

ADELAIDE BUSHWALKERS

Tandanya



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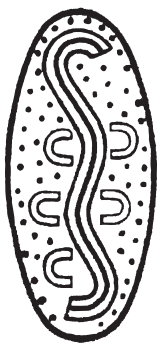
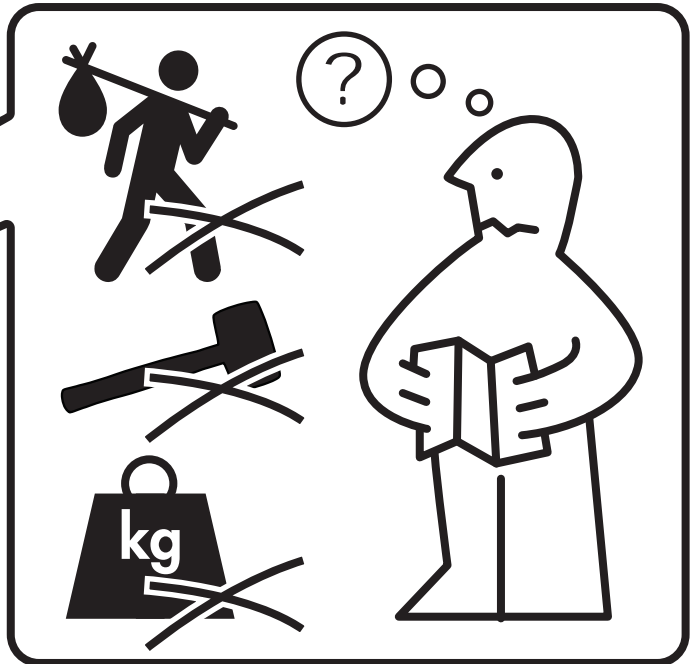
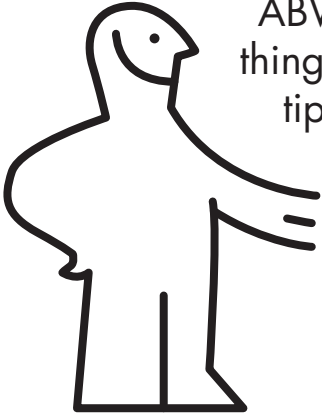
Volume 44 Number 1 Autumn 2014

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Autumn 2014 Volume 44 Number 1

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Willis's Walkabouts

Kakadu Short Circle

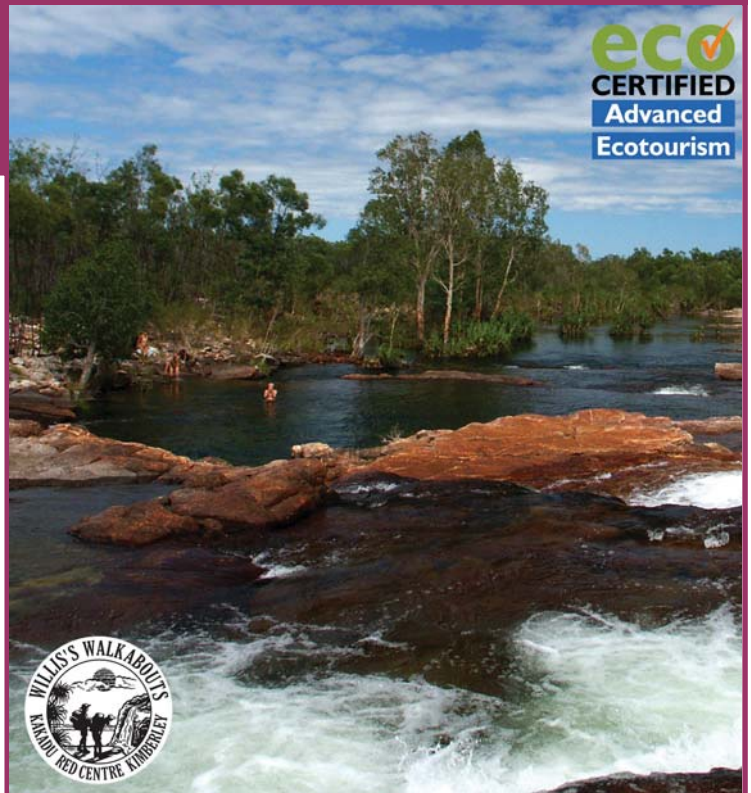
13-26 April 2014

A very special trip at a very special time of year
– **Banggerreng**. It's not the Wet and it's not the Dry. This is when the rain clouds have dispersed and clear skies prevail. Creeks that will eventually dry to a trickle are still flowing well. Wet season wildflowers can still be found. The land is still green with just a touch of the browning off that is to come.

This is our only trip that visits the upper reaches of Koolpin Creek, an area noted for its abundance of Aboriginal art sites. This trip provides most groups with more time for visiting Aboriginal art sites, birdwatching, botanising and/or simply relaxing than is possible on most of our other circle trips.

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Russell Willis



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Close off date for next issue: Wednesday 20 May 2014

Bent Places and Plans: Castle Rock and Mt Hack

By Mike Round

In 2012, I got off the Arkaroola bus at Depot Springs (27 km east of Copley) to walk via Mt Wallace, Mocatoona Hill and Mt Stuart to Aroona Valley where I would meet up with ABW at the start of the June long weekend. Depot Springs had recorded 100 mm of rain in February and with some follow-up rain, the ground in the area was still damp. One of my main interests in doing the walk was to visit a really striking range, as seen on the Goddard 1:50,000 map, with Mt Jefferey and the enticingly named Castle Rock. Both lie out of sight from the road behind low hills and it wasn't long after setting out on the following morning that I saw them for the first time.

Mt Jefferey and Castle Rock are located nearly a mile apart on the apex of a 180° bend of a low range with the two arms of the range extending 12 kms or more to the east, the northern arm to Frome Gap (Angepena HS) and the longer southern arm to Mt Wallace. My first and lasting impression of Jefferey was of a hat-like lump of a thing sitting there, all steep sided, flat topped and with a look more of brawn than brain. I only realised later that I was looking end on to the top of a large spur that rears up from the south. Castle Rock lived up to its name with its more distant rocky trident perched on the very inside of the apex of the bend and it's at the end of 3 km of rocky ridge that tops the steep south side of the southern ridge. It was unfortunate that my tight schedule didn't give me time to climb or inspect either of them but I knew that I could easily access them from the main road next time I was up that way. Instead I headed south between the two features and descended to the faster low country to follow it to Mt Wallace. By way of compensation and much later in the day, it was while crossing the low arm of the range that I came across a quite spectacular gully with walls of brightly coloured yellow clay, just like ochre and I stayed there awhile to explore and take photos.

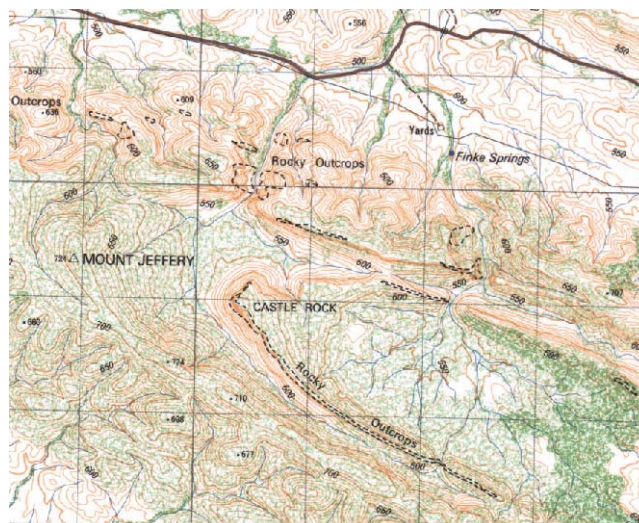
Despite my need to keep on the move, I found that I had to take a long detour to Angepena HS to borrow a spoon after discovering that I no longer one, having unwittingly left it behind at a pit stop, the implement doubling as trowel. In the hope of improving my chances, I introduced myself to the owner Tony Nicholls as a member of ABW, hoping that this would improve my respectability and likelihood of success. As promised, I subsequently returned the spoon on the bus and in the company of a six pack by way of thanks and apology for taking two months to do so. Overall however, I think that the club's reputation has probably been enhanced more than damaged by my unintended visit! The detour (along the hypotenuse and short side of an obtuse triangle instead of by the direct line) added a further 16 km of walking to the trip but with the nine further days of walking ahead of me, it seemed well justified. I spent the night at the surprisingly extensive ponds of Mudlapena Spring and climbed Mt Wallace



Mt Jefferey

the next morning before heading south along the station road.

That road took me to the second main attraction of the walk (and not counting of course my eventually meeting up with my merry ABC group at Pigeon Bore!), namely the hills and valleys immediately 'behind' (from Warraweena's perspective) the Mt Hack range and inside its sharply bent elbow. The area of my interest is shown on the paste up map. It belongs to three pastoral leases and is also situated on the corner of four 1:50,000 topographic maps, namely Goddard, Angepena, Cadnia and Narrina. The Mt Hack range and Turner Creek belong to Warraweena Sanctuary, Mt Goddard is on Manners Well Station while



Castle Rock Map

Mocatoona and its neighbouring hills are on Angepena. "When you get to the fence, Manners Well is on the other side" Tony helpfully told me when I asked where his boundary was.

I arrived in the area late in the afternoon and after setting up camp, climbed straight up to Mocatoona Hill's sweeping crest and followed it round to the summit where at first, I had mixed success photographing some admiral butterflies as they seemed endlessly to flutter about but never too far from the elegant cairn. Notes in the cairn indicated that the only visitors with something to write with were two groups from an Eyre Peninsular High School and two groups from Operation Flinders. From the summit, you can look across to Mt Goddard which has steep

and comparatively barren sides and a flat but rugged looking summit which combine to make it look very different from its neighbours. I hope to climb it sometime in the future. Has anyone been there? It was a fabulous where I was though and I spent the rest of my time up there it admiring the changing light of the setting sun on the low country to the northeast towards Mt McKinley and timing my descent consistent with getting back to camp before dark.



Castle Rock

Just as it is often better, according to 'they say', to let sleeping dogs lie, so it may also have been better for me to have stayed in bed that night and not, on awakening at midnight, get up to go and fetch water. A bright moon (and ignoring the gathering clouds) inspired this lunacy but the idea was to save time by not doing it in daylight when the plan was to set off in the opposite direction. Finding Mocatoona spring was little more than the simple matter of walking downstream and not loosing count of the bends in the wide and very windy, very stony and foot wearying bed of Windy Creek.

The simple part done, I came to some shallow diggings and bits of timber but didn't find the spring. It didn't matter as only a short time earlier, I'd come across some pools of clear water in the creek. Tony Nicholls subsequently told me that the spring is permanent, is dug out and boarded and is located further from the stream bed than I had looked. Finding your tent is the process in reverse and best done without such time wasters as missing your turnoff sheltering from rain until daybreak under the most accommodating river gum that you can find. Annoyed with myself, I spent most of the day in bed but it didn't bother me as the cloud stayed very low and drizzled for much of the day and the extra sleep made it easy to make up much of the lost day later on. If you ever go to Mocatoona, I can only advise that you take your own firewood! Only the red gums offered the chance of sustaining a fire for more than ten minutes, but unlike red gums elsewhere, the Mocatoona gums don't drop their dead branches but hang on to them just out of jumping reach though I did eventually collect enough wood to dry my wet clothing.

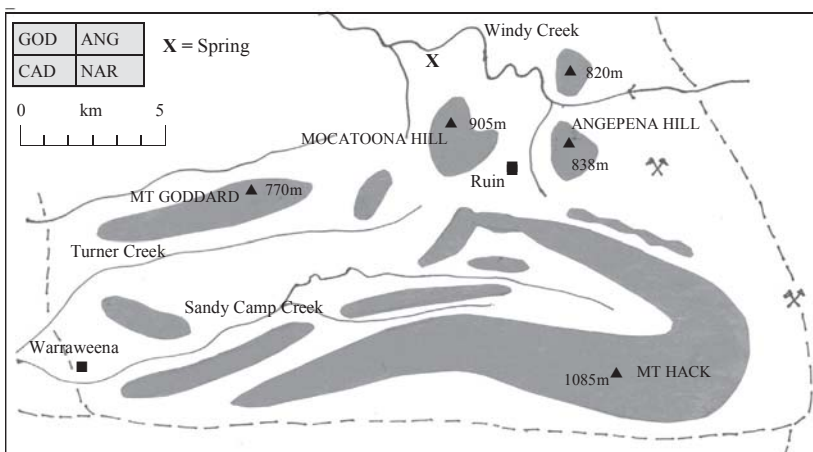
After walking south past the Old Angepena ruin (a humble abode it looked to have been even in its hey day), I climbed up to a well wooded saddle and saw a remarkable spur stepped with three vertical cliffs and I detoured east to have a closer look. Once on the spur, the cliffs turned out to be smaller than they appeared from the distance and I think that my initial

impression of greater size was due to their unusually clean lines. From the top of the same spur you look across to Mt Hack and down into the 'elbow' of the main range. I descended down the ever stony Sandy Camp Creek and eventually found a sandy campsite on the bank not far beyond a pool of water. Next day I headed down the creek and out to the road and the start of the next phase of the walk.

An interesting piece of local history is that, at around the time when the Angepena goldfields were becoming established, the Government funded the construction of a road from Warraweena to the goldfields that was apparently meant to help cope with anticipated heavier traffic to the area. The road went via Turner Creek and old Angepena and it included causeways and culverts as well as several stone retaining walls, the biggest of them 50 metres long and up to 6 metres high. They are all now only in fair to poor condition and I found this information in a survey of heritage sites in the Flinders by Donovan and Associates (1994). Why the road didn't skirt the range via the much lower Main Gap wasn't explained and it is a mystery though it involved less climbing than going around the range via Main Gap.



View looking NE from Mocatoona Hill



It was interesting to also read that the Government only funded road construction where gold was concerned and that if you found copper or any other mineral, then you were on your own!

I could readily justify going back to both of those very bent ranges which on the map look almost mirror images of each other except that Mt Hack range is higher and bulkier while its northern counterpart has a much greater symmetry in addition to its two surprising summits.

Mocatoona Paste Map



CNFR Topo Cadastral Map

Angepena	Tony & Leslie Nicholls
Angorichina	Ian & Di Fargher
Depot Springs	Dianne & Geoff Mengersen
Manners Well	Eddie & Gina Nicholls
Moolooloo	Keith & Lisa Slade
Mulga View	William & July Reschke
Nantawarrina	Aboriginal Corp.
Narrina	Alan Ireland
North Moolooloo	Ian Ferguson
Oratunga	Ginnie Lee
Pinda Springs	Brenda & Steve Coulter
Warraweena	Stoney Steiner (Mgr)
Wertalooona	Peter Moloney (Mgr)
Wirrealpa	Warren & Barbara Fargher



Mudlapena Spring

Springs and Waterholes in the Northern Central Flinders Ranges

- A project proposal

By Mike Round

'It came up cool and clear, but the odour was repellent, likened by Gill to muddy estuaries and rotten eggs and I also could detect hydrogen sulphide in it. Being really thirsty I drank one and then another ghastly cupful, but it was nauseating and I could not drink any more'
C.W. Bonython.

'Northern central Flinders Ranges' is used here as shorthand for all of the country of main interest to bushwalkers anywhere between the Copley to Italowie Gap Road and Parachilna Gorge-Blinman. This region has been comparatively neglected by bushwalkers who tend to favour the better known and more striking areas to the north and south. I think this region deserves more attention from bushwalkers but one of the difficulties in planning extended walks in the area is not knowing the location of permanent or reasonably reliable sources of water the area. Trying to find out, for example, reliable information on the strategically located Alieroona Spring (Narrina 943892) inside the northern bifurcation of Mt Andre would be a good example of the potential difficulties. Because of this, I am hoping that the club might become involved in compiling over time, a data base of the water sources for bushwalkers planning trips in this region. The remainder of this article provides background information that I hope is useful and helps to stir more interest. But first, two anecdotes.

Where the water wasn't.

David Evans has written extensively for Tandanya on dealing with water issues on bushwalks and probably chief amongst his recommendations is not to make assumptions about water sources you know little or nothing about, if you do and things don't turn out

as expected, have a fallback plan. The two situations described below required a fallback plan but on both occasions, the planning seems to have been a little ad hoc! I present them here to stress the importance of water in case any readers were not entirely convinced by the opening quote!

1967 was a wet year in the Flinders as readers of Bonython's book will know while 1968 was wet for much of the ranges but dry in the north. In August that year I was in a small AUMC party that entered the Gammon Ranges (the club's first visit there) by first walking up the former astronomy road to McKinley summit and then descending to a dry camp. It had been a very warm day and we set off next morning with very little water hoping to soon come across some. While walking up Italowie Creek, we came across a bag of stuff that seemed almost certain to have been left there by a bushwalker. It was by chance discussion that our leader found out later that a solo walker had run out of water and dumped some of his gear to help hasten his return to civilization. I'm certainly glad we didn't know this at the time! It turned out that the walker was an outdoor Ed. teacher from a private school researching a future walk for some of his students.

The second incident occurred last year on a walk from Iga Warta to Artimore and is largely what prompted my interest in this topic. I was heading south along the Mt Uro range to Waukawoodina Gap and, coming to a small pool of water in the rocks, drank some but didn't bother to replenish my supply because according to the map, the Gap had a spring, 'Waukawoodina Spring (Approx)' and I fully expected to find water there. Dropping down steeply to the Gap with only a litre or so of water in my possession, I started to feel a little alarmed by what I could see below me and I was more than a little chagrined to arrive and find no sign of a spring anywhere. The length of the spring's name alone seemed to imply water in extravagant over-abundance. The size and brightness of the map's water-signifying blue dot, which if read to scale, also meant I should have stumbled upon a spring-fed pool 75 meter across! But I didn't and instead there was nothing.

The nearest likely water appeared to be nearly 8km upstream of the Gap at Pinda Spring and about which I knew nothing. Going there seemed the only sensible option however and never intending to go that way, I dumped my pack and set off in the last hour of daylight. It was the night of the new moon (I'm convinced that this is a miss-translation of the Old Norse for 'no moon') and the time that I spent walking under its spell certainly gave me new insight into the meaning of darkness and I thanked the Gods that I started that trip with new batteries in my head torch.



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A neighbouring station owner later told me that he only ever saw a puddle of water in the Gap and I think that was while visiting the Gap after the creek had flooded.

Background information on sources of water in the region.

The country previously referred to is covered by seven 1:50,000 topographic maps and they contain a fair scatter of bores and springs. The maps of main interest are Cadnia and Narrina while others are Angepena, Blinman and Godley. Nepabunna and Wertalooona are important if you are going to the more eastern ranges. Map accuracy, the status of man-made water supplies for livestock and the permanence or otherwise of natural springs and waterholes are the main issues. because man-made and natural water supplies present very different situations, they are later dealt with separately.

Map accuracy.

Maps contain a lot of information and it's not surprising that errors can occur. The most 'famous' example, is the 1st Edition Yudnamutana map later shown to have 'around 70 errors' according to Adrian Heard (Walking Guide to the Northern Flinders Ranges published in 1990). My concern is mainly with errors on the Cadnia and Narrina maps which together show 31 springs and 14 of these (45%) are followed by '(approx)' referring to location. There is only one spring identified in this way on the other five maps

of the area and that is Lower Woodendinna Spring (Blinman GR 978715). My concern about the springs marked '(Approx)' is that, from my limited experience, some of them may not actually exist at all.

Heard's claim prompted me to compare 1st and 2nd Edition maps of the seven maps in the SLSA and it was an exercise both interesting and occasionally, illuminating. Take for example Waukawoodna Spring (Narrina GR 002928), the subject of the second anecdote. It did not appear on the 1st Edition map! And somehow that didn't surprise me because if the spring actually existed, it would have been historically well known because the wide gap is the only break, in 36 km of range lying north to south. How that wrong information got onto the map is anybody's guess. While differences between the two editions also included information on springs and waterholes, they probably no longer matter (assuming you're still using Edition 1!), they do serve as a reminder that maps are always in need of correction and update. My favorite map change concerns Wildawildana Spring (GR 957754 and GR 940736). Yes there are two of them but any earlier confusion was solved by appending (Approx) to one of them on the 2nd Ed. map! Please excuse my dryness.

Maps will in most cases probably never be corrected until someone provides the mapping authority with the correct information and Mapping SA (as I think it may now be known) welcomes suggestions for reliable and accurate corrections and updates.

Bore and wells.

Maps become outdated and bores shown on them may no longer be operational. There are a lot of historic wells in the northern Flinders but not all are marked on the map and a lot of these are probably in a very poor state. The presence of the wind pump symbol on maps will indicate if wells are still likely to be in commercial use. If not, a long cord may be needed to access water. Stock water supplies are generally the easiest situation to deal with when planning a walk because information can usually be readily obtained from owners though the situation can be difficult where stations have absentee owners. Unless informed otherwise, the bores on destocked Nantawarrinna can be assumed to have no water.

Concerning wells, the opening quote by Warren Bonython concerns Valley Well in the northern Flinders (Yudnamutana GR 497762m) which was no longer in use at the time of Bonython's visit in 1968 and, as he pointed out, was (and still is) wrongly identified on the map as a bore, probably because there previously was a wind-pump on the site.

Natural springs and waterholes.

Misleading information about the location and nature of waterholes and springs occur on two sites that I know of. The first is Little Magpie (Cadnia GR 744797 indicated to be a waterhole) which was located in a situation where water could not possibly pool. The second is Woolroona Spring (Narrina GR 965914) and which turned out to be almost certainly a very small rockhole and not a spring. The difference is important because springs are more likely to have more permanence than (not spring fed) waterholes.

The other matter is the permanence of, or likelihood of springs and waterholes containing water in average rainfall years although defining 'average' is not always straight forward. For example, waterholes that contain water in autumn and early winter following good summer rains may be dry in spring. Good information can sometimes be got from the land owners or managers about springs (eg Stoney Steiner told me that the springs shown on the map behind the

Mt Hack range all dry out in dry times) but this is not usually the case in my experience for springs remote from station operations and which where bushwalkers are most likely to venture.

A proposed survey of spring and water holes in the region.

Depending on the information already on hand and what can otherwise be gathered by talking to people, I wonder if there might be any interest from the club in actually going into the field and surveying the springs and waterholes in the region of the Flinders described above. Some of these are likely to be more strategically situated than others and these would be the ones to initially target. A helpful first step would be to confirm the existence of, and get the accurate location of the springs marked (Approx) on the map. This would be done in the conventional way and backed up with GPS readings and preferably not by GPS reading alone. It should all tie in. The GPS readings would presumably remove the desirability of someone independently verifying the data. The other aim of the field survey would be to describe the nature of the spring and waterhole locations and their likelihood of having water in drier years.

Such a project is not without precedence. SARDI not long ago surveyed 11 waterholes in the more northern ranges (the most northerly was Tee Junction on the Mawson Plateau) with one of its main aims being to get water quality and other data to help explain the conditions under which the two native fish species continue to survive in two or three of the pools but not in the others. (If interested, go to 'Assessment of endemic fish and native vegetation at springs in the northern Flinders Ranges' by Dale McNeil (2011) which can be accessed at the website of the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources and Management Board.) In that report, the comment was made that the lack of historic data on the pools and in particular, their transience or permanence, was a factor limiting current understanding.

The proposed project would involve visiting each location of interest, double checking its position and recording information about the site. This information could then be passed on to both mapping authorities and to bushwalkers. The project would make for good bushwalking besides being an interesting exercise and producing useful results. Finally and in regards to my questioning the location of certain springs, while I took great care to check my bearings, I did not have a GPS unit to confirm them.



Narrina Waterholes

Walks and Trips

Visit the ABW Website for more details

There are plenty of walks and other activities being listed on our new website.

Log in with your membership account details to keep up to date with new walks, to find out more about walks and register online.

Here's a summary of a few good upcoming walks:

- Deep Creek Conservation Park, two day walks through this spectacular park.
Saturday 22nd - Sunday 23rd March.
- Kayak trip to Coffin Bay (Eyre Peninsula) combined with an exploration of the Gawler Ranges (west of Port Augusta).
Friday 18th - Sunday 27th April.
- Riverton day walks,
Saturday 3rd - Sunday 4th May.
- Mt Remarkable National Park. Walk along the heights of the Battery, descend into Alligator Gorge and summit Mt Remarkable, walking through to Melrose.
Friday 9th - Sunday 11th May.
- New Members Weekend, Kuitpo Forest. An introduction to all things bushwalking.
Saturday 17th - Sunday 18th May.
- Mt Bryan East, through to Caroon Creek.
Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th May.

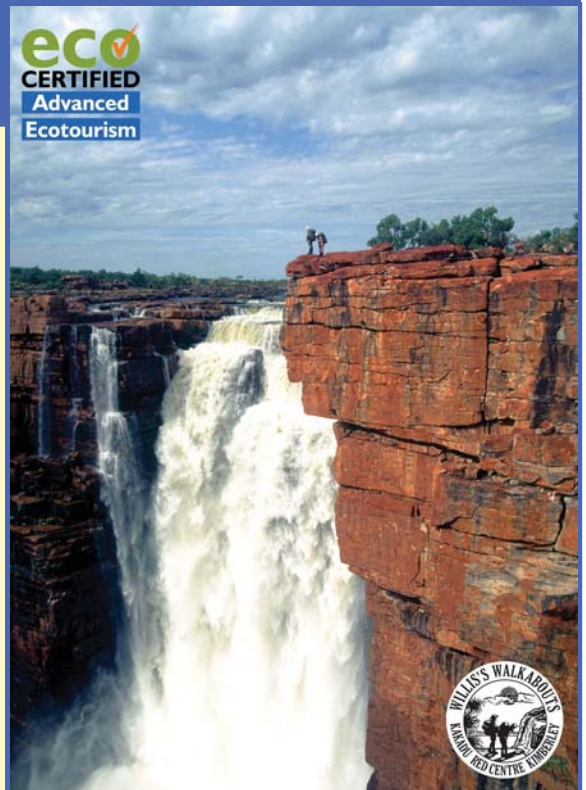
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