

# West MacDonnell National Park



## Fact Sheet

This vast and spectacular section of the MacDonnell Ranges is an outstanding example of an ancient landscape sculptured over time by climatic elements. The West MacDonnell (*Tyurretye*) National Park stretches for 161kms west of Alice Springs. Cool scenic gorges are important refuges for plants and animals, many of which are found only here and some are relicts of a bygone era of tropical forests. There are many opportunities for visitors to explore and appreciate the scenic beauty and history of the area. Features of the landscape are significant in the stories of Arrernte Aboriginal culture, and have existed for many thousands of years.

### Access

From Alice Springs vehicle access to the Park is via Larapinta Drive and Namatjira Drive. From Watarrka National Park (Kings Canyon) the unsealed Red Centre Way (4WD recommended) connects with the West MacDonnell National Park. Simpsons Gap is also accessible via a 17km sealed bicycle track which starts opposite Flynn's Grave, 7km from Alice Springs along Larapinta Drive.

### When to visit

The Park is accessible all year round. The cooler months (April to September) are the most pleasant. All roads can be impassible for short periods after heavy rain.

*Mount Sonder is a landmark and icon for the West MacDonnell Ranges*

### What to do



**Camping** - Ellery Creek Big Hole and Redbank Gorge provide basic facilities. Serpentine Chalet and 2-Mile (4WD only) provide camping sites with no facilities. Ormiston Gorge provides camping facilities including showers and flush toilets. Camping fees apply and are payable at each camping area.



Overnight visitors to the West MacDonnell National Park are required to bring their own water supplies. All tank water in the park should be treated before drinking.

Fireplaces are provided at some sites, however most sites offer free gas BBQs to replace open fireplaces (refer to map). At Serpentine Gorge all fires are prohibited in this special zone. Commercial facilities are available at Glen Helen Resort, including caravan sites and motel accommodation.



**Swimming** - The Park has a number of permanent water holes ideal for swimming during summer. The larger water holes include Ellery Creek Big-hole, Ormiston Gorge, Redbank Gorge and Glen Helen Gorge. Swimmers should be aware that most swimming holes are extremely cold. Prolonged exposure, even during summer, can result in hypothermia. Beware of submerged logs and rocks. Do not jump, dive or swing into the water.

### Safety and Comfort

- Observe park safety signs.
- Carry and drink plenty of water.
- Wear a shady hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, suitable clothing and footwear.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the heat of the day.
- Consider your health and fitness when choosing a walk.
- Swim only where recommended.

### Please Remember

- Keep to designated roads and tracks.
- All historic, cultural items and wildlife are protected.
- Use the gas barbecues provided and fuel stoves where possible.
- Put your rubbish in bins where provided or take it with you.
- Pets are not permitted in this park.
- Generators are not permitted.



**Walking** - A good way to experience the spectacular views in this Park is by walking. There are numerous marked tracks ranging from leisurely to adventurous.

Information about the natural and cultural environment of the NT is available at each site.



The 223km **Larapinta Trail** stretches through the Park and offers extended and overnight bushwalks for fit, experienced and well prepared walkers. Contact Parks and Wildlife or Tourism Central Australia for more information.



### Parks & Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

Ormiston Gorge Ranger Station  
Ph: (08) 8956 7799  
Fax: (08) 8956 7794  
www.nt.gov.au/parks

Regional Office - Arid Zone Research Institute  
South Stuart Highway ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870  
PO Box 1120 ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871  
Ph: (08) 8951 8250 Fax: (08) 8951 8290

  
Northern  
Territory  
Government



# West MacDonnell National Park

