

Warraweena Conservation Park 4WD Trip (6th – 14th October 2013)

Lead by Dave, Michele & Jessica

Sunday 6th October 2013



Sunday Morning bright and early (earlier than usual being start of Daylight Savings) we left home to meet up with Sue, Roger, John & Astrid at Tarlee with no one being late we all successfully turned our clocks forward. 7:30 am we hit the road to meet Paul at Auburn and that's all of us until a couple vehicles meet us at Warraweena on Monday that were at Bri-Glen.

Jamestown saw a Morning Tea stop at our Favourite Playground, back on the road at 10 after our tummies were refuelled it was onto Hawker for lunch and car refuelling time. We headed back out onto the blacktop just after 1 pm making great time

to be at Warraweena at a reasonable time to setup.

A bumpy and rocky ride into the property from Beltana and we found the Office and Gina gave us a run-down of the tracks and we headed back to Sliding Rock Ruins and Old Cemetery to get to our camp site for the duration of our 8 night stay. Miners Camp boasts a Camp Fire Ring and a big communal table as well as a nice large tree for some arvo shade to sit under AND a well maintained Long Drop Toilet including closing door and a solid base.

6pm saw us as set up as we were going to be that night and relaxing after a big days drive.

Monday 7th October 2013

A casual morning on Monday was very welcomed by all while we waited for the Harpers and Martin 1 & 2 to arrive from Bri-Glen.



After lunch we decided to go for a tourist arvo drive to charge the car batteries to keep the fridges going and Jessica's much needed i Pod too haha.

Heading to Nantiburry Spring we came to a dead end driving but a walk (YES we walked for those that don't believe us) found lots of pools of water and loads of tadpoles and was great to see lots of trickles of water amongst the rocks - a really lovely place.



Next stop was the Lookout which was a little steeper on the way up than first thought especially when you can't see the track in front of you and only the sky. Very tight parking up top but thankful to only have 3 vehicles with Paul & Dave leading us all astray talking. Blind leading the blind as they say.



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Tuesday 8th October 2013

We left the campsite around 8.30 am and headed to the homestead to get the track route and instructions for the day and finally set off for the tracks around 9.00 am. The forecast for the day was warm and getting warmer with an expected high of around 32C - clear blue skies and sunshine - wonderful!

Traversing the tracks were Dave, Michele & Jessica (leaders), Sue & Roger, Paul, John & Astrid, Martin & Martin and Sandra & Pete (tail end Charlie.)

After unlocking & locking the first gate (and thanks to Jessica the very generous gate fairy) there was some gentle meandering through creek beds before making our way upwards towards the hills. The wildflowers were in abundance both on the shrubs and ground, whites, pinks, purple & yellow - the Flinders Ranges in all its springtime glory! Eventually, after negotiating more tracks we stopped in a creek bed for morning tea as there were large trees providing plenty of shade and room for us all to be together.

We set off from our morning tea break and were bemused to find emus leading the trip for a little while until they got tired of that and left us to our own devices. Now the track was rocky as the surrounding terrain had changed dramatically and we rocked and rolled slowly around the track.

By this time we had gone all of 8.2 kms (out of 60+ kms of track) from the homestead so still had a way to go!! We travelled through numerous creek beds negotiating huge red gums in the middle of the track from time



to time with the going very slow. At around midday we stopped at the old Warraweena Priory bore and had lunch in the shade of some large trees.

Following lunch we drove to Yellow Well and noticed an old goat trap, which caught everyone's interest and another photo opportunity before proceeding on towards Dunbar Lookout - very interesting driving -with more rocking and rolling (what a pity it doesn't help with the weight loss!)

From the lookout there were two ways to go down - Suicide Hill or Chicken Hill!!! To the more confident drivers there was only one choice, however, Sue and Roger decided to take the Chicken Hill route, until they got there!!

It looked worse than Suicide Hill as the surface seemed very loose and, with the possibility of losing traction, they decided to join the remainder of us and take their chances down the steep Suicide descent with the help of some coaching from Pete. Sue was driving and completed the track like an old hand. Well done, Sue!

We had hoped to get to Blinman's Waterhole but failed due to lack of time. By this time, it was 4.30 pm so instead we headed to Dunbar Hut and then back to the homestead.



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We sighted goats, kangaroos, emus, cockatoos & galahs and thanks must go to Jessica for keeping a record - her tally reads as follows for the whole week:

80 Skippy's	4 Huts
65 Goats plus Paul the Red Goat	11 Windmills
70 Emus	26 Lizards
16 Holes	4 Skinks
34 Creeks	56 Sheep plus the hundreds at the Spring
23 Big Rocks	16 Others - which includes Butterflies, Ruined Buildings, 2 Goannas, Mummy & Baby Goat together
61 Birds	

Thank you to Dave & Michele for a great week and leading the trip over some very interesting tracks.

[Sandra & Pete Harper]

Wednesday 9th October 2013

With temperatures expected in the high 30's for the day, the decision was made to have a leisurely day and try to avoid the heat. Stony recommended the Black Range Springs as the coolest spot in the area.

At 10:45 we left the homestead, with Jessica actively spotting the wildlife and Michelle reporting to the rest of us via the radio. Sandra complained that she wasn't seeing any of the wildlife, which led to comments on needing an eye test and querying the competency of her optician.

Astrid provided a flora lesson after Dave asked about the purple "dunny brush" looking flowers. She was able to advise they were 'nulla nulla' plants, named after the aboriginal clubs used to sort out disputes between the women, as the flowers were similar in shape.

After easy driving through numerous creek crossings we arrived at the **Mt Hack** campsite at approx. 11:50.

Located at the base of Mt Hack (highest peak in the northern Flinders), it provided an ideal spot for morning tea (long drop toilet & fire ring - not used today !!)

Setting off again at 12:15, we had a brief stop while Peter checked under his vehicle for a metal against metal rattle. Nothing found, and sound was gone after we moved off again. This was the only incident close to any vehicle issue for the day.

At 12:55 we arrived at the **Black Range Springs** site. Again well provisioned with long drop toilet, table and campfire ring. Stony was true to his word, and lunch and the afternoon was spent taking advantage of the cool shade of the pine trees.

Apart from active discussions (insufficient to stop Peter from falling asleep in his chair), the only other activity undertaken was Dave taking a long walk along the creek bed to locate the springs.

Setting off at 4:00 for the easy drive back to camp, with M&M, P&S detouring to the lookout to Mt Hack for the panoramic view the rest of us enjoyed on the Monday. Arrived back at camp around 4:45pm.

Overall an easy day (driving & activity wise) enjoying the scenery, fauna & flora of the Flinders, with 2.5 hours of driving and 51 km travelled.

[Roger & Sue Brennand]



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Thursday 10th October 2013

8.15 am: Expedition departs for homestead ready to receive final briefing for the drive to Mt Giles under the guidance of our noble leader David. Roger and Sue had a bad night and decided to stay at base camp and Paul likewise remained as he was unwell.

The intrepid explorers set off along a creek bed full of large gums and then into hop bush and native pine country. This was the easiest part of the drive. The cavalcade was held up by a courting couple on the road [sleepy lizards] but N Z Martin helped them on their way.

We reached the first gate in good time but our navigator Michelle took a while to unlock it, her breaking and entering skills were rusty as was the lock. Superlube sorted it out and it closed smoothly.

We were now entering new territory. Lots of concentration was needed to weave our way between big gums, rocks and the slippery shale of the creek beds. We stopped for morning tea at Cockatoo Hut. A well looked after area with a long-drop. Sandra gave the accommodation 2 1/2 stars.

Off down the creek bed again. Lots of tree hugging and slaloming between trees and rocks, and rocks and a hard place. Beautiful scenery in creekbeds and on both hill-sides.

Then out of the creek-bed and into the high country. Up and up and up and up to the top of Mt Gill [910 m]. Views to die for all 360 degrees. Unfortunately, somewhat hazy due to weather conditions but Wilpena Pound and Lake Torrens were visible on the way up but had disappeared into the haze by the time we reached the top. Too breezy for lunch but our youngest explorer Jessica added her rock to the cairn.

Down again to the creek-bed past the "Australian Christmas Tree" with its decoration of cans and bottles. Stopped for a long lunch and solved the world's problems. After this herculean task we headed for Halleys Hut another little reconstructed corrugated iron hut with an outside shower [bring your own water] and long-drop with a great view [no door].

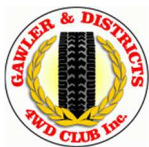
Next stop was Old Warraweena homestead which was partly restored and after a thorough inspection we headed back.

All had gone well for everybody on a trip which required raised suspensions to gain adequate clearance. No mechanical problems. No errors of judgement in spite of difficult terrain requiring lots of concentration.

I was crowing to myself about this when fairly close to home a tyre low-pressure warning went off revealing a piece of stick producing a slow leak. Limped into camp to find it had been struck by high winds and maybe a "whirly" which had upset the tents and spread some equipment around but no serious damage.

The temperature had dropped considerably but happy hour was enjoyed by all!

[Astrid Gardner]



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Friday 11th October 2013



All 6 vehicles left together down to Parachilna Gorge on a wildlife spotting drive to get to Glass Gorge road and on to the public access route (PAR) No 3, to Nuccaleena Mine ruins, having stopped at a lookout on the way. After a coffee and a look around it was time to move on to the North Blinman Hotel dining room.

Blinman burgers were a favourite, but after lunching and a bit of shopping it was 3pm, so back in the cars for the next Artimore loop PAR

No 5. With stopping at the Artimore ruins it took 3 hours to go around and end up at the Angorichina Village for a top up of fuel. Dave served fuel even though we were half an hour after closing time, so most of us topped up even if not needing it (got to keep the locals in business). Jessica got an ice-cream and a



number of people bought new hats with built on fly veils.

The drive back to Warraweena was like playing dodgems with the wildlife at dusk, to return to the campsite at 7.55pm - the trip leaders Dave and Michelle plus tail John and Astrid putting in a lot of overtime!!



After three windy days with fire bans, we finally had a calm cool evening, so we were able to have a camp fire, and set up for happy hour. With 3 days of nibbles to get through (and a large late lunch) I don't think anyone cooked dinner.

The campfire encouraged a lot of talking and a sing-along and a few of us stayed to make sure the fire was dying out in the wee hours. Next morning, we (M&M) left for Bendleby Ranges.



[Martin]

Saturday 12th October 2013

A bit of a mystery tour after Martin & Martin (M&M) left in the morning. We started off to Mt Hack led by Dave, Michele & Jessica then decided to turn back and go to Beltana instead. We turned off into a creek bed to investigate the track and found our first goanna.



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Pictures were taken and in an effort to get a shot, John had a fall and broke his camera as well as injuring himself. The local search party (us) set to to try and find the camera pieces which had fallen onto the creek bed whilst Pete and Astrid mummified John's arms with bandages.

After that excitement and making sure that John was okay to continue on, we set off again towards the Beltana Station for lunch and a history lesson in the disused shearing shed cum museum. The shed was full of all kinds of interesting things, including photos, and once we had eaten our huge scones, jam & cream and consumed drinks, bought souvenirs and books, we headed off towards the Beltana Cemetery - again another interesting place - and onto the Beltana Railway Station which is now used as a private residence. Sad reminders of the mid to late 1800's!

Off to Pattapa Gap Springs, a beautiful setting with green grass and flowing water. There were literally hundreds of sheep at this creek and it also provided another photo opportunity. After we left, the sheep slowly made their way back towards the creek to enjoy the fresh water and shade.

From here we headed back to camp for "happy hour" and more camaraderie around the camp fire. Another great day thanks to Dave, Michele, Jessica and co.

[Paul Chernih]

Sunday 13th October 2013

After a great communal camp fire night we woke to another windy day ☹️ with campers and vans rocking. Peter, Sandra, John & Astrid were leaving us today and it was the first day we all had to dig out the long pants, socks AND shoes since we left -we had been living in shorts and t's until then, ahhhh!!

While we started packing up as much as we could for the trip home the next day, it BLEW and BLEW and BLEW, around and around it went. Couldn't it have waited so we could have had a fire on our last night? We had so much wood left that M&M kindly brought up on our trailer the next campers there will be in camp fire heaven.

A quiet relaxing morning was had by all preparing for the drive home tomorrow then some strange wet drops started falling from the sky unexpectedly just as Dave got back from the office to tell us Stony had a told him we could do another track. Great we all thought better to be inside a car driving than sitting around camp in the wind and rain drops.

Started out as a nice easy drive with no major dramas and nice twists and turns in and out of creeks but with 4pm here and the track getting much harder when we approached a steep rocky bit and rain drops threatening to get MUCH larger we decided it was time to turn around and head back to camp. Unfortunately, it was too late in the day for the trip to go further but we would love to go back and finish it one day.

Monday 14th October 2013

Monday Morning is here and final pack up time as we get ready to be homeward bound wow 8 nights sure went quick. Sue & Roger left with their "Retro" Van at 8 to take it nice and slow to Beltana to pump up their tyres while Paul had a last camp shower (which was a wonderful treat for us all to be able to use at the homestead) and we finished packing up, last as always hey!



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Finally, we were ready to go and 9:30 we said goodbye to Miners Camp and Warraweena after a fantastic 8 nights and a wonderful trip enjoyed by all, even though "happy hour" was quite late or non-existent on some nights.



After a stop for lunch at Hawker and fuel at Clare we got home safe and sound, tired and dusty at 5:30 pm. What a big day but ahhhhhhhhhhhhh nothing like your own bed and lonnnnngggg HOT shower, is there?

Thanks to those who came and sorry that John & Jane couldn't make it at the last minute due to Jane being in hospital - we sure did miss you guys and hope this report and the pictures helps you feel like you were there.

[Dave, Michele & Jessica Riddle]