

History



The distinctive stripes of the Bungle Bungles

Until 1982, the Bungle Bungles remained largely “undiscovered”. Although they were known to local cattle stockmen and Aborigines, the wider world was yet to learn of their existence.

A visiting film crew were filming a documentary in the Kimberleys when they met a mustering pilot who told them of the strange dome-shaped rocks he occasionally flew over. Intrigued, they made a detour to explore the area for themselves. The film they shot ended up becoming a documentary, and the ensuing interest in the region led to the Western Australian government creating the Purnululu National Park in 1987.

In 2003 the Bungle Bungles was inscribed a World Heritage area.

Aboriginal people have been living in the area for over 20,000 years and continue to maintain a strong connection to this ancient landscape. The national park is managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation in conjunction with the traditional Aboriginal owners.

Geology – How the Domes were Formed

Virtually every visitor to the Bungle Bungles asks the same question – how did this remarkable landscape come about?

The unusual orange and dark grey banding on the conical rock formations is caused

by differences in the layers of sandstone. The darker bands are on the layers of rock which hold more moisture, and are a dark algal growth. The orange coloured layers are stained with iron and manganese mineral deposits.

Originally part of an ancient river bed, the sandstone layers were compressed and then lifted to form a mountain range. Over hundreds of millions of years (The Bungles are about 350 million years old!) water and wind have eroded the sandstone into the unique shapes that we see today.

At it's highest point the Bungle Bungle range is 578m above sea level.



Valley of the Giants, Bungle Bungles

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