



Please consider joining the National Trust to help support vital conservation programs on our nature reserves.
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The Roachdale Reserve starts with the intersection of the main South Para Road and Wattle Road on the left. Opposite is a layby where you can park your car. Cross the main South Para Road to the Roachdale Reserve. Enter through gate to the start of the nature trail.

The Reserve is on the left side of the road about 2.5 km from the centre of Kersbrook.

Roachdale is in the Mount Lofty Ranges, about 40 km north-east from the Adelaide GPO. Follow the main road from Kersbrook north towards Williamstown.

How to Get There

The Roachdale property was given to the National Trust in 1957 by Miss Hilda Roach to hold in trust for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of South Australia. Roachdale is one of a number of areas of natural beauty and significance which the National Trust administers.

The National Trust of South Australia was established in 1955 for the preservation and maintenance of lands and buildings of beauty, historical, scientific, artistic, or architectural interest and the preservation of natural features in land and the protection of animal and plant life. Anyone can join the National Trust and new members are always welcome.

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Roachdale and the National Trust



Roachdale Nature Trail

Welcome to the Roachdale Nature Trail

The Roachdale Reserve is one of the few remaining places in the Mount Lofty Ranges where one can see original native forest of the region as it has been for thousands of years. The 46 hectare woodland has an upper storey of eucalypt trees and an understorey of grasses, herbs and shrubs adapted to dry conditions. It is a refuge for native birds and other animals.

The springtime wildflower season is an extravaganza of stunning herbs, lilies and a considerable variety of orchid species.

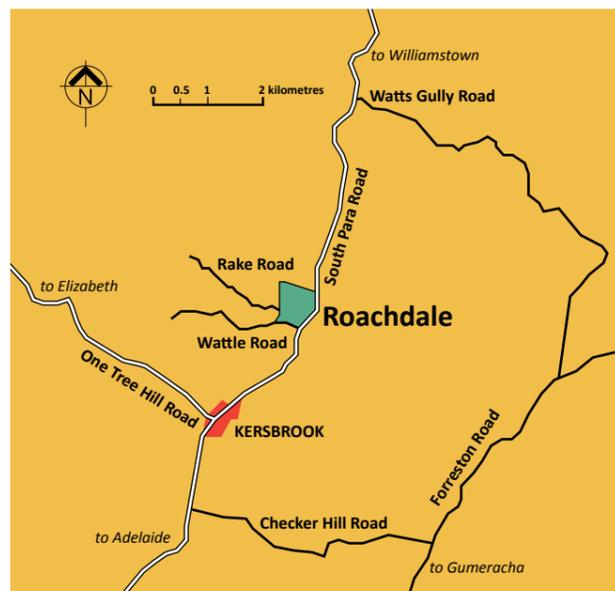
It will probably take just over an hour for you to walk the trail. The current trailhead entry is located at the corner of the South Para Road and Wattle Road. Please observe standard hygiene procedures and use the cleaning ramp to prevent cross-contamination with soil-borne disease.

The trail has been left as natural as possible so good footwear is advised. The trail is marked with arrow posts and the points of interest with numbered posts corresponding with numbered paragraphs in the guide.

PLEASE ...

- Respect and help protect this private property.
- Stay on the marked track.
- Take your litter away.
- Do not bring your pets.
- Leave the wildlife for other people to enjoy.

**THE TRAIL IS CLOSED
DURING THE MOUNT LOFTY RANGES
FIRE BAN DAYS
(check updates with the CFS)**



Since its formation in 1955 the National Trust of South Australia has established a network of 28 conservation reserves which contain:

- a valuable diversity of plant communities
- significant wildlife habitat
- a number of rare and threatened species and
- sites of geological and Aboriginal significance.

The management of these reserves is overseen by the natural heritage section through a volunteer network and is funded by

- membership subscriptions to NTSA
- donations and bequests
- State and Australian Government grants and
- sponsorship

Please do not remove any material from this conservation reserve.

For more information about the Roachdale Reserve or on becoming a volunteer contact the:

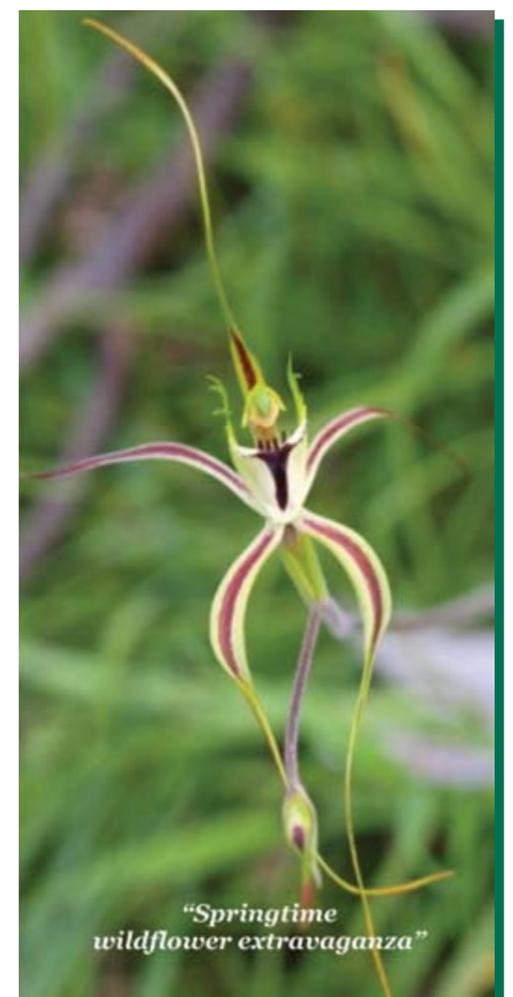
Natural Heritage Manager
National Trust of South Australia
631 Glynburn Road
BEAUMONT SA 5066
Telephone: (08) 8202 9200 Facsimile: (08) 8202 9201
Email: admin@nationaltrustsa.org.au
Web: www.nationaltrustsa.org.au



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Roachdale Nature Trail

Based on Ann Prescott's original leaflet and botanical illustrations this guide has been produced by the National Trust of South Australia, with the help of enthusiastic, local community volunteers from the Roachdale Management Committee, National Trust staff and members of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee. A fully updated map includes trail modifications as designed by Rob & Sue Marshall. Layout and design by Red Sky Graphic Design. Photographs by Steven Krieger.

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"Springtime wildflower extravaganza"

1 Wire Rapier-sedge (*Lepidosperma semiteres*)



A vital and distinctive, dense ground cover, the Wire Rapier-sedge forms a special part of the understorey. Growing in this high-rainfall woodland, the gently drooping tussocks of the Wire Rapier-sedge provide cover for small marsupials, rodents and reptiles.

It is possible to observe butterflies and moths investigating these sedges.

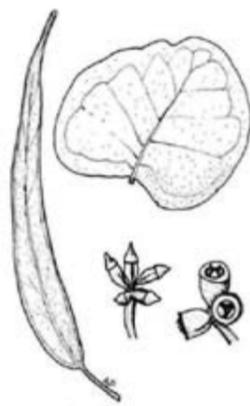
The tiny seeds provide a valuable resource for seed-eating birds and animals.

As for so many understorey plant species, these sedges are yet to be successfully propagated for introduction into bushland revegetation sites. Their conservation as part of natural habitats is critical.

2 Long-leaved Box (*Eucalyptus goniocalyx*)

Roachdale has one of the few remaining stands of the Long-leaved Box in South Australia. Many thousands of years ago it grew in other parts of the State but did not survive when the climate grew drier. This species is stranded here as a 'relic'. It grows in poor soil on ridgetops in the Ranges where the annual rainfall is 750 mm (30 in). It also grows on some hillsides in the Flinders Ranges and in Victoria. This is the most common tree in the reserve.

The main distinguishing feature of the Long-leaved Box is the shape of the leaves of juvenile trees and suckers. They are large, round, very blue and they grow in pairs. The adult leaves are a more normal leaf shape, but quite long. The bark is rough and scaly, as with all 'box' trees and is light grey in colour. The buds and fruit are slightly angular with ridges running along them.



3 Meat Ants (*Iridomyrmex purpureus*)

Don't stand too close! These ants are meat eaters. The mound of earth and gravel about two metres across is the result of an ant nest excavation. There are many entrance holes. You can see the worker ants looking for food close to the nest. Further away, the ants follow a scent trail which with use over time becomes quite a 'highway'. Meat ants have their own territories. When there are several colonies close together you might see ants from different colonies challenging each other at the boundaries. Two ants move towards each other in a stiff-legged walk until one of them runs away. They rarely actually fight. Look for this at some nests further along the trail.

Other insects prefer life in more secluded spots such as under loose bark on trees, in stumps such as the one here, or in the leaf litter on the ground. Of the many insects that live in Roachdale, one is the very rare Diminutus cricket.

4 Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)

The small slender Golden Wattle trees are our national floral emblem. Here they form a lower layer in the plant community. They have dark-coloured trunks, large leaves and grow to about 3 m tall. Golden describes the showy spring flowers; wattle is the name given by early settlers who used the branches (wattles) and mud to make their wattle-and-daub homes. The bark was used to tan leather. The large number of wattles near this post is probably the result of several fires. Fire cracks the tough coats of their seeds and allows them to germinate.

5 Tree Stumps

When this land was first surveyed by the Government, it was set aside as a timber reserve. The survey description said 'peppermint & red gum, stringybark & scattered wattles'.

However, the mis-named Peppermint trees are really the Long-leaved Box which is useless for timber. The Government sold the land soon afterwards, perhaps when the identification mistake was discovered. The size of these stumps show that some big trees were felled. Among the smaller young trees are a few large trees that were missed by the woodcutter's axe. The reserve is still a forest because the soil is not good enough for agricultural purposes and the land has never been cleared.

6 Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*)



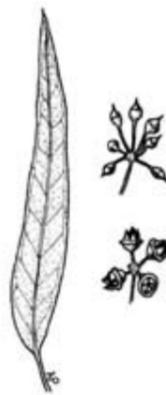
The Blue Gum is another gum found at Roachdale. It is a tall tree with a straight light-grey trunk.

The flower buds and gum nuts occur in groups of three on long slender stalks. You will notice that throughout the reserve there are areas of open forest with a ground layer of grass-like plants, small shrubs, and much bark and leaf litter. Down the slope towards the creek there are perennial native grasses and introduced annual grasses. This type of open forest of Blue Gum and ground cover grows in places with good soil.

7 Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)

The Red Gum often grows along creekbeds and rivers. In arid land, such as the Flinders Ranges, these trees trace out the watercourses. Red Gums also line the banks of the Murray River. Where there is high annual rainfall, the trees are not restricted to the creeks. These magnificent trees are one of the gums made famous by the South Australian artist, Sir Hans Heysen.

The tree has mainly smooth white or grey bark which roughens and darkens at the base as the tree matures. The fruit is almost spherical but the top half cracks into four or five triangles.



8 Native Cherry (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*)

The Native Cherry is a good example of the interdependence of plants. Somewhere nearby, underground, the roots of the Native Cherry have attached themselves to the roots of some other plant to rob it of food. Because it can make some of its own food as well, it is a partial parasite. Another native parasite common in the Roachdale Reserve is Mistletoe. This plant has no real roots and must rely on another plant for water and some nutrients. Most parasites are careful to live in balance with their hosts. If the host dies, the food supply to the parasite is destroyed. (If you spot Mistletoe, keep a look out for the tiny, black, white and red Mistletoe Bird).

9 Freshwater pools

Pools of water remain in this creek for a long time after the winter rains have finished. The calm still water provides a refuge for many small animals, particularly insects, which live in the water. Some of the most common insects are mosquito, dragonfly and damselfly, mayfly, stonefly and caddisfly larvae, pondskaters, water boatmen and whirligig beetles. Tadpoles and adult frogs, leeches, worms, snails and other small animals live in the freshwater pools. Many of these creatures contend with decreasing oxygen and higher temperatures as the pools dry up. They must have special methods to survive the long periods of drought.

10 Birds

For identification, a good field guide is needed, but here are some general bird shapes to give you a start:

Honeyeaters: blossom feeders

- White-plumed Honeyeater
- Brown-headed Honeyeater
- White-naped Honeyeater
- Crescent Honeyeater
- Yellow-winged Honeyeater
- Eastern Spinebill
- Red Wattlebird
- Rainbow, Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets

Seed eaters and grass birds

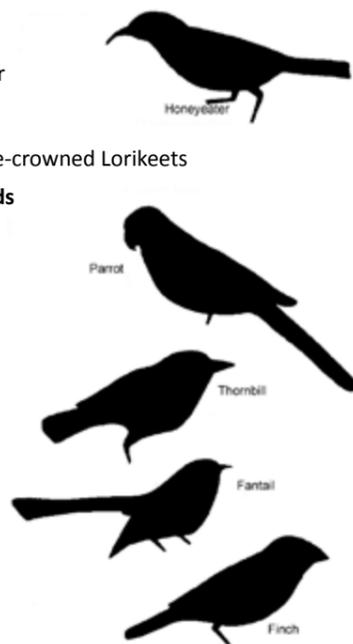
- Red-browed Firetail
- Diamond Firetail
- Adelaide Rosella
- Red-rumped Parrot

Small insect-eating birds

- Striated Thornbill
- Yellow-rumped Thornbill
- Superb Blue Wren
- Scarlet Robin
- Grey Fantail
- Willie Wagtail
- Golden Whistler
- Rufous Whistler
- Grey Shrike-thrush
- Brown Treecreeper
- White-throated Treecreeper
- Striated Pardalote

The Large and Conspicuous birds

eg Galahs, Magpies, Little Ravens, Choughs and Kookaburras



More than forty different species of birds that live in scrubland have been seen at Roachdale. Many can be heard and if you are quiet you should see some as well. The bushes and trees provide nesting sites for the birds. The birds eat the nectar of flowers and seeds of these plants or the insects and small reptiles that live among them.

11 Agricultural land

On the left you can see across a fence to land that has been used for agriculture. A large number of trees have been cleared and non-native pasture planted. There is evidence of past grazing by stock.

Stock would have eaten the young seedlings of most native plants that tried to re-establish. Large Red Gums line the creek but the younger trees have grown only since stock was removed. It is interesting to compare this pasture-land with the uncleared reserve; the reserve supporting so many different types and ages of plants and providing a home for a wide range of native insects, birds and other animals.

12 Rocks (*Schists and gneisses of the Barossa Complex*)

These layered and hard rocks were originally sediments that were deeply buried within the Earth's crust, heated and folded about 1,500 million years ago. The Mt Lofty Ranges were formed around 500 million years ago by faulting and uplifting. Since then, constant erosion has produced the rounded hills, river valleys, creeks and the development of soils. The pale grey flaky patches on the rocks are lichens, which are a symbiotic association of algae and fungi. These small plants assist in the physical and chemical processes that very slowly break the rocks down into soil.

13 Tea-tree (*Leptospermum myrsinoides*)

Beneath the eucalypt and wattle tree storeys is an understorey of shrubs. The shrubs have developed ways to survive in the tough summer weather. They have extensive swollen root systems for water storage. The roots also spread out near the surface of the ground to get nutrients from the decomposing leaf litter before the rain washes them away. After bushfires, the plants regrow from seeds or from protected buds on the roots.

The leaves are also adapted to reduce water loss. They are small and leathery with a waxy covering. The small leaves need less nutrition from the soil. Many of these plants have attractive spring flowers. A common shrub is the tea-tree.

14 Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*)

The Messmate Stringybark is the only 'stringybark' eucalypt at Roachdale. The name refers to the rough reddish bark that seems to cover the tree in long strings or ropes. The messmate part of the name possibly describes the mess that the sticky tree sap makes of saws. One edge of the wide leaves is narrower and shorter than the other. It is rare to find the Messmate Stringybark and the Long-leaved Box growing in the same area.

The Stringybark usually grows in higher rainfall areas and on hillsides facing south.

15 Rehabilitation & Restoration

To reduce the impacts of stormwater erosion, steep climbs and 'trail-creep', some sections of the original nature trail have been decommissioned. In standardising a consistent trail grade/categorisation, new routes have been constructed, taking advantage of better drainage of stormwater, providing improved public safety and enhancing visitor experience.

Here you can see evidence of rehabilitation of the 'old' trail as you wander the 'new', lower route.

As part of ongoing conservation management of the Roachdale Reserve, the condition of the vegetation and wildlife habitat is regularly monitored and actions devised to help restore and rehabilitate areas degraded by past or neighbouring land use. Minimal disturbance techniques are employed to combat pest plant or animals impacting on certain sites. Managing visitor impacts is also important, whilst encouraging and maintaining a great experience and providing an opportunity to learn about and appreciate the conservation of our natural heritage.