

# South Australian Parks Visitation Survey 2016

DEWNR Technical note 2016/32



**Government of South Australia**  
Department of Environment,  
Water and Natural Resources

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Science, Monitoring and Knowledge Branch  
Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

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# Acknowledgements

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Glen Scholz Principal Advisor, Science, Monitoring Knowledge Branch, DEWNR reviewed the results of the survey conducted by Mc Gregor Tan Research and produced a summary of the results for this report.

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# 1 Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to gather information from South Australian residents to inform the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) about their current use of, and attitudes towards South Australian National Parks, Conservation Parks and Recreational Parks. This survey was initiated in 2011/12 and is conducted annually in May–June to report on that financial year.

## 2 Objectives

The objectives of the research were to measure South Australians’:

- current perceptions about their health
- their overall level of satisfaction with their life
- the number of times they have visited National Parks, Conservation and Recreational Parks over the last twelve months
- which parks they have visited
- the value they place on parks
- their familiarity with, and attitudes towards marine parks

## 3 Method

A survey of 1093 South Australian residents was conducted between the 22 June and the 4 July 2016.

The surveys were conducted by a combination of online and telephone (landline and mobile) surveys. This combined approach ensured that the surveys were completed by a representative sample of South Australian residents of different ages and at different life stages, and minimised weighting of the data.

The South Australian Parks Survey question regarding the percentage of visitors to parks was presented differently from 2014 to previous year’s surveys. The All surveys identify a different range of parks depending on the postcode of the interviewee. 201214 survey identified 10 parks which included iconic parks in SA as well as some local parks to the NRM region and a query about other parks visited. The 201415 surveys identified 10 parks which are within the NRM Region and a query about other parks visited. This is likely to have reduced past errors in the survey caused by survey recipients either forgetting or not knowing the area was a prescribed park rather than council reserve. As a result the figures may be slightly higher compared with the previous years but they are likely to be more accurate. The results have been treated the same as previous years data but the aforementioned information should be taken into consideration when comparing results.

### 3.1 Processing

Data was weighted by age group and gender by benchmarks derived from the 2011 Census figures. The survey was administered using a hybrid methodology of CATI (computer aided telephone interviewing) and ONLINE.

While telephone has traditionally been the method of choice for conducting quantitative research, households with fixed telephone lines have been steadily decreasing over time. Many more people tend to use mobiles now and no longer rely on a fixed line. In many cases the telephone landline is only used for the household internet connection. Almost all households have an internet connection while the number of landlines is decreasing.

This combined approach ensured that the surveys were completed by a representative sample of South Australian residents of different ages and at different life stages.

The tables and graphs therefore show the weighted respondents numbers by gender, age and other variables. It should be noted that the weighting process can result in minor rounding variations.

Please note that, because of rounding, answers in single response questions will not always sum precisely to 100%. In addition, as the base for percentages is the number of respondents answering a particular question (rather than the number of responses) multiple response questions sum to more than 100%.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 In 2015/16 what proportion of South Australians visited Parks, and how does this compare to previous years?

This far exceeds the People and Parks Visitor Strategy Target 1 – ‘By 2020 50% of South Australians will visit parks annually’.

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
59.6%	54.6%	56.2%	72%	69%

### 4.2 Is this proportion of visitation similar across all NRM regions?

69% of South Australians visited Parks. (2015 results in red)

TOTAL	Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges	South Australian Murray-Darling Basin	Kangaroo Island	South East	Eyre Peninsula	Northern & Yorke	Alinytjara Wilurara	South Australian Arid Lands
72%	73%	81%	67%	69%	79%	45%	36%	72%
69%	72% -	61% -	51% -	58% -	83% +	46% +	66% +	68% -

Note: Approximately half of all respondents (52%, 2016 from 51% in 2015) visited a National, Conservation or Recreation Park in the Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Region.

### 4.3 Of those people who visit parks, how often did they visit? (2015 results in red)

- 1 to 3 visits 46% ↓ from 49%
- 4 to 11 visits 42% ↑ from 41%
- 12 or more visits 12% ↑ from 10%

#### 4.4 What Parks' values most directly reflect those of the community? (2015 results in red)

- Parks provide community spaces for recreation, enjoyment and health 49% ↓ from 51%
- Parks provide protection for native plants and animals or cultural heritage 47% ↑ from 46%
- Parks are not important to me 2% ↓ from 3%

#### 4.5 What were the top ten most popular Parks in SA? (2015 results in red)

- Cleland 23% ↓ from 24% (incl. Waterfall Gully to Mount Lofty Trail)
- Belair 23% ↓ from 24%
- Morialta 18% ↑ from 17%
- Granite Island 15% ↓ from 17%
- Brownhill Creek 9% ↓ from 10%
- Onkaparinga River 8% ↑ from 6%
- Deep Creek 7% ↑ from 5%
- Marino 6% ↔ from 6%
- Torrens Island 5% ↓ from 6% (incl. Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary)
- Lincoln 4% ↑ from 3%

Note: Last year River Murray was in the top 10 but has dropped from 5% visitation in 2015 to 3% in 2016.  
 \*includes the Waterfall Gully to Mount Lofty Trail. ^Includes the Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary.

#### 4.6 There has been a huge increase in the visitation rate of Belair, Cleland and Morialta between 2014 and 2015/2016, why is that?

The increase in visitation might be attributed to recent initiatives that have occurred\* i.e. Nature Play programs, open days, and mountain biking.

There appears to be a large community response to free organised events in these three parks.

Visitation %	Belair	Cleland	Morialta	Granite Island	Deep Creek
2013	14%	7.9	5.9	16.7	4.2
2014	14.6%	8.1	7.1	16.7	6
2015	24%	24 %	17	17	5
2016	23%	23%	18%	15%	7%

*\*In consultation with the park rangers associated with these parks this is a reflection of what they felt has occurred, but they have limited data to confirm this. Their view is that the increase in visitation is attributed to recent initiatives that have occurred relating to these parks i.e. Nature Play SA programs (ie ride with a ranger) and open days free events and mountain biking. Morialta has been celebrating its 100 years with promotions and events. Belair has had four big events over the last year Cubby town, went for 2 days with approximately 900 cars attending, Belair Open Day had an estimated 1500 cars attend. There appears to be a large community response to the free access days.*

*Overall the park rangers felt that the car visitation numbers are going down but there is an increase in numbers of people and bike rider visitors, and an increase in visitation at other entrances to the parks.*



#### 4.7 What has been the community's attitude\*\* to Marine Parks from 2011 to 2015?

Respondents' attitude	2011/12 Pre Parks establishment	2012/13 Question not surveyed	2013/14 Pre Parks establishment	2014/15 Post Parks establishment	2015/16
Positive	58%	-	61%	55%	60% +
Negative	9%	-	8%	10%	8% -
Neutral	32%	-	30%	32%	29% -
Don't know	1%	-	1%	3%	3%

\*\* 69% of total people surveyed were familiar with what a marine park was, those people who were familiar were then asked "Would you say your attitude towards marine parks in South Australia is positive, negative or neutral?"

\*\*\* The results from the Marine Parks Survey 2016 question "Are you in favour of Marine Parks to protect marine plants and animals? **Yes - 88%; No - 4% and don't know 8%**

#### 4.8 Has there been a significant change to people's attitudes to Marine Parks over the period of survey?

There has been no significant change in people's attitude across the years recorded (supported by both 'SA Parks Visitation Surveys' and 'Marine Parks' surveys).

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