

# SAVANNAH GUIDES

## Communicator

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December 2015

Welcome to our December Newsletter!

This newsletter is the first for our growing band of Savannah Guides Supporters - travellers who have signed up to receive our newsletter. We hope you enjoy our collection of items about nature and the Tour Guide's world, our members and the fun they have on the job! Your feedback is always welcome and we hope to see you again soon.

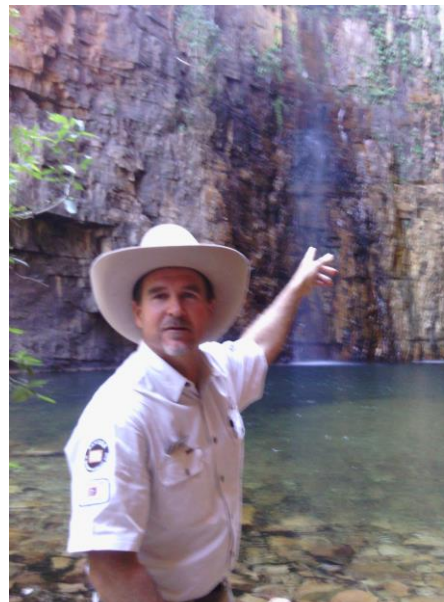
Recently we've held terrific Savannah Guides Schools at Undara and Adels Grove in the Gulf Savannah heartland, delivered new skills workshops and accredited new Enterprise and Savannah Guide members we are proud to have in the team. Savannah Guides has new links in South Africa and Ecotourism Australia and is linking our nature-based Tour Guide systems.

2016 will be an exciting year for our members, partners, new friends and supporters. We hope to see you soon.

Please read more on the pages inside!

*Mick Clark*

President - Savannah Guides









## Adels Grove School – Australia's Ancient Past!

*The Adels Grove Savannah Guides School gave us all 'Gorge Adventures and Fossil Secrets'.*

Many long-term members and new friends came together to learn from each other and our valued presenters Dr Jon Luly of James Cook University, Southern Gulf Catchments' Charles Curry, MMG's Martin Cowley, QPWS' Jason Bruce and Taronga Zoo's Lee Hayter. Lawn Hill Gorge, the Riversleigh Fossil Fields and Adels Grove were magnificent venues for deep insights and some great play time, including a rollicking campfire jam.

Sincere thanks to Michelle and Rod Low Mow and the Adels Grove team, especially the Eveready Bunny, Ange Clucas.

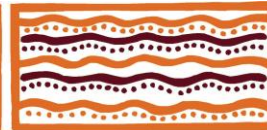
### INSIDE...

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-  Awards and New Members
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### SAVANNAH GUIDES

Savannah Guides is a network of professional tour guides with a collective in-depth knowledge of the natural and cultural assets of Northern Australia. It is a not-for-profit company with enterprise and individual members. Savannah Guides works with many of Australia's leading tourism, environmental and community organisations to pursue its mission:

Being an economically sound, community based, professional body maintaining high standards of: interpretation and public education; training and guiding leadership; and through the promotion of ecologically sustainable tourism principles, enhancing regional lifestyles and encouraging the protection and conservation of the natural and cultural resources of the Tropical Savannahs of Northern Australia.





## The next SAVANNAH GUIDES SCHOOL will be held in Broome 22-24 April 2016

Explore the magical multicultural heritage of Broome and stay at Lombadina Aboriginal Community on the Dampier Peninsula. Lombadina's Bardi People are "Salt Water People", and we'll learn some cultural protocols and knowledge from them. We'll also work with local tourism operators and organisations on a range of Tour Guide skills and sharpen our bird watching – it's the time of the waders' departure. Of course on our field work we'll take in the incredible Kimberley colours - white sandy beaches, pristine turquoise waters and that red pindan sand.

We aim to have vehicle transport available from Darwin. The Information and Registration Form will be available soon at:

<http://savannah-guides.com.au/about/savannah-guide-schools/>

## Congratulations!

Savannah Guides Awards were presented at the Adels Grove Savannah Guides School

### **Val Speedie Outstanding Tour Guide Award: Mark Pugh**

Mark has guided with Wilderness Challenge and other operations in recent years and his interpretation skills, commitment and customer service in a wide range of tour situations are great examples for all Tour Guides.

### **Barry Kubala Future Leadership Award: Kane Bassett**

Kane has evolved from a high class Chef to a first class Resort Manager, incorporating exemplary guiding. He initiated the Savannah Guides Supporters Program and has joined the Savannah Guides Board as Treasurer.

Savannah Guides is proud to have been a part of these Members' journeys.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Another dynamic year for Savannah Guides draws to a close and we are very optimistic about our growing membership and opportunities. The Board is diligently working through a range of issues and always prioritising membership benefits and our Mission in our decisions.

### Board Changes

Our Annual General Meeting at Adels Grove saw some significant changes to the Savannah Guides Board. Leaving us after terms as Treasurer and President was Ben Humphries. The organisation offers its sincere thanks to Benno who has been our NT lynch pin and source of great advice particularly around membership, training and protocols. Amanda Hinton of Capricorn Caves also left the Board. Amanda's greatly appreciated commercial and digital knowledge has helped the organisation significantly.

Our new Board members are Kane Bassett, General Manager at Undara Experience, who also stepped up as Treasurer, and Vicki Jones, former Savannah Guides Manager and now Red Dirt Tours owner/operator in Winton.

### Membership Rules Adjustment

The Board decided to amend the By-Laws to respond to member discussions around the first school accreditation of applicants. Now only employees of Accredited Savannah Guides Enterprises will be able to be accredited at their first school. It was felt that in these situations guides will have been better observed for consistent performance.

### Supporters Program

The Savannah Guides Supporters Program is up and running with Wilderness Challenge and Undara leading the submissions of visitor email addresses. This initiative brings our like-minded guests closer to the organisation and we hope that 2016 sees a new wave of interested visitors.

### New Savannah Guides Services

We are asked regularly by tour operators, potential guides, Indigenous groups and local attractions about training and business mentoring services. This is an area for increased activity by Savannah Guides in the coming years and we are working on several fronts to expand our available services. These include one day workshops, generic and tailored workbooks, accredited training delivery, business development programs and organisation partnerships. Member involvement will be vital to enable the delivery of these services so please contact Manager Russ if you are interested.

### EcoGuide Partnership

Building on our relationship with Ecotourism Australia and the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Savannah Guides is looking to build member benefits through creating a linked series of nature based tour guide systems. Members comments are welcome on this exciting new opportunity.

### We are a family

As Christmas approaches and with the Adels Grove School still fresh in our minds I am reminded how close many of us have become and how our professional and personal lives are enhanced by Savannah Guides. Please take a moment to salute our recently departed friends Ross Rogers and Terry Barnes over this thoughtful time and perhaps make a New Year's resolution to get a little closer to Savannah Guides and its wonderful fraternity in 2016.

Please don't hesitate to contact me about any matters or just call for a friendly chat.

Regards

*Mick Clark*

President - Savannah Guides



## Welcome to the Team!

### A hearty welcome to newly accredited Savannah Guides:

Simon Ling of Australian Nature Guides, Carnarvon Gorge

Stephen Fresta of Cobbold Gorge

Angela Clucas of Adels Grove

We also presented the earlier accreditation of Hirani Kydd from Oz Tours.

### And new Savannah Guides Enterprises:

Red Dirt Tours – Vicki Jones' day touring operation from Winton

Australian Nature Guides – walking tours in Carnarvon Gorge

Congratulations to these talented and valued new members.



### SAVANNAH GUIDES ENTERPRISE PROFILE: RED DIRT TOURS

Red Dirt Tours operate day tours from Winton in Queensland's Outback. Owner operator Vicki Jones is a Senior Savannah Guide with a long term commitment to quality and nature tourism.

Choose from a range of Winton day tours to the Australian Age of Dinosaurs, Lark Quarry Dinosaur Stampede, Opalton, Bladensburg National Park, the Diamantina River Road, Old Cork and relax with spectacular outback sunsets.

See more at [www.reddirttours.com.au](http://www.reddirttours.com.au)

### Vale Ross Rogers, Savannah Guide

November 2015 marked the passing of Ross Rogers, Senior Savannah Guide from Undara Experience.

Many members will remember Ross as an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide and friend, with a wealth of life experience and gentlemanly charm. Ross and his beloved wife Dale were Savannah Guides School regulars and with his ukulele Ross entertained many Undara campfire visitors.

Ross' struggle with illness in recent years was remarkable for his unstoppable positive attitude. We'll remember his example. Thanks Ross.



Gerry Collins, Dale and Ross Rogers, Ivor Davies

### Vale Terry Barnes

Recently we lost Terry Barnes to his long battle with a medical condition that was diagnosed as life-threatening decades ago. Despite this challenge, Terry's determination and good humour enabled him to live a fulfilling and rewarding life which also positively influenced the lives of many people with whom he came into contact through his deep and enduring interest in nature.

His interest in and knowledge of Australian birds was legendary and he pioneered the raptor shows that we now see at wildlife parks. Terry will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

From Mike Anthony - Wildlife Officer, Northern Gulf Resource Management Group





## Adels Grove School Memories: 15-18 October 2015



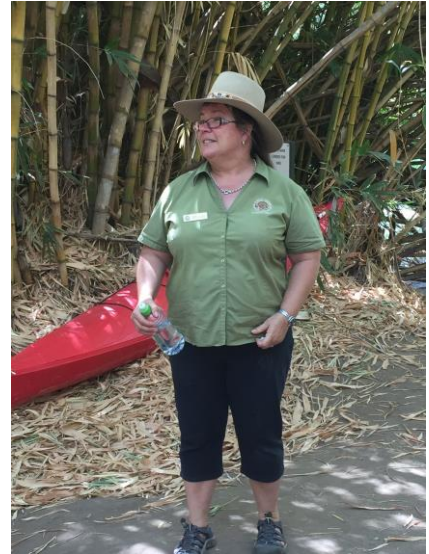
Rod Low Mow sharing knowledge on the Lawn Hill Gorge cruise



Paddling up the gorge



Walking the Island Stack



Michelle Low Mow shows us around



Sunset at Harry's Hill with Mick's pioneer yarn. "Ohhhh! It was a beauty!"



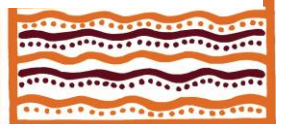
Phil Clucas stokes the Hot Seat at Ange Clucas' accreditation



Rod highlights the amazing Riversleigh fossils



James and Tricky's lenses chase the Purple Crowned Fairy Wren





## Night parrot reserve created

A secretive 56,000-hectare conservation reserve has been established in Queensland in an effort to protect a tiny population of endangered night parrots.

Two years ago, the elusive night parrot was rediscovered after being thought lost for more than 75 years. It was big news in the bird world. The editor of Birdlife Magazine Sean Dooley summed it up as: "The bird watching equivalent of finding Elvis flipping burgers in an outback roadhouse".

After a long search, naturalist John Young found the bird and some feathers on a property west of the town of Longreach in July 2013. Savannah Guides welcomed John Young to the Winton Savannah Guides School to present on his amazing find. He revealed his photographs and evidence to the world, but not the location. That information has remained highly confidential while plans are put in place to protect the parrot from external pressures like weeds, fire, feral predators including cats and people.

Interest in the bird is so high that poachers are also a concern. A live bird or eggs could be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars on the black market.

Conservation organisation Bush Heritage Australia is working with the government, scientists and bird experts to secure 56,000 hectares of land as a conservation reserve.

From abc.net.au



Remote camera at Night Parrot site

## SAVANNAH GUIDES / ECOGUIDE NEW PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Members are asked for their comments on a new opportunity for Savannah Guides in 2016 through an expanded partnership with Ecotourism Australia's EcoGuide Program and other nature-based Tour Guide programs.

New arrangements will see Savannah Guides operating the EcoGuide program including assessing and administration. Along with the Wet Tropics Tour Guide program operated by Savannah Guides, this creates a cohort of over 300 guides, the base for a national culture of excellence in ecotourism guiding with an ethos of continual improvement and network of partnerships with Protected Area Managers, Tourism Organisations, operators, Tour Guides and trainers, conservation and research bodies. The links will support Tour Guide career progression with more transportable credentials and recognition.

The new elements will include:

- Regional one day workshops on Landscape, Flora and Fauna; General Indigenous Culture Protocols and Knowledge; and Commentary Excellence.
- Generic workbooks allowing Tour Guides to develop their own content for specific locations using local field guides, other references and knowledge sharing.
- Accredited training options including through program workbooks and on-the-job assessment.
- EcoGuide field assessments held during the workshop visits to endorse applicants.
- Working with regional EcoGuide Assessors to develop local professional development programs.
- National communication links through e-newsletters and social media.
- Discounted rates to 2-4 day field schools and Savannah Guides Schools.
- An online National Interpretive Resources Library for certified Tour Guides and partners.
- Job listings on the Career Opportunities page on the Ecotourism Australia website.
- Access to cost effective Tour guide insurance.

Your comments and any suggestions on how you might want to be involved are welcome.

Please contact Manager Russ at [info@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:info@savannah-guides.com.au)



## Space Stuff

With Jim Fitzgerald

Here's a link to the fascinating, educational and quite humorous [Kerbal Space Program](#). It's a great way to learn about engineering, physics and maths and is a lot of fun too. There's a freely downloadable demo to play with but at a once-off payment of \$30 for the Full Monty it's pretty good value.

To get a good idea of how the program works, you can follow the YouTube tutorials by the self-titled Astronomer, Scotsman, Hacker, Gamer, DJ (drop your voice pitch to very low) [Scott Manley](#).

Have fun! Jim

## WET TROPICS TOUR GUIDE PROGRAM

Savannah Guides continues to work with its partner, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, to develop the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program.

Our latest Field School was held on Cairns Northern Beaches and welcomed many new friends.

For the first time we held an optional workshop on the Landscapes, Flora and Fauna of the Wet Tropics and some linked interpretive commentary techniques. These workshops are a part of the new process of accreditation for Wet Tropics Tour Guides and will now be offered before each Field School.

On the two-day Field School, we looked at World Heritage Values and interpretive techniques at the Cairns Tropical Zoo and discussed Indigenous Art at Pandanus Gallery in Palm Cove. Senior Savannah Guide Ivor Davies took the group for a valuable session around guiding a bird walk, we discussed the AQUIS development and were hosted at the new Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park.

If you'd like to know more about the program please visit: [www.wettropics.gov.au/tour-guide-training](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/tour-guide-training) or contact Russell to receive the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program E-newsletter.



## Bird Interviews

Highly recommended are John Clarke and Brian Dawes' bird interviews which can be found on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W95SJ6BLdG0>

Check the side menu for more!

## Uncle Nev Takes Home a Cert III

Neville Dunn, a Cairns Tour Guide with more than a couple of decades of guiding experience, recently completed his Certificate III in Tourism through Far North Training Consultancy. "Uncle Nev" was accredited as a Savannah Guide at the April Undara school.

Congratulations Uncle Nev – what's next?



The Nankeen Night Heron, mostly nocturnal, is more impressively coloured than most other herons. The word "nankeen" refers to the buff colour of nankeen fabric, a tough cotton material that was made in Nanjing in China.

## ADELS GROVE TWITCHATHON

Congratulations to our keen Twitchathon teams at the Adels Grove School: The Fledglings, Friendly Feathered Fossils, The Morning Glory's, Figalicious, The Vagrants, Adels Watchers and The A Team.

Some fascinating birds were spotted including the glorious Purple Crowned Fairy Wren, Little Shrike Thrush, Arafura Fantail, Grey Crested Flycatcher, Barking Owl, the Shut Up Bird, Qantas Bird and Big Bird.

Highlights included the Adels Watchers identifying species using local Indigenous names, comic images of Riversleigh's "Deadly Duck of Doom" and the awesome interpretive notes by winners The Morning Glory's.

Keep up your bird watching and we'll see you for another Twitchathon soon!

## SUPPORTERS PROGRAM

If you know someone who would like to become a Savannah Guides Supporter and receive our newsletter, just email [info@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:info@savannah-guides.com.au). We'll subscribe them and post out a bookmark or bumper sticker.

## Helping Small Birds in the Drought

Our old mate and Tropical North Queensland birder Del Richards urges us to think about how we can save small birds on cattle properties from drowning or dehydration as cattle trough water levels drop. Place a piece of pipe from the bottom corner to the lip of the trough to allow birds to walk down to drink or anchor a milk crate upside down in the trough. Contact Del with any Gouldian Finch sightings or thoughts on saving birds from drought: [info@finefeathertours.com.au](mailto:info@finefeathertours.com.au) / 07 4094 1199



## Mike Keighley, NT Savannah Guide, on Parenthood:

One hopes that when their daughter marries a passionate fisherman --- the least one could expect is the occasional fish to be dropped in for dinner.

But... no, not our Chelsea!!!

She and hubby go fishing – and come home with a cow...

Where did I go wrong...?



Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3063645/Fisherman-catches-cow-absconds-export-livestock-ship.html#ixzz3tuuEIVf8>

## An honest mistake! Fisherman catches a COW after it jumped ship into crocodile-infested waters

*Jonathan Brandenburg and his wife were fishing in Darwin harbour .*

*They helped livestock workers to capture a cow which had escaped.*

*It took almost two hours to tie up the cow and ride him onto a ramp.*

By [NELSON GROOM FOR DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA](#)

PUBLISHED: 12:42 EST, 1 May 2015 | UPDATED: 17:43 EST, 1 May 2015

A fisherman made a catch he would never forget when he helped to capture a runaway cow in Darwin Harbour.

Jonathan Brandenburg and his wife were fishing in their local dock last Saturday when a boat of Northern Territory Livestock workers pleaded they help to capture a Brahman cow which had absconded from an export ship. Brandenburg, his wife and the livestock workers wrangled the hefty animal for hours before finally managing to tie it onto the side of a tinny and ride it onto a boat ramp, reports [ABC](#).

The Darwin based fisherman recalled the moment when he and his wife helped to capture the fugitive cattle.

'We jumped in the tinny and got his rope out, wrangles it around the animal's neck and pulls it against the boat. Brandenburg said they cruised back to the East Arm boat ramp where they sedated the cow and returned it to some livestock exporters.

Executive officer of the Northern Territory Livestock Exporters Association Tony Eggington commended Mr Brandenburg and his wife for their help.

'We owe them a vote of thanks because they came to our assistance quickly and readily to help the animal,' he said.

## Congratulations!

### 2015 Outback Queensland Tourism Awards:

**Adels Grove:** Tour and/or Transport Operators and Hosted Accommodation

**Cobbold Gorge Tours:** Tourist Attraction

**Outback Aussie Tours:** Hall of Fame

### 2015 Queensland Tourism Awards:

**Cobbold Gorge Tours:** Silver Tourist Attractions

**Adels Grove:** Gold Hosted Accommodation

**Advanced Ecotourism Certification:** Cobbold Gorge

## Latest News from Lawn Hill (Boodjamulla National Park)

This tourist season kicked off early due to the short and not-so-wet wet season, and fairly moderate temperatures for autumn and winter. Our visitor numbers seemed to be well above previous years (based on water usage at the park along with increases in the level of use of consumables). We think we actually had an increase in the numbers of day visitors, possibly due to our 'grey nomads' who camp at Adels or out on the Gregory River and come into Lawn Hill Gorge for the day.

Our wildlife activity has increased as the year and dry weather has continued. We have watched bird species that you don't usually see, such as Crimson Finches and Zebra Finches, hovering around the creek all day. We've also noticed an increase in the number of wallabies in the gorge. A couple of highlights this year include sightings of Gouldian Finches and Northern Rosellas. We also hosted a somewhat unusual guest in the gorge—a water buffalo took up residence in the upper gorge for a short time but he appears to have moved on to a more secluded location.

On the management side of things, despite the short wet season, we managed to complete all of our planned mosaic burns, which has significantly reduced our fire hazard during this dry time of the year. Managing weeds has taken up a lot of our time—pea and passion fruit vines in the gorge, along with spraying prickly acacia. We've also been busy with maintaining existing fences and constructing new boundary fences.

We were pleased to host the Savannah Guides at the gorge recently—we hope you enjoyed the experience.

*Ranger Jason*





## African Guiding Course Done!

By Shane Ross

Well, I have now finished the 10-week *Field Guides Association of Southern Africa* (FGASA) nature guiding course. We'd heard it would be flat out, but had no idea what to expect until we actually lived it - massive days, intensive learning and partying classmates.

But every moment was worth it. Learning while living on a real game reserve with the Big 5 for 2 ½ months for the price of a 2-week safari – AND coming away with a qualification to *legally* guide in Southern Africa – was INCREDIBLE. I'd recommend it to anybody wanting a taste of Africa, regardless of whether you want to guide or not.

All my life I've wanted to see Africa and in mid-2014, I decided to make real on my long-term dream. I researched for months on end and decided on a 10-week program offered by *Ulovane Environmental Training* on Amakhala Game Reserve, through Enkosini as agent. Options for completing the FGASA Level 1 qualification range from 7 weeks to 2 years; the longer courses including placements and additional courses. Ulovane promised a package, all-inclusive of 3 meals per day, accommodation for the full 10 weeks, vehicle use, daily Reserve access, a comprehensive syllabus & hands-on training from passionate, experienced guides to boot. Groups were generally less than 18 students (while others catered for ~ 30).

I arrived at Ulovane / Amakhala Game Reserve (between Port Elizabeth & Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, South Africa) on Sunday 5th July, with 11 other classmates. The view as we walked through the living area onto the deck was nothing short of mind-blowing!!! We spotted giraffes, countless antelope & elephants within minutes & were assaulted by an almost-deafening cacophony of mysterious bird calls; all of which we'd learn in coming weeks. That afternoon we received our welcome & induction from the Ulovane team, then were shown to our living quarters where we were paired off by age. These were spacious, with single beds / linen, storage cupboards, a toilet & shower; & cleaned daily. Food was most often a cooked meal, & plentiful; our only jobs being to wash up, take out the trash or tend the garden once weekly.

From that afternoon until mid-September, we were flat out. Our comprehensive course syllabus covered aspects from the basics of astronomy, geology, climatology, ecology & ethology, to animal & plant specifics, guiding principles, the earth's history of human habitation, conservation, tracking – & most importantly, the conduct of game drives & trail walks with the Big 5, other dangerous game & a diversity of other plant & animal life. Over the 10-weeks we worked through all aspects of the course, with final assessments 2 x game drive assessments in week 9; & a 3-hour theory assessment in week 10.

Every day had its highlights, the most amazing including:

- Assisting with the capture of a male giraffe for transfer to a nearby reserve, on Day 1;
- Hearing lions roaring / grunting, most nights & early mornings, answered by the eerie yips of black-backed jackals;
- Seeing rare / unique wildlife including Cape Mountain zebra, blesbok, gemsbok, giraffe, elephant, warthog, bushpigs, caracal, vervet monkeys, secretary birds (& loads of other neat bird species), puff adders & boomslang, lizards, various tortoises, frogs, strange insects & amazing plants spread across 5 different biomes;
- Finding and identifying the tracks of cryptic aardvark, brown hyena, Cape clawless otter, porcupine & genets, amongst those species also seen;
- 3 x close encounters with a mother cheetah & her four fluffy cubs – twice on a kill, where all five of them gorged themselves until their stomachs bloated & they could hardly move!



- 2 x close encounters with the male lion, one in the tracker's seat @ <15m, the other while he was bellowing to locate the female (also @ 15m), & scent-marking his domain;
- Several other close encounters with dangerous game / the Big 5, the most memorable of those while on assessment game drives with guests;
- Starting out not knowing a single bird or frog species; ending knowing most of them well enough to identify by their call alone; and
- Most definitely, the overall learning experience – from start to finish, across all aspects of the syllabus.

My utmost thanks go to everyone on the Ulovane team and to our group for countless laughs, distractions & nature moments.

Now its Mozambique... looking out the seaside window of Inhambane's Zavora Lodge at pods of humpback whales full-body breaching less than 200m offshore, two majestic female lesser frigatebirds bombing bait schools amongst them. I miss the wildlife of AGR terribly though, so I'm heading north, via Malawi, to Tanzania to summit Mount Kilimanjaro, before touring her southern parks then hitting Zanzibar Island for party / diving. More of Africa will depend on finding a car or motorbike to make travel easier; taking up an invite to do tracking & trailing assessments with Khoisan bushmen; building my freelance photography portfolio further... or nature guiding.

The beauty is, Africa is an open book – because, now, I'M A FULLY QUALIFIED AFRICAN NATURE GUIDE. And I'm seriously thinking of pursuing a job on a private reserve somewhere in Southern Africa to get my fix. Loving life!

**Shane Ross 5 October 2015**

**Message Shane: #itstartedinbamaga Blog: <https://itstartedinbamaga.wordpress.com/blog-posts/>**

## Interested in Spending Some Time with Ulovane?

Ulovane have customised a short course to suit Australian guides (2-4 weeks). The program incorporates 1 week of each core aspect of Ulovane courses:

- ▶ Week 1 (Level 1): Safari game drives & walks on Amakhala Game Reserve
- ▶ Week 2 (Trails): Learn art of tracking & how to approach dangerous game on foot
- ▶ Week 3 (Marine): Shore profiling, various activities incl. whale watching & ID
- ▶ Week 4 (Birding): ID of African birds (sight, calls) with world-class African birder

The first customised courses will be offered in 2016 for ~ AUD \$2000 (4 weeks):

21 Feb – 19 Mar; 15 May – 11 Jun; 14 Aug – 10 Sep; 6 Nov – 3 Dec

At the Adels Grove Savannah Guides School 17 people were interested in knowing more about this opportunity. For most guides the 6 Nov – 3 Dec date is probably best and we may get a group of Savannah Guides and friends for this date. **Please contact Russ at [info@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:info@savannah-guides.com.au) as soon as possible if you are also interested and we'll have news in the coming weeks.**



Savannah Guides is developing a partnership with Ulovane that will offer other training options, resource sharing and perhaps a field tracking course at an upcoming Savannah Guides School. We'll keep you informed.

See <http://ulovane.co.za/> and Like Ulovane Environmental Training on Facebook







## President Mick hard at work again at El Questro

Grenville from England caught and released  
this 80cm Barra on Pentecost River El  
Questro April 2015

### **Congratulations** to our friend at the **Australian Age of Dinosaurs**

**David Elliot:** awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in June 2015.



## Understanding Cattle

*Cattle have a complex social hierarchy and are excellent spatial learners, control freaks and discerning music lovers.*

Not only do cows seem attracted to music, they stick around, listen and seem to be quite absorbed. Dr Rebecca Doyle from the Animal Welfare Science Centre and the University of Melbourne says that this sort of curiosity is innate in cattle. "When it's in their control, a novel situation can be a really enjoyable and a really positive experience. It's really about how much control they have over the situation."

### **Who knew cows liked to be in control?**

As a 'prey species', cows' sense of control over a situation is a biological necessity. Take for example their 'flight zone'—what we might call personal space. This is the minimum distance at which the cow is comfortable with a nearby threat, be it a cattle dog, a lion or a human on a motorbike. A cow kept on a large grazing station in Australia, which doesn't see humans all that much, might have a flight zone of some 20 or 30 metres. Conversely, the flight zone of a dairy cow milked three times a day will be very close.

That's why cattle farmers and dairy farmers have different herding styles: when you ask a cow to move from one end of the paddock to the other, you do it by entering her flight zone. Her movements will be all about re-establishing her boundaries.

It is amazingly difficult to sneak up on a cow, both because they're often on the lookout and because their eyes are set into the side of their heads, giving them a much wider range of vision than humans. 'They can actually see well past their shoulders,' says Doyle.

### **How many cows does it take to make a herd?**

Scientists have been researching the minimum number of companions cows need to get the psychological benefits of being in a herd. They found that eight is the lower limit. Below that, and cows start to show increased vigilance. So does that mean that, in a manner, cows can count? If they can, they're not telling us with rhythmic hoof tapping, making morse code symbols to be seen from the air or performing syncopated snorts. In fact, cow communication can be surprisingly subtle.

### **What does a cow do to pass the time?**

They ruminate. That is, they partially regurgitate a bit of food and give it another chew to aid the digestive process.

From [www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)



## Indonesian interpretation of radical Dutch business model wins World Responsible Tourism Awards 2015 at WTM London

An eco-resort on the Indonesian Island of Bintan, recognised for its use of a radical Dutch business model, the Polder Model, has been named overall winner of the [World Responsible Tourism Awards 2015](#) at World Travel Market London.

Developed in Holland in the 1980s, the 'Polder Model' – a collaborative, consensus-based way of working between employers and employees which makes everyone a stakeholder in the business – can be seen coming to life in tourism at LooLa in 2015. By setting up local staff as entrepreneurs, running and managing their own businesses within the workings of the resort, LooLa has increased local incomes by 20-50%, has a zero staff turnover through education and development opportunities and gains excellent customer feedback.

[Responsible Travel](#) is the founder and organiser of the World Responsible Tourism Awards and the world's leading market place for small and tailor-made tour operators, all screened for their commitment to responsible tourism.

**World Responsible Tourism Awards 2015 at WTM® London**

Organised by:

*Responsible Travel*

## Meanwhile, in Lithuania...

A research project surveyed 171 customers to determine the key competencies of a Tour Guide.

The Top Ten responses were:

1. Sense of responsibility
2. Good knowledge of the route
3. Punctuality
4. Attentiveness to the client
5. Well organised
6. Sense of humour
7. Aesthetic appearance
8. Inner culture / motivation
9. Knowledge of languages
10. Self control

## Eucalypts of Northern Australia – fast facts

- ◆ Northern Australia hosts the world's largest intact savanna and it's dominated by eucalypts
- ◆ Across Australia more than 80% of original eucalypt woodlands have been cleared or heavily modified
- ◆ Eucalypts in the North differ from those in the south - most are pollinated by birds or bats, are lower in oils, and some are deciduous!
- ◆ There are 188 species of eucalypt in Northern Australia, with 105 of these endemic to it
- ◆ Eucalypt species richness is highest in the central Kimberley, Top End and northeast Queensland, peaking at 46 species per degree cell on and around the Atherton Tableland
- ◆ The strongest shift in eucalypt species composition is east and west of the Gulf of Carpentaria



- ◆ 16 eucalypt species are rated 'extremely restricted' and the highest concentrations of restricted species are in the central Kimberley and southwest of Charters Towers
- ◆ 19 Northern Australia eucalypts are rated as Threatened and 9 as Near-Threatened using IUCN criteria, a result which differs markedly from official ratings
- ◆ 11 eucalypt species are not present in protected areas, 28 species have reservation indices of <10% and 52 species <30%
- ◆ 12 of 84 eucalypt communities are not within protected areas



- ◆ The biggest threat to eucalypts across the North is land clearing, with more local threats from frequent intense fires
  - ◆ For eucalypt conservation in the North it's important to a) improve Threat listings, b) minimise clearing and/or establish offsets, c) manage fire, d) prioritise efforts, and e) undertake research on e.g. reproduction, pollination & evolution ecology.
- More information at [www.kimberleytocape.net.au](http://www.kimberleytocape.net.au)



**Kimberley to Cape**

## Camping With Kids

Senior Savannah Guide Ben Humphries, partner Jen and boys Balin and Lennox are embarking on a year of travelling and camping around Australia!

Like them on Facebook:

**Camping With Kids**





## Wilderness Challenge

Cairns based Enterprise Member Wilderness Challenge was sold recently, ending its 20 year membership of Savannah Guides under owner-operator and Savannah Guides Life Member Tom Warnes.

The company started operations in 1990 just two years after the birth of Savannah Guides. It didn't take too long for Tom Warnes, the founder and owner of Wilderness Challenge, to notice the striking image of SGL's "Phantom" on the door of a Toyota Landcruiser in Cairns. Tom's curiosity soon led him to enquire how his fledgling company could join Savannah Guides.

The door was firmly closed however because Wilderness Challenge did not "live or work" in the Gulf Savannah Region. Unruffled, Tom made the case that not only did his company work in and interpret the region while travelling between Cairns and Darwin, but his company worked to the same sustainable principles and brought guests to Savannah Guides Enterprises in the Gulf country. Tom was invited to a Savannah Guides School at Cobbold Gorge in 1994, and Wilderness Challenge became the first mobile Enterprise member of Savannah Guides, an important step in the evolution of the organisation's culture.

Wilderness Challenge went on to become a significant contributor to the development of Savannah Guides having supplied two presidents spanning six years, five board members, two SGL managers and in excess of 20 Roving Interpreters and Savannah Guides. Tom's commitment was acknowledged with Life Membership of Savannah Guides at the Savannah Guides school at Undara Experience in March 2010.

The Savannah Guides Board and membership sincerely thank Tom for his pivotal efforts in building Savannah Guides. We look forward to catching you between fishing trips, Tom!



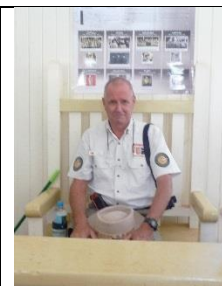
The Wilderness Challenge OKA



Tom accrediting Jim Fitzgerald 1999



2007 Wilderness Challenge guides



Chillagoe School fun

## Ian Pascoe Retires... again

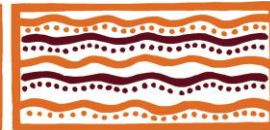
*Ian Pascoe personifies a new generation of people coming to tourism and Savannah Guides. Many have left a career with great people skills and a strong interest in Australia, and jumped into Tour Guiding as a new, fun, seasonal job that suits their lifestyle. And the new role can be rewarding, as Ian notes:*

After joining Savannah Guides in 2009 while working at Adel's Grove, I finished my last trip with Outback Aussie Tours on Sat 28th July 2015. It was fitting that the trip included Adel's Grove on the way across the Gulf Track and into Davidson's Arnhem Land Safari Lodge. My second to last trip was to one of my favourite places, Cape York.

In the 6 years I have worked with Smithy at Outback Aussie Tours, I have been fortunate to guide trips throughout Outback Queensland from the Corner Country up to Cape York, and to Uluru, Broome, Flinders Ranges and Arkaroola.

I will miss my guiding and travelling, but now that I have nearly reached the golden age of 70 years, Carol & I are looking forward to more travelling in our caravan without the need to lift heavy cases for our passengers. No doubt our trips will take us through the areas covered by Savannah Guides and we will be able to catch up with old friends. Regards to all, *Ian Pascoe*

Ian with group at Cape York's "Tip"



## Some Interesting Facebook Pages:

ABC Far North  
Northern Territory Country Hour  
The Savannah Way  
Visit Capricorn Region, QLD  
Australia's North West  
Explore Tropical North Queensland  
Birdwatching Tropical Australia



## PLEASE SEND YOUR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS!

It's great to hear your news, learn about something you've seen or share a nice image.

Please email your contribution for the June 2016 newsletter or your E-newsletter updates to Russ at: [info@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:info@savannah-guides.com.au)

## International Tour Guide joke of the day:

I'm a tour guide in Brazil and on the bus, I said, "If you look to the top of the mountain on your left, you will see a giant man made out of stone."

A bloke at the back shouted, "Statue?"

I said, "No, it's Christ The Redeemer."

## SAVANNAH GUIDES ENTERPRISE PROFILE:

### OZ TOURS SAFARIS

Oz Tours Safaris is a Cairns based, family owned 4WD safari operator. Their menu of accommodated and camping tours covers Cape York, The Kimberley, Gulf Savannah, Kakadu, Tanami Desert and beyond.

Oz Tours have been committed to the quality benchmarks of Savannah Guides for a decade and their guides are among the best in the bush. Join the loyal guests who keep coming back for more adventures with Oz Tours.

See more at [www.oztours.com.au](http://www.oztours.com.au)



Oz Tours Guides Kris and Andrew training at Adels Grove

## Dr Google

Some handy references mentioned at the Adels Grove Savannah Guides School:

- ResearchGate (<https://www.researchgate.net/>)  
Google's professional network for researchers
- Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com.au/>)  
allows access to research papers and legal cases

## Birds Under Threat

The Australian Department of the Environment has advised that several birds, including some of our northern favourites, have been reclassified:

The [Palm cockatoo](#) is now EPBC listed as Vulnerable, and the [Purple-crowned fairy-wren \(western\)](#) moves to the Endangered list.

## Adventure Travel Guide

### Standards released

A new global standard listing the essential competencies of an adventure travel guide has been published. The International Adventure Travel Guide Qualifications and Performance Standard helps travellers, companies and governments to evaluate the quality and sustainability of adventure travel. The standard is a voluntary guideline and was developed by an international group of stakeholders facilitated by the Adventure Travel Trade Association.

See: [http://cdn.adventuretravel.biz/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/ATTA\\_AdventureTravelGuideStandard-A4\\_04SEP15-R009.pdf](http://cdn.adventuretravel.biz/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/ATTA_AdventureTravelGuideStandard-A4_04SEP15-R009.pdf)

## The End



**SEE YOU AT THE BROOME SCHOOL: 22-24 APRIL 2016!**

