



**PRODIGIOUS:** David McCallum and his dog, Tildee, with the nation's biggest River Red Gum.

Picture: SIMON CROSS

## A giant's footprint on our landscape

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SCIENCE REPORTER

TUCKED away in a sheep paddock, 500m from a main road in the southern Flinders Ranges, is a giant of our nation.

Old Emu Foot in Melrose is the national champion of River Red Gums and the biggest tree in the state,

arborists say. The National Register of Big Trees is growing as people nominate their local champions.

Old Emu Foot was a bit of a character, with a solid base shaped like the big bird's foot. "The tree is clearly visible in Google Earth," register co-ordinator Derek McIntosh said.

Kym Knight, from Arbor-

tech Tree Services, nominated the tree, which he believes is more than 400 years old.

The National Register of Big Trees uses the American Forests formula to determine a score for each tree. This single number makes it easy to compare different trees around the world.

The red gum has a cir-

cumference of 14.82m, height 35m and crown 29m, giving a score of 722 points.

The biggest tree in Australia is the Mountain Ash "Kermandie Queen" in Geeveston, Tasmania, with a score of 1118.

Farmer David McCallum said he didn't realise he had such a special tree on his property.