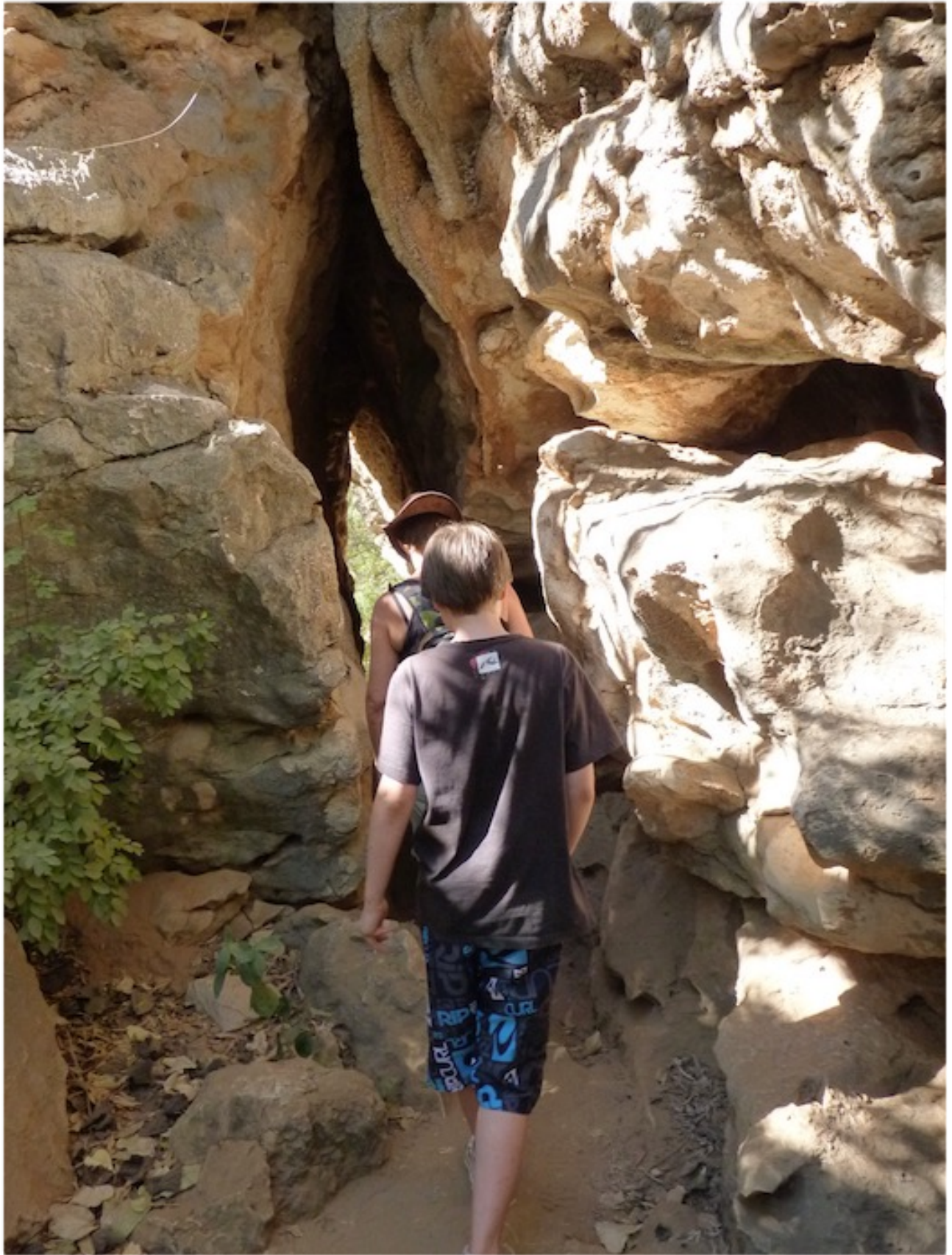
THE NAPIER RANGE IS EXTRAORDINARY. SUCH A BEAUTIFUL CAMPSITE.



ONE CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW INSANELY RUGGED THE NAPIER RANGE WOULD BE ONCE YOU MADE IT TO THE TOP.



IMPOSING CLIFF FACES EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK.



ON THE WALKING TRACK TOWARDS WINDJANA GORGE.



NAPIER RANGE IS FULL OF CRACKS AND CREVICES.



HARD TO BELIEVE THIS WAS BUILT BY TINY SEA CREATURES 350 MILLION YEARS AGO.



STRANGE COLOURING IN THE LIMESTONE CLIFFS.



NO KIMBERLEYS ARTICLE IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A BOAB TREE...



RIPPLES AND LINES GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF OLD AGE.



LATE AFTERNOON LIGHT TRANSFORMS THE CLIFFS. THINK I COULD GET USED TO THIS VIEW!

This is the area where Jandamarra used to roam. This was his mob's country - he was a Bunuba man. For more on Jandamarra's extraordinary life, [go here](#).

A Dutch/Irish Stockwoman

We met a young lady called Anna who was travelling Australia solo, in a Holden Commodore station wagon. She is Dutch/Irish - family moved from Holland to Ireland as a child. She had been working on a cattle station as a stockwoman near Camooweal QLD up until recently - 1.8 million acres and around 35,000 beef cattle.



PETA AND ANNA EMERGING FROM TUNNEL CREEK.

Prior to coming to Oz, Anna had travelled through many countries in the world and consequently had a very open mind and some amazing experiences. She was great company and we all enjoyed travelling with her.

Tunnel Creek - Up Close And Personal With Freshwater Crocs

We took Anna down to Tunnel Creek with us (rough road, her car wouldn't have made it). Tunnel Creek flows through the mountain range and has formed quite a large cave. We did the 750 m return walk through the tunnel.

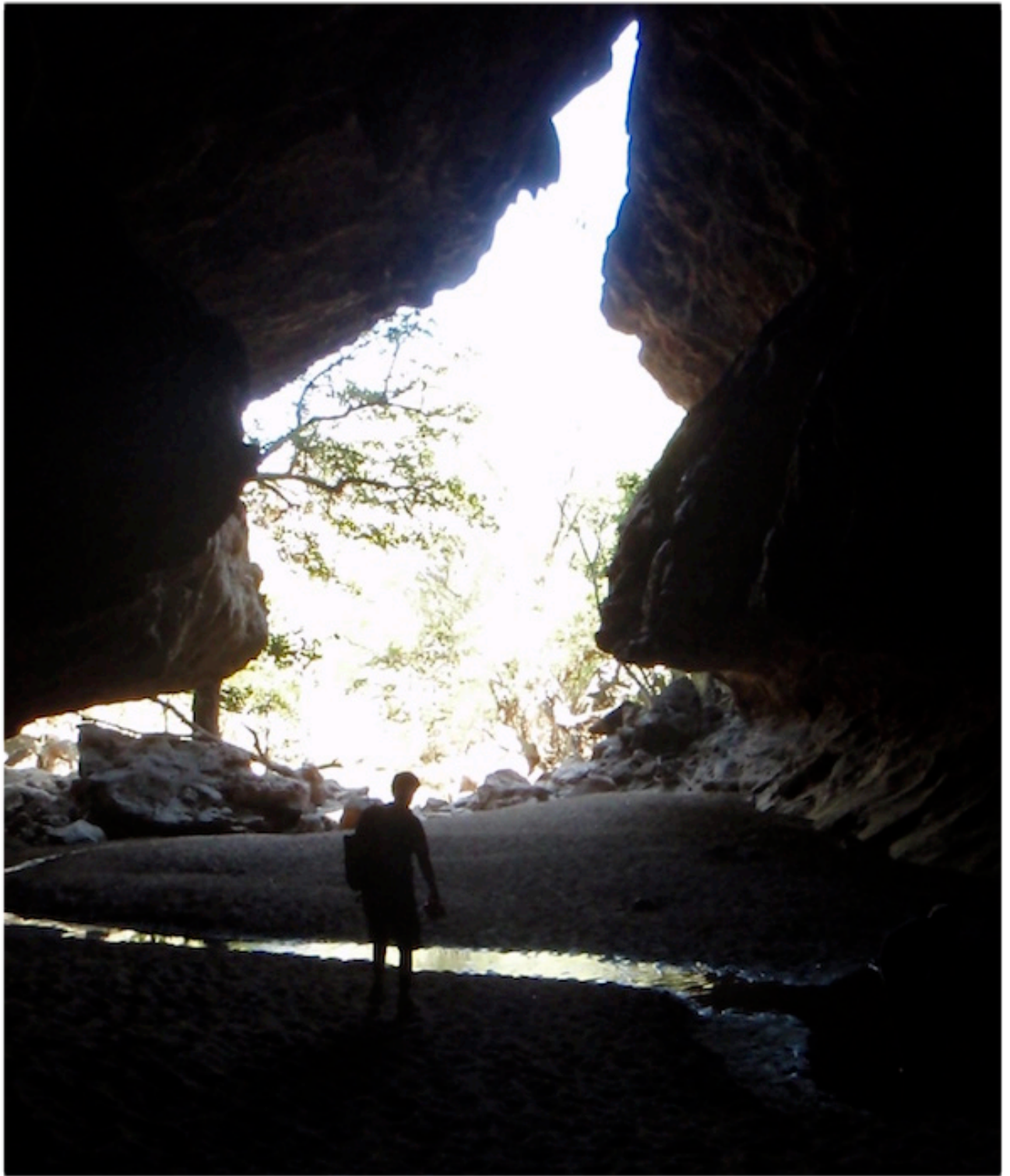
There were lots of bats inside, both large and small. Also, we had to wade through the water in places which was fun - until we saw a set of red freshwater crocodile eyes in the torch light. So after that, wading was a bit less fun and a little more scary!



CLAMBERING DOWN INTO TUNNEL CREEK.



THE WATER WAS QUITE DEEP IN PLACES - A LITTLE UNNERVING WHEN YOU KNOW LOTS OF FRESHWATER CROCS LIVE IN HERE.



REACHING THE DOWNSTREAM ENTRY/EXIT.



PERFECT SPOT TO COOL OFF.



GIANT STALACTITES IN THE CAVES.



THE LIGHTSHOW INSIDE TUNNEL CREEK WAS SOMETHING ELSE.



SUCH A RICH COMBINATION OF COLOURS. NOTE THE TREE ROOTS THAT HAVE PENETRATED THE ROOF.



THE PERFECT HIDEOUT.

Tunnel Creek was Jandamarra's hideout and the place where he was [eventually shot](#). Would have made a great hideout - concealed entrance, pitch black caves, lots of little nooks and crannies inside and a few secret exits where the roof has collapsed.

A Reminder Of Our Brutal Past

On the way back to our campsite, we visited the ruins of the Lillimulura police outpost. Excellent interpretive signs present a short history of this place and of Jandamarra's life. Refreshingly, no attempt has been made to whitewash our colonial history.

This area was a hot spot in the colonial wars. Police were posted here to root out Aboriginal people and either kill them or chain them together and march them into Derby. In return, police were paid a bounty for each person captured.

Jandamarra shot Constable Richardson here and freed his own family. [Go here](#) for more details. It would have been a frightening place to be posted - in the middle of nowhere and backing onto the mountain range. I can't imagine sleep would have come very easily - there were lots of people out there just waiting to kill you...



THE REMAINS OF LILLIMULURA POLICE OUTPOST.



A PLAQUE FOR CONSTABLE RICHARDSON, KILLED HERE BY JANDAMARRA.

Windjana Gorge and surrounds are truly spectacular. What an excellent introduction to the Kimberleys!