

annual report
2008/2009



phillipisland
nature parks

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This report available at penguins.org.au

nature park mission

To conserve and enhance the Nature Park environment for current and future generations whilst achieving a balanced environmental, economic and social outcome.

nature park vision

As a Team, we will achieve the vision 'to be a world leader in environmental, economic and socially sustainable nature-based and ecotourism experiences' as well as to be a great place to visit and work.

chairman's report

we can be proud of our many achievements across our environmental and commercial teams in the last 12 months, particularly in view of the global financial crisis and swine flu virus outbreak

In accordance with the FMA 1994, I am pleased to present the Report of Operations for year ending 30 June 2009.

Destinations from around the world are becoming increasingly competitive for tourists and we are seeing major changes in travel patterns. Over 55% of our visitors are from international destinations, so it is vital that we continue to meet their changing needs and offer unique and interesting experiences. We will need to remain vigilant in our approach and continue to maintain the balance between promoting our commercial activities, whilst ensuring our conservation and environmental initiatives are met.

One of this year's highlights was winning the Victorian State Tourism Award for Ecotourism for the third year running and being inducted into the Tourism Hall of Fame. This is clear recognition of the iconic and unique experiences we provide and important research and environmental work we undertake. Over 50,000 visitors participated in educational tours and activities designed to promote a greater understanding of and empathy for the natural environment and of the need to protect it for future generations.

The State Government announced last year that it was completing the land buyback process on the Summerland Peninsula that commenced in 1985. This is very pleasing news as it provides the landowners with certainty and allows us to plan for the removal of the remaining houses and the rehabilitation of

penguin and other native wildlife habitat. Work also continued this year on preparing strategies for the Summerland Peninsula including facilities such as bikeways and pathways and for the redevelopment of the Penguin Parade Precinct. Both these projects are extremely important to the future of the Nature Park and will be the focus of our attention in the coming period.

After 10 years and substantial planning, construction of the new visitor centre at the Koala Conservation Centre commenced in June and is due for completion in December 2009. It will provide a greatly improved visitor and educational experience and will use the latest sustainable building materials. We also worked with local traders and organisations such as Phillip Island Tourism Association and Destination Phillip Island to attract more visitors to Phillip Island.

I thank my fellow Board Members for their counsel, time, expertise and dedication. They have all played a critical role in the ongoing business and conservation needs of the organisation and ensured that our local community has remained informed. The Board also thanks and congratulates our CEO Mark Manteit and the Management Team and staff for their hard work and dedication in contributing to our continuing success.

I, David Beatty, certify that Phillip Island Nature Park has risk management processes in place consistent with the Australian Risk Management Standard and an internal control system is in place that enables the executive to understand, manage and satisfactorily control risk exposures. The Nature Park verifies this assurance and that the risk profile of Phillip Island Nature Parks has been critically reviewed within the last 12 months.



David Beatty, Chairman



chief executive officer's report

despite challenging economic times, our organisation adapted quickly to changing tourism markets and visitation by managing our costs and implementing targeted marketing campaigns

Total visitor numbers across all the Nature Park's paying attractions (excluding special events such as the Amway event of 2007/08 of 7200 visitors) increased by 1.9% to 707,172. However, Penguin Parade attendances fell by more than 16,000 due to fewer international visitors. Both the Koala Conservation Centre and particularly Churchill Island Heritage Farm recorded strong growth and our premium tours continued to increase in popularity.

We achieved a credible operating surplus of \$416,903 which was very pleasing given the current economic climate. In addition, our commitment to funding for research, conservation and environmental initiatives was maintained to continue to protect our natural environment.

Our ongoing efforts to eradicate foxes have also clearly paid dividends with 33 foxes destroyed and a substantial reduction in the number of penguins killed. Feral and roaming domestic cats continue to be a threat to Phillip Island's native wildlife and this year, a record number of 130 feral cats were caught in key areas of the Nature Park. It has been very pleasing to see so many native wildlife species flourishing and breeding successfully on Phillip Island with the reduced threat of predators.

The Penguin Parade building has undergone nearly \$2M of necessary repairs in the last 12 months to ensure the safety of staff and visitors. Works included preventative fire services and water safety and replacement of the total roof. Three new boardwalks and lookouts were built, providing beach access for locals and visitors whilst protecting the surrounding natural environment.

The Nobbies Centre has now been open for two years and there has been an increase in functions and support from local community groups. We continue to use the media to promote the centre and to successfully leverage it with our other paying attractions.

The new Koala Conservation Visitor Centre is well underway and due for completion before the end of 2009. We also have been working on plans for an upgrade to the Wildlife Hospital. Located near our Environment Centre, it will provide refuge for local sick and injured wildlife, and at the same time, will be an emergency facility for up to 1500 penguins in the event of a major oil spill. We are very grateful to the Board of the Penguin Foundation and its many Little Penguin adoptees for their support to make this a reality.

There are many more achievements detailed in this report of which we can be proud. None of these would have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our staff, management team, Board and community members. I would like to personally thank everyone for ensuring that we have continued our success in accordance with our Strategic and Management Plans.



Mark Manteit, Chief Executive Officer



introduction nature park profile

phillip island nature park manages over 1,805 hectares of natural areas across phillip island

Just 90 minutes from Melbourne, Phillip Island Nature Park (the Nature Park) is the renowned home of Australia's most popular natural wildlife attraction – the iconic Penguin Parade along with a range of quality ecotourism experiences, significant natural areas and wildlife.

Created by the State Government in 1996, it is the only 'Nature Park' in Victoria. The term means that all conservation areas are managed under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978.

The Nature Park is managed by a Board of Management that is appointed by the Minister responsible for the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. During the reporting period, the Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC Minister for Environment and Climate Change was the Responsible Minister.

the nature park is home to unique wildlife and spectacular coastal scenery - protected and managed by quality environmental and research programs

The world-renowned park comprises diverse environments and habitats for a range of flora and fauna including threatened species. We acknowledge that the Nature Park is part of the traditional lands of the Bunurong Aboriginal people.

Self-funded by revenue generated from our four main visitor venues; Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre, Churchill Island Heritage Farm and the Nobbies Centre, we welcomed 707,172 paying visitors in 2008/09. A further 324,641 people visited the Nobbies Centre where entry is free - a total of 1.032M visitors. These visitors came from both around Australia (45%) and the world (55%). All profits generated by our main attractions are re-invested into research, sustainability, ecotourism, conservation, environmental and educational initiatives within the Nature Park.

The Nature Park is Phillip Island's largest employer with a team of 185 people in 2008/09 made up of 71 full-time and 114 part-time positions.



our board of management

Board members are appointed by the Responsible Minister and meet monthly to establish policies and strategic directions. There were 11 Board meetings held in 2008/09:

David Beatty is a Fellow of the Australian Society of Accountants and of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and is Chair of the Board.

Stella Axarlis AM has extensive business experience and expertise in training. She is currently deputy chair of Australian National Training Authority Board.

Dr Kath Handasyde is a senior lecturer in Wildlife Ecology and Management at University of Melbourne and provides the Board with advice on wildlife management.

Christine Wardle is an environmental consultant with 30 years experience in the environment industry, finance and accounting sectors and corporate governance.

Ian Baker has extensive international business experience and is owner and manager of a luxury hotel on Phillip Island.

Michael Gatehouse is partner of a Melbourne law firm and specialises in workplace liability, risk management and adventure sport and tourism liability.

Jason Perry is a chartered accountant and a partner of a large Melbourne accounting firm. He has extensive experience in corporate finance, audit, due diligence and consulting related projects. Jason is also Chair of the Audit Subcommittee.

Board Member Attendance:

Stella Axarlis attended 10 of 11; David Beatty attended 10 of 11; Dr Kath Handasyde attended 9 of 11; Christine Wardle attended 11 of 11; Ian Baker attended 2 of 9 (resigned effective 14 May 2009); Michael Gatehouse attended 10 of 11; Jason Perry attended 8 of 11.

There were six committees that provided the Board with advice:

- Audit Subcommittee (Chair Jason Perry)
- Scientific and Research Advisory Committee (Chair Dr Kath Handasyde)
- Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee (Chair Dr Kath Handasyde)
- Community Advisory Committee (Chair Stella Axarlis)
- Education Advisory Committee (Chair Stella Axarlis)
- Environment Advisory Committee (Chair Christine Wardle)



David Beatty (Chair)



Dr Kath Handasyde



Ian Baker



Michael Gatehouse



Stella Axarlis



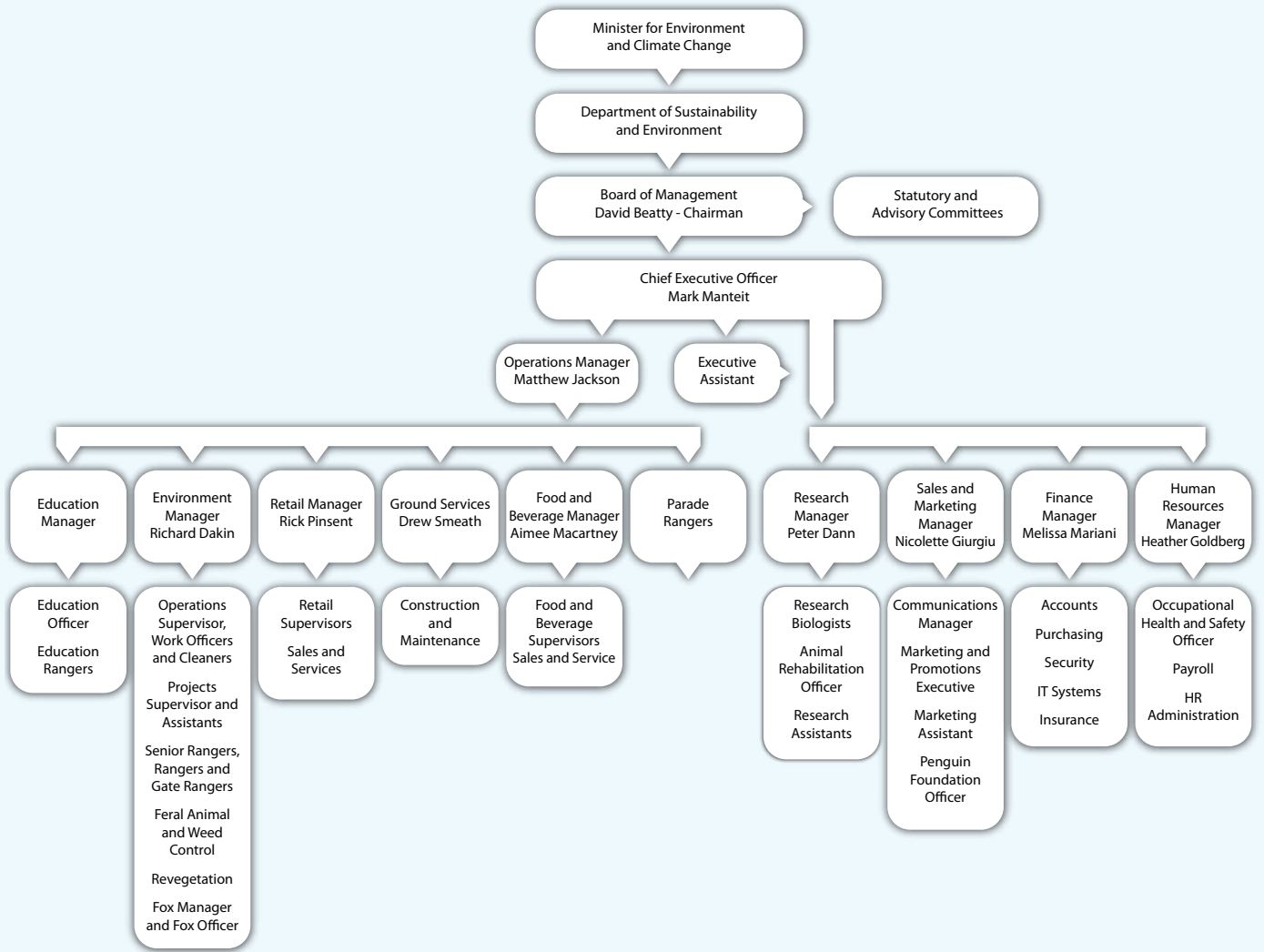
Christine Wardle



Jason Perry



organisational structure



planning background

our management plan was developed by our team and community and describes 386 actions across all aspects of the nature park

strategic planning

Our '2020 Strategic Plan' guides our commitment to 'integrate environmental sustainability principles into all areas of our operations'. Our Strategic Plan 2006-2011 is also a key strategic document for our future and was developed with extensive consultation with Staff, Management and Board Members. Our Management Plan 2006-2011 describes 386 environmental actions across all aspects of the Nature Park. Detailed business plans are prepared for all divisions on an annual basis.

nature park mission

To conserve and enhance the Nature Park environment for current and future generations whilst achieving a balanced environmental, economic and social outcome.

nature park vision

As a Team, we will achieve the vision '**to be a world leader in environmental, economic and socially sustainable nature-based and ecotourism experiences**' as well as to be a great place to visit and work.

nature park goals

1. Integrate environmental sustainability principles into all areas of our operations
2. Enhance and expand the delivery of education, training and research both within and outside the Nature Park
3. Strive to achieve long term financial security
4. Optimise the ways we meet the needs of visitors and our community.

nature park values

Communication - open communication is a two way street

Respect - honoring the values of others

Teamwork - camaraderie and support

Leadership - approachable, empowering, supportive

Opportunity - growth for all

Balance - life and work – environment and economy

Sustainability - commitment to conservation and the future

Recognition - appreciation for effort

Innovation - think smart

Achievement - pride in accomplishment

Enjoyment - like what you do

Integrity - action speaks louder than words

Transparency - what you see is what you get





operational
review ■



sustainability

we are committed to implementing a fully integrated sustainability framework across all areas of the nature park

In addition to our extensive efforts in the field of sustainability to date, the Nature Park contracted the National Centre for Sustainability (NCS) at Swinburne University to extend prior work determining our ecological footprint to undertake a Carbon Sequestration study. The process was undertaken in collaboration between the NCS and Australian Carbon Traders Pty Ltd.

The Nature Park implemented resource saving measures during the year including:

- New 'Aerobin' composting facilities for the volunteer house
- New water tanks at the revegetation facility at the works area of the Penguin Parade precinct.

The Nature Park continued its commitment to:

- Sponsoring local events held on Phillip Island
- Supporting and sponsoring local community groups including Landcare and the Barbara Martin Bush Bank
- Developing and maintaining walking and cycling tracks, car parks, and toilet and picnic facilities in non fee-paying areas across Phillip Island for residents and visitors.

Linking with Community for a Sustainable Future

- The Nature Park supports the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere and is represented on the local roundtable where we share information to assist the project
- We were involved in a number of planning applications and planning hearings which have the potential to impact on Nature Park values and the natural environment of Phillip Island
- Extensive community consultation was undertaken to further develop plans for a new Visitor Centre at the Koala Conservation Centre.



business risk assessment

The Nature Park is committed to identifying, monitoring and assessing the risks under its control to ensure the safety of both staff and visitors. Nature Park staff undertake risk management inspections and address issues as identified. We also conduct independent Risk Management Studies at three-year intervals.

This results in a comprehensive, proactive maintenance and repairs program for all areas of the operation including machinery, coastal boardwalks and the physical structure of our Visitor Centres.

The following actions were undertaken:

- Independent engineer's review of the structural integrity of the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre
- A 'Safety Systems Manual' was actively monitored for all precincts and staff to ensure that health and safety responsibilities, policies and procedures are followed
- Emergency management plans for all precincts and staff updated to ensure compliance to standards
- Security upgrades were completed at all precincts including further expansion and upgrades of alarm systems, CCTV surveillance and improved security lighting in all work areas and visitor centres
- Risk Assessments were completed for Nature Park conservation activities, locations and events.

ecotourism

The Nature Park maintained its Advanced Eco Accreditation, which is the highest international benchmark currently available through Ecotourism Australia. In total it has accreditation for 12 products and ranger guided tours which is the most for any single attraction in Australia. In 2008, we entered the Victorian Tourism Awards Hall of Fame in the category of Ecotourism. The products and tours which have advanced Ecotourism Certification are:

- Penguin Parade
- Private Penguin Parade Experience
- Penguin Sky Box
- Penguins Plus Viewing Platform
- Penguin Eco Explorer
- Ultimate Penguin Tour
- Phillip Island Nature Park's Activities Program
- Phillip Island Nature Park's Education Program
- Koala Conservation Centre's Ranger Guided Walk
- Koala Conservation Centre
- Churchill Island Heritage Farm
- Churchill Island Heritage Farm Ranger Tour.



conservation

habitat

A park-wide orchid survey was completed by Pathways Bushland and Environment consultants. This survey and report builds on recent botanical surveys completed by the Nature Park to increase our knowledge of local environmental assets.

summerland estate

As part of the State Government's commitment to buyback the Summerland Estate to rehabilitate for penguin habitation, in 2008/09 six houses and eleven vacant blocks were acquired leaving 12 private houses and seven private vacant blocks remaining. Weed control and habitat restoration is ongoing throughout the Summerland Estate together with the decommissioning of power lines as they become redundant. Six houses were either removed or demolished from the housing estate this year.

revegetation

- As a part of a contractual agreement with Bass Coast Shire Council, over 30,000 locally indigenous plants were planted at the Rhyll rehabilitation site. In addition, over 10kg of indigenous seed was direct-seeded to maximise the success of the project. All seeds were collected and propagated by our rangers. This completed stage one of the three stage process
- International student and local university volunteers were involved with revegetation projects across Phillip Island, planting over 20,000 indigenous plants. Revegetation and weed control works were also carried out at Swan Lake, Green Lake, Rhyll and Fishers Wetlands. Funds to support these projects were received from the Federal Government through Envirofund 9 and also from Melbourne Water
- Fencing and plant biodiversity enhancement were carried out

at the Ventnor Koala Reserve after the autumn ecological burn. Between 6000-7000 indigenous plants were planted at various sites within the Reserve. This project was originally supported by a Department of Sustainability and Environment Bush Guardians Grant and is currently being funded by a Melbourne Water Grant.

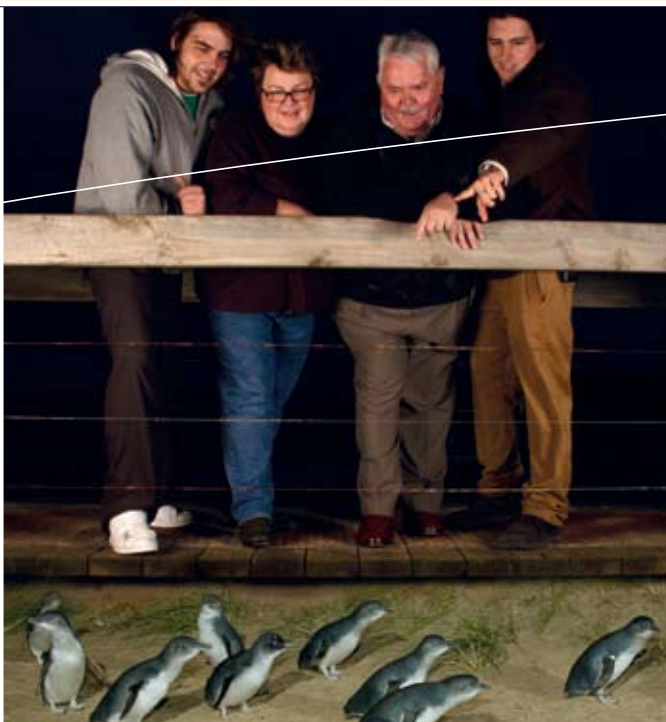
- Coast Action Groups have also been busy around the coast with Sunderland Bay/Surf Beach and West Woolamai groups and Smiths Beachcombers Association having successful working bees during the year.

wetlands and waterways

- Work on the eradication of Bridal Creeper at Rhyll Swamp and Asparagus Fern at Ventnor Koala Reserve was facilitated by a Melbourne Water Grant
- Removal of Tall Wheat -grass and rabbit control was undertaken at Fishers Wetland and this was followed up with the planting of riparian vegetation
- Communication continues with Melbourne Water to protect this waterway during changes upstream. Water testing of waterways continued monthly during the year.

pest plants

- Rangers and volunteers undertook 2,055 hours of weed control works for the 2008/09 year. These figures exclude the contractor spraying hours associated with Envirofund, Melbourne Water, Bush Guardians and Good Neighbour Grants
- Work on Tall Wheat-grass at Fishers Wetland has continued, focusing on competitive planting within rabbit proof enclosures particularly to buffer against reinfestation from neighbouring properties. While the Wheat-grass is dormant, work has been undertaken in the surrounding habitat including mulching, planting and weed control on Bridal Creeper, Boxthorn and Coast Wattle



- At Cape Woolamai, a substantial amount of time has been undertaken regarding Boxthorn regrowth in areas where large bushes have been removed over the last four-five years. Inkweed and Apple of Sodom have also been controlled at Cape Woolamai and Boxthorn work has also continued at Ventnor, Swan Lake, Surf Beach and Forrest Caves
- Around the Penguin Parade, areas of Smoke Weed, Fat Hen, Mallow and Couch are gradually being removed and the areas are being revegetated. More Coastal Teatree has been removed and chipped to increase accessibility and nesting habitat for penguins in the colony while vegetation has been cut back in the bus and car parking areas to discourage penguin nesting for their ongoing protection.

pest animals

Foxes

- 33 foxes were destroyed on Phillip Island with 21 of those succumbing to bait. This high proportion of baited foxes suggests this technique will remain a major tool in the eradication campaign for at least another year before monitoring and reactionary measures will replace broad-scale baiting
- Only two penguins were killed by foxes this year, which is also a record. This suggests a diminishing fox population although this index can be misleading as they are surplus killers and a single animal can inflict significant damage on prey populations
- A higher emphasis is now being placed on monitoring the native wildlife population of Phillip Island. Species such as Cape Barren Geese and Masked Lapwings are considered to be good indicators of fox abundance and monitoring changes in these populations over time allows us to gauge the success of the eradication program.

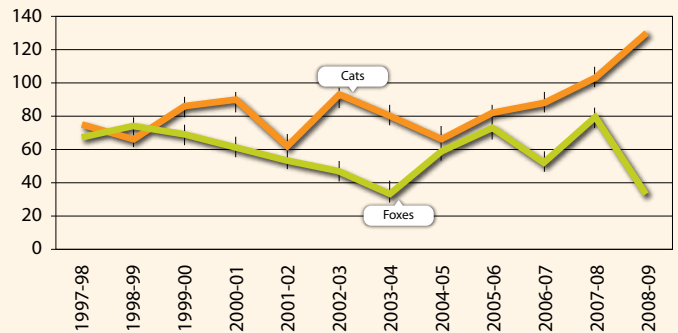


Fig. 1 No. Cats and foxes destroyed 97/98-08/09

Feral and Roaming Cats

Feral and roaming cats are an unrelenting threat to Phillip Island’s wildlife. In the past year, rangers trapped 130 feral cats, which is the highest number of feral cats ever removed from the Nature Park within a year. Rangers removed them from important breeding areas for Little Penguins, Short-tailed Shearwaters, and Hooded Plovers.

A public education/awareness campaign was undertaken to reinforce the message of keeping cats confined. Rangers are working on future strategies to reduce feral cats from not only the Nature Park but across Phillip Island.

Rabbits

A broad scale rabbit control program utilising Pindone™ oat bait was completed in partnership with landowners and Landcare for eastern Phillip Island. Harbour removal, warren fumigation and destruction continue at strategic areas around the Nature Park.

Other Pest Animals

In conjunction with the Bass Coast Shire Council Mosquito Program, the Nature Park again used ‘VectoBac®’ as a biological control of mosquito larvae when in plague numbers at Newhaven and Churchill Island salt marshes.



conservation

infringement notices

A total of 52 infringement notices were given out this year. The majority related to fisheries and dogs on beach offences.

emergency management

There was a small chemical drum spill from an unknown source that caused a health risk at Smiths Beach in May that required the attention of emergency services. Beach notice signs were erected to advise the public of the risk and Smiths Beach was closed for one day.

wildlife rehabilitation

Highlights of the year in wildlife rehabilitation included:

- Only one Little Penguin was admitted for oil contamination which continues the declining trend in numbers for this affliction (six last year)
- The successful rehabilitation and release of a Southern Giant Petrel (listed as endangered by the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts)
- The successful rehabilitation and release of a Shy Albatross (listed as vulnerable by the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts)
- The successful establishment of the Phillip Island Wildlife Rescue/Transport Group's Pelican Feeding and Interpretation Program
- Successful grants from the Penguin Foundation for professional plans for the new Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre and eight extra rescue kits for the Phillip Island Wildlife Rescue/Transport group
- Obtaining a grant from the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Wildlife Rehabilitator program for the purchase of equipment.

A total of 195 Little Penguins were treated in the Wildlife Rehabilitation

Centre during the year. This is a 30% increase in numbers compared to the long-term average (136). Of these, 122 (62%) were adults, 17 (0.08%) were juveniles and 50 (26%) were chicks. The main causes for admittance were starvation on land and at sea (51%), serious injuries (19%) and 'orphaned / wandering' chicks (18%).

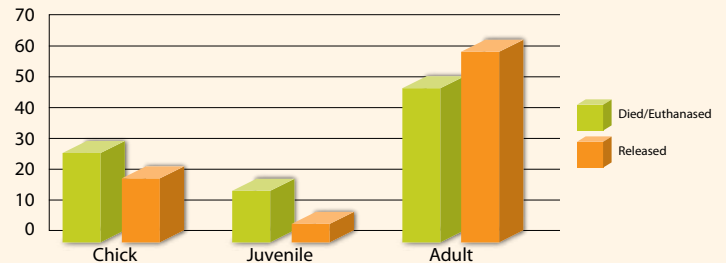


Figure 2. Rehabilitation outcomes for Little Penguins 2008/09.

Only one Little Penguin needed treatment for oil contamination and it was successfully released. A total of 350 animals (other than penguins) was also treated in the facility. This is slightly less than last year but still continues in line with an upward trend over the past ten years. Only 60 Short Tailed Shearwaters were admitted during the fledging time (131 in 2007/08) with an additional 10 adults treated during September to April (21 in 2007/08).

Excluding oil spills, this is only the second time that the treatment centre has handled more than 500 animals (545) in a year. Because of the large numbers of wildlife in care during summer, rangers assisted rehabilitation staff during feed times from early January until late March.

In October 2008, a female Swamp Antechinus with six live joeys still attached was brought to us from Corinella. It was extremely difficult to find information on how to raise the joeys. Four died but two were successfully released back to the site of capture thanks to foster care and rehabilitation.

During January/early February, 55 juvenile Black Swans died at Swan Lake. The birds were possibly suffering from Avian Botulism and samples were sent to pathologists at Victorian Institute for Animals Science at Attwood and the nationally accredited



Biosecurity Sciences Laboratories in Queensland for testing. However, the exact cause of death could not be determined. Some of the birds were admitted to the Rehabilitation Facility but none survived for more than a few hours.

Only two wild koalas were treated at the Koala Conservation Centre's Rehabilitation Facility.

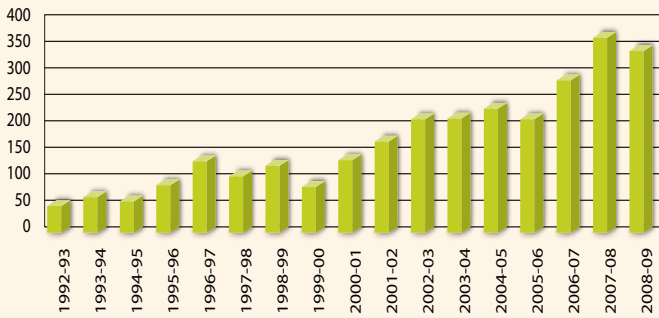


Fig 3. Number of hospitalised animals other than Little Penguins 2008/09.

We provided expert facilitation at conferences and workshops for oiled and injured seabird training and we continued to advise wildlife carers on seabird rehabilitation nationally. Dr Roz Jessop also provided expert advice, presentations and practical workshops for the State Marine Pollution Wildlife Response Training Exercise held at the Port of Melbourne in April.

The Phillip Island Wildlife Rescue/Transport Group continued to function successfully with extra Call Managers being recruited. Some members of the group also volunteered to run the San Remo Pelican Feeding and Interpretation Program.

significant species

hooded plovers

There were steady gains for Hooded Plovers during the 2008/09

breeding season but there are still significant problems facing the population and its future.

Staff and Hooded Plover Watch volunteers were involved in the four Hooded Plover and Gull counts and undertook over 60 hours of nest protection and public education. The November count of 36 was the highest recorded November count. Data sheets for the Birds Australia 'National Count' were also filled in to add to the state-wide biennial count. Nest records were completed for all nesting attempts and rangers erected temporary beach closures, nest progress signage and chick shelters as required.

Only six chicks fledged on Phillip Island despite an increasing and highly productive population and an extended breeding season. The average number of chicks fledged for the previous 10 seasons since Hooded Plover Watch began was 6.8.

We had the highest number of 53 recorded nests and 122 eggs, (previous record was 39 nests and 95 eggs in 2006/07) from 15 pairs at 15 beaches. There were 24 chicks hatched (previous highest was 26 in 2006/07).

While the main causes of nest failure used to be dogs, foxes, cats, human interference and weeds (such as Sea Spurge), their influence is far less now due to active management. The main reasons for egg and chick loss this season were largely attributable to inclement weather, high tides and unknown predation (scavenger birds such as gulls, ravens and ibis were suspected).

koala conservation

The Nature Park manages koalas within the protected habitat of the Koala Conservation Centre and also contributes to the management of the Phillip Island free-range koala population.

Three koalas were conceived and born in the Centre this year bringing the overall population to 37. One of these young was born to 'Meriki', who is in her 17th year and is our oldest koala. Numbers were also boosted by the addition of a male from South Gippsland, who came to us via the Southern Ash Wildlife Shelter,



conservation

to contribute to genetic diversity within our population.

Staff received 18 reports of wild koalas from the public throughout the year (down from 42 the previous year). Two injured wild koalas were received for care (down from six). Both were successfully treated and released. In addition, four koalas were relocated to safer sites.

capital works

Capital works were undertaken to improve safety, provide amenities and protect natural resources. The following improvements/upgrades were completed during the year:

- Construction of a new lookout at Surf Beach and Rhyll Inlet
- Construction of a new beach access at Sunderland Bay
- Installation of recycled plastic seating at the Penguin Parade.

volunteer accommodation

During 2008/09 there were 1132 volunteer nights spent in the Volunteer Accommodation Centre which was slightly up on the previous year. These facilities have been a key to expanding our tertiary and international volunteer programs and our conservation works.

planning

Only four planning applications for developments on properties abutting the Nature Park were received for review from the Bass Coast Shire Council – this reflects the current economic conditions. Submissions were made to the Victorian Civil and Administration

Tribunal regarding updates to the Council planning scheme including the incorporation of the San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan and an updated Council Municipal Statement. Submissions were also made to Council regarding the development of the Cowes, Rhyll and Ventnor Structure Plan.

Information sessions on the development of the Port of Hastings, the proposed construction of tidal power facility near Red Rocks and the development of a car ferry service between Stony Point and Cowes were attended.

grants

Successful grant applications were made to:

- Melbourne Water: Protection of Swamp Scrub and Plains Grassy Woodland at the headwaters of Saltwater Creek, Ventnor Koala Reserve, \$20,000
- Caring for Country Round, Community Coastcare 2008: Phillip Island Fox Eradication, \$29,500
- Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach Coastal Rehabilitation \$14,654 (we were the sponsor for the application by Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach Coast Action Group)
- Good Neighbour Grant: "Phillip Island Integrated Gorse Management" \$7,000
- Caring for Country through the Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority for Protecting Western Port - Fox control in the Western Port Ramsar coastline and Orange-bellied Parrot habitat - Bass River Delta to Powlett River, including Phillip Island and San Remo Peninsula
- The Nature Park was also a partner in 'Caring for Country' grants to the Central Coastal Board: 'Western Port Welcomes



Waterbirds', and Landcare: 'Penguins to the Prom'. Conservation grants received in 2008/09 were \$71,154.

community

Volunteers, students and community groups form an integral component of assisting in Nature Park environmental activities. Projects this year included:

- Joint revegetation planting days with local schools and community groups
- Habitat rehabilitation days with Toyota, Streets, National Australia Bank and Novartis Pharmaceuticals
- Work with Landcare on pest plants/animals, wildlife corridor, Urban Landcare and salinity mapping and management
- International Student Volunteers contributed six weeks of plant propagation, weed control, revegetation and habitat rehabilitation
- Seven Green Corps participants graduated in November following a successful six months project with the Nature Park, Shire, Landcare, and the Barb Martin Bushbank. The Green Corps team planted over 26,000 plants, propagated 5000 plants and constructed 1km of fencing as part of the project
- Practical placement tertiary students from Holmesglen TAFE, Chisholm Tafe, Gippsland TAFE, Latrobe University, Monash University, and Deakin University
- Working days with Coast Action Groups, Friends of Koalas and Friends of Churchill Island

The Environment, Education, Community and Scientific advisory committees also aided management and the Board with feedback throughout the year.

events

The Nature Park hosted the following events at Churchill Island:-

- Chill Island music festival
- Churchill Island Easter Family Fun Festival
- Garden Lovers Festival
- Art And Soul Festival
- Monthly farmers' markets.



research

The main research directions for the year included projects in relation to the following:

- winter feeding ecology of Little Penguins
- diet of Australian Fur Seals
- development of technology for cleaning oiled seabirds
- commencement of studies of human disturbance of seals
- foraging behaviour of penguins
- climate change and Little Penguins.

The Nature Park Board is assisted by a Scientific and Research Advisory Committee which includes external scientists to advise on scientific issues and research directions. The committee met twice during the year to review current projects and the research program and budget for the coming year. The Nature Park also acknowledges the generous support from major sponsors including BHP Billiton, Toyota, the Penguin Foundation, and NSW Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife.

research highlights

investigations of the diets of australian fur seals

Two significant papers on the diet of Australian Fur Seals were published during the year. The first was on nine years of Australian Fur Seal diet monitoring at Seal Rocks, which is home to 25% of the entire species population. Collections of scat and regurgitate samples were made between 1997-2006 and identified prey remains of 42 fish species and seven cephalopods. Six species represented 80% (as frequency of occurrence) of the fish prey, and the arrow squid *Nototodarus gouldi* represented 70% of cephalopod prey. Differences between years was related to mean sea surface temperatures in western Bass Strait where the seals foraged and therefore has considerable importance for predicting the effects of climate change on the diet of seals.

The second paper looked at seal diet determined from fish DNA isolated from scats. This very new technique confirmed the

validity of the standard technique for determining seal diets and also found remains from cartilaginous prey which had not been identified in the diet before.

satellite tracking of little penguins in winter

The satellite tracking of 53 Little Penguins across in July and August 2008 gave us the first comprehensive picture of where Little Penguins go in winter. The importance of Port Phillip Bay and western Victoria as feeding areas during winter was highlighted and, judging from their movements, we can determine in which winter months they have difficulty finding food. Concurrent to this project, was a study of anchovy distribution in the Bay which will allow a collaboration to investigate the spatial relationship between the penguins and their main food (anchovy) in Port Phillip Bay for the first time.

french connection

Andre Chiaradia was a recipient of the Australian Academy of Science, International Programs to visit the Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien, Strasbourg, France to finalise analyses of diving data and write up the results from our current joint projects. This visit was also used to plan and discuss current collaboration and to become familiar with the production of a new generation of miniature – yet powerful – data- loggers currently being developed by the CNRS (French national centre for scientific research). These new loggers will let to study penguins at sea in much finer detail than we have studies conducted so far.

penguins and climate change

Two advances were made during the year in understanding the potential effects of predicted changes in climate. A paper was published indicating a strong relationship between sea-surface



temperatures in Bass Strait and the timing and success of the subsequent breeding season. In addition, the first general analysis of the likely impacts of climate change on Little Penguins was conducted. It was found that there were a number of aspects of the biology of penguins likely to be affected, both positively and negatively, by predicted climate change over the next 100 years.

Breeding productivity and juvenile survival seem likely to improve with increasing sea temperatures. Marine productivity and adult survival perhaps, seem likely to decline while the feeding behaviour of penguins will possibly experience both negative and positive impacts as a consequence of climate change. Some of the negative impacts can be addressed on small scales in the short-term, particularly those resulting from expected changes to the terrestrial environment. A number of areas requiring further research were identified including the effects of ambient and burrow temperatures on breeding success and adult survival, the effects of sea temperatures on adult survival and productivity and the effects of rainfall on food availability. Continual review will be essential as the predictions and implications for climate change develop further.

scientific and conservation significance of publications during the year

Much of the research conducted at the Nature Park relates to local environmental issues. The research department also makes a conscious effort to sustain a high profile in the international scientific community. This is achieved through the publications of research papers in peer-reviewed high impact research journals, collaborations with universities and other research institutions, supervision of students, honorary positions in university departments, public and conference presentations, and the production of theses, reports and research papers. A full listing of these for 2008/09 is provided in the Publications List.

marine ecology of little penguins

Apart from the satellite tracking of penguins during chick-rearing and winter, marine research on penguins looked at the effects of age on diving behaviour, foraging trip durations during winter and breeding, the effects of bands on diving performance, the foraging ecology of penguins breeding at St Kilda and a trial was conducted using DNA to determine diet.

breeding ecology of little penguins

For the past three years, the average annual number of birds crossing the beach at the Penguin Parade has been relatively stable and higher than the long term average for the last 32 years of 551. The averages have been 636 in 2006/07 and 2007/08 and 633 in 2008/09.

The seasonal pattern of penguin attendance has remained predictable over the past three years with higher numbers in spring/summer (breeding) and lower numbers in autumn/winter (non-breeding).

Breeding success was examined at six study sites around the Summerland Peninsula and 0.75 chicks fledged per pair which was below the long-term average of 0.94. The average laying date of the first clutch was 10 October and close to the long-term average. Chicks weighed 912gm on average, just prior to fledging, which is also close to the average of 917gm for the last 41 years.

beneficial long trips during incubation

During chick rearing, seabirds tend to make short foraging trips to gather food for their chicks and long trips to feed themselves. But what influences trip duration during incubation when chicks are not a factor? We examined the foraging behaviour of incubating Little Penguins using sophisticated data loggers together with nest-attendance records. Results indicate that body condition is an important factor influencing a trip. When in low body condition, the penguins undergo longer trips, perhaps to target more profitable, distant prey patches. When in good condition, their trips are short, so they can return to the colony and check on the



research

status of their partner who is sitting on the eggs. This study was in collaboration with the National Institute of Polar Research in Japan.

banding affects diving performance

Flipper banding has been the primary method of identifying individuals of penguin species. We studied the short and long-term effect of flipper banding on the diving behaviour of Little Penguins. Immediately after being banded, birds significantly modified their diving behaviour, increasing the time spent in various phases of the dive (descent, bottom time, and ascent) as well as slowing their descent rate. Birds that have carried a band for a number of years, however, do not exhibit the modified behaviour. Our findings build on an earlier study that found that penguin survival in the long-term was reduced if they carried flipper bands. The Nature Park no longer uses flipper bands to mark penguins and we encourage other researchers to use alternative methods of identification, such as transponders.

penguins at st kilda

The effects of human activities in the marine environment are less conspicuous than on land, but they are often extensive, particularly in coastal areas. As part of a PhD project, we are examining interactions between the colony of Little Penguins at St Kilda, 5 km from the centre of Melbourne, and marine urban developments. Penguins were recorded in a number of locations within Port Phillip Bay and examination of their diving profiles suggests that they forage extensively in this area. Little Penguins at this urban location are exposed to many potential human threats in their marine environment.

using dna to determine diet - a trial

Over the past 20 years, we have been examining the diet of Little Penguins through stomach flushing. Although useful, this technique is invasive and has innate biases. Last summer, we conducted a captive feeding trial to test whether prey DNA analysis could be used to more accurately and less invasively assess penguin diet. We

used pre-fledging chicks that are usually kept in the Nature Park animal hospital every year prior to release to the wild. Initial tests are encouraging. A large scale DNA sequencing is now underway. This project is in collaboration with the Australian Antarctic Division.

monitoring penguin weights

The Port of Melbourne Channel Deepening Project instigated bay-wide monitoring program to provide information on the status of key species, habitats and ecological processes in the bay. Little Penguin monitoring is a component of the bay-wide program. The stated aim of the penguin component of the Channel Deepening Project bay-wide monitoring program is to: "Detect changes in Little Penguin body mass (an indicator of health) outside expected variability". The Nature Park has been contributing weight data to this monitoring program throughout the year and has produced 12-monthly reports and participated in the production of three press releases and a video on the monitoring. The weights of penguins fluctuated above the long-term average weight (see green line on graph below) of Little Penguins for much of the winter period. The weights of males and females followed a similar trend, confirming the generally good condition of the penguins throughout this period. One likely explanation for the relative increase in weights over the reporting time is that there was an increase in food availability compared to previous years. Preliminary analysis of penguins that were fitted with satellite trackers in June 2009 show a greater proportion of locations immediately to the southwest of Phillip Island compared to individuals tracked in June 2008. The location and duration of winter foraging trips is likely to be primarily driven by the availability of food. The shorter range trips in 2009 may therefore indicate a greater availability of prey closer to the Phillip Island colony.

crested terns

Prior to 1994, Crested Terns on Phillip Island only bred at Seal Rocks. In 1966, 40 nests were recorded at Seal Rocks, but the colony had



declined to only six nests by 1978. The tern colony at the Nobbies first appeared in the 1994/95 breeding season when 900 nests were recorded. Many new recruits, as shown by band recoveries, came from the main Victorian colony at Mud Island in Port Phillip Bay. This year, 2,474 tern chicks were banded and 67 adults captured in collaboration with the Victorian Wader Study Group and the colony was estimated at 3,000 pairs, an improvement on last year when only 2,100 pairs were recorded and closer to historical levels. Crested Terns are listed under JAMBA and the Marine Provisions of the EPBC Act.

The seven recoveries of birds from The Nobbies largely conform to the usual pattern of moving up the NSW coast and into Queensland for the winter. Four relate to chicks banded in December 2008, with two of these on their way eastwards along the Victorian coast by March and one up in its non-breeding area on the New South Wales coast in July. The fourth had travelled in the opposite direction, being in Apollo Bay in July – an unusual movement.

The recovery of a one year old bird at Bermagui in New South Wales in December is a further illustration that many birds remain in their non-breeding areas in their first summer and do not return to their natal area until they are two or more years old. The recovery in Queensland, 1,513 km from The Nobbies, is at the northern end of the range of wintering areas used by Victorian Crested Terns. The terns are expected back at the Nobbies in late September to early October.

marine ecology of australian fur seals

seal tracking project – juveniles

This was the fifth year of the Juvenile Australian Fur Seal Foraging Study. In July 2008, we deployed eight satellite trackers at Seal Rocks to bring the total juveniles tracked so far to 33 from Seal Rocks and 12 from Lady Julia Percy Island. This year, the seals' movements were followed for periods of 33 to 81 days, five of the eight devices were later recovered.

australian fur seal diet

Diet monitoring continued at Seal Rocks with samples collected at near monthly intervals.

During 2008/09, collections were made on: 17 July, 26 August, 24 September, 29 October, 29 January, 12 March and 4 June. All samples collected between 1997 and December 2006 were sorted and results published this year.

entanglement rates of australian fur seals in marine debris

We have monitored the frequency of entanglements, their severity and material since 1997. In a total of 140 days at Seal Rocks, we have seen 296 individually identifiable, entangled seals. Debris has been removed from 133 (45%) of these. In 2008-09 at Seal Rocks, we sighted 28 separately identifiable seals that were entangled. We caught and removed the debris from 19 of these.

seals around phillip island

Monitoring of seals ashore on beaches on and around Phillip Island continued. A total of 147 seals was recorded ashore over the past year. Most were pups that washed ashore dead during December and January. Several of these were being fed by people and so lingered around jetties and boat ramps for several months over summer.

paper published on new zealand fur seals in bass strait

New Zealand Fur Seals recently commenced breeding at several sites in Bass Strait. They are thought by some to be colonisers from New Zealand. In a review of their historical and current status in Bass Strait, however, we report that New Zealand Fur Seals were present in their thousands prior to the sealing era of the early 1800's. They were virtually eliminated from Bass Strait sites by the sealers and have just recently recolonised several sites. Currently, their population in Bass



research

Strait is about 1000 seals, with pupping at four sites. Their numbers have not changed substantially in the past ten years. The elimination of New Zealand Fur Seals from Bass Strait by the early sealers would have influenced the local marine ecosystem. For example, New Zealand Fur Seals eat Little Penguins (while Australian Fur Seals do not). Perhaps, Little Penguins were able to increase in numbers up to their present levels in Bass Strait because of the local elimination of the New Zealand Fur Seal. If New Zealand Fur Seals continue to return to Bass Strait, Little Penguin numbers may reduce.

commenced study on seal responses to boat approaches

Masters student and recipient of a Fullbright Scholarship, Julia Back, commenced research on the responses of Australian Fur Seals to boat approaches. This is the first such research to be conducted at Australian Fur Seal colonies. The research will assist with the development of guidelines for boat approaches to seal colonies that will minimise impacts on the seals.

animal experimentation ethics committee

The Committee met three times during the year. Five new projects were approved including research on Little Penguin diets and identification using transponders, satellite tracking of Little Penguins and determining the sex ratio of Sooty Oystercatcher populations in Victoria and Western Australia. Eight previously approved projects continued through the year. The Committee conducted inspections of rehabilitation facilities at the Penguin Parade and Koala Conservation Centre.

post-doctoral research

Dr Ilka Zimmer is conducting a post-doctorate funded by European Union and the University of Strasbourg in France. She is exclusively working on Little Penguins from Phillip Island in a joint project with the Nature Park, investigating how age and experience can influence the foraging behaviour of Little Penguins.

honours and postgraduate research

An integral part of our strategy of continuing high quality research and maintaining a reputation as a research institute is to develop strong links with tertiary institutions and to supervise honors and postgraduate students. We have been successful in attracting students from a variety of universities.

Theses completed and in progress (supervisor in brackets)

TOPIC	CANDIDATE	INSTITUTION
Completed		
Genetic differentiation of Little Penguins in Australia (Peter Dann)	Amanda Peucker	PhD Deakin University
Detoxification of plant secondary metabolites on feeding koalas and possums	Karen Marsh	PhD Australian National University
Life history and trophic relationships of red cod in south-eastern Australian coastal waters (Roger Kirkwood)	Jody Kemp	PhD Melbourne University
Sexual differences in the diets of Little Penguins over 25 years (Peter Dann & Andre Chiaradia)	Tracy Shaw	MSc University of Pretoria
Foraging patterns of Little Penguins in the non-breeding season (Andre Chiaradia)	Rohan Long	Honours Monash University
Winter foraging by Little Penguins from Phillip Island (Peter Dann)	Clare McCutcheon	Honours Deakin University
Models and methods for adaptive management of the Little Penguin population on Gabo Island, Australia (Peter Dann)	Victoria Hemming	Honours Melbourne University
In progress		
Disease surveillance and epidemiological investigations in Australian Fur Seal populations (Roger Kirkwood)	Michael Lynch	PhD Deakin University
Behavioural ecology of Little Penguins (Peter Dann)	Tania Billing	PhD Melbourne University
Foraging ecology of Little Penguins at St Kilda (Andre Chiaradia)	Tiana Preston	PhD Monash University
Gastrointestinal microflora of seabirds: phylogenetic and dietary relationships (Peter Dann)	Megan Dewar	PhD Deakin University
Resource partitioning of breeding seabirds in Bass Strait (Peter Dann)	Nicole Schumann	PhD Deakin University
Responses of Australian Fur Seals to boat activity (Roger Kirkwood)	Julia Back	MSc Deakin University



research results

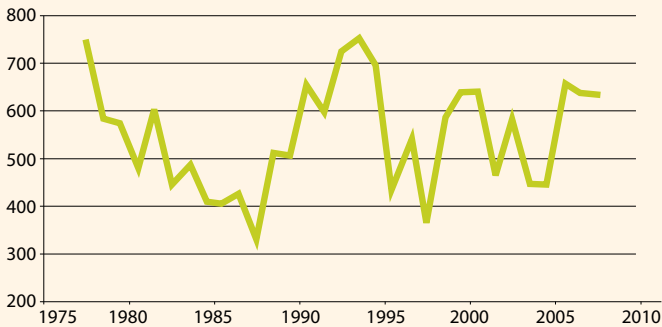


Fig 4: Annual mean numbers of penguins crossing Summerland Beach at the Penguin Parade, July 1977 – June 2009

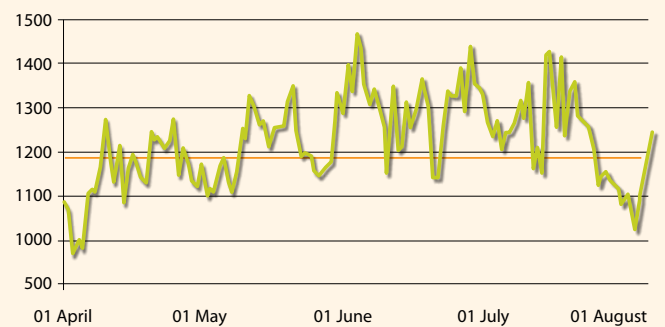


Fig 5: Average daily weight of all Penguins

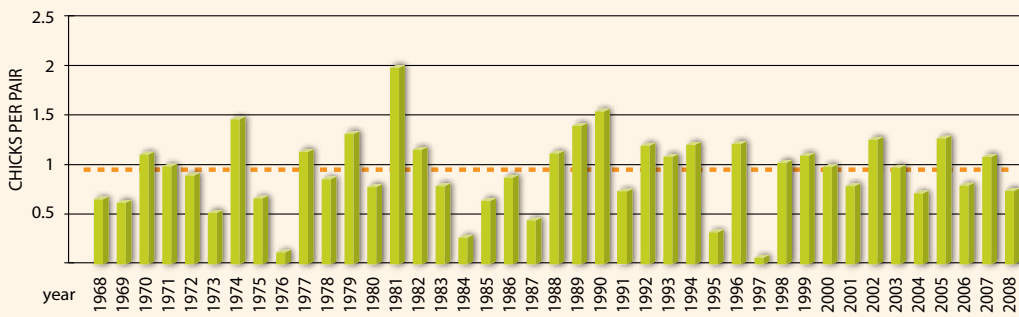


Fig 6: Mean number of chicks produced per pair of Penguins between 1968/69 and 2008/09.

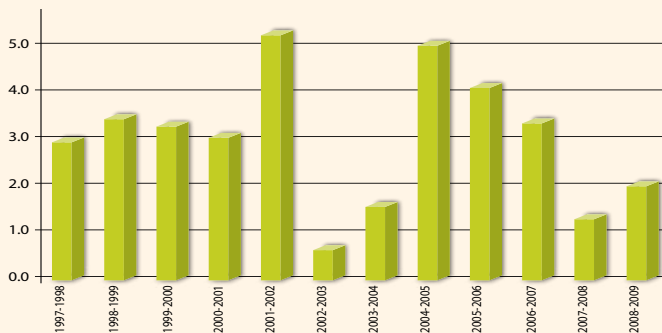


Fig 7: Mean number of entangled seals seen per day ashore at Seal Rocks.



marketing

1,031,813 visitors

Our marketing team focuses on increasing paying visitor numbers, selling tours to maximise front gate yield, implementing promotional campaigns, developing e-commerce strategies and increasing online bookings. In 2008/09, paying park visitation increased by 1.84% and front gate yield increased by 5.6% per visitor. Nature Park visitation (excluding Amway event visitors 07-08) was made up of 45% domestic and 55% international visitors.

domestic marketing

The focus of our domestic activities was:

- Achieving an audience circulation of 50 million and a value of \$5M through our national PR and media program.
- Promotion of 3 Parks Passes as the preferred ticket type, to increase awareness, length of stay and yield. 3 Parks Pass sales increased by 54%, from 35,015 to 53,996.
- Promotion of new penguin viewing options and focusing on ecotourism branding and new tour products across our parks. We achieved significant increases in premium tour capacity throughout the year and expansion of tours at Churchill Island.
- Fully integrated major sales and marketing promotions including Winter Hot Deal, Summer Nintendo Cadbury promotion, Easter 3 Parks Pass promotions, and ongoing website promotions.
- Implementation of a new event concept at Easter on Churchill Island.
- Maintaining relationships with existing sponsors, wholesalers and inbound operators and developing new opportunities.
- Development and upgrades to our website to increase online bookings.
- Continuing to enhance relationships with local accommodation providers, Bass Coast Shire Visitor Information Centre and Federation Square (cross promotions and representation).

international marketing

The focus of our international activities was to:

- Increase visitation from the Eastern markets and continue to be the lead attraction into Victoria for the China market.
- Introduce trade marketing initiatives – Penguin Loyalty Club completed, Chinese New Year promotion, Stimulus package, Penguin Protection program, Eco Academy. We initiated and developed promotional campaigns with key wholesalers and retail agents.
- Improved the product perception in key western markets by focusing on our new penguin viewing options which resulted in an increase in sales to all of our premium tours and numerous ranger guided tours.
- Focus on key international events, conferences, incentive markets and special interest groups. Partnerships with cruise ship operators have been developed with more than 5,000 passengers visiting the Penguin Parade.
- Be represented at major international sales missions organised by Tourism Australia and Tourism Victoria.
- Continue to focus on building relationships with international wholesalers, Tour Operators bringing visitors into Australia and Day Tour Companies. New packages have been developed to include the 3 Park Passes.
- Have a strong presence at Australian Tourism Exchange in Melbourne. New material was designed in appropriate languages and customised itineraries developed to target eastern and western Hemisphere buyers.
- New tour products have been launched – Sky Box luxury package, Penguin Plus with Audio Guided Tour (iPods' interpretation in several languages), Audio Guided Tour at General viewing, Volunteer and Education packages).



education

over 50,000 visitors participated in our education programs

The Education team delivers a variety of ranger-guided activities to school students, international visitors and the general public that visit the Nature Park. These activities aim to promote a greater understanding and empathy for the natural environment so it is protected for future generations to enjoy.

This year saw a significant increase in students participating in education programs as well as the development of many new initiatives and the relocation of the Education team to new offices located near the Penguin Parade.

Overall 21,846 students were involved in formal education programs such as Rockpool Rambles at Summerland Beach, Koala Prowls at the Koala Conservation Centre and Historical interactive tours at Churchill Island. This is a 9% increase from the last financial year.

education programs

Eight new curriculum-based programs based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the various Victorian Certificate of Education Study Designs were developed for school students. Many of our new programs focused on the delivery of hands on research activities at the senior level such as biodiversity investigations - comparing transects from a variety of coastal environments. Education also worked on delivering multiple park experiences for many of our schools and International visitors, developing programs such as 'The People to People Tour' which visited all four precincts of the Nature Park.

Education staff attended and presented at various teacher and subject conferences throughout the year. Ten new volunteers were also trained to assist with the school holiday programs and to help out at various expos and festivals. We thank them for their help.

community involvement

Education staff organised, and were involved in, a number of community events this year such as World Environment Day, Sustainability Festival and School's National Tree Day. We also thank ExxonMobil for their generous and ongoing financial support to develop seal educational tours for primary schools, and to further our knowledge with updated data and information collected on Australian Fur Seals.

school-based traineeships

This year, the Nature Park's School Based Apprentices Program saw 21 school-based trainees complete their traineeships in Hospitality, Retail, Conservation and Land Management. The Nature Park continued to work with Traineeship Advisory Services Australia to deliver quality training and to ensure that the community education initiatives were ongoing.

coastal ambassadors

Two Coastal Ambassador camps were held with 31 students and three teachers participating. Camps were held at the Nature Park's new volunteer centre and students were involved in various educational talks from Rangers and Researchers. They learned about the various marine and coastal environments and developed skills to take positive action in their schools' local environments.

eco tours

The Nature Park continued to provide a range of interpretive services and programs to welcome visitors and to interpret our natural and cultural values. A total of 1,616 people attended ranger guided eco tours across the Nature Park's four precincts.

A total of 6,517 visitors experienced the 'Ultimate Penguin Tour' and the 'Private Penguin Parade Experience', which provided them with more unique and intimate tours with Rangers. Due to high visitor demand, a second 'Ultimate Penguin Tour' and 'Private Penguin Parade Experience' tour were also developed and run successfully.



our team

our team is a great resource and strength to deliver best practices in ecotourism and excellent customer service

workforce data

Overall staff numbers comparison 2007/08 to 2008/09:

Staff	2008/09	2007/08
Full Time	71	79
Part Time	114	130
Total	185	209
Male	71	75
Female	114	134

The Nature Park had 185 employees as at 30 June 2009 and continued to be the largest employer on Phillip Island. The decline in staff numbers was due to timing of completion of many schools based apprenticeships, the impact of the global

financial crisis and reduced visitor numbers at the Penguin Parade. The annual turnover of employees was 5.3% including seasonal staff. The Nature Park provides a Staff Handbook which is issued to all new staff on commencement. Our Human Resources Manual provides the organisation's policies and procedures and continues to be updated throughout the year.

staff training

We are pleased to advise that 100% of staff completed training last year. Our continued commitment to employee development saw staff undertaking tertiary and TAFE courses in Diploma of Management, Diploma in HR Management, and Certificate IV – Hospitality Supervision together with recognized training programs in Management, Information Technology, Occupational Health and Safety, Manual Handling, Maintenance, Risk Management, Hospitality, Retail and Customer Service. We continued our partnership with Chisholm Institute, with staff also completing diploma and certificate courses in Hospitality Supervision, Management and Business, which were all funded by the Nature Park.



occupational health & safety

We have an Audit and Risk Committee which consists of three Board members, the CEO and Financial Controller. Three of these people are Chartered accountants and have much experience in Risk Management. They meet bi monthly to discuss risk management in conjunction with our internal auditors. We have identified the major risk areas and documented detailed strategies to minimise risk. As well as management, it is incumbent on each team member in every division to proactively identify and act upon risks as they arise – for themselves and visitors.

Also:

- At our instigation, insurers and risk assessors visit annually to identify risk issues within the business and propose formal recommendations to manage risks and minimise premiums.
- Identified risk issues have influenced the development of our specific risk mitigation strategies. These include our pro-active Safety Management System and strategies developed prior to the implementation of every new product

to ensure best practice industry standards are maintained throughout our attractions.

- Our management team uses a Risk Register Matrix that calculates, evaluates and provides an overall rating for risks based on: likelihood, consequence and significance to our business. In addition, the Nature Park has developed Business Continuity Plans for Power, Information Technology and Staff - three of the major identified business risks.

During the year, the Nature Park implemented specific OH&S induction processes for each division. We also put an electronic Risk Management System in place. An online incident reporting software system was developed and became operational with ten different types of reports in use.

conferences

Management and staff attended and spoke at a range of conferences and seminars during the year. Research staff presented papers at several forums. Education staff attended specialised conferences and educational forums to promote Nature Park programs.



friends and community

the nature park liaises with over 20 community groups and values their input to planning and conservation works

volunteer contribution

Friends groups and hundreds of volunteers contributed many thousands of hours to programs protecting the values of the Nature Park during the year. Programs included:

- Hooded Plover Watch Group and Westernport Bird Observation and Conservation volunteers spent over 60 hours protecting nesting birds and chicks and providing education and information to the public.
- The Victorian Wader Study Group undertook studies of resident and migratory shorebirds at Rhyll and Crested Terns at the Nobbies.
- Penguin Study Group Volunteers monitor penguins monthly.
- Bird Counts were undertaken by volunteers including members of the Westernport Bird Observers Club on key species including Cape Barren Geese, international waders, Hooded Plovers, Gulls and wetland birds, totaling hundreds of volunteer hours across Phillip Island.
- The volunteer Wildlife Rescue and Transport Group assisted to provide a 24 hour rescue and transport to the Nature Park's wildlife hospital of sick and injured animals from across Phillip Island. Volunteers and Wildlife shelter trainees assisted with the day to day chores in the hospital.
- Friends of Koalas spent hundreds of hours assisting with monthly Habitat days and koala counts.

- International Student Volunteers assisted with propagation, weed removal, revegetation, and habitat rehabilitation. Three groups of 12 (including a team leader) worked for two week periods.
- Churchill Island Volunteers contributed to restoration projects, gardening, tree planting, signage and ongoing conservation and the promotion of Churchill Island.
- Churchill Island Guides wear period costume and provide information for visitors as they walk through the historic buildings. They also help to ensure the historic collection is protected from theft or damage.
- Work Placement Students assist with Nature Park operations including checking cat traps, working in the nursery, weed control and replanting.
- Activities and Events Program volunteers assist with Summer/ Easter activities and the Coastal Ambassadors Program.
- Coast Action Groups contributed to education programs and assisted in extensive tree planting, erosion control measures, wildlife habitat restoration and conservation works across Phillip Island. Over 20,000 plants were planted this year.

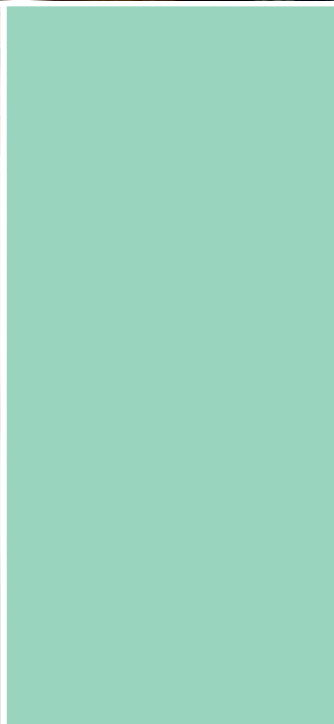
community partnerships

- The Nature Park continues to work closely with Phillip Island Landcare in revegetation and weed control and rabbit control works across the Island.
- The community indigenous nursery, the Barb Martin Bushbank, is supported by the Nature Park through provision of venue and services. The Bushbank produced thousands of indigenous plants and seedlings for Nature Park revegetation projects this year.
- The Woolamai Surf Lifesaving Club is also supported by the Nature Park to provide life saving services at Cape Woolamai beach over the summer months.





financial
review ■



efficient business

operating position

Despite the difficult economic times in the last 12 months, we exceeded many of our business goals and targets including net profit, control of wages and overheads, completion of many infrastructure capital projects, and focusing on target visitor markets and increasing yields.

The Nature Park's operating revenue was down by 7.9% on the previous year. This is mainly due to a large "one off event" which did not recur this year. However operating expenses also decreased by 9.4%.

There were no other significant changes in financial position.

The areas of research and environment remain strongly supported with a total expenditure of \$1.9M.

The operating surplus was \$416,903, after including all abnormal and extraordinary items. This compared to \$350,600 for the previous year.

nature park revenue

The Nature Park has four main revenue generating venues from which it receives funds from visitor entry fees, souvenir and food sales, photography and educational programs. They are the Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre, Churchill Island and Nobbies Centre. The Nobbies Centre has free entry with revenue gained from a café, gift shop and tours.



commercial operations

retail

The Nature Park's retail operations consist of sales and service in retail outlets at the Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre, Churchill Island and Nobbies Centre. It also manages an online store and 'greenscreen' photography operation.

In a difficult retail environment, highlights of the year included an increase in overall yields by 4.7% and increase in revenue by 4% in comparison to last year across all of the Nature Park's retail outlets.

Upgrades to the Penguin Parade and Nobbies outlets were undertaken to enhance the visitor's experience with a key focus on customer service.

food and beverage

The Food and Beverage operation continued to improve in terms of revenue, yields and contribution margin. The Boardwalk Café at the Penguin Parade expanded its menu, promoted meal deals and improved its customer service levels. A new strategy of adding a coffee cart to our external boardwalks was introduced and proved successful. This added to the overall visitor experience and had a significant positive impact on our yields. A highlight of the year was the ongoing support from our key suppliers including Cadbury Schweppes (beverage and confectionery), Streets (ice-cream) and Grinders (coffee). All companies strongly supported the Food and Beverage department and helped us greatly with promotional strategies.

The Nobbies Centre cafe and function area continued to grow during their second year of operation. Re-opening of the kiosk over peak periods, continual menu improvements and changes to service were introduced throughout the year, showing improvements on revenue, yields and contribution margin. The function centre hosted several weddings and corporate events throughout the year. This saw a steady increase on the previous year's business. The function team at the Nobbies took part in several trade shows and increased exposure for the centre and its facilities.

admissions and bookings

- During the year the 'admissions and bookings team' continued to focus on customer service, sales and product training. This approach led to a significant increase in pre-paid ticket sales and a 5% increase in yields, particularly from our premium product range
- A key result was a 54% increase in 3 Parks Pass sales resulting in an increased visitor length of stay across Nature Park attractions
- An upgrade of our ticking systems was completed. This enabled barcode scanning for all entry tickets into the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre and online ticketing system
- The Online booking system was also enhanced with a key focus in driving sales which resulted in an increase from 1% to 15% of entry tickets sold online for the year.



abridged financial statements

operating statement for the financial year ending 30 June 2009

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING REVENUE					
Sales	5 771	5 680	4 942	4 784	4 313
Cost of Sales	2 330	2 304	2 121	2 056	1 854
GROSS PROFIT	3 441	3 376	2 821	2 728	2 459
Admissions	8 461	8 062	7 527	6 830	6 299
Interest	187	251	253	130	99
Other Operating Income (A)	782	2 308	1 019	915	835
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	12 871	13 997	11 620	10 603	9 692
Assets Received Free of Charge					711
Assets Recognised for the First Time					935
Proceeds from Oil Spill				260	
Nobbies Project Operating Grant			1 200		
TOTAL REVENUE FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES	12 871	13 997	12 820	10 863	11 338
OPERATING EXPENDITURE					
Employee Benefits	7 250	7 505	6 847	6 117	5 449
Materials and Supplies	866	1 109	981	916	898
Depreciation	1 721	1 671	1 213	866	883
Other Operating Expenses	2 617	3 360	2 027	2 198	2 051
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	12 454	13 646	11 068	10 097	9 281
Writedown of Assets on Revaluation					108
Nobbies Project Non Capital Expenses			1 200		
TOTAL EXPENSES FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES	12 454	13 646	12 268	10 097	9 389
NET OPERATING RESULT FOR THE YEAR					
(excluding one off specific revenue and expenses)	417	351	552	506	411
NET RESULT FOR THE YEAR	417	351	552	766	1 949
Increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	-1 702	4 007			5 712
Decrease in Net Result on adoption of a new accounting pronouncement					
Increase in Contributed Capital for Nobbies Building			3 285	2 098	
TOTAL CHANGES IN EQUITY	-1 285	4 358	3 837	2 864	7 661
(A) 2008 total includes revenue for a "one off" event that did not occur in the other reported years.					

balance sheet as at 30 June 2009

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash Assets	4 340	4 926	799	1 779	866
Other Financial Assets			3 051	2 572	1 000
Receivables	357	361	734	576	674
Other Current Assets	64	59	56	62	120
Inventory	839	697	758	586	845
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	5 600	6 043	5 398	5 575	3 505
NON CURRENT ASSETS					
Property, Plant & Equipment	50 346	51 621	48 101	43 510	42 952
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	50 346	51 621	48 101	43 510	42 952
TOTAL ASSETS	55 946	57 664	53 499	49 085	46 457
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Payables	806	1 025	1 262	923	1 102
Employee Entitlements	768	1 022	923	745	787
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1 574	2 047	2 185	1 668	1 889
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Payables					
Employee Entitlements	178	138	193	133	148
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	178	138	193	133	148
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1 752	2 185	2 378	1 801	2 037
NET ASSETS	54 194	55 479	51 121	47 284	44 420
EQUITY					
Contributed Capital	28 881	28 881	28 881	25 596	23 499
Accumulated Surplus	6 610	6 193	5 842	5 290	4 523
Asset Revaluation Reserve	18 703	20 405	16 398	16 398	16 398
TOTAL EQUITY	54 194	55 479	51 121	47 284	44 420

compliance issues

establishment and minister

Created by the State Government in 1996, it is the only 'Nature Park' in Victoria. The Nature Park is managed by a Board of Management appointed by the Minister responsible for the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. During the reporting period, the Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC Minister for Environment and Climate Change was the Responsible Minister.

committees

Below is the membership of the Nature Park committees who provided advice to the Board throughout the reporting period.

audit committee

Jason Perry - Chair (Board of Management)
David Beatty (Board of Management)
Stella Axarlis (Board of Management)

scientific and research advisory committee

Dr Kath Handasyde - Chair (Board of Management)
Robin Lawson Patrick Coutin
Karl Harrigan Ian Norman
Adrian Moorrees Simon Goldsworthy
Edward Pinceratto

environment advisory committee

Christine Wardle - Chair (Board of Management)
Michael Gatehouse (Board of Management)
Bob Baird Penny Manning
Nicola Tregear Bessie Tyers
Paul Smith Michael Cleeland

education advisory committee

Stella Axarlis - Chair (Board of Management)
Jim Wilson Rob Higgins
Glenn Mancer Pat O'Connell
Don Paproth David Roche
Paul Malone Rick Pearce

community advisory committee

Stella Axarlis - Chair (Board of Management)
Ian Baker (Board of management – Resigned May 09)
Cr Jane Daly Cr Kelly Simrajh
Patsy Hunt Fred Allen
Jock McKechnie Stephen Fullarton
John Adam Pauline Taylor
Peter Huthwaite Kim Storey
Margaret Hancock Nerida Stubbles

animal experimentation ethics committee

Kath Handasyde - Chair (Board of Management)
Clare Davis / Anne Davie / Jennifer Hibble

superannuation

Staff are covered under two superannuation schemes:

Defined Contributions – 91.4 % of workforce with employer contribution of 9%.

Defined Benefits – 8.6% of workforce with employer contributions of 9.25% and employee contributions of 6%.

Employees have a choice whether they elect to be included in the default defined contribution fund (Vision Super) or have their superannuation paid into a nominated complying superannuation fund.

occupational health and safety

The Nature Park has an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Workcover Policy and Procedures system. Safety officers met regularly during the reporting period to table, assess and improve health and safety throughout the organisation. The Nature Park has a full time OH&S Officer who is responsible for all OH&S issues. Lost time for injury sustained in the workplace was 686 hours. See page 25 for more details.



industrial relations

Staff are employed under a Nature Park Certified Agreement and the applicable Union is the Australian Services Union. No Industrial Relations claims were applicable during this year.

freedom of information act 1982

The FOI Act 1982 allows the public a right of access to documents held by Phillip Island Nature Parks. The Nature Park makes available to the public information about the operations by creating a general right of access to the information in documentary or electronic form. All FOI requests are subject to a \$22.50 application fee.

There were no requests during the reporting period. Written requests as detailed in Section 17 of the FOI Act are to be forwarded, with prescribed fee, to:

FOI Officer, Phillip Island Nature Parks, PO Box 97 Cowes Vic 3922

A written response will be forwarded to the applicant in accordance with the Act.

privacy act

The Nature Park is committed to ensuring that the Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000 is adhered to. This Privacy Act applies to all Nature Park operations including website and email. Our Privacy Policy is available to all staff, visitors and stakeholders as requested. A summary of the Policy is also available on our website at www.penguins.org.au

whistleblowers protection act 2001

The Act is designed to encourage and facilitate disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies and to provide protection for the persons who make disclosures.

There were no reports made under this Act during the reporting period. The protected disclosure coordinator for the Nature Park acts as an agent for the Authority to receive disclosures under the Act and applies DSE procedures in managing disclosures. Disclosures of improper conduct by the Authority or its employees may be made to the following:

Heather Goldberg
Human Resources Manager Phillip Island Nature Parks
PO Box 97 COWES 3922
hgoldberg@penguins.org.au

The Ombudsman Victoria
Level 22, 459 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
Telephone: 3 9613 6222 Toll free: 1800 806 314
ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au

national competition policy

The Nature Park implemented and complied with the National Competition Policy Statement.

building act 1993

All buildings were built and are maintained in compliance with the Building Act 1993.

public administration act 2004

The Nature Park adheres to the merit and equity principles of the Public Administration Act 2004 to ensure employment decisions are based on merit, that employees are treated fairly and reasonably, that the EEO is provided, and that procedures are in place to deal with disputes.

To ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities. The



compliance issues

following policies are in place and contained in the Human Resources Policy & Procedure Manual:

Section 2.0

Recruitment & Appointment Policy & Procedures:

Section 4.0

Training & Development Policy & Procedures

Section 5.0

Employees' Performance & Development Review Policy & Procedures

Section 7.0

Termination & Settlement of Disputes Procedure

Section 9.0

Employee Equal Opportunity Procedure

Section 11.0

Code of Practice for Employees

consultancies and contracts

There was one individual consultancy above \$100 000 entered into during the reporting period for \$171,356 with KPMG who were contracted to undertake an economic impact study of the Nature Park. There were five consultancy appointments made during the year at a total cost of \$221,776.

There were no major contracts entered into greater than \$10 million during the reporting period.

external reviews

Independent internal auditors performed four reviews of the Nature Park during the reporting period.

fee policy

The Nature Park has a policy of reviewing entry fees annually. During the reporting period, fees were increased within CPI by an average of 2.5%.

statement of availability of other information

Information not fully detailed on pages 32-33 is available in the Full Financial Statements. A DOPI was completed by all relevant officers. Publications are listed on page 38 and Research Activities on pages 16-21 of this report. Marketing and Promotion Activities are detailed on page 22.

subsequent events

There were no events after the balance date which would significantly effect the Nature Park's operations in the future.

vipp

The Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003 (VIPP) requires public bodies and Departments to report on the implementation of the VIPP. Departments and public bodies are required to apply VIPP in all tenders over \$3 million in metropolitan Melbourne and \$1 million in regional Victoria.

The Nature Park has not commenced or completed any contracts during 2008/09 to which VIPP applied.



disclosure index

The Annual Report of Phillip Island Nature Parks is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation. This index will facilitate identification of compliance with these statutory disclosure requirements.

Legislation	Requirement	Page Reference
	MINISTERIAL DIRECTIONS	
	Report of Operations – FRD Guidance	
	Charter and purpose	
FRD 22B	Manner of establishment and the relevant Ministers	3, 34, 62
FRD 22B	Objectives, functions, powers and duties	3, 62
FRD 22B	Nature and range of services provided	3
	Management and structure	
FRD 22B	Organisational structure	5
	Financial and other information	
FRD 10	Disclosure index	37
FRD 12A	<i>Disclosure of major contracts</i>	36
FRD 15B	<i>Executive officer disclosures</i>	63
FRD 22B	Operational and budgetary objectives and performance against objectives	6-26
FRD 22B	Employment and conduct principles	3, 24, 61, 64
FRD 22B	Occupational health and safety policy	34, 25
FRD 22B	Summary of the financial results for the year	32-33
FRD 22B	Significant changes in financial position during the year	1, 2, 32-33, 41-69
FRD 22B	Major changes or factors affecting performance	1, 2, 22
FRD 22B	Subsequent events	36, 68
FRD 22B	Application and operation of Freedom of Information Act 1982	35
FRD 22B	Compliance with building and maintenance provisions of <i>Building Act 1993</i>	35
FRD 22B	Statement on National Competition Policy	35
FRD 22B	Application and operation of the <i>Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001</i>	35, 70
FRD 22B	Details of consultancies over \$100 000	36
FRD 22B	Details of consultancies under \$100 000	36
FRD 22B	Statement of availability of other information	36
FRD 24C	<u>Reporting of office based environmental impacts</u>	8-9
FRD 25	Victorian Industry Participation Policy disclosures	24, 35, 36
FRD 29	<i>Workforce Data disclosures</i>	24, 35, 36
SD 4.5.5	Risk management compliance attestation	1
SD 4.2(g)	General information requirements	41-69
SD 4.2(j)	Sign-off requirements	69
	LEGISLATION	
	Freedom of Information Act 1982	35
	Building Act 1983	35
	Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001	35, 70
	Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003	36
	Financial Management Act 1994	69
	Multicultural Victoria Act 2004	22, 23

Notes:

Italicised – for Departments only but recommended that where possible and with any necessary modifications required a disclosure is made

Underlined – for some public bodies only

Does not include disclosure index items relating to the financial report section of the annual report.

publications

reviewed publications, conference presentations, reports and thesis. nature park's staff and fellows in bold. further information also at penguins.org.au

reviewed publications

Penguins

- Chambers, L. E., Renwick, L. and Dann, P.** (2009). Climate, fire and Little Penguins. *Strategic Assessment of the Vulnerability of Australia's Biodiversity to Climate Change*. CSIRO Melbourne.
- Chambers, L. E., Congdon, B., Dunlop, N., Dann, P. and Devney, C.** (2009). Seabirds. Climate change and the marine environment report card. CSIRO, Melbourne.
- Cullen, J. M., Chambers, L. E., Coutin, P. C. and Dann, P.** (2009). Predicting onset and success of breeding of Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* from ocean temperatures off south-eastern Australia. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 378, 269-278.
- Fallow P. M., Chiaradia A.,** Ropert-Coudert Y., Kato A. and Reina R.D. (in press). Flipper bands modify the short-term diving behaviour of Little Penguins. *Journal of Wildlife Management*
- Hoskins, A. J., Dann, P.,** Ropert-Coudert, Y., Kato, A., **Chiaradia, A.,** Costa, D. P. and Arnould, J. P.Y. (2008). Foraging behaviour and habitat selection at sea in little penguins *Eudyptula minor* during the chick-guard stage of breeding. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 366, 293-303.
- Kato, A., Ropert-Coudert, Y. and **Chiaradia, A.** (2008). Foraging strategies of an inshore forager: regulation of trip duration by Little Penguins during incubation. *Auk* 125, 588-593.
- Nisbet, I. C. T. and Dann, P.** (2009). Reproductive performance of Little Penguins in relation to Year, Age, Pair-Bond Duration, Breeding Date and Individual Quality. *Journal of Avian Biology* 40, 1-13.
- Overeem, R. L., Peucker A. J.** (nee Mitchelson), Austin, C. M., **Dann, P.** and Burrridge, C. P. (2008). Contrasting genetic structuring between colonies of the world's smallest penguin, *Eudyptula minor* (Aves: Spheniscidae). *Conservation Genetics* 9, 893-905.
- Peucker, A. J., Dann, P.** and Burrridge, C. R. (2009). Range-wide Phylogeography of the Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*): Evidence of Long Distance Dispersal. *Auk* 126, 397-408
- Preston, T. J.,** Ropert-Coudert, Y., Kato, A., **Chiaradia, A., Kirkwood, R., Dann, P.** and Reina, R. D. (2008). Foraging behaviour of Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* in an artificially modified environment. *Endangered Species Research* 4, 95-103.

Oil and birds

- Weston, M. A., **Dann, P., Jessop, R., Fallow, J., Dakin, R.** and Ball, D. (2008). Can oiled shorebirds and their nests be successfully rehabilitated? A case study involving the threatened Hooded Plover *Thinornis rubricollis* in south-eastern Australia. *Waterbirds* 31, 127-132.

Coastal birds

- Schumann, N., Arnould, J. P.Y. and **Dann, P.** (2008). Diet of the Common Diving-Petrels (*Pelecanoides urinatrix urinatrix*) in south-eastern Australia during chick-rearing. *Waterbirds* 31, 620-624.
- Weston, M. A., Liu, X., Suzuki, T., **Fallow, J.** and **Dann, P.** (2009). Forensic fibre analysis to determine the origins of leg-entangling threads on shorebirds: a case study. *Wader Study Group Bulletin* 116, 46-48.

Marine mammals

- Arnould, J. P. Y. and **Kirkwood, R.** (2008). Habitat selection in a benthic diver: the foraging areas of female Australian fur seals (*Arctocephalus pusillus doriferus*). *Aquatic Conservation* 17, 553-567.
- Deagle, B., **Kirkwood, R.** and Jarman, S. (2009). Analysis of Australian fur seal diet by pyrosequencing prey DNA in faeces. *Molecular Ecology* 17, 2022-2038.
- Kirkwood, R.** and Arnould, J. P. Y. (2008). Australian fur seal. Pages 723 – 725 In 'Mammals of Australia: 3rd Edition' (ed van Dyke S & Strahan R). Reed New Holland publishing, Sydney.
- Kirkwood, R., Hume, F. and Hindell, M.** (2008). Sea temperature variations mediate annual changes in the diet of Australian fur seals in Bass Strait. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 369, 297-309.
- Kirkwood, R., Warneke, R. M. and Arnould, J. P. Y. (2009). Recolonization of Bass Strait, Australia, by the New Zealand Fur Seal *Arctocephalus forsteri*. *Marine Mammal Science* 25, 441-449.

Other studies

- Dann, P.** (2009). Book review: 'Penguins of the World' by Wayne Lynch. 2nd Edition. Firefly Books Ltd., Buffalo. *Waterbirds* 32, 476-478.

- Kirkwood, R.** (2009). Book review: 'Albatross: their world, their ways' by T. de Roy, M. Jones & J. Fitter. *Emu* 109: 89

- Kirkwood, R.** (2008). Book. Antarctica. New Holland Publishers PL.

- Lawton, K., **Kirkwood, R.,** Robertson, G., Raymond, B. (2008). Preferred foraging areas of Heard Island albatrosses during chick raising and implications for management with regard to fisheries bycatch. *Aquatic Conservation* 18, 309-320.

- Robertson, G., Moreno, C., Lawton, K., **Kirkwood, R.** and Valencia, J. (2008). Comparison of census methods for Black-browed Albatrosses breeding at the Ildefonso Archipelago, Chile. *Polar Biology* 31, 153-162.

theses (jointly supervised by nature park research staff)

- Peucker, A.** (2009). Genetic differentiation of Little Penguins in Australia. PhD thesis, Deakin University. (Peter Dann)
- Kemp, J.** (2008). Life history and trophic relationships of red cod in south-eastern Australian coastal waters PhD thesis, Melbourne University. (Roger Kirkwood)
- Marsh, K.** (2008). Detoxification of plant secondary metabolites on feeding koalas and possums. PhD thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Shaw, T.** (2009). Sexual differences in the diets of Little Penguins over 25 years. MSc thesis, University of Pretoria. (Peter Dann & André Chiaradia)
- Wasiak, P.** (2008). The role of shell grit ingestion in the reproductive biology of the Little Penguin. B.Sc. (Hons) thesis, Monash University. (André Chiaradia)
- Farrugia, M.** (2008). Effects of flash photography on Little Penguins. B.Sc. (Hons) thesis, Deakin University. (Peter Dann)
- McCutcheon, C.** (2009). Winter feeding areas of Little Penguins. B.Sc. (Hons) thesis. Deakin University. (Peter Dann)
- Hemming, V.** (2009). Models and Methods for Adaptive Management of the Little Penguin Population on Gabo Island, Australia. B.Sc. (Hons) thesis. Melbourne University. (Peter Dann)
- Long, R.** (2009). Foraging patterns of little penguins *Eudyptula minor* in the non-breeding season. B.Sc. (Hons) thesis, Monash University. (André Chiaradia).

reports

- Kirkwood, R.,** Gales, R., Pemberton, D., Arnould, J. P. Y., Hoskins, A., Mitchell, A. & Shaughnessy, P. D. (2009). Continued increase in pup production and re-colonisation by Australian fur seals (*Arctocephalus pusillus doriferus*) between 2002 and 2007. Unpublished PINP Report, June
- Dann, P.** & Chambers, L. (2009). Little penguins and climate change. Report to Greenhouse Alliance and Department of Sustainability and Environment. Pp.46.

conference presentations

- Berry, O. and **Kirkwood, R.** (2008). DNA analysis reveals immigration rate and breeding population size of foxes on Phillip Island, Victoria. *Aust. Wildlife Management Conference, Fremantle, Sept.*
- Chiaradia, A.** (2008). Effects of large and small-scale environmental changes on penguin's foraging abilities. *Workshop on "Co-existing with Little Penguins: What Can We Do?". April 3rd, Hobart.*
- Chiaradia, A., Weller, D.,** Kato, A., Ropert-Coudert, Y., **Jessop, R.** and Swearer, S. (2008). Their tern to take a dive: diving activity of crested terns, *Thalasseus bergii*, in Australia. *Third International Biologging Science Symposium. September 1-5, 2008 Pacific Grove, California, USA (poster).*
- Chiaradia, A.** (2008). Penguins at sea - Management challenges. Little penguin workshop in Tasmania. *February 9th 2008, Ulverstone.*
- Dann, P.** (2008) Penguins on land - Management challenges. *Little penguin workshop in Tasmania. February 9th 2008, Ulverstone.*
- Dann, P.** (2008). The conservation status of the world's penguins. *Little penguin workshop in Tasmania. February 9th 2008, Ulverstone.*
- Dann, P., Renwick, L., McInnes, J., Chiaradia, A., Kirkwood, R., Buick, E., Hoffman, J.** and Arnould, J. P. Y. (2008). Foraging areas of Little Penguins during chick-rearing: evidence of changing food availability. *Penguin Symposium, Oamaru, New Zealand, June.*
- Kirkwood, R.** (2008). Australian fur seals and the Bonney Upwelling. *Bonney Upwelling Workshop. Queenscliff, April.*
- Lynch, M. J., **Kirkwood, R.,** Burton, J., Robson, D. and Arnould, J. P. Y. (2008). Investigation of an alopecia syndrome in Australian fur seals (*Arctocephalus pusillus doriferus*). *Wildlife Disease Association. Kioloa, NSW, Sept.*
- McInnes, J. and Dann, P.** (2008). Sexual dimorphism and sex determination in little penguin chicks. *Penguin Symposium, Oamaru, New Zealand, June.*
- Manteit M.** Mar 2009 International Symposium on Sustainable Tourism in Quebec, Canada.

thank-you

we listen and liaise with many community groups to work together on joint outcomes to improve our community and environment

The Nature Park's achievements are a tribute to the generous and loyal support of our sponsors and colleagues. We are indebted to our many dedicated volunteers who tirelessly dedicate their time and efforts to the Nature Park.

Particular thanks go to the following organisations and volunteer groups for their exceptional support in 2008/09:

government support

Bass Coast Shire Council
Commonwealth Government
 Australian Tourism Development Program
 Envirofund
Melbourne Water
Victorian State Government
 Bush Guardians Program
 Coast Action Coast Care program
 Good Neighbour Program
 Smart Water Fund

volunteers

Churchill Island Volunteer Group
Clare Davis
Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA)
Green Corps
Hespa Mann
Hooded Plover Watch
International Student Volunteers
Phillip Island Wildlife Rescue/Transport Group
Wildlife Victoria
Kerry Ritchie
Lyn Blom and Kerry Morrison for penguin jumpers
Marion Thomson and Jenny Mattingley
Penguin Study Group
Schools and students
Shearwater Rescue Volunteers

major supporters

Our grateful thanks for their continued support:

local community groups

Friends of Churchill Island Society
Friends of Koalas
Local Farmers – Fox Control Access
Phillip Island and District Historical Society
Phillip Island Conservation Society
Phillip Island Landcare Group
Silverleaves Conservation Association
Smiths Beachcomber Association Inc
The Barb Martin Bush Bank
Western Port Bird Observation and Conservation

supporting organisations

Australian Antarctic Division
Australian Academy of Science
Bass Coast Landcare Network
Bidvest Food Services
Blackmores
Cheetham Salt Limited
Chisholm Institute
Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE)
Dentche Papier
Environment Canada
Environmental Protection Authority
Healesville Sanctuary
Heritage Victoria
Hi-cone ECO CARRIERS
Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien - France
Japanese Penguin Fund
Luna Blu Slide Design
McLaughlins/Juro Pty Ltd
Monash University
National Institute of Polar Research (Japan)
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
Newhaven, Wonthaggi & Cowes Veterinary Clinics
Parks Victoria
PFD Food Services
Rothwell Publishing
San Remo Fisherman's Cooperative
Sylvania Lighting
Tourism Victoria
University of Melbourne
VicRoads





penguinparade
phillip island



thenobbies
phillip island



koalas
phillip island



churchillisland
heritage farm & functions



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Phillip Island Nature Parks is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the protection of Phillip Island and its wildlife. We are committed to environmental sustainability. This report is printed on 100% recycled Australian made paper using solar power energy.