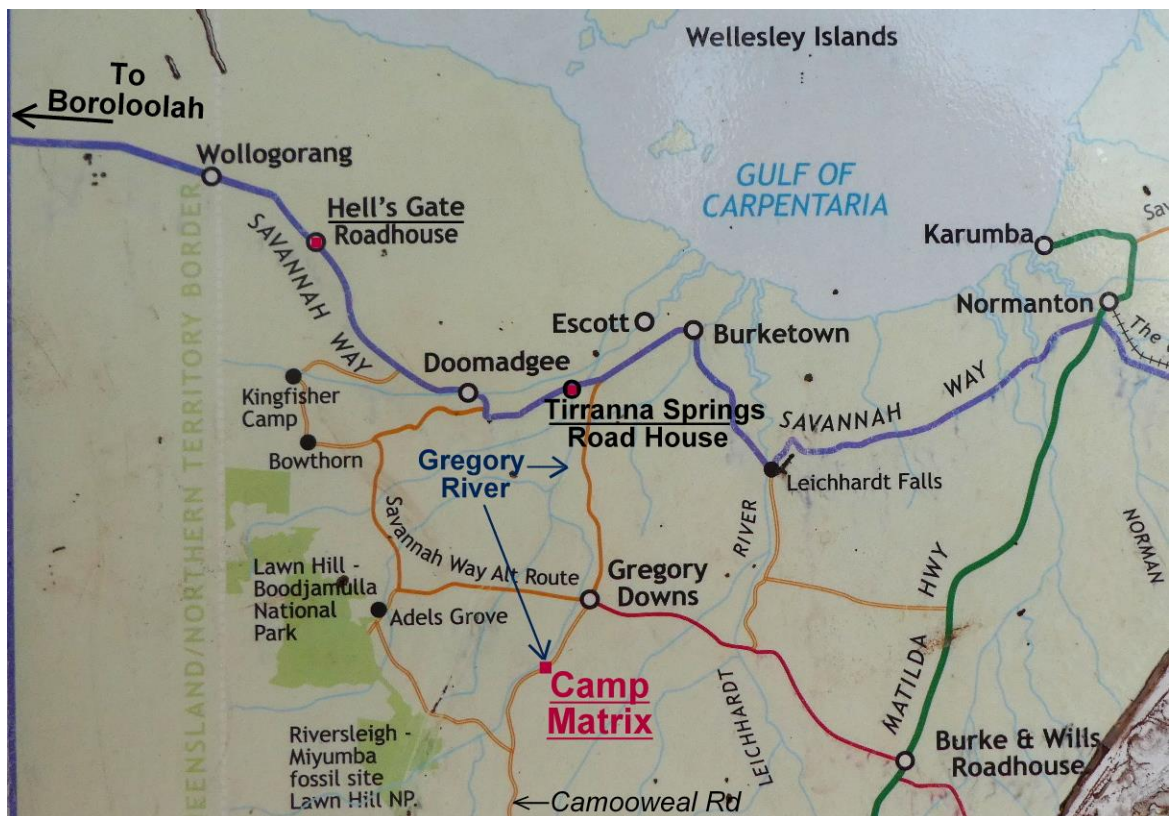


Kimberley Crusaders – Part 4

July 22/2018 – 5,850km (3,656miles) from home

Our last chapter closed at **Tirranna Springs Road House** and this new one opens there...



We enjoy our time with hosts Nemelah and Jack so much we stay an extra day. Sitting outside on a tropical night under the stars “chewing the fat”, low and behold, a **black-headed python** passes by. Jack swiftly summons the wriggly visitor for a session of bush entertainment: *No need for TV when you can play with one of those!*



Bush entertainment opportunity seized!



The Black-headed Python (*Aspidites melanocephalus*) only occurs in the dry areas of tropical northern Australia. Although it can bite when overstressed it is entirely harmless otherwise. The trick is not to restrict movements as it snakes about exploring your body. Gently – gently does it! This species has no heat-sensing capability as they prey heavily on other (cold blooded) reptiles, mostly snakes. They are diurnal (also hunt at night) and grow up to 2.5m!



Nem is determined to coax Katherine into befriending our chance visitor– with limited success!

We waste no time in setting our yabby traps a second time when Nem and Jack lead us to another secret spot of theirs. Sure enough, as promised, we bag a good catch - enough for a delicious dinner. Following Nem’s advice we do not boil our catch this time (as is common practice). Apparently much flavour is lost in the boiling process possibly making the flesh a tad rubbery. Instead, **Katherine sautés the tasty morsels in garlic-butter and white wine sauce.**

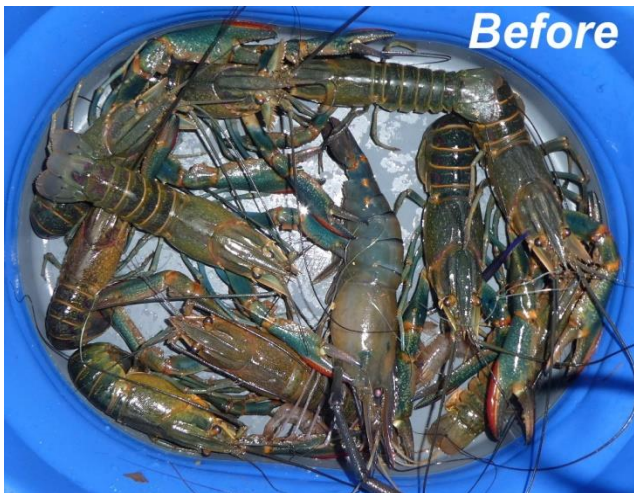
We have some evidence to show you the **BEST TASTING yabbies ever** – Do try this mouth-watering recipe home! *Can’t thank you enough Nemelah!!*

People frequently ask “*what’s that bamboo pole for you carry on your roof racks*”?

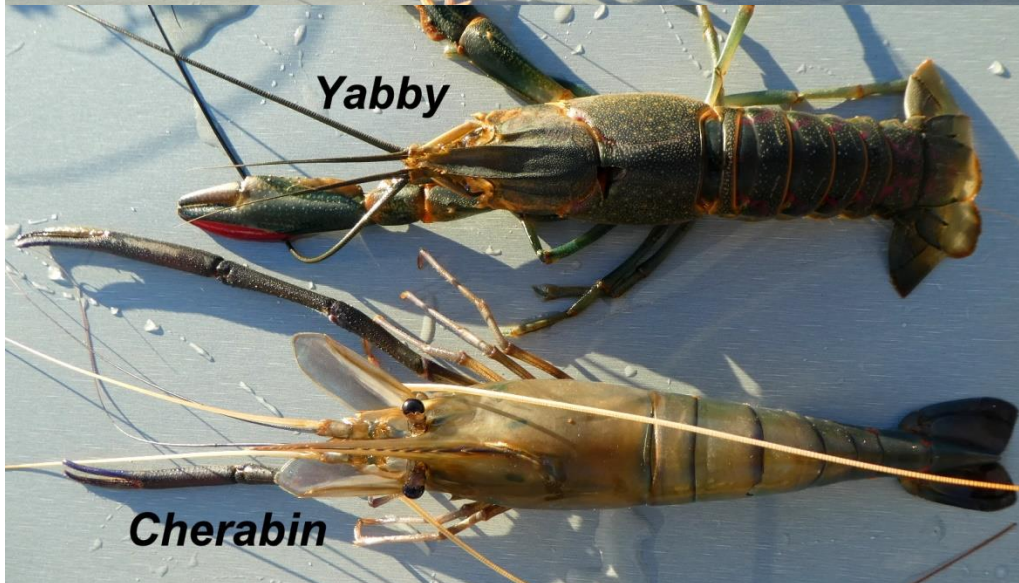
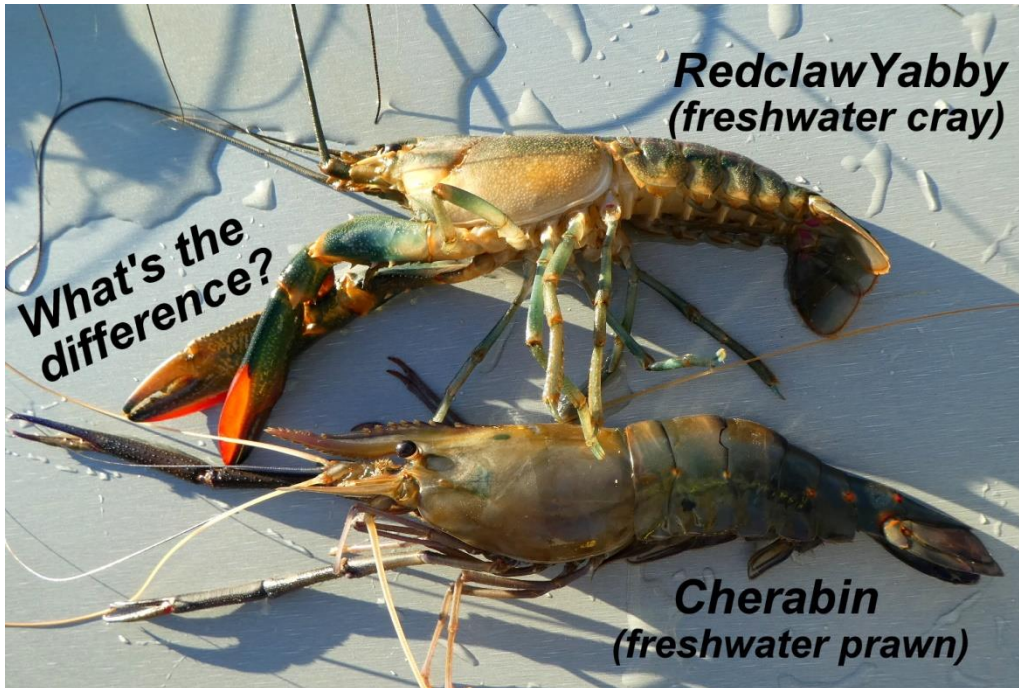
Well, it could serve as a ‘back-scratcher’ but in the main is used to safely retrieve our **Opera House yabby traps** in crocodile infested territories as it is strongly advisable **not to stick one’s neck too far over the water’s edge** for potential danger of large man-eating lizards lurking in muddy waters (yabbies like to hide in murky environments).

Other than that, we have retrieved snagged fishing lures or floats on several occasions in the past with this multi-purpose pole.





What is the **difference between a Yabby** (freshwater crayfish) and a **Cherabin** (freshwater prawn)?? – See photos below for comparison – two different species though equally delicious table fare 😊 - Cherabin are also choice bait for catching Barramundi...



Bon appetit!



Jack teaching Katherine the 'throw-net' technique

For some time Katherine has expressed interest in **cooking a kangaroo tail stew** (I see this as a threat!) – The only thing stopping her so far is the missing kangaroo tail...

When we return from our yabby collection this morning Jack returns to camp with a powerful rifle in hand – he'd been...



Correct net gathering is an art form!

...trying to shoot a kangaroo to supply aforementioned tail. Unfortunately the "prospect targets scattered" before he could "nail" one. **I breathe a sigh of relieve!**

Instead, Katherine takes a **throw-net casting lesson** from Jack. This is said to take quite some practice to perfect...



Lead weights around entire circumference

The cast net - practice makes perfect!

...but this throw ain't looking too bad at all!



For early settlers 'Hells Gate' was as far as police escorts were to accompany them. West of here, braving **Northern Territory** high country, they were left to their own devices leaving them vulnerable to the fierce indigenous tribes that roamed beyond. Today the scenic route west dips to translucent, pandanus-fringed rivers where you can fish and forage for crays on this otherwise croc-filled stretch.



Calvert River camping had good reports but there is only ONE spot - it was taken. We move on...

Calvert River



Instead, we camp at **Kangaroo Creek** for two nights. The location looks promising for another yabby haul – and we are not disappointed...



Kangaroo Creek



Kangaroo Creek camp



**Kangaroo Creek -
bush tucker dinner
- day 1**



Kangaroo Creek ups the ante - day 2



Add garlic-butter & white wine - cook until shells turn red



"A mouth-watering gift from nature" 😊



Water lily at Kangaroo Creek



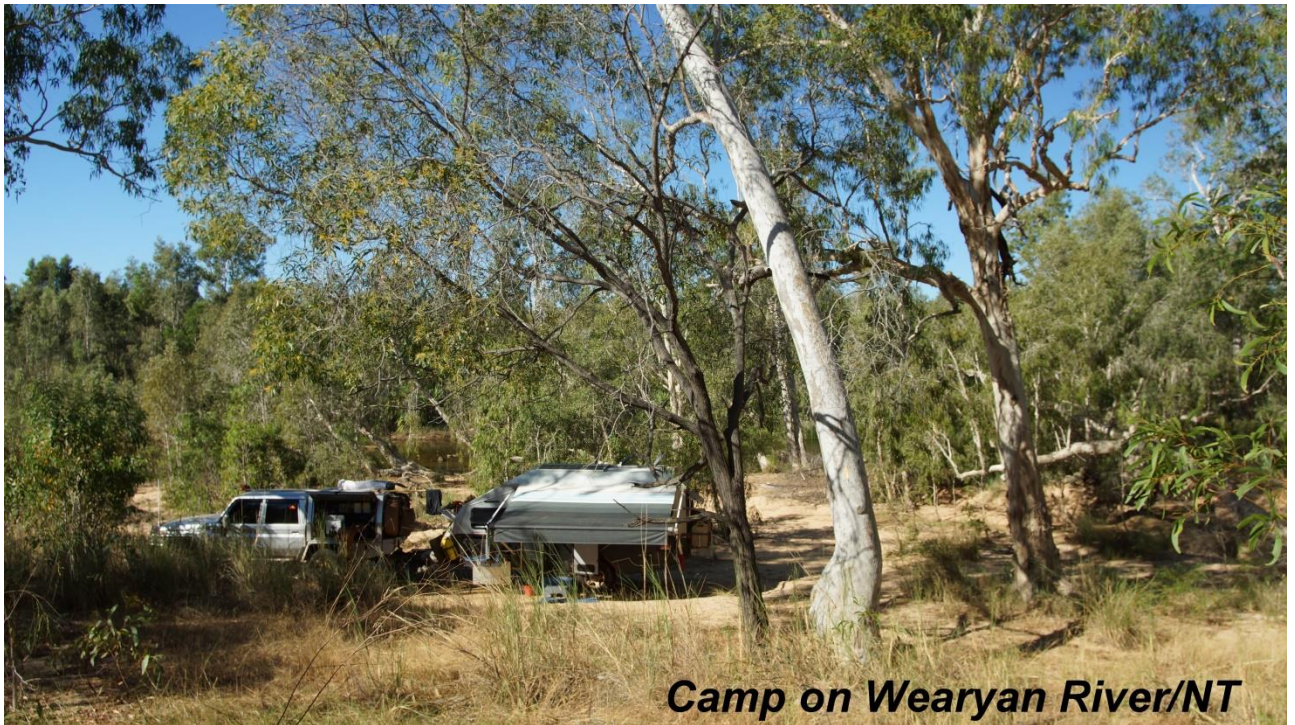
The ingenious bush shower bucket hoist



Truck's recovery winch pulls 30kg shower bucket into position

Above:

Although we have a complete bathroom aboard the Matrix, we love a good old fashioned bush shower; creek water heated in a galvanised bucket on the camp fire saves LPG gas for cooking and stretches water supplies further; even extending our long stays 'off the grid' 😊!



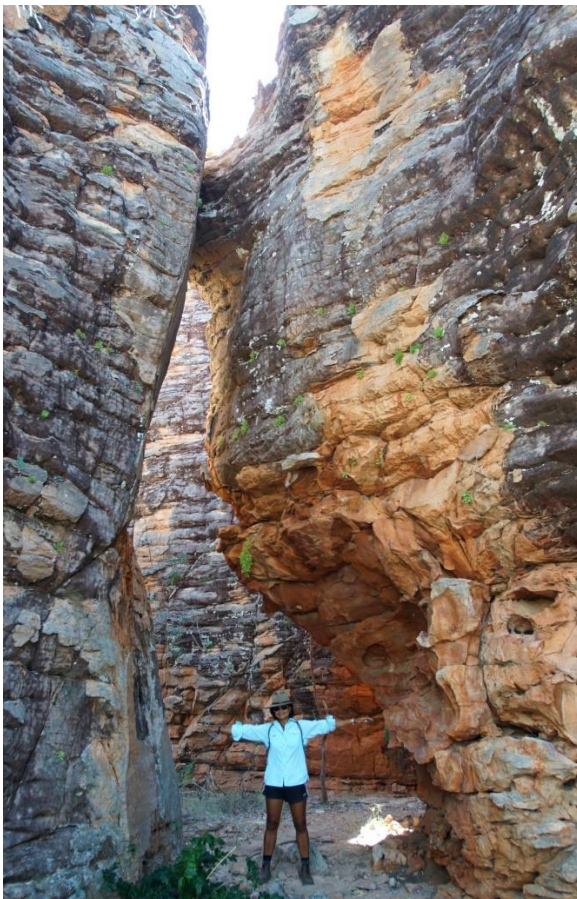
Camp on Wearyan River/NT



Emerging from our hidden Wearyan camp



Carinbirini National Park: These sandstone columns are called 'organ pipes'. Their shape is the result of weathering along deep cracks in the rock as the surrounding landscape was eroded revealing the structures as we see them today





First stop at Limmen National Park



"Cheers to AUSTRALIA"

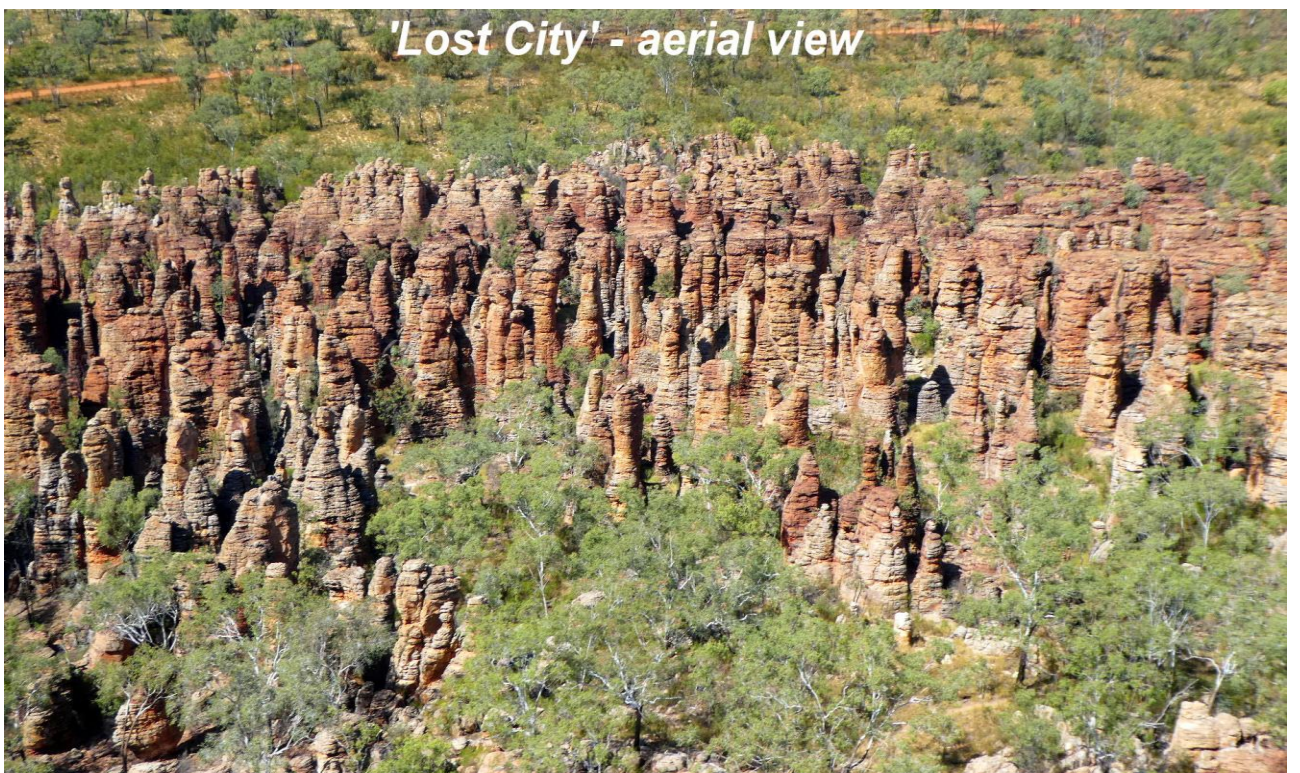
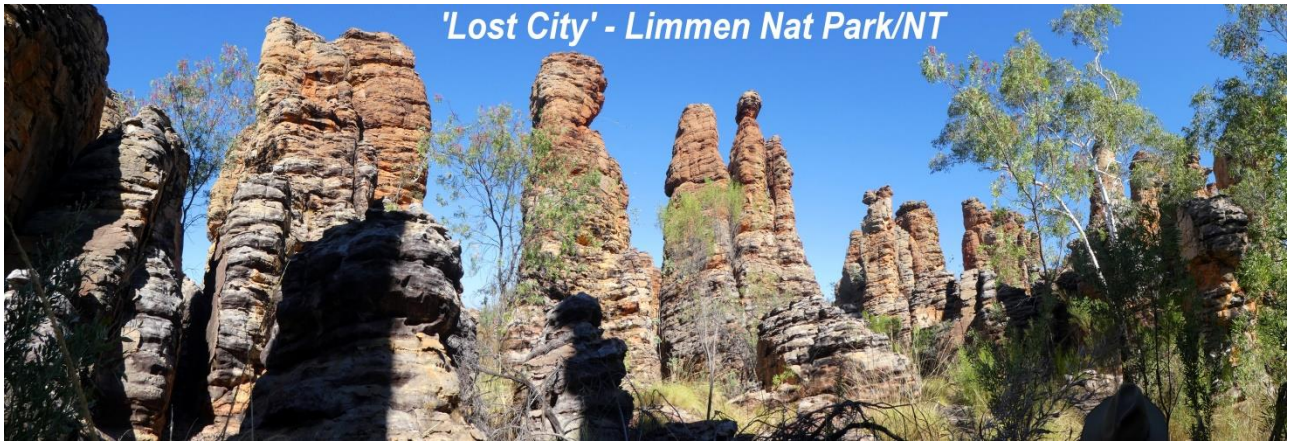


Fire gazing...



...under the Milky Way

Limmen National Park/NT incorporates 10,000 square kilometres (3,900 sqmi) and is the second largest in Australia. It covers wetlands, numerous rivers and towering sandstone rock formations.





450km SE of Mataranka sits **Lorella Springs Wilderness Park**, a **one million acre** (4000 square km) **privately run station** in the Gulf of Carpentaria – Northern Territory: Drive 32km into the station from the Savannah Way and you have merely arrived at their front paddock. Beyond lies a playground of nearly 1000km four-wheel-drive tracks leading to countless waterfalls, beaches, salt flats, rivers, creeks and billabongs, fishing spots and a host of beautiful picturesque swimming holes safe from crocs. While there is a one-square kilometre unpowered camping ground right behind the homestead and adjacent hot spring, the rest of the property offers unlimited camping anywhere. Firewood supplies are ample and there is plenty of open space for everyone to enjoy their own **camp fires – an essential part of camping in our opinion!**



Lorella Springs Station - one million acre wilderness playground

Initial plan was to stay three nights but we hang out for six: So much to see!
We cover over 250km of tracks exploring the property. The distance from the homestead to the Gulf of Carpentaria coast line stretches over 80 long kilometres on sandy 4WD tracks. Since it is **our 30th wedding anniversary**, we decide it is a good plan to fly out there by helicopter, after all the driving, to sum up our Lorella experience with a wonderful aerial overview. We fish a number of spots on the heli-tour but our *'finned targets'*, while frequently chasing after our lures, aren't keen on biting. Such seems to be the way this season everywhere up North so far: Waters too cold (22C) they say!

Gulf of Carpentaria



Mouth of Rosie Creek - 80km from Lorella homestead



Searching for fishing spots

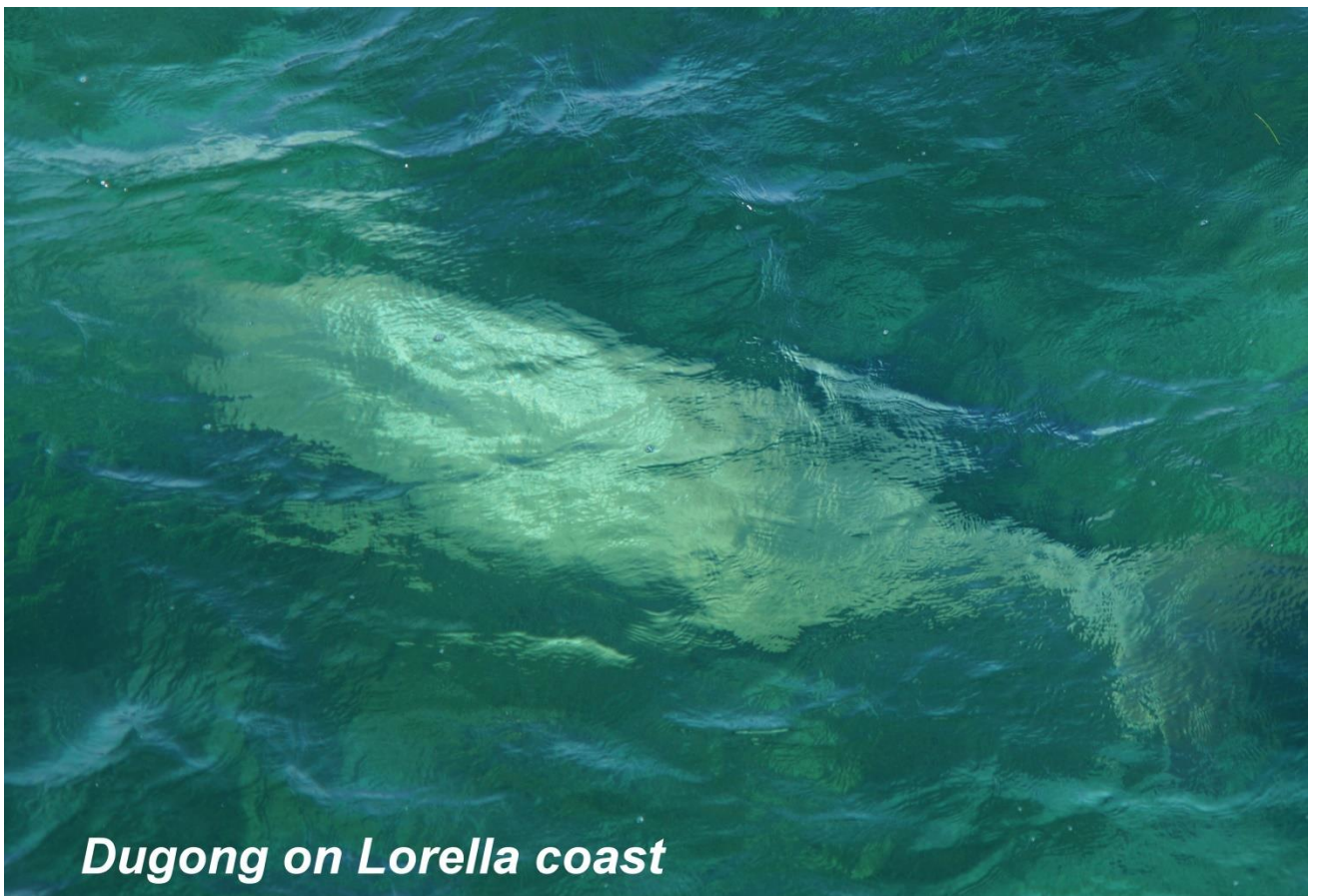


Heli anglers



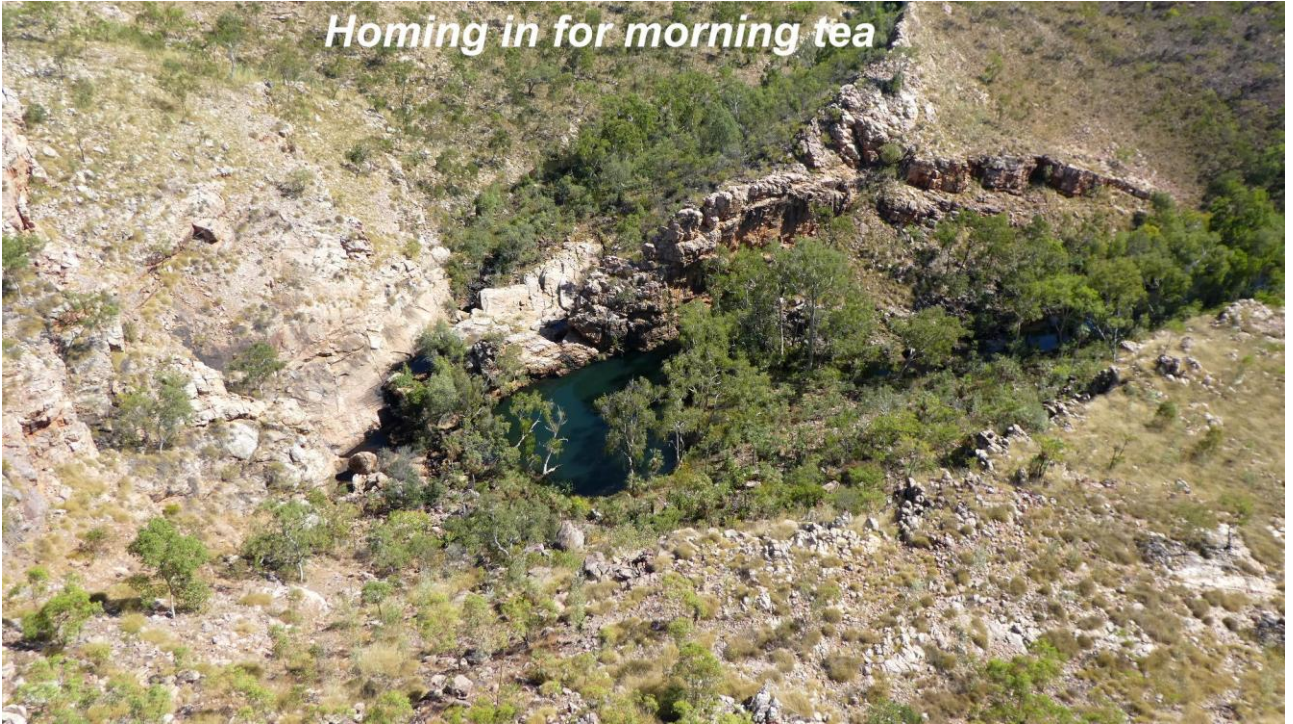
Chopper view of a sizeable saltwater croc at Rosie Creek

On the way see Dugongs, schooling Manta Rays and a number of big saltwater crocs.



Dugong on Lorella coast

Homing in for morning tea



Bush landing for a cuppa

On the way back to base we stopover for morning tea at a **new secret location** pilot 'Nick' only had discovered a fortnight prior (even after running flying tours at Lorella for the past five years!). The crystal clear spring-fed waters are invigorating at 20C as midday temps rise into the mid-thirties. Do we feel privileged?! – **"Happy Anniversary"** ☺



Morning tea on secret location



Lorella entertainment



Almost 1000km of 4WD tracks



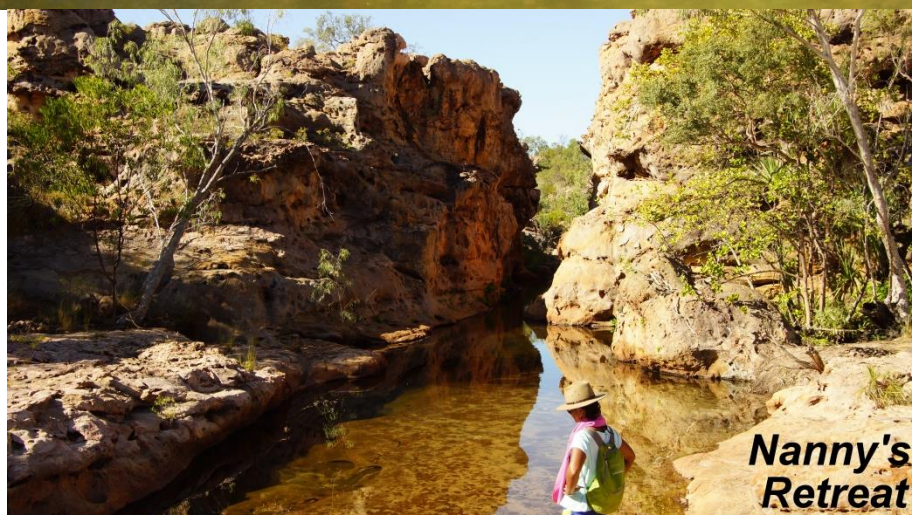
We spend a number of days deciding which the most picturesque swimming spot is...



Fern Gully Falls



Helicopter Pool



**Nanny's
Retreat**



Water Slide pool



Wild Fire Gorge



Tough winter day in NT



Wildfire Gorge

On the way to Katherine/NT - More soon...

Greetings from Chris and Katherine

