

# Trip Reports:

## Gawler Ranges South Aust.

Trip Report by Peter Carlyon April 2009

If you are travelling the Eyre Highway a side trip through the Gawler Ranges Nat. Park is worthy of inclusion in your itinerary. Access from the east via Iron Knob, or as I did from Ceduna, via Minnipa.

Time wise I left Ceduna, about 9.00, morning tea at Pildappa Rock, lunch at Yandinga Falls, camped at Mattered, Next day, Old Pondanna Outstation, Yardea, Southern end of Lake Gairdner, Mt Ive & camped at Whyalla. Daytime temperatures were mid to high 30's.

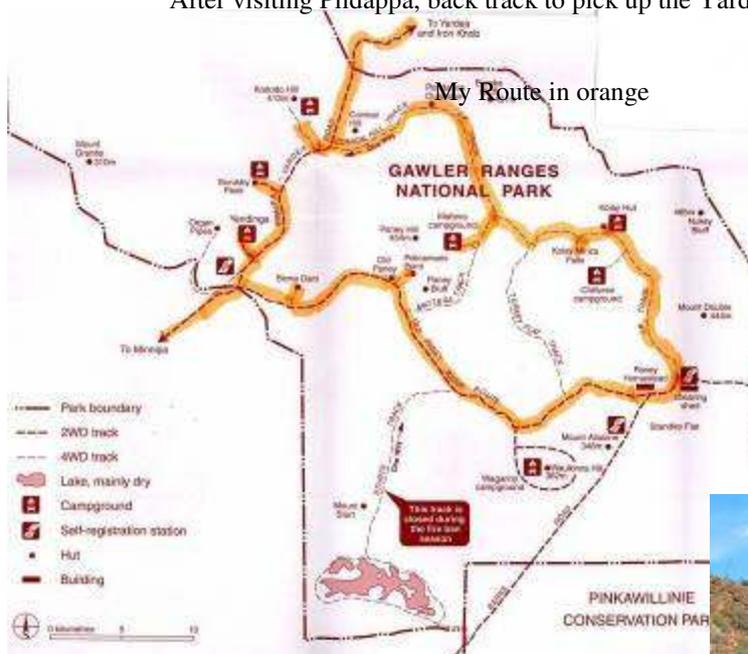
Pildappa Rock about 19km north of Minnipa



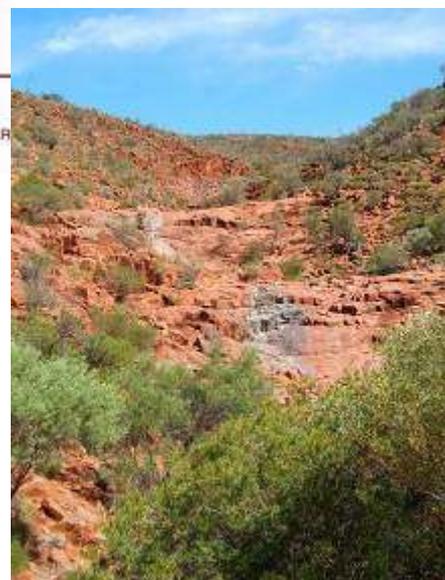
Picnic Area Pildappa



After visiting Pildappa, back track to pick up the Yardea road again.



My Route in orange



Yandinga Falls

The Nat Park consists of broad valleys between the ranges previously operated as Paney sheep station since the 1850's. The dark red to mauve colours of the hills contrast well with the greens of the valley foliage. The effect is more subtle than spectacular.



Stone Dam



#### Old Paney Homestead

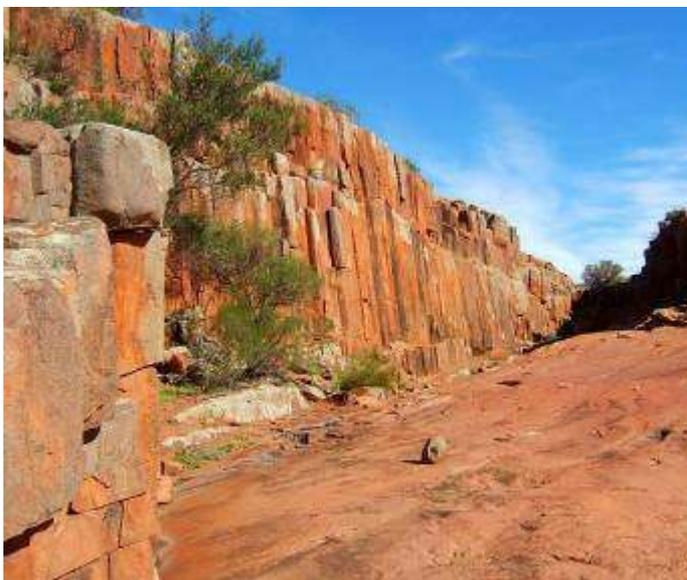


The shearing shed is a modern day galvanised iron building, The park offers accommodation in the shearers quarters nearby.

LP track is marked as 4x4, in sections to Turkey Flat track, it becomes slow, 10 – 20 kph rocky & rough but no problem for Wang 4x4 members used to our alpine country, off road trailers would be ok. One of the better camp sites is Kolay Hut, under shady trees beside the creek. (dry) A nearby cement block hut has a shower & tank water, the original corr. iron is shown below right.



The Kolay Mirica falls have some great organ pipe structures of rhyolite.



## Track Torque



Mattera Camp is not much to write home about, not a lot of shade but lots of open space.

Old Pondanna outstation has been restored by Friends of Gawler NP Cropping was carried out here in the early 1900's. Today the flat paddocks have a good crop of heliotrope but no saltbush, unlike the grazing areas.



### Conical Hill from Paney – Yardea Gate

The Conical Hill track (4x4 one way) climbs up to a ridge from Pondanna Outstation to the Paney – Yardea Gate, again slow, rocky, twisty and some what washed out ( ok for off road trailer ) to possibly the best views in the park, especially in the morning.



On the Yardea road the Nat Park is soon left behind and I headed toward Lake Gairdner. The 1880's Pondanna shearing shed foundations, cook house & quarters stand near the southern end of the lake.

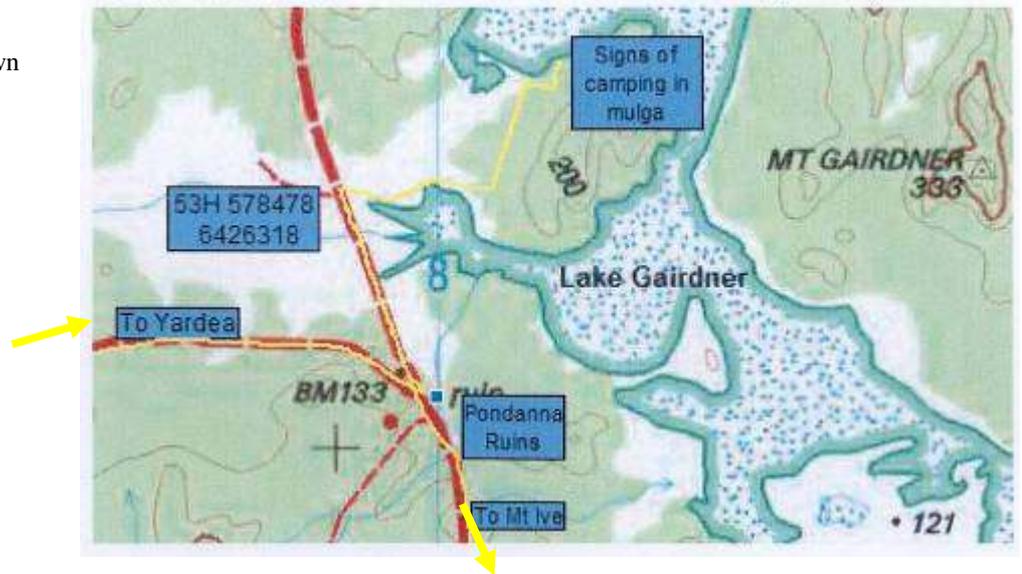


It would have been a long trek to get firewood!

I decided to see if I could get a view of Lake Gairdner from the road heading north from here and found a track following a fence line in the right direction this brought me out on to the shores of the lake.

Yellow line is my track log.  
 From the grid ref. no track is shown  
 on maps.  
 It's about 3km north of  
 Pondanna ruins.

si5303 Yardea .ecw Australian Geocentric 1994 (GDA94)



Lake Gairdner



The intense redness of the sand dunes  
 and the variety of plant life impressed me.



My intention was to stay at Mt Ive and explore their tracks and visit Lake Gairdner via their locked gate. When I arrived at their shop at 2.00 it didn't open until 5.00. The sign said to use their UHF mic. on the shop door several tries brought no response. Shearing was on, so I suppose they were busy. I looked at the camp ground offering little shade on this mid 30's plus afternoon, I had seen Lake Gairdner, the countryside of their property didn't seem to offer much more than I had seen in the Nat Park so I headed for Whyalla to camp.