

## DISPLAYING CAVE DETAILS

# "Hells Hole"



### CAVE SITE INFORMATION

**CAVE NAME:** Hells Hole

**CDAА RATING:** Sinkhole

**ACCESS:** Permit Required

**ACCESS INFO:** For access to Forestry SA dive sites the following conditions apply: Permits for Hells Hole may be obtained by one of the following: e-mail - forestry.recreationse@saugov.sa.gov.au fax " (08) 8724 2885 post applications to - Forestry SA, PO Box 162 Mount Gambier, SA. 5290 phone (08) 8724 2876 between 8:00am and 4:30pm weekdays Permits can be picked up from the Carter-Holt Harvey Mill gatehouse, Jubilee Highway East, Mount Gambier. The forest is closed to the public on days of Total Fire Ban. Forest Work Bans (which also exclude public entry) may be imposed by Forestry SA on extreme fire danger days. If in doubt, check with Ranger Trevor Wynnai, although signs are generally erected at diving sites to indicate such bans. Specific permission is required to operate a petrol driven compressor during the Fire Danger Season, ie. November to April inclusive (to be included with permit application) Gate key can be picked up from Lady Nelson Visitor Centre

**LOCATION:** Mount Gambier

**AIRFILLS:** Mount Gambier

**MAX DEPTH:** 26 Metres

**AVG DEPTH:** 15 Metres

**AVERAGE VIZ:** 10 Metres

**CAVE OWNER:** Forestry SA, PO Box 162 MT GAMBIER, SA 5290 Ph: (08) 8724 2876 Fax: (08) 8724 2885

### HOW TO FIND THE CAVE:

When you get the key's, they give you a map as well. It is in the forest, and fairly easy to get to, with the map.

### CAVE DESCRIPTION:

What a dive site! There is a 30 metre drop to the water, all around this sinkhole. No ramps. No ladders, No Platforms. Lower the gear by rope, abseil in, don your gear in the water, and do the dive with your climbing harness still on. Finish the dive, take your gear off, to be hauled up, after you climb 30 metres + of wire ladder. For a half hour dive, it's a lot of hard work, but well worth it.

This dive site is commonly used as a training ground for Nullarbor trips. The dive itself isn't too bad a typical sinkhole, with lots of debris in the water. Shotgun shells everywhere, a sunken dinghy, (in 2 pieces, full of bullet holes) :- Tree branches are everywhere in the shallow centre section, and need to be avoided. Down one end, in the deeper section, there are some swim-throughs. The other end gets down to around 25 or so metres. All up, a day's work, for a single dive, but well worth the effort. It really has to be done once, just so you can say you've done it!

## DISPLAYING CAVE DETAILS

# "Piccaninnie Ponds"



### CAVE SITE INFORMATION

**CAVE NAME:** Piccaninnie Ponds

**CDAА RATING:** Sinkhole

**ACCESS:** Permit

**ACCESS INFO:** Permit required from Dep't of Environment, Heritage & Aboriginal Affairs (08) 8735 1177

**LOCATION:** Mt Gambier

**AIRFILLS:** Mt Gambier

**MAX DEPTH:** 36 Metres

**AVG DEPTH:** 20 Metres

**AVERAGE VIZ:** 200 Metres

**CAVE OWNER:** Dep't of Environment, Heritage & Aboriginal Affairs, PO Box 1046, MT GAMBIER, SA 5290 (08) 8735 1177

### HOW TO FIND THE CAVE:

Follow the Nelson Road out of Mt Gambier, follow the signs...

### CAVE DESCRIPTION

This site is a CDAА Sinkhole rated site. You cannot dive it without the correct training and certification. The site is controlled by Department of Environment, Heritage & Aborigi

nal Affairs and a permit is required to dive it. There are STRICT depth restrictions also, because of the numerous deaths that have occurred in this hole. There is a sign at 36.5metres (100ft), and no-one is allowed to go deeper. There is a full-time park ranger employed specifically to monitor this, and he is a CDAА certified diver, and has been known to meet divers at their deco stops, to check computers and gauges! Pics are the 8th wonder of the world, a freshwater spring, with unlimited visibility.

It goes down "The Slot" to a ledge at 36.5 metres, from which is "The Dogleg", that goes down to a few other bits, with a maximum depth of around 90 odd metres, which of course can't be gotten to. From the slot, you can proceed back up to "The Cathedral". This is what makes it one of the best, if not the best dive in the world! Sitting in the Cathedral, at 15-20metres, at around 11am on a sunny day, you can see the suns rays shining through the reeds on the surface; it makes for a photographers dream! There are freshwater eels, Marin, Bream, Ducks, and other freshwater species in here also.

An absolutely magic dive, words can't describe it!

## DISPLAYING CAVE DETAILS

# "Little Blue Lake"



### CAVE SITE INFORMATION

**CAVE NAME:** Little Blue Lake

**CDAА RATING:** Sinkhole

**ACCESS:** Permit

**ACCESS INFO:** Obtain permit via CDAА website

**LOCATION:** Mount Gambier

**AIRFILLS:** Mount Gambier

**MAX DEPTH:** 41 Metres

**AVG DEPTH:** 38 Metres

**AVERAGE VIZ:** 3 Metres

**CAVE OWNER:** District Council of Grant

### HOW TO FIND THE CAVE

Drive out of Mount Gambier, past the blue lake caravan park, and turn right at the Bellum Hotel.

### CAVE DESCRIPTION

A great dive as an intro to Cavern / Sinkhole Diving, quite deep, and dark, it is easy to silt up. There are lots of things to look at, including a number of safes, and safe lids, a car, with a petrol bowser attached, abalone shells (poachers dump them there), and lots of other rubbish that has been thrown in over the years.

**CDAА Deep Cavern Certification.**

## DISPLAYING CAVE DETAILS

# "Allendale East"



## CAVE SITE INFORMATION

**CAVE NAME:** Allendale East

**CDAARATING** Cave

**ACCESS:** Permit Required

**ACCESS INFO:** Go to the Lady Nelson Centre, show your card, and get the key

**LOCATION:** Allendale East

**AIRFILLS:** Port MacDonnell / Mount Gambier

**MAX DEPTH:** 26 Metres

**AVG DEPTH:** 20 METRES

**AVERAGE VIZ:** 30 Metres

**CAVE OWNER:** District Council of Grant

## HOW TO FIND THE CAVE

The hole is in the middle of the road at Allendale East, on the Port MacDonnell road coming from Mount Gambier.

## CAVE DESCRIPTION

This sinkhole used to be under the highway, on the main road between Mt Gambier and Port MacDonnell. When it collapsed, it took the road with it! It was then filled in, and the road re-built over it, but it collapsed again, so the road now diverts around the hole! It would have been a great dive before they filled it in. Now it's fairly small, basically a tunnel heading down fairly steeply to a very clear chamber, around the 20-25meter mark. One side passage that leads to a very silty dead-end, the chamber is nice to look around, but the black silt is easy to stir up. Right in the back corner, is a small hole, where divers have been digging, trying to find another room; if you shine your torch through, you can see beyond the restriction, but at this stage, it's too small for even a "no mount" diver to get through. Good dive, if a little short. Hard to get in without silting out, but the silt doesn't roll down the hill beyond about the 5 meter mark. You may have to do your first tie-off in very limited viz.

# "Ewens Ponds"

## QUALIFICATIONS:

**DIVING:** the minimum qualification for all divers is "open water". This also includes suitably qualified minors.

**SNORKELLING:** no formal qualifications are required

## BOOKINGS AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

For further information or to make bookings, please contact the Department for Environment and Heritage Office at Mount Gambier: 11 Helen Street, PO Box 1046, Mount Gambier SA 5290 or PH: 08 8735 1177 or FAX: 08 8735 1110

(due to the cold water and potential for damage to aquatic environment, swimming is only allowed in the First Pond)

## DESCRIPTION:

Ewens Ponds is a unique spring-fed system. It does not have the deep chasm or cave that Piccaninnie Ponds has. It is a series of three shallow basin-shaped ponds, approximately ten metres deep and connected by shallow channels. The clarity of the water enables plants to grow underwater to a depth of about six metres. Some of these plants are not found growing fully submerged underwater anywhere else. The amount of water flowing from the springs is greater than at Piccaninnie Ponds. Although the current cannot be felt in the ponds, when snorkelling through the channels it will carry you along. You will glide through the 1 to 1.5 metre deep channel and float past dense stands of plants while coming face-to-face with a variety of fish. The tiny, rare Ewens Pygmy Perch can be found hiding in the cover of the reeds in the channels. When in the ponds, look for the telltale bubbling limestone sand that indicates where the ground water is rising from the bottom.

At night or on a cloudy day Freshwater Crayfish may be seen scuttling along the pond's floor scavenging for food, while the small native fish, the Pigmy Perch and Galaxids, prefer to hover just below the surface. All plants and animals are protected and must not be disturbed.

# Caves and Sinkholes



# Diving and snorkelling

