

Coorong National Park 50,000ha



Coorong National Park is a 130km stretch of saltwater lagoons protected from the Southern Ocean by the sweeping sand dunes of the Youngusband Peninsula.

There is something for all ages and interests in the Coorong. The serenity, the sheer diversity, and the proximity to Adelaide make it an immensely popular park. Visitors come for bird watching, boating, kayaking, fishing, camping, walking, four-wheel driving and European and cultural history.

The Coorong also is a wetland of international importance, it supports many significant and endangered flora and fauna.

The Encounter and Upper South East Marine Parks border Coorong National Park. Find out more at marineparks.sa.gov.au.

When to visit

The weather is mostly warm and dry during summer and autumn – it's easy to travel on the roads, great for camping and perfect for beach lovers.

Opening hours

Coorong National Park is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The park may be closed on days of extreme fire danger.

Getting there

The park is located 200km south east of Adelaide. The park is accessible via Meningie and Kingston off the Princes Highway. If you are arriving from the south, enter the park via Kingston. The Coorong Northern Lagoon can be accessed by boat via the Murray Mouth or by road via the Princes Highway to Narrung or Meningie.

Fees

Fees apply to camp in Coorong National Park. Please note that campsite bookings and payments can only be made online – cash payments are no longer accepted. Visit parks.sa.gov.au/coorong.

Traditional owners

The Coorong is of enormous cultural significance to the Ngarrindjeri people, with ancient mounds of discarded shells revealing archaeological evidence of Aboriginal campsites over thousands of years. 'Kurangk' (meaning 'long narrow neck') is the name given to the area by the Ngarrindjeri people. Ngarrindjeri involvement in cultural heritage is linked with current management of the park.

Friends of the Coorong

The Friends of the Coorong is a community-based group of volunteers who work to protect and develop the natural and cultural heritage in the park. Find them at friendsofthecoorong.org and learn more about volunteering in parks at parks.sa.gov.au.

Contact

Emergency: 000

Coorong National Park
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General park enquiries: (+61 8) 8204 1910
DEWNR.CustomerServiceCentre@sa.gov.au
parks.sa.gov.au | facebook.com/parkssa

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Things to see and do

Explore the park using the various walking trails, by paddling along waterways by kayak, or by four-wheel driving along designated tracks and between the high and low water mark along the beach. Bring your camera – you'll be rewarded with sightings of the many birds that visit the area and with spectacular views of waterways, dunes and the vast ocean beach.

Park maps on your mobile

Download free maps of this park for your mobile device from [Avenza PDF Maps](#) while you have mobile phone coverage. Used within the app, the maps allow you to calculate distances and locate yourself within the park (GPS coverage required).

Rangers recommend:

- Joining a boat tour and cruising from Goolwa to the mouth of the Murray River and the Coorong.
- Viewing the pelican breeding grounds from the Jack Point Observatory between August and February. Pelican Point and Mark Point are also great viewing spots for these majestic birds. Take your binoculars with you.
- Camping among the Pink Gum forests at Salt Creek from where you can visit the historical salt lakes and take the Ngrugie Ngoppun Walk.

Camping

Camping fees apply, you must book and pay for your camp site online before you go. Cash self-registration stations are no longer available in this park. Visit parks.sa.gov.au/coorong

The campgrounds at the southern end of the Coorong provide the best shelter for tent camping. There are campgrounds with designated sites and toilets along the Loop Road, 42 Mile Crossing, 28 Mile Crossing and at Parnka Point.

The camping areas best suited for caravans are 42 Mile Crossing, Parnka Point, Long Point and Mark Point. Sites in the park are not powered. Taking a caravan below 42 Mile Crossing is not recommended because of unpredictable terrain. Tea Tree Crossing is also not recommended for caravans – there's a high risk of getting bogged and the water levels at the crossing are unpredictable.

The Godfrey's Landing camping area is accessible only by boat, and you will find other secluded campsites along the

Younghusband Peninsula. Remember that navigating boats in the Coorong can be hazardous because of changing weather conditions, shallow water and rocky reefs.

If travelling on the beach, you can camp behind the foredune with a 4WD vehicle in the designated campsites that are indicated with a wooden post and poly fencing. Driving into the dunes is not permitted. Vehicles and tents must stay within the fenced area - there are heavy penalties for driving and camping on the vegetation or in the dunes.

Camping on the beach is allowed anywhere between the high and low watermark. Please choose where you sleep carefully, remember you might not be visible to other 4WD vehicles. When beach camping, take care not to disrupt the flow of traffic and be aware of tides.

Solid fuel fires are permitted on the ocean beach between the high and low water mark, except on days of total fire ban. You must bring in all of your own wood.

Camping facilities

	Camping	Water <small>(not for drinking)</small>	2WD access	Caravan access	Toilets	Boat access	Walking trails
Barker Knoll	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Godfrey's Landing	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Pelican Point	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Mark Point	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Long Point	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Parnka Point	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Jack Point	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Loop Road	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Tea Tree Crossing	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
Chinaman's Well	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
42 Mile Crossing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
32 Mile Crossing	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
28 Mile Crossing	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Kartoo track	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N

No internet?
No worries.



Our maps are geo-enabled meaning you will always have your location dot no matter where you are*

*when used in conjunction with the FREE Avenza app and smart phone

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Credit: SATC

Boating

With over 150km of lagoon and coastline to explore, the waters of the Coorong are ideal for boating, kayaking and canoeing. There are two separate bodies of water in the park – the Northern Lagoon (from Goolwa Barrage to Parnka Point) and the Southern Lagoon (Parnka Point to Salt Creek).

Be cautious when navigating the lagoon – it can be hazardous because of currents, choppy water, shifting sands, rocky reefs and shallow water. Always check the weather forecast before you set out.

Boat launch	Type	Jetty	Draught Deep >1m Shallow <1m	Affected by tide/ wind
Goolwa	Concrete ramp	Y	Deep	N
Marina, Hindmarsh Island	Concrete ramp	Y	Deep	N
No 19 Beacon	Concrete ramp	Y	Deep	N
Sugars Beach	Sand	N	Shallow	Y
Mundoo Channel	Concrete ramp	N	Shallow	N
Drive				
Mark Point	Concrete ramp	N	Deep	N
Long Point	Sand	Y	Shallow	Y
Parnka Point	Clay	N	Deep	N
Policeman's Point	Clay	N	Shallow	Y

Fishing

There is excellent surf fishing along the Coorong ocean beach. The steep beach offers good access to deep gutters along the shore where fish hunt for food. Between the Murray Mouth and Long Point are good spots for boat fishing – try casting a line in the lagoon for the famous Coorong Mullet and Mulloway. Please note:

- net fishers must have recreational licences
- you must observe bag sizes and limits
- there is currently no recreational collections of cockles allowed in the Coorong (regulations are subject to change). More information: pir.sa.gov.au
- no fishing is allowed within 150m of the barrages.

Fishing is not allowed in marine park sanctuary zones (from 1 October 2014). Coorong Beach South and Coorong Beach North sanctuary zones border Coorong National Park. Details: marineparks.sa.gov.au.

Bird watching

The Coorong is a birdwatchers' paradise. Over 200 species of birds have been recorded in the park, including two rare species. Many different water birds visit the wetland, particularly in summer. The distinctive landscape is an internationally renowned breeding area for the Australian pelican and a refuge for ducks, swans, cormorants, terns, grebes and numerous species of migratory birds.

When bird watching, carry binoculars and a field guide to help with bird identification. Wear clothes that blend in with the surrounds and be quiet, particularly if birds are nesting. Do not approach or interfere with nests – this can cause birds to abandon them.

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Driving

With its long and challenging beach drive, narrow crossings, and secluded campsites, the Coorong is one of Australia's favourite four-wheel driving destinations. When travelling in the Coorong, please observe all safety signs and closures.

From Goolwa it is possible to access the very top end of the Coorong, but there is no vehicle access across the barrages into the main areas of the park. Primary access into the park is via the Princes Highway from Taillem Bend.

The ocean beach is a gazetted road so speed restrictions apply. Standard road rules apply when driving anywhere in the Coorong, including the laws for speed limits, drink driving, vehicle registration, drivers licences and seat belts.

Be careful if driving on the beach, and only do so at low tide. Remember tides are unpredictable and can turn quickly. You may only drive on the beach between the high and low water mark. Do not take your vehicle off the designated tracks. Precious Indigenous sites can be damaged and wildlife threatened by off track driving, and fines apply.

Only registered motorbikes are permitted in the park. Quad bikes are not permitted.

To protect the Hooded Plover, the ocean beach track north of Tea Tree Crossing is closed to vehicles from 24 October to 24 December every year. This closure applies to the beach from Tea Tree Crossing to the Murray Mouth.

Walking

Walk (easy)	Jack Point Pelican Observatory Walk	20 minute return	1.2km return
<p><i>A walk is accessible to people of all ages and fitness levels. These are well-defined trails, generally less than 3km in length, with even surfaces.</i></p>	<p>A great walk for families winding through the dunes to a viewing area overlooking pelican breeding islands.</p>		
	<p>Chinaman's Well Historic Site Journey to Gold Walk</p> <p>Explore the Chinaman's Well historic site to find the stone well and associated quarries, learning the history of the gold rush.</p>	1 hour return	1.3km return
	<p>Godfrey's Landing Walk (only accessible by boat)</p> <p>A great wildlife walk, this trail takes you through the sand dunes from the Coorong Lagoon to the ocean beach.</p>	1 hour return	3km return
	<p>Lakes Nature Walk Trail</p> <p>A gentle, pleasant walk past ephemeral lakes, through mallee scrub and over low sand dunes.</p>	1 hour loop	3km loop
	<p>Ngrugie Ngoppun Walk</p> <p>This means 'good walk' in the Ngarrindjeri language. This short loop offers wildlife viewing and access to some local history.</p>	1.25 hours loop	2.5km loop
Hike (moderate)	Nukan Kungun Hike	2 days (one way)	25km (one way)
<p><i>A moderate hike is suitable for bushwalkers with an average level of fitness. These trails can be any length and may include moderate inclines and irregular surfaces.</i></p>	<p>This 25km trail is great for school and walking groups.</p> <p>It starts from Salt Creek and links some of the more popular trails in the park, concluding at the 42 Mile Crossing campground.</p> <p>From the campground you may continue over the sand dunes to the ocean beach, a further 1.3km.</p> <p>Secluded bush campsites are dotted along the trail.</p>		

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Know before you go

Every national park is different. Each has its own challenging environment and it is important to understand how to stay safe, while enjoying all the park has to offer. Please:

- leave your pets at home
- take your rubbish with you
- drive only on designated tracks
- respect geological and heritage sites
- do not feed or disturb animals, or remove native plants
- do not bring generators, chainsaws and firearms into the park
- be considerate of other park users.

Fire safety

This park may be closed on days of extreme fire danger. Listen to your local radio station for broadcasts, or call the CFS Hotline on 1300 362 361.

- Wood fires and solid fuel fires are prohibited all year round. Fire ban information: cfs.sa.gov.au.
- Ocean beach foreshore only: Wood fires are allowed between the high and low water mark all year round (except on days of total fire ban)
- On days of total fire ban all solid, liquid and gas appliances are prohibited.
- Gas fires and stoves are permitted (except on days of total fire ban).
- BYO firewood, gathering firewood in the park is prohibited.

Boating safety

Before setting, out check the weather forecast. Weather conditions can change rapidly.

- Make sure your boat registration and your boat operator's license are current.
- Check your boat – make sure it is seaworthy and that you have enough fuel for the return trip.
- Check that all the required safety equipment is on board and in good condition.
- Know your boating regulations and respect the right of others to enjoy the Coorong.
- No jet skis or hovercraft are allowed in the Coorong.

4WD

- Take extreme care when driving in the park – be aware of soft, shifting sands, blowouts and drop offs.
- Driving on the ocean beach is only permitted between the high and low water mark.
- When driving on the beach, it is best to do so at low tide. High tides and storms can cause sections of the beach to become treacherous. Check the tide times for your forward and return journey.
- When driving on sand, deflate your tyres to 105kPa (15psi) – or as appropriate for your vehicle. Take care when lowering tyre pressure as there is a risk you could roll a tyre off a rim. Also, remember that lower tyre pressure can mean a change in how the vehicle handles. Don't forget to reinflate your tyres to the manufacturer's recommended pressure before leaving the park.
- Please consider other drivers by not obstructing the flow of traffic.

Dune protection

- Coastal dunes are very fragile and are easily destroyed by off-road vehicles. It is an offence to drive a vehicle off clearly marked existing tracks. The only approved tracks to access the ocean beach are at Tea Tree Crossing (summer only), 42 Mile Crossing, 32 Mile Crossing, Wreck Crossing (summer only) and 28 Mile Crossing. Access to designated campsites is via the ocean beach between the high and low water mark.
- Sand boarding or sand surfing has a devastating impact on coastal sand dunes and is not permitted in Coorong National Park.

Phytophthora (Root-rot fungus)

Phytophthora (fy-TOFF-thora), otherwise known as root-rot fungus, is killing our native plants and threatens the survival of animals depending on plants for food and shelter.

This introduced fungus can be found in plant roots, soil and water. Please help stop the spread by staying on tracks and trails and by complying with all *Phytophthora* management signs.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile phone coverage can be patchy and unreliable in national parks, especially if you are in a low-lying area (such as a gorge or a gully).

To get a signal, you may have to drive to one of the higher areas in the park.