

## ABORIGINAL BOAT TOUR AT GEIKIE GORGE

A new boat tour focusing on traditional Aboriginal culture began at Geikie Gorge National Park in July.

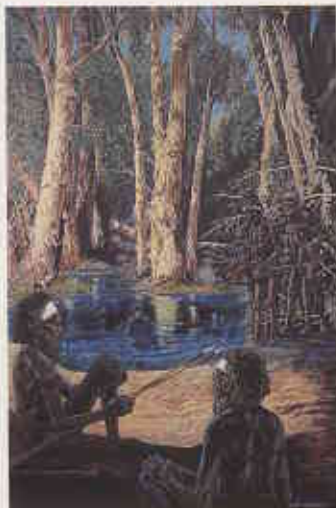
The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and the DarlNgunaya Aboriginal Corporation, representing the traditional owners of Geikie Gorge, are jointly operating half-day and full-day tours for up to 12 people.

The new tour provides visitors with an Aboriginal perspective of the Park and its plants and animals. It also imparts something of the rich cultural knowledge of the Bunuba people, whose traditional country includes lands now managed as Geikie Gorge, Windjana Gorge and Tunnel Creek National Parks.

When the new *Miss Geikie II* was commissioned in 1992 the old vessel, although quite serviceable, remained idle. It is well suited to the enclosed waters of the Fitzroy river, and is ideal for a leisurely journey up the river, stopping for tea and damper and calling at points of interest along the way.

In a co-operative venture with CALM, two Bunuba guides have been contracted to accompany visitors and deal with all aspects of the operation. They are assisted by Kimberley tour operator Sam Lovell, who is working with CALM to encourage Aboriginal involvement in tourism on CALM-managed lands.

DarlNgunaya Aboriginal Corporation currently owns and operates DarlNgunaya Backpackers, a hostel offering budget accommodation at the historic Fitzroy Crossing Post Office. The post office was recently restored by the Corporation. The group is expanding its involvement in



Kimberley tourism by linking the accommodation side of their operation with the new Geikie Gorge boat tour, and other tours in the region.

The DarlNgunaya guides spent four months with the rangers at Geikie Gorge planning and preparing the new tour and assisting with the operation of CALM's existing boat tour. They then underwent training on small

craft handling, and acquired Coxswain's Certificates, qualifying them to operate the boat on the Fitzroy River.

The project is giving Bunuba people opportunities to develop and control tourism-based enterprises in co-operation with CALM, while sharing their heritage with visitors keen to learn more about the Aboriginal history of the Kimberley.

*Top: Geikie Gorge  
Photo - Tony Tapper*

*Two of the paintings to be used  
in the new Geikie Gorge visitor  
centre.*

*Paintings - Neil Carter*



# LANDSCOPE

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Wildfires are synonymous with Western Australian summers, but what can be done to lessen the threat to life and property? Lachlan McCaw discusses the problem on page 49.



Daisies belong to the Asteraceae family, one of the world's largest families of flowering plants. Suzanne Curry presents some of them in 'Delightful Daisies' on page 41.



Aborigines have eked out a living in the harsh Western Desert region for thousands of years. Their intimate knowledge of the desert is helping scientists learn more about its plants and animals. See 'Digging Sticks and Desert Dwellers' on page 10.



'Rainforests and Bats', on page 34, tells the story of the recent LANDSCOPE Expedition to the Mitchell Plateau.



Can images from space help locate desert mammals? See 'From Buckshot to Breakaways' on page 23.

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## COVER

Cape Barren geese live on the islands and rocks of the Archipelago of Recherche. A few years ago their numbers appeared very low and their survival was in doubt. However, a recent survey of the islands has brought good news with a marked increase in the bird's population.

The illustration is by Philippa Nikulinsky.



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