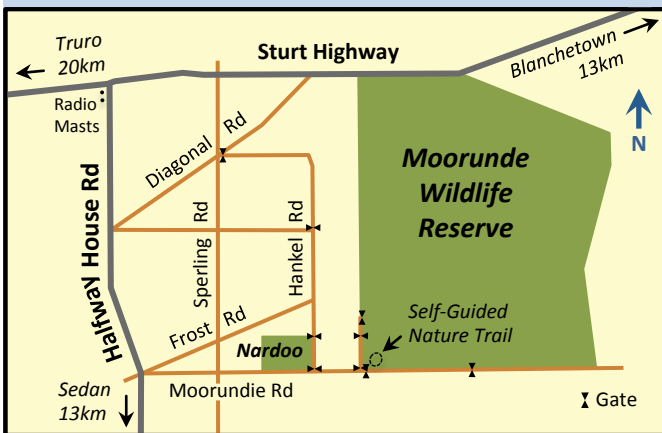


Visiting Moorunde. Moorunde is about 100km northeast of Adelaide on the south side of the **Sturt Highway**. To the north is Brookfield Conservation Park and to the south is Yookamurra Sanctuary. Possible routes from Adelaide:

- Port Wakefield Rd, Northern Expressway, Sturt Highway, Halfway House Rd, Moorundie Rd. Distance 130km, drive time approximately 1hour 30mins
- Gorge Rd, Birdwood, Mt Pleasant, Cambrai, Sedan, Halfway House Rd, Moorundie Rd. Distance 121km, drive time approximately 1hour 45mins.

Access is via **Moorundie Rd** (unsealed). Turn off Halfway House Rd, keep to the right (left fork is Frost Rd), then travel 7km to the Moorunde Wildlife Reserve sign and the Self-Guided Nature Trail. On the way, you will pass one of our smaller reserves, **Nardoo**.

The **Self-Guided Nature Trail** is open to the public at all times. The reserve is not open for public vehicle access or camping. For attending working bees or special interest tours please contact us for entry information - see back page for contact details.



For more information on Moorunde Wildlife Reserve or the Society including volunteering, membership or donations visit our website or contact us via email, post or phone:

web nhssa.com.au
 email info@nhssa.com.au
 post **NHSSA Secretary**
10 Treetop Terrace
BELAIR SA 5052
 phone **0417 881 658**



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There's much to see at Moorunde! The mallee is a rich habitat and home to many species of birds, reptiles, insects and plants, as well as wombats, kangaroos and echidnas!

*The name **Moorunde** was chosen by the Society to acknowledge the traditional owners of the Murraylands and to link with the early explorer Edward John Eyre. In 1841, Eyre was appointed 'Protector of the Aborigines'. He established a station on the river near present day Blanchetown which he named 'Moorunde'. Eyre's published journals provide a valuable insight into Aboriginal life and culture, and the state of country at that time. 'Moorundi' is the Aboriginal name for the Murray River in the language groups along the lower reaches of the river.*

Moorunde Wildlife Reserve

Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat Sanctuary



Managed & maintained by the
Natural History Society
 of South Australia Inc.

Moorunde Wildlife Reserve, located in the mallee scrub of South Australia, was the first sanctuary established specifically for the Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat. With a total area of 6,900ha, it is one of the largest wombat sanctuaries in the world.



A Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat at Moorunde, so distracted by a fly as to allow head-ranger Glen Taylor to get up close for a great photo!

The **Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat** (*Lasiorhinus latifrons*), one of three living species of wombat, lives in semi-arid regions of South Australia. The other two species are the Bare-nosed Wombat found in cooler areas of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmanian and southeast South Australia and the highly endangered Northern-hairy Nosed Wombat of Queensland.

Wombats are the largest burrowing marsupial. Hairy-nosed wombats usually rest in burrows during hot dry days and emerge at night to feed on a range of herbaceous plants. Wombats have a strong sturdy body. Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats grow to about 30cm tall, 75-95cm long and weigh up to about 32kg.

All species of wombat have suffered population fragmentation since European settlement of Australia through hunting, culling, land clearing, introduction of toxic weeds and competition from other native and feral grazers.

The Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat was adopted by the state government as the faunal emblem of South Australia in 1970. The Natural History Society of South Australia is proud to participate in protecting and promoting this unique and iconic animal.



Wombat warrens consisting of numerous interconnected burrows can extend for tens of metres underground.

How it Started. In 1967, Mr & Mrs Jack Conquest of Adelaide approached the Society, keen to establish a sanctuary for Hairy-nosed Wombats. The Society had earlier lobbied the state government to create a sanctuary on the Nullarbor Plains in far-west South Australia, however the government failed to pursue this action. In 1968, the Society launched a public appeal to raise money to purchase land in the Murraylands, between the Mount Lofty Ranges and the Murray River.

The appeal was tremendously successful with publicity and support from the Sunday Mail newspaper and Adelaide Bank, donations from many schools, community groups, private businesses and individuals. Monies donated allowed the Society to purchase 2,000ha of station-land near Blanchetown. The land had been heavily grazed by sheep and denuded of much of the original native vegetation. It is amazing now to see the regrowth of trees, shrubs, mosses and lichens that have returned this land to a rich, bio diverse habitat. Also amazing is the resilient population of wombats that have slowly recovered in numbers, albeit not without new pressures from introduced weeds and grazing competition from other animals.

In 2007, the Society had the opportunity and support of generous members to purchase 4,900ha of adjacent land, commonly referred to as the Twelve Mile Plain, bringing the total area of Moorunde to 6,900ha.

In 1973, the Chicago Zoo purchased land north of Moorunde and established Brookfield Conservation Park as a wombat sanctuary. In the 1990s, Earth Sanctuaries established Yookamurra to the south of Moorunde. These three large reserves, together with numerous smaller private properties now form a large contiguous area providing a protected habitat for wombats and many other native animals.

Today, the Society continues to manage and maintain Moorunde with the aim of ensuring a viable population of Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats is preserved and protected in the Murraylands. A weekly ranger roster manned by volunteer members ensures the reserve is one of the best monitored wildlife sanctuaries in Australia.



*A great facility at Moorunde is the **Self-Guided Nature Trail**, open to the public at all times. Why not head out for a visit and enjoy a quiet walk in wombat country?*

Wombats in Poor Health. In the last few years wombats in the Murrayland have been observed in poor health (malnutrition and liver disease) leading to premature death. This is likely due to reduced food supplies and the consumption of toxic weeds.



Prolonged drought and the consumption of toxic weeds leaves many wombats with fur loss, malnourished and emaciated like this one.

Research & Activities. The society is conducting and supporting numerous research projects to help combat these health problems and to gather more knowledge on the wombats and their habitat. Projects include:

- Population estimation study, ongoing for over 40 years
- Rainfall data collection, ongoing for over 40 years
- Grazing competition study using preferential exclosures
- Native grass reestablishment exclosures
- Diet determination through scat DNA analysis
- Behaviour observations using motion sensor cameras
- Bird species surveys - biodiversity indicators
- Native scrub regeneration photo surveys
- Regular active weed control
- Feral animal monitoring (goats, rabbits, hares, foxes, cats)

Get Involved. If you would like to join us with any of these projects and activities or simply come out and see the reserve, regular **Visitor and Volunteer Weekends** are held on the second weekend of each month, weather permitting. Contact us or visit our website for more information – see back page for details.

Wombat recorded by motion sensor camera feeding near its warren.

