This vast and spectacular section of the MacDonnell Ranges is an outstanding example of an ancient landscape sculptured over time by climatic elements. Tjoritja / West MacDonnell National Park stretches for 161 km west of Alice Springs. Cool scenic gorges are important refuges for plants and animals, many of which are found only here and some are relics of a bygone era of tropical forests.

There are many opportunities for visitors to explore and appreciate the scenic beauty and history of the area. Features of the landscape are significant in the stories of Western Aranda and Arrente Aboriginal culture, and have existed for many thousands of years.

Access
From Alice Springs, vehicle access to the Park is via Larapinta Drive and Namatjira Drive. From Watarrka National Park (Kings Canyon) the unsealed Red Centre Way (4WD recommended) connects to Tjoritja / West MacDonnell National Park. Simpsons Gap is also accessible via a 17 km sealed bicycle track which starts opposite Flynn’s Grave, 7 km from Alice Springs along Larapinta Drive.

When to visit
The Park is accessible all year round. The cooler months (April to September) are the most pleasant. All roads can be impassible for short periods after heavy rain.

What to do
Camping - Ellery Creek Big Hole and Redbank Gorge provide basic facilities. Serpentine Chalet and 2-Mile (4WD only) provide camping sites with no facilities. Ormiston Gorge provides camping facilities including showers and flush toilets. Camping fees (cash only, no change available) apply and are payable at each camping area.

Overnight visitors to Tjoritja / West MacDonnell National Park are required to bring their own water supplies. All tank water in the park should be treated before drinking.

Fireplaces are provided at some sites, however most sites offer free gas BBQs to replace open fireplaces (refer to map). At Serpentine Gorge all fires are prohibited in this special zone.

Swimming - the Park has a number of permanent waterholes ideal for swimming during summer. The larger water holes include Ellery Creek Big Hole, Ormiston Gorge, Glen Helen Gorge and Redbank Gorge. Swimmers should be aware that most swimming holes are extremely cold. Prolonged exposure, even during summer, can result in hypothermia. Beware of submerged logs and rocks. Do not jump, dive or swing into the water.

Glen Helen Lodge has closed indefinitely. Commercial services and facilities, including food, fuel, accommodation and camping, are no longer available at Glen Helen.

Access to Glen Helen Gorge is available via an alternate route from the Glen Helen access road.

Mount Sonder (Rutjupma) is a landmark and icon at the western end of Tjoritja.