

# Desert Parks Bulletin

Department of  
Environment and  
Natural Resources

National Parks and Wildlife South Australia  
SA Arid Lands Region

## **DESERT PARKS BULLETIN**

**NO. 425**

**2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012**

**Important information regarding future temporary change to Wabma Kadarbu  
Conservation Park access (see section).  
Simpson Desert now open but no access/exit via the Warburton Crossing.**

Outback temperatures are cooling down. If you decide to travel in the Outback, you should ensure your vehicles are properly prepared and equipped for outback travel and any emergencies or delays. **The use of trailers in the Simpson Desert is strongly discouraged, plus motor homes and caravans should never attempt this crossing.** Serious damage can be caused to vehicles and the environment, and difficulties are likely to result. Take extra water, food and fuel supplies. Ensure good communications equipment, either HF Radio or Satellite Phone. 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.transport.sa.gov.au/quicklinks/northern\\_roads/northern.asp](http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/quicklinks/northern_roads/northern.asp).

**Be aware that entry to Desert Parks requires a permit or a Desert Parks Pass that must be displayed on the vehicle windscreen.**

## **LAKE EYRE NATIONAL PARK**

**Boating in any type of vessel requires written permission from DENR, and granting of a boating permit will be dependant on safety and environmental factors, as well as written approval from the Arabunna people.**

Lake Eyre has already peaked. Current surface coverage of Lake Eyre North has dropped to 15%. Lake Eyre South has also dropped to 40%. There is also some minor water further up in the catchment but this will not impact Lake Eyre significantly like previous years. The best way to see water in Lake Eyre is still from the air. Local charters are available at William Creek and Marree.

### **General Conditions**

For further information regarding the National Parks and Wildlife South Australia visit our web site <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/home>. For information regarding air tours phone the Wadlata Outback Centre on 1800 633 060. Check local conditions before traveling into the Outback area.

If you decide to travel in the following areas you should ensure your vehicles are properly prepared and equipped for outback travel and any emergencies. Take extra water, food and fuel supplies. Ensure good communications equipment. Notify a responsible person of your plans prior to travelling. **Do not speed along roads and tracks. Take your time as Lake Eyre is not going anywhere. No fires at Lake Eyre.**

**Halligan Bay Track – Open to 4WD with caution. Extra caution at ponded water, washouts and wheel rutting.** This track is a declared Public Access Route. It is a bush track, not a road. Please drive to track conditions. Driving on the Lake surface is an offence and dangerous. **Trailers and caravans are not recommended.**

**Level Post Bay Track – Open to 4WD. Caution at sand dunes.** This track is a declared Public Access Route. It is a bush track, not a road. Caution at corrugations, however drive with caution along the entire track as the landscape is fragile and the track will deteriorate due to the unusually high 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.

**Marree's Outback Roadhouse – Agents for the Desert Parks Pass & Lake Eyre Permits. Post Office & Commonwealth Bank Agency, diesel & unleaded fuel, gas bottle refills, licensed restaurant and take away service available. Ph (61 8) 8675 8360**

## **WABMA KADARBU CONSERVATION PARK**

Please note that boardwalk redevelopments will occur at the Bubbler and Blanche Cup springs, most likely between the 21<sup>st</sup> of May and 30<sup>th</sup> of June.

For visitor safety, one spring will be closed at a time to allow work to occur. Please note temporary signage and adhere to restrictions for your safety.

The Department apologises for any inconvenience while this upgrade occurs to improve visitor facilities and further protect the springs.

## **INNAMINCKA REGIONAL RESERVE and COONGIE LAKES NATIONAL PARK**

### **General Vehicle Access.**

**Note:** Be aware that entry to Innamincka Regional Reserve requires a day/camping permit or a Desert Parks Pass that must be displayed on the vehicle windscreen. Desert Parks passes/permits are available from the Innamincka Trading Post.

**Coongie Track – Closed due to floodwater until possibly August.**

**Walkers Crossing Track – Closed due to floodwater damage.**

**15 Mile Track and Access to Cooper Creek – Policemen, Ski Beach, Kings, Minkie and Wills open to 4WD. 15 Mile closed beyond Wills turn off.** Town Common and Queerbiddie is open.

**Cullyamurra Track and Burke's Grave – Open to 4WD.** Burke's Grave - day visitors only.

**Old Strzelecki Track (on Innamincka Regional Reserve only) - Closed due to extensive ponded water.** Likely to be closed for the next month.

**Bore Track North– Open to 4WD. Caution at washouts and very soft sand sections.**

**Bore Track South – Closed.** Contact Bollards Lagoon (61 8 8091 3873) prior to crossing private land.

**The Innamincka Trading Post (Ph: (61 8) 8675 9900). Agent for the Desert Parks Pass and camping permits.**

**Provide a comprehensive range of supplies and services for visitors in the Innamincka area.**

**Innamincka Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8675 9901). Provide meals, drinks and accommodation. Agent for the Desert Parks Pass and camping permits.**

## **WITJIRA NATIONAL PARK and the SIMPSON DESERT RESERVES**

Check local conditions before travelling into this area. See the National Parks and Wildlife South Australia web site on <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/home> for more information. Please purchase Desert Parks Pass or permit before travelling to Witjira.

**The Witjira Co-management Board have approved that fire wood collection will not be permitted on Witjira in 2012, but wood fires will still be allowed. In 2013, both wood fire collection and wood fires will not be permitted. This does not apply to the Simpson Desert reserves in South Australia.**

**Witjira National Park – Open to 4WD. Pedirka Track is open again. Caution at Federal at deep water that is 800mm deep. Caution at Freeth Junction area. Caution at other sections of ponded water and track damage.**

Drive with caution and to track conditions as tracks are over a fragile landscape and deteriorate rapidly. Check local conditions before travelling. Please call the **Desert Parks** hotline on **1800 816 078** for further information. A public phone (card only) is available at Dalhousie Springs. (Note: Phone cards **not** available at Dalhousie). Camping is restricted to Dalhousie Springs, 3 O'clock Creek and Purni Bore.

**The Dalhousie airstrip is currently closed to public use.**

**Please dispose of rubbish at the western tip. Eastern tip is full and temporarily closed until a new tip is dug.**

**The Oodnadatta Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7804) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass, meals including takeaway, drinks and accommodation (not open Sunday)**

**The Pink Roadhouse Oodnadatta (Ph: 1800 802 074, Email: [pinkroadhouse@bigpond.com](mailto:pinkroadhouse@bigpond.com)) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass, phone cards, diesel and unleaded fuel, food including takeaways, travel supplies, refreshments, tyre and minor repairs and welding**

**Mt Dare Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7835) – Desert Parks Pass Agents - Diesel and unleaded fuel, accommodation, meals, hot showers, fuel, minor repairs, camping, travel supplies and phone cards available for travellers. Satellite phones are available to hire from Mt Dare Hotel for trips across the Simpson Desert.**

**Simpson Desert – Open to 4WD with caution.**

**Access/exit to the Simpson Desert is via Dalhousie and Birdsville. No access/exit via Warburton Crossing.**

Please check with local authorities or call the Desert Parks Pass Hotline on 1800 816 078. For information about access to the Queensland Simpson Desert, please contact the Wirrarri Visitor Centre on (07) 4656 3300.

Tracks may be a little difficult this time of year due to sand drift and no compaction of tracks over sand dunes for the last 3 months. Some tracks may be a little overgrown.

Warburton Track is overgrown due to past two years of vegetation growth and there is no vehicle access through the Warburton Crossing. The first few sand dunes west of the K1/Rig Road intersection along the Rig Road are difficult to traverse and may cause problems for drivers. Some salt lakes may have water in them so please drive around these to reduce the risk of becoming bogged. Carry extra fuel reserves as up to 50% more fuel may be used currently than a normal desert crossing.

**The use of trailers in the Simpson Desert is strongly discouraged.** Serious damage can be caused to vehicles and the environment, and difficulties are likely to result.

**Warburton Crossing – Closed due to recent rain and flooding.**

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Hire of Communications Equipment**

Satellite phones can be hired from Birdsville & Mt Dare. For further information call:

**Wirrarri Centre - Birdsville (61 7) 4656 3300**

**Mt Dare Hotel (61 8) 8670 7835**

### **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 the **Desert Parks** toll free hotline on **1800 816 078** 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**

The recent warm weather and rains in the Northern Territory and in Northern South Australia has seen an increase in mosquito numbers across central 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](http://www.health.sa.gov.au)

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Government of South Australia  
Department of Environment  
and Natural Resources



*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 traveling into remote outback areas.*  
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