

# Jatbula Trail

## Safety & Emergency

Notify a reliable person of your intended start and finish dates.

Emergency Call Devices (ECDs) are located along the trail at various locations. **ECDs are for:**

- contacting a Ranger in an emergency
- reporting an expected delay in arrival at Leliyn (Edith Falls).

## Trail Conditions

There is no formed path and trail conditions vary from rocky with creek crossings, to flat sections with swampy bits.

The Trail is marked by blue triangles, usually located every 20-50 metres. Intersections are marked by sign posts. **At times the markers may be difficult to find - if you have walked for five minutes without seeing a blue triangle marker, go back to the last marker and find the next marker.** Be aware that worn paths through the bush may be animal tracks rather than the Trail.

Permanent creeks at Biddlecombe Cascades, Crystal Falls, 17 Mile Falls and the Edith River usually have adequate water. As there is some distance between each of these creeks you will need to carry and drink water between them. **Carry** three litres of water between refill sites.

## Climate & weather

The Jatbula Trail lies within a region with distinct wet and dry seasons. Officially the dry season is from May to October and the wet season from November to April. However, October to December is a very hot and humid time known as ‘The Build-up’ where temperatures can exceed 45°C on the escarpment.

Most people complete the walk between May and August when it is cooler, however daytime temperatures can reach 40°C.

## Trail closure

The Trail is generally closed by seasonal conditions (high temperatures and



heavy rainfall) from October to late May. However wet season rainfall levels can greatly affect the opening dates.

*The Trail can also be closed at any time at the discretion of the Regional Chief Ranger.*

## Creek Crossings

The Trail is not opened until creek crossings are considered safe. However, if unseasonal rain does cause water levels to rise, do not cross deep, swift-flowing creeks.

## In an Emergency

The registration system ensures that Rangers know you are on the track. In the event of severe storms or other hazardous events, Park Rangers will evacuate walkers.

### Please Note

- **Camping is only permitted for one night at each site along the Jatbula Trail.**
- **Edith Falls is not a campsite on the Jatbula Trail. Separate camp fees apply.**

## Camping along the Jatbula Trail

All campsites along the Jatbula trail are near permanent water.

The tumbling waters of Biddlecombe Cascades reward walkers with soothing pools to sit in and cool off. The nearby campground is nice and flat, toilets are provided.

Crystal Creek above Crystal Falls is wide and deep. It’s a great place to swim and explore upstream. Toilets provided. Be aware the river crossing here can be challenging.

17 Mile Falls campground sits high above 17 Mile Creek. Toilets provided. Get to camp early so you have time to enjoy swimming and rockhopping up the creek.

Edith River Crossing marks the start of your journey along the riverine corridor of the Edith River. A good spot for a rest and a swim.

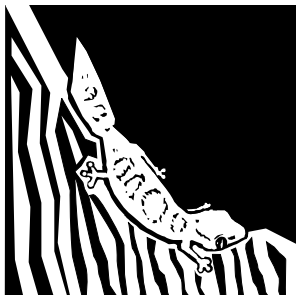
Sandy Camp Pool on the Edith River lives up to its name with the softest sandy campsite beside a nice big swimming hole. Take care when crossing the creek here, often very slippery. Toilet provided.

Overlooking Sweetwater Pool is the last campsite and swimming hole before you join the Leliyn loop walkers. Toilet provided.



As you can see on this Jawoyn calendar, Jawoyn people recognise five seasons. The best time for walking is the cold weather season of Mapapbarr.

# INFORMATION SHEET



# Nitmiluk National Park Jatbula Trail



**Your adventure on the 62 km Jatbula Trail will be highlighted by stunning scenery, waterfalls and Jawoyn rock art.**

The Trail follows the route travelled by generations of Jawoyn people between the Gorge and Leliyn. It is named for Peter Jatbula, a man who was instrumental in securing land rights for his people and who walked this route with his family. Members of Peter Jatbula’s family still live in the area today and continue to help look after country.

Today you can enjoy the Trail as a five or six day walk. It is **only marked in one direction**, from Katherine Gorge to Leliyn (Edith Falls). The Trail is best done in the cooler months between June and August. It is closed due to seasonal conditions from October to late May, however wet season rainfall can vary the opening date.

The climate, terrain and length of the Jatbula Trail make it challenging. You really need to be fit and well prepared to safely enjoy the walk.

## Before you visit

Bookings are essential and numbers are restricted so please book your walk well in advance. Contact the Nitmiluk Centre on (08) 8972 1886 between 8am and 4pm.

This Information Sheet can help you prepare for your walk and provides a basic map and distances.

## Registration and Fees

All walkers must register at the Nitmiluk Centre before starting

(between 8am and 1pm) and deregister by calling the Nitmiluk Information desk on (08) 8972 1886 upon completion (before 4pm). If you expect to arrive at Leliyn later than intended, report your delay using an Emergency Call Device (ECD) along the way.

A refundable deposit of \$50 per person (Max. \$200 for groups of 4 or more) will be collected along with your camp fees when you register at the Nitmiluk Centre, and will **only** be returned when you deregister. Failing to advise of your safe completion of the Trail can lead to costly search and rescue - please deregister as early you can.

*Payment by credit card is preferred, however if you pay cash you will need to return to the Gorge visitor centre to collect your deposit.*

Camping fees of \$3.30 per person per night apply and will be collected when you register at the Nitmiluk Centre - *cash or credit card accepted.*

## Ferry Service

The walk starts on the eastern side of 17 Mile Creek. A ferry ride across the river needs to be booked with Nitmiluk Tours and costs \$7.00 per person.

## Getting back to the start

Because the trail is one-way, you need to make arrangements for transport to the start of the walk at the Gorge; and from Leliyn back to the Gorge.

## The Jatbula experience

The Jatbula Trail is a unique cultural and wilderness experience. The Jawoyn people and Parks and Wildlife Commission are working

together to provide visitors with an opportunity to walk through ancient natural and cultural landscapes.

Please respect Jawoyn culture and the natural environment by minimising your impact as you walk along the Jatbula Trail.

## Please Remember

- Take all rubbish with you as bins are not provided
- All cultural items and wildlife are protected
- Nets, traps and firearms are not permitted
- Camp fires are not permitted. Fuel stoves only
- Avoid using soaps and detergent in or near waterways
- Bring your own toilet paper
- Bury all toilet waste at least 30 cm deep and well away from waterways
- Camp only in designated camping areas
- Respect Jawoyn people. Do not touch or vandalise rock art. Do not deface rocks or trees

## For your Safety

- Carry and drink plenty of water
- Wear a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent
- Wear suitable loose-fitting, light clothing
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots
- Avoid strenuous activity during the heat of the day
- Notify a reliable person of your planned departure and arrival times
- Carry a map, compass, pocket knife and matches or lighter
- Carry a first aid kit.



## Pre visit checklist

Before you start your walk, make sure you:

1. Book your place on the Jatbula Trail so Park Rangers can make sure there are no more than 15 people at the campsites. Call (08) 8972 1886. ☐
2. Arrange transport from Leliyn (Edith Falls) to Katherine or Katherine Gorge. ☐
3. Organise your ferry ride with Nitmiluk Tours across the Katherine River to the start of the trail. ☐
4. Have at least 3 litres of water per person. ☐
5. Arrive at the Nitmiluk Visitor Centre Information Desk before midday to start the walk before 1pm. Walkers cannot start after 1pm as there will not be enough time to safely reach the first campsite. ☐
6. Collect your Permit, register and pay your camping fees and deposit at the Information Desk in the Nitmiluk Centre. ☐
7. Have a fuel stove as fires are not permitted in the Park. ☐

# Nitmiluk National Park Jatbula Trail

**Track markers**

Follow the blue triangle arrows. If you have not seen one for a few minutes, go back and look for the last one.

**Checkpoints**

For your safety please register your passing in the checkpoint books. This can help Rangers locate you in an emergency.

**Permanent water**

You can fill up your drink bottles from creeks with permanent water, but you will need to carry and drink water between these creeks.

**LEGEND**

	Information		Emergency Call Device
	Ranger Station		Checkpoint
	Camping		Jawoyn Art
	No Camping		Toilets
	Public Phone		Watercourse
			Walking Track

