

6.4 Checkpoint 3—Summit Viewpoint, 820 m

A view across more or less treeless hills to the western plains and through the trees to the eastern plains—there's plenty to take in, but you will need to take glimpses between the trees; starting in the north.

Look at the topogram.

Peregrine Falcons nest on the cliff and will make noisy threats as you approach, while on some days, Wedge-tailed Eagles soar overhead in the updraughts caused by the cliff.

From a saddle beyond the marker, Mt Remarkable is visible (south) to the left of Mt Brown above the floor of the Richman Valley.

5.8 to 5.6 A Drooping Sheoak woodland with Mt Lofty Grass-trees on a slope of quartzite blocks. The even size of the Sheoaks suggests that all regenerated at the same time following a fire.

5.4 to 4.6 This slope has a south-eastern aspect and is quite different from the slope we walked up; the Sugar Gums are much larger, there is more Christmas Bush, Curry Bush, Rock Wattle and Native Cherries; depending on season the ground is much moister.

3.8 to 3.6 Big Sugar Gums—some lose their tops from lightning strikes and some fall over during storms or when the ground is very wet. Here there are birds that occur no further north—the Scarlet Robin, Eastern Spinebill, Adelaide Rosella and Grey Currawong.

There are good views across the plain; this steep gorge with its scree slopes is the valley of Stony Creek.

3.4 to 3.0 The golden gorge walls are ABC Range Quartzite – resistant to weathering. Rock colour lights up particularly during late afternoon and early morning. You may be lucky to see some Yellow-footed Rock-wallabies on the cliffs.

On the scree between these markers are the Velvet Daisy-bush (dark green shiny leaves, velvet underneath with large white daisies in August-September) and yellow Feathery Groundsel (a species confined to rocky hills and gorges of southern central Australia which may be at its southern limit here).

2.8 to 2.4 There are increasing amounts of reddish Brachina Formation siltstone recognisable by its platy fragments. Here, Blue Gums and Mallee Box have taken the place of the large Sugar Gums.

2.2 A minor creek, tributary of Stony Creek

1.8 Checkpoint 4—trail meets vehicle track (Heysen Trail)

By the checkpoint are the remains of an old trolley or sled. This may have been used for transporting tan bark which was collected from Golden Wattle (mostly during depression years).

From here the walking track bears left and the narrow footpad winds through Blue Gum and Mallee Box woodland, typical of the lower slopes, with Curry Bush, Clammy Daisy-bush and Golden Wattle. Cypress pines cling to the sides of rocky creeks.

1.0 Checkpoint 2—Cross the vehicle track and retrace the earlier walk across the paddock to the trailhead. Elegant Parrots may flash past here, while the Southern Scrub-robin frequents the Quorn Wattle and Curry Bush.

0.0 The Dutchman Trailhead, Checkpoint 1.



Quorn Wattle (*Acacia quornensis*) flowers in spring.



Flinders Ranges Walks



Flinders Ranges Walks have been established in protected areas to provide visitors with experiences of the Ranges.

Trail maintenance and servicing of these trailhead leaflets is provided by the voluntary Walking Trails Support Group.

For downloads and further information please visit:
www.walkingtrailssupportgroup.org.au

Read *Explore the Flinders Ranges*, a definitive guidebook by the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia

Or download our FREE Flinders Ranges Walks App!



Flinders Ranges Walks



Dutchman's Stern



Distant view of a lovely terrace walk.

A good walk for the family takes in this prominent hill north-west of Quorn. It lies in the Dutchman's Stern Conservation Park. It is, like Mt Brown, an outcrop of ABC Range Quartzite; it and The Bluff to the north are remnants of a higher range that had its summit between them. All the material between has been removed by erosion over millions of years.

Look for rocks showing layers of the sediments as they were laid down under water. In places the angle of the layers changes abruptly indicating possible change in direction of water flow. The quartzite sits on top of reddish Brachina formation siltstones. And beneath all these rocks are some that are evidence of glaciation from a time sometimes called 'Snowball Earth.'

Changes in vegetation reflect rock type, altitude and aspect. Sugar Gums occupy the crest and upper slopes, with stands of Drooping Sheoaks amongst them; Northern Cypress-pines occupy cliff faces some distance below the crest of the range and Blue Gums clothe the lower slopes. An attractive heath of Fringe Myrtle and Flinders Ranges Bottlebrush on thin soils of northern slopes, near Terrace Viewpoint, contrasts with the Christmas Bush and Curry Bush on deeper moister soils of southern and lower slopes.

Dutchman's Stern

Distance and time: You have four options:

- 10.6 km circuit walk; allow 5 hours
- 4.2 km one way to Summit Viewpoint; 4 hour return
- 2.5 km one way to Terrace Viewpoint; 2 hours return
- 600 m return, to a small creek where relics of 'Snowball Earth' may be found

Altitude Range: from 440 m (Trailhead, Checkpoint 1) to 820 m (Summit, Checkpoint 3).

Access: From the Arden Vale road; the sign-posted turn-off to the park is 6.5 km from the Port Augusta road intersection in Quorn. It is then a further 3 km to The Dutchman car park. The trailhead is at the car park.

Track: Gentle grades, some rocky, but no steep sections.

For your safety;

- This is an AS2156 Class 3 walk in a natural area; beware of inherent hazards, including fire.
- Advise a reliable person of where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Wear strong comfortable boots and take adequate food and clothing.
- Take at least 2 litres of water per person, more if it is hot.
- Protect yourself from the sun and carry a small First Aid kit.

Seasons come and go, and plants and animals mentioned in the notes may not always be there.



Notes read for an anti-clockwise circuit starting at Checkpoint 1 with marked distances every 200 m decreasing as you proceed.

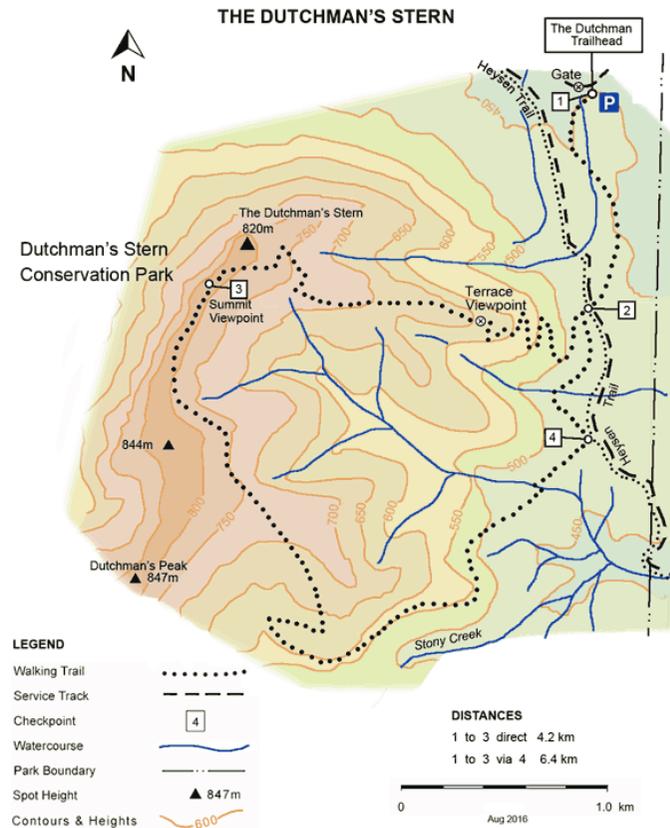
10.6 The Dutchman Trailhead, Checkpoint 1—at the car park. Follow the narrow foot pad and yellow markers.

This paddock would have had heavy use when The Dutchman was a sheep station. It is now able to support the roundish bushes of Quorn Wattle (*Acacia quornensis*), a species which is confined to the Quorn/Hawker area.

For geologists, **Geosite** posts identify sediments from a period popularly called 'Snowball Earth', which ended about 620 million years ago.

An enclosure was established to propagate the Many-flowered Mat-rush (*Lomandra multiflora ssp. dura*) which is the food plant for larvae of the rare White-spotted Skipper butterfly (*Trapezites luteus luteus*).

Trail Map



10.2 On the other side of the little creek is spiny Porcupine Grass and the Garland Lily which has bright pink to maroon coloured flowers in Autumn.

9.6 Checkpoint 2—at crossing of vehicle track (Heysen Trail).

Take the right hand footpad up the hill (the left hand one goes to **Checkpoint 4**).

9.2 to 8.8 The Sugar Gum woodland begins about here at about 550 m altitude; it prefers the higher slopes where there is more rain and mist. Colonies of Tree Martins are especially evident here in spring months, as they dip and swoop catching insects in flight.

The underlying rock changes from siltstone to harder quartzite.

The higher rainfall in the hills means that the shrubs of these slopes are similar to the slopes of the Mt Lofty Ranges near Adelaide—Curry Bush, Clammy Daisy-bush, Golden Wattle, Mt Lofty Grass-tree, Native Cranberry and Christmas Bush.

8.7 At about this point there is a rock overhang with the piece that fell still intact below; in spite of this seemingly dry spot, Blanket Ferns grow underneath in crevices where moisture seeps out. Further up the hill Northern Cypress-pines become more numerous.

8.2 Terrace Viewpoint ahead – views to north and south.

8.0 This open exposed aspect close to a cliff top, has thin rocky soils and is rather different from the woodland through which we have just walked. It is a heath with Fringe Myrtle, Flinders Ranges Bottlebrush, Drooping Sheoaks, Mt Lofty Grass-trees, Sticky Hopbush, Guinea Flowers and an occasional Rock Wattle. In this heath, Redthroats, Variegated Fairy-wrens and Inland Thornbills seek the cover of the shrubs, whereas Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters are more easily seen.

A multiple stemmed Sugar Gum near the marker has had its main trunk destroyed (by fire or lightning) and it has produced a number of replacement trunks from the base; many trees around here have been affected in this way.

Termite mounds may be seen. Termites exploit tree stumps or grass trees as the foundation for their mound. Which may be about 0.5 m high. Termites are important recyclers of nutrients. Trees, dead or alive, are important sources of food and provide shelter for many animals.



Flinders Ranges Bottlebrush

(*Callistemon teretifolius*)
(also in the Mt Lofty Ranges)
flowers in November.

6.9 A marker identifies a view across the valley slightly north of east to Arden Vale reservoir. This was built in the 1880s to supply water for Quorn and the Northern Railway. It is fed by creeks to the north including the creek that passes The Dutchman homestead. (Stony Creek, which we see later, was diverted and confined to a concrete channel so that it too supplied the reservoir.) The town now obtains water from bores, and the dam rarely has water in it.

6.6 Ripple marks in rocks along the track ahead are a reminder of the shallow river deltas in which the sandy sediments were originally laid down.