



MEDIA RELEASE

Flora River Nature Park

A recent cultural camp at the Flora River Nature Park near Katherine has combined traditional knowledge and park management with fun.

Parks and Wildlife Service Senior Park Ranger Chris Kinnaird said 45 people, including 25 children, took part in the two-day camp that was held earlier this month.

Mr Kinnaird said the camp brought together the Wardaman traditional owners, Parks and Wildlife staff, scientists, linguists and Northern Land Council staff.

He said those who participated learned about how rangers and traditional owners use plants and animals in either similar or different ways. Traditional ecological knowledge and modern science aspects were presented to participants.

“The camp was a great success. The two main aims were to pass on traditional knowledge and stories to the younger generation and visually record this information,” Mr Kinnaird said.

“This was a great chance for the older people to get back on their country and show their children the land and pass on stories and traditional knowledge. Bill Harney and Lily GinGina taught the children stories about the country and how to live in it.

“It was a great opportunity for the older people to teach the children about their land and how life was for the old people while they were growing up. Bill and Lily referred to many objects, plants and animals in their own language.”

This was the third time the Wardaman people had come together at the Flora.

The first meeting held in April this year introduced the concept of joint management of parks to the traditional owners as detailed in the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2005. The joint management partners _ traditional owners and the NT Government _ discussed issues and identified park management goals.

The second meeting was held in July where Mr Kinnaird showed a typical work program for the year using an Aboriginal seasonal calendar. From this participants developed a joint work program for the year and made decisions on how money would be spent.

This included involving traditional owners in contract work to construct boundary fences, repairing the boat ramp and collecting seed. The majority of this work has been completed.

Following on from these camps, a meeting will be held near Katherine at Binjari next February to develop a Statement of Management Intent, which will be the precursor to a more detailed joint management plan.

Media Note _ For more information contact Chris Kinnaird on 8973 8856