

GRAND OUTBACK

PHOTOGRAPHTOUR EWENBELL

Come and experience an epic photographic journey in the Australian Outback, travelling in style and comfort. Our private aircraft traverses the entire continent, stopping on the way in The Flinders Ranges, The Red Centre, Arnhem Land and East Kimberley.

This is a genuinely unique adventure designed by photographers, for photographers.

11 May 2023

27 June 2024

Maximum of 8 places

AirAdventure





The Outback

We'll show you some truly remarkable wilderness in this genuinely iconic landscape

The Plane

Specialised aircraft for Outback conditions, short runways and genuine comfort between stops.

The Photos

Professional photographer Ewen Bell guiding your journey, sharing his insight and skills.

The Experience

We know some great people in some great places. That's the most important ingredient.

The Wildlife

From wallabies to finches, this trip takes in some stunning opportunities to photograph wildlife.

The Stars

We've designed the itinerary and tuition around stunning opportunities to capture the stars at night.

ITINERARY

Ikara (Flinders Ranges)
Uluru-Kata Tjuta (Red Center)
Tjoritja (West Macdonnell Ranges)
East Kimberley (Bullo River)
West Arnhem Land (Mt Borradaile)

Day 1 / Melbourne

Hotel Lindrum MGallery by Sofitel

Check into your luxury city hotel from 2pm today. Meet Ewen and your fellow travellers over dinner and a chance to discuss the adventure ahead of you.

Days 2-3 / Ikara - Flinders Ranges

Prairie Hotel, Parachilna

We have a private transfer to Essendon Airport from the hotel for you, and then all aboard our private prop-jet bound for the sunshine above the clouds. Our first touch down is the Flinders Ranges where we schedule an introductory session on photography before we head out to begin the real work.

While on the ground in the Flinders Ranges you will be hosted by fourth generation pastoralist Ross Fargher. To say that Ross knows the region 'like the back of his hand' is an understatement. You will photograph a wide range of perspectives on this spectacular rugged landscape, from the colourful high country to the red sands and salt of the desert to the west. We'll even get out to explore Ross's 200,000 acre cattle station. Air Adventure has a long standing relationship with Ross and the Prairie Hotel and they really enjoy showing our guests around their region.

Expect to see plenty of roos and emus on this stage of the trip, plus we'll visit a colony of elusive and endangered Yellow-Footed Rock Wallaby. We'll also capture some of the ancient river gums that featured so gracefully in Heysen's paintings.

Accommodation for two nights is at the stylish Prairie Hotel, Australia's best outback hotel (Australian Geographic Magazine) – we would also say it is Australia's most photogenic hotel.

Day 4-6 / Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park

Desert Gardens Hotel

Following one last Ikara photo shoot to greet the sunrise, we return to our private aircraft for a flight out across the gibber plains to the tiny outpost of William Creek. This quirky outback town with a population of just 6 is our lunch stop and a chance to refuel the plane. We continue north until we hit the red sands of Uluru and Ayers Rock Airport (Yulara). This evening will be your first sunset shoot in this amazing national park.

The natural beauty of Uluru and Kata Tjuta is spectacular from many angles. The flora within the park is also worth a special mention, especially when set against the vivid red sandy soil. Ewen will be focusing not only on the landscape moments, but the flora and fauna as well. We also arrange a special permit for after hours access to photograph the night sky inside the park. Star trails and the Milky Way are our subjects.

Your accommodation at the Desert Gardens is beautifully appointed with everything you need to keep your batteries and brains charged. We have included ample time and space in the schedule to learn about image processing techniques, with Ewen's help.

ITINERARY

Included in our schedule at Uluru is a “doors off” helicopter flight for the ultimate angle on Uluru. Ewen will advise on techniques in preparation for the flight to help you get the most out of the experience.

Days 7-8 / Tjoritja - West Macdonnell Ranges

Glen Helen Lodge

We leave the Red Centre to journey deep into the desert landscape of Tjoritja, the West Macdonnell Ranges. After flying into Alice Springs we make the most of 4WD access to visit some of Ewen’s favourite locations. Spinifex and sandstone dominate the scenery, punctuated by remote gorges and seasonal rivers. Wildlife is concentrated around the limited water holes and wide open horizons give us long shadows at dawn and dusk.

Glen Helen Gorge itself is just one of the draw cards. The night sky is another feature and we plan to capture the wealth of stars above from a very special location far from anywhere. We’ll trade the comfort of dining at the lodge for a picnic dinner and a hot cup of tea, in exchange for solitude and tripods.

Our accommodation in Tjoritja is the Glen Helen Lodge, recently redeveloped and offering the most comfortable digs anywhere west of Alice Springs. Our last stop here will be an a remote Indigenous community to explore some of their artwork and culture.

Days 9-10 / Bullo River Station

Bullo River Station Guest House

Depart the West Macdonnells after with a fuel stop enroute before landing at Bullo River Station, literally 50m from the homestead. Bullo River was made famous by the novels of Sara Henderson. Bullo River is an authentic cattle station with all the trimmings including massive Boab trees, crocodiles, barramundi and prolific bird life.

The night sky at Bullo is famous for being clear and dry in the winter time, so we’ll venture out into the darkness to shoot stars and the Milky Way. Ewen will guide you through the finer details of capturing star trails, using the stunning Boab trees as inspiration for your compositions.

We virtually have half a million acres to ourselves and a dedicated team on the ground to help you enjoy it. Helicopter time is included here so we can photograph the tidal flats and sandstone gorges in style. It’s an experience you’ll never forget.

ITINERARY

Days 11-13 / Arnhem Land - Mt Borradaile

Davidson's Safari Camp

We touch down at Mt Borradaile's private airstrip and spend three nights in the Arnhem Land equivalent of a tented-camp. Here, you are staying within a registered "Aboriginal Sacred Site" of extreme significance. Borradaile is home to the world's richest body of rock art, along with many fascinating artefacts.

The abundance of both Indigenous art and Australian wildlife is astonishing. We'll spend quality time with both. Private cruises around the billabongs planned for sunrise and sunset will allow you to get close to birdlife, crocodiles and wallabies. We don't rush this experience, we take it slowly and give ourselves the best chance to capture some beautiful images. You will need a good telephoto lens to make the most of this part of the journey, and Ewen will be on hand to help you prepare for the wildlife shoots.

Day 14 / Darwin

Departure

Following a morning visit to 'The Rainbow Serpent', one of the most potent rock art sites at Mt Borradaile, it is time to depart back to Darwin. Expect to arrive in Darwin around midday so you can make plans for onward connections, or stay in Darwin for a few days, or plan an extension to visit Broome, the Kimberley Coast or the Tiwi Islands.







STARRY NIGHTS

Photographing the progression of stars across the night sky is about letting the camera capture something that only our imagination can see.

Star trails are one of the most deeply technical captures you can pursue. They are also one of the most difficult if only for the challenge of finding clear skies and suitable inspiration. This adventure makes all of these things possible.

Night photography requires a very sturdy tripod and the right lens choice, and sometimes a cable release depending on the camera you own. A long series of short images are captured on the camera and then stacked into a single frame that connects the dots.

This adventure will also give us opportunities to chase the Milky Way and time lapses of the sky at night. There's a lot to photograph up there, if you're in the right place to begin with.

Ewen has written several articles about the star trails, and the techniques are a regular feature of his conventional photo tours in the Outback.

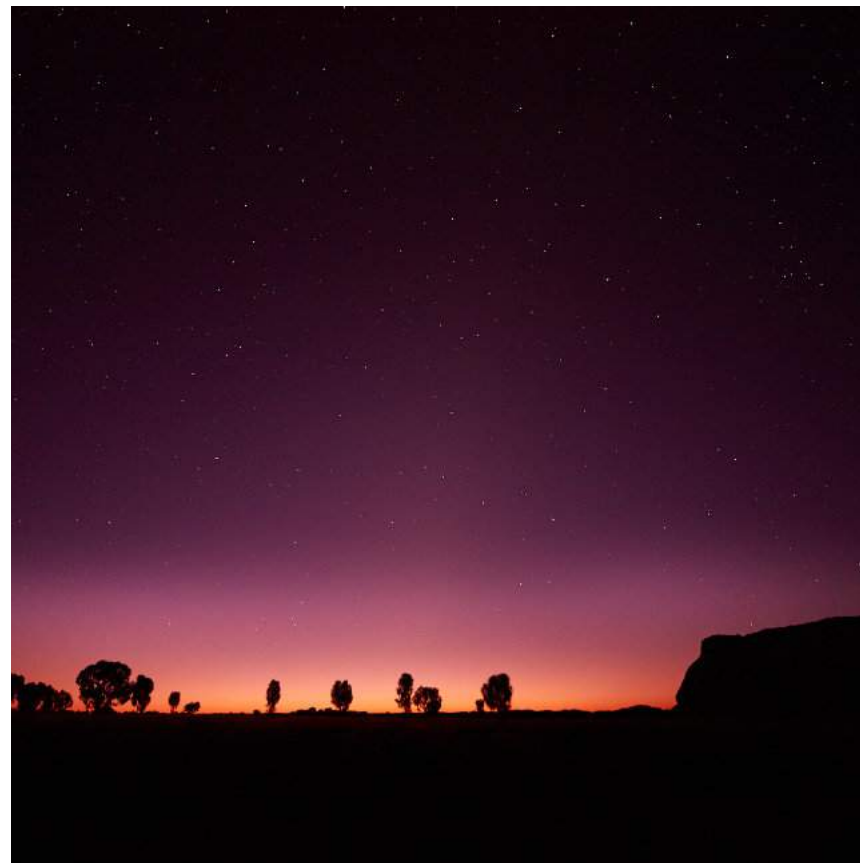
DESTINATION ULURU KATA TJUTA

The most iconic national park in Australia and a worthy highlight of any The Red Centre experience.

There's more than just "The Rock" to see in this national park, if you know how to look. Uluru and surrounds is an oasis of flora and fauna, an explosion of colour in the desert.

We get to see Uluru from every angle, beneath the stars and from the sky. We can also explore some of Uluru from the Indigenous perspective, through their artwork and conversation.

Ewen has spent an immense amount of time in this national park over the past decade. He says it's a place that has an energy you can feel. No wonder; this stunning massive monolith rising up from the sandy plains. There are details to enjoy here too beyond the rock itself, from seasonal blossoms to the textures of the land.















PHOTOGRAPHIC ESCORT

Meet Ewen Bell

For the duration of the journey your photographic instructor and escort will be Ewen Bell. His work is published all over the world in travel brochures, the travel media and photography magazines including National Geographic in the USA and Food & Travel in the UK. Ewen's depth of experience with leading tours is impressive, with over 25 journeys completed in recent years across Asia, Australia and Antarctica.

“There is no better way to see Australia. The combination of a powerful little aircraft and so many great people on the ground make this experience unlike any other. It's everything a photographer could ask for, and sometimes even more.”

It wouldn't be a great photography adventure without a great photographer. But don't take our word for it, visit his websites and see for yourself.

ewenbell.com



PILATUS PC-12

This prop-jet aircraft is a fast, reliable outback machine capable of landing on gravel and remote airfields where larger aircraft can't.

Travel is in the privately chartered Air Adventure Outback Jet, Pilatus PC-12. It's equipped with state-of-the-art avionics and is all weather rated with impressive safety features. The interior is spacious with custom leather seating, climate control and clear windows (every seat is the window seat) making in flight viewing a joy.

Is it a Jet?

Yes the aircraft is a prop-jet, meaning it has a jet turbine that drives a propeller shaft. The cabin is pressurised so we can cruise at altitudes around 29,000ft and still land on a dirt strip in the middle of the Outback.

How far can she fly?

If need be the Outback Jet can fly coast-to-coast from Wyndham to Whyalla, but for our private guests we like to keep the airtime down to approx 2hrs at a hop. Depending on the weight we are carrying we may also land for extra fuel, or just stop en route to stretch our legs and order a coffee.





AIR ADVENTURE AUSTRALIA

Luxury Outback tours by private aircraft

Air Adventure Australia was founded by Rod Dyer (1925-2008). Rod, a pastoralist and bush pilot of over 10,000 hours pioneered 'Ellenbrae' cattle station in the Kimberley back in the 1960s. It was the combination of Rod's knowledge and love of the outback and flying that led him to launch Air Adventure.

Since 1977, thousands of travellers have chosen Air Adventure to fly them to the Australia less-travelled. The company is guided by Rod's son, John Dyer who is also a pilot and very passionate about creating high quality travel experiences spanning the entirety of the Australian continent.

His team at Air Adventure share his enthusiasm and dedication to transform the way people experience remote Australia.

airadventure.com.au

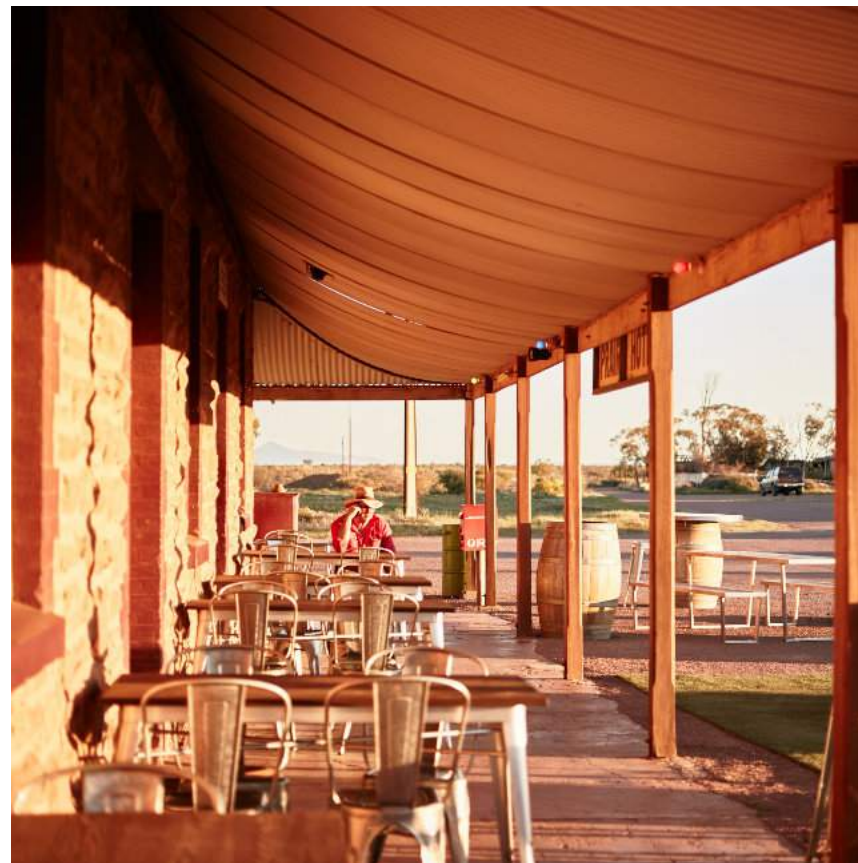
DESTINATION FLINDERS RANGES

A geological landscape that is an oasis for river gums and rock wallabies.

Vast salt lakes stretch to the west and the geological diversity of the Heysen Ranges to the east. In the middle is the tiny township of Parachilna and the elegant Prairie Hotel.

Our hosts are Jane and Ross Fargher, fourth generation graziers with a flare for excellent cuisine and good company. Most people who visit the Prairie have a 6 hour drive from Adelaide, but we'll be landing a little closer than that!

From Parachilna we'll explore the western gorges of the Flinders Ranges, and get up for some morning sunrises. Breakfast with the elusive Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies is high on the list.













PROFESSIONAL TUITION

Not only is this adventure designed to deliver exceptional photographic opportunities, but you get dedicated presentation sessions as well.

Ewen has been running photographic workshops and tours since 2005, and every year he works hard to make the next tour better than the last.

Every detail of the craft is open to discussion. Ewen's style is to emphasise the creative potential of photography without getting mired in the technical. He will push you to be in control of the camera, to make the images your own, but for the sake of creativity and expression.

These adventures are not only designed to help you learn to take better photos, but to go home with some incredible experiences. Ewen will be there every step of the way to offer support as you need it.



8 IS GREAT

Ewen Bell restricts all of his photographic tours to just 8 people. With good reason.

“I never want to run a photography tour with more than 8 people, let alone 12 or 16. Smaller groups mean less drama, more fun and are infinitely more rewarding. My first responsibility is to ensure every person on my tour gets plenty of my time and advice, plus to ensure we don’t ruin a lovely location by dragging a horde of photographers about. Small isn’t just good, it’s great!”

Air Adventure fits perfectly with Ewen’s ethos of genuinely small groups. The aircraft are small enough to land in remote locations, yet big enough to fit a photography tour.







ART & CREATIVITY

The camera is like a paintbrush, and in the hands of different people it will produce very different images.

Ewen Bell specialises in teaching people about the creative potential of photography, to go beyond the technical issues of a camera and start taking creative control. Expression is at the heart of great photography, sharing your perspective, your view, your experience. Ewen is also the author of the book "ReIMAGINE - changing your photography by changing your perspective"

A few basic principles underpin the art of travel photography. Go Slow. Get Closer. Look for the Light. Find out for yourself how much inspiration can flow from three very simple ideas.



CAMERA GEAR

Ewen will be able to discuss in detail what gear you need to bring to make the most of this adventure. The right choice of lenses and a decent laptop will get you through. .

There will be a very wide range of photographic challenges on this journey, from wildlife to wide angle landscapes. Star Trails and capturing the Milky Way are also a big feature of the tour design, so a sturdy tripod is essential for that.

Ewen is experienced with walking his guests through the technical side of photography, with a view to opening up the creative side.

Whatever gear you have, Ewen can help you get the most of it. He's been writing for photography magazines and reviewing cameras for nearly a decade now. We also suggest a few long conversations before the trip begins to ensure you have the right gear in your pack before taking off for the Outback.





DESTINATION THE WEST MACS

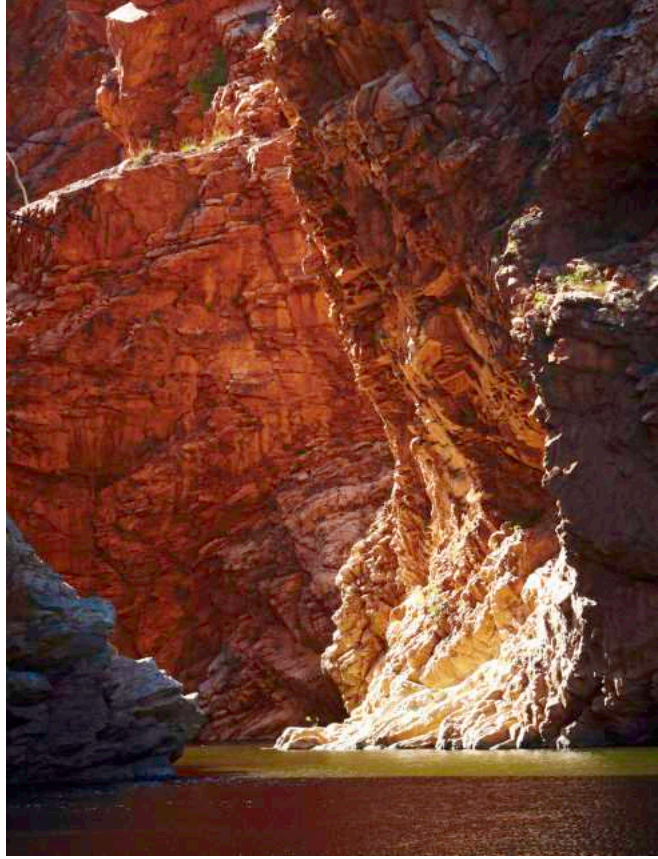
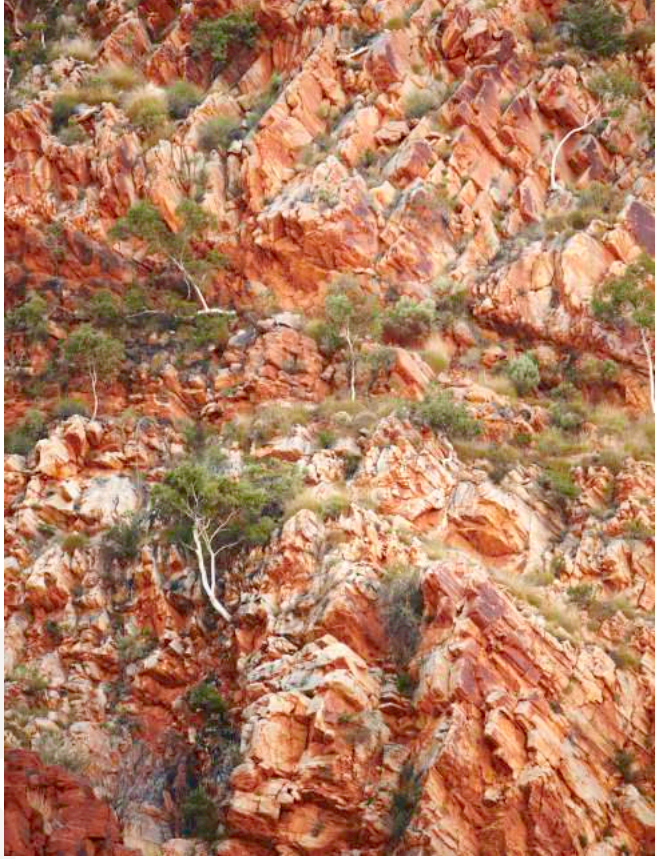
Ghost gums and dingos thriving in a semi-desert landscape.

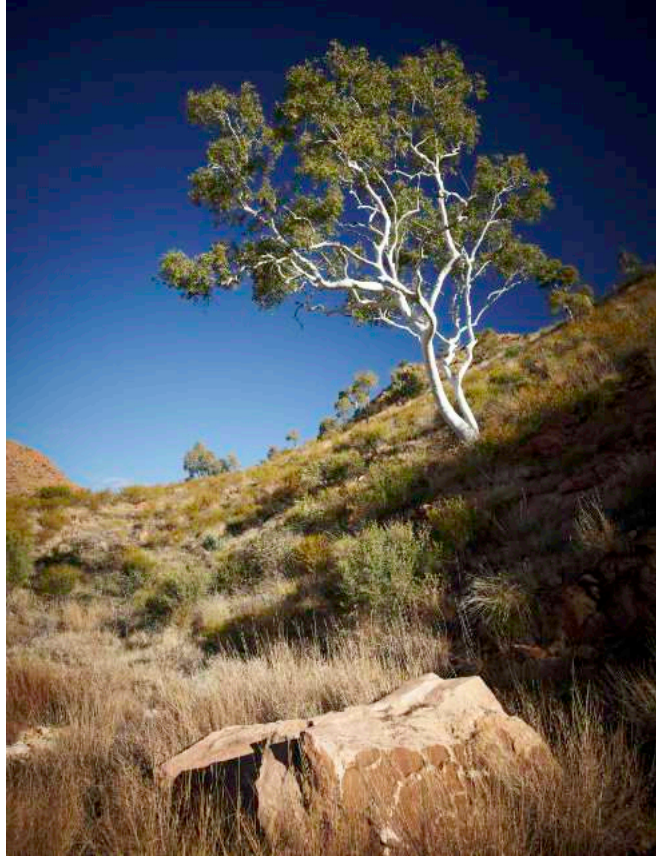
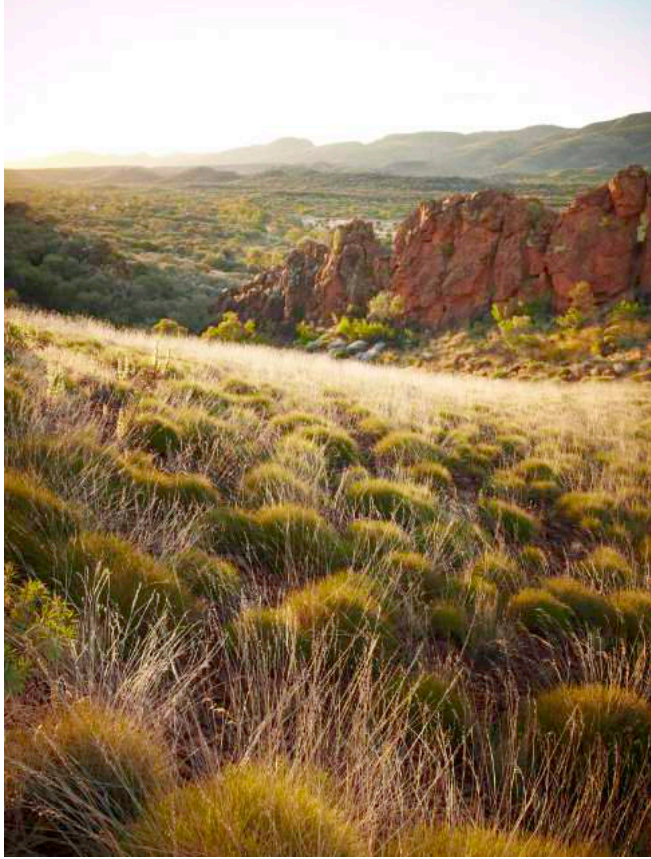
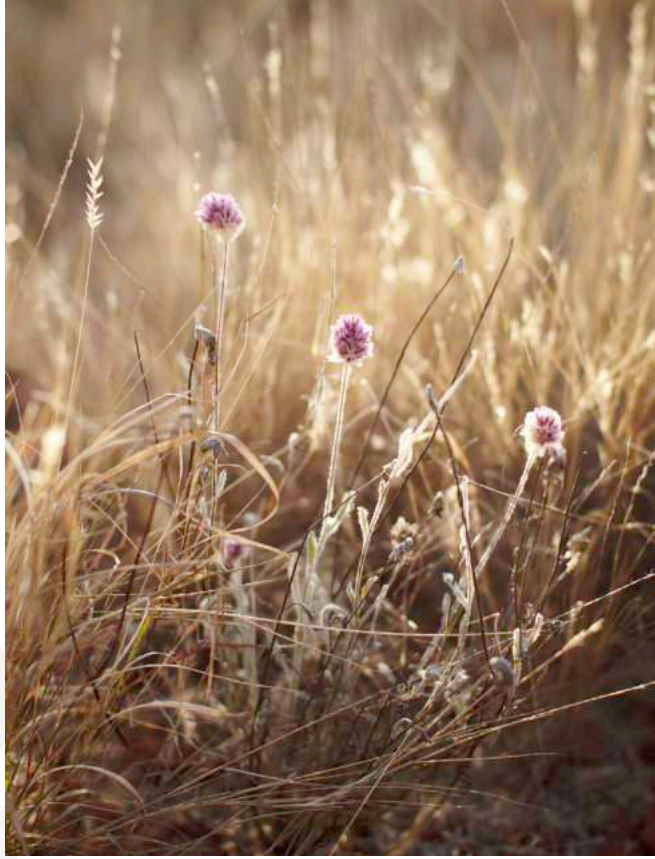
One of the hidden gems of the Australian Outback, the West Macdonnell Ranges (Tjoritja) is a gentle series of ridges that rise up from the desert plains. Rivers and water holes punctuate the landscape, with a handful of 4WD tracks and walking trails making it possible to travel further into the wilderness.

Our base for this section of the tour is the recently redeveloped Glen Helen Lodge, situated at a scenic bend of the Finke River where it carves a path through the sandstone. We have comfortable lodgings for our stay and a vast array of landscape moments to capture with the camera.

Ewen has travelled here several times for his magazine work and will be sharing a few of his secret locations for everyone to enjoy.









DOORS OFF

An immense amount of fun and a wonderful photographic experience.

Getting around the outback in our private prop-jet is great, but for the best photographic experience you need a helicopter with the doors off. We include two dedicated heli-shoots on this trip, and Ewen will be able to assist you with technical advice to prepare for these events.

Our first heli-work sessions will take place at Uluru, to give you a remarkable perspective on the rock and a birds eye view of it's incredible geology as it rises up from a flat desert landscape.

The second heli shoot will be at Bullo River, where the local pilots use the R44 helicopters with doors off. Everyone gets a window seat and everyone gets to enjoy the magnificent scenery of the tidal flats and sandstone ridges.



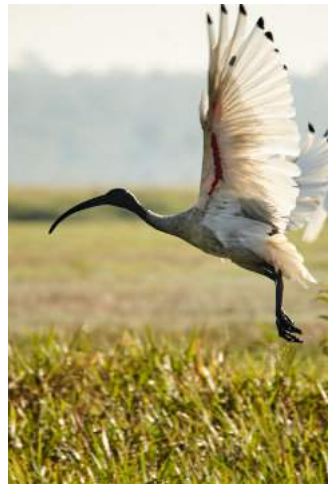
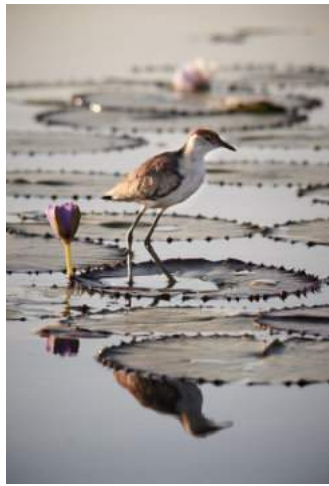
WILDLIFE

When we talk of wildlife in the Outback it's usually kangaroos and crocodiles but the serious diversity, and photographic challenges, are the birds.

The diversity of wildlife in the Outback is often overlooked, if you lack the right camera gear. Even at places such as Uluru there are treasures to photograph, and the confined billabongs at Bullo River Station and Mt Borradaile offer unique opportunities to see some hard to find species.

We hope to get photos of the Jabiru, White-Bellied Sea Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Rainbow Bee-Eater, Great Bowerbird, Star Finch, Gouldian Finch, Zebra Finch, Double-Bared Finch, Brolga, Jacana, Snake Bird, Fig Bird, Azure Kingfisher, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Salt-Water Crocodile, Agile Wallaby, Short-Footed Rock Wallaby, Pandanus Frog, Green Tree Frog, Grasshoppers and Green Ants.

A 600mm lens will get you close enough to enjoy the smallest of creatures, and an extension tube will allow you to adapt your telephoto to shoot macro as well. Ewen can tell you more about what to pack and why.



DESTINATION BULLO RIVER

Working cattle station and homestead covering 500,000 acres, or roughly 3 times the size of Singapore.

A landscape of sandstone and grasslands has been carved over time by gorges and hidden waterfalls and a variety of ecosystems for wildlife. Where the Victoria River meets the Bullo river this is one of Australia's most unique cattle stations, recently upgraded to offer a luxury homestead experience.

East of Kununurra, Bullo River Station operates in harmony with the land, balancing sustainable farming methods to achieve best-practice land management alongside conservation priorities. This is a genuine working cattle station that smooths out the rough edges with an excellent selection of WA wines.

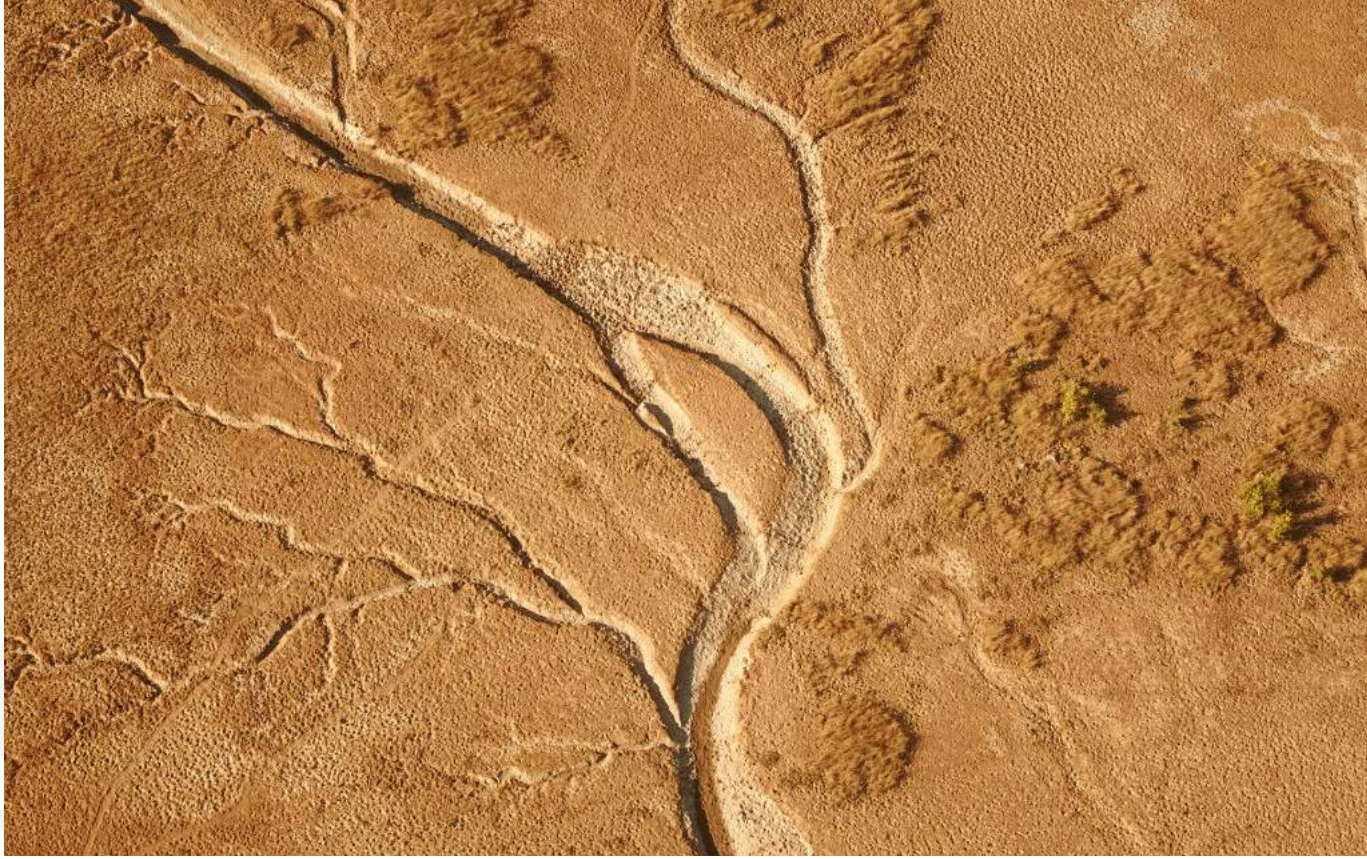
The owners are also passionate about the native flora and fauna, and encourage guests to make the most of the wildlife and boabs.













WHO TRAVELS WITH US

You just have to enjoy photography to love this trip.

Our photographic journeys appeal to both the young and old, the experienced and novice. Most tours are made up of people aged 25 to 65, and occasionally older or younger still. It doesn't matter what your skill levels are, you will enjoy sharing a creative and immersive experience with like minded people.

If you're a confident photographer who just wants to visit some amazing places, you'll love this trip. If you're an absolute beginner and want to be inspired to learn more about the craft, you'll be right at home.

Ewen offers personal guidance all through the journey, and will run special sessions every few days that explore the art of photography and current techniques.

THEIR WORDS

Liane Kemp
2019 Grand Outback

“

The 'main course' was the photography. I learned SO MUCH about my camera and about taking photos and Ewen was endlessly patient with my questions, some of which were pretty basic! He made time for everyone and there wasn't much he didn't know about any of the camera systems we were each using. He walked us through the techniques we would need for each day, including showing us images that he had taken on previous trips - a very high bar indeed! All photographers have their signature style and Ewen's is reflected in the images on his website. I love his style, but even if your style is different, there is still much to learn.

The other special feature of this tour was that Ewen made sure that we were pretty much always where 'the other people' weren't, even in Uluru, where we found ourselves shooting sunrises and stars on our own. The vast Australian landscape with its contrasts and extraordinary flora and fauna was the perfect canvass for a wonderful trip.

It was great to 'get off the grid' for two weeks and indulge a passion with a wonderful tutor and lovely human being. In fact it was quite jarring to re-engage with the people and the business of our connected world at the end, but as I process the images (the many thousands of them!!), each brings back lovely memories.

”



THEIR WORDS

Paul Steele
2018 Outback Adventure

“

Simply Amazing... I signed up for this trip with Ewen to Outback Australia to reignite my passion for photography, which it achieved. But it did so much more. I made new friends, increased my photography skills, and got the chance to see some parts of this magnificent country from a new perspective.

Ewen not only helps you with your technical skills, he curates an experience where you are overwhelmed with opportunities to take amazing pictures. The number of shoots and experiences that Ewen packed into one week was breathtaking. We could opt in for as little or as much as we liked, and as I opted in for everything I ended up a little sleep deprived, but it was worth it. Beyond all this, Ewen encouraged me with his ability to see the world from a unique perspective. He inspires you to chase the light in new and bold ways.

If you have a interest in photography, want to see this magnificent country in a unique and amazing way, and need an adventure - sign up for the next Outback Photo Safari. Highly recommended!

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THEIR WORDS

Glenda & Ian Wilks
2017 Outback Adventure

“

Outback Australia has always been on our plans for a photography tour; the option to add the Kimberley region and some instruction from a professional photographer like Ewen Bell, was the absolute deciding factor. What an opportunity! So Glenda and I signed up and waited for the date to roll over in the calendar. Our travel companions were a great mix of people, it was fantastic to have such a terrific crew to spend a week with in the Outback.

Our “Outback Jet” was simply amazing, capable of taking off and landing almost anywhere. This aircraft travels at almost blistering speeds of around 550 kmph at anywhere up to 35,000 feet. No sitting around in the air like a flying “Kombi Wagon” - this is state of the art, get up and go jet prop at its very best!

The real benefit of having Ewen as your host goes far beyond photography itself. Ewen’s relationships with the people that you engage with at every stop is absolutely amazing. The quality of the outback characters, the staff who host your stays, the folk who attend the tables and look after your culinary delights, find you a coffee in a tin shed or indeed a decent wine in a desert setting - this really is an experience with a level of service that went way beyond our expectation.

I will not give away too much detail as this trip had so many wonderful “surprises” that you really have to experience for yourself. All we can add is that we enjoyed the whole experience, especially the people that we met along the way. Our photography has really gone to another level. Thanks to all the people who made this trip possible, our fellow travelers, Ewen and his incredible entourage of outback people.

”



THEIR WORDS

Michael Walker
2015 Grand Outback

“

Ewen Bell; a great photographer, tutor and mentor. On a recent photographic tour Ewen demonstrated an extensive knowledge of the photographic medium; particularly as an art form.

He provided excellent tutoring to all group members keeping the technical to a simple, understandable level whilst encouraging everyone to maximise their capabilities to take great, artistic photos. We certainly finished the trip with hundreds of great shots, wonderful memories and a plethora of newly acquired photographic skills and techniques which we have subsequently put to good use.

We thank Ewen for a wonderful photographic experience, his mentoring and friendship and would highly recommend anyone interested in touring with Ewen to; Go For It!

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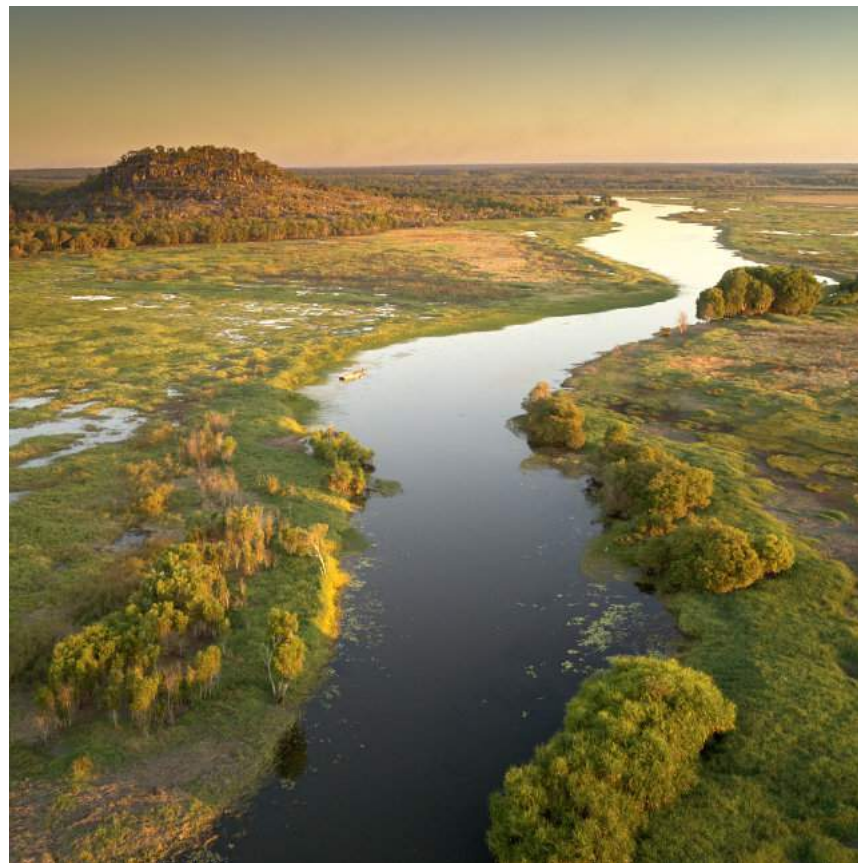
DESTINATION ARNHEM LAND

Wetlands wildlife and some of the most impressive Indigenous rock art you'll ever see.

We finish the journey with a generous offering of rock art and wetlands wildlife. Mount Borradaile is surrounded by billabongs where birds, wallabies and crocodiles cling to during the dry season. Finches flock through the tall grasses, kingfishers amongst the paperbark forests, and jacana on the water lilies.

The landscape here is dotted with sacred sites, some easy to access and some more demanding. Travelling by boat, jeep and foot we explore tens of thousands of years of unbroken culture painted on the sandstone.

The camp itself offers a small number of open air cabins, similar to a tented-camp but with private facilities and an excellent chef serving quality meals at lunch and dinner.

















HOW TO BOOK

There are only 8 places for this trip and it runs only once a year. Get in quick.

11 May 2023
27 June 2024

From \$23,978pp

Simply visit the website for Air Adventure Australia and complete the online booking form to reserve a place, or fill out the printed booking form and mail it to Air Adventure Australia. Once payment of the deposit has been received your place on the trip is confirmed.

Fell free to email Ewen directly if you have any questions, or contact the office for Air Adventure Australia.

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AirAdventure