

Bendleby Ranges, Upper Mid North, SA

Friday 3/5/24

Made my way to Bendleby via Gawler, a more scenic if slower route. Arrived about 2.30 pm, paid my camp and track fees and got all relevant paper work. Made my way out to our camp number 8 called "Sugarloaf". Great private location, it had a fire pit and composting toilet and firewood supplied

Later in the afternoon James and Gary rocked up. I got the fire ready, while they were setting up their tent and swag, and early in evening Jeff made it to camp but it was dark already, he had no trouble putting up his tent. A quite but enjoyable evening followed.

Saturday 4/5/24

In the morning Bruce and Mel found their way in and set up the tent. Our first drive into the Bendleby Ranges we drove along Hidden Valley Road then onto the Gum Gorge track via Gumdale Ruins, the track is very much a scenic route and could be done in a car 2wd we turned off at Murphys Yards to Monument loop rated 6/10 and onto Kokoda trail 7/10 and made our way back to camp. Later that arvo another fire, a few nibbles a bevvy or 2 and a great social evening was had. In the morning...

Sunday 5/5/24

Bruce and Mel packed up and in the process did some repairs to the camping trailer. The guys pitched in and fixed the problem, Bruce and Mel made their way home, this was Mels first time camping and 4wd driving enjoyed it and left with a smile on her face. And then there were 4, Gary decided to explore the Bendleby side while we went to the Hungry Ranges side, and then there was 3 vehicles to do the good stuff. We had to start early because the Variety Bash 4wd had 43 cars to do the same track and we did not want to be behind them. Billy Goat track starts with dirt track to get to Quartz track 7/10 and then onto the Fence track. When we got to the start of Billy Goat the Variety bash guys set up a tent to serve scones and tea but we missed out and told to move on as the Bashers were coming. On to Billy goat and it did not disappoint, I can tell you its rated 10/10 with lots of getting out of 4wds to spot the hard places, off camber stuff with substantial drop offs to worry about. Its scary in places, it will test your skill . If you had lockers they would have been welcome, but alas I have none but made it anyway. After Billy Goat we completed Kings Ridge 8/10 then onto Back Ridge 7/10 made our way back to camp via the 3 gates. When we got back to camp Jeff stayed to late afternoon but had to go home. Later that evening we had another fire - we had plenty of firewood had nibbles some ales and a wine or two .

Monday May 2024

The weather gods smiled on us the whole weekend. Monday morning and then there were 3: James Gary and me, we all packed up and took our time, we left camp at different times as some were quicker than others. I got there first and I left last. I got home later that arvo happy but tired. I am sure everyone had a great time because I sure did!

Yours in 4wd, Chris