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**National Parks  
and Wildlife Service**  
South Australia

## Lake Gairdner National Park



### About

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Situated north of the Gawler Ranges, the park protects a large saline lake system surrounded by red sand hills. The park includes Australia's third largest salt lake, Lake Gairdner (plus Lake Everard and Lake Harris), which contains over 200 islands, in some parts of the lake the salt layer can be up to one meter thick!

The glistening, white, salt, surface is surrounded by the red foothills of the Gawler Ranges.

### Opening hours

Open daily.

### Contact details

Visitor information, bookings and park management:

**Gawler Ranges National Park National Parks and Wildlife Service Office**

**Phone: (+61 8) 8648 1883**

**Email: [DEWEPOnlineBookings@sa.gov.au](mailto:DEWEPOnlineBookings@sa.gov.au) (mailto:DEWEPOnlineBookings@sa.gov.au)**

Emergency contacts:

**Medical, fire (including bushfire) and police emergency situations**

**Phone: Triple Zero - 000**

**Police Assistance**

**Phone: 131 444 for non-urgent police assistance**

**National Parks and Wildlife Service SA – After-hours duty officer**

**Phone: 08 8688 3223**

Injured wildlife:

**Within the park**

**Please contact Gawler Ranges National Park National Parks and Wildlife Service Office on (08) 8648 1883 or the after-hours duty officer on (08) 8688 3223**

**Outside of the park**

**Please contact a local wildlife rescue group**

## Getting there

**The southern edge of the lake is approximately 150 km north west of Port Augusta. The northern end of the lake is a few kilometres south of Kingoonya, the Trans Australian Railway and the Stuart Highway. The main route to the lake is via Mount Ive station on a 34 km station track. Mt Ive must be contacted prior to entry and a key to the gate is required (a fee for this service applies).**

**Access to the Waltumba Tank campground is via the Stringer Highway towards Glendambo.**

**Please be aware that this park is surrounded by private properties and private roads, please stay on the public and signposted tracks and roads.**

Road conditions

**All roads and tracks in the area are unsealed gravel or sand roads. Conditions can change quickly depending on the weather.**

**Please check the [Northern and Western South Australian Outback Roads Temporary Closures, Restrictions and Warnings Report](http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads) (<http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads>) before you depart.**

**Phone: 1300 361 033**

## Dogs not allowed

Dogs are not permitted in this park.

Discover which parks you can walk your dog in on our [find a park \(https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/find-a-park\)](https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/find-a-park) tool or read [12 dog-friendly walks in Adelaide Parks \(http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/goodliving/posts/2017/12/dogs-part-2\)](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/goodliving/posts/2017/12/dogs-part-2) by Good Living for inspiration.

## Facilities

There are very limited facilities in the park, there is a campground and toilet at Waltumba campground on the western side of the lake.

Visitors should ensure they carry sufficient water and food, please take your rubbish with you. You should advise a responsible person of the intended duration of your trip.

## Useful information

- [Remote area travel information \(https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/coorong-national-park/psa-gen-remote-area-travel-information-brochure.pdf\)](https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/coorong-national-park/psa-gen-remote-area-travel-information-brochure.pdf)
- [Parks management plans \(https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/park-management/state-wide-park-strategies/park-management-plans\)](https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/park-management/state-wide-park-strategies/park-management-plans)
- [Trails SA \(http://www.southaustraliantrails.com/\)](http://www.southaustraliantrails.com/)
- [SA Marine Parks \(https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/home\)](https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/home)

### Outback Road Report

1300 361 033 (24-hour automated service)

[Northern and Western South Australian Outback Roads Temporary Closures, Restrictions and Warnings Report \(http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads\)](http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads)

- **Important:** Collection of firewood within National Parks is prohibited. Dead wood plays a vital role in providing shelter for animals and adding nutrients to the soil.

### Park Management Plan

A park management plan is being developed for Lake Gairdner National Park, which will set the vision and directions for the area. [Read the draft management plan.](#)

<https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/assets.yoursay.sa.gov.au/production/2019/01/10/13/03/27/20664f7f-0793-4715-acfa-beef3463dd8b/95236%20Lake%20Gairdner%20Parks%20Draft%20Management%20Plan%20FIN.pdf>

<https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/assets.yoursay.sa.gov.au/production/2019/01/10/13/03/27/20664f7f-0793-4715-acfa-beef3463dd8b/95236%20Lake%20Gairdner%20Parks%20Draft%20Management%20Plan%20FIN.pdf>

This plan has been developed to ensure the community can have a say into the way Lake Gairdner National Park is managed.

The plan addresses the most important issues facing the national park, focusing on two key themes:

- Theme 1: Looking after Country
- Theme 2: Enhancing the visitor experience and enabling appropriate access

The Lake Gairdner National Park Co-Management Board encourages interested members of the community to submit their views on the draft plan.

Co-management in South Australia is a partnership between the state government and Aboriginal groups to help manage our national parks that combines traditional knowledge with contemporary park management.

To learn more about co-management, visit

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topicshttps://www.parks.sa.gov.au/park-management/co-management-of-parks>  
<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics%7Bentry:72029:url%7D/co-management-of-parks>

## Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are permitted in most public places and are therefore welcome in South Australia's parks and reserves. Assistance dogs must be appropriately restrained on a lead and remain under your effective control at all times while in a park or reserve.

As per the dogs in parks and reserves policy, if the dog is not an accredited assistance dog, they must be trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate that disability and meet standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for a dog in a public place. However, refusal may be given if the person with the disability is unable to produce evidence the dog is an assistance dog with the appropriate training.

Before taking your assistance dog into a park that does not normally allow dogs, it is highly recommended that you contact us so we can provide you with the latest information on any potential hazards within specific parks that may affect your dog. Please contact the park via the contact details provided under the contact tab or contact the visitor service centre via email (<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/get-in-touch-online>) or on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NPWSSA>), or you can live chat with a customer service representative on the website

Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

## Plants and animals

Flora and fauna species lists

To download flora (plants) and fauna (animals) species lists for this park, use the 'Create Simple Species List' tab under 'Flora Tools' or 'Fauna Tools' in [NatureMaps](https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/NatureMaps/Pages/default.aspx) (<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/NatureMaps/Pages/default.aspx>).

## Traditional Owners

The Gawler Ranges People are recognised as the traditional owners of this Country, attaining native title in 2011. The Gawler Ranges people are a distinct group of foundation families made up of, but not all, the Barngarla, Kokatha and Wirangu People. This Country was and continues to be important to the laws, customs and cultural identity of the Gawler Ranges People. The Traditional Owners ask that you respect their culture and request that you do not move any of the rocks around the Lake or walk onto the surface of the Lake

Words from the Lake Gairdner National Park Co-management Board

We see co-management as a new way to work together; a new way to care for country.

We are building relationships amongst our Board members and with wider partners and stakeholders including pastoralists, tourist operators, park visitors, scientists and a range of Commonwealth and state government agencies: partners are the keys to success -we need to listen and learn from each other.

We are connecting with our communities and talking with senior Elders. It is important to find out: What do they want to protect? For the future, our focus is on revising the management plan for the park. We are continuing to undertake on country planning and initiatives that involve getting our people back on country for tasks such as: controlling weeds and feral animals, flora and fauna surveys and mapping cultural heritage sites.

We are working together to improve natural and cultural landscapes for all stakeholders.

# See and do

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## Rangers recommend

We have picked the brains of our park rangers to find out what they would recommend you see and do whilst visiting this park.

- **Sitting around the campfire and sharing a meal or a drink and enjoying the remote tranquillity.**
- **Rolling out your swag or sleeping bag under the vast expans of stars that feel so close you could touch them.**
- **Counting the many different types of animals you encounter as you travel around the park. It's not all kangaroos and emus here – keep an eye out for wombats, goannas and lizards too.**

## Bushwalking

There are no specific bushwalking trails within this park.

## Stay in the park

Camping is free in this park, you do not need to book online.

Self-sufficient bush camping is available in the Waltumba campground located on the eastern side of the lake.

Waltumba is a great spot for camping and is set amongst the Western Myall trees on the edge of the lake with fantastic views overlooking the lake and onto the Gawler Ranges. A walking trail leading from the campground and day visit area will take you up onto a hill overlooking the lake. The trail is well formed and it is a moderate hike.

The campground is accessible to vehicles with high ground clearance.

## 4WDiving

Although the best way to explore this magnificent park is in a 4WD, in good weather you can visit much of the park in a high clearance 2WD. You'll see lots of wildlife on the tracks so look out for emus and kangaroos, especially at sunrise and sunset.

Please observe all track and safety signs. Standard road rules apply when driving anywhere in the park, including

**the laws for speed limits, drink driving, vehicle registration and seat belts. Do not take your vehicle off the designated tracks. Precious habitat and indigenous sites can be damaged, and wildlife threatened, by off track driving.**

**Please note, driving on the Lakes' surface is prohibited without an appropriate permit.**

## Volunteering

Want to help?

**To find out how you can help in this park or nearby, please visit [Natural Resources Eyre Peninsula – Volunteering](https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ep/get-involved/volunteering).  
(<https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ep/get-involved/volunteering>)**

Want to join others and become a Park Friend?

**To find out more about Friends of Parks groups please visit [Friends of Parks South Australia](http://www.friendsofparkssa.org.au/members-list).  
(<http://www.friendsofparkssa.org.au/members-list>)**

**You could join others to help look after a park. You can take part in working bees, training and other events.**

# Safety

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## Bushwalking

Ensure that you:

- when hiking, wear sturdy shoes, a hat and sunscreen
- be aware of weather conditions and avoid walking during the hottest part of the day
- make sure you have appropriate weather proof clothing
- carry enough water to be self-sufficient
- please be respectful of other users at all times
- stay on the designated trails and connector tracks for your own safety, and prevent the spread of declared weeds to other areas in the park
- ensure someone knows your approximate location and expected time of return
- take appropriate maps.
- Walk, hike or trek - what's the difference? (<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/bushwalking>)

## Fire

Can I have a fire or barbecue?

- Wood fires and solid fuel fires are prohibited between 1 November 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- You must bring your own firewood, as the collection of firewood within National Parks is prohibited.
- Gas fires are permitted through the year, other than on days of total fire ban.
- Ensure you are familiar with the fire restrictions (<https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/park-fire-restrictions-2021-22.pdf>) for this park.

Closures and safety

This park is closed on days of Catastrophic Fire Danger and may also be closed on days of Extreme Fire Danger.

You can determine the current fire danger rating by checking the Fire Ban District map ([https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans\\_and\\_ratings.jsp](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans_and_ratings.jsp)) on the CFS website.

Check the CFS website (<https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp>) or call the CFS Bushfire Information Hotline 1800 362 361 for:



- **Information on fire bans and current fire conditions ([https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans\\_and\\_ratings.jsp](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans_and_ratings.jsp))**
- **Current CFS warnings and incidents ([https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/warnings\\_and\\_incidents.jsp](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/warnings_and_incidents.jsp))**
- **Information on what to do in the event of a fire ([https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare\\_for\\_a\\_fire.jsp](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare_for_a_fire.jsp)).**

Listen to your local area radio station (<https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/public/download.jsp?id=104478>) for the latest updates and information on fire safety.

## 4WDiving

- **Please keep to defined vehicle tracks to avoid damaging the surrounding area, which includes damage to habitat, wildlife or culturally significant areas.**
- **Take extreme care when driving in parks – be aware of blind corners, crests and narrow tracks.**
- **Know what to do if you get bogged and always carry suitable recovery equipment.**
- **Make sure you have the right tyre pressure for the terrain, as per the manufacturer's instructions.**
- **Observe 'No Public Access' signs.**
- **Only experienced and well-equipped travellers should attempt to cross the more remote parks.**

### Public Access Routes (PARs)

- **Public access routes are established under the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989 to provide public access over pastoral land without the need for travellers to ask permission from the lessee.**
- **Public access routes are not roads or part of the formal road network. They are unimproved and unsurfaced dirt tracks intended to provide four wheel drive access in dry conditions only**
- **For further information see - [Public access routes to pastoral land in South Australia.](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/sa_arid_lands/land/rangelands-public-access-routes-fact.pdf)**  
**([http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/sa\\_arid\\_lands/land/rangelands-public-access-routes-fact.pdf](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/sa_arid_lands/land/rangelands-public-access-routes-fact.pdf))**

## Know before you go

Every national park is different, each has its own unique environment, it is important to be responsible while enjoying all the park has to offer.

Please ensure that you:

- **leave your pets at home**
- **do not feed birds or other animals, it promotes aggressive behaviour and an unbalanced ecology**
- **do not bring generators (except where permitted), chainsaws or firearms into the park**
- **leave the park as you found it - there are no bins in national parks, please come prepared to take your rubbish with you.**
- **abide by the road rules (maintain the speed limit)**

- respect geological and heritage sites
  - do not remove native plants
  - are considerate of other park users.
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- **Important: Collection of firewood within National Parks is prohibited. Dead wood plays a vital role in providing shelter for animals and adding nutrients to the soil.**

## Camping

When camping in a National Park, it's important to remember the following:

- Always let someone responsible know your travel plans, especially when travelling in remote areas. It's a good idea to let them know when you expect to return.
- Check the weather forecast before you leave, including overnight temperatures on the Bureau of Meteorology (<http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/>). Even during very mild weather, the nights can get very cold.
- The quality and quantity of water cannot be guaranteed within parks. Please bring plenty of water and food to be self-sufficient.
- Always camp in designated sites (where applicable) - do not camp beneath trees with overhanging branches, as they can drop without warning. It's also a good idea to check that there are no insect nests nearby.
- Check to make sure you're not camping in a natural waterway, flash floods can happen anytime.
- If camp fires are permitted, you must bring your own firewood, as the collection of firewood within National Parks is prohibited. Extinguish your camp fire with water (not sand or dirt) until the hissing sound stops.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the fire restrictions (<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/fires-and-bbqs>) for this park.

# Maps

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# Fees

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## Entry fees

**Come and enjoy this park for free.**

## Camping and accommodation

**Camping is free in this park, you do not need to book online.**

## Parks pass

**This park is not included in the park pass system.**

- **Which parks are included in the park pass system? (<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/book-and-pay/parks-passes>)**

## Other fees and permits

**There are no other fees or permits associated with this park.**