

# Highbury Aqueduct Reserve

Resident Information Sheet  
April 2022



The Highbury Aqueduct Reserve is an important urban biodiversity corridor located amongst the suburbs of Highbury and Athelstone with shared-use trails linking with the adjacent River Torrens Linear Park – a beautiful natural environment in which the community can connect with nature.

This unique reserve has a fascinating history that dates back to the 1870s, when the state government purchased land to develop an aqueduct to transfer water from the River Torrens into the Hope Valley Reservoir to supply the greater Adelaide area with piped water. In 2008 an upgrade of the system saw the water transferred through an underground pipe and the aqueduct infrastructure was then decommissioned. With the development and implementation of a Master Plan in 2013, works have since been undertaken to improve accessibility to the reserve by removing boundary fences and installing shared use trails. The reserve has become popular with local residents for walking, bike riding, bird watching, gardening, exercising and conservation.

## Park of the month

The parks of the North Mount Lofty Ranges are featuring in the Park of the Month Program which aims to connect people with nature based experiences that promote health, wellbeing, access and inclusion, recreation, culture and stewardship.

Find out more about the Park of the Month Program at [www.parks.sa.gov.au/get-inspired/park-of-the-month](http://www.parks.sa.gov.au/get-inspired/park-of-the-month)

Highbury Aqueduct Reserve is one of the reserves featuring as Park of the Month in May 2022 as it is located within the North Mount Lofty Ranges and links with the Black Hill Conservation Park through the River Torrens Linear Park walking trail.

## Events being offered at Highbury

**May 13th: Ranger guided walk**

**May 29th: Community planting day  
(2 sessions available)**

Limited spots so get in quick and book your place!

Please click the links below to book your place.

Ranger-guided walk: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/highbury-aqueduct-reserve-ranger-guided-walk-tickets-309211769727>

Planting Day: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/highbury-aqueduct-reserve-community-planting-day-tickets-309231719397>



Government of South Australia  
Department for Environment  
and Water



## Recent project achievements

Highbury Aqueduct Reserve is managed under the Public Land Stewardship Project – a partnership between the Department for Environment and Water and the Attorney General's Department. Since the last newsletter, the recent project achievements include:

**Trails and signs** – trail construction (approx. 4km of surfaced trails) has been completed, including the installation of trail markers, trailhead signs and several new sections of trail linking with Linear Park. The trails are regularly audited and repaired where required.

**Site maintenance** – These works include the ongoing removal of old fencing and installation of new where required, rubbish removal, verging vegetation along trails, and generally maintaining the reserve to be a safe and inviting place to visit for the community. Some recent works have also included new safety fences built across a bridge and on parts of the trail network.

**Fire management** - fire risk mitigation is undertaken throughout the reserve on a yearly basis with works starting around the end of spring and can continue through to December/January. This involves lowering fuel levels within the reserve by brush-cutting and spraying etc. This work is undertaken mainly around the reserves boundary and is guided by the reserve fire management plan. An extensive mowing program is also undertaken on all open grassy areas of the reserve.

**Pest plant management (weed control)** – Weed control works are undertaken across the 50ha reserve to

reduce self-seeding weed species and minimise spread of invasive weeds thereby reducing fuel loads and fire risk across sections of the reserve. There has also been a focus on watercourse rehabilitation supported by River Torrens Recovery Project grant funding from Green Adelaide to help address invasive weeds in the stormwater channels feeding into the River Torrens.

**Tree Management** – Tree management within the reserve is managed in two parts. Trees that are close to boundaries, trails, tracks and infrastructure are independently audited every three years and tree works are determined from the recommendations of the audit to minimise risk to the public. Other tree works within the reserve include the removal of Aleppo pines that are growing close to native trees such as South Australian blue gums to allow for healthier growth of these native species. Whilst Aleppo pines are a declared pest plant under the *Landscape SA Act 2019*, it is important that the removal of these is staged over many years to allow alternative habitat and food sources for native animal and bird species such as the yellow tail cockatoos to be re-introduced.

**Revegetation** - Revegetation efforts are focused on areas that also have targeted weed control treatment and were prepped for incoming seedlings. In the last two years, approx. 5900 tube stock have been planted across the reserve. Some of these species include native grasses and lillies, wattles, sheoks and gum trees including SA bluegums and river redgums

## Partnering with Athelstone School for biodiversity outcomes

In October 2021, we partnered with Athelstone Primary School to grow and plant native grasses in the reserve. The year 3/4 students participated in a native grass seed propagation exercise, growing their grasses from seed and later planting the native grasses at Highbury Aqueduct Reserve. The children enjoyed learning about the important of native grasses as a food source and habitat for native wildlife, while connecting with nature and getting their hands dirty.







Niquet Reserve

## See and do — our Rangers recommend:

**Grab a bite to eat** at a local eatery, bring a picnic blanket and enjoy lunch in the great outdoors – there are many great spots in Highbury Aqueduct Reserve to take in sweeping hills views of the nearby Black Hill Conservation Park

**Walk, run or ride** along the Aqueduct trail - 4 km of shared use trail that can be used in both directions and links with the River Torrens Linear Park trail. The trail has a physical rating of moderate and difficulty rating of “Green Circle” or Easiest” level trail for mountain bikes or a Class 2 trail in the Australian Standards for Walking Tracks. On average it takes 16 minutes to complete this trail by bike and closer to 1 – 1.5 hours on foot

**Playground for kids** - visit the nearby Niquet Reserve playground, off Niquet Avenue, Highbury (City of Tea Tree Gully)

**Download Avanza Maps** on your phone and navigate your journey through Highbury Aqueduct Reserve in real time. Download the Highbury Aqueduct Reserve Map from Avenza Maps - find out more about Avanza Maps at [www.avenzamaps.com](http://www.avenzamaps.com)

**Historic sites** - check out the old Aqueduct infrastructure, there are two historic drains to be found with original brickwork still in-tact. The historic site locations can be found on Highbury Aqueduct Reserve map on Avenza Maps.

**Pioneer Court Community Garden Open Days** - keep your eye on the Pioneer Court Community Garden Facebook page for their Winter Warmer Fundraisers and Spring Open Days. Our congratulations go to the Pioneer Court Community Garden for their achievements in serving the community and being awarded the Outstanding Community Group of the Year – Australia Day Award. This is a well-deserved award and we are proud to support the community garden volunteers.

**Explore the creeks** - there are loads of yabbies in the creeks and plenty of frogs and tadpoles too. See how many you can find, but please put them back where you found them.

**Capture the perfect shot** - keen photographers will have no trouble finding interesting subjects at Highbury Aqueduct Bush for Life site off Valley View drive - capture a Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo mid-flight, close-ups of Superb fairy-wren.

**Spot native animals** - We've got koalas and echidnas aplenty. Our koalas are a bit special, sometimes you'll see them sleeping in a pine tree! Echidnas are much harder to spot – try looking for diggings around ant nests. Head up to the top of the reserve over the eastern side of Mulberry Drive for a chance to spot kangaroos grazing and walk the trail linking into the River Torrens Linear Park. Please remember to keep your dog on a lead to keep these critters safe!

**Nature journaling** - try your hand at nature journaling, a great way to slow down and practice mindfulness by drawing or writing about your observations of nature. Sitting quietly in nature presents opportunities for animal sightings and noticing small details about plants that you would not normally see when walking or riding through a reserve. BYO journal and pencils.

**Make a stick cubby or a tepee** – a great way to connect children with nature - please make sure you don't break off live branches or disturb wild animals – they need shelter too. For the safety of others, please don't use

nails or other construction materials and dismantle cubbies when play time is over.

**Volunteering in the reserve** - If you live locally and would like to help with weeding or revegetating, contact the Senior Ranger for Highbury Aqueduct Reserve on 0407 610 359.

**Bush For Life** - if you are interested in bush care at the Bush for Life site, the site coordinator runs regular group activities and is always looking for help. If you would like to get involved please email Mark or call 0417 421 474.

**Geocaching** - grab your phone and try your hand at GEOCACHING - a fun outdoor activity that involves using a hand-held GPS on your phone to guide you to a hidden container (or "cache"). Warning, this activity can be addictive. It can lead to outdoor exercise and finding new and interesting places. To begin the hunt, you will need to download a geocaching app on your phone and locate nearby caches. Use the QR codes to link to geocaching apps.



Download the app



Geocaching Australia



## Safety Notice

**Closure of informal trail** - an informal trail has been created across a dam wall in the reserve near Filippo Court. This trail is not maintained as a formal trail and has been closed due to an undermining of the dam wall causing it to be unstable. For these reasons, please do not use the dam wall as a crossing point.

**Bushfire safety** - On days of Catastrophic Fire Danger or Extreme Fire Danger it is recommended you do not enter the reserve. You can determine the current fire danger rating by checking the Fire Ban District map on the CFS website.

## Reserve access and management information

Come and enjoy this reserve for free. The reserve is open daily, however use of the reserve after dark is not recommended as there are no lights anywhere in the reserve or along the trail. There is no unauthorised vehicle access into the reserve and carparking is limited to street parking adjacent the reserve. There is no camping or accommodation available within the reserve.

### Visitor information:

**Black Hill National Park and Wildlife Service Office**  
Call (+61 8) 8336 0901 and ask to speak to someone in the Public Land Stewardship Team

Email: NPWS-AMLR-PLS@sa.gov.au

### Emergency phone contacts:

**Triple Zero (000)**  
Urgent medical, fire and police assistance

**131 444**  
Non urgent police assistance