

## UMBRAWARRA GORGE, JUNE 2009

**Jon Clark**

Easy to get to and 4 hours from Darwin this is a great little backpack or day hike.

A right turn just after Pine Creek took us along a dirt track to a campsite and a car park. With only a few cars around this place was definitely off the beaten track compared to other popular swim holes within a few hours of Darwin.

A small paved walkway took us along the first section of trail before we got into some rock hopping, a bit tricky sometimes with the large pack. After about 1km, after passing some impressive cliffs we came to a pool spanning the gorge. This is where we had to hoist our packs above our heads and wade. Chest high for most of us, but you could get away with waist high if you planned your route well!

This was camp for the night and there was a nice sandy beach for us to pitch tent.

The afternoon was spent continuing down the gorge for another 2kms. There were some spectacular rocky cliffs and the gorge was stunning. Other highlights included the crystal clear pools, with their sandy bottoms and abundance of fish. The biggest challenge was slippery submerged rocks and a landslide we had to climb over.

The end of the gorge was blocked by a big pool of water that looked like it was more inviting to a croc than a human! We decided to leave it for the crocs!

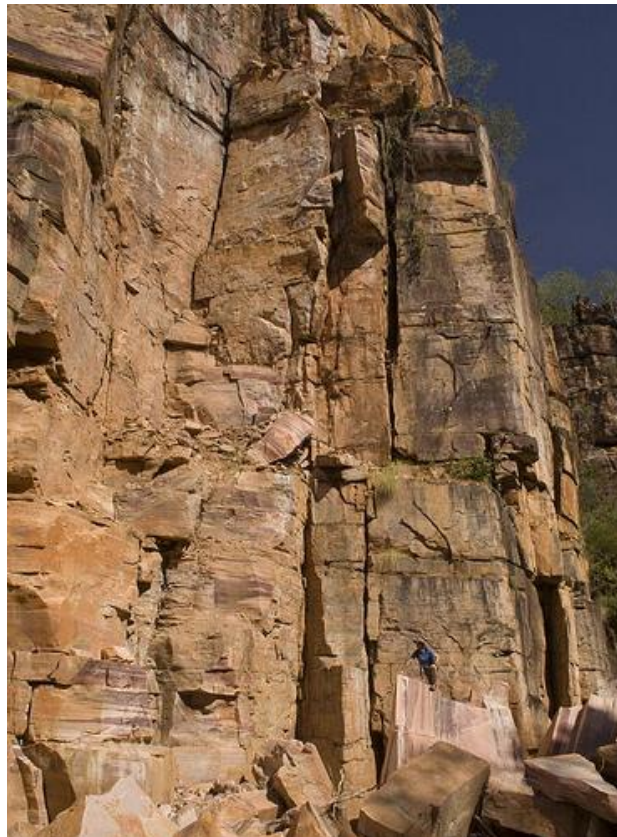
Back at camp we had a nice relaxing evening by our swim hole checking out the fantastic Australian night sky and swapping hiking stories.

Breakfast next morning, then it was back to civilization and the road back to Darwin.

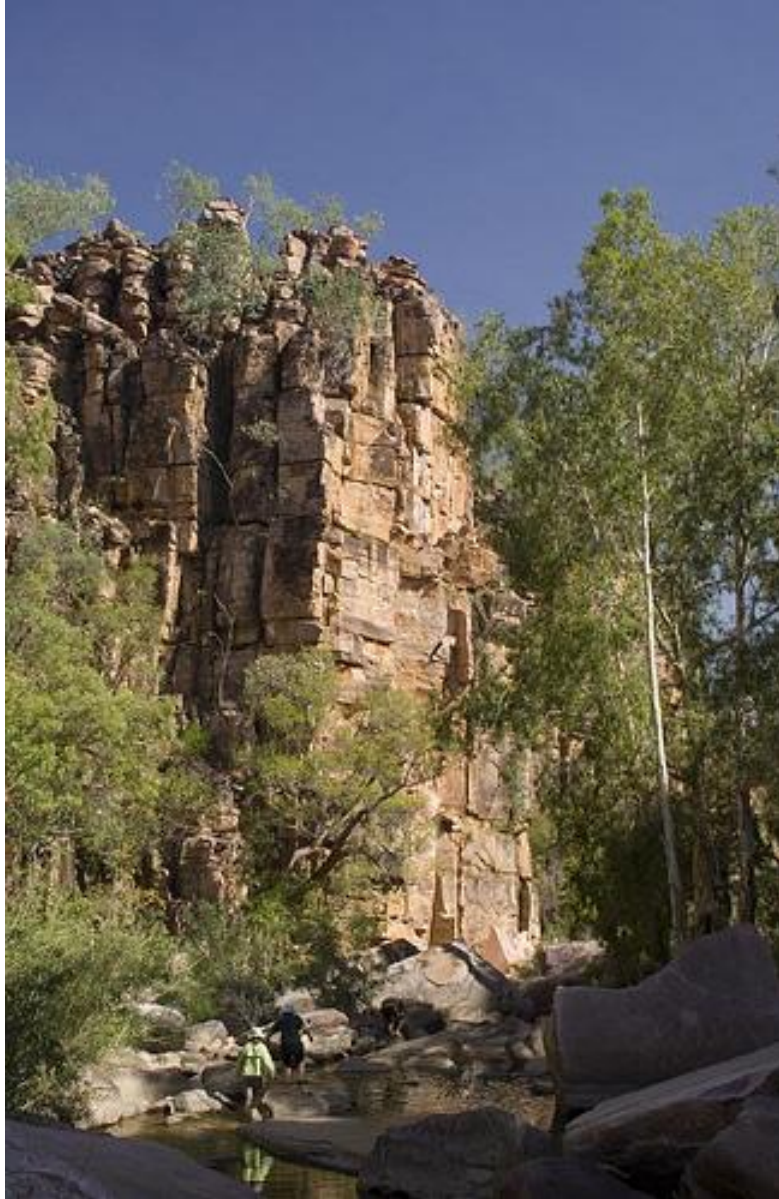
Next time maybe we will head to the cliff tops that Parks & Wildlife describe as having magnificent views!



Stream crossing with packs



Jon on top of one of the big rocks from the landslide



Erica and Rebecca wading in the stream



An impressive rock wall and nice swimming pool