



Naracoorte Lucindale Council

# Naracoorte Caves Trail

STOP 6

Early visitors to the caves often described the bushland as wild and uninteresting.

A quote from the Port Adelaide News, December 1887 - *“Nothing between the town and the caves calls for remark, much of the country being poor, that surrounding the caves being sandy land with a thick covering of ferns. The timber is principally stringy bark, honeysuckle, and tea-tree, and a more uninteresting approach could hardly be conceived, although in the season the most beautiful of wild flowers are to be found on these sandy ranges.”*



*Pardalotus punctatus* Spotted Pardalote.  
Source: Steven Bourne.

Despite the unflattering description, the above account does provide a sense of what the original vegetation was like along the Caves Range. Today, there is less than 15% of remnant vegetation left. Conservation and natural resource management agencies are addressing this through a combination of re-vegetation and invasive species eradication.

A diverse range of plants thrive in the sandy soils of the range, including orchids, ferns, banksias and eucalypts. A myriad of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals call this diverse and beautiful bushland home.

*As you ride through the forest, observe the thick layer of needles beneath the pines. Note the contrast between the understorey and diversity of plants in the native forest and pine plantation.*

*Pine trees produce thick beds of needle-like leaves and dense root systems that can limit water flow into caves below. Plantations at the Naracoorte Caves have now been replaced with native vegetation, restoring natural flows to several caves.*



*Glossodia major* Waxlip orchid.  
Source: Steven Bourne.



*Pogona barbata* Eastern Bearded Dragon.  
Source: Steven Bourne.



*Drosera whittakeri* Scented Sundew.  
Source: Steven Bourne.

