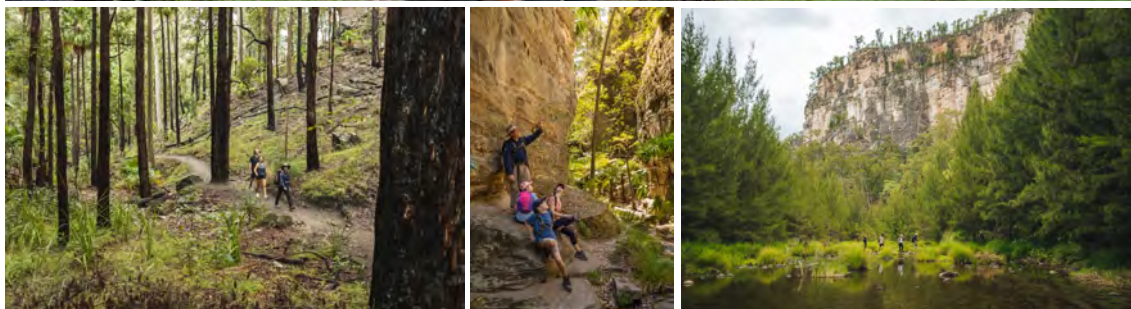




# MESSAGE STICK



Registration Opens August 2024



Savannah Guides Limited acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders Past, Present and Emerging. Our "Message Stick" name picks up on our Savannah Guides classic Hatband Motif and the tradition of passing news between our Members and Friends who are scattered across northern Australia ... and beyond!

JUNE 2024

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**Enormous Thanks to  
Ange Clucas  
and  
Christian Bom**





## Winter is here!

Growing up I always considered myself a “summer person”. I loved spending time outdoors, whether that was playing street cricket with my neighbours, enjoying midnight swims with Mum, or early morning bike rides with Dad. Everything just seemed bright, easy, and fun in summer.

In contrast, I despised winter. I grew up in Melbourne after all, and Melbourne winters had a habit of being pretty miserable. Staying warm was often a great challenge for me, so given the choice, I'd curl up next to the sunniest window possible. Of

course, that's providing there was a sunny window to be found. As a result, I was forever being told to take off my coat whilst inside, much to my disgust.

Despite my itchy, woollen, winter school uniform, which I will reluctantly admit kept me somewhat warm, I started getting chilblains on my fingers. These painful, swollen, itchy lumps left me longing for summer even more.

So, what did I do? I moved to Bendigo, one of the coldest places in Victoria. I studied Outdoor Education and Nature Tourism at La Trobe University, which meant I was often camped in the cold, sometimes even snow! I rented a tiny, south-facing flat that barely reached 15C with the heater on high, and I became very well acquainted with my electric blanket. Of course, my chilblains persisted.

So, what did I do? I moved to Uluru, where summer is hot, hot, hot, but winter is cold, cold, cold. Then I moved to Winton, which was same, same, same. Still, I got chilblains.

So, where am I now? Well, this is my ninth winter at Carnarvon Gorge, and I'm camped on a cattle station just outside the National Park boundary. The first frosts have graced the valley floor, and I'm well and truly rugged up for the early hours of my day tours. So, it's not surprising our bed is made up with flannel sheets and two toasty kelpies, my bags are overflowing with old/secondhand beanies, buffs, gloves, thermals, fleece jumpers and puffer jackets, and our freezer is chocka-block full of hearty, homemade meals. Nowadays, I even wear compression gloves under my possum-merino gloves.

Will I still get chilblains? Absolutely!

Do I still despise winter? No way! How could I despise waking to a rich dawn chorus, walking under bright blue skies and towering sandstone cliffs, catching wafts of early wattle in full flower, spying tiny ground orchids in the undergrowth, and spotlighting for marsupial gliders. My office may be brutally cold at times, but I still reckon it's the best office in the world, and I have the pleasure of sharing it with awestruck visitors every day. Any discomfort I'm likely to experience this winter will easily be outweighed by everything the natural world has to offer.

Whether I'm prepared to admit it or not, this “summer person” is now a “winter person” by default, and I kind of like it.

Are you a summer or winter person I wonder?

*Michelle Whitehouse*

President

Savannah Guides Limited



Image thanks to Nathan White



# WHAT IS A SAVANNAH GUIDES FIELD SCHOOL?



A Savannah Guides "Field School" is not a course with assessment or a qualification. It's simply our name for our 4-5 day **Professional Development Workshops**, held at various locations across Northern Australia at least twice each year. These bring together tour guides, operators, Traditional Owners, National Parks Rangers, tourism and government representatives, researchers and other like-minded individuals. We workshop guiding skills including interpretation, guest management, natural and cultural knowledge. Field Schools are a part of our Tour Guide and Enterprise accreditation process, although most participants come for the knowledge and skill sharing, networking with ecotourism and community leaders and understanding the country in more detail. Most of our time is spent outdoors. We have an affordable registration fee plus accommodation and camping options to suit all participants.

Participating in a Field School is the best way to consider whether Savannah Guides can support your professional development, networks or skills. Savannah Guides Field Schools help guides to maintain a high level of professionalism. Many individuals and operators use the Schools to enter the tourism industry, set staff professionalism benchmarks, refresh technical knowledge, make network contacts or simply explore a new region behind the scenes in a fun, educational setting. Sharing knowledge is a key part of our ethos and everyone is welcome at a Savannah Guides Field School.



**Members and non-members are very welcome.** Field Schools are a great opportunity for any tour guide, tourism industry member, government or community representative or nature lover to gain a real insight into quality tourism operation. The professional development opportunity provided at these Field Schools is unparalleled and networking invaluable.

For more information (and a fun video) [CLICK HERE!](#)

*"I came to the Field School not knowing what to expect and as a real novice I was blown away by how welcoming and willing to share knowledge everyone was – couldn't recommend this event highly enough."*

*"The Savannah Guides Field School has been the best value for money workshop I have ever attended. The opportunities for deep and genuine cross cultural learning were an absolute highlight."*

*"The experience is great – relevant and practical. It has been very valuable for an organisation rep who is a non-guide and first-timer."*





Thanks to Sharon Nott, Friend of Savannah Guides

# SAVANNAH GUIDES FIELD SCHOOL REPORT

## “PROTECTING THE OUTBACK”

### Iningai Country - Longreach

19-24 March 2024

OK, so you're standing in the queue to buy a drink at the Birdcage Hotel at Longreach and Sam taps you on the shoulder to come outside ... you begin to think ... what have I done to upset her ... then, in her Sam way, she asks ... "Can you please write an article about this Field School for our Message Stick E-Magazine?" I have no choice but to say "Yes, of course" as she looks me in the eye.

The first thing you learn when on a Savannah Guides Field School is that ... "what happens at the Field School stays at the Field School," so ... I can only really tell you a fraction of what we got up to! Ivor with bird sharing skills is a given. The Message Stick is all about conveying important messages and sharing stories of the outback and the stories within the landscape. The weather message that Sam sent out to participants just prior to the start of the Field School was HOT HOT HOT! What she failed to mention was that the Field School Topics, the Presenters, the Locals we engaged with and the Venues we went to all ended up being ... Flaming Terrific! We all 'Lived the Outback - For Real!' - even if it was for only six days!



Alan and Sue Smith – Founders and Experience Creators (don't you just love that!) of 'Outback Aussie Tours', along with their Team, put on a wonderful week of experiences that will forever stay memorable to all who attended. I'm not sure of the 'official numbers' as we had a number of guests coming and going during the week, but some 50-odd registered for the event, according to my bus roll call!

A Snippet of the Experiences Gained by Participants:

- A greater understanding of Iningai Country and the work Tony Weldon and his mob are doing together to preserve scar trees and bringing the country back at Iningai Park Reserve.



- How the simple act of throwing a 'snake cactus' in a rubbish heap can have devastating effects on the landscape – Smithy organised not only Jeff Newton to talk about it, but somehow got us on the property of 'Bexley' to see what is actually happening – the measures, time and resources being used to try and control it before it hits the Thomson River. As Smithy told us ... the



Thomson is the cleanest river in the world ... because it has no P in it (the spelling that is)! You really had to be there!

- Longreach is not all flat- there are jump-ups and the Outback Aussie Tours vehicles conquered all – thanks to all the expert drivers – we saw places visited by no other tour guides - just magic!
- The story of Rosebank Homestead and how we all went to the toilet in the 'Princess' Room'.
- The rail motors that Outback Aussie Tours run to both Morella and Ilfracombe.





• The story of Qantas, our national airline, by Tour and Light and Sound Show. John LOVES planes!

• The exploring of Mulga Country, ancient river beds, quarry sites, the effect of 'over-love' at

rest stops, and ancient sea creature fossils.

• Where, How and Why cattle are rested at the Longreach Cattle Sale Yards.

• Very cool, handy and sustainable guiding and hiking equipment.

• The story of 'Well Shot' being Australia's largest wool producing station in it's hey day - 400,000 merinos and of course, how to get a ten dollar note to stick to the ceiling of a pub for charity.

• How Wil lost his hat out the train window and became a broken man ... but was reborn again that evening when the hat was found - who said grown men don't cry!



the Longreach Powerhouse and Historical Museum!

• Agri-Tourism and Primary Production in the Longreach regional area.

• Fascinating Facts at

• The sharing of the Tindall Family story at Darr River Downs and the Deane Family of Goodberry Hills – what an historic agricultural collection and what a great look-out!

• We are now all expert herbarium plant gatherers and pressers - no excuses for not getting plants identified whilst out in the field – thanks Sarah!



• Cruising the Thomson River before our Farewell Dinner at Smithy's Dinner and Show!

• Entertainment by the lovely Corrine before many participants got their Karaoke on – Michelle, our President does have another side to her quiet personality!



We had Hot Seats, the Twitchathon and Guiding Tips, but so much more ... it was fitting that Smithy received his Life Membership ... his enthusiasm was indeed very contagious. We all

had our 'Legends of Longreach' Plants to present but the reality is ... we are all 'Legends' and we all made the 81<sup>st</sup> Field School at Longreach something to remember ... expanding our Tool Kits and Sharing our Stories. Thank you Sam and Russell for bringing it all together and a huge thanks to everyone who made the week so very special!

See you in Injune and Carnarvon Gorge - October 2024!







## A Field School Song ...

# "THE MANY GIFTS OF THE FIELD SCHOOL"

Words by "Bus Group A"

Sung to the tune of "The Twelve Days of Christmas"

At the 81st Field School, Longreach gave to me,  
A Stranger to Introduce Me!

At the 81st Field School, Longreach gave to me,  
Birding Bino Buddies and  
A Stranger to Introduce Me!

At the 81st Field School, Longreach gave to me,  
Neville's Wannabees,  
Birding Bino Buddies and  
A Stranger to Introduce Me!

At the 81st Field School, Longreach gave to me,  
Smithy's Monster Member ... ship,  
Neville's Wannabees,  
Birding Bino Buddies and  
A Stranger to Introduce Me!

At the 81st Field School, Longreach gave to me,  
JOHN LOVES PLANES!  
Smithy's Monster Member ... ship,  
Neville's Wannabees,  
Birding Bino Buddies and  
A Stranger to Introduce Me!

By the end of the Field School, Longreach gave to me:

- Wil's hat a flying	<i>Robyn</i>
- Why is she called Thumper?	<i>Mike</i>
- Farmers wearing stubbies	<i>Mindy</i>
- A thirsty trip to Goodberry, with	<i>Rachel</i>
- Bus scraping gidgee	<i>Rachel</i>
- Two hot seat yarpies	<i>Glen</i>
- Sam's squeaky sneezing	<i>Jim</i>
- Plant pressing pressures	<i>Scott</i>
- Tickling Tilly's tummy	<i>Michelle</i>
- Local Legends laughter	<i>Jo</i>
- Don't forget your Keep Cup	<i>Jane</i>
- Princess Throne at Rosebank	<i>Izzie</i>
- Darr River rifles	<i>Wendy</i>
- Snake cactus prickles	<i>Kim</i>
- Tight toilet timing	<i>Glenda</i>
- Special sacred scar trees	<i>Ray</i>
- Sue's Anzac biscuits	<i>Mick</i>
- My first Emu sighting	<i>Geneene</i>
- Bloody hot sand ridge walk	<i>Russ</i>
- JOHN LOVES PLANES!	<i>All</i>
- Smithy's Monster Member ... ship,	<i>All</i>
- Neville's Wannabees,	<i>All</i>
- Birding Bino Buddies and	<i>All</i>
- FOR F@*K'S SAKE YOU'RE ON THE WRONG BUS!	<i>Sam</i>



**These wonderful people were accredited as Savannah Guides at our last Field School. We would like you to meet ...**

### **Glen Gilbert**

In 2017 I left my long term "normal" job in Adelaide and, along with my wife, headed to El Questro, where I was given the opportunity to become a tour guide. How lucky was I to have Mick Clark as Senior Guide and my mentor! The tours at El Questro were many and varied, so I had a plethora of tours and experiences to learn, upon which I honed my guiding skills. I was also surrounded by many fellow guides who had Environmental Science degrees, and they all had their special interests, be it birding, reptiles, flora, geology, etc. I learnt so much from all of them, whether it was joining them on tour, or just chatting with them after hours.



After four seasons at El Questro, I gained my Coxswain License and decided to try my hand at guiding tours by boat, at Cygnet Bay on the Dampier Peninsula, but after one season I realised that navigating the second biggest tidal movement in the world wasn't for me. That's when I heard about Cobbold Gorge, and this is my second season guiding there.

I thoroughly enjoy guiding and not a day goes by that I don't love my job, and I'm sure that is conveyed to my guests.

### **Johannes "Vissie" Visser**

I was born in South Africa in the early 70's, give or take 5 minutes, as Smithy would say! During my younger years my family would go camping and exploring each month. I was fortunate to visit many places and privileged to observe most of the African animals in South Africa.

Looking back now, as a Savannah Guide, I realise that from a very young age I started to fall in love and appreciate nature and all it has to offer. I joined the army at 17 and completed my military service. The following year I started my apprenticeship with South African Airways as an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer and was offered a full time position. In the early 2000's Qantas came to South Africa looking for engineers to relocate to Sydney, which I did for three years, and moved to Brisbane in 2004. I also worked for a season in the Wind Farm Industry.

If I wasn't working I would be outdoors, camping, four wheel driving, scuba diving and exploring. When I married Linda, we both had similar interests including travelling around Australia and exploring this wonderful country. In August 2022 we went to Cape York. On the way home we stopped at Cobbold Gorge. We thoroughly enjoyed our experience and thought that it would be a great place to work.

My dream became a reality when I was asked to be a guide. It took a couple of weeks into the season for the reality of being a guide and my new career path to set in.



I had to learn about bushtucker, trees, plants and rock formations. There were many days where I said to myself "what have you done", and had to pinch myself to believe what was happening. A big thank you to Grant Smith who has encouraged me to learn and grow and help develop my skills as a guide.

My first Savannah Guides Field School was a bit nerve-wrecking as I did not know what to expect from it but my feelings changed as I was greeted by friendly and encouraging participants.

I am so grateful I was able to attend the Longreach Field School. It has given me more confidence to enjoy being a guide and has opened my eyes to learn and appreciate more of what our Outback has to offer.

A big shout out to Cobbold Gorge in giving me the opportunity to be a guide and giving this "South African" a go. Also a shout out to Wil Kemp for being my Savannah Guides Buddy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Savannah Guides in achieving my accreditation and look forward to continuing this journey of learning and developing my skills and helping others experience this amazing country as a Savannah Guide.



## OUR 9TH LIFE MEMBER ... MR ALAN SMITH

**“Contribution to the development of the organisation and its members such as the planning and organisation of a Savannah Guides Field School, control and execution of a funded project, research and development of issues of concern to the organisation, or other tasks which promote Savannah Guides’ Mission Statement.”**



Born and raised in Blackall, Outback Queensland, as a 21-year-old I had a dream to share the essence of Western Queensland with visitors. It holds so many special places and we wanted to

share and educate people about the Outback and all it has to offer, which is where Outback Aussie Tours was born. My wife Sue and I have raised our family and built and operated our business in Longreach, Western Queensland, for over 37 years. We started with a troop carrier, camp oven, billy and a big heart in 1987 providing small day and packaged overland trips. Today, we operate 6 vehicles, a 48-seat river boat, a 2000 Class Railmotor and we package experiences ranging from day tours in Longreach to guided holidays that visit regions from Cape York, the Gulf to Cameron Corner.

I attended my first Savannah Guides School in Mataranka, NT in 1998 where I was introduced to the camaraderie and sharing of knowledge of Savannah Guides as part of 'The New Dawn' strategic plan which extended the Savannah Guides operating area to incorporate areas such as the Mitchell Grass savannahs in Western Queensland where we are based. In 1999, at the Katherine School, Outback Aussie Tours (OAT) was accredited as a Roving Operator of Savannah Guides Limited (SGL), and I was accredited as a Roving Interpreter. I spent the following years helping with Schools where I could and contributing to the organisation, and in November 2001 OAT was elevated to a SGL Master Operator.

Over the years, building networks across northern Australia through the incredible camaraderie of SGL Field Schools has cemented for me what the essence of Savannah Guides is – adding true value to guest experiences, our environments, and communities. By sharing knowledge, we simply save it. Not to mention, the fun, antics, characters and becoming part of a community of amazing, like-minded people that



share a deep connection of their own and so many other regions, stories and special places. Personally, the ethos of spirits past, present and future of the Savannah Guides offers a solid confidence that we can all make a difference as a collective who are open to evolving by caring and sharing, thereby saving our planet in a positive and interactive way.

Together, Sue and I now care for our team, guests and suppliers as an extended family to deliver tour packages with a high standard of guest experiences, encompassing the key Savannah Guides values of sharing our knowledge and passion for our regions. The journey has been a life changing experience with continual learnings in our mission to create unforgettable moments and create a deeper connection with our part of Australia. I am truly honoured to now be a Life Member of this wonderful organisation. Thank you!

*Alan Smith*

Founder, Outback Aussie Tours

### **Presented by President, Michelle Whitehouse, here is a little of what she had to say ...**

I first met Smithy at a tourism function at the Age of Dinosaurs, some nine years ago. You parked on a big rock at the entrance, sporting an epic hat, and an even better beard. It was our second encounter that most informed my opinion of you. I'd recently started working at Carnarvon Gorge, you were visiting with a very special tour group - your most loyal, past guests. Despite being in a position to roster an employee as their guide, you chose to deliver that experience personally. It was a privilege to share that day with you.

We've met many times since, and I've discovered along the way you are an amazing mentor. You have generously shared your time, knowledge and expertise with me and Simon, helping shape us as tour operators. I also proudly say you are my friend, with the best hugs, and the best thumbs up!

Most recently, my parents and I joined you and Sue at Naracoorte, SA. It was part getaway and part research trip. I was blown away by your ability to see the big picture, and how bringing operators together could create a new and exciting experience for your loyal guests.

I admire how seriously you take your role as hospitality provider, without taking yourself too seriously. You can yarn with anyone, roar with laughter, and dance around in a mankini at the behest of the crack-up sisters.

I've never had the pleasure of bestowing a Life Membership... over the course of 32 years, Savannah Guides has honoured just eight Life Members. I am beyond stoked that my first recipient is you, Smithy. Congratulations, you truly are a legend of Outback tourism!





# QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TOURISM BUSINESS CAPABILITY SUBSIDY

The \$2 million Tourism Business Capability Subsidy provides funding to eligible sole traders, micro, small and medium-sized tourism and event businesses in Queensland to undertake targeted training and/or accreditation programs.

Eligible businesses can choose from a number of identified programs aimed at enhancing the visitor experience.

Identified accreditation and training programs support key themes including sustainability and ecotourism, trade distribution, international visitor cultural understanding, First Nations cultural awareness, tour guiding, improving tourism quality, accessible tourism, marinas, zoos and aquariums, and caravan/holiday parks.

Savannah Guides is offering the following:

EcoGuide Certification - Application Fee and first Annual Fee \$240

EcoGuide Workshop at your venue or online \$1320

Online Cultural Awareness Course (see right) \$110

Up to \$2000 (ex GST) is available for reimbursement and training / accreditation must be completed by 18 October 2024. This is a unique opportunity for operators wanting to benchmark high quality guiding to add value to their experience, to gain a marketing advantage and/or to reward their high quality guides.

For more information:

[https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/hospitality-tourism-sport/tourism/funding-support/tourism-business-capability-subsidy?utm\\_source=ampkit&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_id=TBCSRd2](https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/hospitality-tourism-sport/tourism/funding-support/tourism-business-capability-subsidy?utm_source=ampkit&utm_medium=email&utm_id=TBCSRd2)

## NATURE NOTES # 33

All thunderstorms unleash lightning, dazzling flashes of electricity across the sky. Thunder is the sound of the shock wave created as a lightning bolt superheats the air. Because sound travels slower than light, you always hear the clap of thunder after a lightning strike. The closer they arrive together, the closer you are to the storm!

Thanks to Ange Clucas, Senior Savannah Guide and Vice-President of Savannah Guides

## ONLINE CULTURAL AWARENESS COURSE

We are very proud to advise that to date Savannah Guides has had over 500 Participants take part in this important initiative from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

This is an innovative and valuable Online Course developed to strengthen your cultural capability. The Course consists of Ten Modules covering a broad range of topics focussing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, history and society to assist people to enhance their cultural understanding, gain a deeper sense of self-awareness and critical reflection; and enhance their personal and professional capacity to engage respectfully and effectively in an intercultural context.

You complete the Course at your own pace and receive a Certificate on Completion. This Course is 100% Online and will take approximately ten hours to complete. The Modules covered are:

- Module 0 Introduction
- Module 1 Thinking about Cultures and Identities
- Module 2 My Country, Our Country
- Module 3 History Lives in Us
- Module 4 Too Much and Not Enough Change: Commonwealth Indigenous Affairs
- Module 5 Communities in Control: Recognising the Role of Community Organisations
- Module 6 Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's Rights to Country
- Module 7 Self-determination and Autonomy
- Module 8 Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities
- Module 9 Helping to Build and Inspire the Australian Nation
- Module 10 Continuing Your Journey

The cost of the Course is \$110 per person.

Round Seven is now open for Registrations before our commencement date:

15 July 2024

To register please email:

[sam@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:sam@savannah-guides.com.au)





# SAVANNAH GUIDES TRAINING ACTIVITY

## ~ COUNTRY-WIDE ~

### Eclectus Training Institute

Our very own, Becoming a Tour Guide Online Course, continues to have excellent uptake. Our Second Course will be launched very soon.

#### Karratha and Cheelah Cattle Station

Mar 24 - Russell Boswell conducted EcoGuide Workshops and Business Mentoring in the Pilbara region

#### Capricorn Caves

Mar 23 - Russell Boswell spent two days with this Savannah Guides Enterprise. In addition to Tour Guide Refresher Training, he focused on Customer Service, Dealing with Difficult Guests and Working with Children.

#### Talaroo Hot Springs

Mar 23 - Ivor Davies and Cheryl Parsons trained new Tour Guides over 2.5 days

#### Cultural Awareness

In July Savannah Guides' Seventh Cohort will begin the CORE Online Cultural Awareness Program through **AIATSIS**

#### Injalak Arts & Crafts Aboriginal Corporation

Apr 24 - Michael Alexander conducted five days of Tour Guide Training for 12 Guides in this remote West Arnhem Land location

#### El Questro

May 24 - Mike Keighley trained new Tour Guides for four days at this Discovery Parks property in the East Kimberley

#### Discovery Parks Undara and Mt Surprise

Apr 24 - Ivor Davies and Cheryl Parsons conducted Tour Guide Training for Discovery Holiday Parks' new guiding team for four days.

#### Gallery of Modern Art

May 24 - Russell Boswell conducted an Online Tour Guide Training Workshop for this Museum in Brisbane.

#### Mt Isa

Jun 24 - Russell facilitated a two day Workshop for the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts

#### Tarkiner Tour Experiences

May 24 - Russell Boswell conducted three days of Tour Guide Training and Business Mentoring in North-West Tasmania





# AUSTRALIA NEEDS MORE TOUR GUIDES!



Savannah Guides is working with other organisations to find more Tour Guides.

Guiding offers a great lifestyle and range of benefits for those seeking a tree-change or sea-change, transitioning to retirement or looking for an exciting new career. Our welcoming fraternity has brought new happiness to many and the fun of learning in spectacular locations is truly energising.

Tour Operators should check out Austrade's [Mature Age Hub](#) which has resources to support you in recruiting and retaining older workers. [Workforce Australia](#) has some services as well. Many States and Territories have workforce or training support.

Some people considering a part-time guiding role can take advantage of temporary changes made by the government to the Work Bonus and earn more without losing income support payments, or do some training ... [See here](#).

[Savannah Guides](#) and [Tour Guides Australia](#) offer a range of accessible training options.

There are now opportunities in regional areas for seasonal roles, cruise ship ports for day tour roles, language guides and more.

Who do you know that could use a change?

**SAVANNAH GUIDES**



*Protectors and Interpreters of the Outback*







# ECLECTUS Training Institute

BY SAVANNAH GUIDES

EXPLORE • ENGAGE • ENRICH

With a national shortage of Tour Guides threatening our industry, it is vital that we expand training opportunities and support people to become Tour Guides.

Savannah Guides has begun to develop a range of courses to entice “sea changes” and “tree changes”, as well as rekindle continuous learning for existing Tour Guides.

Our first course, “Becoming a Tour Guide”, is now [available here](#) and other courses are under development.

Please keep checking our website's “Tour Guide Training” menu for more individual and group opportunities in the coming months.

## NATURE NOTES # 34



Lucy, The Largest Diamond in the known Universe, would need a Jeweller's Loupe the size of our Sun to grade it. Discovered in 2004, it

is a crystallised what dwarf star 50 light years from Earth. This enormous crystal is 4023 kilometres wide. Lucy is the two-thirds the size of Earth and larger than our moon.

Thanks to Ange Clucas. Image by Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

## INJALAK ARTS & CRAFTS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION TOUR GUIDE TRAINING

By Michael Alexander,  
Savannah Guides Board Member

As the Melbourne Summer turns to Autumn and ultimately Winter, it is time to make preparations and head north. It is a great time to run training for tour guides, even if you have to fly in over flooded rivers.

Injalak Arts is based in Gunbalunya in West Arnhem Land and has its 35th Anniversary of operating in 2024. Among the many things Injalak Arts is doing to prepare for the season is getting their guides trained in first aid and running tours. Savannah Guides was asked to provide the training and I was available to assist.

It was a small plane from Darwin to Gunbalunya. The country looked fantastic, green and flooded.

All of the trainee guides are also artists at Injalak Arts. Once the guide runs a tour, the guests can visit the Art Centre to buy the guide's artwork, how good is that!

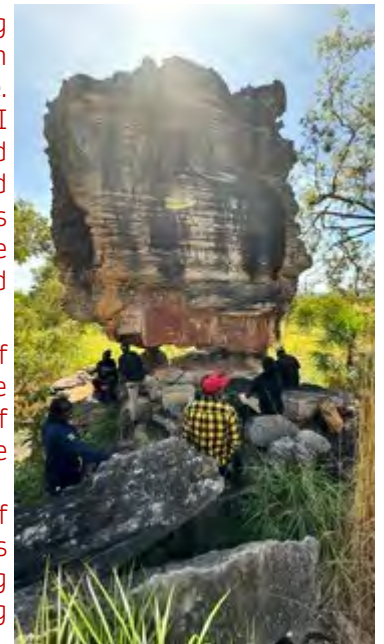
We ran a five-day training program for 12 guides with all levels of experience. During the program I adapted the exercises and classroom locations based on how the group was progressing and advice from the more experienced senior guides.

Enjoying the combination of bush classroom and the Arts Centre we had lots of practice in: Guide Introduction; Acknowledgement of Country; Safety - Guests and Rock Art; Storytelling and Wrapping up - including selling their artwork!

It was important to adapt the delivery of the training to suit the participants. This meant using the country as the classroom, including onsite at the Injalak Hill Rock Art site as well as the Dingo Dreaming site closer to town.

Apart from learning about this part of Arnhem Land, delivering this program of training highlights the need to be able to adapt and innovate to meet the needs of the participants and location.

All in all, it was great for Savannah Guides to contribute to communities and organisations and prepare them to run quality tours.



Dingo Dreaming  
Story Telling Classroom

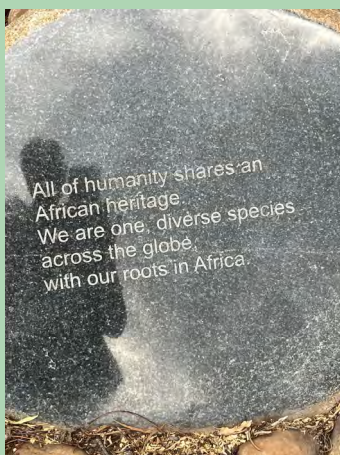






## THE SEQUEL

Savannah Guides' connection with Ulovane Environmental Training in South Africa dates back to 2015, when our Friend Shane Ross introduced us to Candice and Schalk Pretorius. They are highly regarded Tour Guide trainers in South Africa and were able to create a four week package for Savannah Guides to experience the amazing landscapes, wildlife and camaraderie of the Eastern Cape. From 2016 to 2019, 17 of our members and friends had this life changing experience.



conservation agencies and just occasionally taking lucky travellers on personalised touring.

This new tourism experience sounded way too enticing, so Sam and Russ, Bram and wife Cassie joined Candice and Schalk for four weeks in January-February 2024. Six adventurers in a minibus, travelling 4380 kilometres from Johannesburg to Cape Town, via the jaw-dropping Kruger National Park, a host of early man sites, expansive coastal wetlands and dunes, the stunning Drakensburg and Mountain Zebra National Park, exquisite wineries and soulful connections with local communities and friends.



Schalk and Candice were the ultimate hosts, arranging the itinerary with special touches, deep insights on our environment and more fun than a barrel of Vervet Monkeys. 164 bird species, 44 mammals, 8 reptiles, 3 UNESCO World

Heritage Sites, 8 Provinces and a magical memory for every time we now close our eyes.

These tours are not scheduled, and can be tailored to your interest, timing and budget. There is a wide range of options, from South Africa to Kenya or even Namibia and Botswana. Six is a very workable group size in a minibus although any number is possible. Different seasons offer different wildlife and opportunities. These tours are personal, safe, with the best guides possible and highly recommended for those new to Africa or returning.



See: <https://ulovane.co.za/>

Contact: [candice@ulovane.co.za](mailto:candice@ulovane.co.za)

Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic eliminated Ulovane's international market and had a devastating effect on South African tourism, meaning that the Ulovane lodge



at Amakhala had to close and Schalk and Candice had to pivot into new opportunities. They are now training community based guides in South Africa and Kenya, building partnerships with





## GUIDING GEAR - WALKING THE TALK

At our March Longreach Field School, Madam President, Michelle Whitehouse delivered a super-interesting and through-provoking session on sustainable tour guiding equipment. Here are some of her recommendations ...

One Planet - Backpack. They also make tents and sleeping bags.

MSR WhisperLite - Stove. Available from specialist outdoor stores such as Snowys Outdoors, K2, Wild Earth, Bogong Equipment, and Paddy Pallin.

Aeropress - Coffee maker. Available from Alternative Brewing, Anaconda, and some coffee specialists.

Fair Coffee - The fairtrade coffee we choose to use on tour.

Zero Co - Reusable/refillable cleaning products/deodorant

Seed & Sprout - Where I buy my shampoo bars, stainless steel lunch boxes, reusable face wipes

ONYA - Reusable sandwich wraps, produce bags, bulk food bags.



Naked Asian Grocer - Plastic free groceries

The Source Bulk Foods - In-store and online plastic-free bulk food store.

Winki Zinc - Plastic free, reef safe zinc and sunscreen.

Australian Made Laser Pointers - I forgot to mention this one in my presentation. They are available from Telescopes and Astronomy. It's a dinky website ... you have to scroll down to find the Aussie Made lasers. They also offer servicing and calibration on these lasers, so their life can be extended.

More insight on Page 18.

We also went on to chat all things recyclable, sustainable and just general good for the Planet and feel-good products including "Who gives a Crap" Toilet Paper, Paper Towel, Tissues and Swedish Cleaning Cloths.



## MUDSKIPPERS ... FISH OUT OF WATER!

With thanks to Ange Clucas, Senior Savannah Guides and Vice-President of Savannah Guides

Mudskippers are amphibious fish native to the tropical and subtropical regions and they inhabit the intertidal mudflats and mangroves from Queensland to Western Australia.

There are 13 different species of this walking, jumping, googly-eyed wonder, that lives most of its life in the mud.



Mudskippers are an important ecological marker contributing to the maintenance, integrity and health of the coastal ecosystems. They have adapted to thrive in severe environmental conditions including large fluctuations in temperature, high turbidity, low oxygen and high levels of pollution.

They can breathe by gulping air and also by cutaneous respiration through their skin, which needs to remain wet to allow absorption of oxygen and release of carbon dioxide by diffusion, hence their humid and moist habitats. Mudskippers have pectoral fins shaped like legs and on land they can walk and even climb.

They are territorial creatures who build a mud barricade around areas where they feed and breed. When disturbed by an intruder, a defensive mudskipper opens its mouth and raises the dorsal fin along its back.

## THINKING OF BECOMING A TOUR GUIDE?

Being a tour guide can be a great choice for people who are passionate about travel, enjoy meeting new people, and want to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for different destinations and experiences - 'work' means being a part of someone's happiest holiday memories. If this exciting career is an option that you have been considering, please complete the following quiz and submit.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/atecguides>



# WIL'S WILDLIFE



By Wil Kemp, Senior Savannah Guide and Director of Savannah Guides

A Scrub Python (*Simalia kinghorni*) was in our care for some time after mistaking two tennis balls, that had been chewed on by a puppy and were drenched in dog saliva, for a tasty canine treat in Cooktown in early April.



I have to give a big WELL DONE to the pup's owners for doing the right thing (despite the snake's effort to eat their pet) and contact FNQ Wildlife Rescue.

From there the snake hitched a ride to Cairns where he was operated on by the amazing team at Ulysses Vets in Stratford. How cool is this X-ray!??

He was then passed on to Mel and I to recover from his operation. Initially we administered pain killers and antibiotics through subcutaneous injection for about a week before his check-up back with the Vet.

He became quite famous on Social Media during this time and was even the subject of a few radio interviews. Many tennis / dog themed names were suggested:

Deuce Wiggle-low; Pat Roofter; Happy Ballsmore and Ash Barky to name a few.

But my favourite was Anna Kondakova.

His check-up went well and he was given the OK for me to start feeding him on small food items. I tried thawed rats at first but he wasn't interested in the slightest, so I tried young chickens. That was a very different story and he eagerly took the food.

When he was pretty much fully recovered, it was time to start looking for a way to get him back to Cooktown so that he can be released in suitable and familiar habitat which is incredibly important for his survival.

Snakes have a 2-5 kilometre home range and when taken out of this range, have proven to have a very high mortality rate. They seem to be searching for familiar country and looking for those hiding spots, water sources and areas to ambush prey that they know so well and have always been there. The only problem is that they can't find them so they just keep searching.

This results in the snake being active at times of day when it shouldn't be (Diurnal snakes being active at night and vice versa) which often sees the snake picked off by predators. If they manage to escape that fate, important fat reserves are used up due to the endless searching making the snake vulnerable to illness and disease while getting overburdened by parasites and eventually starving to death.

This is why it was so important to get him back to his Country.

I put out a call for any Savannah Guides heading to Cooktown that were willing to offer a lift and release him and even offered to teach the person everything they needed to know! No offers from Savannah Guides but Anna Kondakova was taken back to Cooktown and was released on the same property that he originally came from.

This is a very good news story for wildlife lovers everywhere!





## SIMON'S THREE-LEGGED STOOL SAMPLE

**Thanks to Simon Ling, Senior Savannah Guide**

**This new Column will be a regular feature focused on Sustainability; what it is, why it's a useful concept, and how to work towards it. Simon's Master's Thesis focused on Sustainability Education and its foundation is often summarised as the three-(or four-)legged stool.**

If you're content with the three-legged jobbie, the legs represent People, Planet and Profit (also referred to as the three Ps). If you want the stability of the fourth leg, we add Ethics to the structure. At face value, it's a simple proposition; if I live, work and play in an ethical manner that allows people, the planet, and profit to thrive then my way of life is sustainable. Of course, in modern human societies, living sustainably is anything but simple. Everywhere you look, someone is trying to convince you to be an unsustainable consumer.

That's where this Column comes in! Mouthful by mouthful, we'll gnaw our way through the elephants in the global room. Pick up your knife and fork and let's have at it...

Attendees of the recent Longreach Field School might recall Michelle doing a show-and-tell on the contents of her tour backpack. Let's go over that list and look at the decisions governing some of Michelle's selections.

One Planet - Backpack. Made in Australia, these backpacks are built to last and when things do fail you can send them back to One Planet and have them repaired. The idea of making things that last and are repairable is not new. By supporting businesses with this ethic, we reduce our footprint on the Planet. You could argue that Profit suffers under this model as you won't be buying a new backpack anytime in the near future. However, these backpacks are not cheap and repairing them comes at a cost as well, so money is still changing hands in decent amounts.

MSR Whisperlite - Stove. First, these little devils use refillable fuel bottles, reducing their long-term impact on resources compared to units with one-shot fuel systems. Second, like One-Planet's gear, they are repairable. All the parts that fail are available as spares and repairs are easy to perform in the field, increasing their reliability; an important consideration when you don't want to be caught without the means of boiling water due to equipment failure on a tour full of jonesing coffee addicts.

Oxfam Coffee. Often dearer than alternatives, we choose to use their Fairtrade Certified coffee as a way of ensuring the producers get a fair share of the Profits. This doesn't reduce Profits, just ensures those Profits are distributed more equitably among the People in the supply chain.

Winki Zinc - plastic free, reef safe zinc and sunscreen. These products are Australian Made and have reduced environmental impacts compared to other brands. This is important to us as we live in the Fitzroy Basin, the largest catchment feeding into waters between the Great Barrier Reef and the mainland.

These are a few examples of the kinds of selection criteria that help discriminate a more sustainable choice from one less sustainable. I don't always get this right and I'm constantly learning to improve my choices through research online, and through talking to others. This includes my clients; walking up the Main Track of Carnarvon Gorge I often try and guess the total life experience of the group traipsing along behind me. It's often in the order of five centuries and those folk have figured a bunch of stuff out, which they happily pass on.

That ought to do for this Column's maiden voyage. Next time, I might delve a little deeper into the history of sustainability as a concept so we can all have some common context moving forwards.

## NATURE NOTES # 35

The tiny Brazilian flea toad, about the size of a pea, may threaten the current record-holder for the [world's smallest vertebrate](#). Male *Brachycephalus pulex* frogs are so small that two of them can sit side by side on a pinky nail. The male of the species, which is smaller than the female, is just over 7mm long on average. The Brazilian flea toad is actually a frog with a misleading name and its only known habitats are two forested hills in Bahia, Brazil, making it also extremely rare.

<https://www.newscientist.com/>, 13 February 2024



A flea toad perches on 1 Brazilian real  
(the coin has a diameter of 27mm)  
Image: Renato Galga

# A LITTLE ABOUT LICHEN!

Thanks to Christian Bom, Savannah Guide  
and Director of Savannah Guides

Lichens are fascinating symbiotic organisms composed of a partnership between fungi and algae or cyanobacteria. Despite their simple appearance, lichens play several important roles in ecosystems, including their contribution to nitrogen fixation and soil enrichment. Here's how lichens fulfill their vital ecological role:

**1. Nitrogen Fixation:** One of the key roles of lichens in ecosystems is their ability to fix atmospheric nitrogen. Many lichen species contain cyanobacteria or nitrogen-fixing bacteria within their thalli (the main body of the lichen), which have the unique capability to convert atmospheric nitrogen ( $N_2$ ) into a form that plants can use, such as ammonium ( $NH_4^+$ ) or nitrate ( $NO_3^-$ ). This process, known as nitrogen fixation, is essential for replenishing soil nutrients and supporting plant growth, particularly in nitrogen-poor environments.

**2. Soil Enrichment:** As lichens fix atmospheric nitrogen, they release nitrogen compounds into their immediate surroundings. These nitrogen-rich compounds are gradually deposited onto the soil surface when lichens shed their thalli or through leaching during rainfall. The nitrogen enrichment provided by lichens helps to improve soil fertility and nutrient availability, benefiting neighbouring plants and microorganisms. In nutrient-poor or degraded ecosystems, such as arid regions or post-fire landscapes, lichens play a crucial role in kickstarting ecological recovery by enhancing soil fertility and promoting vegetation establishment.



**3. Erosion Control:** Lichens are pioneers of soil stabilisation and erosion control in harsh environments. Their ability to colonise barren or disturbed surfaces, such as rocks, soil, or tree bark,



helps to prevent soil erosion caused by wind, water runoff, or human activities. The intricate network of lichen thalli binds soil particles together, creating a protective crust that holds soil in place and reduces the risk of erosion. In this way, lichens contribute to the formation of stable soil substrates that support the growth of other vegetation and promote ecosystem resilience.

**4. Habitat and Microclimate Creation:** Lichens provide habitat and microclimates for a variety of organisms, including insects, spiders, and microorganisms. Their complex three-dimensional structure creates a diverse array of niches and microhabitats, offering shelter, moisture, and food resources for various species. In cold or arid environments, lichens act as natural insulation, trapping air pockets that help to regulate temperature and humidity levels, thus creating favourable microclimates for both lichens themselves and associated organisms.

**5. Air Quality Indicator:** Lichens are sensitive to air pollution and environmental changes, making them valuable indicators of ecosystem health and air quality. Certain lichen species are highly sensitive to air pollutants such as sulphur dioxide ( $SO_2$ ), nitrogen oxides ( $NO_x$ ), and heavy metals. By monitoring lichen populations and diversity, scientists can assess the impact of air pollution on ecosystems and human health. Additionally, lichens are used in biomonitoring programs to track changes in air quality and inform environmental management and policy decisions.

In summary, lichens play multifaceted roles in ecosystems, ranging from nitrogen fixation and soil enrichment to erosion control and habitat creation. Their unique ecological contributions make them indispensable components of healthy ecosystems, highlighting the importance of conserving and understanding these fascinating organisms.





# RECOLONISERS, RESPROUTERS AND REGENERATORS

With thanks to Sarah Swan, Friend of Savannah Guides

*Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* (Grass tree) resprouting after fire

Fire has been part of the Australian continent for eons, firstly resulting from lightning strikes, more recently, extensively and wisely used by First Australians. Fire, along with rainfall and soil, are major drivers of Australian Flora, so let's talk about fire and Australian plants.

Firstly, we have two types of vegetation, fire hating (pyrophobic) and fire loving (pyrophylic). Pyrophobic vegetation is vegetation that is not adapted to fire and cannot cope with heat and flames; this vegetation is destroyed by fire. Examples of pyrophobic vegetation include rainforest, permanent wetlands and some heath communities. Much of the continent is dominated by pyrophylic vegetation, plants that have not only adapted to cope with fire, but have physical properties that benefit fire, such as volatile oils and fuel which carries flames high into the canopy.

There are three ways in which fire adapted vegetation copes with fire: recolonisation, resprouting and regenerating. Recolonisation is when recruitment is from another place, following annihilation of the existing population. Whilst there are different ways this can happen, the easiest to think of is when animals, especially birds, transport seeds, deposited in droppings, to a recently burnt area. Resprouting and

regenerating are a little more complicated.

The resprouters are damaged, but not destroyed by fire, and have physical adaptations for survival (eg: thick bark). Some plants (eg: lilies) may have their above-ground parts destroyed but are able to resprout from underground storage organs (bulbs, tubers etc.), as soil of any depth provides excellent insulation from heat.



*Lophostemon suaveolens* re-sprouting from lignotubers



Other plants, Eucalyptus being a great example, resprout from lignotubers (underground storage organs) and epicormic buds (buds located beneath the bark on trunks and branches). Fire has also been proven to stimulate flowering in many species (eg: grass trees) when conditions allow.



*Haemodorum coccineum* (Blood Lilly)  
resprouting from underground organ

Regenerators are destroyed by fire. Most Acacias, with their thin bark and shrubby growth, are easily consumed. Sometimes called “obligate seeders”, these plants regenerate from seed as soon as conditions are favourable. Much of this seed is present in the topsoil and is called the soil seed bank. These seeds often have a hard seed coat, which helps these seeds remain dormant but viable in the soil for many years, but the hard coat requires heat from fire and/or chemicals in smoke to break dormancy. Some Australian plants (including both resprouters and regenerators) exhibit bradyspory, where seed is stored in hard, woody fruits on the adult plant; these fruits open in response to the heat of the fire and release seeds. Some Banksias do this.

Fire always brings change. Firstly, by damaging or destroying existing plants, competition for space and resources is reduced. While this can allow adapted natives can thrive, it also assists colonisation by introduced and weedy species. Fire also changes the uppermost layer of soil, creating a phenomenon known as the “Ash Bed Effect”, where there are increased soil nutrients available (Nitrogen, Phosphate, Calcium and

Magnesium) and soil is more fertile. Also there is a decrease in soil micro-organisms, meaning pathogenic and predatory micro-organisms aren't present to spread disease or consume new growth.



Regeneration: an *Acacia* seedling, showing both true leaves and phyllodes.

Good fire management practices are essential. Vegetation that can't tolerate fire must be protected; these are usually restricted in size and distribution and face additional threats. For example introduced Guinea Grass grows along wet tropical rainforest margins. This robust African grass produces high fuel loads and will carry fire to the forest margin, where the edge of rainforest retreats from the heat and flames. Another issue is fire severity, associated with large fuel loads



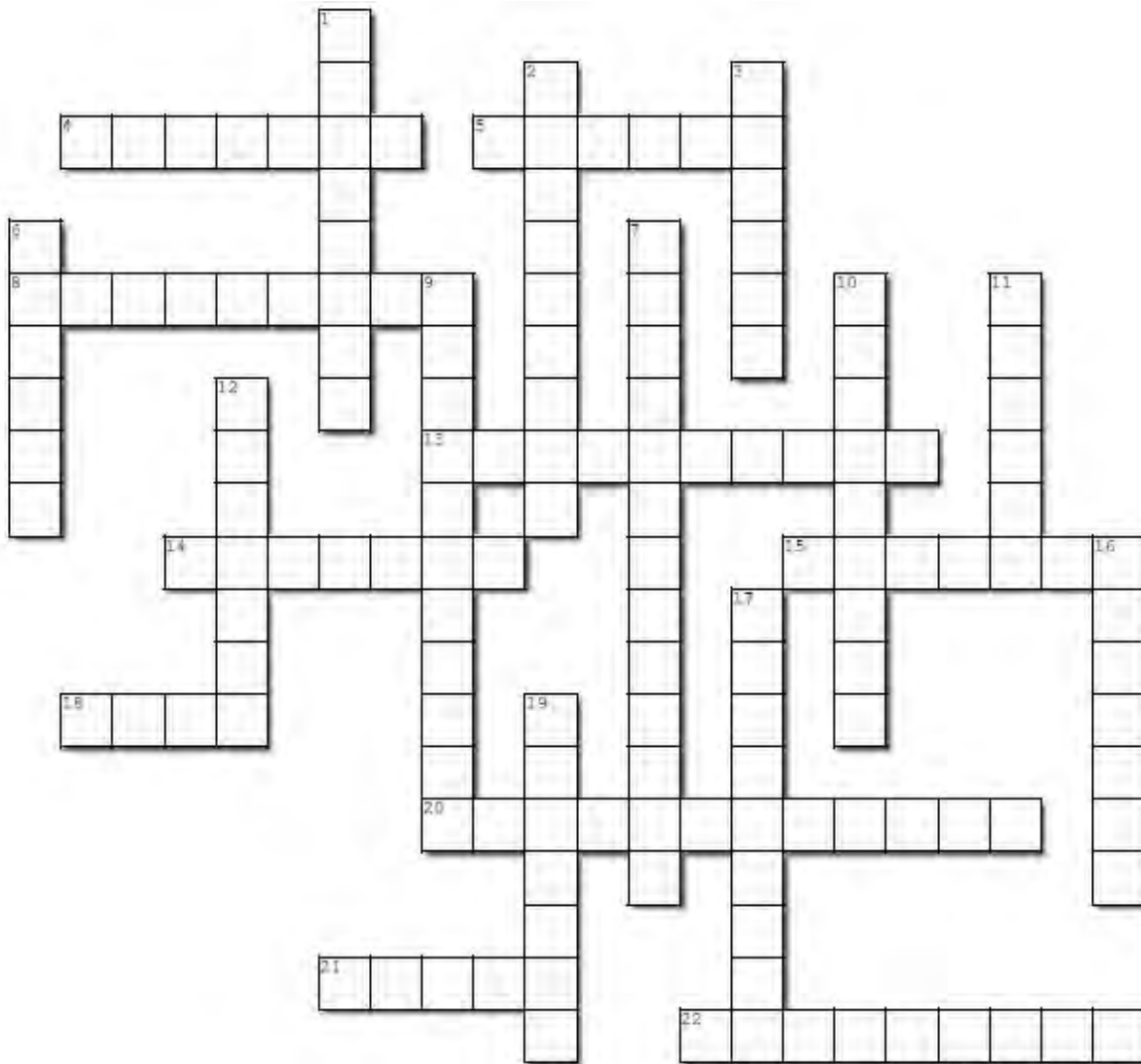
White Mountains National Park post-fire

accumulated in the absence of traditional land management regimes, but also exacerbated with climate change. Whilst catastrophic wildfires have destroyed large areas within Australia in recent years, it remains to be seen if the ecological integrity of these impacted places can be restored. Perhaps the way forward is to reintroduce the fire management practices used for millennia by the people who have intimate know of this land, the First Australians.



# SEASONAL / PLANT CROSSWORD PUZZLE

created by Ange Clucas



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

## ACROSS

4. These richly nectar producing plants are considered nocturnal because some emit a strange odour at night to attract their nocturnal pollinators, such as possums, gliders and bats
5. An introduced species that is also the name of a popular cocktail
8. If a eucalypt tree is damaged by fire it has the ability to sprout new shoots from \_\_\_\_\_ buds beneath the bark
13. Which early prominent botanist explorer has his surname recognised in the scientific names of many plants?
14. A leaf that has no stalk is called \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_ belong to the non-vascular plant group
18. A woollybutt tree trunk has rough bark at the base for \_\_\_\_\_ protection
20. An epiphyte that outgrows its host
21. The \_\_\_\_\_ tree is a common calendar plant used by many Indigenous groups across northern Australia
22. This plant family regularly survives tidal inundation with saltwater

## DOWN

1. Ferns have underground stems called \_\_\_\_\_, instead of roots
2. Which family of native palms are also known as cabbage palms?
3. This native fig is semi-deciduous meaning dropping its leaves but rapidly regrowing foliage within days
6. Commonly known as Soap Tree due to its leaves which lather up when rubbed with water
7. The fruit of which Terminalia species contains 50 times more Vitamin C than an orange?
9. A plant that has leaves which are the same colour on both sides is said to be \_\_\_\_\_
10. The fruit of which pandanus is covered with green spikes?
11. What colour is the flower of the wild mint Hyptis suaveolens?
12. Due to the high concentration of \_\_\_\_\_ in eucalyptus leaves and bark, only koalas, ringtail possums, greater gliders and a few insects can eat them without suffering toxicity
16. This native spear grass sets its seed at the end of the wet season rather than waiting for the rain at the end of the dry season
17. These trees can survive having their base constantly submerged in water for long periods of time, such as on a floodplain
19. A native hibiscus with very pale pink petals and a deep maroon throat

Answers on Page 22



# FREAKY FUNGI

Welcome to a Brand New Regular Column by  
Christian Bom, Savannah Guide  
and Director of Savannah Guides

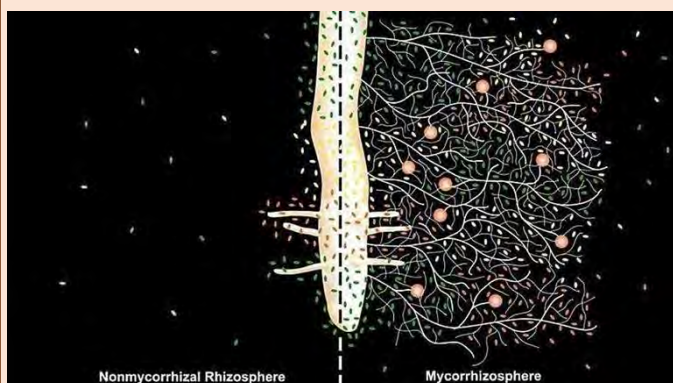
## Mycorrhizal Fungi

Mycorrhizal fungus is a fungus that forms a symbiotic relationship with the roots of plants. This means that both the fungus and the plant benefit from the association.

The fungus helps the plant to absorb water and nutrients from the soil, and the plant provides the fungus with sugars that it needs to grow.

Mycorrhizal fungi are found in the root systems of most plants, and they play an important role in plant health and growth. They can also help to improve soil quality by increasing the organic matter content and improving soil structure.

It is believed that all orchid species on the planet rely on this association for at least part of their life cycle.



Our planet would not look anything like it does today if it wasn't for the help of mycorrhizal fungus, so it is an important part of any discussion about local eco-systems.

On tours, it may be described as one of the primary regulators of all eco-systems on the planet, and our growing understanding of fungi will play an integral role in the future of our land management practices in Australia, and the world.



## First Nations Tourism Mentoring Program



**Want to keep culture strong?**

Call out to all community who want to grow the First Nations Tourism Industry.

Learn more at

**FNTMP.com.au**



PwC's Indigenous  
Consulting



**Intrepid**



**Welcome to  
Country**



**Australian Government  
National Indigenous  
Australian Agency**

Image: Jillian Mundy Photography, Nandani Scott-Hoppe Green Takara ripakana

The First Nations Tourism Mentoring Program (FNTMP) is a new, free mentoring program for First Nations tourism businesses across Australia, matching businesses with skilled and experienced mentors. This program is designed to support mentees to grow their tourism businesses and achieve their business goals. Mentees will have access to expert advice, tailored learning, and culturally respectful industry specialists.

**Applications to access free, one-on-one mentoring through the FNTMP are now open!**

**Apply now**

[fntmp@au.pwc.com](mailto:fntmp@au.pwc.com)

[1800 792 000](tel:1800792000)

[FNTMP.com.au](https://fntmp.com.au)



## NATURE NOTES # 36

### A STEP TOWARDS ERADICATING MALARIA

Malaria is a serious mosquito borne disease which kills over 600,000 people every year. African countries are the most affected by malaria and children are particularly vulnerable.

Mosquirix is the world's first vaccine against malaria and it took over 30 years to develop.

Since April 2022, a trial program vaccinated nearly two million children in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi and this year a massive rollout of the free vaccine is happening across several African countries.

It is expected that tens of thousands of children's lives will be saved every year.





## WHERE IS SHE NOW?

### An Update from Wendy Carter, Savannah Guide

"This year I am organizing the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference for the Australasian Mining History Association in September, in my new home town of Leonora in the Northern Goldfields of Western Australia.

After 21 years based in Kununurra I decided on a tree change and moved to Leonora over Christmas via Marble Bar and Paraburdoo to start work at the Gwalia Museum in early January.

I have really enjoyed the change and learning about my new environment. A singing Honeyeater heralds my every morning from a fabulous flowering grevillea in my garden and I look straight out over my fence into the bush on the eastern side of town. The Western bowerbirds are just as quirky as the Northern bowerbirds, but with a much larger repertoire of sounds which is captivating. They have all the tourists at the museum thinking there is a cat stuck up in the tree!



Mine shaft at Malcolm

The avenue of Desert Kurrajongs along the road between Leonora and Gwalia have the tourists asking whether someone is pruning them - true enough - the hungry cows at the end of six years of drought, before the big rainfall events we have had this year. 40 hours of solid rainfall in January gave one mine site east of Laverton two years average rain in just two days! The ten days straight rain in March closed the Great Central Road until it was re-opened in May.



Mulla mullas

So anyone travelling this way between August and October should be greeted with a wonderful wildflower season!"

More information on the Leonora Conference can be found here: <https://amha.tidyhq.com/>

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS!

### Seasonal / Plant Crossword Puzzle Answers

#### ACROSS

4. Banksia
5. Mimosa
8. Epicormic
13. Cunningham
14. Sessile
15. Lichens
18. Fire
20. Strangler Fig
21. Kapok
22. Mangroves

#### DOWN

1. Rhizomes
2. Livistona
3. Banyan
6. Red Ash
7. Ferdinandiana
9. Concolorous
10. Aquaticus
11. Purple
12. Cineole
16. Sorghum
17. Melaleuca
19. Merauke



### Savannah Guides Uniform Item Price List

Hat Band	\$ 11
Savannah Guide Patch (Large or Small)	\$ 15
Savannah Guide Pin	\$ 20
Name Badge	\$ 25

### Savannah Guides Membership Price List

Friend of Savannah Guides (Individual Employed by SGL Enterprise)	\$ 60
Friend of Savannah Guides (Individual)	\$ 95
Friend of Savannah Guides (Enterprise)	\$225
Savannah Guide	\$125
Senior Savannah Guide	\$225
Retired Savannah Guide	\$ 80
Special Member	\$125
Enterprise Membership	\$550

### EcoGuide Price List

Application	\$130
Annual Membership	\$110
EcoGuide Pin-On Badge	\$ 15



## Small Changes

# What Can I Do?

## Big Benefits

### Eat a Plant Rich Diet

Changing what we eat reduces carbon emissions, improves human health, and conserves resources

beef 1 kg = 59.6 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq peas 1 kg = 0.9 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq

**BENEFITS:** Healthier for you and the planet

### Buy Second Hand

Give second hand goods a new lease of life, help the environment and save money



1 new cotton shirt = 2,700 litres water

**BENEFITS:** Save money and save water

### Manage Energy Use

Install a smart thermostat to track your energy use and control your heating and cooling remotely



Every 1°C cooler = 10% more energy use

**BENEFITS:** Save money and save energy

### Seek Active Transport

Choose sustainable transport options to reduce carbon emissions. Active transport is good for your health



**BENEFITS:** Better fitness and reduced traffic pollution

### Act for Change

Use your voice to make a difference

Our biggest climate change protest took place in 2019 in 185 countries with millions of people

**BENEFITS:** People power can change legislation

### Restore Nature

Going outdoors helps improve cognitive function, physical and mental health

Restoring wildlands and improving farmlands will achieve 30% of global carbon capture targets

**BENEFITS:** Improved personal and environmental health

### Learn to Adapt

Climate change is forcing us to live differently, learning will be core to our ability to adapt

If 16% of high school students received climate change education, we could reduce 19 Gt of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2050

**BENEFITS:** A future for our children with less CO<sub>2</sub>

**ACT NOW to Save Money, Improve Health, Reduce Climate Change and Protect Coral Reefs!**



**Save Reefs from Home**

[WWW.CORALWATCH.ORG](http://WWW.CORALWATCH.ORG)



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA

## GREAT BARRIER REEF FACTS

### Australia's Jewel

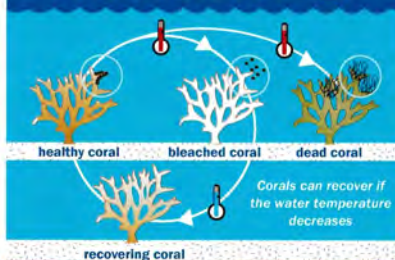
World Heritage Site  
Largest reef  
3,000 reefs, 2,300 km long  
Can be seen from space

Allen Coral Atlas

### Threats

Cyclones  
Water quality  
Crown-of-thorns starfish  
Coral bleaching  
Coastal development  
Ocean acidification

### Coral Bleaching



### Biggest Threat

Human induced climate change

↑ carbon emissions  
= ocean temperatures  
↑ coral bleaching events

### Value

**\$6.4 Billion** Annual Australian economic contribution  
**\$56 Billion** Australian economic, social & icon value  
**2 Million** Visitors every year  
**64,000** Jobs

Deloitte Access Economics. At what price? Report, 2017

### Importance

The Great Barrier Reef is home to 450+ hard corals, 1,625+ fish and 30 mammal species. Healthy reefs protect us, provide products such as medicine and support local economies.



### Reef Decline

More than 50% of reefs are severely degraded

**CO<sub>2</sub>** = **4** Mass bleaching events in the last **7** years  
1998, 2002, 2010, **2016, 2017, 2020, 2022**



**Get Involved - The Reef Needs You!**

[WWW.CORALWATCH.ORG](http://WWW.CORALWATCH.ORG)



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# OUR FUTURE IS IN OUR PAST

Thanks to Bram Collins, this is a Regular Column with focus on the History of Savannah Guides. Bram believes that Savannah Guides has its own unique Culture and History. It is now critically important to use these, our reputation and what we have learnt along our journey to drive our future decisions, have influence and make a difference!



*Australia's Adventure Drive*

The Savannah Way is Australia's longest nationally recognised touring route covering 3,700km. The concept of linking tourism operators across the north developed during the 1990's and the name "Savannah Way" was suggested by Savannah Guides Life Member, Russell Boswell at our 1997 Field School at Hell's Gate. The route was launched in 2000 and continues to offer travellers unforgettable adventures in Queensland's Gulf Savannah, the Northern Territory's Top End and Western Australia's Kimberley region.

A trip along the Savannah Way presents 5 World Heritage Areas, 17 National Parks and hundreds of unique products and experiences including 37 of the 86 signature "Discover Aboriginal Experiences" in Australia! Not to mention 8 Great Fishing Adventures and 6 Luxury Lodges of Australia.

Some of the biggest tourism brands in northern Australia are working strategically with the 3 Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO's) Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ), Tourism Top End and Australia's North West Tourism (ANW) that collectively represent more than 1000 tourism members across the length of the Savannah Way. Together they're spreading the message of the Savannah Way nationally and around the world and it's no wonder that many travellers are hailing the Savannah Way as Australia's answer to America's Route 66.

A new initiative for 2025 is the creation of a trade brochure for European wholesale travel agents, where tourism operators along the route can sell their products to key international drive markets.

The Board of Savannah Way Limited is made up of representatives from all levels of tourism in each state and territory including operators delivering the experiences day in, day out and RTO's who spearhead the marketing and work closely with the State Tourism Organisations (STO's), whose government agency connections are critical for the future development of the Savannah Way Adventure Drive.

Let's not forget the reason the Savannah Way concept came to be - to facilitate an economic benefit from the tourism industry to the regional and remote economies in the vast, isolated regions of northern Australia. These benefits can be the springboard to a brighter future and help many communities achieve their economic, environmental and social aspirations.





Savannah Guides Limited operates the EcoGuide Program in Australia. This national nature-based tour guide accreditation program delivers great benefits for EcoGuides, growing the links between nature-based Tour Guides around Australia.

Savannah Guides is also working in several regions developing tailored programs for specific situations. Together the Savannah Guides and EcoGuide programs create a network of over 500 nature and culture based Tour Guides and many leading Tourism Operators involved in professional and personal development. The benefits for everyone include access to Regional Workshops, Field Schools, Training Programs and Resources, job links and a National Communication network. How can you connect more with these opportunities and help us build the professionalism of Tour Guides across Australia?

## CONGRATULATIONS! NEWLY CERTIFIED ECOGUIDES

Diana Barnett	Hawthorn West, VIC
Daniel Caruana	The Entrance, NSW
Wil Kemp	White Rock, QLD
Gabrielle Murphy	El Questro, WA

## A Huge Welcome to our new Friends of Savannah Guides!

Rachel Berthiaume	Ningi, QLD
Glenda Dickson	Melton South, VIC
Ray Dickson	Moama, NSW
Jim Henry	Ningi, QLD
Beth Jones	Silver Valley, QLD
Leeanne Kippen	Longreach, QLD
Elizabeth Lynch	Longreach, QLD
Patrick Lynch	Longreach, QLD
Robert Peacock	Boyne Island, QLD
Cindy Potter	Longreach, QLD
Tania Taylor	Wandeng, VIC
Jo Volz	Nundah, QLD

Home Valley Station, The Kimberley  
Great Value Holidays, Queensland  
Wet Tropics Management Authority

**Thank you for your enthusiasm!**

## ECO GUIDES AT MON REPOS TURTLE CENTRE

Tourism and Events Queensland supports the professional development of tour guides through Savannah Guides, Ecotourism Australia (and of course Master Reef Guides and Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides). Having the Mon Repos team undertaken EcoGuide Certification is a great way to show this famous wildlife attraction improving their guest delivery and prioritising formal certifications. Our partnership with the QPWS team has influenced/encouraged this outcome.

Ten rangers and long-term volunteers from Mon Repos Turtle Centre recently completed EcoGuide Certification through Ecotourism Australia and Savannah Guides.



Mon Repos Turtle Centre rangers and volunteers with their EcoGuide certificates

The process involved completing the EcoGuide workbook, peer review and a practical assessment to document, refine and practice skills relating to environmental interpretation, group management, safety and minimal impact guiding.

Cathy Gatley, Senior Ranger at Mon Repos Turtle Centre said "Completing EcoGuide Certification was the obvious next step after our outstanding work attending Ecotourism Australia's ECO Certification, Climate Action Certification and Respecting Our Culture Certification for Mon Repos Turtle Centre.

The staff and volunteers are passionate about turtle conservation and education. You can see them light up each time they engage with visitors and get to share the incredible experience on the beach at night. They are committed to sharing their knowledge and encouraging visitors to rethink their habits and find ways to lessen their impact on the environment around them."

Mon Repos Turtle Encounter tours are available from November to March for visitors to experience excellence in environmental interpretation. The Mon Repos Turtle Centre is located near Bargara in the Bundaberg region of the Southern Great Barrier Reef. The centre is dedicated to marine turtle research, protection and education. They have 'Best of Queensland' status.

The certified EcoGuides are:

Lauren Engledow	Sonya Gregon-Allcot
Janine Ferguson	Nicole Murnane
Ainsley Gatley	Shane O'Connor
Cathy Gatley	Sally Obst
John Gatley	Cynnamon Vockler



# GEOFEST, AND ASSOCIATED WILDLIFE TOURISM WORKSHOP

18-20 JULY 2024 - SYDNEY

“Volcano as a World Class  
Sustainable Geotourism Destination”

<https://geofest.com.au>

18 July - Geotourism Presentations  
University of Sydney

19 July - Geotourism Excursions  
Several to choose from

20 July - Wildlife Tourism Workshop  
University of Sydney

Program details are available at <https://geofest.com.au/program-speakers> / with the Field Trip details at <https://geofest.com.au/field-trips/>

WTA Chair Ronda Green is organising the Wildlife Tourism Workshop, and leading discussions on incorporating the interpretation of Australian and Indonesian animals into geotourism. WTA Treasurer Simin Maleknia will speak on the importance of alerting tourists and those working in the tourism industry to the issue of wildlife trafficking.

Several other WTA member are involved. Angus Robinson, Managing Director of Leisure Solutions and Coordinator of the National Geotourism Strategy, has been very involved in planning and PR, and he and WTA committee member Noel Scott (University of the Sunshine Coast) will be hosting presentation sessions. Russell Boswell, Manager of Savannah Guides, will be presenting on “Interpreting volcanic landscapes in Far North Queensland”.

# WILDLIFE TOURISM AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE

5-7 NOVEMBER 2024

Wild Tails: the Value of Story-telling and other Quality  
Interpretation in Wildlife Tourism

Hastings Point, northeastern NSW, Australia (easily reached by bus from the Gold Coast airport). Also available online.

This event in a beautiful location will have enthusiastic discussion around a very important aspect of wildlife tourism such as:

- How do we best design interpretive experiences for a variety of visitors – different age groups, levels of interest or prior knowledge, different levels of understanding of the language spoken by the guide, different cultural backgrounds etc?
- How can we awaken interest in the “forgotten fauna”: reptiles, insects, rat-like mammals, small brown birds etc. with interesting behaviours or ecological roles?
- What are the ways we use storytelling to capture interest and proceed to impart some important or fascinating information?
- How can we best guide our visitors' behaviour for minimal-impact viewing?
- Face-to-face guiding, self guided nature trails, interpretive signage in zoos or wilderness areas, apps, websites, virtual reality and other methods of sharing information.
- What to avoid when giving out information or opinions

[www.wildlifetourism.org.au/blog/coming-events/  
conference-2024/](http://www.wildlifetourism.org.au/blog/coming-events/conference-2024/)

## NATURE NOTES # 37

### WHAT IS ICE CREAM HEADACHE?

Eating cold food or drinks can cause “ice cream headache” or “brain freeze”. The medical name for that sudden pain in your forehead is *sphenopalatine ganglioneuralgia* and it doesn't last very long. It happens when a frosty treat suddenly drops the temperature of the roof of your mouth and back of the throat. This sets off a chain reaction causing blood vessels to rapidly constrict and dilate which activates the pain receptors in the blood vessel walls to send the pain signal through the sensory nerves of the head and face. When your palate warms up again the pain sensation stops, so the way to avoid brain freeze is to consume very cold foods slowly and the quickest cure is to drink some warm water or to push your tongue to the roof of your mouth to warm the area.

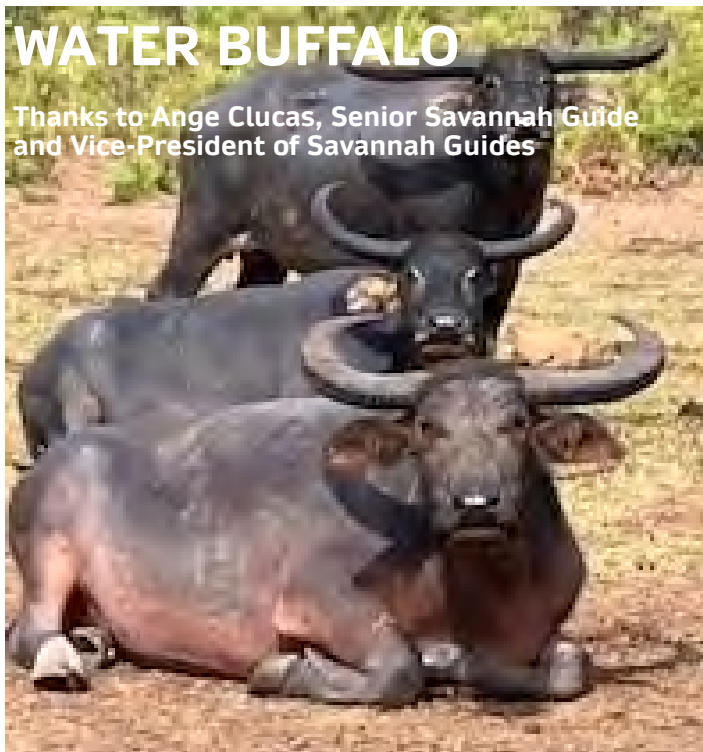
Thanks to Ange Clucas





# WATER BUFFALO

Thanks to Ange Clucas, Senior Savannah Guide and Vice-President of Savannah Guides



Water buffalo are an introduced species in Australia. Between 1825 and 1843 about eighty buffalo were brought to Melville Island and the Cobourg Peninsula for meat. However, when these settlements were abandoned in the mid 1900s the buffalo soon colonised the permanent and semi-permanent swamps and freshwater springs of the Top End.

Prior to extensive culling in the 1980s as part of the Northern Territory Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign, there were ~350,000 feral Water buffalo but numbers dropped dramatically as a result of this program.

Today only a few isolated feral populations remain in the wild, with farming of re-domesticated herds now occurring in the Northern Territory. There are two species, Asiatic, introduced from South-East Asia and Riverine, which were imported from India to America, then to Europe and eventually introduced to Australia. For farming today a mix of both breeds is favoured as Riverine have a growth spurt from 12-18 months, making them more valuable for live export. However Riverine do not handle dry season conditions as well as the Asiatic, so a mix gives better balance for business year round.

Each animal consumes up to 30kg of feed per day, eating large quantities of aquatic plants. On floodplains they can muddy the water and wallowing creates swim channels which can allow saltwater to intrude into freshwater swamps, damaging aquatic ecosystems. However their dung does provide the floodplain with nutrient rich soils that bring diversity of native flora and fauna, compared with other Top End floodplains that do not have buffalo. And as buffalo feed on native vegetation, noxious weeds such as mimosa and salvinia

become exposed, making it easier for graziers to identify and remove them.

Asiatic Water buffalo have large, outward sweeping horns, a short, wide snout and a stocky build with short limbs and a wide girth.

Riverine Water buffalo have smaller horns which curve upwards and they are darker in colour and more robust.

Male Water buffalo weigh up to 1000kg and females up to 600kg and they have a life expectancy of 20 years.

Buffalo temperament requires them to be worked quietly and gently, without confrontation. When handled regularly in this way they are docile but if treated roughly, they become cranky and difficult to manage. Water buffalo have fewer sweat glands than cattle and need to wallow to cool down and avoid heat stress. They cannot be mustered for long periods of time in the heat of the day.



Newborn calf with umbilical cord still attached

Buffalo meat is lower in fat and higher in zinc and iron than beef, but requires careful cooking as it becomes dry if overcooked, due to the low fat content.

Buffalo milk is pure white, smoother and thicker than cow's milk. It is higher in calcium and protein and lower in saturated fat than cow's milk. Traditionally Buffalo milk is used to make mozzarella cheese but currently in Australia there are only a few boutique cheesemakers utilizing buffalo milk to create this product.



# REMINDER ... Enterprises are able to nominate Savannah Guide Employees for this special Award

## Savannah Guides Awards The Barry Kubala Future Leaders Award

The aim of this award is to develop a younger, up and coming, mentored, active, member that can be seen as a role model for others and a future leader for Savannah Guides Limited. This award has a succession role within the organisation.

### Criteria:

The candidate must:

- Be a Financial, Accredited Member of Savannah Guides Limited
- Be employed by an accredited Savannah Guides Enterprise Member
- Display potential for Senior Savannah Guides roles
- Be nominated by at least two Savannah Guides Limited Members who may be:
  - The candidates' Enterprise Owner / General Manager (mandatory if not the candidate)
  - A Savannah Guides Limited Board Member or Life Member
  - A Savannah Guide who is aware of their Future Leader potential
  - Their Savannah Guides mentor

Note: Nominations should address the nominee's growth and/or leadership potential within Savannah Guides. Any number of supporting nominations can be received from a single Enterprise however only one from any Enterprise shall count toward the required three nominations.

The Board may choose to interview the nominee and/or their colleagues and managers in the decision-making process. The Board determines recipients of the award which is bestowed where possible by a Life Member or otherwise the President at a School ceremony. This is not an annual event but an honour given from time to time to one or more nominees.

### Barry Kubala, Savannah Guide 1988 - 2006



Barry Kubala

*Barry Kubala, originally from former Savannah Guides Enterprise, Adels Grove, was one of the original seven founding members of Savannah Guides in 1988. Barry never ceased to amaze with his knowledge of botany and geology. In Savannah Guides' early days Barry took on the role of standards and protocols officer, and woe betide you if you had not ironed your uniform, or treated your clients without full respect, or (evil of evils) misrepresented Savannah Guides. He took great pride in the organisation, and in being a foundation member. Barry also held office as President and Secretary on a number of occasions. Savannah Guides veterans will tell you how Barry Kubala's knowledge was almost without peer among tour guides, and not just of his patch but of the wider savannahs. He had a very distinctive way of presenting information that both entertained and educated. His outstanding dedication and contribution to the development of the Savannah Guides network was recognised in 2010 when Barry was awarded Life Membership of Savannah Guides Ltd after he resigned his Savannah Guides status due to ill health. Barry's leadership, passion, intelligence and wit live on with the Barry Kubala Future Leaders Award.*

*Barry passed away on 26 March 2011*



# REMINDER ... Enterprises are able to nominate Savannah Guide Employees for this special Award

## Savannah Guides Awards The Val Speedie Outstanding Tour Guide Award

The aim of this award is to acknowledge outstanding guiding performance and skills.

### Criteria:

The candidate must:

- Be a Financial, Accredited Member of Savannah Guides Limited
- Be employed by an accredited Savannah Guides Enterprise Member
- Display potential for Senior Savannah Guides roles
- Have demonstrated Professional and Personal Development in their guiding role
- Be nominated by at least one accredited Savannah Guides Member.

Note: A nomination must be in writing and detail the nominee's outstanding performance and skills. This should address the guide's culturally, socially and environmentally responsible techniques and customer satisfaction.

The Board may choose to interview the nominee and/or their colleagues and managers in the decision-making process. The Board determines recipients of the award which is bestowed where possible by a Life Member or otherwise the President at a School ceremony. This is not an annual event but an honour given from time to time to one or more nominees.

### Val Speedie, Savannah Guide 1991 – 2006



Kay Stephens and Val Speedie

Val Speedie was a Savannah Guide who worked at Savannah Guides Enterprise, Undara Experience, for 12 years. Although no longer with us she is commemorated in the Val Speedie Tour Guide Award, presented by Savannah Guides to an outstanding interpreter working with a Savannah Guides Enterprise. Val had a true understanding of interpretation, the art of connecting an audience with real meaning in a landscape. She looked at every aspect of her commentaries - using correct information and current research, developing fascinating themes, and interacting with her customers. When asked what drove her passion for continually working on her own guiding and training the next generation of Undara's Savannah Guides she said that her ongoing love for sharing nature was to ask "Why?" Why are there different trees on that hillside? Why are different raptor species often seen at different heights? Why was this place so important for people? Continually asking "Why?" can stimulate a guide's

passion, research and effectiveness with an audience and it is a question that has driven some other great minds. Val started work at Undara in July 1991. Val was in her element – this started her love affair with volcanoes, the bush and the Gulf Savannah. Within six months she became a Savannah Guide and in two years became their head guide. She was instrumental in writing up training manuals and procedures for the guiding department. Val, along with Kay Stephens taught TAFE students the Dry Landscapes module of the Heritage and Interpretive Tourism Course. Val was diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2002 and she took time off to have treatment which involved surgery and radium. Val returned to work but soon retired from Undara in 2003 after 12 years of loyal service.

Val passed away on 18 September 2010





## SOCIAL MEDIA SNAPSHOT

Our Social Media Team of Grace Elliott, Jessanie Johnsen, Wil Kemp, Cheryl Parsons, Katherine Goldsworthy and Izzie Hudson continue their concerted effort around Savannah Guides' Social Media. We thank them for their dedication and the huge amount of time they volunteer to make this possible. The results have seen a significant increase in our Page Likes and Followers.

Every team member continues to bring their own unique approach, which has helped immensely in fostering connections with our Followers, and generating growth across our profiles. We are incredibly proud of everything we've achieved, and are looking forward to seeing how our online presence evolves moving forward. The Team has looked hard at what people want to see, and the best approach for showing them that. They look at the core values of Savannah Guides and how we want the world to see us. The

result? Regular Posts with a blend of content from all our Enterprises and Members.

They have discovered we need to be pretty smart with our #hashtags to get Posts noticed by the wider community.

You can help Savannah Guides by "Liking" and "Sharing" our Posts, as well as "Tagging" Savannah Guides in any relevant content you might Post!

**For Instagram:**

@savannahguides

#savannahguides

#protectorsandinterpreters

#savannahguidesshoutout

**For Facebook:**

@Savannah Guides Limited

@savannahguides

If you have some epic content you would love to see featured on our Social Media Channels, please contact. [sam@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:sam@savannah-guides.com.au). And don't forget you can also Tag any one of our 16 fabulous Savannah Guides Enterprises! We will continue to closely monitor our Strategy and are super keen to see a steady increase in Interaction, Likes and Followers.

If you have any feedback or further suggestions, feel free to share as we are always looking to improve and learn.

## THE BOARD AND MANAGEMENT OF SAVANNAH GUIDES LIMITED



Michelle Whitehouse  
President



Ange Clucas  
Vice-President



Michael Alexander  
Treasurer



Christian Bom



Wil Kemp



Mindy Bambrick



Ivor Davies  
Shadow Board  
Member



Grace Elliott  
Shadow Board  
Member



Russell & Sam Boswell  
Managers





## WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR "MESSAGE STICK" PLEASE ...

Please send any Articles, Pictures, Nature Notes, Fun Facts, Quizzes, Website Links, Facebook Pages etc to [sam@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:sam@savannah-guides.com.au). If it isn't your own material, please be sure to send appropriate References.

**ANY CONTENT IS TRULY APPRECIATED!**

### FIELD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A gentle reminder that the Savannah Guides Limited By-Laws state that to maintain Savannah Guide accreditation you must attend at least one Savannah Guides Field School every two years (Version 7 - July 2019 - 2.4.1, Page 11).

### QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT ONLINE TOOLS

[qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au](http://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au)

### AUSTRALIA - THE TIME TRAVELLER'S GUIDE

An ABC Production

[youtube.com/watch?v=UlhMBH6U8pU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=UlhMBH6U8pU)

The Australasian Bat Society is a non-profit organisation which aims to promote the conservation and study of bats in Australasia. The Australasian region is a hot spot for both mega and micro bat diversity. However this region also has one of the highest numbers of species at risk from extinction. Over 30% of the world's endangered and critically endangered bats (IUCN Red List) call Australasia home. [www.ausbats.org.au/about-us.html](http://www.ausbats.org.au/about-us.html)

### SCIENTISTS SOLVE MYSTERY OF ANCIENT 'TREE OF LIFE'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-69012221>

### ASTREBLA ECOLOGY GRASS IDENTIFICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP

Do you need to identify grasses to species, or have an interest in doing so? Then this two-day course is for you. More details:

<https://astrebla.com/>



### THE STRANGE WORLD OF CROCODILE HAIRBALLS AND THE QUEENSLANDERS WHO COLLECT THEM!

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-03-10/crocodile-hairballs-bezoars-queenslander-collectors/103555802>

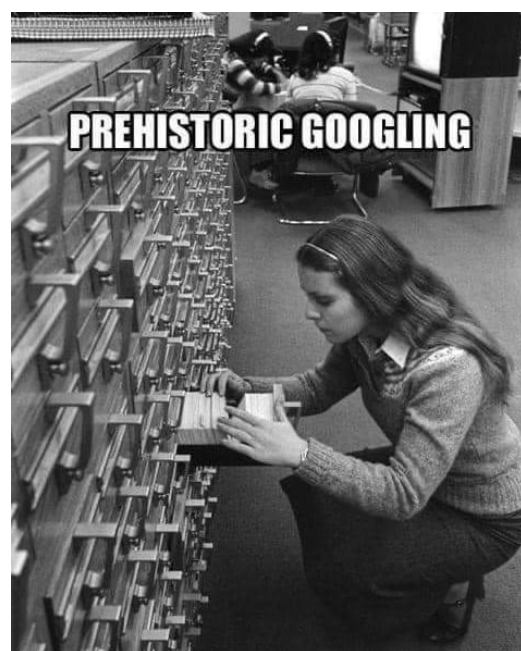
Recent release by debut novelist Fae le Friz (aka Savannah Guide Grace Elliott) is a Young Adult (12-18 years) Australian work set in a fictional Charters Towers boarding school and on a Muttaborra working sheep and cattle station. It follows the adventures of sixteen-year-old Richard "Dick" Dyre, who is paid for some property work with the pick of the litter ...

only to find out that the litter was of dalmatians instead of the expected traditional working breeds. *Babe* meets *101 Dalmatians* when Dick decides that he's going to train Bother the dalmatian as his new working dog, hopefully without getting caught on school grounds! For more information, check out Grace's website [www.faelefriz.com](http://www.faelefriz.com)



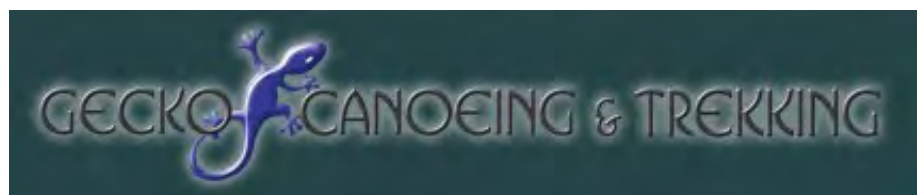
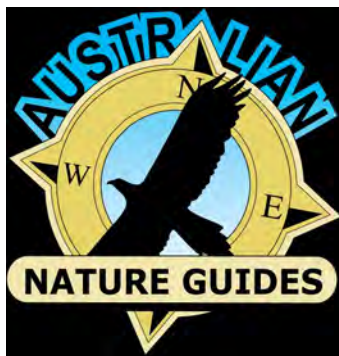
### DIG THE TROPIC GEO-TOURISM TRAIL

<https://www.digthetropic.com.au>





## OUR PROUD SAVANNAH GUIDE ENTERPRISES



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## OUR PROUD SAVANNAH GUIDE ENTERPRISES



Undara  
and  
Mount Surprise



Our Stories...  
Your Adventures





# THE ONGOING WORK OF SAVANNAH GUIDES IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING CORPORATE PARTNERS



**Queensland  
Government**



Savannah Guides is a network of tour guides and operators delivering various professional development programs around Australia including EcoGuide and Online Courses. Savannah Guides is a not-for-profit company with Enterprise and Individual Members working with leading tourism, environmental and community organisations to pursue its Mission:

To be an economically sound, community based, professional body which maintains high standards of:

- Interpretation and Public Education
- Training and Guiding Leadership
- Natural and Cultural Resource Management

[www.savannah-guides.com.au](http://www.savannah-guides.com.au)

