

Bush Babbler Volunteer E-news



Edition 5 | 27 July 2020

Hello! The 'Bush Babbler' is the Volunteer Programs electronic newsletter. Aiming to bring some light-hearted banter and joy to you all during these challenging COVID-19 times.

Winter has settled in and it seems COVID-19 is going to stick around for a while too. Our team would just like to take a moment and thank our volunteers for their cooperation in continuing to take appropriate safety measures to keep our community as safe as possible- we know it's been difficult! It's also really important that we continue to apply these safety measures, especially as we start to socialise again and get back to our activities. So please ensure you get tested if you have symptoms (even if mild), practise good hygiene, download the COVIDSafe app, and keep 1.5 metres distance from others wherever, whenever possible.

Whale watching, fungi, orchids, school holidays, rain and of course flowing waterfalls are just a few things that Winter brings. In this edition, learn about our gentle giants of the sea, the various types of fungi you might see in our parks, tips to avoid a wildlife strike in your travels and much more...

By the way, we're loving all the photos coming in and seeing all the interesting things you're finding! Please continue to share your photos or #Hashtag us on Facebook, so we can promote and share your amazing work - Gill, Ian, Amanda, Amy, Carly, Pam and Edi.

Volunteer Programs Update

Update to public health restrictions and volunteering

With the recent easing of some of the COVID-19 restrictions in SA, this has enabled more volunteer activities to recommence, or made it easier to manage the onsite requirements. At this time we still recommend that you don't share food and drinks at volunteer events, sanitise hand tools and other shared equipment after each use, and maintain 1.5m distancing where possible.

You probably also read about the record number of South Australians who seized the opportunity to visit our national parks after a few months of being cooped up at home. Due to this sudden influx additional Campground Hosts and Volunteer Rangers helped out at numerous parks over the June Long Weekend and July school holidays; assisting Rangers by supporting campers and park visitors. The flexibility and 'can do' approach by both these groups of volunteers was much appreciated by ranger staff and the Volunteer Programs staff, proving the value of these volunteers and the programs. A big Thank You to all volunteers who participated.

Changes to NRM Boards and volunteering support staff

As many of you will be aware, the SA regional Landscape Boards came into operation on 1 July 2020, with the new board members appointed and the first board meetings happening across July. Watch this space for more information.



Alligator Gorge – June Long Weekend 2020
(Image by Ian Roberts)

Some of you may have seen the Volunteer Ranger Program Coordinator role advertised recently; and it is with some sadness but also excitement that I inform you all, that I will be leaving Volunteer Programs Unit. As of the 3rd August 2020 Amanda Parker will be taking over as Coordinator, Volunteer Ranger Program. Some of you may already know Amanda from the Campground Host Program which she currently coordinates. What will I be doing? I'm heading back out into the field as a Senior Ranger within the Central Lofty District, AMLR Region; and will be responsible for managing Cleland Conservation Park as well as a host of other parks. I know the program will be left in very capable hands, and am excited to see how it grows going forward. Hopefully, I'll have an opportunity to work with you all more actively in our parks too! Best Wishes ☺ Amy Anderson - Coordinator, Volunteer Ranger Program

Getting to know you...

This edition we get to know **Amy Anderson** - Coordinator, Volunteer Ranger Program (soon to be Senior Ranger – Central Lofty). Amy has been working in national parks as a ranger or in related roles for 12 years in the NT, VIC and SA. Some of the favourite parks she's worked in or managed include: Kakadu NP, Mount Buffalo NP, Enfield State Park, Morialta CP, Flinders Chase NP, Ikara-Flinders Ranges NP, Aldinga Scrub CP, Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary, Stipiturus CP, Deep Creek CP, Hallett Cove CP, Charleston CP, Onkaparinga River parks and many more...



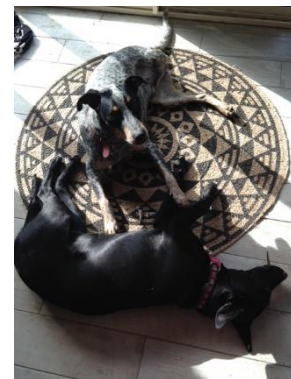
Kuti-Pauamu (Iron Range) NP, Far North QLD

When did you join the National Parks and Wildlife Service?

I joined the National Parks and Wildlife Service in February 2012, as a Graduate Ranger based at Berri in the Riverland.

What do you do when you are not working?

Relaxing and catching up with friends! I love a good sleep in, pottering around the garden and hanging with my 2 dogs- Betty and Louie. My fiancé and I are in the slow process of renovating our house, so that keeps us very



busy, as there is always something to do! I also enjoy getting away out into nature in faraway places and travelling overseas (when I get the chance). I have a 4 week trip planned to go up to the NT with a visit to Ikara NP, Coward Springs and friends along the way- so excited!

What is one thing others may not already know about you?



I love handmade jewellery, a passion I got from my Mum who was a gemmologist and worked selling pearls in Japan in her younger days. When I get time, I really enjoy making my own brass and silver jewellery.

What has been your most memorable holiday to date and why?

This one is a hard one! I would have to say our 6 weeks trip to Europe in 2016. My fiancé and I had the most amazing time visiting family and friends, eating food, drinking and hiking in Holland, Finland, Estonia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Montenegro, Spain and France. It was just such a fantastic trip which we both still reminisce about; especially the pistachio eclairs in France, eating wild mushrooms whilst hiking with my friend in Finland, getting the little boat across to the old town of Zadar and more...



Not Europe but another adventure hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, NZ.

If you could invite any 3 people in the world (dead or alive, besides your partner or family) to dinner who would they be and why?

Eddie Mabo – I’d love to hear Eddie’s story firsthand - what it was like to have your ongoing connection to traditional lands and culture legally recognised; to hear ‘terra nullius’ was void. I imagine this would have been an amazing moment for Eddie and our First Nations people. Also, to hear what he thinks about how far we’ve come since then and next steps forward.

Jacinda Ardern – Being a woman in politics is hard, being a prime minister is even harder. I’d love to know how Jacinta manages the politics, what leadership means to her and some of the tips and tricks to great leadership.

Elsa Schiaparelli – One the greatest fashion designers in history, who was daring, innovative, unconventional and created pieces which were truly wearable art. Her designs are amazing, still stick in my memory and I think she would truly bring life to any party!



What is your favourite SA park and why?

As a park ranger this question is like asking ‘Who is your favourite child?’ – I love them all for their different characteristics. If I had to pick one, it would probably be Deep Creek Conservation Park for its beautiful rugged coastal views, diversity of native wildlife, flora, fungi and more! Plus it’s only a couple of hours south of Adelaide and such an easy amazing getaway.



Are there any movies could you watch multiple times or what TV series have hooked you?

There’s only a few movies I watch multiple times, including my all-time favourite ‘Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels’. This movie is timeless and makes me laugh every time I watch it, even though I know what’s going to happen. Plus hands down it has one of the best movie soundtracks. I love listening to the CD just as much as watching the movie- worth checking out if you haven’t seen it.

You could be next! We plan to ask a range of volunteers and staff to share a little information about themselves in future editions. So be ready when the VPU staff come knocking!

KI Bushfire Recovery Update

Six months since the summer bushfires ended and there are some amazing bushfire recovery works in process as Kangaroo Island recovers:

KI Dunnart Recovery

A record number of citizen scientists answered our call to help identify native wildlife through the online Wildlife Spotter tool. More than 550 volunteers sorted through almost 25,000 images of native wildlife taken by camera deployed across the western end of Kangaroo Island in search for the Kangaroo Island Dunnart, and other wildlife which survived the bushfire.



Processing an average of over 350 images every day, the virtual volunteers set a record for the largest mobilisation of citizen scientists, contributing to image classifications for a project conducted on the island!

With more than 90 per cent of the dunnart habitat burnt in the bushfires; initial assessments indicated a significant decline in the Kangaroo Island dunnart population, making it more important than ever to track and protect these animals. This work will help to give an understanding of survivor populations, assist with feral predator control and inform recovery actions for species of concern like the endangered Kangaroo Island dunnart.

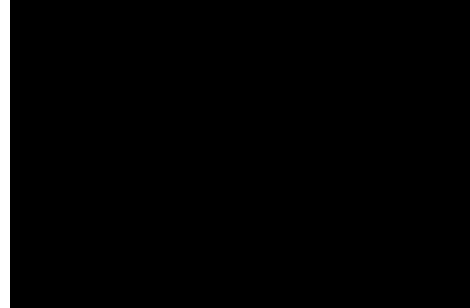
Flinders Chase Reopening

As of Saturday, 4 July 2020, Flinders Chase National Park has reopened to the public for day visits only. Visitors are able to explore the park by vehicle via a safe corridor to the following sites: Remarkable Rocks, Admirals Arch, Cape du Couedic Lighthouse and Weirs Cove. Once on-site, visitors can browse around them on-foot.

Other bushfire-closed parks on Kangaroo Island and across the state remain closed until further notice.

KI Koala Count

Recently, NPWSSA staff finished up surveying known koala sites and will be sending the raw data to Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to analyse it. We'll have a post-bushfire Kangaroo Island koala count in a few weeks. In the interim, check out the video to see some cool footage from our high-tech koala count on Kangaroo Island:



Feral Pig Eradication Funding

Removing the threat of feral pigs (particularly while the environment is vulnerable and recovering from the bushfire) is an important step in supporting the recovery of threatened fauna over the coming years and decades as they return back to pre-fire levels.



Feral pigs are causing ongoing damage to the island's agricultural industries such as pastures, grain and potato crops, fence lines and dams, but they are also impacting on threatened native species and the environment.

Recent surveys have shown that the feral pigs in parks are now on the move looking for fungi as they pop up after heavy rain. Feral pigs are a direct predator of frogs, fish, reptiles, birds and small mammals, destroying habitats and ecosystems too. Species at risk

include the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot, the endangered Kangaroo Island Dunnart and the endangered Kangaroo Island Echidna.

A Commonwealth Government funded \$2.67 million program will help remove feral pigs from Kangaroo Island, which currently cost the community \$1 million per year. Farmers will be supported by marksmen both on the ground and in the air who will work across parks and farms, and will ramp up baiting and trapping programs. Around 130 feral pigs have already been removed by Kangaroo Island Landscape Board staff in collaboration with private landholders.

The locally coordinated program builds on the island's ongoing feral pig control work since the bushfires; capitalising on the reduction in feral pig population numbers with an aim to eradicate the pest species from the island.

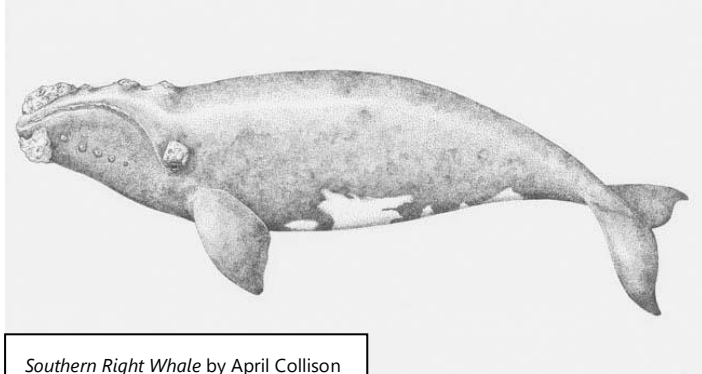
'Species' in the Spotlight – *Gentle giants of the sea*

It's winter and you know what that means? Whale watching season in South Australia! Each winter, visitors eagerly flock to the coastline of the southern Fleurieu Peninsula, hoping to catch a glimpse of our giant 'cousins' of the sea. An amazing 30 different whale species (including dolphins, which are classified as whales) have been recorded, but the most renowned of the larger whales found in South Australian waters is the **southern right whale, (*Eubalaena australis*)**, which visits our shores in winter to mate, calf and socialise.



The annual migration of whales to SA waters occurs during the cooler months, which is when they mate, give birth and nurse their young. SA whale migration starts in May and finishes in October, with frequent sightings of these giants of the deep occurring between June and September.

Whales are marine mammals, and like other mammals they are warm-blooded (maintain a stable body temperature), breathe air via their lungs and suckle their young. Additionally, they are perfectly adapted to life in the ocean with smooth streamlined bodies, a powerful tail, modified breathing and circulatory systems, and a thick layer of blubber.



Southern Right Whale by April Collison

Right whales were one of the first species to be hunted by whalers. They were considered the “right” whale to hunt because they are slow swimmers and have a very thick layer of blubber which makes them float accommodatingly when dead. Their huge bodies provided vast quantities of oil, meat and baleen, making them very valuable, and therefore tragically, hunted to the brink of extinction. They are now a protected species, and although still considered Endangered, their numbers are slowly growing.

The **southern right whale** is the only right whale species found in the southern hemisphere. They are very large, bulky whales, mostly black in colour with patches of white on the chin and belly, and are easily distinguished from other whales by the cream coloured skin callosities (patches of raised skin) on their head and around the jaw, and their broad back without a dorsal fin. They are baleen whales, which means they don't have any teeth and feed by filtering food (mainly zooplankton and krill) through 220-260 baleen plates which hang from either side of their upper jaws. The baleen is up to 2.8 metres long, and fringed by long, fine greyish bristles. All baleen whales have 2 blow holes, and this produces the characteristic V-shaped blows.



Campground host, Kym Loechel, reported a huge influx of visitors at [Newland Head Conservation Park](#) over the June long weekend, after a whale had been spotted frolicking at Parsons Beach. To make sure you never miss a whale sighting, join the [SA Whale Centre](#) mailing list to receive updates each time a new sighting is confirmed.

Tips for Whale Watching

Whales visit the entire length of South Australia's coastline, making our state a whale-watching paradise.



Head of the Bight. Image courtesy of F Christiansen, Murdoch University Cetacean Research Unit



Whales You Might See From Ashore

Most SA whale sightings are [southern right whales](#) and occasionally [humpback whales](#). Toothed whales such as [sperm whales](#), [pilot whales](#) and [orcas](#) are around, but are usually found further offshore.

The world's largest animal, the [blue whale](#), feeds offshore in the [upwelling zones](#) near Kangaroo Island and the Bonney Coast.

Top Spots

The two most popular whale-watching spots are at opposite ends of the coast: the [Encounter Marine Park](#) in Victor Harbor and the [Far West Coast Marine Park](#) at the Head of the Bight, about 4 hours west of Ceduna.

Whales can be also spotted in areas along Eyre Peninsula such as [Thorny Passage Marine Park](#) at Sleaford Bay and [Nuyts Archipelago](#) at Fowlers Bay.

You can enjoy watching these magnificent whales breaching, body-rolling and tail-lobbing from viewing platforms or by booking with a [private tour operator](#).



Here some handy tips to get you started to ensue you a 'whale of a time':

- Bring a pair of binoculars
- Get up high for a better view
- Be patient – whales move at their own pace
- Know the [law](#) – marine mammal regulations are in place to protect whales from being disturbed while in our waters
- Research local whales
- Learn how to identify different whale species
- Share your sightings via the SA Whale Centre [log](#)

Happy Whale Watching!

Safe Driver Tip – Reducing Wildlife Strike

Did you know... insurance companies reported an 80% increase in incidents during a full moon; this is a significant increase and while no-one knows the reason, there's an undeniable connection.

Volunteers can be at risk of hitting native wildlife, especially driving around our parks and getting to/ from working bee sites. Peak times for wildlife are:

- 1 hour at dawn
- 2 hours at dusk
- Winter
- Full moon
- After rain

You are more likely to encounter wildlife near waterways, especially those along or located near roadsides. Why? After long periods of dry conditions when there is minimal feed in the bush; the nourishment of fresh grass (green pick) which contains water and is digested more easily, will entice wildlife, particularly kangaroos onto the edge of the road. Heavy dew will collect on roads and this condensation eventually rolls off the edge of the road and collects in the surrounding gravel or dirt, encouraging minor plant growth referred to as 'green pick'.

Please see some easy safety tips from the *Australian Driving Institute* to reduce the chance of wildlife strike whilst driving:

Are you reducing the risk of a wildlife strike?

- **Do you react to a road sign or keep charging along?**
It is the best warning you can have.
- **Do you keep cruise control on?**
Often a driver will pull their feet away from the pedals, this will take longer to brake.
- **Do you steer with one hand at 12 o'clock?**
This will create instability and possibly a spin, we always recommend hands at 9 and 3.
- **Are you on the phone or engaged in conversation?**
Phones are a big distraction, you need to focus on the road and scan side to side as far ahead as possible. This can be tiring on long trips, so remember to take breaks as required.
- **Do you adjust your speed?**
Speed is relative to the conditions, sometimes 80kph is too fast.
- **Can you travel at another time?**
Driving outside of peak times for wildlife activity will reduce the likelihood of an incident.

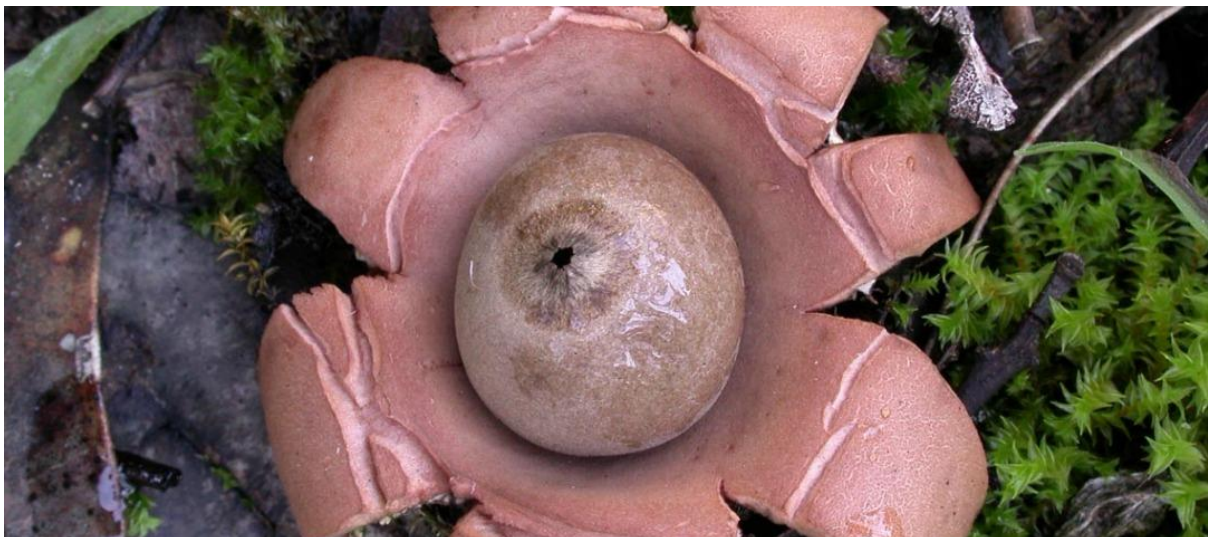


Handy things to know

- Use Low beam and full brakes to avoid a strike.
- Polly bars work best for vehicle protection
- A 80 kph hit = 1000kg of force

If a crash is inevitable: Attempt to hit the kangaroo with your head light. It will deflect and not damage the radiator. The headlight will not work but you can possibly keep driving if it is safe to do so.

Fungi Finding



Fungi is both weird and wonderful, with structures that appear and can be gone in just a matter of days! Fungi is important in all ecosystems, with many species returning vital nutrients back to the soil by breaking down organic matter (sometimes dead animals). A fancy name for this ability is 'saprotrophic'. Others help plants grow by supplying them with essential nutrients that they have drawn out of the soil.

Just because they might look interesting, it doesn't mean fungi are safe to touch or eat, so **don't eat any** you come across and **wash your hands** if you accidentally touch one.



Next time you're out bushwalking in the Adelaide Hills, keep an eye out for these different types of fungi:

1. Collared earth star (*Geastrum triplex*) – Pictured above by David Catcheside

This fungus sounds like it should be a ship in Star Wars! It starts as an onion shape before the outer layer peels away to resemble a star. Spores puff out through a hole in the centre if it's touched.



2. Coral fungus (*Ramaria australiana*)

A coral or cauliflower look-alike – whichever way you'd like to see it. This 'fun guy' is part of the family that produces its spores on club-shaped structures called basidia. (Image by David Catcheside)

3. Jelly baby (*Leotia lubrica*)

This one sounds tasty, but don't be fooled into eating it as it's inedible. It's a yellow to green colour and has a rounded cap sitting on top of its stem. (Image courtesy of Anthony Robinson)



4. Smooth cage (*Ileodictyon gracile*)

This is a creepy looking fungus that grows in the shape of a cage and can separate from its base and roll along the ground. Smooth cage is one of the 'stinkhorns', which as the name suggests, often smells quite unpleasant. (Image courtesy of Phil Bridle)

5. Lawyer's wig (*Coprinus comatus*)

This fungus pops out of the ground as a white, scaly cylinder but its gills eventually turn into black liquid. Once upon a time, this liquid was used as writing ink – in George Washington's day apparently. (Image courtesy of Anthony Robinson)



SA Heritage Photo Competition

Did you know that South Australia has 2,300 listed State Heritage Places and 17 State Heritage Areas?

South Australians are being encouraged to take part in a 'Heritage Snaps' photographic competition, which aims to showcase these wonderful historic sites and provide an opportunity for people to learn why these heritage places are so special. Just by entering the competition, you will be helping to promote and celebrate our State's heritage!

There will be a number of great prizes are up for grabs simply by sharing a photo of a South; with 8 categories in this year's competition:

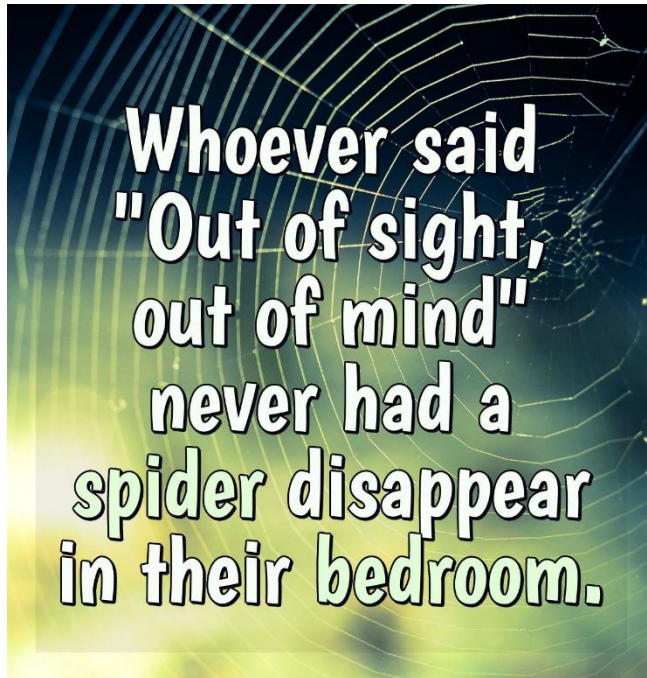
1. Maritime and coastal Heritage (inc. shipwrecks)
2. Heritage places that have been changed (showcasing adaptive reuse)
3. State Heritage places to visit
4. Wild SA (Natural State Heritage Places)
5. Young Talent (open to school age entrants under the age of 18 as at 1 July 2020)
6. Heritage and technology (if you are using a drone or 3D imagery this is the category for you!)
7. Professional and edited
8. Honouring our involvement in wars (photos of State Heritage war memorials, monuments or buildings involved in the war effort)



One of last year's winners, Dale Turner – Cape Du Couedic Lighthouse on Kangaroo Island

Entries close Friday, 30 October 2020 and you can find more information [here](#).

You know what they say...



Sourced: coolfunnyquotes.com



Government of
South Australia



Just a bit of Fun



Soul Food

Go bananas with this **'Brilliant Banana Cake'** brought to you by **Amanda Parker** (Volunteer Programs Unit). Amanda says "I like to make this on a Sunday afternoon, while enjoying a glass of red wine".

You will need:

200g self-raising flour
120g butter
150g sugar
Dash of vanilla essence
2 eggs
3 ripe bananas
1 teaspoon bi-carb soda in 3 tablespoons of warm milk
Glass of Wine (Optional)

Method:

Cream butter and sugar (creaming simply means mixing your butter and sugar together until well blended) using electric beaters, then add the eggs gradually.

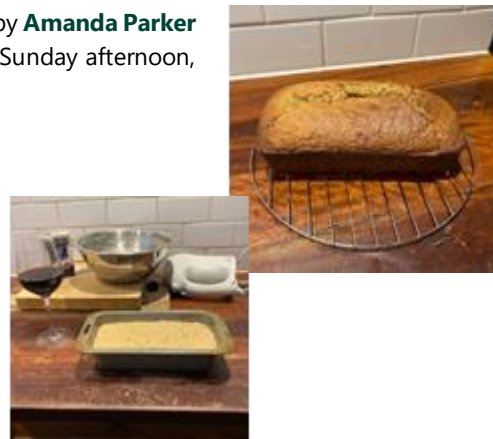
Add the mashed bananas with the vanilla essence.

Add the flour and milk mixture alternately.

Put into a non-stick rectangular cake (or lightly grease the tin with oil or butter), and cook in a fan-forced oven at 180 degrees for 45 minutes. Easy!

Suggestions:

Amanda recommends using wholemeal self-raising flour and raw sugar. She also freezes over-ripe bananas to store for future banana cake making. ENJOY 😊



Upcoming Activities & Initiatives

Park of the Month – Encounter Marine Park and Granite Island Recreation Park

Each month we celebrate a national park as our Park of the Month. We invite you to come along and join in on a range of fun, family-friendly events held throughout the month. Events often include ranger-guided walks, working bees, guided bike tours, nature play activities, cultural events and more. Meet some of our volunteer rangers who will be assisting with these events

Keep a look out for what's on this month at Encounter Marine Park and Granite Island Recreation Park [here](#).

Contact Us

Do you have any tips, tricks, ideas, stories, recipes, photos etc. that you would like to share and have included in a future edition of the Bush Babbler? Send contributions through to Amanda or Carly – we would love to hear from you!

Please email either: amanda.parker@sa.gov.au or carly.dillon@sa.gov.au

Also, don't forgot you can keep in touch with us or your other program volunteers on our Facebook pages:

[Volunteer Ranger Program \(Private page for Volunteer Rangers\)](#)

[Campground Host Program \(Private page for Campground Hosts\)](#)

[Friends of Park SA](#)

