Visitor Safety in Kakadu National Park

There are a number of safety-related risks when traveling in Kakadu National Park: crocodiles, disease-carrying insects, large feral animals, dehydration, and what to do if a member of your group gets injured or lost.

Swimming in the plunge pools and gorge areas

Some visitors choose to swim (at their own risk) in selected natural plunge pools and gorge areas such as Gubara, Maguk, Jim Jim Falls, Gunlom, Jarrangbarnmi (Koolpin Gorge and in creeks on the plateau above Twin Falls and Gunlom. These areas are surveyed for estuarine crocodiles prior to opening each dry season. There is some risk that estuarine crocodiles may move into gorges and plunge pools during the dry season.

Please read the crocodile warning signs in each plunge pool and gorge area and consider their information carefully.

Disease-carrying insects

Insects such as mosquitoes can carry and transmit very debilitating viruses—the Ross River virus is an example—so always cover up and if necessary use repellent.

Large feral animals

Large animals such as buffaloes and pigs can be dangerous. If you see them, keep at a safe distance and do not to approach them.

Dehydration

Throughout the year, daytime temperatures in Kakadu are consistently warm to hot. September to December is extremely hot and humid.
Prevention
Make sure you are suitably dressed in loose-fitting clothing that allows adequate ventilation but provides protection against sunburn.

Your must have plenty of drinking water with you wherever you go. In a climate such as Kakadu's, most people need between four and eight litres of water a day. A minimum of two litres per person should be carried for short walks.

Dehydration symptoms
Among the symptoms of dehydration are feeling thirsty, headache, dizziness and nausea. If the symptoms continue, seizures, loss of consciousness and even death can be the result. Children are at particular risk.

First aid
- Lay the person in a cool, shaded area.
- Give them water gradually.
- If the person cannot keep the water down or does not recover quickly, seek medical assistance without delay.

Lost or injured group members
If a member of your group becomes lost or injured it is important to stay calm and pay attention to your own safety.

- If a member of your group becomes lost in an isolated area, gather together the rest of your group. Search the immediate area but do not get involved in a major search by yourself; this could lead to other members of your group becoming lost. Collect your group and walk out. Contact a ranger or make sure that a message is delivered to staff at park headquarters. Give the rangers or police detailed information about the person's last known location.

- If a member of your group becomes injured in an isolated area try, if possible, to leave at least two responsible group members with the injured person while you and the others seek help. If the injured person can walk, and the return route is straightforward, one or two people should remain behind to help the injured person walk out slowly while you and the others go for help. Don't take short cuts. Give the rangers or police detailed information about the injured person.

Reducing the risk of wildfires
Please help prevent wildfires. Make sure your cigarette butts and matches are out and put them in rubbish bins, not on the ground. Use the fireplaces provided
and, especially where no fireplace facilities are provided, ensure that you clear the area around your campfire. Always put your fire out before you leave.

**Flash Flooding**

Frolicking in the rock pools above and below the waterfalls can be a highlight on a trip to Kakadu for many visitors. However, there is potential hazard here during the months of October to April. Flash flooding can happen suddenly and without warning in the gorges, creeks and streams in the stone country. It is possible for a flash flood to be generated by a heavy rainstorm that occurred many kilometres upstream and more than a day earlier.

Please be aware of possible sudden rises in the levels of waterways, which can quickly cut off the return route from the top of waterfalls such as Gunlom and Jim Jim Falls. Fast flowing water produced by a flash flood can be deceptively strong, causing strong currents when crossing waterways and dangerous swimming conditions.

When walking on trails or entering/swimming in rock pools above and below the waterfalls during these months, watch for rising water levels and flood debris. Be mindful of the possible dangers of sudden and unexpected flooding.