

Depot Creek with the DBC: 10-12 February 2017

Three of us, myself, Ken and Fergal, left Darwin late Friday and drove to Emerald Springs where we had a pleasant evening. Rooms were basic but clean and not expensive (\$65 for a single or double), meals reasonably priced, large but not overlarge portions – and tasty.

Fokker, Thongs (I was asked not to use real names so I've used Hash House Harrier nicknames) and Felicity left Darwin very early the next morning and met us at Emerald Springs just past 8:30 am. We drove back to the turn off and headed in. As we had two good 4WDs and there were some very fresh tyre tracks ahead of us, we simply drove on to the turn off to the first camp site, then to the top of the hill, 4.0 km from the highway. Our camp was only 50m from the cars. Given all the rain that there had been and all the water on the track, we did better than I'd expected.

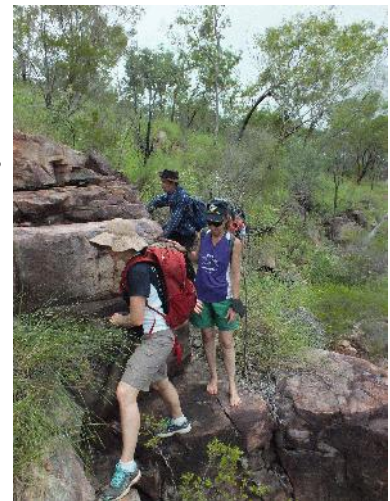


Not as boggy as it looks. The track was actually quite firm.



Campsite next to our pool. The big group fly is in the background.

We set up the tents plus a big fly for us all and a smaller one for the fire. Then headed off downstream with day packs. We eventually came to a small waterfall below which was a mass of people – the other group that had driven in. We waved, and continued downstream to another waterfall where we had lunch.



Walking down the gorge was a bit tricky in places but not so hard that everyone needed shoes.



Swim stop.



Lunch by the falls.

I thought it might be possible to climb up below the falls and get a photo looking back. It worked. I should, however, have said something before the climb because once up, I felt it

was too hard to drop back down. It was impossible to shout over the waterfall so I simply kept going. Eventually I got to within sight of the end of the gorge – first time I'd done that in something like 30 years.



The three photos at left were all taken near the bottom of the gorge.

I turned back from where I could go no further in the gorge. I'd had to stay up in several places as the gorge is impassable with wall to wall water in several spots. I thought I might intersect the vehicle track so I climbed up to a clear area. No sign of the track but it was flat and easy so I set off roughly parallel to the gorge. A number of side creeks come in via deep side gorges. I'd just come up the first of these when I met the others on their way back to camp.

We hit a track just near where the other group had camped. Went in and had a chat. Fokker knew one of them from a Wednesday cycling group. The track snakes around so we continued cross country and eventually made it back to camp. Timed well, but not well enough. The rain started about ten minutes before we arrived so we were all pretty wet. Back at camp, our gear was dry so it didn't matter.

Fergal kept an eye on the water level in the creek, slowly rising but no threat.

Back at camp we sat under the big fly, snacked and chatted. We had dry firewood under the fly and another small tarp over the fireplace so I had no trouble starting a fire for dinner. Fokker & Ken had brought a bit of liquid refreshment – more than enough to go around. One course followed another with more conversation before we all headed off to bed just past 9 pm. By this time it had stopped raining. No longer worried about flooding, we slept well.



The rain didn't matter to the fire when it had its own shelter.



Relaxing under the fly while it was raining.



No more rain so we moved outside.

There was no rain overnight. We had a leisurely start in the morning, drove back to the road and headed north, stopping at Adelaide River where some of us had lunch, then home. A good weekend.

Grid ref, Australia 66 datum

Campsite - 749892

Lunch stop - 737885

Furthest I got - 730885

View to the end of the gorge - 729886