

South Australian Parks Visitation Survey 2018: Summary of the key findings

DEW Technical note 2018/23



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and Water

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Environmental Science Branch
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1 Purpose

The purpose of the annual South Australian Parks Visitation Survey is to gather information from South Australian residents to inform the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) about their current use of, and attitudes towards South Australian national parks, conservation parks and recreational parks. The first survey was initiated in 2011/2012 and is conducted annually in May–June to report on that financial year.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the annual survey and the key findings of the 2018 survey in context of survey findings from previous years (where this is possible).

2 Objectives

The objectives of the 2018 survey were to measure:

1. The visitation of South Australians to state-managed parks over the last 12 months
2. Which parks they have visited
3. The value they place on parks
4. Activities and experiences undertaken within parks over the previous 12 months
5. Barriers to parks visitation
6. Links between parks use and the community's health and wellbeing, including if they had a disability or long-term health condition (new question).

3 Method

The 2018 survey was of 1296 South Australian residents across all SA NRM regions (199 postcodes). It was conducted between 1 June and 25 June 2018 and referred to the 2017/2018 financial year.

The survey was conducted online, as opposed to calls to landline or mobile phones, which occurred in previous years. It is anticipated that using this approach, the accuracy of the survey will have increased, as each respondent will have had more time to consider their responses. The data was weighted by age group and gender by benchmarks delivered from the 2016 Australian Census, to ensure that the surveys were completed by a representative sample of South Australian residents.

The South Australian Parks Survey question regarding the percentage of visitors to parks was presented differently from 2014 to previous surveys.

The 2012/2014 survey identified 10 parks which included iconic parks across South Australia, as well as some local parks within the NRM region, and a query about other parks visited. The 2014/2015 surveys identified 10 parks which are wholly 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 focusing on major parks rather than the smaller parks within the region. As a result the figures may be slightly higher compared with 2015/2018 data, 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.

From the 2016/2017 survey the following Parks in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region were added to the list of specifically named parks: Para Wirra, Anstey Hill, Black Hill, O'Halloran Hill, and Cobbler Creek (Morialta and Onkaparinga River Parks were previously identified). This was due to the requirement for increasing the accuracy of parks visitation data in response to the *Linking Adelaide with Nature Strategy 2012* which invested 8.9 million dollars into seven metropolitan parks.

To improve accuracy in parks identification, the 2017/2018 survey also identified Port Gawler in conjunction with the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary National Park, and Marino Conservation Park in conjunction with Hallett Cove, as the walks between these park locations is the major visitation activity.

3.1 Processing

Data was weighted by age group and gender by benchmarks derived from 2016 Census figures. The survey was administered using an online survey. This 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%.

It should be noted in this report that all data based on sample surveys are subject to a sampling tolerance. Further details on statistically valid significant differences are identified in the data analysis reports noted in the reference list of this document.

4 Results

1. In the 2018 survey (2017/18 financial year) what proportion of South Australians visited a state managed park, and how does this compare to previous years?

In 2017/18, 76% of South Australians visited a state managed park. 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	2017	2018
59.6%	54.6%	56.2%	72%	69%	74%	76%

2. What proportion of respondents residing in each NRM region attended a state-managed park in SA? (2017 results in red)

TOTAL 2018	Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges	South Australian Murray-Darling Basin	Kangaroo Island	South East	Eyre Peninsula	Northern & Yorke	Alinytjara Wilurara	South Australian Arid Lands
74%	73%	79%	80%	73%	82%	64%	100%	72%
76%	75%+	79%	91%+	79%+	92%+	56%-	78%-	66%-

Note: Approximately half of all respondents (55%, 2018 same as in 2017) visited a national, conservation or recreation park in the Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Region.

3. Of those respondents that visited state managed parks in 2017/2018, how often did they visit? (2017 results in red)

Survey participants visited on average four times:

- 1 to 3 visits 43% ⬆ from 41%
- 4 to 11 visits 44% ⬆ from 42%
- 12 or more visits 15% ⇔ from 15%

4. What parks’ values most directly reflect those of the community? (2017 results in red)

- Parks provide community spaces for recreation, enjoyment and health 44% ⬇ from 49%
- Parks provide protection for native plants and animals or cultural heritage 54% ⬆ from 49%
- Parks are not important to me 1% ⇔ from 1%

5. What were the top fifteen parks that were visited in SA in 2017/2018? (2017 results in red)

1. Cleland	26%	↑	from 24% (incl. Waterfall Gully to Mount Lofty Trail)
2. Belair	24%	↑	from 21%
3. Morialta	20%	↑	from 17%
4. Granite Island	16%	↑	from 14%
5. Marino to Hallett Cove	11%	↑	from 9%
6. Anstey Hill	9%	↑	from 7%
7. Brownhill Creek	9%	↓	from 11%
8. Onkaparinga River	8%	↑	from 7%
9. Deep Creek	6%	↓	from 7%
10. Torrens Island	6%	↔	from 6% (incl. Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary)
11. Coorong	6%	↑	from 4%
12. Murray River	5%	↔	from 5%
13. Cobbler Creek	5%	↔	from 5%
14. Black Hill	5%	↑	from 3%
15. Para Wirra	4%	↔	from 4%

6. What has been the community's attitude** to Marine Parks from 2012/2018?

The survey asked "Would you say your attitude towards marine parks in South Australia is positive, negative or neutral?"

Respondents' attitude	2012 Pre Parks establishment	2013 Question not surveyed	2014 Pre Parks establishment	2015 Post Parks establishment	2016 Post Parks	2017 Post Parks	2018 Post Parks
Positive	58%	-	61%	55%	60%	49%	52%
Negative	9%	-	8%	10%	8%	7%	4%
Neutral	32%	-	30%	32%	29%	36%	34%
Don't know	1%	-	1%	3%	3%	9%	10%

*** The results from the related DEW Marine Parks Survey 2017 question "Are you in favour of marine parks to protect marine plants and animals? **Yes - 91%; No - 3%, and Don't know 6%**

7. How does the community's familiarity with Marine Parks relate to their attitude to Marine Parks?

The survey asked, "How familiar are you with what a marine park is?" 65% of respondents who were **not familiar** with what a marine park is had a neutral or unsure position on marine parks compared to 30% of those who **were familiar** with what a marine park is.

Sentiment	All respondents	Very familiar or somewhat familiar	Not familiar
Positive	52%	65%	33%
Negative	4%	5%	3%
Neutral	34%	26%	46%
Don't know	10%	4%	19%

8. What activities and experiences did South Australians participate in when visiting parks in the last 12 months?

Activities and Experiences	S.A. Parks Visitors 2017	S.A. Parks Visitors 2018
Experiencing nature and scenery	82%	86%
Walking	81%	85%
Socialising with friends	65%	67%
Connecting with family	61%	61%
Time by myself	47%	52%
Picnicking/BBQ	49%	52%
Learning about nature	50%	48%
Walking the dog	25%	27%
Camping	22%	23%
Four-wheel driving	15%	15%
Volunteering in nature	9%	10%
Cycling/mountain biking	8%	9%

9. Health and wellbeing

People that report having good health and wellbeing visit parks in greater proportion, and more frequently, than those that report having poorer health and wellbeing:

- Of those respondents who visited a state-managed park in 2017/2018, 88% rated their health as good or better (those that did not visit 74%);
- Of those respondents who visited a state managed park in 2017/2018, 77% rated their life satisfaction as between 7 and 10 out of 10 (those that did not visit 69%)
- Those respondents rated their health as good or better visited parks on average 9 times a year compared to those with a fair to poor health who visited 6 times
- Those that had a wellbeing score between 7–10 visited parks on average 9 times a year compared to those who had a wellbeing score of 0–6 who visited 7 times

10. What percentage of South Australians describe themselves as having a disability or long term health issue?

- 29%

11. Of those South Australians that have a disability or long term health issue what percentage visited a state-managed park last year?

- 66% (80% of able-bodied South Australians visited a state managed park)

12. Of all people who did visit parks what proportion have a disability or long term health issue?

- 26%

13. Of those South Australians who did not visit a park last year, what percentage had a disability or long-term health issue?

- 42%

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