

2.2 to 2.0 A notch in the rocky spine gives on to an easy section of the walk which is through a shrubland of Rock Fuchsia-bush. Views overlook the steep cliff faces (Devil's Slide) of the entrance road.

The spine of rocks forming the ridge provides niches for Northern Cypress-pine and Mt Lofty Grass Trees, but strong southerly winds have stunted some individuals. Bushes of the southern Flinders (Clammy Daisy-bush, Curry Bush, Stiff Mat-rush and Narrow-leaved Hop-bush) have a tenuous existence, here benefitting from heavy dews and mists which do not extend to lower slopes.

1.8 to 1.6 Further downslope are other plants more characteristic of arid areas, including Silver Mulla Mulla, Bullock Bush, Needle Bush and the Native Orange. Near the fence are two Witchetty Bushes.



Witchetty Bush (*Acacia kempeana*) not common on Acacia Ridge; shrub 2-3 m tall, Witchetty Grubs feed on the roots of these bushes; they re the larvae of the Ghost Moth (*Xyleutes leucomochla*) and were valued as a source of fat in the diet of Aboriginies before settlement.

0.8 Walk across the dam wall.

Mt Elva Dam was built to provide a supplementary water supply for Arkaroola. This arid country is poorly supplied with water, even underground supplies. But seasons are capricious and since construction in 1986 the dam has filled with water on only a few occasions.

0.6 The walk continues through mulga woodland finally descending into the creek.



Elegant Wattle (*Acacia victoriae*) occurs only at either end of the walk in drainage lines; spreading spiny shrub 1-2 m tall, flowers in October. Crushed seed is used in biscuits, confectionery etc.

~0.3 about here is **Geosite 2** *Wortupa Quartzite*: which explains the geology of the entry road and the opposite slope of Griselda Hill. There is a good profile view from Reception.

0.2 Geosite 3 *Opaminda Formation*: is across the road (**beware of traffic**) with more about the softer sediments under the Wortupa Quartzite.

You pass Arkhenge which displays more of the rock types found on Arkaroola.

0.0 Arkaroola Village Trailhead Checkpoint A1



Flinders
Ranges
Walks



Flinders Ranges Walks have been established in protected areas to provide visitors with experiences of the Ranges.

Trail maintenance and servicing of these trailhead leaflets is provided by the voluntary Walking Trails Support Group.

For downloads and further information please visit:
www.walkingtrailssupportgroup.org.au

Read *Explore the Flinders Ranges*, a definitive guidebook by the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia
Or download our FREE Flinders Ranges Walks App!



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Flinders
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Acacia Ridge



An interesting stop along the way

This ridge top walk is a good introduction to the Arkaroola country which is so different from the more southerly Flinders.

The ridge itself is of Blue Mine Conglomerate, one of the older sediments of the Adelaide Geosyncline. If you look closely at pieces of the rock, it has coarse clear crystals in it; these are quartz a mineral found in granite, an igneous rock.

Thus, Blue Mine Conglomerate (an arkose) is formed from sediments laid down 800-900 million years ago resulting from the erosion of an even older granite—an island mass to the north. In some places the Blue Mine Conglomerate is finely grained like quartzite and like that too, it displays ripple marks.

These sediments are no longer lying flat as can be seen by the bare, near vertical faces visible both along the road and the walk.

Acacia Ridge

Distance and time: 5.6 km along the ridge including 400 m return spur to the summit; allow 3 hrs.

Altitude Range: 270 m (Arkaroola Station Trailhead) to 566 m (summit of Acacia Ridge).

Access: The best system is to arrange a lift either through Arkaroola management or a friend to be dropped at **Arkaroola Station Trailhead Checkpoint A2**, near Grace Paterson cairn, so that you walk back to the village along Acacia Ridge. If you start in the village the return walk back along the road can be tedious.

Track: Generally a gradual grade; some rocky sections between 2.0 km and Mt Elva dam.

For your safety:

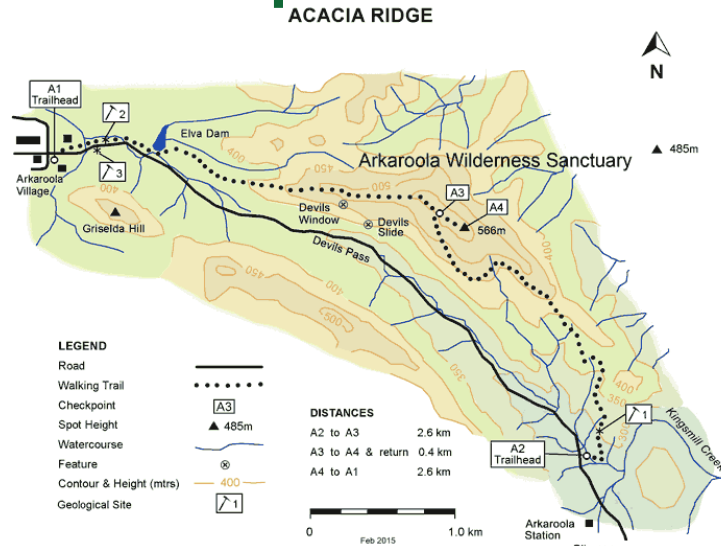
- This is an AS2156 Class 3 walk in a natural area; beware of inherent hazards, including fire.
- Advise a reliable person of where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Wear strong comfortable boots and take adequate food and clothing.
- Take at least 2 litres of water per person, more if it is hot.
- Protect yourself from the sun and carry a small First Aid kit.

Seasons come and go, and plants and animals mentioned in the notes may not always be there.



Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) tree 10 m, flowering any time after rain. Occurs along the length of the walk.

Trail Map



Notes reads for a linear walk starting at **Checkpoint A2** with marked distances every 200 m decreasing as you proceed.

5.2 Arkaroola Station Trailhead Checkpoint A2

Cross the creek and walk up slope.

In good seasons seven species of Acacia may be seen on Acacia Ridge – some are illustrated here. Dead Finish, a spiky shrub; Mulga, a greyish tree; Elegant Wattle, grey shrub with spines (occurs at the creek crossing here); Barrier Range Wattle and Witchetty Bush, not common on Acacia Ridge. Grubs (larvae of the Goat Moth) feed on the roots of Witchetty Bushes, they are a valued source of fat in the Aboriginal diet. Close to Elva dam Silver Wattle and Umbrella Bush can be seen.

5.0 These Mulga groves have many dead trees; young ones, although small, date from 1974, when good rains followed removal of sheep and goats.

Geosite 1 Blue Mine Conglomerate: is a short distance ahead with information about the rock which forms Acacia Ridge.

4.8 Ahead is a black oak grove mostly dead; such groves develop in areas of loose stone which move slowly downhill, abrading roots and stimulating the growth of suckers.

4.4 A view south through a gap in the range, above the station buildings, to Nepouie Peak.



Barrier Range Wattle (*Acacia beckleri*) not often seen.

3.4 The marker is at the foot of a bare slab of rock; this provides a different habitat as all water drains off the rock surface and runs into cracks or straight down the slab to soak into the soil at the bottom. Thus there are some plants unusual for the North Flinders – the delicate pink-flowered Fringe-myrtle and Green Fuchsia-bush are both more common further south and may only be seen here in good seasons. Gum-barked Coolibah trees also take advantage of the extra water. Barrier Range Wattle is here too.



Dead Finish (*Acacia tetragonophylla*) a spiky drought survivor.

2.8 This cool, south facing slope has a greater variety of shrubs than the hotter north slope.

2.6 Checkpoint A3—below the summit

There is a short walk (200 m) to the summit from here where landscape features are pointed out on a topogram; you return to this point for the downward route.

Checkpoint A4—the summit

Take in the view, which includes on the eastern horizon the white salt flats of Lake Frome (45 km). Use the topogram for directions.

Return to **Checkpoint A3** and take the track in the direction of the village.