



40 THINGS TO DO IN HALLETT COVE CONSERVATION PARK

A park that takes you back in time to when the ice age was here, with glacial pavements, fossils, and geology dating back millions of years. The cliffs and mountains have survived the harshest of storms and been pounded by the winds and sea. It's a story of survival and resilience, and when you visit, your footprints will be part of its history.

Hallett Cove Conservation Park is one of Australia's most recognised geological and archaeological sites. In the Park 'glacial pavements' show scratches from a large glacier that covered the Park 280 million years ago when Australia was part of Gondwana (the ancient supercontinent). Over the past 600 million years the Park has undergone a number of changes from being beneath the sea, covered in an ice sheet and forming a mountain range. Throughout the Park there is informative signage along the trails that helps you understand the story of Hallett Cove Conservation Park.

For thousands of years the dunes, cliff tops, plants, animals and oceans of the Park have been, and still are, a significant part of Kurna culture for food, shelter, travel, and Dreaming.

The Park is home to Stumpy Lizards, Singing Honeyeaters, Superb Fairy-wrens, Banjo Frogs, sea stars, sea urchins, Nankeen Kestrels, and hundreds of insects such as butterflies, beetles, and native bees. Many of the plants are adapted to the harsh conditions of the coast such as Pigface, Cushion Bush, and the Purple Fanflower.

The Park is cared for by Park Rangers and the Friends of Hallett Cove Conservation Park. It is accessible via public transport (train and bus).

You can download a map for Hallett Cove Conservation Park from environment.sa.gov.au/parks

PARK PROFILE



Toilets



Wheelchair Access



Pram Access

Name: Hallett Cove Conservation Park

First established: 1 July 1976

Size: 50 hectares

Location: 22km south of Adelaide.

Number of plants and animals: Over 150 native species of plants. Whilst mammals, reptiles, frogs, birds, invertebrates and a range of marine species exist in the Park no official surveys have been done.

AUTUMN



Autumn in the Park sees cool sea breezes whilst the autumn rains begin to fall

Moss and lichen come to life on the bare earth, boulders and all around the rock pools.

- 1 Do an early morning walk with your family along Glacier Hike and listen for the Singing Honeyeater or spot them in the dune shrubs   
- 2 After rains, stroll along the path at the Dutchman Drive entrance trail and spot the colourful moss and lichen as it comes to life
- 3 From the Second Street carpark head down to explore the mouth of Waterfall Creek and listen out for the 'crick-crick-crick' of the Common Froglet as they begin their breeding cycle
- 4 At sunset walk along Glacier Hike and watch the colours of the cliffs change. These cliffs are known as the 'Amphitheatre'   
- 5 For those with good levels of fitness walk/jog from Boatshed Café to Marino Rocks Beach where you will travel along boardwalks and staircases with views of rugged cliffs and other ancient geological marvels 
- 6 Walk along the Dutchman Drive entrance trail taking time to observe and smell the flowers of the Mallee Box gum tree, you will eventually find a picnic bench where you can look out over the ocean and cliffs.
- 7 From the Second Street carpark head down and discover the cottage ruins where you can read about its history
- 8 On a calm day count the steps of the staircase that leads down to the beach from the boardwalk along Glacier Hike where you can observe life in the rock pools (always keep an eye on the waves)
- 9 Count how many boats you can spot or on a calm day go fishing for Tommy Ruff, Garfish or squid from the shoreline
- 10 Walk along the beach and head north where you can explore the chocolate-coloured rocks at the base of Black Cliff. These rocks are the oldest in the Park and an interesting place to explore and look for signs of life. 

WINTER



Winter in the Park sees the wild weather arrive with rain, wind, thunder and stormy seas

It's the perfect time for exploring the beach for washed up shells, sponges and different types of seaweed.

- 1 Walk the Geological Hike and follow the signs to admire the layered beauty of the Sugarloaf and keep an eye out for the Meadow Argus butterfly as they search for nectar (it is important not to climb the fragile Sugarloaf)
- 2 At the end of winter, hike along the Dutchman Drive entrance trail and spot the yellow flowers of the Golden Wattle as it begins to bloom
- 3 Explore the beach after a storm and see what shells, sponges, pebbles and other washed up treasure you can spot 
- 4 After your adventures, head to the Boatshed Cafe for a warm drink and watch the wintery weather roll in from the coast   
- 5 From the Glacier Hike head up to the boardwalk to see if you can spot any Nankeen Kestrels (birds of prey) as they hover in search of mice and reptiles 
- 6 On the beach, find a flat stone, about the size of your palm, and practice skimming stones or seeing what makes the biggest splash 
- 7 Take a path in the Park that you haven't taken before or take another family along and let them pick a trail and see where it leads
- 8 Hallett Cove is one of the most geologically unique places in South Australia – see how many different coloured and shaped rocks you can find along the shoreline (remember to leave them there for someone else to find) 
- 9 From the Second Street carpark head down to observe the wintery changes in Waterfall Creek and listen out for the 'weep-eeep-eeep' or 'creeee creee creee creee' of the Brown Tree Frog
- 10 At low tide head down to the Shore Platform at the base of the Glacier Hike staircase to explore the rocks pools where you might observe sea stars, urchins and crabs (always keep an eye on the waves).

DID YOU KNOW?

- Stumpy Lizards mate for life and unlike many other reptiles that lay eggs, they give birth to large
- live young (equivalent of a human giving birth to a 6 year old!). This lizard has other common
- names such as Shingleback, Sleepy and the Two-headed Lizard.

SPRING



Spring in the Park sees Stumpy Lizards wake from hiding and butterflies beginning to take flight

Colourful flowers start to bloom with yellow wattles and vanilla lilies a beautiful sight.

- 1 Walk along the Glacier Hike and keep your eyes peeled for **Stumpy Lizards** as they begin to emerge after their winters rest (MH) (S) (R)
- 2 See if you can hear the Banjo Frogs at Waterfall Creek or spot the Common Brown butterfly (accessed from the Second Street Car Park)
- 3 Wander along the Dutchman Drive entrance trail and see if you can spot the bright Superb Fairy-wrens as they chatter in the shrubs
- 4 For adventure seekers kayak from Hallett Cove to the mouth of the Field River
- 5 Have a picnic, fly a kite, or roll down the grassy slopes of Heron Way Reserve
- 6 Create a rock stack for someone to find along the beach (MH) (S) (R)
- 7 Find a place to watch the clouds and talk about what weird and wonderful creatures and shapes you can spot (MH)
- 8 At the beginning of the Glacier Hike trail see what types of insects are visiting the flowers of the Purple Fanflower [hint: the petals are arranged in a the shape of a fan] (MH) (S) (R)
- 9 See how many shorebirds you can spot along the beach such as Cormorants and Sooty Oystercatchers
- 10 Towards the end of spring walk along Dutchman Drive entrance trail in search of wildflowers to smell such as the purple flowering **Vanilla Lily** (they smell like vanilla) or the many types of wattles in the Park.

SUMMER



Summer in the Park sees scorching hot days, rock pools drying up and plants going into survival mode,

In the evenings the sunset fills the sky with yellows, oranges, pinks and reds causing the ancient cliffs to glow.

- 1 Sit at the waters edge with your feet in the ocean, go for a swim or head out on a paddleboard to get a different perspective of the cliffs (MH)
- 2 Set up for a beach day on Heron Way Reserve and wander along the beach path and read the interpretive signs about Kaurna culture (MH) (S) (R)
- 3 Walk up to the first lookout along Glacier Hike, and observe the big scratches on the rocks known as 'glacial pavement'. The scratches are from the glacier that covered the Park 280 million years ago
- 4 On a calm day, with goggles or a snorkel see what marine creatures you can spot around the rocks at the base of Black Cliff such as **biscuit stars** and sea urchins
- 5 Find your own way to walk or rock hop from Black Cliff to the staircase on the Shore Platform (always keep an eye on the waves and check the tide times)
- 6 Head down in the early morning and choose a short hike and listen out for honeyeaters and wrens and see if you can spot some dolphins or sea lions who occasionally visit
- 7 Wander onto the beach or stroll along the boardwalk at sunset and take some photos of the cliffs and ocean as they begin to change colour (MH) (S) (R)
- 8 Walk barefoot on the beach pebbles and balance across the rocks (MH)
- 9 Explore the granite boulders along the beach known as 'erratic rocks' that were carried from Port Elliot in the ice sheet 280 million years ago and dropped on the beach (MH)
- 10 Hike along the Glacier Hike and if it's cool enough find a path that leads up into the cliffs where you'll spot the white flowers of Christmas Bush or cream-coloured flowers of the **Dryland Tea-tree** (shaped like a bottlebrush).

DID YOU KNOW?

- The traditional owners of the land in and around Hallett Cove Conservation Park are the Kaurna
- people. In 1934 Aboriginal stone implements were discovered and over the following 30 years more
- than 1700 artifacts were collected, and are now part of the South Australian Museum collection.

L: Common Froglet (SW)
R: Moss and Lichen (JT)



L: Golden Wattle (JT)
R: Meadow Argus butterfly (JT)



L: Stumpy Lizard (JT)
R: Vanilla Lilies (JT)



L: Dryland Tea-tree (JT)
R: Biscuit Star (JT)



LOOKING AFTER THE PARK

- 1 Keep wildlife wild:** We must never feed wildlife as it can be unhealthy for them and impact their natural behaviour.
- 2 Leave things as you found them:** If you look under any rocks on the beach be careful not to squash anything and put them back as you found them. Rocks on land should be left as they are part of the ancient geological history and easily be damaged.
- 3 Care for wildlife:** Protect wildlife by not removing living things from the beach or storing them in any containers as they may dry out and die.

- 4 Leave nothing but footprints:** Always take your rubbish with you or even better pack a litter-free lunch. Stick to the pathways as many of the plants, rocks and other geological features such as the Sugarloaf are fragile and easily damaged.
- 5 Be prepared:** If you are going to swim, snorkel, kayak, or paddleboard it's a good idea to check the tides. If you are going to explore the Shore Platform or really rocky areas wear sturdy shoes and always keep an eye on the waves. Take lots of water and sun protection and most importantly be prepared to discover new things and venture to new places.

This resource is part of the Park of the Month, an initiative run in partnership between Nature Play SA and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. Photos by Jason Tyndall (JT) and Steve Walker (SW). Writings by Jason Tyndall, Nature Play SA.