

## Teachers' Guide

### Visiting the Carnarvon Gorge section of Carnarvon National Park



We hope these guidelines help you plan a successful excursion and we look forward to seeing you at Carnarvon Gorge.

#### Contact us for resources

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service visitor management staff can provide some resources that may assist you with planning your visit. We can send you copies of the Park Guide and fauna and flora lists (you will need to copy these for your students) and recommend some other resources. Contact details below.

Rangers at Carnarvon Gorge may be able to assist you with enquiries about park conditions or other information on activities that may be suitable for your excursion. Contact details below.

#### Things to do

Carnarvon National Park exists to protect and preserve a unique landscape and its astonishing wealth of natural and cultural values. It is essential that field excursions at Carnarvon Gorge are designed to protect, not damage, the park's special places.

Activities such as collecting material or disturbing plants and animals in any way are not suitable for park excursions.

Your excursion may be a student's first visit to a national park. This is a great opportunity to encourage an interest in, and a caring attitude for, these protected areas that belong to us all.

Suggested activities for your visit include:

- Bush-walking.
- Wildlife watching and spotlighting.
- Supervised swimming at the Rock Pool.
- Art, photography, bush poetry and nature journals.
- Remote camping, bush navigation and survival skills.

Suggested education topics include:

- Discovering how and why the gorge sustains a great diversity of ecosystems (e.g. riparian, rainforest and open eucalypt).
- Aboriginal and European cultural heritage and history at Carnarvon Gorge.
- Geology/geomorphology (e.g. riparian, rainforest and open eucalypt).
- Natural systems and our dependence on them for essential life requirements (e.g. air, water, energy cycles).
- Visitor impacts and how these can be minimised in national parks (e.g. minimal-impact bushwalking principles).

## Camping at the Gorge

Takarakka Bush Resort, a private campground located 4km from the visitor area, caters for school groups of all sizes. Ph. (07) 4984 4535 or visit [www.takarakka.com.au](http://www.takarakka.com.au).

Within the national park, Big Bend (a bush camping site that is a 19.6km return walk from the visitor area), is very popular in the peak season. A maximum of ten (10) people per night can camp here and prior bookings are essential.

The Carnarvon Great Walk, an 86km circuit walk, links the Carnarvon Gorge and Mount Moffatt sections of Carnarvon National Park. Camping permits are required for the Great Walk. The maximum group size for campers at each designated camp site is six people. Please note that the remote sections of the Carnarvon Great Walk are closed from November to February.

For all national park camping bookings go to: [www.qld.gov.au/camping](http://www.qld.gov.au/camping)

## Facilities at Carnarvon Gorge

### Gorge visitor area

Parking for buses is provided in the turn-around loop adjacent to the Carnarvon Gorge visitor area.

Toilets, picnic tables and free gas barbeques are provided in the visitor area. Taps with water are available, however, all water needs to be treated before consumption — so ideally make sure your students bring water bottles with adequate water for your day's activities. A public phone is located outside the visitor centre.

### Carnarvon Gorge visitor centre

The visitor centre is open from 8am to 4pm, seven days a week. Educational resources include interactive and informative displays, a relief model of the gorge topography and a reference library.

Groups should be split up so that no more than ten students are in the visitor centre at any one time. Try to spread these visits out over the duration of your stay. Rangers may not always be in attendance at the visitor centre.

## Supervising your group

Please remember that rangers are not responsible for managing your group. Students will respond best to your directions. Rangers and other visitors expect adequate supervision of students at all times.

## Caring for your group

Natural areas can present dangers for the unwary and inexperienced visitor. There is no reliable mobile phone coverage within Carnarvon Gorge. Satellite phones can be used to contact Triple Zero (000) in a medical emergency. Remember emergency medical assistance is a minimum of two hours away by road.

### First aid

Ensure that at least one adult in each group holds a current first aid certificate and carries a well-stocked first-aid kit when bush walking. The most common injury in the gorge is strained ankles and knees. Keep a number of broad elastic bandages and ice packs on hand back at your campsite.

### Medication

Know your school's policy on holding and administering medication. A parent/guardian responsible for treatment and medication should accompany children with chronic medical conditions.

### Water

Always ensure each individual carries plenty of drinking water on walks. Treated water is not available on the walking tracks and creek water is not suitable for drinking. Remember that salty foods, sweets, soft drinks and cordials can dehydrate the body.

### Weather

Winter months at Carnarvon are generally dry, with mild daytime temperatures and cold nights (down to 0°C). Ensure your group has sufficient warm clothing and bedding.

Expect rain and storms in spring and summer. Maximum temperatures can soar above 40°C and bush-walking in these conditions is not recommended. Creeks can rise rapidly during summer storms, cutting access in the park to motor vehicles.

## Caring for Carnarvon

- Do not use soap or detergent in any of the creeks.
- Have your group adopt the 'take only photos, leave only foot prints' philosophy. Rubbish bins are not provided on park nor is rubbish collected. The most common rubbish collected by rangers includes small fruit stickers, lolly wrappers and popper straw wraps. Even so-called bio-degradable items such as fruit and vegetable scraps (e.g. orange peel) can take many years to break down and can encourage aggressive behaviour in the area's wildlife. Seeds may also germinate.
- Ensure students do not feed or chase wildlife, as this is prohibited in national parks.
- The Rock Pool is the only designated swimming area within the park.

## On the walking tracks

- Wear comfortable clothes and sturdy shoes with good grip.
- We request that you split larger groups into a manageable size. **Please ensure your group/s have no more than 15 people at any time on the main walking track or at the sites.** The sites are fragile areas that are easily damaged by large groups. Splitting your group also provides students and other visitors with a better experience.
- Keep group members together and stay on the designated walking tracks.
- Ensure the planned walk is within the physical capabilities of your group.

- Abide by restricted access area signs. Always keep your group behind railings and on the boardwalks. This will help protect the natural and cultural features you have come to learn about.
- Graffiti is not just 'leaving your mark', it's vandalising the park. **Scratching names in trees, or drawing and painting on the sandstone is illegal and penalties apply.** Please do not destroy the irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage you have come to learn about. You are responsible for supervising the members of your group.
- Creeks can rise rapidly during summer storms. Do not attempt to cross the creek if you think it is unsafe.
- Rock climbing is not permitted anywhere within the park.

## Useful contacts and other information

### Park alerts

Visit [www.npsr.qld.gov.au/park-alerts](http://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/park-alerts) for up-to-date information on park access and closures.

### Weather

Visit the Bureau of Meteorology [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) for weather conditions and forecasts.

### Road conditions

Visit [www.131940.qld.gov.au](http://www.131940.qld.gov.au) or phone 13 19 40.

### QPWS visitor management staff

P: (07) 4529 8310

QPWSWestSWR.Corro@npsr.qld.gov.au

### QPWS Carnarvon Gorge rangers

P: (07) 4984 4505

Carnarvon Gorge section

Carnarvon National Park

via Rolleston, Qld 4702

### Park information

[www.npsr.qld.gov.au/parks/carnarvon-gorge](http://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/parks/carnarvon-gorge)



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