

Department for Environment and Heritage

# Para Wirra Recreation Park

Lizard Rock Nature Hike



*Healthy Parks  
Healthy People*



Government  
of South Australia



[www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au)

*“The Lizard Rock Nature Hike is approximately an hour walk through a variety of vegetation and landscapes on mostly easy grades. Take time to admire the views and observe some of the plants and animals along the way.*

*Please enjoy your visit to the park.”*

**Points of interest are marked with numbered posts that correspond with sections labelled in this leaflet.**

#### **1 Long Leaved Box (*Eucalyptus goniocalyx*)**

This eucalypt is one of the dominant trees in the park. Look at the different leaves on new shoots near the base. New leaves change colour and shape as the shoot matures.

#### **2 Guinea Flowers (*Hibbertia spp*)**

These are the common understorey shrubs with yellow flowers in spring. Look closely at the leaf. The edges are rolled over to conserve moisture in hot conditions.

#### **3 River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)**

On these hills river red gums are found along creeks or in places where water collects - like the rock shelf here. The rocks have also prevented the tree roots getting a good grip and it has fallen in a storm but continued to grow. In time the old limb that was once the main trunk will become hollow and provide shelter for small animals.

#### **4 Old Fence Posts**

Here are reminders of the park's history of grazing. An old fence line with river red gum posts and dead trees still show the marks of the axe that ringbarked them. Ring-barking killed trees and encouraged grass growth. The trees were often left standing unless they were needed for fuel or timber.

#### **5 Sticky Hop Bush (*Dodonea viscosa*)**

If you feel the leaves of this shrub on a hot day you will see how it earned its name. It has small fruit, each with three papery wings that may catch the wind and help it to spread and colonise on bare ground.



#### **6 Chimney Rock**

This rock is part of the same formation as Lizard Rock and the Devils Nose. It is composed of granite that is about 800 million years old. Granite is weathered away slowly by heating and cooling that causes layers to peel off like an onion (exfoliation). This process and the effects of water result in an acidic soil that supports many plants that do not grow on the coastal plains.

#### **7 Grass Tree (*Xanthorrhoea quadrangulata*)**

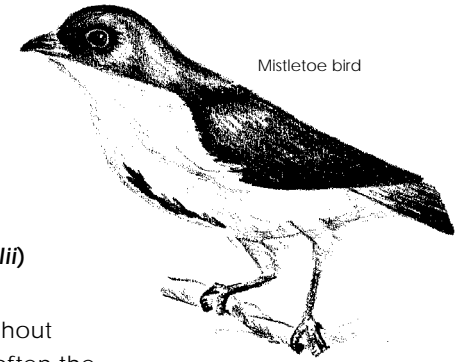
There are two kinds of grass trees growing in the park. This one has a longer trunk and shorter leaves and is most common on the rocky hill slopes. Feel the leaves. They have four sides as described by its scientific name.

#### **8 Pink Gum (*Eucalyptus fasciculosa*)**

**and Mistletoes (*Lysyana exocarpi*, *Amyema miquelii*)**

The pink gum is common throughout the park and is often the host for a parasitic plant, mistletoe.

In this case another mistletoe species has parasitised the first. Most are short lived and rarely kill the host tree. If there is ripe fruit watch out for the red feathers of the mistletoe bird. Mistletoe also provides healthy tucker for possums.

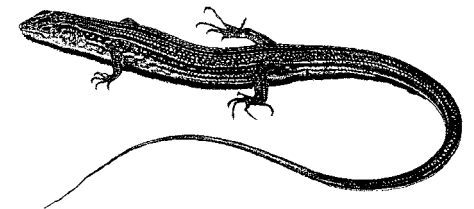


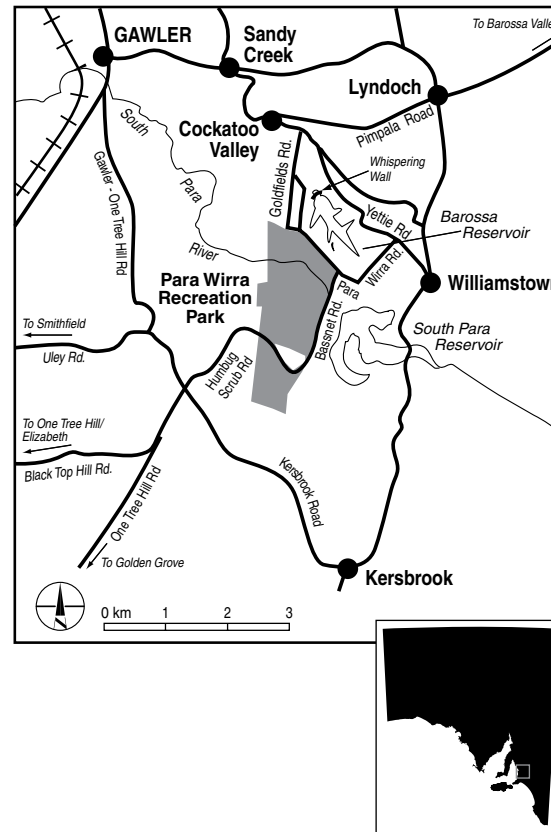
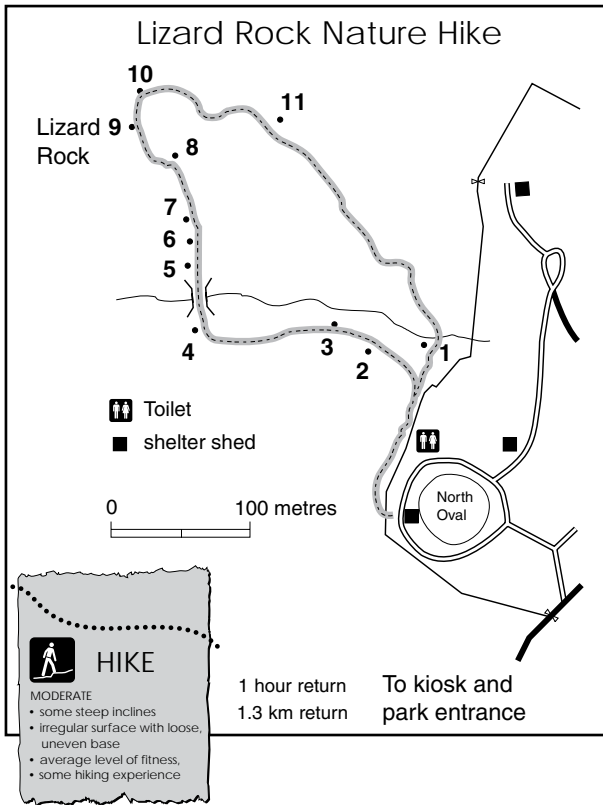
#### **9 Kadno Rock**

Kadno is the Kaurna name for 'large lizard.' Walk past the rock and look back. You will see the shape of a lizard's head. Cracks in the rock are home to the tree skink which has rough, ridged scales on its tail to help it grip the rock.

#### **10 Lookout**

Look to the south across the valley. There is another reminder of the park's farming history in the cleared land slowly regenerating. At the bottom of the clearing is a concrete foundation. It is the remains of a sentry post from World War 2, staffed by American soldiers to guard their camp at Sandy Creek. They would have had a much clearer view down the valley in 1945 when the slopes were newly cleared.





### 11 Yacca (*Xanthorrhoea semiplana*)

These are much bulkier plants than the grass trees with four sided leaves. They are common in most parts of the park and provide shelter for many plants and animals under their "skirt" of old leaves. Both types of grass tree produce tall flower spikes. These are most particularly spectacular after a fire when mature plants flower providing a valuable food source for birds and possums while other food plants are still recovering.

### For further information contact:

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This brochure was produced by Friends of Para Wirra and the Department for Environment and Heritage



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