



Swan Region Snapshot

Focus on Swan Coastal District

Number 5

You have to live it and breath it

Penguin Island — Famous photographer misses out

What a pity Ansel Adams died in 1984. He missed the opportunity to capture Penguin Island.

"It is all very beautiful and magical here - a quality which cannot be described. You have to live it and breath it."

How apt for Penguin Island is his description of Yosemite. Think what he would have said about Penguin Island had he know of its existence. It is appropriate that the first national park is linked to one of Australia's most stunning world class parks.



Even during construction, island life continued.

Best practice

DEC's Penguin Island Conservation Park's new southern boardwalk is well and truly on the map.

This twelve month \$330,000 development was funded through DEC's Parks and Visitor Services capital works program and completed late last year. It completes the series of modern and safe promenades that direct some 90,000 visitors a year to walk around the island seeing birdlife, engaging with the beach and experiencing the pleasure of being in a pristine environment.

Stakeholders were also an important part of the development of this project and meetings were conducted with the local council, relevant commercial concerns and scientific researchers.

Photographers

top Kevin Crane Senior Marine Conservation officer
centre and lower: Terry Goodlich Senior Ranger



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future





DEC's teams deliver excellence

This cutting edge project was designed by Swan Coastal District Landscape Architect Sara Padgett in association with the Recreation and Landscape Unit, and built to an exacting standard by DEC employees from the Jarrahdale Works team.

The new boardwalk and lookout nestle into the swale of the landscape and curve around existing nesting sites. Unknowingly, visitors are directed to fascinating views of the bird sites with minimal chance of disturbing them. Glorious vistas of the sea, dunes and the mainland impress upon visitors the importance of the natural environment. This experience reinforces the promotion of environmental protection fostered by the Penguin Island Experience Discovery Centre.

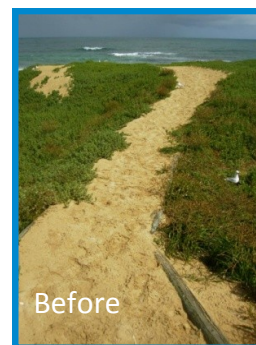
Design Mantra

“Does it provide the best protection of the environment?”

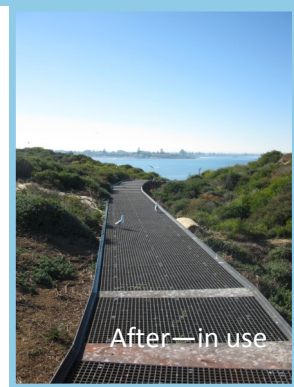
Although Penguin Island is such an important ecological area, it still has to serve around 90,000 people who visit the island when it is open from September to June. Ongoing environmental protection, management and conservation are imperative. This project was designed to dovetail with current practices and extend the long-term preservation of Penguin Island's unique situation within the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.



After



Before



After—in use

The boardwalk was designed primarily to protect the Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) and abundant seabirds, many of which are seldom seen on the mainland.

Not only has the boardwalk been constructed to have minimal environmental and visual impact, it also represents innovative design and use of the latest, durable materials.

New signage has been developed by DEC Design Studio. The colours flow from those in the environment so they do not disrupt the visual landscape. These new signs inform visitors of their responsibilities regarding the environment and remind them of their safety obligations.





The very latest



The boardwalk's grated decking, steps and kick rails are built of fibreglass reinforced plastic (FRP). The selection of this material meant jarrah was used mainly to enhance the design language of the already existing boardwalks on the island;

the sense of being in a natural environment as well as providing longevity to the structure as it is exposed to varying weather conditions all year round.

Stainless steel fixtures are used throughout the structure. The lookout's hand railing uprights and wire cabling are particularly thin (and made from stainless steel). These materials require less maintenance and almost disappear from view against the sky as visitors are gazing at the mesmerising views.

The transportation of the materials to the island was a matter of great discussion. Opinions were sought from experts and, although there were other environmental considerations, the least disturbance to the ecology of the site was the criterion for the decision. The helicopter option was chosen because the drop zone could be closer to the site and so there would be fewer disturbances to the environment. All 20 tonnes of materials were then hand carted in and up over the dunes to a central point.



As the southern lookout is somewhat higher than the previous track, better views of the island, the surrounding seascapes and the mainland have resulted. Sensational photo opportunities have been created.





Vigilance

Two Rangers, on a seven day roster, are responsible for the maintenance of island facilities, visitor liaison and research assistance where required. Officers at the Penguin Island Exploration Discovery Centre are rostered on every day the centre is open and are responsible for reinforcing environmental values through explaining penguin husbandry and providing interpretive talks and tours.

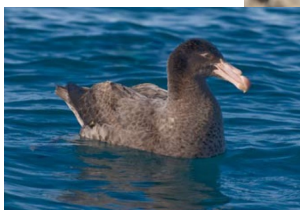
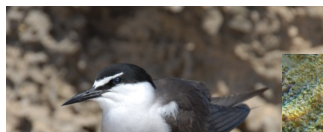
More to come

The updating of directional and safety signage offers the opportunity to develop an innovative logo.

Unwelcome visitors

DEC's Swan Region Urban Nature has developed a Weed Management and Restoration Plan for Penguin Island which aims to eradicate the exotic weeds and restore the rest of the plant community to a pristine condition. The herbicide control techniques will not impact on the native flora or fauna of the island.

Terry: Bridled tern



Leanne :Southern Petrel

Carolyn: Sea anemone



Is there no end to DEC officers' talents?

Sensational Photographs, too.

John Huisman, Flora Conservation & Herbarium Program,; Carolyn Thompson-Dans, Senior Project Officer; Leanne Thompson Office of the EPA; Terry Goodlich, Senior Ranger.

Where would the environment be without them?

2011 International Year of Volunteers

"It's a question of discipline," the little prince told me later on. "When you've finished washing and dressing each morning, you must tend your planet."

Volunteers and DEC employees have an ongoing program of planting and, where necessary, laying of jute matting to rehabilitate denuded areas. Seed collection is also undertaken from time to time.

One of DEC's PVS 10-11 priorities is:

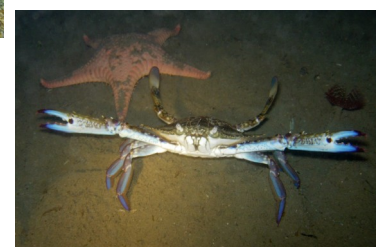
Community enjoyment of park facilities and services, wildlife and the natural environment displayed in parks.

Penguin Island? ☒

Visiting? Remember your mask and goggles



John:
Octopus
Sand dollar
Sea star
Blue-manna



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