

WESTERN PORT SHOREBIRDS

EDUCATION KIT FOR
GRADES 5 & 6 CHILDREN



Foreword

A note for teachers...



Western Port is a beautiful bay, home to ecologically important wetlands. These wetlands form the habitat of a variety of locally and internationally important shorebird species.

At present, many Western Port shorebird species are endangered as a result of land and water threats. Therefore, conservation efforts are currently underway to protect the shorebirds and their wetland habitat. The Bird Observation & Conservation Australia (BOCA) has been involved in the conservation of Western Port birds and adjacent wetlands for over thirty years and comparable shorebird conservation efforts are underway throughout Australia.

An important component of the Western Port shorebird conservation effort is to increase awareness of the issue among the local residents. This can be facilitated through educational programs, such as the one included in this handbook. Education is important because knowledge empowers action.

As primary school educators, you hold a very powerful position in that, through education, you can inspire your students and their families to take action to help conserve the shorebirds in the Western Port area.

We don't need to be experts to make a difference. Every little bit helps and it doesn't take much to spread information to a lot of homes from one classroom.

On behalf of the Monash University research team and BOCA we wish you all the best in your utilisation of this education kit. Furthermore, we sincerely thank you for making a valuable contribution to the welfare of Western Port shorebirds.



Acknowledgements



The 'Western Port Shorebird Education Kit' has been developed by a postgraduate Monash University research team in association with the Bird Observer's Club of Australia (BOCA).

Monash University Research Team

The four members of the research come from a variety of academic backgrounds (outlined below). Overall, the team encompasses a strong foundation in biology, environmental science and environmental engineering.

The members of the research team are currently enrolled in a postgraduate Masters Degree in either 'Corporate Environmental and Sustainability Management' (MCEsm) or 'Environment and Sustainability' (MES). The production of this education kit forms an important component of these Masters Degrees.

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Bird Observation & Conservation Australia (BOCA)

This education kit has been developed for BOCA. BOCA will be responsible for the distribution of this education kit to Western Port primary schools. BOCA is a major birding organisation with members all over Australia. BOCA runs birdwatching activities, outings, camps, interstate/overseas trips, undertakes bird surveys and has an extensive library and retail [shop](#). BOCA provides [educational](#) workshops and teaching resources and has an ongoing commitment to, and active participation in, [conservation](#) of Australian native birds and their habitats.

Printing and distribution of this document has been funded through a Natural Heritage Trust grant managed by Worldwide Fund for Nature.





Contents

Introduction	1
CD Power-Point presentation outline	3
Section A: Western Port	5
Note to Teachers	5
Location of Western Port	5
Description of Western Port	6
Changes in the use of Western Port's natural environment	7
Negative human impacts at Western Port	8
Ecological importance of Western Port	9
Other shorebird habitat sites in Australia	10
Summary	11
Glossary	12
Recommended activities	13
Section B: Shorebirds	15
Note to Teachers	15
Introduction to shorebirds	15
Categories of shorebirds	15
Western Port shorebirds	17
Habitat of shorebirds	18
Shorebird feeding	18
Identifying shorebirds	20
Shorebird migration	21
Shorebird migration patterns	22
Summary	24
Glossary	25
Recommended activities	26
Section C: Wetlands	27
Note to Teachers	27
Introduction to wetlands	27
Western Port wetlands	27
Importance of wetlands in Australia	28
Importance of wetlands to shorebirds	29
Environmental status of wetlands	29
Protecting wetlands in Australia	29
Summary	30
Glossary	31
Recommended activities	33
Section D: Conservation status of Western Port shorebirds	35
Note to Teachers	35
Conservation status of Western Port shorebirds	36
Threats to Western Port shorebirds	36
Efforts to protect Western Port shorebirds	40
Good News Stories	43
What can you and your students do to help?	45
Summary	46
Glossary	47
Recommended activities	48
Section E: Activities	49
Outline of activities	49
Activity checklist table	52
Activity sheets	53
Appendix	
References	
Additional resources	



Introduction

The purpose of this education kit is to guide teachers and their students through a fun and informative journey into the world of Western Port shorebirds. This kit has been specifically designed for primary schools located in the Western Port area. Please note that prior knowledge on the topics covered in this kit is neither required nor expected of teachers or their students.

This education kit provides teachers with all the information and materials they need to undertake a successful educational program on Western Port shorebirds. Additional references are supplied in the kit, but it is not expected of teachers to undertake further research into the topics, unless desired.

This kit is innovative in that it not only focuses on the plight of the shorebird species but also includes good news stories with regards to shorebird conservation. Provision of good news as well as bad news is important because both concern and hope insight action.

The following section consists of a series of sub-headings. Each sub-heading explains a fundamental facet of the education kit.



Education level

The content and activities included in this education kit are suitable for primary school children at a grade 5 and 6 level (Level 4).



Teaching aims

To educate students on the shorebird species that lives in the wetlands of Western Port, including their current plight and need for protection. Education is important because it improves local-community awareness of the issue which then insights action to protect the shorebirds and their habitat.



Importance of education program

By taking part in this education program, teachers and their students are making a valuable contribution to the broader action plan to protect the Western Port wetlands and shorebirds species.



Topics covered

There are 4 interrelating topics covered in this kit. The topics are divided into 4 sections, section A, B, C and D. Topic A provides an introduction into the Western Port area. Topic B focuses on shorebirds. Topic C centers on the wetland habitat of shorebirds. Topic D focuses on the conservation of shorebirds and wetlands. Throughout each section a number of words are underlined. Definitions of these underlined words are provided in a glossary located at the end of each section.



Structure of kit

Sections A-D contain the teacher's information on each of the topics. Section E contains the recommended activities that students can undertake to enhance their understanding of the topics. The appendix section lists the references utilised in the formation of this kit and outlines additional resources that teachers can use if desired.



The activity section

This section contains recommended activities that can be undertaken by students to facilitate effective learning on each of the topics. Activity sheets can be photocopied as required for handouts and there are plenty of ideas for interesting ways to incorporate the content into various programs for students. Included in this section is an 'activity checklist table' the purpose of this table is to keep track of the activities that the class has completed.



CD Power Point Presentation

This kit contains a CD power point presentation. The CD provides a variety of pictures and photos aimed at bringing to life the different topics covered. An outline of the CD power point presentation is provided in this handbook.



CD Power-Point presentation

Outline

Sections A to D of this education kit contain a number of pictures. All of these pictures have been put on the CD as a Power Point Presentation. This will bring to life the different topics covered for the students. The table below outlines the Power Point slides that relate to each section.

Section	Slides
Section A	2 – 5
Section B	6 – 9
Section C	10 – 12
Section D	13 – 15

