Visit Hiltaba Nature Reserve – Frequently Asked Questions

September 2026

Thank you for visiting Hiltaba Nature Reserve, we hope you enjoy your stay. Here is some information to help you prepare for your visit.

Should you have any further questions, please email info@naturefoundation.org.au or call (08) 8340 2880 during business hours. Further information can also be found on our website: www.naturefoundation.org.au

Contents

SAFETY ON RESERVE 1
Bookings, Payments, and your Visit 2
About Staying at Hiltaba 3
Getting there 6
Emergency contact information — Hiltaba 7
Other information 7
Nature Drives 8
Walking Trails 11
Getting there — Map and Environs 12
Quick reference — Useful information for planning your travel 13
Hiltaba Nature Reserve – Precinct Map 14

SAFETY ON RESERVE

- You are primarily responsible for your own safety and the safety of your party.
- Be well equipped, prepared, and informed for travelling in remote locations. There is limited mobile coverage, and limited access to medical and other services. Check road conditions and weather forecasts to ensure you make the best travel decisions, and carry recovery equipment for your vehicle
- Road conditions may be highly variable. Please adhere to road rules and drive to conditions, especially when towing. Roads may be closed at short notice due to weather events, for your safety and to protect the integrity of the road.
- If you break down stay with your vehicle. RAA Service is available from Wirrulla on 13 11 11 but wait times may be longer than regional and metro areas.
- Make sure you carry adequate water, food, first aid and medical needs for your travels. Snakes may be active on reserve. You should carry a snake-bite first aid kit when away from your vehicle.

- Telstra Mobile coverage is not reliable on our reserves. We recommend visitors carry communication devices suitable for use in remote areas, that are capable of summoning assistance in an emergency, such as a Satellite Phone, GPS communication device (e.g. Garmin inReach) or Personal Location Beacon. In addition, a UHF radio is useful for communication between vehicles but should not be relied upon for emergency use.

- We recommend that you establish an emergency response plan with a responsible person (family member or friend) who can monitor your travel plans and alert authorities should you fail to return as expected.

Bookings, Payments, and your Visit

Only Nature Foundation members can book and stay at Hiltaba Nature Reserve. Existing members can use their Member ID to verify their membership during the booking process.

We welcome new members, and you are able to join during the booking process.

The annual Individual membership fee is $50 and is valid until 31 December.

You can see all Nature Foundation member benefits here: naturefoundation.org.au/join

Bookings should in the main be made online prior to arrival.

Book your visit here: visit.naturefoundation.org.au

For those who arrive on site and wish to book accommodation and or nature drives, we direct you to the self-service process, at Visitor Information Centre at the Woolshed.

Instructions are provided to book using our Wi-Fi and your smart phone via the booking site above.

- There is no entry fee for the Reserve. However, fees are payable if you want to stay overnight on the Reserve and/or enjoy our Nature Drives.

- Hiltaba Nature Reserve is open between 1 April and 31 October to day visitors, campers and visitors staying in our accommodation. The reserve is closed to visitors during the summer months.

- Accommodation and Nature Drives access are subject to operational requirements and the reserve may be closed to visitors during the Tourist Season for operational purposes and other program activities.

- Hiltaba has two bush campsites. All sites are unpowered and unallocated. Hiltaba provides accommodation options with our Shearers Quarters.

- Membership and booking fees for accommodation and nature drives help fund the ongoing management and conservation of our Nature Reserves.

About Staying at Hiltaba

Are there showers available at Hiltaba?

In the Hiltaba Shearers Quarters showers are available to those who have booked accommodation and are a short walk and adjacent to the Shearers Quarters. For campers, your fee includes optional use of showers. Please note these showers are approximately 7km from Pretty Point Campground. ***We ask you to conserve our precious water, having short showers and being smart with water use.***

Can we camp anywhere on the Nature Reserve?

- No. Camping is only in the designated campgrounds.

Can you accommodate RVs?

- While you can book and use the campgrounds with an RV, please note there is no RV dump on site and all waste must be disposed of after leaving at an official RV dump site.

What should I bring?

- All your food, personal, medical and care needs, and water for the visit.
- All your bedding for booked accommodation, a towel and all your camping or caravanning needs for our unpowered and unallocated campsites.
- Sturdy covered shoes are recommended for walking in the nature reserves and around the Hiltaba Homestead Precinct.
- Layered clothing is recommended as the temperatures can be warm during the day and cold at night.
- Waterproof clothing is useful if rain is forecast.
- Insects (flies and/or mosquitos) may be present so flynets, long sleeves and trouser legs may be useful. March flies and bees can be present in significant numbers during the year, so come prepared with allergy or insect bite medication.
- As no external lights are present, a torch can be helpful when moving around at nighttime.
- Firewood and kindling if wanting a campfire. *Please take special care when bringing firewood into the reserve so as not to also bring in weeds or invasive snails.*

- Plan well for your trip to minimise rubbish and ensure you take it with you to dispose responsibly.
- Camera to take photos and share your trip highlights with friends.

Can we top up our water tanks when we leave?

- Visitors must bring all their water needs for their stay.

Is there mobile phone coverage on the reserve?

- Patchy Telstra coverage may exist, but it is not widespread or reliable. We recommend guests have other communication devices available.

Is there internet access on the Nature Reserve?

- Yes. There is limited internet access available for visitors at the Visitor Information Centre area at the Woolshed.

Are fridges and freezers available in the kitchens?

- Yes. The Shearers Quarters shared dining facility with a kitchen/eating area with fridges and freezers.

Do the kitchens have cutlery, crockery, and basic appliances?

- Yes, the kitchen in the Shearers Quarters have crockery, cutlery, and basic appliances for guest use. In consideration of all our visitors, these facilities should be kept tidy and clean by all users. *Please leave all shared cooking and dining areas in a tidy and clean condition.*

Staying in the Shearers Quarters?

- Please ensure you leave your room tidy and clean up any spills, remove rubbish and sweep out your room before you depart.

Can I have a campfire on a reserve?

- Yes. You can use the fire rings at our camping and accommodation sites for campfires. Please ensure that you fully extinguish your campfire whenever you are not attending to it.
- Observe fire restrictions (no wood and solid fuel fires usually 1 November to 15 April) and check the Visitor Information Board for any changes to Fire Season.
- No fires are permitted outside the fire rings on our Nature Reserves.

Is firewood available on the reserve?

- No. If you want to have a campfire in one in our fire rings you must bring your own kindling and firewood. *Please take special care when bringing firewood into the reserve so as not to also bring in weeds or invasive snails.*
- Do not forage for, or cut down, wood on the reserves or outside our reserves. Dead and fallen timber is important habitat for birds, animals, and insects.

Can we use fire pigs/webers/gas stoves?

- Yes.

Can I dispose of rubbish on the reserves?

- No. Plan your trip well to minimise your rubbish.
- Bring garbage bags and take your rubbish with you when you leave to dispose of properly.

Is fuel available on the reserves?

- The closest fuel available is at Mt Ive or at Wirrulla.

Can I charge my electric vehicle on the reserves?

- No. The reserves do not have facilities to charge electric vehicles.

Is food available on the reserves?

- No. Plan and bring all your food and water requirements for your visit.
- There is a general store at Wirrulla 70 km from Hiltaba. Mt Ive Station has limited supplies.

Is power available in the accommodation?

- Yes. The Shearers Quarters accommodation has power. Campgrounds do not.

Can I bring my pet to the Nature Reserve?

- No. Pets are NOT ALLOWED on the Nature Reserve. This is for the protection of native wildlife and your pet. Baiting programs are also undertaken on the Nature Reserves to manage invasive species.

Getting there

What are the roads like for AWD, 4WD, towed campervans, trailers, and caravans?

- The roads into the Nature Reserves are AWD and 4WD accessible (subject to weather conditions). Nature Drives are not accessible to AWDs, they require high clearance 4WDs.

- Depending on your off-road experience with towed campervans and trailers, they may be able to be towed into the Nature Reserves. Please check road conditions for caravans. The roads to the Nature Reserves may be closed due to recent rain and at these times there are additional restrictions on vehicles and/or towing.

For information on road closures phone Transport SA on 1300 361 033 or visit their website http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads.

What's the best way to get to the Nature Reserves from Adelaide by road?

- 4WDs are recommended for travelling to Hiltaba. Nature Drives require high clearance 4WDs. Recent or impending rain will significantly impact access to and from the reserve, and your safety while there.
- Weather conditions can be checked at http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/map.shtml for weather in the Northwest Pastoral District.
- Check road conditions before travelling and be aware that significant penalties apply for travelling on a closed road.

How do I get to Hiltaba?

- Via Mt Ive: From Adelaide the total distance is approx. 650km (310km sealed road to Port Augusta, 69km to Iron Knob and approx. 250km of well-maintained UNSEALED ROAD from Iron Knob to Hiltaba).
- The last fuel stop is Mt Ive which has unleaded and diesel fuel, open 7 days. Phone (08) 8648 1817.
- Via Wirrulla: From Adelaide the total distance is approx. 750km (680km sealed road to Wirrulla and 70km UNSEALED ROAD from Wirrulla to Hiltaba). Wirrulla general store has unleaded and diesel fuel, open 7 days. Phone (08) 8626 8038.
- There is no fuel available at Hiltaba, so we recommend that you fill up at Mt Ive or at Wirrulla.
- For information about approaching Hiltaba in from other directions, please call the Adelaide office on (08) 8340 2880 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Emergency contact information — Hiltaba

- Hiltaba Homestead — Conservation Land Managers
  - Telephone: (08) 8648 1885
  - UHF 06 duplex

Hiltaba medical advice

- Streaky Bay Hospital — Phone (08) 8626 1127
- Royal Flying Doctor — Phone 1800 733 772 (doctor on call 24/7)
- Wudinna Hospital — Phone (08) 8680 2101

Police or other emergencies

- Call 000
- Wirrulla Police Station — Phone (08) 8626 8011

Other information

- Please call Nature Foundation's Adelaide office on (08) 8340 2880 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm for any other queries.
- RAA Service — Phone 13 11 11

Nature Drives

Multiple Nature Drive loops are a great way to explore Hiltaba. These follow former station tracks from when the Nature Reserve was a pastoral property. These re-purposed tracks are suitable as self-drive tours so that visitors, with suitable vehicles, can enjoy the different landscapes and views offered by the reserve.

The Nature Drives are suitable for properly equipped 4WD vehicles and are fully signposted, with track notes available to borrow from the Nature Drive Box outside the Visitor Information Centre at the Woolshed. Off track driving is strictly prohibited.

Please note: Wombats are active on the reserve, and you may encounter Wombat holes on our roads. We highlight known wombat holes with white pole markers. Drive with caution at all times on our reserves.

Nature Drives and Walks may close without notice for environmental and/or operational reasons.

Drive information

- The drives are fully signposted, and track notes are available to borrow from the Visitor Information Centre (or you can download PDFs).
- Some of the drives are accessed through locked gates. Check your Nature Drive booking itinerary for the combination code for all locks. Please clock the gates after travelling through.
- Please review the safety information about drives at the Visitor Information Centre or in the Nature Drive Guides.

NOTE: At Hiltaba Nature Reserve you will need the Lock Combination code found in your Nature Drive booking confirmation email to access these Nature Drives:

- Mt St Mungo Nature Drive
- Pine Well – Narlaby Nature Drive

Important information for our drives

- Keep to the tracks as marked with the appropriate Nature Drive signs indicated on the track notes.
- Off track driving is strictly prohibited.
- Avoid driving on boggy roads and if you get stuck, do not leave your vehicle.
- The Nature Drives are suitable for properly equipped 4WD vehicles
- For your safety and the safety of our wildlife keep vehicle speed below 40km on all Nature Reserve tracks at all times.

Mt St Mungo – CLOSED due to extensive track damage

- Approximately 75kms round trip from Hiltaba Homestead, excluding side trip.
- Allow 4-5 hours.

Starting from the Homestead and turning east for approx. 7.5kms along the Hiltaba-Iron Knob Road, this drive takes visitors into the north-east regions of the Reserve. It passes by the Pretty Point campground and the adjacent Betty and Bob Lewis walking trail, then winding through mallee woodland, past the historic Peeweena Dam and yard, before climbing over a saddle and heading north for about 3.5kms to the foot of Mt St Mungo.

A 45-minute walk to the summit provides spectacular views. To the north is Lake Acraman formed by a meteor strike around 580 million years ago. The route returns southwards through saltbush plains, re-joining the main road approx. 23kms from the Homestead.

Pine Well – Narlaby

- Approximately 79kms round trip from Hiltaba Homestead, excluding side trip.
- Allow 4 hours.

Starting from the Homestead and turning east for approx 28.5kms along the Hiltaba-Iron Knob Road, this drive takes visitors into the south-east regions of the Reserve.

The route visits the large windmill and yards at Pine Well, winding westwards through woodlands and former sheep paddocks to the historic Narlaby wells. For a few kilometres it follows the southern boundary fence with the Gawler Ranges National Park, before turning northwards to link with the Mark Bonnin walking trail near twin waterfalls (geologically impressive, though usually dry), in hilly country near the centre of the Reserve.

The route then heads back towards the Homestead, past one of its main water sources, through saltbush plains, ending near the Hiltaba woolshed, 2kms from the Homestead.

The Lookout

- Approximately 35kms round trip from the Homestead if undertaken as a separate drive but can be combined as a side trip with either of the previous 2 drives.
- Allow up to 1 hour for the 5.4km return 4WD section, with time to walk around the Lookout site.

This drive is a short, but steep, rocky route for about half its 2.7km length; use of 4WD low range is recommended when the climbing section begins. With some short walking around the summit area, visitors can enjoy spectacular views of the Reserve in all directions.

Chiltadinna Track

- Approximately 50kms round trip from Homestead, including 43kms off-road.
- Allow three hours.

Starting from the Homestead turn right towards Wirrulla and this track turns right and winds its way mostly within the former Chiltadinna paddock (over 65km square).

It passes through a variety of landscapes including Mallee Woodlands, Black Oak stands and Bluebush plains. The drive traverses large sections of the boundary fence with Kondoolka Station and there are several fine viewpoints.

How much does a Nature Drive cost?

- Pricing is available through our booking site with payment per vehicle and by number of days you wish to access drives: www.visit.naturefoundation.org.au

Can we add extra vehicles to our booking when we arrive?

- Yes, and you will need to pay the additional fee through self-service booking system at the Visitor Information Centre.

Can I do a Nature Drive if I don't have a 4WD?

- No. Nature Drives are accessible to 4WD vehicles only.

How long should we stay for?

- You can visit for a day drive or stay longer, depending on your interest and other travel plans. We suggest 2-3 days to enjoy the different parts of the reserve, including our Nature Walks, or longer if you want to unwind and relax in nature and explore more slowly.

Walking Trails

Hiltaba's Walking Trails are a paradise for hikers and birdwatchers. The trails range in length from 2km to 14km and cater for a variety of fitness levels. They offer breathtaking views and ample opportunities for photography, bird watching and viewing spring flowers.

Trail notes are available at the start of each walk.

The Betty and Bob Lewis Walking Trail around Pretty Point is about 2km in length. It climbs on a marked track around the stunning granite boulders at Pretty Point. The gentle climb is rewarded with views across the rugged rocky landscapes back to the homestead and beyond, towards Mount Hiltaba and Barber Hill.

The Mark Bonnin Walking Trails provide an opportunity for walkers of various abilities to walk either the green route of 3km, the blue route of 9km or the more rugged red route of 11km. The trailhead (starting point) for all three walks is approximately 15km from the Hiltaba homestead accessed by a short vehicular detour off the Iron Knob/Yardea road.

These trails provide the opportunity to experience different landscapes at Hiltaba: open grasslands, casuarina, mallee, and bullock bush stands and rocky gorges. While the Lookout (a high point from which large areas of the Nature Reserve are laid out before you), is only accessible via the red walk, all walkers can climb or drive to the Lookout for an opportunity to experience its magnificent views.

The David Cleland Walking Trail is a linear walk of 7km (14km return). The trail commences at the Shearers Quarters and follows the wide valley dotted with wombat burrows and includes gentle climbs on the smooth sheets of Hiltaba Granite. A gentle climb through mallee slopes passes over a ridge to the Pretty Point Camping Area with its distinctive Granite boulders.

This walk can be extended by including the Betty and Bob Lewis Walking Trail, before returning to the Shearers Quarters. You can also detour to an important geological feature (Geosite 966).

If you only plan to walk one way, ensure you have arranged a vehicle pick-up at Pretty Point.

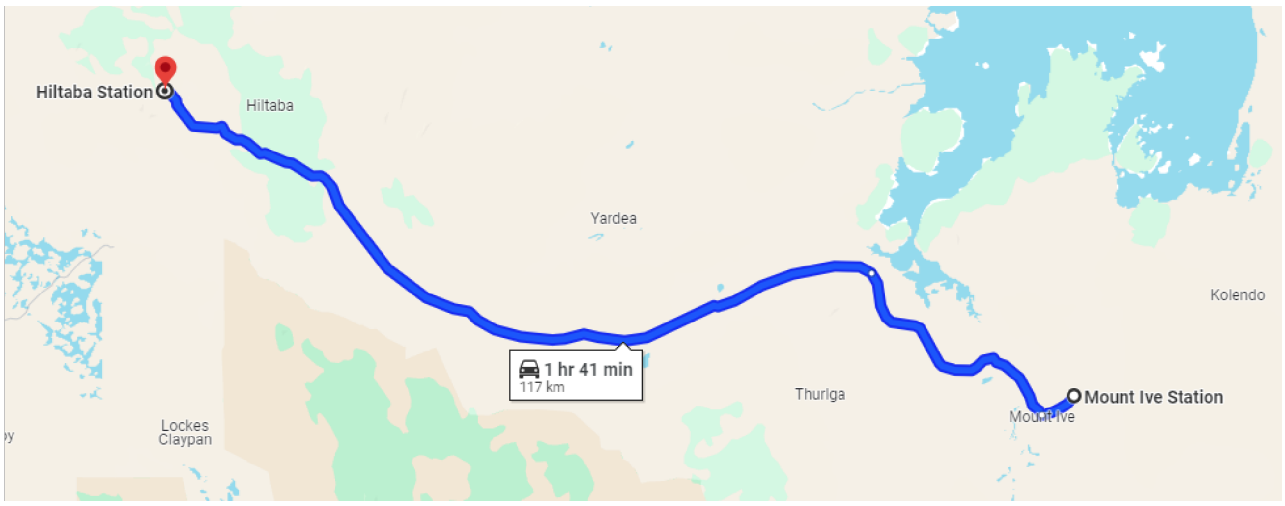
The Warren Bonython Walking Trail is a 10km loop walk, commencing near the Hiltaba Homestead and circumnavigates majestic Mount Hiltaba. It includes a steep climb to the summit of Mount Hiltaba (424m) along rocky creek beds, ledges, and slopes. Stop for a break at the summit and enjoy the magnificent views south to the Gawler Ranges National Park and the salt pans towards Wirrulla before commencing the rugged descent over rocky terrain. The last section returns to the homestead along the mallee slopes on the eastern flanks of Mount Hiltaba.

Getting there — Map and Environs

From Wirrulla



From Mt Ive



Quick reference — Useful information for planning your travel

www.naturefoundation.org.au

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

North West Pastoral District Forecast (bom.gov.au)

Central Eyre & Gawler Ranges | Eyre Peninsula

Outback safety & travelling in arid landscapes

Hiltaba Nature Reserve

