

LAND OF The

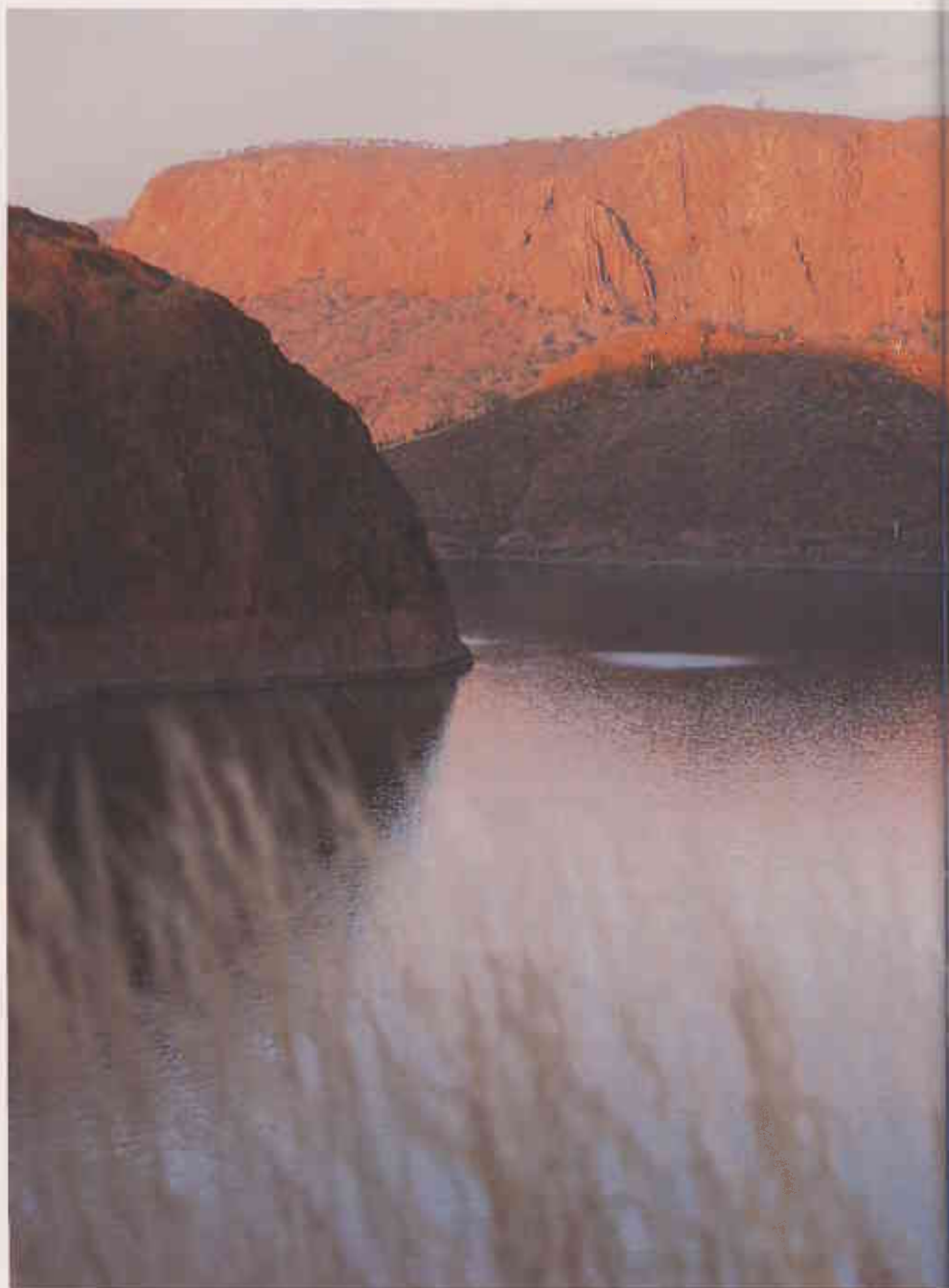
Story and photos by
Cliff Winfield



No other photographer has been as closely associated with LANDSCOPE as Cliff Winfield, seen below at Geikie Gorge. He has taken photographs for LANDSCOPE from the very first issue. We asked Cliff to attempt the difficult task of choosing just nine pictures from his extensive collection of the Kimberley region, and to write about what they mean to him.

Azure sea and sandstone at Roebuck Bay, Broome (above).▲

Human engineering has created artificial vistas like Lake Argyle - our contribution to the natural gallery (right).▶



Big Water





IT'S almost 20 years since I took the all-night flight from Perth. The old twin-prop plane banked as it circled and began the descent over Cable Beach to land at Broome at sunrise. I was going to work in the north, my first time in a plane, my first time north of Kalbarri or east of Northam.

Looking out of the scratched oval window I remember being struck numb by the outrageous beauty of the turquoise sea meeting an endless white band of sand. I was headed further north, and an hour or so later the patterned mud and tidal flats around Derby caught my eye, and whetted my appetite for photography.

During my few years there I managed to get out into the hinterland or to the coast on weekends, but being without a four-wheel-drive I was only able to explore the more accessible areas. I promised myself that one day I would return at my leisure.

That opportunity arose in 1986. I purchased the right equipment and went back with three months to explore, discover, interpret and photograph the Kimberley. After several thousand kilometres of travel on the ground, over water and in the air, I came home with hundreds of photographs, each one a personal souvenir.

Photography, when it is freed from the assignment, recording or documentary mode, moves from informative to interpretive, from contrived to creative. It attempts to suggest rather than tell.

The Australian landscape, and especially the Kimberley, is like a giant, colourful canvas or sculpture. The skill



in photographing it is in recognising the essential features, then using the viewfinder to select which element to accentuate. I can't help feeling that my pictures are more notable for what they leave out than what fills the frame.

The Kimberley has so many elements that cropping them into an essential theme is nearly impossible. Is it the vastness, the contrast of green foliage on red rock, the richness of the bird life or the friendly parochiality of the people?

I began to see the elements of the land, and came to appreciate that both the natural and human features of the Kimberley had been shaped by water.

The roaring rivers, tidal rips, seemingly endless beaches and glassy lakes are an integral part of the landscape. So is the effect of the water on the life of the people who live there. Day-to-day activities at the ports, the beaches and

resorts, and the lives of pearlers, fishermen and tourists, are dominated by the huge tides.

The Aboriginal people of the Kimberley relied heavily on the rivers, estuaries and coast as fishing grounds. Availability of water determined the location and viability of cattle stations, and the damming of big rivers enabled the establishment of irrigation projects. And the wet season during the monsoon touches everybody's daily life.

Being asked to put together a folio of my favourite photographs for *LANDSCOPE* created a dilemma. I have hundreds of favourite pictures and selecting a dozen or so is almost impossible!

The images I have selected convey my philosophy of photography through the visual interpretation of the Kimberley...the land of the big water.



Opposite page:

█ Pentecost River on the Gibb River Road (far left). The presence of water through the eons has etched the ranges, providing amazing backdrops to the watercourses.

█ Mangroves and mud at Mission Beach, Kalumburu. The transition zone from sea to land is marked by a varied intertidal zone that provides contrasts of texture and colour (lower far left).

This page:

█ From the air, the earth is like a huge canvas. The skill of the interpretive photographer is in framing the canvas into a series of portraits of nature, such as this shot of Cape Londonderry (top left).

█ Charnley River (top right) and the Ord River (left). The land is so vast that you cannot fully appreciate the presence of the big rivers until you rise above them in an aircraft.

█ The view from Five Rivers Lookout, Wyndham (below). The tidal portions of these rivers are prime crocodile habitat.



LANDSCOPE

VOLUME FIVE No. 4 - WINTER EDITION 1990



Each weekend, hundreds of novice scuba divers take the plunge. Get the most out of your diving on page 10.



How do birds fly? How do some reach speeds of over 80 kilometres per hour? Learn about avian aerodynamics on page 28.



A very different landscape replaces what was once a thriving timber industry. Rediscover Cannington in the 1850s. See page 42.



Western Australia grows some rare and stunning native spider orchids. Their alluring nature will delight the reader on page 34.



Seaweed! Delicate and beautiful, or slimy and smelly? Decide for yourself on page 20.

FEATURES

TAKING THE PLUNGE
GREG POBAR AND TANYIA MAXTED 10

NUMBAT DAWN
TONY FRIEND 15

SEAWEED - THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY?
JOHN HUISMAN 20

LIGHTNING STRIKE
ROGER UNDERWOOD 23

TO FLY LIKE A BIRD
JIM LANE 28

ALLURING ORCHIDS
ANDREW BROWN 34

HAVEN IN THE HEART
BARRY WILSON 37

TAKING WOOD TO WATER
OTTO PRAUSE 42

LAND OF THE BIG WATER
CLIFF WINFIELD 46

CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK
JEN McCOMB & IAN BENNETT 50

REGULARS

IN PERSPECTIVE 4

BUSH TELEGRAPH 6

ENDANGERED
THE GROUND PARROT 27

URBAN ANTICS 54

COVER

Back in the early 1970s, Western Australia proclaimed the numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*) as its State emblem which may have saved its life. With the help of scientists and new techniques, these delightful creatures are now fighting back against extinction. See page 15.

Illustrated by Martin Thompson.



Managing Editor: Ron Kawallik

Editors: Carolyn Thomson/Ray Bailey

Designers: Robyn Mundy/Steve Murnane

Production: Karen Addison

Advertising: ☎ (09) 389 8644 Fax (09) 389 8296

Illustrations: 'To Fly Like A Bird', 'Lightning Strike' - Ian Dickinson
'Chip Off The Old Block' - Yeon Hee Kim

Colour Separation by Prepress

Printed in Western Australia by Kaleidoscope

© ISSN 0815-4465 All material copyright. No part of the publication may be reproduced without the consent of the publishers.



Published by Dr S Shea, Executive Director,
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
50 Hayman Road, Como, Western Australia 6152.