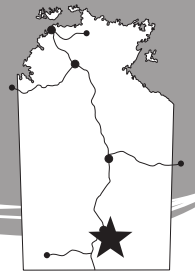


# Rainbow Valley Conservation Reserve



Rainbow Valley is a living cultural landscape, the traditional country of the Upper Southern Arrernte Aboriginal people. The Traditional Owners know this place as *Wurre*, part of *Imarnte*, the country to which they belong.

The Reserve also has very important archaeological sites and artefacts that are evidence of ancient Aboriginal connections to the area.

Rainbow Valley became a jointly managed park in 2008 and visitors are asked to respect the natural and cultural values of this place.

The Rainbow Valley area features scenic sandstone bluffs and cliffs. These free standing cliffs form part of the James Range, and are particularly stunning in the early morning and late afternoon when the rainbow-like rock bands are highlighted.

The coloured rock bands in the sandstone cliffs were caused by water. In earlier, wetter times the red iron of the sandstone layers were dissolved and drawn to the surface during the dry season. The red minerals formed a dark, iron rich surface layer with the leached white layers below.

This dark red capping is hard, and weathers slowly, whereas the softer white sandstone below weathers quickly into loose sand.

Weathering and erosion have also produced the valley shape, where sandstone blocks have eroded into rock faces and squared towers.

## Access

The turn-off to the Reserve is 75 kilometres south of Alice Springs along the Stuart Highway. From here it is a 22 kilometre stretch east, along an unsealed road which has some sandy patches. For this reason 4WD is recommended, but not essential.

## When to visit

The Reserve is accessible all year-round, the cooler months from April to September being the most pleasant.

## What to do



**Camping** - is permitted in the two designated camping areas only. Facilities include communal gas and wood barbecues, picnic tables and pit toilets. Camping fees are payable on site.



**Walking** - There are two walking tracks within the Reserve; both are graded easy and are suitable for families.

A one kilometre loop walk allows visitors to view Mushroom Rock, an interesting sandstone formation with many Fairy Martin nests attached to the upper walls.

## Safety and Comfort

- Observe park safety signs.
- Carry and drink plenty of water.
- Wear a shady hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, suitable clothing and footwear.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the heat of the day.
- Consider your health and fitness when choosing a walk.

## Please Remember

- Keep to designated roads and tracks.
- All historic, cultural items and wildlife are protected.
- Firewood collection is not permitted in the reserve.
- Fires are only permitted in designated firepits.
- Bins are not provided, please take your rubbish with you.
- Pets are not permitted in this reserve.
- Generators are not permitted.

The Claypan Walk is 1.6 km return and meanders along the edge of the mostly dry claypans that transform into reflective pools for short periods after rain. There are several viewing platforms along the way that provide the best views of Rainbow Valley.

The sandstone ridges and bluffs provide opportunities for spectacular photographs, particularly around dawn or dusk, or when the claypans adjacent to the bluffs are holding water.



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