

Two Bays January 2010 Science and Monitoring Program

Project Title: Shorebird and Seabird Surveys

Lead Agency / Scientists:

- Birds Australia – Ash Herrod
- Arthur Rylah Institute – Peter Menkhorst
- Parks Victoria – Steffan Howe

Purpose: The two key objectives of the marine habitat mapping component of the program include:

- To conduct shorebird surveys of sites within Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site
- To determine the importance of navigational aids and port structures in Port Phillip bay and Western Port Bay as roosting and nesting structures for seabirds to inform Parks Victoria's management and maintenance of these structures.

Background: Migratory shorebirds from as far as Siberia use bay beaches and coasts for feeding and roosting. Parks Victoria and partners are undertaking a range of activities to protect Ramsar habitats and shorebirds from pest animals such as foxes, invasive weeds, and inappropriate human activities. Parks Victoria is also the local port manager in Port Phillip and Western Port responsible for managing navigational aids including piles, buoys, beacons and signs, many of which are used for roosting and nesting by various seabirds. Many of these structures are deteriorating and either not being replaced or being replaced with structures incorporating bird deterrents. Information regarding the importance of these structures for seabirds will help inform Parks Victoria's management and maintenance of these structures.

Outline of Program: Ash Herrod from Birds Australia will conduct surveys of shorebirds at a number of sites around the western shoreline in Port Phillip Bay on 22nd January.

Volunteers will be on board the Pelican as it travels around Port Phillip Bay and Western Port Bay and will survey navigational aids and other structures managed by Parks Victoria for roosting and nesting seabirds.

For Further Information: www.birdsaustralia.com.au,
www.dse.vic.gov.au/ari
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Image: Many migratory bird species visit Victoria's bays and coastal areas in summer after a long migration from breeding areas above the Arctic circle including places like Alaska and Siberia. Western Port and Port Phillip contain Ramsar sites listed as wetlands of international importance for migratory bird species.

