

Keep an eye open for wildlife — Fantails, wrens, Grey Kangaroos and a variety of lizards. Most trees were cleared many years ago and only their stumps remain.

3.6 km At the top of the hill is a firewatch tower and a walkers' **Checkpoint W4** is visible. The hilltop is a good place to rest and identify some landmarks. Using the compass directions on the post top map, and starting in the north and turning to the east you can see. . . .

Scrub-covered Wirra Wirra Peaks (20°)
Mt Crawford (40°)
Mt Pleasant (80°)
Mt Lofty and Mt Bonython (205°)
South Para Reservoir (265°)
Hale Conservation Park (300°)
Warren Reservoir (338°)
Belvidere Hills far distant (360°).

On clear days Yorke Peninsula is visible on the other side of Gulf St Vincent. You may need to move around on the summit to see some of these.

If walking to **Checkpoint W6**, keep following the vehicle track to reach Sailors Gully Trailhead.

If returning to Watts Gully Road Trailhead (**W1**), leave the vehicle track and pick out a solitary tree to the right of the track at about **3.4 km**. Follow a faint footpath across the grass past the marker post, noting the Tree Violet amongst the boulders.

A stile takes you back into the scrub. Immediately over the fence you are back into Messmate Stringybark, Tufted Grass-trees, Pink Gum and Kangaroo Thorn. Guinea Flowers and Bush Peas also provide colour. After a few minutes you reach a netting fence alongside a pine plantation. These are Maritime Pines (*Pinus pinaster*, native to the Mediterranean). *Where the netting ends, turn right on to the fire track.*

2.6 km Under the Pink Gums and Long-leaved Box there is a very wide diversity of heath shrubs with colourful flowers, most of which you will already have seen.

2.0 km The trail leaves the fire track and goes gradually downhill passing, as on the way up, dense stands of Tufted Grass-tree and Tea-tree where water seeps from buried rock crevices. Rock platforms give good vantage points for views, which include the South Para Reservoir.

1.8 km Some rock outcrops of micaceous sandstone near here have interesting weathering sculpture; and there are good displays of Fringe Myrtle in October.

1.0 km Rejoin the original track at **Checkpoint W2** and return to Watts Gully Road.

PLANTS YOU MAY SEE ON THE WALK

Dusty Miller *Spyridium parvifolium* white woolly leaves surround heads of tiny flowers
Flame Heath *Astroloma conostephioides* shrub to 1m, red tubular flowers in late winter-spring
Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha* slender tree, dark bark, golden balls of flowers in late winter
Guinea Flowers *Hibbertia sericicia* shrub to 0.5m, bright yellow flowers; *H. exultiacies* low shrub with spiky leaves, yellow flowers
Hakeas *Hakea carinata* small woody fruit with upright beak
Beaked Hakea *H. rostrata* large fruit with beak turned back on to fruit
Kangaroo Thorn *Acacia paradoxa* large straggling wattle with sharp thorns
Long-leaved Box *Eucalyptus goniocalyx* tree to 15m with dark-green strap-shaped leaves, fibrous bark
Messmate Stringybark *Eucalyptus obliqua* tree up to 40m, stringy bark, barrel-shaped fruit
Native Currant *Acrotriche depressa* low bush with festoons of dark red berries close to the ground in autumn
Pink Gum *Eucalyptus fasciculosa* tree up to 18m with smooth cream/grey bark, masses of white flowers in spring
Pink-eyed Susan *Tetratheca pilosa* clusters of bright pink flowers in spring
Prickly Tea-tree *Leptospermum continentale* slender shrub with prickly leaves, white flowers along the stem
Sundew, Scented *Drosera whittakeri* rosette of sticky leaves, white large white flowers
Tree Violet *Hymenanthera dentata* spiky bush to 2m, tiny cream flowers in late winter
Tufted Grass Tree *Xanthorrhoea semiplana* mop of long leaves frequently drooping to the ground

This walk crosses a conservation park managed by the Department for Environment and Heritage and ForestrySA lands. It is presented here by the Walking Trails Support Group.
www.walkingtrailsupportgroup.org.au

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

Barossa Walks Warren Tower



Pink-eyed Susan
Tetratheca pilosa

A walk in Warren Conservation Park and neighbouring ForestrySA land which takes you across the headwaters of a creek that drains into the South Para Reservoir. The rich diversity of plants in the little disturbed Messmate Stringybark and Long-leaved Box woodland is best appreciated in late winter and spring when many shrubs and herbs, including orchids and lilies, are flowering at their best. Open country in part of Mount Crawford Forest near the fire watch tower provides extended views. The walk passes a pine plantation before returning through the Park.*

Keep an eye open for signs of wildlife - Grey Kangaroos, Echidna diggings, lizards and feral goats.

Look at the rocks too, which are rich in sparkling mica. They were formed from sediments which have been heated and compressed by movements in the earth's crust to form rocks which vary according to the amount of pressure and circulation of hot fluids during folding. They grade over a spectrum and some of the variety is pointed out on the walk. White quartz veins intruded as hot fluid are a common feature.

Distance and Time: 9km circuit, including a linear section, allow 4 - 4 ½ hours. Distances are marked every 0.2km decreasing as you return to the Trailhead. The route is shared by the Heysen Trail as far as the firewatch tower.

Access: On the Williamstown - Kersbrook road turn off at Watts Gully road which is 7.0km from Kersbrook and 7.0km from Williamstown. Warren Conservation Park is 2.7km along this road. There is a small roadside carpark and pedestrian entrance.

Alternative access is available from Sailors Gully Trailhead (W6) reached via Tower Road near ForestrySA Information Centre.

Notes are written for a clockwise circuit from Watts Gully Road.

Track

Generally an AS2156 Class 3 track in a natural area. There are some sections of exposed rock (not steep).



Purple Cockatoo
Glossodia major

For your safety

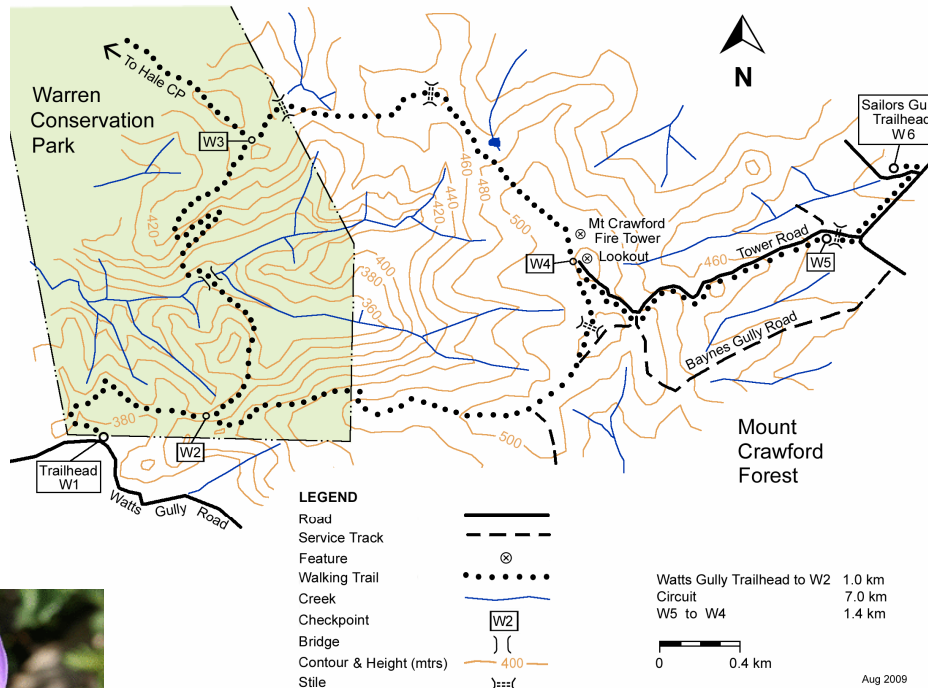
- This is a walk in a natural area; beware of inherent hazards
- Walk in a party of four, advise a reliable person of where you are going and when you expect to return
- Wear strong comfortable boots and take adequate food and clothing
- Take at least 2 litres of water per person, more if it is hot
-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

Watts Gully Road Trailhead, Checkpoint W1

The boardwalk bridges a wet area. Walk up the foot track (north-west) through some partially cleared land (an old tank stand near the road suggests that this was once part of a grazing property). Golden Wattles and Tufted Grass-trees and a few other shrubs remain under the Long-leaved Box. The scrub is not as dense or tangled as elsewhere.

WARREN TOWER WALK



Kangaroos shelter here, but graze the grassland and neighbouring pastures. Micaceous sandstones (Aldgate sandstone) are found in this section of the walk.

8.0 km Checkpoint W2

Take the left hand route. These rough, dry hill slopes are coarse grained quartz-mica gneiss – see rock at **7.8 km** – where micaceous sandstone sediments have undergone great change. They carry a great diversity of plants. On these slopes you can expect to see Hakeas, Native Currant, Flame Heath, Guinea-flowers, Black-eyed Susan, Dusty Miller, Sundews and a variety of orchids.

7.4 km Rock outcrops provide moist clefts for Downy Mintbush and large Tufted Grass-trees. Rock Ferns exploit thin soils and cracks in rock. Shiny flakes of mica are quite clear in the rocks as are the bedding planes of the original sediment layers in this micaceous sandstone.

Birds to look out for in this scrub include Crescent Honeyeaters, White-throated Treecreepers, Bassian Thrush and Grey Currawongs.

7.2 – 7.0 km Moisture-seeking plants grow alongside the creek and on the cooler slopes you are about to walk up, once you are over the bridge. They include Maiden Hair Fern, Common Buttercup, Flinders Ranges Bottlebrush, Prickly Tea-tree, Oyster Bay Pine and Christmas Bush.

6.8 km Climbing up to 6.4km the ground has an irregular lumpy surface with random boulders, rather than the more even slope with rock outcrops. This is possibly the result of an ancient land-slip which slumped to a rest just here.

6.2 km About 15m further on is an outcrop of coarse grained quartz-mica pegmatite, a reflection of high temperature and low pressure conditions during folding of the sediments of the Aldgate Sandstone. The slopes close by carry a grass-like plant, Mt Lofty Mat-rush, common just here but confined to South Australia and to this region.

Heath on top of the ridge includes Pink Gum and you reach some seats for a welcome break.

Checkpoint W3 Continue straight on, down to shallow steps (70 in all) to reach the park boundary (5.3km). This is the entrance to a section of Mt Crawford Forest.

5.2 – 4.8 km The vegetation looks different here. There are still Stringybarks and Long-leaved Box, but Tufted Grass Trees seem to dominate with more Kangaroo Thorn, and fewer low heathland shrubs. These differences may reflect past management practices. The fire access track reaches a gate and stile and you turn right, following the fence which protects the scrub from grazing by stock.

4.2 km Before reaching this marker there are some old stock yards and a dam; walk past the yards and continue up hill towards Long-leaved Box trees on a rocky outcrop.