

# Danggu Geikie Gorge National Park



## Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions



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## Planning your visit

Danggu Geikie Gorge is located 20km from the Fitzroy Crossing township, 280km from Derby and 390km from Broome. The road accessing the park is sealed bitumen and a four-wheel drive is not required. The park is open from the end of April to late November depending on weather and road conditions. During this time of year it is the dry season, typified by clear warm days and cool nights. Temperatures range from about 35°C during the day to 15°C in the night.

**This park is open daily from 6:30am–6:30pm.  
There is no camping or overnight stays permitted.**

Visitors should contact the visitor centres at Derby and Fitzroy Crossing or the Parks and Wildlife Service office in Broome to make sure the park is open.

### Fees and park passes

There are no entry fees for Danggu Geikie Gorge National Park.

### Access in the park

There is universal access to all facilities and boat tours within the park. Walk trails are not universal access.

### Services and facilities

An information shelter, toilets and picnic areas with water are located at the recreation area near the gorge. Walk trails and boat tours provide opportunities to view the gorge.

### Camping

Danggu Geikie Gorge is a day-use area ONLY. Camping is not permitted. There is accommodation available nearby at Fitzroy Crossing.



## More information

**Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

Parks and Wildlife Service

West Kimberley District

111 Herbert Street Broome WA

Ph: (08) 9195 5500

[dbcwa.wa.gov.au](http://dbcwa.wa.gov.au)

**Danggu Geikie Gorge Ranger Station**

Ph: (08) 9191 5112

**Derby Visitor Centre**

Ph: (08) 9191 1423

**Fitzroy Crossing Visitor Centre**

Ph: (08) 9191 5355

**Main Roads Western Australia**

Ph: 1800 013 314

(24-hr road condition report)

**Fire and other emergency information**

Visit [emergency.wa.gov.au](http://emergency.wa.gov.au) or listen to ABC Radio for bushfire alerts and warnings.

In the event of an emergency, call 000.



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**Front cover** Geikie Gorge boat tour. All photos – DBCA

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# Welcome

Come and enjoy the natural and cultural wonders of Danggu Geikie Gorge. From the staggering walls of the gorge to the relaxing water below, cultural stories, wildlife and geology, there is so much to entice the visitor.

*Wadbirali Milawa Bunuba Muwayi – Come and see Bunuba country*

Enjoy a boat tour through the gorge guided by a knowledgeable Parks and Wildlife Service ranger, or discover the traditional culture, including access to important areas, with a Bunuba guide.

## Important place, important name

Like many national parks in the State, this park has changed names to reflect the importance of the traditional name and meaning of the area. To the Bunuba people, Danggu [pronounced DARN-goo] means the area where the water is very deep under the cave.

Geikie Gorge was named after Sir Archibald Geikie, a British geologist, by fellow geologist Edward Hardman, who explored the area in 1883.



## Traditional owners

The traditional custodians of the land and waters of the Fitzroy Valley are the Bunuba people who call the gorge Danggu. Bunuba people still maintain strong cultural and spiritual beliefs linked to the area and actively manage their country through the Bunuba Ranger group and other programs. The variety of plants and animals in the area are a rich resource for food, tools, bushcraft and bush medicine.

Take the Bun.gi and Larrgari trails to find out about Bunuba people's stories of the land, water and wildlife. The information shelter also contains stories of the area, including the Dreamtime story about Linyjiya, Old Man Rock, which is located in the middle of the gorge.

## Geology

During the Devonian period 360 million years ago, a vast tropical sea covered much of Australia's north-west and an enormous barrier reef over 100 kilometers long surrounded the Kimberley coastline. As the sea floor slowly subsided over 50 million years, known as the Devonian period, reef building organisms deposited limestone up to two kilometers thick.

The reefs are a series of limestone ranges including the Napier, Oscar and Geikie ranges. The ranges wind across the country between 50 and 100 metres above the surrounding plains, in much the same way that the reef would have stood above the ancient sea floors. At the reef's cross-section it is exposed with fossils and ancient reef.

The Fitzroy River has carved a 30-metre deep gorge through the limestone of the Geikie Range. During the wet season, the river rises between 10–16 metres, polishing the walls of the gorge white and the flooding sections of the park with up to seven metres of water. In the dry season the river is transformed into a peaceful stream beneath the towering limestone cliffs. Honeycomb weathering is a fascinating feature of gorge walls.

## Wildlife

You can spot freshwater crocodiles sunning on the banks among the shrub and many different waterbird species such as the white-bellied sea-eagle, little pied cormorant and kingfishers. Large colonies of fruit bats may also be seen, and listen out for noisy corellas.

The striped archer fish, rainbow fish and freshwater turtle live in the waters of the Fitzroy River, as well as the prized barramundi.

Keep a look out in the rocks of the gorges for many different lizard and goanna species.

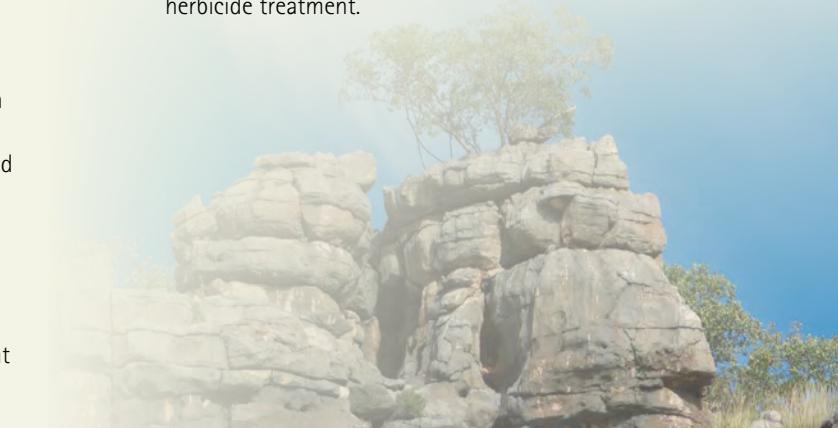
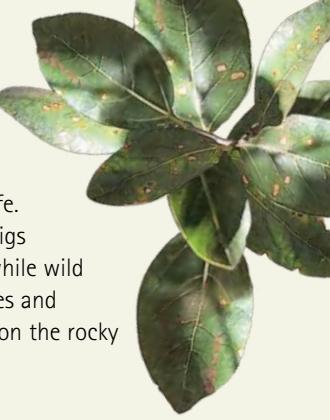


## Plants

Thick vegetation of paper-barked cajeputs and river gums support the colonies of fruit bats and birdlife. The freshwater mangroves, native figs and pandanus stabilise the banks while wild passionfruit scrambles over the trees and shrub. Spinifex grasses are located on the rocky limestone walls.

## War on weeds

Weeds are one of the biggest threats to the natural ecosystem of the gorge. As a visitor, you may notice the prolific vine, whose common name is stinking passionflower, smothering the native vegetation. This vine has a very tasty fruit which native birds and other animals love to eat. They then deposit the seeds elsewhere, spreading the problem throughout the national park and beyond. Other weeds you may notice include rubber bush, bellyache bush, parkinsonia and a variety of grasses. The Parks and Wildlife Service, with the Bunuba Rangers, is actively controlling these weeds through different methods such as hand removal and herbicide treatment.





## Safe walking tips

Extreme heat can be experienced when walking in the park. It is recommended you walk during the cooler times of the day.

You need to take and drink one litre of water for every hour of walking to avoid dehydration.

There is no drinking water in the gorge.

Avoid sunstroke and sunburn.  
Wear sunscreen, long sleeves and a hat.

For your safety wear sturdy footwear, follow the trail markers and remain on the trail.



## Tours

### Boat tour

Danggu Geikie Gorge Boat Tours, guided by the Parks and Wildlife Service rangers, run daily from April to October and give a personal insight into the gorge's wildlife and geology. You might see crocodiles sunning or snapping at stray flying-foxes, and birds such as sea eagles, brolgas and red tailed cockatoos. Tours may be less frequent in April–May and September–November, however during the peak visitor period (June, July and August) there are usually 4–5 tours per day. Each tour lasts for approximately one hour, and you will need to arrive to the information shelter 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time. The boat, named Ms Casey Ross after a local Bunuba elder, has a shade canopy and seating for up to 79 guests. A ramp with handrails means that there is universal access and wheelchair access is possible. Please bring water, a hat and sunscreen on the tour.

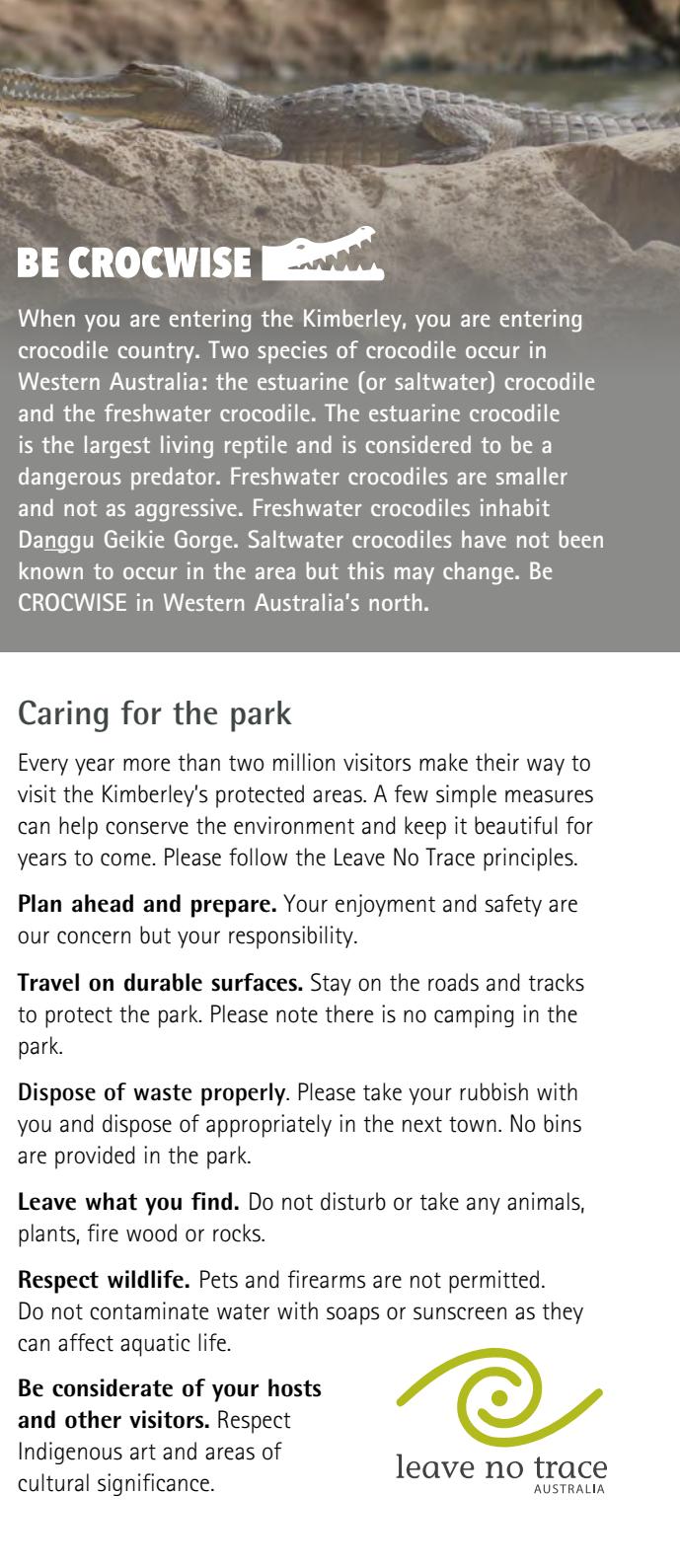
Tours can be booked online at [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/danggu-geikie-gorge](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/danggu-geikie-gorge). Tickets are also available at the gorge information area, up to 30 minutes prior to the cruise.

Tour groups must book well in advance through the Broome Parks and Wildlife Service office by emailing [broome@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:broome@dbca.wa.gov.au).



### Indigenous tours

Darnku Heritage Cruises provide guests with an insight into the Kimberley region's rich Indigenous history and culture. The tour combines a boat tour and a walk, where visitors will hear timeless stories from the Dreamtime, learn about surprising bush medicines and discover sacred sites. The range of tours and times can be viewed online at [darnku.com.au](http://darnku.com.au) and bookings can be made by contacting the operators on (08) 9191 5552 or 0417 907 609.



## BE CROCWISE

When you are entering the Kimberley, you are entering crocodile country. Two species of crocodile occur in Western Australia: the estuarine (or saltwater) crocodile and the freshwater crocodile. The estuarine crocodile is the largest living reptile and is considered to be a dangerous predator. Freshwater crocodiles are smaller and not as aggressive. Freshwater crocodiles inhabit Danggu Geikie Gorge. Saltwater crocodiles have not been known to occur in the area but this may change. Be CROCWISE in Western Australia's north.

## Caring for the park

Every year more than two million visitors make their way to visit the Kimberley's protected areas. A few simple measures can help conserve the environment and keep it beautiful for years to come. Please follow the Leave No Trace principles.

**Plan ahead and prepare.** Your enjoyment and safety are our concern but your responsibility.

**Travel on durable surfaces.** Stay on the roads and tracks to protect the park. Please note there is no camping in the park.

**Dispose of waste properly.** Please take your rubbish with you and dispose of appropriately in the next town. No bins are provided in the park.

**Leave what you find.** Do not disturb or take any animals, plants, fire wood or rocks.

**Respect wildlife.** Pets and firearms are not permitted. Do not contaminate water with soaps or sunscreen as they can affect aquatic life.

**Be considerate of your hosts and other visitors.** Respect Indigenous art and areas of cultural significance.



# Walk trails

## Walk trail classifications

Parks and Wildlife Service walk trails are assigned a 'Class' to indicate degree of difficulty. The walk classes range from Class 1 (universal access), which is suitable for wheelchairs, to Class 5, which require walkers to be fit, experienced and suitably equipped. Check trailhead signs at the start of walks for specific information. The walk trails in this brochure are Class 3.

 **Class 3** Moderate walk trail with clear directional signage. You may encounter minor natural hazards such as short, steep sections; steps; shallow water crossings; and unstable or slippery surfaces. A good level of fitness is recommended.

## Balili Rarrgi Trail

(Class 3 – 1.6km return. 1 hour)

This short walk over a mostly sandy surface branches off the Jarrambayah Trail and meanders around weathered remains of limestone reef from the Devonian Sea.

## Jarrambayah Trail

(Class 3 – 4.4km return. 2 hours)

Follow the trail markers along the sandy bank of the Fitzroy River floodplain to the West Wall of Geikie Gorge. Pass by limestone reef outcrops sculpted by seasonal flooding.

## Bun.gu Trail

(Class 3 – 1.2km return. 30 minutes)

Learn about the local Bunuba people's knowledge of plants, animals and landscape by reading the signs along the way. Follow the river downstream to above the sandbar (bun.gu walyarra) where the Margaret River meets the Fitzroy River. Take care if you leave the trail to descend the sandbank to the sandbar.

## Larrgari Trail

(Class 3 – 1.75km loop. 1 hour)

You will walk along the banks of the Fitzroy River to the savannah woodland in the upper of the flood plain. This trail connects with the Bun.gu Trail.

