

diverse on the southern side. Pause to look at the little birds that flit past, and listen for the plaintive call of the Peaceful Dove.

1.0 km A cleared area comes into view, with old experimental enclosures. Aged Silver Banksias grow on the left at the foot of the dune, with Scarlet Bottlebrushes. A drainage line on the right has been cleared in the past for pasture and is now replanted with local species. A South African pasture grass (Veldt Grass) is much in evidence.

0.6 km Having crossed the creek return to **Checkpoint C2** along the fire track** noting very dense vegetation on the left and, as you proceed, cleared land on the right with regenerating Pink and Blue Gums.

0.0 km Checkpoint C2 Return to Pimpala Road along the Honeyeater Link.

Conservation Park Rd Trailhead Checkpoint C4 to Checkpoint C3 – Firetail link (0.6 km).

Start at the stile, but you may want to have a look at a stone ruin, on the other side of the clearing, before you start.

0.6 km From the stile, follow the narrow trail through the Pink Gums, Southern Cypress-pines and the spindly Wallowa wattle and cross the open paddock. You could be startled by a Stubble Quail if they take off in alarm.

0.4 km Before you reach this point, you enter the mature pine woodland with patches of the tough leaves of Pointed Mat-rush.

0.0 km Checkpoint C3 Join the Wren Circuit here. Continue around the circuit anti-clockwise from **C3** to **C2** and return to **C3** (see notes above). Your next distance will show as 1.4km; at C2 the notes start at 2.8km, returning to C3 at 1.5km.

Follow the Firetail Link back to Conservation Park Road.

Plaques in the park commemorate three people who contributed to its establishment – Cecil Rix Commissioner for Crown Lands (nr C4), Sir Keith Wilson donor of land (nr C1), and Mark Bonnin first President of the National Parks Foundation (nr **).



Diamond Firetail



Superb Fairy-wren

PLANTS YOU MAY SEE ON THE WALK

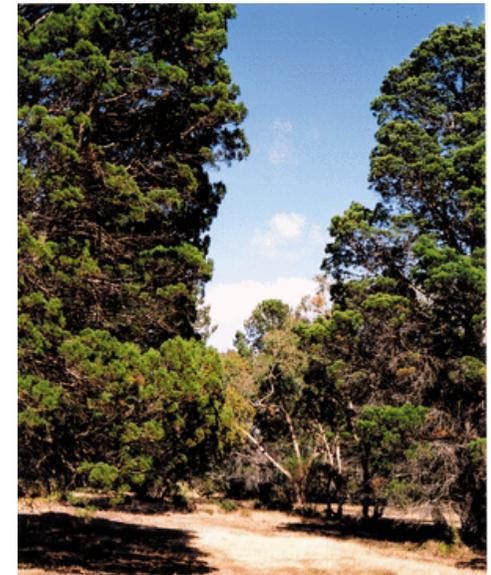
- Blue Gum (SA Blue Gum)** *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* tree up to 30m tall, smooth grey/cream bark
- Drooping Sheoak** *Allocasuarina verticillata* tree up to 8m, with dark green leafless branches
- Golden Wattle** *Acacia pycnantha* slender tree, dark bark, golden balls of flower late winter
- Mallee Box** *Eucalyptus porosa* mallee form to 10m, with rough bark, white flowers in summer
- Mount Lofty Grass-tree** *Xanthorrhoea quadrangulata* usually with trunk
- Peppermint Box** *Eucalyptus odorata* Tree or mallee up to 12m tall, rough dark grey bark
- Pink Gum** *Eucalyptus fasciculosa* tree up to 18m with smooth cream/grey bark, masses of white flowers in autumn
- Pointed Mat-rush** *Lomandra densiflora* tufted, linear leaves to 60cm, small basal flowers
- Ridge-fruited Mallee** *Eucalyptus incrassata* low mallee to 5m, with thick-walled, ribbed fruit.
- Scarlet Bottlebrush** *Callistemon rugulosus* compact shrub, with oval leaves, red bottlebrush flowers in spring
- Silver Banksia** *Banksia marginata* large shrub or small tree with yellow candle flowers
- Silver Broom** *Baeckea behrii* slender shrub to 2m, small white flowers in spring and summer
- Sticky Hopbush** *Dodonaea viscosa* purplish 'hops' in late spring
- Wallowa** *Acacia calamifolia* in Sandy Creek, a straggly wattle with linear leaves, globular flowers in spring (rounded bush in other locations)

Walk is in a Conservation Park managed by the Department for Environment and Heritage. It is presented here by the Walking Trails Support Group.
www.walkingtrailssupportgroup.org.au

Interpretation is based on the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia's guidebook Exploring the Barossa available from Tanunda Visitor Information Centre

December 2009

Barossa Walks Sandy Creek



Mature woodland of Southern Cypress pine
Callitris gracilis

Sandy Creek Conservation Park lies on sands of Tertiary age (between 40 and 2 million years ago) like those at Altona, having their origin in the ancient river system that carried eroded material from the uplifted Barossa Range. Sand quarrying, as at Rowland Flat, occurs alongside the reserve. Limited clearing made way for farming and a small area was planted to vines in 1888. As part of 'Sandy Creek Scrub', trees were cut for fence posts, building material and fuel. Stands of Southern Cypress-pine and the uncommon Ridge-fruited Mallee occur on the deeper sands. Many flowering shrubs and herbs provide a colourful display from spring into early summer.

Like other parks in the Barossa region this is a valuable remnant of the original vegetation, providing habitat for a variety of lizards and birds -Striated Pardalote, Diamond Firetail, honey eaters (including White Plumed, New Holland and Yellow-faced), Superb Fairy-wren and various parrots.

Distance and Times: There are two starting points. From Pimpala Road Trailhead (**Checkpoint C1**), Honeyeater Link trail and Wren Circuit is 4.8km; allow 2¼ hours.

From Conservation Park Road Trailhead (**Checkpoint C4**), Firetail Link trail and Wren Circuit is 4km; allow 2 hours.

Access: From Lyndoch. To reach **Pimpala Road Trailhead** drive west from the main Lyndoch cross roads for 3.1km. The turning on the right is unmarked and obscure.

To reach **Conservation Park Road Trailhead**, drive NW from the main cross roads for 3.9km. The left turn is signposted and the park is a further 0.5 km – look out for trains and quarry trucks!

Distances are marked every 0.2km decreasing as you progress. Notes are written for a start from Pimpala Road C1, but if starting from C4 the Firetail link track takes you to C3 and you continue from there.

Track

Generally an AS2156 Class 3 track in a natural area.

For your safety

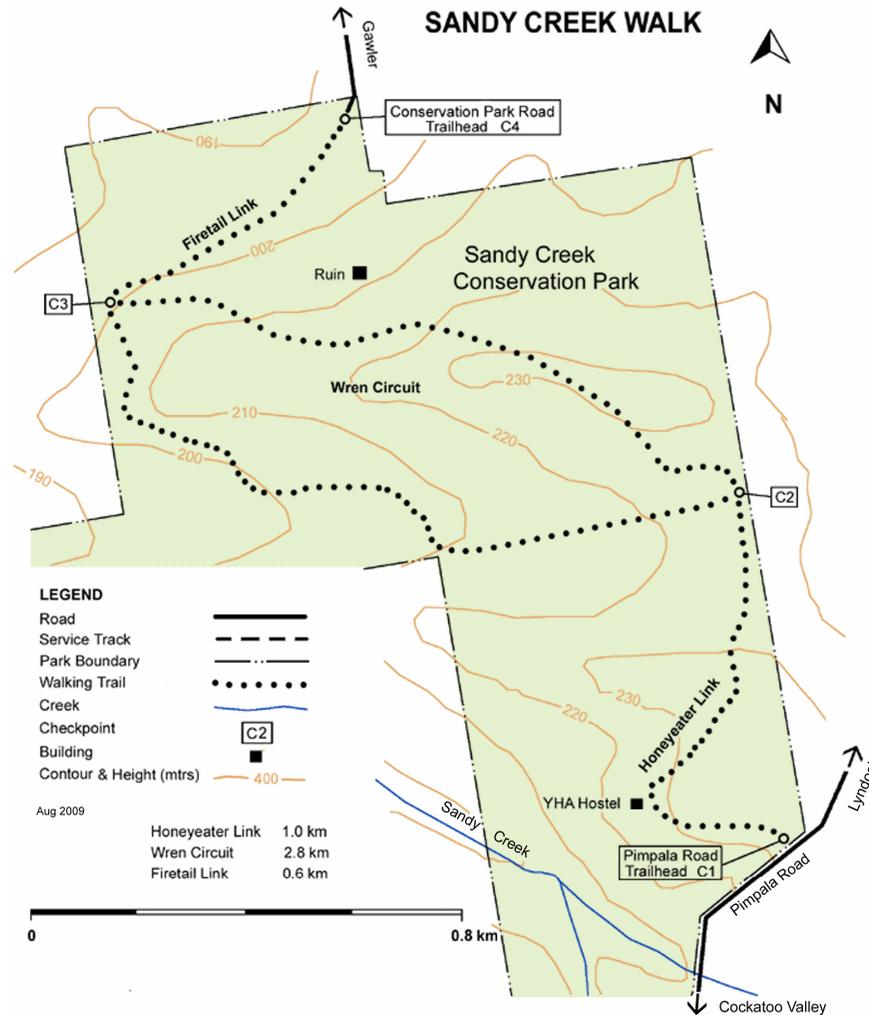
- This is a walk in a natural area; beware of inherent hazards
- Walk in a party of four, advise a reliable person of where you are going and when you expect to return
- Wear strong comfortable boots and take adequate food and clothing
- Take at least 2 litres of water per person, more if it is hot
- Protect yourself from the sun and carry a First Aid Kit

Seasons come and go, and plants and animals mentioned in the notes may not always be there.



Merrilyn Browne

New Holland Honeyeater



Pimpala Road Trailhead, Checkpoint C1 to Checkpoint C2 – Honeyeater link (1.0 km)

1.0 km Checkpoint C1 The track rises from the sandy car park through Southern Cypress-pines, Drooping Sheoaks, Pink Gum and Golden Wattle to ...

0.8 km ... where there is a clay knoll behind the Youth hostel. The main trees here are Peppermint Box, Mallee, Box and Blue Gum and there is a scatter of white quartz pebbles. The hostel was once a sheep farm known as 'The Vale'; limited clearing round about suggests that farming opportunities were limited.

0.6 km Just beyond this marker, sandy soils reappear and meat ants' nests and their 'highways' make sure you move on quickly. Echidnas however, relish the little morsels and their diggings occur here and all along the walk.

0.4 km Under big pine trees, on the hilltop, a clearing gives a view east to the Barossa Range. The highest hill here is Pewsey Vale Peak, the highest in the Barossa (629m).

0.0 km Checkpoint C2 Again there are views east. Kaiserstuhl (600m) is the high point.

Wren Circuit (2.8 km) starts here. *Notes are written for an anticlockwise walk.* Continue along the narrow trail, walking gradually up the southern side of a large sand dune. The mature woodland here with Southern Cypress-pine, Pink Gum, Drooping Sheoak, Sticky Hopbush and Silver Broom is likely to have been like this since before settlement. Moss and litter on the ground are important stabilisers of the sand surface.

2.4 km The top of the dune reveals broken views to the south; 50m further on, a creeping shrub, Muntries, stabilises the sand.

We start to descend the other side of the dune, which faces north. The scrub seems more open, with more bare ground and fewer young pines. There are more Mt Lofty Grass-trees (yaccas), some Pointed Mat-rush, and fewer shrubs under the trees (pine, sheoak, pink gum).

2.2 km Nearby, a patch of iron stone gravel is mixed with water-worn quartz pebbles which had their origin in the ancient river. Keen botanists can find a few Ridge-fruited Mallee nearby, rare here but common on Eyre Peninsula and in the south-east of South Australia. Tall sheoaks and pines form a mixed woodland.

1.5 km Checkpoint C3 – among Grasstrees and Mat-rush. Follow the markers to the left to reach the southern side of the dune.

1.4 km Young pines reappear and the shrubs are more