WILD, WILD WET

The Australian outback is all desert, right? Wrong! Kakadu National Park – in Australia’s remote far north and covering an area half the size of Switzerland – is a place that plays by its own rules. The landscape is shaped by water. Its weather is so wild it needs six seasons to encompass it, and it houses the biggest outdoor art collection in Australia.

Thunder Down Under

Here is a striking fact – Kakadu has more lightning than any other place on Earth. During the monsoon season of Gudjewg, the rain sluces down and the lightning crackles for hours each day. According to the locals, lightning is created by Namarrgarn. He manages it by having air-splitting axes mounted to his knees and head.

EXTRA SEASONING

Kakadu has six seasons:

- **Gudjewg**: wet and wild, with thunderstorms and floods
- **Banggereng**: ‘knock ‘em down’ storm season – expect high winds
- **Yegge**: cool and misty
- **Wurpeng**: cold – ‘only’ 30°C (86°F)
- **Gurung**: hot and dry
- **Gunumeleng**: hot and humid, with thunderstorms starting again, and the chance of tropical cyclones

Big bird

Kakadu is home to about one-third of Australian bird species. The Jabiru, or the black-billed stork, is Australia’s largest wading bird. The biggest township in Kakadu is also called Jabiru. That’s more than a big coincidence!

Dexterous dingo

Dingoes are part of Kakadu’s wildlife. One special feature of the dingo is that its wrist can rotate easily. This means it can use its paw like a hand and could turn a doorknob. So don’t forget to lock the door!

Art history

Indigenous artists have been leaving their mark on Kakadu’s rocks for thousands of years, and they have never stopped. There are ships and World War II planes beside extinct animals and ancient Dreamtime figures.