

Desert Parks Bulletin

No. 785 - 16 August 2023

ALERT: COVID-19 information

People traveling to the outback should check the latest SA COVID-19 information on COVID-19 | SA Health

It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them.

Please respect other campers and park visitors by keeping a safe distance and practicing good hygiene.

Safety in the Outback

ALERT: Water across tracks has resulted in electrical faults being reported in a number of vehicles. High clearance 4WD's recommended and extra care is required when navigating these areas.

Outback daytime temperatures can reach high 40°Cs. If you are travelling in the Outback, you should bring appropriate clothing, ensure your vehicles are properly prepared and equipped for outback travel and any emergencies or delays. Take extra water, food and fuel supplies. Ensure good communications equipment, either HF Radio or Satellite Phone and an EPIRB or PLB. Ensure you notify a responsible person, such as a family member, of your plans prior to travelling into remote areas, and seek local advice.

If you attempt driving in sandy conditions and get bogged, do not attempt to get the vehicle out without ensuring 4WD and hubs are engaged, tyre pressures are decreased and sand is removed from the path of the tyres. If you become stuck, do not leave your vehicles to walk for assistance as this can have fatal consequences.

Speed limits

Check road and weather bulletins and local conditions before travelling into the Outback. Speed limits of 40km per hour apply within all parks. For up to date public road information outside of National Parks, please call the Transport SA Road Condition Hotline on 1300 361 033 or visit the Transport SA web site on Outback Road Warnings – Department for Infrastructure and Transport – South Australia (dit.sa.gov.au)

Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park

ALERT: It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own firewood, drinking water cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them.

Halligan Bay Point Public Access Route – Open to 4WD Drive to track conditions.

Level Post Bay Public Access Route – Closed For Public Safety, by order of the Pastoral Board of South Australia

Tallaringa Conservation Park – Open to 4WD

Future closures of the Anne Beadell Highway by the Department of Defence are 13 November – 18 December 2023

Extreme caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations, plus rutted sections.

The tracks within Tallaringa Conservation Park are un-maintained 4WD tracks and conditions can change unpredictably.

ALERT: It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own firewood, drinking water cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them.

ALERT: The Anne Beadell Highway west of Tallaringa crosses the Amber Zone 2 in the Woomera Prohibited Area and is subject to annual closures by the Department of Defence. For the latest information please check the Department of Defence website at:

www.defence.gov.au/woomera .

Online park bookings or a Desert Parks Pass is required, as well as a tourist access permit to access this area from the Department of Defence. Enquiries about tourist permits should be directed to woomera.enquiries@defence.gov.au

Innamincka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park

ALERT: Brucellosis (*Brucella suis*) has been detected in feral pigs in the Cooper and Diamantina catchments including pigs within Innamincka Regional Reserve. This disease can cause serious illness and in some cases death. Avoid contact with feral pigs and do not let dogs eat from feral pig carcasses or faeces. For more information please check the PIRSA website at *Brucella suis* – PIRSA.

ALERT: Japanese Encephalitis has been detected in feral pigs in the Cooper and Diamantina catchments including pigs within Innamincka Regional Reserve. This disease is spread by mosquitos so prevent its spread by covering up, using insect repellent, ensure screens are installed and in good repair on caravans and tents and use mosquito nets. More information can be found at the PIRSA website here [Current alert \(pir.sa.gov.au\)](http://Current alert (pir.sa.gov.au)) .

ALERT: It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own firewood, drinking water cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them.

ALERT: Please remain on tracks, the surrounding ground can be wet, boggy and treacherous. Extreme caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations, plus rutted sections from visitors driving on wet tracks.

Access to campsites can vary, some are not suitable for large caravans.

Please note that chainsaws and fire wood collection is prohibited in Innamincka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park, with no wood fires permitted at Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park. Bring firewood with you and take your waste material home or deposit it at the Innamincka township refuse site.

Dogs, generators and powered water craft not permitted within Malkumba – Coongie Lakes National Park

Coongie Track Innamincka to Kudriemitchie Campground – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Coongie Track Kudriemitchie Campground to Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

15 Mile Track – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Merninie Loop – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Cullyamurra Waterhole – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Burke's Grave – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Queerbidie – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Policemans – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts

Kings Marker – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Ski Beach Campground – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Wills Grave – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Minkie Waterhole Campground – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Old Strzelecki Track (on Innamincka Regional Reserve only) – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Bore Track North – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water and washouts
Bore Track South – Closed indefinitely.
Walker Crossing Public Access Route – Closed For Public Safety, by order of the Pastoral Board of South Australia
Witjira National Park
ALERT: Hamilton – Mt Dare Road Open to single 4WD Vehicles only – no Towing. Take caution at soft sections in swamp area north of Hamilton Creek.
ALERT: It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own, drinking water cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them.
ALERT: The disabled toilet is closed pending repairs.
Witjira National Park – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
Dalhousie Campground – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
Three O’Clock Creek Campground – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
Dalhousie Campground to Purni Bore – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
The Dalhousie airstrip: Closed to public.
Bloods Creek Ruin to Federal Waterhole Track: Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
Binns Track: Open to 4WD Caution at ponded water, washouts and rutted sections
Pedirka Public Access Route – Open to 4WD Caution at ponded, washouts water and washouts
Tracks in the park are graded in May/June every year.
Rubbish tips are located 3 kilometres east and west of the Dalhousie campground or at Birdsville for disposal of rubbish.
Check local conditions before travelling into this area. See the National Parks website at www.parks.sa.gov.au for more information.
Wood fires are not permitted in Witjira, with the exception that wood fires are still permitted at Mt Dare. Wood can be carried through Witjira to be used in the Munga-Thirri–Simpson Desert National Park.
Pink Roadhouse (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7822) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass. Provides diesel and unleaded fuel, accommodation, food and groceries, meals, minor repairs, tyres, travel supplies, and alcohol.
Mt Dare Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7835) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass. Provides diesel and unleaded fuel, accommodation, meals, hot showers, minor repairs, camping, travel supplies, alcohol, and phone cards available for travellers. Satellite phones are available to hire from Mt Dare Hotel for trips across the Simpson Desert
Munga-Thirri – Simpson Desert National Park – OPEN with warnings
ALERT: Detours are in place on the QAA Line at the Eyre Creek Crossing. Refer to the park alert on the National Parks and Wildlife website for more information.
ALERT: This bulletin applies to the South Australian Munga-Thirri – Simpson Desert National

Park only. It does not apply to the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service' Munga-Thirri National Park. For up to date information on this park please check <https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/munga-thirri>.

ALERT: It is important that campers and other park visitors are self-sufficient, and carry their own firewood, drinking water cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene products with them. Extreme caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations, plus rutted sections.

The tracks within Munga-Thirri – Simpson Desert are un-maintained 4WD tracks and conditions can change unpredictably.

National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia do not recommend the towing of trailers or campers within the desert.

Warburton Crossing Public Access Route – Closed For Public Safety, by order of the Pastoral Board of South Australia

Colson Track – Open to 4WD

Condition updates

As conditions change a further update bulletin will be issued. For further information on SA Desert Parks and Far Northern South Australian road and track access, please call Desert Parks on (61 8) 8648 5328 or the Department for Infrastructure and Transport Outback Road Warnings website [Outback Road Warnings – Department for Infrastructure and Transport – South Australia \(dit.sa.gov.au\)](http://Outback Road Warnings – Department for Infrastructure and Transport – South Australia (dit.sa.gov.au))

Alternatively contact local Police where applicable for condition updates. For travel communications, contact the Australian National 4WD Radio Network Inc on (61 8) 7325 2600.

Public Access Routes

Public Access Routes (PARs) provide public access over pastoral leasehold land, from public roads or tracks to points of public interest, which in some cases include parks and reserves, without the need for travellers to seek permission to travel along these routes. PARs are not part of the formal road network, they are unsealed and unformed dirt tracks intended to provide four wheel drive access in dry conditions only.

The Minister for the Pastoral Act manages 14 PARs in the desert parks area:

- Curdimurka
- Strangways Springs
- Lake Cadibarrawirricanna
- Tallaringa
- Lake Eyre/Kati Thanda – Halligan Bay Point
- Lake Eyre/Kati Thanda – Level Post Bay
- Old Peake
- Pedirka
- Arckaringa Hills
- K1 Warburton Crossing Track
- Walkers Crossing
- Algebuckina Bridge
- Beresford Bore
- Mungerannie Bore

Camping on PARs

Camping is permitted (temporarily) on PARs. Camping is not allowed on pastoral leasehold land without the permission of the lessee. If the lessee grants permission to camp on the lease, you

must not camp within one kilometre of homesteads or other buildings and not within 500 metres of stock watering points.’

Travelling on PARs

PARs are unsealed, unformed, dirt tracks designed for 4WD use in good weather only and should therefore be treated with caution. The following tips will help you to travel safely:

- Use a high clearance 4WD
- Caravans and trailers are not recommended
- Beware of washouts, corrugations and other road hazards
- Beware of wandering stock – these routes are not fenced and are usually part of the network of tracks used by lessees to manage their pastoral properties
- Drive to road conditions
- Leave gates as you find them
- In case of emergency ensure you have adequate food and water, and appropriate communication devices, and in the event of a breakdown stay with your vehicle.
- Tracks may temporarily close as required (i.e. due to rain), so ensure you check prior to leaving at www.dit.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads.

Please avoid travel during or immediately after rain – this can cause significant damage to the track and put others that follow at risk. It can also cost many thousands of dollars to make basic road/ track repairs.

Travelling through pastoral land

In the South Australian outback, most land not in the Department for Environment and Water’s parks and reserve system is pastoral leasehold land. If you wish to travel through pastoral property on tracks that are not PARs or main public roads or tracks, then prior approval from the pastoral lessee of the respective pastoral lease must be obtained.

Fight the Bite – a health warning from SA Health

Mosquitoes can be active around waterbodies in northern South Australia.

Mosquitoes are not only a nuisance but some can spread serious disease such as Ross River virus (RRV) and Barmah Forest virus (BFV) when they bite (symptoms of RRV and BFV can include joint pains, rash, fever, fatigue or muscle pain).

There is NO CURE and NO VACCINE to protect against these mosquito borne diseases. The only known and effective way to reduce risk of mosquito borne disease is to prevent mosquito bites.

If you are a visitor, or if you live in northern South Australia, it is important that you protect yourself, your family and friends against mosquito borne disease by Fighting the Bite. Key strategies include:

- Covering up – wear long, light coloured, loose fitting clothing (mosquitoes can bite through tight clothes like jeans)
- Apply personal insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin (avoid using on babies and toddlers and ALWAYS read and follow instructions on the label first).
- Ensure insect screens cover openings in holiday houses, boats, caravans or tents.
- Cover sleeping areas or beds with mosquito nets if necessary.

For additional strategies and information about how to Fight the Bite and protect against mosquito borne disease visit www.health.sa.gov.au

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While every attempt has been made to provide up to date information in this bulletin, all travellers are responsible for ensuring that they obtain accurate and detailed information and are properly equipped and prepared for all emergencies prior to travelling into remote outback areas.
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