

**Distance in km from Trailhead**

**0.0 Arkaroola Village Trailhead**  
(map ref. 399 453)

From the Trailhead walk down the road past Arkhenge, which displays some of the rock types found on Arkaroola.

**0.4** A cairn acknowledges the effort of the workers who were responsible for the road into Arkaroola through Paterson Pass; the road is built over relatively soft sediments (Opaminda Formation siltstones) which are sandwiched between the harder quartzites of Blue Mine Conglomerate (Acacia Ridge) and Wortupa Quartzite (Griselda Hill).

**0.7 Checkpoint 1**—turn off for Acacia Ridge (map ref. 405 453)

**0.8** Mt Elva Dam was built to provide a supplementary water supply for Arkaroola. This arid country has poor supplies of water, even from underground, but seasons are capricious and since construction in 1986 the dam has filled on only three occasions.

**1.2** There are four species of acacia on Acacia Ridge:

dead finish - *A. tetragonophylla*, occurs along the length of the walk; shrub 2 m tall; short angular spiky 'leaves' (phyllodes) in clusters; round flower-heads

mulga - *A. aneura*, occurs along the length of the walk; tree 5 - 10 m tall; narrow greyish 'leaves'; oblong flower heads

elegant wattle - *A. victoriae*, occurs only occasionally along this walk; shrub 2 m tall, spiny stems; flat grey-green 'leaves'; lemon coloured flower heads

witchetty bush - *A. kempeana*, occurs only rarely; shrub 2 - 3 m tall; flat green 'leaves'; oblong flower-heads; witchetty grubs feed on the roots of these bushes; they are the larvae of the Goat Moth (*Xyleutes leucomochla*) and were a valued source of fat in the Aboriginal diet before settlement.

**Distance from Trailhead in km**

**1.6 to 1.8** Further up the hill other plants typical of sandstone appear— cypress-pines, Mt Lofty grass-trees, curry bush, clammy daisy-bush, stiff mat-rush and narrow-leaved hop-bush.

These occur at lower altitudes further south; at Arkaroola they capitalise on the heavier dews and light showers that occur on range tops and which may not extend to lower slopes.

The generally arid situation, however, encourages other plants as well—native orange, bullock bush, silver mulla mulla and rock fuchsia bush. Native orange is host to the Caper White butterfly (*Anaphaeis java teutonia*). Females may be seen fluttering around the foliage in late spring and summer as they lay eggs.

**2.0 to 2.2** An easy section of the walk which is through a shrubland of rock fuchsia bush.

**2.7 Checkpoint 2**—below the summit (map ref. 423 450)

There is a short walk to the top from here and you return to this point (0.5 km return) for the downward route.

**Checkpoint 3**—top of Acacia Ridge. (map ref. 424 449)

Starting on the western side the view includes (bearings are magnetic):

<i>to the north</i>		
Sprigg Knob	287°	6.5 km
Mt Oliphant	298°	6 km
Mt Elva	313°	1.5 km
Yudnamutana Hill	316°	16 km
Dinnertime Hill	337°	4 km
The Armchair	345°	12 km
Mt Painter	351°	9.5 km
Freeling Heights	360°	19 km
Humanity Seat	19°	7 km
Bararranna Hill	45°	4 km

<i>to the south</i>		
Mt Jacob	143°	10 km
Nepouie Peak	174°	18 km
Mt Warren Hastings	208°	4.5 km
Mt McKinlay Bluff	219°	28 km
Mt McKinlay	221°	33 km
Benbonyathe Hill	232°	20 km

On the eastern horizon are the salt flats of Lake Frome (45 km).

**Return to Checkpoint 2.**

**2.8** The track down hill is on the cooler south-facing slope and the variety of shrubs is greater here than on the northern side; they include the spiky-leaved needlebush.

**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 plants here which are more common in moister southern areas, including the delicate pink-flowered fringe myrtle and green fuchsia-bush.

**4.8** Ahead is a black oak grove; such groves develop where there is loose and fractured rock which encourages the production of suckers.

**5.0** These mulga groves have many dead trees; young ones, although small, date from 1974.

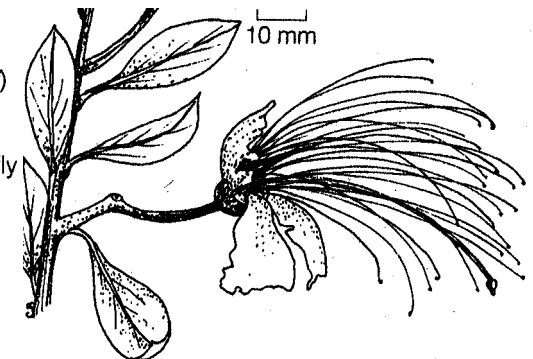
**5.2 Arkaroola Station Trailhead**—the main road (map ref. 432 435)

Return to Arkaroola Vilage along the road, looking at the Devil's Slide and Devil's Window on the way.

Devils Slide is the steeply dipping bedding plane of the sediments of the Blue Mine Conglomerate. Folding began 500 million years ago, eventually pushing the originally flat-lying sediments to this steep angle.

Devils Window has been formed by selective weathering and erosion of the parent arkose rock. Because feldspar readily breaks down to a clay mineral it can erode erratically.

native orange (*Capparis mitchellii*) is host to the caterpillars of the Caper White butterfly



## Acacia Ridge

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, you will see coarse clear crystals in it; these are feldspar, a mineral found in granite (an igneous rock). Blue Mine Conglomerate (an arkose) is formed from sediments laid down 900 - 800 million years ago which resulted from the erosion of an older granite—an island mass to the north. In some places the Blue Mine Conglomerate is more finely grained like sandstone and displays ripple marks.

### SELF-GUIDED WALK

- 5.8 km linear walk including the 0.5 km return along the spur track to the summit;— allow 3 hours. It is 4 km back along the road to the Village.

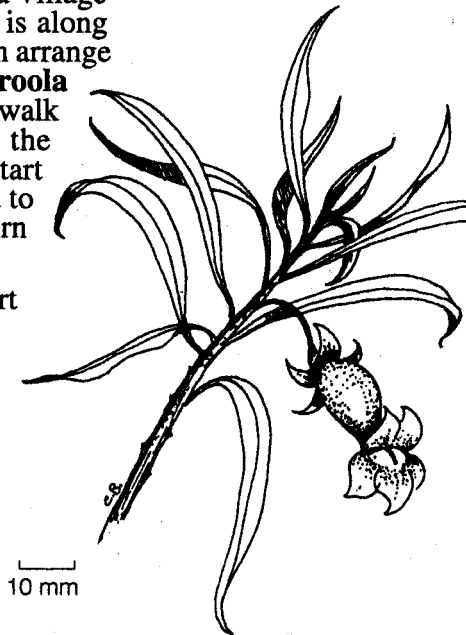
Altitude range 270 m (Arkaroola Station Trailhead) to 566 m (summit of Acacia Ridge).

### ACCESS

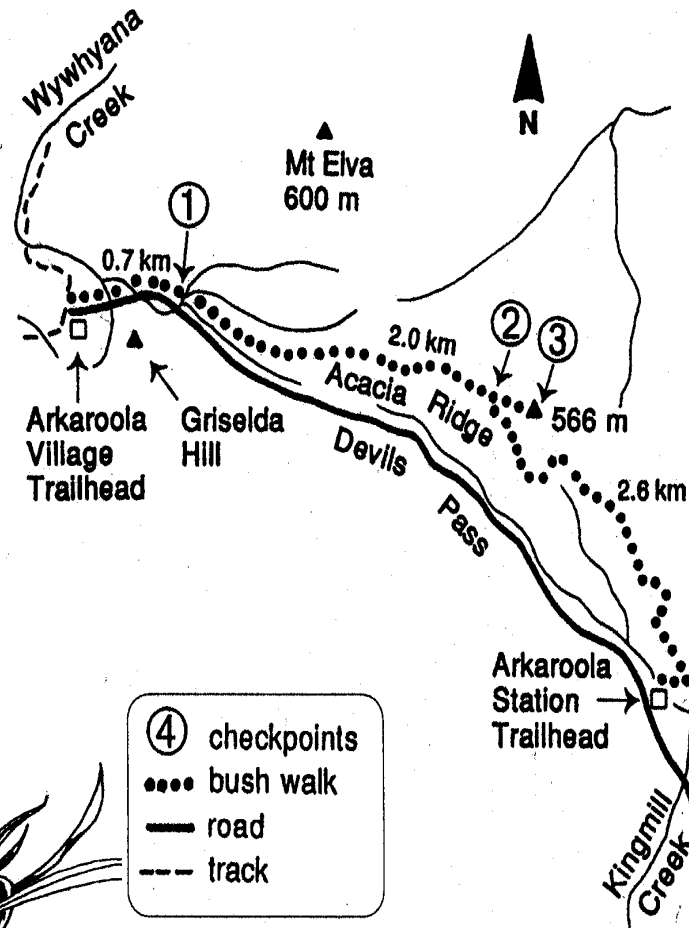
The trailhead is in Arkaroola Village and the first half kilometre is along the entrance road. If you can arrange to be dropped off at **Arkaroola Station Trailhead**, you can walk back to the village along the ridge. Alternatively, if you start in the Village you will need to make allowance for the return trip.

The notes read as for a start from the village.

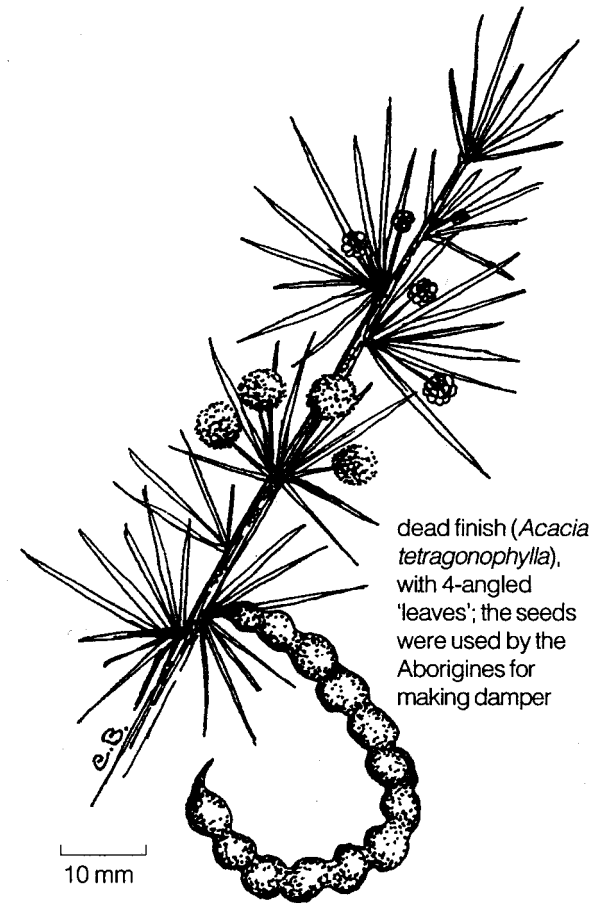
rock fuchsia-bush  
(*Eremophila freelingii*);  
there are many  
eremophilas in arid  
Australia



## Acacia Ridge Bush Walk



## ACACIA RIDGE



dead finish (*Acacia tetragonophylla*), with 4-angled 'leaves'; the seeds were used by the Aborigines for making damper

## FLINDERS RANGES BUSH WALKS

5.8km (3hrs)