Welcome to our May newsletter

We’ve just finished a tremendous School in Chillagoe, Queensland, with a diverse set of knowledge and skill sessions. It was inspiring as always to be with Savannah Guides members, old and new, and some very welcome guests, all learning together.

Lately Savannah Guides has been sharing the learning with Wet Tropics Tour Guides and some Indigenous businesses. I hope you enjoy reading about some of our recent activities.

Savannah Guides President, Ben Humphries

Chillagoe takes us “From Caves to Cosmos”

Chillagoe’s incredible surroundings provided a fascinating backdrop to the 18-21 April Savannah Guides School. Our group really enjoyed their cave touring, historical tour including to a working marble quarry and night at the observatory among the many field trips. Of course our networking was in full swing with participants including Life Member Tom Warnes and Board Members Ben, Ivor, Amanda and the committed Ken who drove well into Thursday night to make the school. Sam Boswell made it to her first School and there were strong contingents from Capricorn Caves, Oz Tours and Wilderness Challenge. Between the local pub, observatory and our own Town Hall party a good time was had by all. Some other great memories include:

- Ken driving the Savannahlander Train and John and Rick from Oz Tours’ valuable heavy vehicle recovery demonstration and sparkling Andy’s catering!
- Presentations on Chillagoe’s Geological Timeline, Northern Gulf Resource Management Group’s landcare initiatives, the meaning of bird names, Frogs and Reptiles of the Savannahs with Mike Anthony and “Who Do You Think You Are? – The Life of Stars”, a Jim Fitzgerald special complete with great props.
- Andrew Packer of Wilderness Challenge taking out the Twitchathon Alpha Birder Prize AGAIN!
- Tommy Prior and his amazing restored Ford collection that Kevin Lyons just couldn’t leave.
- “Vertical’ and “Horizontal” Adventure Caving challenges with the Chillagoe Caving Club. The new Court House Police Museum and restoration announcement about Chillagoe Railway Station.
- Touring the magnificent Royal Arch & Trezkin caves with QPWS Rangers Mick and our first QPWS Site Interpreter Doug Davidson (pictured). Congratulations to all of the newly accredited guides (see page 3) including new Savannah Guides Rick Edwards and Ken Fairbairn, and welcome to our new participants.

Chillagoe was our 52nd Savannah Guides School and we hope to see all of our members and friends at a school before long!

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.
SAVANNAH GUIDES IS ON FACEBOOK

Our Facebook page is alive and well – please “Like” us and stay in touch! We are looking for members who can add posts and build our following. Can you help spread the social media word? Please visit the Facebook page or contact SGL Manager Russell!

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Our Opportunity

Savannah Guides has the principles of Responsible Tourism at its core in our Mission and Vision, in many ways ahead of its time. As world travellers become more aware of the importance of putting something back into local communities and supporting environmentally friendly businesses, we need to develop the way we tell the story of our organisation and members.

We currently have access to an international expert in this field and are looking for your ideas on how we can:

- Help members give their guests take-home sustainability messages and motivations
- Increase our commitment to sustainable activities
- Improve the marketing of our environmental and cultural roles in the community

World Responsible Tourism Day

In our last newsletter we featured Savannah Guides’ participation in World Responsible Tourism Day at the Nitmiluk School. This is a worldwide movement and we encourage all members to consider how they and their enterprise can become involved.

Please see http://www.wtmwrtd.com/

What kind of cooperative approach can we take to promoting the message of Responsible Tourism every day and on this year’s World Responsible Tourism Day on November 6, 2013?

Please contact Manager Russ with your ideas.

The next SAVANNAH GUIDES SCHOOL is in Alice Springs NT 12-15 October 2013

...more details soon!

JULIE CARMODY RESEARCHES SAVANNAH GUIDES

Our long term Friend and contributor Julie Carmody, now with the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) has published a paper about Savannah Guides in the Journal of Sustainable Tourism.

Here is the link to the article on the Savannah Guides Professional Development Schools http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/B4eB8KqKnBDP2C4H45Cc/full Thanks Julie!

Kerryann, Tracey, Amanda and Julie in Chillagoe

Savannah Guides School Ideas

It's about creating symbiotic relations between organisations. We have an absolute advantage being able to network and gain valuable knowledge and experience from other guides. This taps into an endless source of knowledge.

At Schools we make new contacts and friends and ensure that the same standard is maintained across all guides and operators. I feel like the Savannah Guides are like a keystone animal, the Cassowary – if it disappears many plants in the rainforest would also disappear. If Guides are not trained the standard will drop and we will resort back to being a country that offers a poor interpretation of our past and present.

Rick Edwards
Savannah Guides Stars!

Celebrate some of our leading members, acknowledged with Savannah Guides Awards and Accreditation:

**2012 BARRY KUBALA FUTURE LEADERS AWARD**

Mick Clark was awarded the Savannah Guides Future Leader’s Award at the Nitmiluk School. The aim of this award is to develop a younger, up and coming, mentored, active, member that can be a role model for others and a future leader for Savannah Guides Limited. Rod Low Mow, Mick’s employer at Adel’s Grove, has commended Mick on his responsible and capable approach to all tasks. Mick has also continued to step up at Savannah Guides Schools, assisting in a range of ways at every opportunity.

Congratulations Mick – you are a great role model and we look forward to your continued involvement.

**Mick Clark on the Northern Rockhole Walk**

**Nitmiluk National Park**

**2012 VAL SPEEDIE MEMORIAL TOUR GUIDE OF THE YEAR AWARD**

NT Immersions’ Matt Leigh was the inaugural winner of this award at the Nitmiluk School. Matt’s employer Mick Jerram submitted a glowing endorsement of Matt.

A Savannah Guide, Matt receives very positive feedback from his guests on overnight canoe trips on the Katherine River and walking trips on the Jatbula Trail. Risk management, quality interpretation and maximising guests’ experiences when they are sometimes outside their comfort zone are Matt’s specialties.

Congratulations, Matt, your skills and approach are a great example to all of us!

**Matt Leigh presents on conducting overnight walking tours at the Nitmiluk School**

Please remember that Savannah Guides is your vehicle for continual professional development. Consider how you can:

- Be nominated for a Savannah Guides award – these will be announced again at our October School
- Upgrade your accreditation from Site or Roving Interpreter to Savannah Guide through contributing to Savannah Guides activities and its Mission
- Stand for election to the Board
- Join us in a project to assist developing businesses or integrate Responsible Tourism into member activities
- Contribute to the newsletter

Ask Russell or a Savannah Guides Board member for details.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Guides Accredited at the Chillagoe School:

Ken Fairbairn
Rick Edwards
Andrew Packer
Andrew James
Chris Knol
Kevin Lyons
Doug Davidson
Rohana Bell
Kerryann Flohr
John Colless

Savannah Guide
Savannah Guide
Roving Interpreter
Roving Interpreter
Site Interpreter
Site Interpreter
Site Interpreter
Site Interpreter
Site Interpreter
Site Interpreter
About Savannahs – by John Colless of Wetherby Station

What is a Savannah?
- Wikipedia -“Savannah is a grassland ecosystem”. Savannah can be grassland, open canopy with scattered trees or treed.
- “The term savannah is believed to have originally come from an Arawak (Central and Southern American people) word describing “land which is without trees but with much grass”. By the late 1800s it was used to mean “land with both grass and trees.”
- “Spanish explorers familiar with the term sabana for areas they colonised in South America.”
- Another term commonly used in Australia and America to define Savannah is Rangeland. A definition for Rangeland is similar to Savannah: “Rangelands are vast natural landscapes in the form of grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, wetlands and deserts.”
- Savannah covers approximately 75% of Australia and over 30% of the World’s land surface.

Activities on Savannah
Economic, cultural and social activities carried out sustainably on Savannah include:
- Grazing cattle and sheep (A$5b per annum)
- Mining- minerals and coal (A$12b per annum)
- Coal seam gas and oil extraction
- Agriculture and horticulture in favoured pockets
- Timber from native forests
- Fishing
- Tourism, travel and camping
- Education and interpretation
- Cultural - indigenous people on communities
- Carbon sequestration

Threats to Savannah
Existing and emerging threats to the sustainable future of the precious Savannahs.
- Human pressure – over clearing of native vegetation, poorly designed and maintained roads and fire breaks leading to erosion and stream runoff.
- Fire - wild fires or uncontrolled out of season burn offs.
- Grazing and browsing animals such as camels, goats, cattle, sheep, horses and donkeys which can destroy fragile vegetation.
- Exotic plants including rubber vine, prickly acacia, prickly pear, mesquite, lantana, as well as grasses such as giant rat’s tail, buffel grass, gamba and grader grass.
- Feral animals which have been imported from overseas - cane toads, fox, rabbit, pig, camel.
- Biota such as imported bees, crazy and electric ants, fungi and fish (tilapia, European Carp)
- Climate change and global warming. Greenhouse effect leading to timber thickening and vegetation change.

The future
We as Savannah Guides and all Australians will need to work together to understand, interpret, communicate and educate to sustainably manage and preserve our valued Savannah into the future. The future is great if we look after our “brittle” environment, identifying problems and applying sound solutions.
Thoughts About Climate

Climate change is upon us as a serious threat to the world’s ecology and human lifestyles in the coming years. Learn more at: www.climatecodered.org/
This book is also of interest to all of us on the planet:

Systematic short-termism: Climate, capitalism and democracy

by Jorgen Randers

This is the third book in a series – see the others here:

- Plus 2°C in 2052. What to do?
- Forty more years of slow growth

Guide Profiles for SGL Website

WANTED!

We’re putting profiles of some accredited members on the Savannah Guides website to personalise our message. Can you help? Please send 200-250 words about your guiding history and specialities and perhaps a favourite place or tour moment PLUS a nice image to info@savannah-guides.com.au.

SAVANNAH GUIDES PARTNERSHIPS

Savannah Guides Limited has a range of valued partners who assist our organisation work towards its mission:

Our Corporate Partners

QPWS & NT Parks and Wildlife – support our schools through expert presentations and participation and continually liaise with Savannah Guides on access and park monitoring issues.
Tourism NT – long term partners acknowledging Savannah Guides Limited’s role in maintaining and raising the quality of experiences in the NT. The central marketing body for NT tourism product so closely linked to our NT members.
Savannah Way Limited – promotes the Cairns to Broome drive route and features SGL enterprise members, who receive “Friends of Savannah Way” level Savannah Way membership.
Price Waterhouse Coopers, Townsville – leading accountancy firm who provide pro bono services to complete our Annual Financial Review.
OM4 – website design company providing the SGL website platform.

Our Project Partners

Wet Tropics Management Authority – protectors and presenters of the ancient rainforests in north Queensland who contract Savannah Guides to run tour guide workshops for rainforest guides.
Indigenous Business Australia – supports our Indigenous Business Partnerships program with the Townsville Cultural Centre.
Other Government Agencies – Commonwealth, NT and Queensland departments have provided funding and guidance.

Members are encouraged to contact Manager Russ with partnership ideas or to get involved.
WET TROPICS TOUR GUIDE PROGRAM

Savannah Guides has been working with the Wet Tropics Management Authority to develop the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program. The program includes two day Field Schools, day families and workshops, an online course developed by Industry Accreditation and a social media network of guides.

Field Schools have now been held in the Daintree in December 2012 and Yungaburra in March 2013. These and the overall program have been a great success. Some highlights have included tree kangaroos, Jungle Canopy Surfing, night spotting, dawn canoeing, insightful presentations and workshops, and Tai Chi with Allan Gillanders!

We are already seeing crossovers in attendance with some of the region’s Savannah Guides members attending the workshops and Wet Tropics participants coming to the Chillagoe Savannah Guides School. Congratulations and thanks to these guides for bringing your input.

This is a very positive expansion of the Savannah Guides model and we look forward to seeing more of our mates in the rainforest.

For more details see: www.wettropics.gov.au/tour-guide-training

PREZIDENT BEN LEADS THE WAY in NT Parks Week 2013 activities.

NT members looking to participate in 2014 should contact Ben on benjamin.humphries@nt.gov.au

Certificate of Appreciation

for your support in celebrating the importance of Holmes Jungle Nature Park during Parks Week 2013

www.nt.gov.au/parks

Drew Morta’s interpretive walk at Lake Eacham and Piggy Pavlov cracking them up in the Daintree
Greetings from Roving Interpreter Ian Pascoe of Outback Aussie Tours

As well as our regular tours to The Gulf Country, The Corner Country, and Outback Queensland, Outback Aussie Tours does individualised trips for special interest groups, and I would like to tell you about some of our experiences. When I say we, I refer to the team at OAT as well as my wife Carol who Alan sends on lot of the tours as hostess. All of these trips with the exception of the last one were operated in one of our two MAN 4WD coaches.

The first of these trips was in May when we left Longreach for Cooktown via the back-tracks through Richmond, Porcupine Gorge, The Lynd and Mount Molloy. We spent several days exploring Cooktown and the MAN 4WD coach proved its credentials when it climbed to the lighthouse in low range. This was a highlight for many of the passengers. Leaving Cooktown we travelled the Bloomfield Track to Cape Tribulation for a night before ending in Cairns.

The second trip in June started in Rockhampton & ended in Longreach, including Carnarvon Gorge, Thargomindah, Tibooburra, Cameron’s Corner, Innamincka and Birdsville. It turned interesting as we left Innamincka because the heavens opened up with a massive thunderstorm. Thank god for 4WD coaches. Some of the water-courses were running nearly a meter deep, but luckily not very wide across. We were late into Birdsville that night. The next day we ventured out to the base of Big Red, something which had not been possible for 3 years due to the huge amount of water they had experienced in the region. Everyone climbed Big Red & had a great time, but on the return trip our tyres had churned up the sand & we got bogged. No amount of 4WD was going to help, until a chap came along in a Chevy Silverado with dual rear wheels & offered a snatch. I wasn’t too optimistic until he produced the biggest snatch strap I have ever seen (about 120mm wide). When the strap took-up the rear wheels on his ute lifted 600mm off the ground, but we were out in one snatch. When we left Birdsville the next morning the road was in terrible condition due to the rain & on reaching Windorah we found they had closed the road soon after we left Birdsville. The group enjoyed some time in Longreach before taking The Spirit of The Outback back to Rockhampton.

The third trip in July was basically a Corner Country Trip which started in Longreach and ended in Sydney. We travelled through Birdsville, Innamincka, Tibooburra and Broken Hill, staying in each town & exploring the attractions. I had never driven a coach in Sydney before, and only go there in my own vehicle about every 2-3 years. The Satellite Navigation proved its worth. However, the drop-off point was the Metro-on-Pitt Hotel in Pitt Street right in the centre of the CBD at 8PM on a Friday night. I won’t say anymore except that I got back to Longreach unscathed.

The fourth trip in August was for a special interest walking group who wanted to travel from Longreach to Darwin with some walks in between. They did walks at Cape Crawford (after helicoptering in) and Nitmiluk & Kakadu National Parks. The fifth trip in September followed on from Darwin. Alan Smith joined us on this magic trip - a group from Darwin to Brome via the Kimberley. We spent 3 nights in Kununurra, then onto El Questro & Home Valley Stations. Other stops were Purnululu National Park (Bungle Bungles) & Fitzroy Crossing before spending 3 magic nights in Broome, with the highlight being a night of entertainment by 3 of The Pigram Brothers at our farewell dinner. Top marks to Alan for arranging that finale before the group flew home the next morning.

The sixth & final trip I would like to share with you was in November for a scientific group from Sydney. This was operated in our 48 seat Mercedes coach due to the size of the group. Their tour was in 2 parts. Firstly to explore the Dinosaur Trail around Winton, Richmond & Hughenden with an invited palaeontologist as host & guide. He took us onto a dig site where one of the group unearthed a neck vertebrae from a long necked dinosaur as well as many other fossils. The second part of their tour was to observe the total solar eclipse from the best spot in Australia for viewing (just south of Cooktown). They were based at Palm Cove for 6 nights but on the eve of the eclipse they had set up an overnight luxury campsite in the bush. This part was hosted & guided by an invited astronomer. The total tour took two weeks, and will go down as one of my most memorable experiences with Outback Aussie Tours.

What does 2013 hold for Carol & me? Well we are becoming tourists ourselves for the next few months, with 10 days in Fiji in March, and 23 days in South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana in May. June will see me heading back to Longreach, where Alan has me lined up for another 3 special interest tours (two to Cape York and one to The Flinders Ranges in South Australia), along with the regular tours.

I hope you all have an enjoyable & busy season - Regards Ian Pascoe.
**TOWNSVILLE CULTURAL CENTRE**

Savannah Guides Limited will be working with Townsville Cultural Centre into the future to develop their tourism and community activity. This is an exciting opportunity for both partners and is supported by Indigenous Business Australia.

The Townsville Cultural Centre provides an insight into the traditional and contemporary life and cultural practices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through its museum, performances, workshops, art gallery, events and community activities. It is between Reef HQ and the North Queensland Museum in Flinders Street East, Townsville. You can see more details at [www.cctownsville.com.au](http://www.cctownsville.com.au). Savannah Guides members are invited to contact Russell about their interest in contributing expertise to the project. If you are in Townsville please drop in to meet Manager David Gela and the team.

**PickMyGuide.com**

PickMyGuide.com is a new website, created purely as a one stop shop to help connect Travellers directly to Tour Guides and Tour/Activity Companies worldwide.

Tour Guides and Tour Companies can register on [www.PickMyGuide.com](http://www.PickMyGuide.com) for free and PickMyGuide does not take commission. Guides registering are asked to advise Savannah Guides about their experience and success with the site.

**NEW WILDLIFE FIELD GUIDE: CALL FOR IMAGES**

A comprehensive Field Guide to the Wildlife of the Top End is being produced by the Environment Centre NT: [www.ecnt.org/campaigns/field-guide-wildlife-top-end](http://www.ecnt.org/campaigns/field-guide-wildlife-top-end)

ECNT is looking for high quality digital images of wildlife and wild places for this guide, in particular clear images of wildlife in their natural surrounds, images showing aspects of wildlife biology, eg mating, feeding, grooming etc, and images with novel viewpoints. Preference will go to images not previously published. All contributors will be credited in the text, and receive a free copy of the book. The deadline for images is 30 June. The book is slated to be on sale by June 2014.

**PARKS PARTNERSHIPS**

Savannah Guides members are reminded about our partnerships with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the NT Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Under these partnerships members should contribute news of interest to local park staff – perhaps an unusual wildlife sighting, degraded infrastructure or inappropriate visitor behaviour. Please get to know your local rangers and involve them in your activities!

--- **YOUR BOARD** ---

The 2012-13 Savannah Guides Limited Board is:

- Ben Humphries – President
- Andrew Sturges – Vice President
- Ivor Davies – Secretary/Treasurer
- Andy Ralph
- Ken Fairbairn
- Amanda Hinton

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**Some Aboriginal Astronomy:** The Yolngu people say that the constellation of Orion, which they call Julpan, is a canoe. They tell the story of three brothers who went fishing, and one of them ate a fish that was forbidden under their law. Seeing this, the Sun carried the two brothers and their canoe up into the sky. The three stars in the constellation’s centre, which form Orion’s Belt in Western mythology, are the two brothers; the Orion Nebula above them is the forbidden fish; and the bright stars Betelgeuse and Rigel are the bow and stern of the canoe. (Wikipedia)
It was great to attend the School at Chillagoe, and being given my Savannah Guide Patch will always be a very proud moment in my life. It was good to catch up with some old friends, meet some new ones introduce our new staff to Savannah Guides. It is always good to learn more and brush up on your knowledge! I am looking forward the next School. Rick Edwards
– Oz Tours Safaris

Before...

... After!

Kerryann, Amanda and Ann with fossils (no, not the guys at the back!)

Ken reckons he wears a few hats

Left: Chris, Mike and Andrew
Centre: John goes for the bear hug
Right: Tom looking guilty in the Courthouse
Below: Jim regains his marbles sizing stars

You are invited to the opening of the Chillagoe Courthouse heritage display to be held in June 2013. Please contact Mary Bolam for details on: (07) 4094 7160
Tex Battle of Sweers Island visits Savannah Guides Site Adels Grove:

As a consolation for staying married to me for longer than anyone else has, I booked us into Adels Grove

Recently my bride of twenty plus years had a significant birthday. I won’t mention which one, but believe me, it was a significant birthday.

To assure her I had not underestimated the importance of the occasion, and as a consolation for staying married to me for longer than anyone else has, I booked us into Adels Grove for a weekend.

We had spent a very short honeymoon at nearby Lawn Hill Gorge twenty plus years ago before the Resort existed.

Departure day dawned with a howling southeaster and visibility restricted to about 5kms by dust and haze. Even the birds were walking, so there was no chance of this Pelican attempting to fly.

By about 3pm, conditions had improved considerably so we loaded our luggage, did our pre-flight and chased the bustards off the strip (the spelling is correct, the 10kg birds are like mini-emus - Google it).

I was less concerned about hitting one of them than I was one of them trying to mate with the Pelican.

The first 20nm over water was smooth, but after we crossed the coast, we endured 90nm of turbulence. Approximately one and a quarter hours from departure we landed at Adels Grove, where we were met by Rod Low Mow who with his wife, Michelle, are the owner/operators of the resort.

Rod is a member of RA-Aus, and the proud owner of a Jabiru 230. We were offered a choice of either a cabin or a quality tent, complete with lights and a double bed (A bit of a step up from the honeymoon). We elected to take the tent beside the beautiful Lawn Hill Creek, even though I was a bit concerned that with all that running water, I might need to get up five times every night.
Flight of the Pelican cont.

The name ‘Adels’ Grove (aka ‘The Frenchman’s Garden’) is an acronym for Albert De Lestang, a French botanist who, because of the rich soil, reliable water supply and the climate, established an experimental grove there in 1920, comprising about one thousand trees from all over the world.

Unfortunately, most of his work, including his house and records of years of research, were destroyed in a fire in the early 1950s. De Lestang died a broken man in a nursing home in Charters Towers in 1959, however he would have been pleased if he had known he would be commemorated by this beautiful resort.

After a magnificent breakfast the next morning, we boarded a coach driven by Savannah guide, Mick Clark, for a trip to the nearby Riversleigh Fossil Fields. The fields are amazing.

The part we visited was a hill where every rock contained fossils of incredible diversity. The existence of the fossils was known for a long time, but the field was not exploited until eminent palaeontologist, Dr Michael Archer, came onto the scene. Michael said that before Riversleigh, a six week expedition would be considered successful if it yielded a handful of specimens. Six weeks of work at Riversleigh can yield twenty five tonnes of fossil bearing rock. Riversleigh has rewritten the pre-history of Australia and they have still only scratched the surface.

After lunch, we were driven 10 km to the Lawn Hill Gorge where we took a canoe and paddled along the breathtaking beautiful waterway, between striking 100m high red cliffs up to a beautiful waterfall. Normally you can carry your canoe around the waterfall and paddle through the upper gorge, but due to fires in the area, the upper gorge was closed while we were there. Lawn Hill Gorge is carved out of the escarpment on the eastern edge of the Barkly Tableland and is supplied by run-off from the huge aquifer of that tableland. All year, even in the worst drought, huge quantities of beautiful clear blue water pour out of the Barkly Tableland, through Lawn Hill Creek and the nearby O’Shannassy River into the Gregory River, then into the Nicholson River and finally into the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The next morning we packed our gear into the Pelican, said goodbye to Rod and Michelle, climbed in, turned the key and were greeted by the dreaded clicking noise which signifies a flat battery. Rod saved the day with a battery and a set of jumper leads. No, I did not leave the master on. The regulator/rectifier had failed and was delivering sixteen plus volts which cooked the battery. Fortunately the radios and avionics survived.

A little later than planned, we took off and had a beautiful, uneventful flight over the Gulf savannah, across twenty miles of the Gulf and landed at Sweers Island with about four knots of crosswind.

If you are considering flying to this part of Queensland’s Gulf Country, be sure to put Adels Grove/Lawn Hill Gorge on your itinerary, I have seen nothing like it in Australia.
**Coursera - free university courses online!**

Coursera is a social entrepreneurship company that partners with the top universities in the world to offer courses online for anyone to take, for free. When you take one of these classes, you will watch lectures taught by world-class professors, learn at your own pace, test your knowledge, and reinforce concepts through interactive exercises. A comprehensive selection of courses is available in topics ranging from arts to computer science to economics to physics and more. Jim Fitzgerald has just completed a six-week course titled 'Critical Thinking in Global Challenges' and “though it was a little challenging to be back in the formal study mode I found it very interesting and very instructive. I have signed up for 5 other courses covering various topics and have no doubt I'll be taking on more. Highly recommended.” See [www.coursera.org](http://www.coursera.org) Thanks Jim!

**Darwin Kakadu Park Special Licence Workshop**

Savannah Guides accreditation earns applicants additional application points in Kakadu permit application under the Professional Development of staff and quality assurance section. The new 5 year licences for Kakadu National Park come into effect 1 April 2014. Licences will replace current special permit activities or new exclusive activities or experiences. Activities currently permitted within the Park under the new licence system are:

- Sport Fishing
- Bush walking
- Safari Camps (based at one of our managed campgrounds)
- Access to Ikoymarrwa (Moline Rock hole)
- Access to Jarrangbarnmi (Koolpin Gorge)

At the recent operator Workshop Savannah Guides President Ben Humphries gave a presentation on savannah Guides, and Board Member Andy Ralph, as Aboriginal Homelands Officer at West Arnhem College, presented on engaging Bininj in Kakadu. There were 65 Kakadu guides/tour operators in attendance and the workshop was Chaired by Savannah Guide and Kakadu National Park Board of Management Member Rick Murray.

**Wildlife Tourism Australia Workshop : Darwin : 2-4 October 2013**

“Snake as sister, spectacle or scientific object: connecting the dots for wildlife tourism”

This upcoming workshop includes an optional excursion to Kakadu and Arnhem Land. Visit the website for details about the workshop and research tourism: [http://wildlifetourism.org.au/](http://wildlifetourism.org.au/)

**Naming Your Newsletter**

The competition continues for members to re-christen this larger newsletter format & claim a pair of Bushnell Legend binoculars. Send your suggestion with an article – the winner will be headlining our next edition in December.

*This larger “Communicator” edition comes out twice yearly, after each School. In between, our e-news Communicator reports on Savannah Guides news and upcoming events. Contributions are welcome at any time.*

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THE END