

Kevin's Wilderness Journeys

KEVIN'S WALK ON THE WILDSIDE



ISSUE 9: NOVEMBER 2004

Welcome to the latest issue of 'Kevin's Walk on the Wildside,' an ezine with a focus on wilderness in Australia, but also areas throughout the world. It's a focus not so much on conservation (though certainly I whole-heartedly support conservation efforts), but providing information on visiting these areas and sharing stories of people who have visited them.

My experiences have all been in Australia and though I have had opportunity to visit many areas I still have a long way to go. Thankfully I'm still young enough (I tell myself that anyway) to see far more than I already have.

One of the great things I have found with the 'Kevin's Wilderness Journeys' web site is that I have had a great opportunity to share the travels of others to areas within Australia. I was recently contacted by a fella who is about to travel around this great country. He was able to tell me how the site helped him to prepare and I was able to share in his enthusiasm for the planned trip. Of course it also got me thinking about travelling again as well. This is something I want to do (and soon), but I am not sure as to when I'll be able to do so with my current workload.

I have also some friends who travelled to various destinations around the world and I had the privilege of catching up with them and seeing their photos. I wasn't so much thrilled with the city shots, etc, but the photos of wilderness areas captured my imagination and fed my own ambitions of visiting the world's wild places. It was great to hear of their experiences and stories during their travels.

Perhaps you too would like to share some of the experiences you have had. Send me an email with some of your stories. I'd be pleased to share them with others.

If you have any feedback on the site please let me know about it. All you have to do is send an email to me at the address below:

nrbcpastorkev@yahoo.com.au

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1. KEVIN'S WILDERNESS BLOG:

I have a blog now on the site - a place for leaving any thoughts or comments concerning preparations for future trips, wilderness news, etc. Just go to the site's front page and click on the link to the blog. It really is as simple as that.

This will be where I begin to leave thoughts about upcoming trips, unless they happen suddenly like the last few that I have taken. What I will add to the Blog in days to come will be the actual journey journal entries that I wrote on my last trip - not they are particularly exciting or revealing. This only covers July 2-8, 2004 - or the period of my last trip. The two trips prior to that I had forgotten to write in my journal (only a new thing for me you see). Hopefully it will become more interesting with future trips.

Any of my readers have an online Blog or Journal that records their trips and experiences? If you have, send me an email and let me know. I'll add a link to it on the site, as well as have a look at it myself.

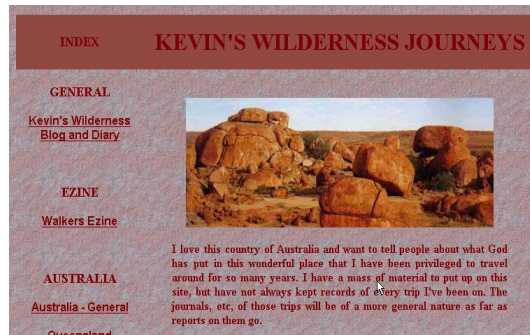
2. KEVIN'S WILDERNESS JOURNEYS: Web Site

Not a lot has happened on the web site in recent times. I have been busy updating my family history site, getting all the photos easily accessed from the site without having to register at a photo hosting site to do so.

Still, I have some plans for the coming weeks including the beginning of content relating to other wild places throughout the world.

Visit the web site at:

<http://wilderness.esmartweb.com/index.html>



3. AUSTRALIA TRIP 3:

In October 2002 I went on my third Australia Trip. This journey took me fewer miles than the previous two but I still got to visit New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. It was a journey marred by several vehicle issues, though on this occasion I managed to avoid any major impacts with the wildlife.



ABOVE: From left - Mungo National Park, London Bridge and the Twelve Apostles (Port Campbell National Park)

I was able to travel along the Murray River for some distance and also to visit the Mungo National Park (though not travel within it as much as I would have liked). The highlight of the trip was definitely the Great Ocean Road along the southern Victorian coast. What an amazing place and Apollo Bay was just brilliant. Anyhow, the whole story can be found at the following link:

<http://wilderness.esmartweb.com/Australia/oztrip3.html>

4. Wilderness News

Africa: Gabon - National Parks

From Africa, more particularly from the Central African country of Gabon, comes news of the formation of a number of national parks. Previously there were no national parks in the country of Gabon. Now there are some 28 500 square kilometres of national park. That's about 10% of the country in 13 national parks.

These national parks will now preserve areas of high value rainforest and other vegetation types, as well as protect significant populations of Gorilla, Elephant, Chimpanzee, Hippopotamus and many other species.

What a fantastic move by the government of Gabon! Kevin's Wilderness Journeys applauds the government of Gabon for this spectacular move.

For more visit the Gabon National Parks web site at:

<http://www.gabonnationalparks.com/>

Arctic Circle: The Big Thaw Has Begun

It's bad news for the world as the 'big thaw' has begun in the Arctic Circle. Experts estimate that by 2100 there will be no ice left in the Arctic Circle during summer. This will also mean great changes and losses for the environment, including the loss of Polar Bears, rising sea levels and problems down south in Antarctica as well.

For more visit:

<http://www.amap.no/acia/index.html>

<http://www.panda.org/index.cfm>

Australia: Barrington Tops National Park - Gloucester Tops

If you haven't been to the Gloucester Tops section of Barrington Tops National Park recently you wouldn't know about the changes to facilities in this area of the park. The road up to this section of the park has been improved, as well as repairs to one of the causeways on the road. Facilities in this area of the park have been greatly upgraded by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

If you have never been to this area pop up and have a look - well worth the visit.

China: Giant Panda Population

Those bears that are adored around the world are extremely rare - but not as rare as we once believed. A recent study has concluded that there are some 40% more Giant Pandas than was first thought. What this means in numerical terms is that there may be about 1 600 Giant Pandas still existing in the wild.

To find out more about the Giant Panda Visit:

<http://www.panda.org/index.cfm>

<http://www.giantpandabear.com/>

5. AFRICA: THE OKAVANGO DELTA - BOTSWANA

The first page on my web site relating to the World's wild places outside Australia is going to be on the Okavango Delta in Botswana, Africa. This is a place that many people have probably heard of, but not too many probably know where it actually is. The Okavango Delta is actually in the north of Botswana, which is located to the north of South Africa. The delta itself is the largest inland river delta in the world, taking in an area of some 15 000 square kilometres.

The Okavango region is probably second only to the Serengeti as the most well known and popular region in Africa. It is an incredibly bio-diverse region of tremendous importance.

Visit the page at:

<http://wilderness.esmartweb.com/Africa/okavango.html>

For more info on the Okavango region visit:

<http://www.okavango-delta.net/>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/okavango/>

<http://www.stud.ntnu.no/~skjetnep/owls.html>

<http://www.go2africa.com/botswana/okavango-delta/>

6. OXFAM CHALLENGE VIETNAM/CAMBODIA: 6-18 December 2004

The Vietnam/Cambodia Challenge begins at Ho Chi Minh City and features cycling along the Mekong River. There is a \$300 registration fee and \$5 000 needs to be raised for Oxfam Community Aid Abroad Projects before actually taking part in the challenge.

For more info visit:

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/challenge/vietcamb.html>

There is also an upcoming Oxfam Challenge Sri Lanka 2-13 April 2005. For more info visit:

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/challenge/srilanka.html>

7. KEVIN' S WILDERNESS WALKERS MAIL GROUP:

Associated with Kevin' s Wilderness Journeys web site is the ' Kevin' s Wilderness Walkers Mail Group.' The mail group currently only has a few members and very little in the way of activity. One of the members (other than myself) has posted some photos in the photo album of her visits to the Colo and Wollemi wilderness area west of Sydney. Hopefully as more people join the group there will be an increase in activity.

Why join the mail group? A good question. The group gives an opportunity for those who love wilderness and the bush, especially in Australia, to share their experiences and perhaps pass on information about destinations, track conditions, etc, to other group members. By doing so there is an opportunity to assist others who are planning trips to the same area, etc. When you think about it, the opportunities for the sharing of information are limitless.

Visit the group at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Kevins_wildwalkers/

8. THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS:

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness is all about saving Australia's wilderness areas from further destruction. This very useful web site can be found at:

<http://www.colongwilderness.org.au/>

A number of current conservation and wilderness issues are highlighted by the site including the further preservation of Wollemi wilderness areas. Currently areas around Newnes and the Wollangambe River are threatened by a sand mining operation.

You can also assist the foundation by becoming a member and subscribing to the bi-monthly newsletter. I haven't joined yet, but in the near future I will be.

9. LORD HOWE ISLAND GROUP WORLD HERITAGE AREA

The spectacular Lord Howe Island Group is located about 700km east of mainland New South Wales and covers an area of almost 150 000 hectares. The islands are dominated by rainforest and are home to over 160 species of birds, including the extremely rare and flightless Woodhen.

Lord Howe Island was first spotted by the HMS Supply in 1788, during the early days of Australian exploration and the first year of settlement in Australia.

There are opportunities for walking throughout Lord Howe Island with several accommodation options for the visitor.

For more info visit:

<http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/worldheritage/sites/lhi/index.html>

http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=31&id_site=186&l=en

10. OTHER INTERESTING WEB SITES

Are you interested in wilderness and other related issues? Listed below are a number of web sites that you might be interested in having a look at:

Munda Wanga Environmental Park (Zambia) - <http://www.mundawanga.com>

11. SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE

If you would like to subscribe to 'Kevin's Walk on the Wild Side,' simply send an email to Kevin at nrbcpastorkev@yahoo.com.au and let me know. If you want to unsubscribe, simply send me an email and let me know. Members of the mail group automatically get a copy of the ezine as part of the group.