Smithy’s President Report

It’s with sad news that I begin my president’s report for this newsletter.

With the shock passing of Philippa Davidson, my deepest sympathies go too Max and the family at this time as we all know what it is like to lose someone close. Philippa to me and many others, was an absolute pioneer for Tourism in the Territory and was dedicated to the ethos of Savannah Guides. We offer Max and his family our ongoing support for the road ahead.

I’d like to welcome all our new members both accredited guides and our friends of. We have a very exciting future ahead of us with some fantastic operations coming on board to be mentored through the accreditation.

Those who were present at the Winton School in March will never forget the Tricky Trish style and the amazing project of the Australian Age of Dinosaurs. An incredible calibre of presenters and participants – great stuff, Trish! We look forward to hearing of, and being a part of, the future success of AAOD.

The inaugural Satellite School was held at Bedrock Village in April was very successful with great feedback to Savannah Guides and Joe and Jo at Bedrock. A big thanks to Joe and Jo for their efforts in developing the Satellite School which served very practical needs for guides and a great opportunity to keep many valued friends of Savannah Guides at the fore front of sharing knowledge. This also developed greater relationships for Savannah Guides with some great outcomes.

This coming November’s Darwin School/Savannah Symposium is a new direction in developing improved relationships and exposure for Savannah Guides. We team up with Savannah Way Ltd and the Tropical Savannah CRC to raise the profile and ramp up the communication of business best practice in the Tropical Savannah’s, this is shaping up to be an incredible school. Hope to see you all there.

The first Savannah Guide School of 2010 will be held at Undara Experience with dates yet to be announced.

Come on and get involved in projects that will benefit your business, Savannah Guides and the local communities of your area.

Best wishes to everyone who is entering Tourism Awards this year!

See you in Darwin!!

Smithy.
Savannah Guides Board

The Savannah Guides Board are a volunteer Board who are elected by the voting members at the Annual General Meeting. They each have a two year term as a Board Member and are elected to be your link to decision making.

Please contact any Board Member to discuss your ideas and issues.

Your Board are:

### Alan Smith - President
- **Location:** Longreach, Qld
- **Enterprise:** Outback Aussie Tours
- **Email:** alans@oat.net.au

### Andy Ralph – Vice President
- **Location:** Kakadu, NT
- **Enterprise:** Kakadu Culture Camp
- **Email:** bininj@kakaduculturecamp.com

### Ivor Davies – Secretary/Treasurer
- **Location:** Fraser Island, Qld
- **Email:** ivor_davies@kingfisherbay.com

### Ben Humphries
- **Location:** Darwin, NT
- **Email:** ben.humphries@cdu.edu.au

### Jeff Woodward
- **Location:** Katherine, NT
- **Email:** jwoo9@hotmail.com

### Trish Sloan
- **Location:** Winton, Qld
- **Email:** trish.sloan@australianageofdinosaurs.com.au

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Savannah Guides in the News and Promotion

- Full page article on the Winton School in the Longreach Leader on 3rd April, 2009.
- ABC radio interviews before and after the Winton School – March/April.
- Presentation to the Visitor Information Centre Conference at Undara Experience on 8th May.
- Representation at the Parks and Tourism Working Together forum held in Cairns by Qld Parks and Wildlife in conjunction with Tourism Queensland on 4th June.
- Meeting with the author of a new tourism based Human Resources book to include Savannah Guides practices on 18th June.
- Talk to American ecotourism students at JCU regarding Savannah Guides on 30th June.
- Talk to JCU Tourism Masters students re Savannah Guides on 7th July.
- 1/3 page promotion in the *Gulf Savannah Visitor Information Guide 2009* (launched on 7th July).
What is Savannah Guides working on at the moment?

The Board and subcommittees of Savannah Guides are always working on projects to achieve the actions and direction set out in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013. Teams are made up of individual members of the organisation, and a few non members, who want to share or learn skills in order to enhance Savannah Guides and its membership. These volunteers show a commitment to the professionalism and improvement of the organisation and Savanna communities that is the heart of Savannah Guides. A huge THANK YOU to all team members for their ongoing commitment!

Currently teams are working on the following activities:

- Work Uniform Policy
- Marketing Strategy
- Recognition of early members and founders
- Partnership arrangements with Qld Parks and Wildlife / Department of Environment and Resource Management
- SGL Website Upgrade
- Ecotourism Australia Partnership
- Savannah Symposium and the Darwin/Kakadu Savannah Guides School
- Updating Corporate Documents, Application Forms and Assessment Documents
- New training organisation partnership and training plan
- New Enterprise member development and mentoring
- Savannah Guides Communicator Newsletter
- 2009 Tourism Awards Submissions for Tropical North Queensland and Brolga Northern Territory

What have the teams achieved recently?

- New Tourism Queensland Partnership
- Winton Savannah Guides School
- Mt Surprise Satellite School
- TQUAL (federal government tourism funding) funding application from Savannah Guides
- TQUAL funding application in partnership with Northern Gulf Resource Management Group
- Dual Accreditation option with EcoGuide
- Dual Accreditation option with Guides of Australia

If you want to get involved a little bit or a big bit, just give Vicki a call or email.
November 2009 Savannah Guides School

This November we are doing something a little different for the Savannah Guides School. We're working in conjunction with the Savannah Symposium.

Savannah Symposium
The Savannah Symposium is a joint effort between Savannah Guides, Savannah Way and the Tropical Savanna CRC. The Symposium targets a number of stakeholders throughout Australia’s Savanna regions and will focus on learning about new ideas, programs and opportunities, successful case studies and developments in three streams – Sustainable Communities, Conservation Business and Ecotourism.

The Symposium will be based at Charles Darwin University (CDU) from Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th November with a field component on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st.

Savannah Guides is effectively running the field component of the Symposium which will leave from Darwin on Friday morning and head to Kakadu and Injalak (within Arnhemland). During this you will meet Traditional Owners and see how tourism businesses interact with culture. Visit ancient rock art at Injalak, activities/dinner/spotlighting at Kakadu Culture Camp and cruise Yellow Waters. There are other activities yet to be confirmed. This field component returns to Darwin late afternoon on Saturday 21st.

Savannah Guides School
The official dates of the Savannah Guides School are 19-22 November. This means the following:

Day 1 - Thursday 19th November
Attend the Savannah Symposium for one day in presentations that interest you, including the options within the Ecotourism stream.

Day 2 and 3 – Friday 20th and Saturday 21st November
Field component of the Savannah Symposium.

Day 4 – Sunday 22nd November – Savannah Guides Training Day
Savannah Guides General Meeting and AGM in Darwin followed by a “Training Day” with experts in their field. This may include a half day training program in Geology or rock art interpretation; and the potential to have an enterprise training component in international marketing. This training day is an addition to the Symposium but for members will be included in the cost of the Thursday, Friday and Saturday Symposium. The day will also be open to non members and non school attendees for a minimal fee.

Interested in attending?
Because we are running in conjunction with the Symposium we would like to get an idea of how many people are interested in attending. We ask that you let either Vicki or Russell Boswell at Savannah Way know if you intend to attend.

Interested in Presenting or Sponsoring?
There are opportunities to showcase what you have been doing in your operation or your research and there are opportunities for sponsorship on a small or large scale. If you’re interested in either contact Russell Boswell at Savannah Way.

For more information contact Vicki Jones on info@savannah-guides.com or (07) 4062 1057

Reminder! Membership Fees are due now so if you haven’t yet paid please contact Vicki.
Peregrine Economics to conduct research on Savannah Guides

Over the coming weeks Peregrine Economics will be conducting research into Savannah Guides Ltd. Romy Greiner, an honorary member of SGL is the managing director of Peregrine Economics, based in Townsville. She put the idea to the SGL Board to have a visiting student, Julia Sturm, answer the question what makes membership in Savannah Guides Ltd attractive to company and individual members? We jumped at the idea of having this strategically important research done for free!

We will be distributing the survey shortly. As the research topic is of utmost relevance, we ask that EVERY member take the time to complete the survey so that the researchers will be able to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the data.

Members will receive the survey by email. Preference is to return it by email to Romy. Alternatively, it can be returned to Peregrine Economics by facsimile or mail. The survey takes approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Again, we urge you to do so for the benefit of SGL.

The research will also answer other questions, including: Why do people/companies join and why do they continue to be members? What makes SGL successful? What are its weaknesses? What are key challenges to the continued operation/growth of Savannah Guides Ltd and how are these being resolved?

In addition to the member survey, Peregrine Economics will also interview former members and non-members. We are in discussion whether an additional short survey of tour clients would be beneficial also.

For questions, don’t hesitate to phone Romy or Daniel on (07) 4775 2448.
To check out Peregrine Economics, please go to www.riverconsulting.com.au/peregrine
KAKADU BIRD WEEK – 10-17 OCTOBER

Tour operators who specialise in bird watching tours are invited to be involved in the inaugural Kakadu Bird Week, 10-17 October being hosted by Gagudju Lodge Cooinda.

The main program which caters for both experienced and beginner birdwatchers incorporates the annual ERA bird count, guided bird walks, field trips and interactive workshops.

Opportunities exist for tour operators to link into the event by scheduling pre and post touring options to complement the main program. Tour operators wishing to be involved should contact Gagudju Lodge Cooinda by emailing toursgm@gagudjulodgecooinda.com.au

Tour guides interested in furthering their birding knowledge are also invited to become involved in Kakadu Bird Week. Birds Australia and Charles Darwin University representatives will be offering advice on training in this field.

Anyone interested in the CDU Recognise Birds Unit (VTP-111) or Birds Australia Endorsement should contact Ben Humphries from Charles Darwin University by emailing ben.humphries@cdu.edu.au

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Places in our Backyard!

Learn about the Cumberland Chimney—location 20kms west of Georgetown, Qld on the Gulf development road/Savannah Way

The Cumberland chimney, and the dam that was built to provide water to the mill and batteries, are substantial remains of the Cumberland mines on the Etheridge fields. The brick chimney was built in 1889 to dispense smoke from the large steam driven engines powering the batteries that crushed the gold bearing stone.

By Etheridge standards the Cumberland was a highly mechanised operation and steam provided the muscle that kept it pounding the hard rock. The Cumberland prospecting claim was registered on December 18, 1872. It was then sold fourteen years later to the Cumberland Gold Mining Company Ltd.

The Cumberland gold production reached its peak of 11, 500 ounces gold just before it was sold in 1886, then fell rapidly thereafter. Falling grade from lower grade ores lifted from greater depths, forced retrenchment and by 1889 only a few hundred ounces were recovered. But of course, the days of high gold productions from Cumberland were over before the mine was put on the market in 1886.

By the end of 1890 there were only 169 residents of the township and the company was reconstructed and again refinanced to the Cumberland Gold Mining Company Ltd. The company abandon the site in 1897 although attempts to use the battery continued to 1934. The miner’s camp grew into an energetic and populous community that rivalled Georgetown.

At the time of the top gold production there were almost 400 mine workers and families with another hundred or so people living there. Shops were numerous and “the butcher, the baker and the candle stick maker” could all make a good living at Cumberland. 1885 saw a police station built and a telegraph office set up. Confidently, the Bank of New South Wales (not Westpac) established its Cumberland branch in 1887 the settlement was proclaimed as a township in 1889. A school was opened in 1891 and four hotels were doing business in Cumberland by 1894.

When gold petered out and shareholders funds dried up Cumberland could not continue and by 1898 the township was reduced to a single hotel and both the bank and the police station were withdrawn. The telegraph office closed its doors in 1899 but the school carried on until 1915 when there was a “drought of pupils”.

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The NW Queensland Flood Effects Continue to Worsen

The Northern Gulf Resource Management Group (NGRMG) in partnership with the Queensland Primary Industries & Fisheries (QPI&F) is surveying flood affected country from the worst floods in recorded history. In some areas the effect of prolonged inundation (up to 12 weeks) has left the ground barren, the biodiversity virtually non existent, surviving cattle numbers low and calving rates insufficient for a continuing viable grazing industry without emergency measures being taken.

Graziers have 6 weeks to make a decision whether to agist their remaining stock while they can still be transported, supply feed over a prolonged period with no income to pay for it, or shoot them. Natural water supplies in some areas are becoming seriously polluted with dead fish, algae and even dead crocodiles found in some normally pristine water holes.

Noeline Gross, General Manager for the NGRMG said “There is an urgent and compelling need for government consideration of environmental or natural resource recovery in the lower Gulf of Carpentaria following the dramatic floods during January to March 2009, given the current and future asset and production values held. Over one million hectares of land has been left devastated due to some 12 weeks of total inundation (the longest continuous inundation ever on record). Additionally compounding factors such as erosion and weed infestation will continue to decline the regions production capacity and biodiversity value if immediate action is not taken.”

Last week Senator for Queensland Ian Macdonald and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter toured the region and saw first hand the devastating effects of the flood and are lending their whole-hearted support for assistance.

John Bethel, Chair of the NGRMG and a local grazier said, “Our Executive fully supports the work of the NGRMG staff in taking on the responsibility of helping the local community recover from this catastrophe. This is in addition to their normal duties and they are putting in a huge effort that is likely to continue for several months.”

There is no recorded science of how the land may recover from such an event as there has never been an one like it. The NGRMG and QPI&F are using existing and new monitoring sites to begin recording how the land recovers, how long it takes, when native grasses begin to return, the effect of weeds, tree thickening, return of biodiversity (termites and all the little “critters”), etc. This could well become baseline data in understanding how future such catastrophes can be managed.

For further information contact the Northern Gulf Resource Management Group on 07 4062 1330 or email to admin@northerngulf.com.au

Line of dead mussels and fish on lagoon impacted by floods

Country in A-B condition before flood now denuded.

Congratulations!

To Kakadu Culture Camp as they’ve been named in the National Top 10 Indigenous Adventures.

Outer Edge is Australia’s number one selling ‘Adventure’ magazine.
We are OPEN!

Australian Age of Dinosaurs opened up their brand new Preparation Facility and released three brand new Dinosaurs!

Tours are 9am, 11am & 2pm everyday except Christmas Day. Coaches via special arrangements. Education programs available.

We have revealed to the world the first new sauropods to be named in Australia in over 75 years and the most complete carnivorous dinosaur skeleton ever found in our country. The meat-eating Australovenator wintonensis (Banjo) has been coined Australia’s answer to Velociraptor – which was brought to terrifying life by Stephen Spielberg in the Jurassic Park films.

Banjo possessed similar speed, razor-sharp teeth and had three large slashing claws on each hand. This was a terrifying creature. The two plant-eating, four-legged sauropod species unveiled today are new types of titanosaur – the largest animals ever to walk the earth.

Palaeontologists say that the Diamantinasaurus matildae (Matilda) was a solid and robust animal, filling a niche similar to the hippopotamus today. The second new species, Wintonotitan wattsi (Clancy) represented a tall animal that may have been Australia’s prehistoric answer to the giraffe.

VISIT www.australianageofdinosaurs.com
For more information about these amazing Creatures...and our Preparation Facility!

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Join the Australian Age of Dinosaurs team for a 5 day dig experience.

$3300pp
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Help us preserve the past for the future!

Limited positions available.
BOOK FAST!
Call and ask for Judy on (07) 4657 0414 or email judy.elliott@australianageofdinosaurs.com

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Where are they now?
Jim Fitzgerald—Savannah Guide/Retired

Most will have read in a previous newsletter that Susanne and I were managing Moreton Telegraph Station camping ground in 2006 and 2007, and what a great place it is. Brett and Kathy Hintz, previously guiding for Simon and Gaye Terry at Cobbold Gorge, are the current managers with Ian and Kerre (also ex-CG) helping them out for the '09 season. From all reports Brett and Kathy are doing a terrific job, with the business continuing to grow.

For most of the past 12 months I was working for Queensland Parks and Wildlife as a ranger based at Tinaroo. Much of the work I was doing was on a walking track that meanders along the shore of Lake Tinaroo from Downfall Creek to Kauri Creek camping areas. Cyclone Larry caused a great deal of damage to the vegetation along this track, and many sections were severely eroded and footbridges damaged and I was part of the team working to restore it.

Resurfacing of the entire track length with Quinkan gravel was hard yakka but essential, and the building (and rebuilding) of footbridges was a great experience. This time with QPW was limited and I’m now 'retired' but kept hard at work at home.

I try to attend Savannah Guides’ Schools when I can and will no doubt catch up with my fellow guides at one of them in the near future.

Jim Fitzgerald
JOIN THE AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY’S

CAPE TO GULF
CONSERVATION EXPEDITION

BOOK NOW AND RECEIVE A FREE AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC SUBSCRIPTION

Now you can explore Cape York Peninsula’s greatest natural treasures and protect them at the same time.

Help scientists undertake a range of fascinating plant and animal surveys in 633 sq. km Brooklyn Sanctuary, which has a greater diversity of wildlife than Kakadu National Park. Camp in the Aboriginal community of Mapoon and make night-time sorties along the coast in a quest to save flatback and Olive Ridley turtles. Spend time with like-minded travellers, sleep under the stars and learn from experts in science and conservation.

This exclusive AG Society self-drive 4WD expedition will depart from Cairns and finish in Cooktown. During those two weeks, you’ll have the experience of a lifetime. We guarantee it.

WHO Odyssey Travel
WHEN 20 September–3 October 2009
COST $5400 per vehicle (ex-Cairns)
CONTACT Call 1300 888 225 for a full itinerary

A portion of the profits from this expedition will go directly to the AG Society, to support community, adventure and environment projects.
Welcome to our new Site and Roving Interpreters

At the Winton School we welcomed 4 new accredited Guides into the Savannah Guides family. They are:

Freia Lee from Undara Experience as a Site Interpreter
Michelle Edwards from Oz Tours Safaris as a Roving Interpreter
Stewart Flanagan from Bedrock Village as a Site Interpreter, and
Peter Kimber from Bedrock Village as a Site Interpreter.

Congratulations and Welcome! It’s great to see some new faces committed to professional standards of guiding service and ongoing professional development. What’s even more special is that these four Guides are all over 40 and have experienced other careers before turning to the fulfilling life as a tour guide.

AND…Welcome to our newest Friends of Savannah Guides:

Australian Age of Dinosaurs Limited
Capricorn Caves
Gagudju Lodge Cooinda
Bruce Honeywill
Greg Tyers
Lisa King
Petra Kennedy
Ladies and Gentlemen Meet our friend Freia!

Receiving the Site Interpreters Patch at the last school was an honor and I now wear it proudly. I have been in and out of guiding for the past five years but I have somehow always ended up returning to the Savannah Guide Schools. At present I am working at Undara Experience, the place where my guiding and the love for the savannah all started.

I have always had a love of the bush and fortunately, our family lived close to wild places. As a teenager my dad purchased a caravan park on the mid north coast of NSW which was on ‘virgin ground’, as dad put it. The park, bounded by a river one side, beach on the other and Diamond Head National Park to the South. My sisters and I spent all of our free time exploring bush on our trusty steeds and the rest of the time running the kiosk, cleaning amenities and mowing lawns. I guess that was my introduction to the tourism industry.

I found myself free to follow my heart after raising two wonderful children. My daughter, Naomi and I packed up shop and home and drove off in search of adventure. Travelling in a van for around a year, and having a wonderful time, we ended up in Cairns then purchasing land and settling in Ravenshoe. My own special patch of ground.

After a long journey, both physical and spiritual, it seems I have come full circle, back to my childhood days, romping around in the bush and still being amazed by its nature.

Freia 🌟

In loving memory...

Vale Philippa Jane Davidson
1.09.1945 – 17.06.2009

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to a very special friend and a valued “Special Member” of Savannah Guides.

Philippa passed away in Melbourne, doing what she loved most, promoting her beloved Davidson’s Arnhemland Safaris, beside Max her best friend and husband of many years, attending the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE).

Philippa was one of the Territory’s staunchest supporters, attending Trade & Consumers Shows all over the world promoting their product, Savannah Guides and northern Australia. We have lost a valuable colleague and much loved member.

Philippa will be remembered as a happy and cheerful lady, always ready to hop in with a helping hand and someone who was a strong supporter of young people coming into the tourism industry.

We will miss the extra pair of hands at Schools, the laughter and the friendship of a very warm and giving lady who always gave us 100%.

Our love and thoughts go to Max and the extended Davidson family.
“Hot Off the Press” Member Benefits

**Savannah Way Membership**

Cooperation between Savannah Guides and Savannah Way has been positive with synergies between our organisations. Savannah Way is offering all of our accredited Enterprise Members free Friends of Savannah Way Membership; or 25% discount on other categories of membership with Savannah Way. To take up one of these member benefits or find out more about membership contact Russell Boswell of Savannah Way on info@savannahway.com.au or 0408 772 513.

**EcoGuide Dual Accreditation** – voluntary additional accreditation for Site/Roving Interpreters and Savannah Guides.

The EcoGuide arrangement:

Any guide who has been accredited as a Savannah Guide or Site/Roving Interpreter by Savannah Guides will receive a discount on their application for EcoGuide Australia Certification.

*Accredited Savannah Guides and Site/Roving Interpreters will receive:*

- Complimentary online registration or workbook (usually $45)
- No assessment fee (usually $125)
- No onsite verification (usually from $80)

To qualify, a Savannah Guide or Site/Roving Interpreter will need to fill out the EcoGuide application and pay an annual fee (currently $170) to maintain their certification.

**Guides of Australia Accreditation** – voluntary additional accreditation for Site/Roving Interpreters and Savannah Guides.

The Guides of Australia arrangement:

Savannah Guides is a member of Guiding Organisations Australia who administer the national tour guide accreditation called Guides of Australia. As an accredited Savannah Guide or Site/Roving Interpreter you qualify for

- A signed Tour Guides Code of Guiding Practice (which you sign as a part of SG accreditation)
- The Guides of Australia Application Form
- Passport sized photo – (digital or hardcopy) for an ID Card. The image is to reflect how the guide looks while at work. The applicant should not be wearing sunglasses and is most welcome to be smiling!
- Application Fee - $33 for a new application (lasts for 3 years) and $22 for a renewal.

For more information and application information contact Vicki.
The Bone Readers
Eminent scientists set the record straight for readers puzzled by the myriad of claims and counterclaims about Australia's prehistory, arguing that many popular theories are based on misinterpretation or outright distortion of scientific evidence.

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http://www.savannahway.com
THE PARROT FLOWER
This is a flower from Thailand. It is also a protected species and not allowed to be exported.
A VERY RARE PARROT FLOWER.

Expand your mind....

Ancient primate is evolutionary 'aunt'
Wednesday, 20 May 2009
Scientists have unveiled the well preserved fossilised remains of an ancient primate found in Germany that may have been a close relative of monkeys, apes and humans.
Subjects: animals, fossils, evolution, mammals
Locations: germany, norway

Dr Karl talks back with Dr Tim Flannery
Thursday, 2 April 2009
Science on Mornings Podcast What's the quickest way to stop sweating after exercise?; is biochar a legitimate solution to carbon emissions?; why do men have nipples?; double glazing versus solar power; how can you navigate through space when everything is moving?; and why do diamonds have different colours?
Subjects: science-and-technology, dinosaurs, fossils, weird-and-wonderful, anatomy, scienceontriplej, podcasts
Reptile Mania...

Brachyurophis incinctus
Shovel nosed snake

Cyclorana noraeohollandiae eating Litoria rubella
New Holland Frog eating a Naked Tree Frog

Nephrurus asper
Spiny Knobbed tailed Gecko

Brachyurophis incinctus
Gilbert's Dragon

Ctenophorus caudicinctus
Ringtailed Dragon

Photo’s by Steve K Wilson
These were his siting’s from the March Savannah Guide School in Winton.
**Career Opportunities...**

Undara Experience is currently looking for a Savannah Guide to complete their team for the season. We ask that you commit for full season which ends 1st November 2009, upon completion of this period we offer a bonus payment! Accommodation and meals provided for a small fortnightly fee. All staff live at the resort and we run a 10 days on, 4 days off roster. If you are looking for a place to call home and a proxy family for the next few months, then Undara is the place for you. Please contact Alicia Sturges – hr@undara.com.au

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**Missulena - Mouse Spider, Family Actinopodidae**

Mouse Spiders are a group of Trapdoor Spiders common in suburban gardens in Australia. Males often fall into suburban swimming pools whilst in search of females. Males may vary from a 5 to a 20 cent coin in leg span. The body may be uniform black or dark blue, or black with a light grey to white patch on top. The head is very wide, shiny, and black, sometimes with bright red or orange-red chelicerae and eye region. The legs are dark and may appear long and thin. The female spider is a larger, stockier, more solid spider with uniform black head and body. Missulena is often confused with Funnel-web Spiders. When viewed from the side, the head of the Mouse Spider appears as a step, strongly divided into two levels by a nearly vertical drop from the front half of the head. The eight tiny eyes are spread across the front of the upper section behind the very prominent chelicerae. In the Funnel-web and all other Trapdoor Spiders the eyes are grouped together on a mound at the centre front of the head and the head is not strongly divided. When provoked, Missulena is aggressive and is quick to rise to the striking position. It lacks, however, the dangerous bite of the Funnel-web Spider. When viewed from underneath, the fangs of Missulena tend to cross over at the tips whereas in the Funnel-web and all other Trapdoor Spiders the fangs lie parallel when closed. Of all recorded and specimen-backed bites of the Mouse Spider (Missulena bradleyi) only one (to a 19 month old baby in Gatton) has caused serious reactions. The seriousness of the bite of Missulena is the subject of considerable disagreement. Over the years, we have received reports of uneventful bites from Missulena species both males and females.

Two reports (both backed by specimens registered in the Qld Museum) spring to mind immediately. In one a 7yr boy had a female, attached bull-terrier style to his finger. The GP had to crush the spider to get it to release. The boy indicated no illness but only minor hunger pains as in the excitement, lunch had been missed! The second case was of a paramedic who was working under a house at Mt Tamborine and put on a coat that was on the ground. He had noted the ground was almost swarming with male Missulena bradleyi. He was bitten repeatedly by the males that were in the sleeve. Apart from the immediate pain which soon passed he reported no problems until 36 hours later when a large suppurating wound appeared on his arm. Recognising a secondary infection he applied an antibiotic powder and the wound healed without further complication and was barely noticeable when I saw it a week or so later.

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**Got anything you want to share...**

*Send it to info@savannah-guides.com*

*Did you win an award? Maybe found a new species of animal...Share it with your fellow members and friends!*

*How many ants can you find in the newsletter?*