

ANIMALS AND WATER

In the past, Gluepot was heavily grazed by sheep and feral goats. The carrying capacity for sheep was estimated at 1500, but in the latter years of the previous owner, the actual numbers were much less than this. Mobs of over 200 goats were reported on occasions. With an increase in the value of feral goats in recent years, trapping was conducted on Gluepot with up to 2000 per year being removed. Neighbouring properties have also been removing goats, such that the numbers have been reduced considerably.

Foxes and feral cats have been a part of the property for over 200 years, but the arid nature of the land has meant that rabbit numbers have never been high. Kangaroo numbers were artificially high for this arid landscape due principally to the presence of a number of dams.

Since Birds Australia purchased Gluepot in 1997, sheep have been removed entirely and goat numbers have been further reduced by a combination of trapping, shooting and the restriction of watering points. Fox baiting and cat trapping have been conducted almost continuously.

The closing of dams by either totally filling them in or blocking off the collection drains has been very successful in reducing the grazing pressure on the property. Now there are only two dams that hold water for any length of time and these are surrounded by a fence to prevent the entry of feral goats and kangaroos. This strategy has contributed to a significant reduction in the number of these two species.

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In order to provide water across the property for water dependent birds, elevated water troughs have been erected with bird hides nearby. This also enables visitors to see and photograph the birds at close quarters. The elevated troughs prevent feral goats, kangaroos and foxes from obtaining water.

The value of using all of these strategies to reduce grazing pressure is that they will eventually result in the restoration of a more diverse range of plant species. This will benefit native animals and in particular some of the unique species such as the Malleefowl.

FOX BAITING ON GLUEPOT

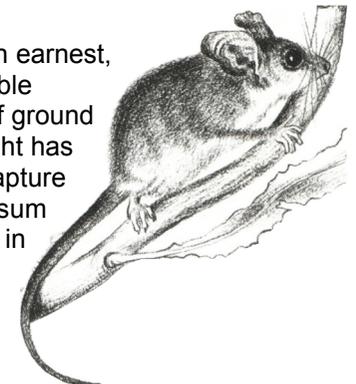
Fox baiting stations are located at 2 km intervals along the side of the main tracks. The baits used are dried red meat that has been treated with 1080. The baits are buried at the bait station to reduce the chance of a non-target animal taking one. These stations are regularly monitored and any missing baits are replaced.

The whole property is baited three times a year to coincide with a similar baiting programme being conducted by neighbouring properties to the east and the south of Gluepot.

Keeping the threat from feral predators to a minimum will also contribute to the well being of Malleefowl, other bird species, and the large range of reptiles present on the property.

Since fox baiting began in earnest, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of ground dwelling lizards. A highlight has been the first recorded capture of a Western Pygmy Possum north of the River Murray in

SA.



WALK DETAILS

6.0 km circuit
2 to 3 hours
easy walking , some sand

This walk commences from the car park on track 8 which is approximately 1.5 km from the Visitor Centre. (Alternatively, from the Visitors Centre through the enclosure.)

The walk follows a line of old fence posts south of track 8 through a range of habitats including mallee/triodia, black oak woodland and mallee/senna/acacia stands.

A bird hide at 2.5 km, overlooking a bird watering point, provides an opportunity for visitors to sit, watch and photograph birds as they come in to drink.

At this point one can return to the car park or continue around the entire circuit.

Just past the bird hide, near Whistler Tank, the walking track turns west and follows the vehicle track back to the enclosure around the home dams near the Visitor Centre.

At the entrance to the enclosure you can choose to not enter the gate and follow the fence line north. At the northern end of this fence the track crosses back to track 8 which leads east back to the car park.

By entering the gate and walking through the enclosure, the track leads the walker back to the Visitor Centre, but provides an opportunity to perhaps add some water birds to your bird list. The vehicle track will then need to be followed back to the car park on track 8.

THIS WALK IS HABITAT FOR

Gilbert's Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Weebill, Chestnut crowned Babbler, Striped Honey-eater, White-browed Treecreeper.

IF YOU BECOME LOST ON THIS WALK
walk north to intercept track 8.

MONITORING ANIMAL NUMBERS

With soft sandy vehicle and walking tracks it is easy to see the tracks of animals that have walked along or across the track.

Some native animals, such as the Echidna, are rarely seen, but their tracks and diggings are quite easily identified, indicating a healthy population of these unique animals.

This "track spotting" is used to check for the presence of foxes and cats, as methods such as spot lighting, that can be used in more open country, are not practical in the densely vegetated areas on Gluepot. When fresh fox tracks are found, baits are laid in the surrounding area.



FOX



CAT

SAFETY GUIDELINES

A few simple precautions should always be taken when walking at Gluepot.

Dehydration is always a real risk

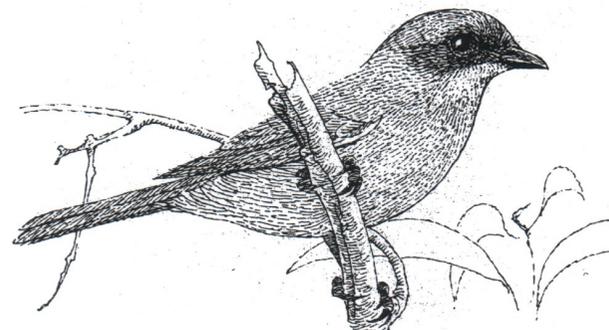
as the temperature can get extremely high (over 45°C), and humidity is normally very low.

- **Carry sufficient water**
- **Protect yourself from the sun**
- **If on a long walk take at least one piece of warm clothing**
- **Carry a compass & plan or map**
- **Carry a snake bite kit.**

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WHISTLER WALK

Bird hide, Water point Home dams



Gilbert's Whistler *Pachycephala inornata*

**GLUEPOT RESERVE
WALKING TRACK NETWORK**
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South Australian
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