

Southern Explorers Four Wheel Drive Club Trip Report

Mt. Ive Station – 2 to 4 May 2019

Trip Leader: Ian R

Immediately after the Goog's Track Trip (see trip report if interested) and with two less vehicles, the



remaining 6 vehicles headed off toward Mt. Ive Station on another dirt road heading southward just outside Kingoonya. This road was similar to that travelled on at the end of the day before, so speeds were kept at a reasonable level and we made good time. The day started out with blue skies but as we headed south / south east we started to catch up with the weather front that had been generating the rain. The terrain changed frequently along the road – sandy to rocky sections of road, washaways, spinifex, shrubs and occasionally larger trees, particularly by creeks. The sun came out from time

to time and lit up distant hills. We did see some wildlife, mainly roos and/or euros, with one or two drinking from the occasional puddle in the middle of the road or near the road's edge, evidence of rain the day before. After many kilometres we turned left off the Kingoonya – Wirrulla Road and headed on another reasonable dirt road towards Mt. Ive and Iron Knob.

We stopped on the side of the road for lunch and then continued until we found a turnoff to a free camp near the edge of Lake Gairdner. The lake was in the distance but there was definitely water in it. Some of us stretched our legs and climbed a hill for a better view whilst others walked on the flat ground to get closer to the Lake. It was getting fairly late in the day, so onward we



continued to Mt Ive Station reaching it at around 16:30, booking in with site manager, Lindy, who welcomed us all. For those who did the Maralinga Trip in 2018, they would recognise a few buildings that were bought by the Station when Maralinga was decommissioned in the late 1970's. The campsites were nice and flat, and tent pegs went into the ground well. A communal gazebo did us well for happy hour and tea, with a BBQ, lighting, and windbreaks. The flushing toilets and hot showers were also very luxurious after two nights bush camping along Goog's Track. We had a campfire that evening in half a 44 gallon drum before retiring for the night.



The next day started very foggy but cleared to blue skies and some beautiful views of the hills around the Station. The decision was made to take the track to the top of Mt. Ive itself, at a small cost of \$5 per car. After a number of days of mostly sandy terrain, we traversed a more rocky track, quite steep in places and a bit rough in others. We did note the point where a car recently took out it's sump, leaving the tell tale oil trail, however we all took care and avoided the

rocky culprit with little difficulty. The views from the top were 360 degrees and incredible. Unfortunately clouds had gathered so the views in some directions were a little dull and photos never do them justice. We signed our name in the book kept at the summit in an old fridge and made the most of the great location by having morning tea there. It was here that Bruce's car decided not to start, so jumper leads were connected to the spare battery and Bruce headed back towards the camp site before the car decided to stop again. Once back on flat land again we said goodbye to Jim who headed towards home while the rest of us headed back to camp for lunch.



For the afternoon's entertainment, we parted with another \$30 per vehicle to travel on another series of tracks to visit some more scenic destinations on the Station property, Bruce accompanying Judy. The first of these was Lake Gairdner, on the opposite side to where we visited the day before. And, not only was there water in the Lake (apparently the most water there has been in the past 40 years) we dodged heavy showers intent on increasing the water level even more. We did manage to have a good walk around by the lake before heading back down the track we had come on but turning off a

few kilometres later towards the Water Embankment, built around 1892. Lindy thought with all the rain that there may be water behind the embankment but although there were small pools of water in front of the embankment there mustn't have been enough rain to collect water behind it. We saw a couple of euros near the embankment but little other wildlife. We all stretched our legs and had a good walk in the sunshine which bathed the rocky outcrops and brought out the red colours.



The final stop on the track was the Organ Pipes, an interesting rock formation high up on one side of a valley. To get a closer look this, involved walking through the valley, dotted with pools of water after

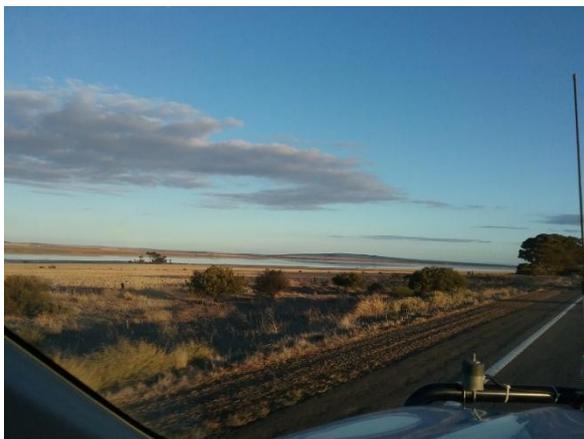


the rain. It was all very picturesque, particularly with the blue skies contrasting with the red ground and the yellow Spinifex ... until more clouds gathered resulting in showers and an impressive rainbow. At one point, we saw a wedge-tailed eagle soaring above the rocky outcrops.

Dodging the rain yet again, we headed back to the cars (which had been loaded with some fire wood by those who didn't walk up the valley) and drove back to the

Station where the gazebo was again used as a communal dinner area and the mandatory camp fire was again lit by David (Captain Combustion). I managed to cook another batch of scones in the camp oven, ably assisted by Ian who ensured I didn't accidentally tip ash on them like I did at Goog's Lake!

The following day saw us packing up the tents and swags from the past two nights and heading towards home. Bruce tried to start his vehicle again, this time with success so he headed for home quite early in the day (07:30). Next to leave were David and Julie around 09:00 while the rest of us continued to pack up and then head to the "submarine" that marks the entrance to Mt Ive Station. We had pumped our tyres up to around 25psi before heading on the road to Iron Knob but Rob and Anne-Marie and also Judy decided to leave their tyres at 18psi for now. We had a good trip to Iron Knob, passing through various farming Stations. The road was a good dirt road and we made good time. We all stopped at Iron Knob for lunch and to pump tyres up. It was at this point that our air compressor died – rattled to death on Goog's Track followed by several hundred kilometres of dirt road. From Iron Knob we headed to Port Augusta on sealed road, going at only 90km as our tyres were still at 25psi. We had a final stop together at Port Augusta for a coffee, fuel, air and farewells with Judy and Rob and Anne-Marie deciding to push on for home rather than camp out another night.



Ian and I pushed on to Port Pirie and as we arrived there well before 16:00 we also decided to push on home. The sun was back out again as we passed the Pink Lake at Lochiel (still guarded by the "Pink Lake Monster" made of tyres!) Dinner was at the Dublin Hotel before journeying the last 150km home.

The trip was most enjoyable and we would like to return to Mt Ive Station again as we understand there are more tracks to traverse across the property and out the back of the Gawler Ranges.

Written by: Vanessa R