

Desert Parks Bulletin

No. 628 – 18 February 2020

On-line park bookings commenced 1 June 2017. See end of Bulletin for details.

Simpson Desert and the K1 Warburton, Walkers Crossing and Halligan Bay Point Public Access Routes are closed between 1 December 2019 and 15 March 2020.

For those travelling through the Flinders Ranges, Cooinda Campsite, St Mary Peak, Malloga Falls and Mt Ohlssen-Bagge walking trails will be closed 1 December 2019 to 28 February 2020 due to high risk to walkers from summer heat. Other alternative walks and drives are available.

Note - all reserves have a 40km/h speed limit unless sign posted otherwise.

Outback day time temperatures are reaching the high 40°Cs. If you decide to travel 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. 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.

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 <http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads>

General Conditions

For further information regarding South Australia's National Parks visit our website www.parks.sa.gov.au. For information regarding air tours phone the Wadlata Outback Centre on 1800 633 060. Check local conditions before travelling into the Outback area.

Be aware that entry to Desert Parks requires a permit or a Desert Parks Pass.

Please note DEW/National Parks does not have the management responsibility of Public Access Routes in South Australia. That responsibility is with the Pastoral Board and PIRSA's Pastoral Unit who can be contacted on (08) 8429 0333 or PIRSA.Pastoral@sa.gov.au. Public Access Routes are un-surfaced tracks intended to provide 4WD access. All drivers should drive with caution and to track conditions as condition will vary. Public Access Routes are located on working pastoral properties (please do not disturb stock) and are located in remote areas - ensure you have adequate supplies in case of emergency.

Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park

Halligan Bay Point Track – Closed 1 December 2019 – 15 March 2020

Level Post Bay Track – Open to 4WD. This track is a declared Public Access Route. It is a bush track, not a road. Drive with caution along the entire track as the landscape is fragile and the track will deteriorate with the number of vehicles using it. Please drive to track conditions. Driving on the Lake surface is an offence and dangerous. **Trailers and caravans are not recommended. No camping at Level Post Bay – camping at Muloorina campground.**

Tallaringa Conservation Park

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. Details can be found at <http://www.defence.gov.au/woomera/permit-tourist.htm>

Innaminka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park

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.

Coongie Track – Open to 4WD only. Caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations. Drive to conditions and stay on track.

Walkers Crossing Public Access Route – Closed.

15 Mile Track and Access to Cooper Creek – Open to 4WD only. Caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations.

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

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

Old Strzelecki Track (on Innamincka Regional Reserve only) – Open to 4WD. Caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations.

Bore Track North – Open to 4WD. Caution at ponded water, washouts and corrugations.

Bore Track South – Closed.

Witjira National Park and the Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert Reserves

Pedirka Public Access Route – Open to 4WD.

Witjira National Park – Open to 4WD. Caution at sections that visitors have chopped up graded tracks when wet.

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. This does not apply to the Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert reserves in South Australia and wood can be carried through Witjira to be used in the Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert reserves.

The Dalhousie airstrip is closed to public use.

Binns track is closed indefinitely between Mt Dare and Old Andado. The track has deteriorated due to extreme dry weather and high volume of traffic over the past two years leading to deep and dangerous rutting. Travellers wishing to access the Binns track from Mt Dare to Old Andado will need to detour via New Crown station.

Pink Roadhouse (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7822) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass. Provide 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. Provide 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 Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert

Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert– Closed 1 December 2019 – 15 March 2020

K1 - Warburton Crossing Public Access Route – Closed 1 December 2019 – 15 March 2020

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 Transport SA Outback Roads hotline on 1300 361 033.

Alternatively contact local Police where applicable for condition updates. For travel communications, contact the Australian National 4WD Radio Network Inc on (61 8) 8287 6222.

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

On-line park entry and camping bookings

From 1 June 2017, entry and camping for Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park, Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park, Innamincka Regional Reserve, Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park, Witjira National Park and Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park will need to be booked through the online booking system. Grindell's Hut, Nudlamutana Hut and the Balcanoona Shearers Quarters in Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park will also be available to be booked online before you go.

The new booking system recognises that there is often high demand for some camping areas during peak periods, and will allow visitors to book their favourite campsites 12 months in advance of a planned visit. For many people it will be a more convenient experience; they can plan and book ahead from the comfort of their home, and they won't have to carry the correct amount of cash.

The Desert Parks Pass that covers entry and camping to the Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert Regional Reserve and Munga-Thirri-Simpson Desert Conservation Park will still be purchased via normal arrangements. After purchasing your Desert Parks Pass, you will be required to go on-line to book campsites in other parks that are covered by the Desert Parks Pass such as Witjira National Park, Innamincka Regional Reserve, Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park and Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park. When booking a campsite, the booking system will ask if you have a Desert Parks Pass, so you will not have to pay twice.

Park visitors need to visit www.parks.sa.gov.au to make their bookings. Preferably visitors will book before they leave home, however some visitors prefer not to plan ahead. As mobile reception is limited or non-existent in the Region, or if visitors do not have access to the Internet while travelling, a number of businesses in strategic, remote locations have become agents. These agents can be found at www.parks.sa.gov.au

For further information on this matter please contact the Desert Parks Pass Administration Officer on 08 8648 5328 or DesertParks@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. Privacy, Disclaimer, Copyright