

Jim Jim Falls, 24 – 26 July 2009

Report from Kerrie Taylor

Photos from Pam and Eric Nunn

So firstly a description of the **walking and the environment**.....The Jim Jim walk initially is a reasonably steep incline of about an hour onto the plateau, cutting across to Jim Jim Creek. We followed the creek walking mostly on terrain interlaced with grasses, rock slabs, sand and rocky stretches until we reached the aptly named Monoliths - our base camp for 2 nights.

The monoliths comprise a number of very large intricately layered outcrops and depending on the time of day, range in colour from the deep ochres, tinges of yellow to the full spectrum of blues, and greys. The outcrops rise from a large water hole with flowering lilies, small fish with superb reflections shimmering the water. A number of water monitors were spotted as was a turtle. An absolutely beautiful camp spot !!! (Eric and Pam's photos can more aptly reveal the beauty – see below).

Our second day was a longish 20 k. exploration downstream of Jim Jim Creek, rock hopping, exploring and finding swarming wasps and continual breathtaking scenery.

Our third day saw a back track detouring to the top of Jim Jim Falls viewing clearly the escarpment in the distance and looking below to the popular Jim Jim waterhole.

And so to a description of the **fellow trekkers and their idiosyncrasies**.....because for me, my fellow bushwalkers form just as important part as the actual walk and the beauty.....

- Our intrepid and ever reliable leader Rob, who kept us moving and..... moving..... and moving. “Just a number of more kilometres” became his mantra.....
- Pam and Eric, thoughtful, focussed and resident photographers (sorry Nev, their camera was bigger). Pam the sunworshipper and Eric sacrificing himself for the greater good of the group and not grimacing after the 20 or so wasp stings.
- Mountain goat Neville who continued to amaze us all in continually trying to obtain that shirtless, sunburnt Aussie look in low 30's heat.
- In startling contrast, there was Renae who followed the “slip, slop, slap” message even though we couldn't manage to see her through her sun-screened applied white glaze.
- Sophie our resident advisor on all foody things.....Renae and I realised our laksa was sadly missing key ingredients. Sophie also kept producing little sweet goodies. No doubt Don was the one carrying the gear since Sophie (having a sore knee) relaxed at camp reading Simon's book “Sleeping around”. And that says much about Simon.....more about him later.

And lastly some observations on what makes a **comfortable peculiarly Top End walk**:

- Whilst walking, full covering from head to toes (unless you are Neville)(the current fashion colour is beige)
- No clothes when cooling down in the multitude of waterholes and for those a little coy, a sarong is a prerequisite
- Goggles for those interested in the water-life and having a stretch swimming after a hard day's slog
- Thermarest seats to comfortably lounge around those hours around camp
- For a great star peppered and peering sleep, a mozzie dome tent
- A sleeping bag even though you think you won't need it (Nev found out the hard way)
- Something to trade and negotiating skills so that you can feast....red wine, port, shortbread, lollies, Monolith pleasure chocs., uncrushed potato chips (still not sure how you managed this Don)
- The other element of note was a Victorian/NT joviality. Having lived in the Territory for 8 years and visiting from Melbourne this year, I must say I still feel very Northern Territorian but I was starkly reminded of my 'heritage' when I was clearly disowned, on falling and hurting my ankle. Everyone was pleased to announce that since I was member of the VNPA and not the Darwin Bushwalking Club I wouldn't affect the injury statistics for the Club. Thanks comrades!

Finally I'd like to **thank everyone** for supporting me in the final stage of the walk. This showed me when the chips are down, the Darwin Bushwalking Club personalities described really pull together.....I have to thank Simon in particular for without Simon chatting, smiling and distracting me from concentrating I would not have fallen on that dramatically difficult 1cm. drop and experienced such camaraderie. Thanks Simon !!!

Kerrie Taylor

(as discussed, no right of reply!!!)



Monoliths campsite





Jim Jim Creek and (below) top of falls

