



## Arkaba Conservancy: Ten Years of Conservation Factsheet

### **About Arkaba Conservancy:**

Set amongst 60,000 acres on a private wildlife conservancy, an escape to Arkaba's beautifully restored homestead is like staying with friends in the country. With the backdrop of the Elder Range and Wilpena Pound in the Flinders Ranges, guests enjoy the five-bedroom 1850's homestead and private guiding while the signature 'Wild Bush Luxury' touches ensure comfort, style, and a truly memorable outback experience.

### **Arkaba's mission:**

Arkaba's mission is to conserve the environment that sustains it and to provoke, inspire, educate and reconnect guests to the bush through experiences that are natural, exclusive and truly Australian.



## **Conservation work at Arkaba**

Wild Bush Luxury, owner/operator of Arkaba Conservancy, has worked tirelessly over the past decade to transform the property from sheep station to wildlife conservancy – blending sustainability and tourism in one of Australia’s most ecologically significant landscapes, and positioning Arkaba at the forefront of conservation in the tourism industry.

### **At a glance: conservation initiatives over the past decade**

#### **Feral animal control:**

- In 2010 Arkaba removed remaining sheep stock from two-thirds of the property, with the last third cleared in September 2013.
- Since then, an ongoing comprehensive feral animal removal program has been in place in conjunction with National Parks and Wildlife Service. Aerial and ground-based control methods have eradicated 3,381 feral goats and reduced rabbit populations, both major factors in the destruction of native vegetation and causing competitive grazing pressure for native animals.
- Arkaba’s own extended program has eradicated 364 foxes and 372 feral cats which kill large numbers of native animals and damage native flora.
- In winter 2018, Arkaba participated in an EradiCat trial with reintroduction expert Kathryn Moeseby and the Department of Environment and Water – baiting, collaring and removing feral cats which kill millions of native animals each day across Australia.

#### **Widespread regeneration and recovery of plant communities:**

- Identifying and removing government listed non-native noxious weeds.
- Permanent monitoring sites have been established to assess the recovery of a range of vegetation communities across the property and regeneration of native plants.
- Monitoring the health of River Red Gum communities along major creek lines across Arkaba. Presence or dieback of Redgums provide a snapshot of creek line health that can continue to be tracked over time.

#### **Monitoring of natural springs:**

- A large number of native springs and waterholes across the property provide critical refuge for native wildlife.
- Permanent monitoring sites have been established to assess the recovery of vegetation and water quality following the removal of stock and ongoing control of feral goats.

#### **Guest involvement:**

Guests can also choose to get hands-on involvement in the projects during their stay with initiatives such as monitoring cat traps, setting up the trip cameras that monitor key sites across the property, looking for signs of vegetation critical to endangered animals, or joining a biologist on land surveys.

### **Guest education:**

- Arkaba uses education to engage guests in its conservation programs. The guided Arkaba Walk incorporates an interactive wilderness experience promoting the conservation mission of Wild Bush Luxury.
- Educating guests on the importance of the whole ecosystem and reconnecting them with the land is at the heart of Wild Bush Luxury's ethos, hoping to influence future generations of conservationists.

## **Results of conservation initiatives**

### **Return of native wildlife**

- **New resident mammal colonies:** The re-establishment of two colonies of Yellow-Footed Rock Wallabies in the Elder Range for the first time in 18 years.
- **New native bird sightings:** Owlet-Nightjars, Stubble Quail, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, Nankeen Night Heron, White-winged Fairywren, Black-fronted Dotterel, Spotted Nightjar.
- **New mammal sightings:**
  - A Brush-tail Possum has been sighted on the property, after being regionally extinct for 75 years.
  - Arkaba has sighted a Western Quoll on the property, which had been extinct in South Australia for 100 years.
- **Increased mammal, avian and reptile sightings:**
  - **Reptiles:** Bearded Dragons, Gidgee Skinks, King Brown snakes, Burton's Legless Lizard, Bandy Bandy Snakes.
  - **Birds:** Elegant Parrots, Mulga Parrots.
  - **Mammals:** Increased sightings of Red and Western Grey Kangaroos and Common Wallaroos, Fat-tailed Dunnarts, return of bat populations.
  - **Monotremes:** Significantly increased Echidna sightings.

### **Regeneration of native flora**

- Regrowth of native plant species including River Red Gums and grasses have halted the erosion of slopes and watercourses.
- Recovery of extremely long-lived plant species e.g. Bullock Bush, Narrow-leaved Emu Bush, Oswald's Wattle and Leafless Cherry at monitoring sites and more broadly across the property.
- **Regeneration of native species:**
  - Elegant Wattle, Bitter Saltbush, Shrubby Riceflower and Mealy Saltbush demonstrate the ability of the country to recover from prolonged grazing impacts.
- **Regeneration of native grasses previously wiped out by stock:**
  - Bottle-washers, Wallaby grass and Wire Grass.
  - Ongoing work to remove the dominance of exotic weed species still prevalent where there was high grazing pressure around natural springs, waterholes and artificial waterpoints.

## **Return of Natural Springs**

- **2015:**
  - Preliminary surveys in 2015 found that 19% of natural springs across the property were in good condition, 69% in fair condition, 12% in poor condition.
- **2017:**
  - Follow up surveys conducted in 2017 found an improvement in 9 of 14 springs visited with 43% of springs in good condition and 29% in very good condition based on the Index of Riparian Spring Condition.
  - None of the springs surveyed in 2017 were rated as poor, demonstrating signs of recovery of these sensitive areas in response to current management.

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

Interview opportunities with Wild Bush Luxury owner and founder Charles Carlow available on request.

Images available to download [here](#).

### **For all media enquiries or further information, please contact:**

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### **About Wild Bush Luxury**

Wild Bush Luxury's mission is to reconnect guests with the bush, through experiences that are thought-provoking, educational and inspirational. Our concept of 'Wild Bush Luxury' brings a touch of style to any experience of Australia's extraordinarily diverse habitat: a 'down to earth' yet attentive level of service; an appreciation of the finer details and above all, a team of hosts and guides who are passionate about Australia's environment, wildlife and culture.

The Wild Bush Luxury portfolio includes Bamurru Plains, Arkaba Conservancy and the Arkaba Walk.

For further information, please visit:

- [www.wildbushluxury.com](http://www.wildbushluxury.com)
- [www.arkabaconservancy.com](http://www.arkabaconservancy.com)
- [www.arkabawalk.com](http://www.arkabawalk.com)
- [www.bamurruplains.com](http://www.bamurruplains.com)
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