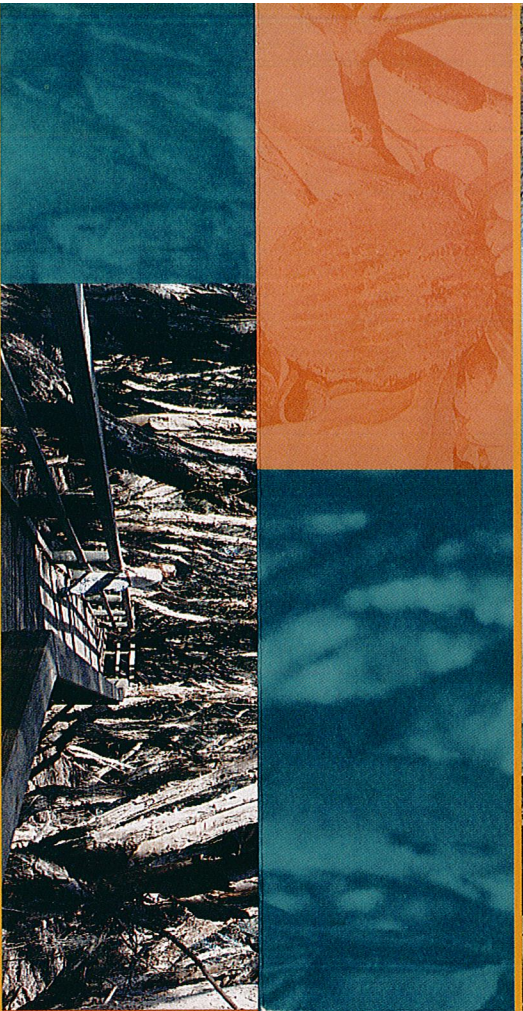




THE SPECTACLES WETLANDS



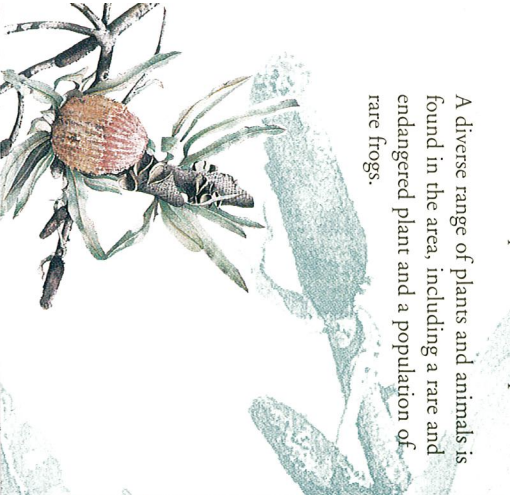
Introduction

Wetlands throughout the Swan Coastal Plain are becoming degraded as a result of the pressures of increased urbanisation, drainage inappropriate land use and, in many cases, a lack of awareness in the community of the value and delicate balance of the wetland ecosystem.

The Spectacles Wetlands - named because it comprises two wetlands joined by a drain, giving it the appearance of a pair of spectacles - is the most southern of the Beeljar chain of freshwater lakes on the Swan Coastal Plain.

It is the only wetland of its kind in the metropolitan area to have an extensive cover of paperbark trees. It is also one of the few breeding grounds for the Rufous Night Heron and for the Straw Necked Ibis. Two of more than 100 species of birds which frequent the swamps.

A diverse range of plants and animals is found in the area, including a rare and endangered plant and a population of rare frogs.



History

The 360 hectares of wetlands are located north-west of Kwinana, about 40kms south of Perth. The area was part of the original Peel Settlement Scheme.

However, the swamps in the centre of the land, and the infertile leached quartz sands which surround them, led to early settlers leaving the area. It was only after World War II that The Spectacles again attracted settlers.

In the 1970s the Industrial Lands Development Authority and Alcoa of Australia purchased the land for future industrial use. However, when the land was evaluated for residue disposal purposes, it became clear not only that the wetland nature of the property made it unsuitable for this particular industrial use, but that The Spectacles Wetlands area had high conservation value.



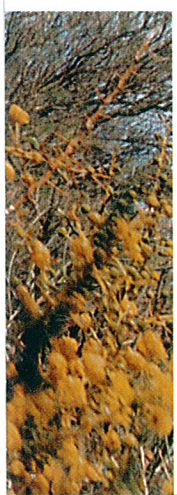
Background

By the early 1980s Alcoa had started to develop a management plan to restore and protect the wetlands. The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), The Town of Kwinana and the Wetlands Conservation Society provided additional advice. The result was a comprehensive plan encompassing the conservation, recreation and educational values of the area. Alcoa's Landcare Project committed \$250,000 to development of the concept.

The early 1990s saw the implementation of the initial steps of the plan, including two carparks, walktrails, information shelters and picnic areas. A boardwalk into the wetlands was constructed, with special birdhide to enable viewing of the many wonderful birds without disturbing them.

In 1997 the original plan was reviewed to keep up with the fast growing Kwinana region.

These changes, in conjunction with rehabilitation and promotional programs, will create an area the size of Kings Park, providing a similar environmental haven for future generations to enjoy.



Rehabilitation Areas

Some of the land surrounding The Spectacles Wetlands have been cleared, and introduced plants like veldt grass, cape weed and stinkweed have established and begun to invade the wetlands. An introduced species of pigface, favoured by the activities of horses and cattle, has led to further degradation. Topsoil and the seed store have been adversely affected and the rejuvenation of the original of the original plant species needs more than just the fencing of the area for rehabilitation to succeed.

With the community's help in regeneration and protection, it is hoped to increase the numbers of native animals that make their homes in The Spectacles Wetlands.

Remember

Be Careful...

Tread softly and stay on the tracks. Your enjoyment and safety is our concern but your responsibility.

Be Clean...

Please take your litter with you when you leave.

Be Cool...

Don't light fires. The animals and plants of The Spectacles Wetlands are particularly vulnerable to fire.

Be Wise...

Leave this natural environment as you find it for all to enjoy. Please don't pick the wildflowers.

Protect Wildlife...

No firearms or pets are permitted in The Spectacles Wetlands.



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1 Fringing Paper Bark Woodland

Ducks, like the rare endangered Freckled Duck, use the upturned roots of the fallen paperbarks as nesting sites. While most of the area is underwater at times, for much of the year it is easy to walk over the spongy green vegetation carpet under the paperbarks.

This woodland is a good place to watch birds nesting or feeding and see uncommon bandicoots or some of the many reptiles.

2 Open Water

The Spectacles has only a small area of open water, the largest being in the smaller of the two 'eyes'. The open water of the large 'eye' is fragmented, with much of the remainder being inaccessible, making it suitable for the nesting and roosting of birds like the Rufous Night Heron. This feature adds to the conservation value of the wetlands.

Gilgies, water beetles and other aquatic insects, as well as native and introduced fish, form the diet of the water birds.

--- Existing Pathways

--- Proposed Pathways



Ankerell Road



Thomas Road

Spectacles Drive (formerly Johnson Road)

Kwinana Freeway

To Kwinana
Miazak

3 The Reed Beds

Extensive reed beds fringe the limited areas of open water of the large and small 'eyes'. They make access to the water difficult, but serve as screens for birds like the secretive crakes and rails, and nesting sites for a variety of the large number of birds that feed or nest in The Spectacles Wetlands.

Tiger snakes, legless lizards, swamp skinks and long-necked tortoises also frequent the reed beds.

4 Banksia Woodland

The banksia woodland, covering an area of about 100 hectares to the south-west of the large 'eye', is rich in plant species. Jarrah, tuart, banksia and she-oak, along with orchids and kangaroo paws are among the 86 plant species you will discover in this area. Few sites in the southern metropolitan area have such a rich and diverse number of plants.

The vegetation provides habitats and serves as breeding grounds for many different species of animals including brush-tailed possums, reptiles and amphibians and a huge variety of land and water birds. Introduced species like foxes, cats and rabbits are a threat to native species and have caused considerable damage. Trail bikes, horses, fires and wood collection have also had an adverse effect on the area.

