



penguinparade
phillip island



thenobbies
phillip island

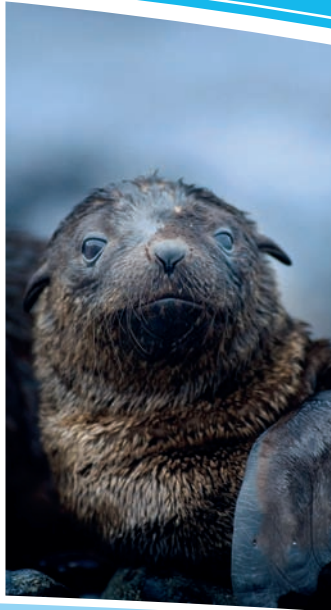


koalas
phillip island



churchillisland
heritage farm & functions

annual report 2007/2008



phillipisland
nature parks

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*Full financial statements available on request.
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

This has been another successful and satisfying year for the Nature Park. We completed the construction of our new Research, Environment and Education Centres which will provide world class facilities for our staff for the next 20 years. It will also enable them to continue their valuable research and conservation efforts to protect the natural habitat and wildlife of Phillip Island.

In accordance with the FMA 1994, I am pleased to present the Report of Operations for the year ending 30 June 2008.

Over 49,000 visitors participated in educational tours and activities which promote a greater understanding of, and empathy for, the natural environment so it is protected for future generations to enjoy.

One of the highlights for the year was winning the Victorian State Tourism Award for Ecotourism for the second year running, while also finishing runner up in both the Major Tourist Attraction and Education and Training categories.

The 2007/08 year was also very successful financially with record visitor numbers at all of our attractions. This was despite difficult circumstances in many of our visitor markets.

Our fox eradication program continued with a record 79 foxes destroyed this financial year. Feral and roaming domestic cats continued to be a threat to Phillip Island's native wildlife and 103 feral cats were removed from key areas of the Nature Park. This is the highest number of feral cats ever removed in a financial year.

I am pleased to advise that, as at 30 June this year, the Nature Park increased staff numbers from 207 to 209 employees, providing opportunities for many locals. We also continued to support local businesses and organisations such as Phillip Island Tourism Association and the marketing organisation, Destination Phillip Island.

It was also pleasing that the State Government announced finalisation of the buyback program on the Summerland Peninsula which is expected to be complete by June 2010. Sales of houses and land are proceeding and the Nature Park is revegetating penguin habitat gradually.

I thank my fellow Board Members for their counsel, time, expertise and dedication. They have all played critical roles 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

We are pleased to report a total of 707,837 paying visitors to the Nature Park attractions in 2007/08. This continues the upward trend and is an increase of 19,000 visitors from the previous year. Some 350,000 people also visited the new Nobbies Centre during its first year of operations, which equates to 1.057 million visitors in total.

If we exclude the additional depreciation charges resulting from the Nobbies Centre, the net operational profit from last year has in fact increased. This is a terrific result despite the many current challenges facing the tourism industry.

The new Nobbies Centre has been open for just over a year and it has been very challenging to integrate it with other Nature Park attractions in a coordinated approach. Visitor data obtained this year will give us a track record and help us to continue to meet visitors' needs from all nationalities whilst generating sufficient funds to be a net contributor to conservation initiatives across Phillip Island.



We continued our commitment to environmental sustainability through our ongoing partnership with the National Centre for Sustainability at Swinburne University. This involved development of key action plans and timelines and implementation of policies, practices and procedures to ensure we make a positive difference to our environment in the future.

A major highlight of the year was completing new facilities for our Research and Environment teams culminating in the official opening by the Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC, Minister for Environment and Climate Change. These 'purpose built' facilities have been funded entirely by the Nature Park and were designed to cater for our needs for the next 20 years. In addition, there are new undercover facilities for Education and school groups as well as meeting rooms for community and staff.

For the first time, we hosted a Chinese Amway incentive group of nearly 7,000 visitors. This was the second largest incentive group ever to visit Victoria and required substantial planning and logistics. Whilst they visited some other Victorian sites, they overwhelmingly voted Phillip Island as their favourite location. Thanks go to the many local service providers and community members who made this event such a success.

There is no doubt that the Tourism industry is headed for a very difficult time in the next 12 months, with the price of petrol and inflation generally. Many countries are in recession and of course the forthcoming Beijing Olympics will not encourage travel at that time. We will need to remain vigilant in our approach and continue to maintain the balance between promoting our commercial activities, whilst ensuring the ongoing conservation and environmental needs are met so what visitors have come to enjoy is not destroyed.

In the coming year, we will complete the relocation of the Administration team to the new Research/Environment precinct which will then allow us to focus on necessary repairs and planning for a much needed upgrade of the Penguin Parade building and attraction. It has served us well, however it is now over 20 years old and it lives in a very harsh coastal environment. It is becoming increasingly competitive to attract both domestic and international visitors as they are becoming much more sophisticated and their expectations are high and they demand value for money with their experiences requiring, modern facilities, attractions and technology.

There are many more achievements detailed in this report that we can be proud of. None of these would have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our staff, Management team, Board of Management and our 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Manteit".

Mr Mark Manteit, Chief Executive Officer

organisational structure

Department of Sustainability & Environment	Board of Management		Statutory and Advisory Committees
	Chief Executive Officer	Mark Manteit	Executive Assistant
	Operations Manager	Terry Robinson	Security Retail and Food & Beverage Managers Photography Unit Ticketing
	Financial Controller	Lyndal McKenzie	Assistant Accountant Accounts IT/Systems Insurance
	Human Resources Manager	Heather Goldberg	OH&S Officer Payroll Officer HR Administration
	Environment Manager	Richard Dakin	Senior Environment Coordinator Senior Rangers, Rangers & Gate Rangers Feral Animal & Weed Control Revegetation Fox Manager & Fox Officer Animal Rehabilitation Officer & Staff
	Research Manager	Dr Peter Dann	Research Biologists, Research Assistants, Visiting Researchers & Postgraduate Students
	Education Manager	Bridget Cornish	Education Officer Education Rangers Information Officer Parade Rangers Trainees/Apprentices
	Sales & Marketing Manager	MJ Deng	Communications Manager Marketing & Promotions Executive Marketing Assistants Functions & Events Coordinator Penguin Foundation Officer
	Food & Beverage Manager	Aimee MacCartney	Food & Beverage Supervisors Chefs & Catering Functions Sales & Service
	Retail Manager	Rick Pinsent	Retail Supervisors Sales & Service
	Ground Services Manager	Drew Smeath	Construction Projects Supervisor Works Yard Supervisor Ground Services Staff & Cleaners

introduction nature park profile

We care for over 1,805 hectares across Phillip Island

Phillip Island Nature Park (the Nature Park) is the renowned home of Australia's most popular natural wildlife attraction – the Penguin Parade.

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 appointed by the Minister responsible for the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. During the reporting period, the Hon. Justin Madden MLC, from 1 July 2007 to 2 August 2007 and then the Hon. Minister Gavin Jennings MLC, from 3 August 2007 to 30 June 2008 were the Ministers for Planning, Environment and Climate Change.

An easy 90 minute drive from Melbourne, the Nature Park features unique wildlife and spectacular scenery

It is an island adventure with flora and fauna reserves, wetlands and breathtaking coastal scenery. We acknowledge that the Nature Park is part of the traditional lands of the Bunurong Aboriginal people.

The Nature Park is self-funding from revenue from its four main visitor venues; Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre, Churchill Island and the Nobbies Centre. In 2007/08, the Nature Park welcomed 707,837 paying visitors from around the world and a further 350,000 people visited the Nobbies Centre where entry is free. All profits generated by these main attractions are reinvested into research, conservation, environmental and educational initiatives on Phillip Island.

The Nature Park is Phillip Island's largest employer with a team of 209 people in 2007/08 made up of 79 full-time and 130 part-time positions including 24 trainees.



management

our management team

Under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer, the Management Team is responsible for the day to day operations of the Nature Park.

Members of the Management Team during 2007-08 were

Chief Executive Officer - Mark Manteit

Operations Manager - Terry Robinson

Financial Controller - Lyndal McKenzie

Human Resources Manager - Heather Goldberg

Research Manager - Dr Peter Dann

Marketing Manager - Nicole Hill, MJ Deng

Environment Manager - Richard Dakin

Education Manager - Bridget Cornish

Communications Manager - Sally O'Neill, Ultan O'Dwyer

Retail Manager - Rick Pinsent

Food and Beverage Manager - Shane Herbert, Aimee Macartney

Ground Services Manager - Drew Smeath

our board of management

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)

Board Member Attendance:

The Board met monthly to establish policies and strategic directions. Its members were appointed by the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Justin Madden MLC. For the period between July 2007 and June 2008 (inclusive), there were 11 Board meetings.

Stella Axarlis attended 11 of 11; David Beatty attended 9 of 11; Dr Kath Handasyde attended 6 of 11; Christine Wardle attended 10 of 10 (newly appointed on 24 August 2007); Ian Baker attended 8 of 10 (newly appointed on 24 August 2007); Michael Gatehouse attended 4 of 5 (newly appointed on 22 February 2008); Jason Perry attended 8 of 11.

Our management plan describes 386 actions across all aspects of the Nature Park



David Beatty (Chair)



Dr Kath Handasyde



Ian Baker



Michael Gatehouse



Stella Axarlis



Christine Wardle



Jason Perry

planning background



strategic planning

The Nature Park Strategic Plan 2006-2011 is the 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 actions across all aspects of the Nature Park. Detailed business plans are prepared for all divisions on an annual basis.

nature park mission

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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 - honouring 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 2006, the Nature Park contracted the National Centre for Sustainability (NSC) at Swinburne University to assist with creating and implementing a fully integrated sustainability framework across all areas of the organisation. Consultation sessions were held with all staff and managers to begin the process of implementing key performance indicators and developing action plans after determining the Nature Park's carbon footprint.

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

- Separate bins at all locations for recyclable and non-recyclable items.
- The latest AAAA rated flushing toilets installed at all amenities not previously upgraded making all toilets water-efficient.
- The design of the Nobbies Centre building incorporated best practice in sustainability principles where practical.
- Sustainability principles were applied to the building of the new Environment/Research facility including rain water tanks, solar hot water, passive solar design, sustainable materials and extra insulation.

The Nature Park continued its programs and commitment to:

- Sponsor local events held on Phillip Island.
- Support and sponsor many local community groups including Landcare.
- Develop and maintain walking and cycling tracks, car parks, toilet and picnic facilities in non fee-paying areas across Phillip Island for Phillip Island residents and visitors.

Sustainable future

- The roll out of sustainability action plans within the organisation was undertaken in partnership with the National Centre of Sustainability.
- The Nature Park strongly supports the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere and is represented on the local roundtable and shares information to assist the project.
- Involvement 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 Sustainability Centre at the Koala Conservation Centre (KCC).

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 continuously undertake risk management inspections and address issues as identified. We also conduct independent Risk Management Studies at three-year intervals.

We further developed a Risk Management Framework for the Nature Park in accordance with the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework.

This resulted 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:

- Complete independent audit review of risk and implementation of new strategies.
- Independent engineer's review of structural integrity of Penguin Parade building.
- A 'Safety Systems Manual' was actively monitored for all precincts and staff to ensure 'Health and Safety' responsibilities, policies and procedures were followed.
- Emergency management plans for all precincts and staff have been updated to ensure compliance to relevant standards.
- Further security upgrades have been completed at all precincts including further expansion of alarm systems, CCTV surveillance and improved security lighting in all work areas and visitor centres.
- Further security upgrades have been rolled out in all areas including fleet, shipping containers and work areas.
- Risk Assessments were completed for a number of Nature Park conservation activities, locations and events.
- A security guard was contracted to manage cash transfers ensuring staff no longer have the responsibility of carrying cash in vehicles.

tracks and boardwalks

Capital works were undertaken to improve safety, provide amenities and protect natural resources. Tracks and boardwalks underwent regular assessment and were audited for safety. All boardwalks are now constructed from ACQ Nature Wood pine, or Cypress Pine rather than Copper Chromium Arsenic (CCA) treated pine. The following improvements/upgrades were completed:

- Improved beach access at Shelly Beach, Summerland Peninsula.
- Upgrade of 3.5km of Nobbies boardwalks.

ecotourism

The Nature Park maintained its Advanced Ecotourism 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. The products and tours which have advanced ecotourism certification are:

- Penguin Parade
- Private Penguin Parade Experiences
- Penguin Sky Box
- Penguins Plus Viewing Platform
- Penguin Eco Explorer
- Ultimate Penguin Tour
- Phillip Island Nature Parks Activities Program
- Phillip Island Nature Parks Education Program
- Koala Conservation Centre Ranger Guided Walk
- Koala Conservation Centre
- Churchill Island - Heritage Farm & Functions
- Churchill Island - Heritage Farm & Functions Ranger Tour



conservation

We completed our new Research, Environment and Education Centres

management plan

We continued to follow and carry out the many actions from the Management Plan (2006-11). A key component was bringing together all the latest information on natural resources and using the latest technology available to maximise our resources and outcomes for the environment.

habitat

The Nature Park contracted Australian Ecosystems to prepare a Management Plan for Ventnor Koala Reserve. This will include aspects of weed control, staged removal of planted natives and vegetation management for koalas.

summerland estate

The Department of Sustainability and Environment is committed to completing the buyback of privately owned houses and vacant lots by June 2010. During the year, four houses and one vacant lot were acquired leaving 18 houses and 18 vacant lots still remaining in the estate. Weed control and habitat restoration is ongoing throughout the Summerland Estate together with the decommissioning of power lines as they become redundant.

revegetation

Key projects over the year included penguin habitat rehabilitation in the Summerland Estate and at the Penguin Parade. Other notable projects included island-wide Moonah re-establishment, South Point revegetation at Churchill Island, Crooks Plantation and other extensive revegetation works at the KCC.

Much of this work would not have been possible without the great support of International Student Volunteers, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Schools, Friends and Coast Action Groups.

- Over 24,000 plants were used in over 22 revegetation projects across the entire Nature Park.
- Approx 16,500 plants were propagated in the Nature Park's nursery.
- Ten kilograms of native seed was collected by volunteers.

wetlands and waterways

During November a flora survey of Nature Park wetlands was undertaken by Australian Ecosystems consultants and the report was finalised in March. It highlighted six threatened plant species, one state and seven bioregionally threatened

vegetation communities. Botanists were engaged to provide recommendations on protection of rare plants and threatened ecological vegetation communities.

Melbourne Water organised a frog survey undertaken by Ecology Partners consultants. They located a Growling Grass Frog (listed as threatened in Victoria under the FFG Act and listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act) at Swan Lake in early March.

Melbourne Water, in partnership with the Nature Park, organised weed control work in four waterways which was undertaken by Southern Environmental contractors.

There has been much work undertaken at Fisher's Wetland with funding provided by Envirofund Round 9. This included control of tall wheat grass through slashing, burning and spraying. Also there was spraying of Water Couch and Kikuyu. Green Corps assisted in fencing for future planting works.

A grant from Melbourne Water assisted with control of weeds in the Rhyll and Rowell wetlands.

A Water Watch water quality test kit was purchased to commence monthly water monitoring. Frog monitoring will be undertaken at the same time.

pest plants

The Nature Park has 209 listed weeds. This includes five 'Weeds of National Significance' and 27 'Declared Noxious Weeds'. The remainder are environmental and agricultural weeds. Ranger staff, contractors, Green Corps, volunteers and school groups completed 2054 hours of weed control activity on 42 species.

Weeds of national significance targeted were Bridal Creeper, Gorse, Chilean Needle Grass, Boneseed and Blackberry. New and emerging weeds such as Tall Wheat Grass, Stinkwort, and Kunzia, were controlled at all known locations. High priority established weeds (many of which are garden escapees) were contained e.g. Kikuyu, Buffalo Grass, Blue Periwinkle, Agapanthus, Asparagus Fern, and agricultural weeds such as Thistles, Ragwort, Gorse, Phalaris and Apple of Sodom. Ongoing projects included: Boxthorn follow up and removal at Cape Woolamai, Surf Beach and Summerland Peninsula. The removal of Sea Spurge has been very successful. Less than half the 107 hours spent on controlling this species was on regrowth in old infestations. A new infestation was located in the tertiary dunes at Cape Woolamai and was removed. Sea Spurge competes with dune vegetation and is detrimental to Hooded Plover and Short-tailed Shearwater breeding areas as well as threatening endangered plant species due to its dense habitat.

An Envirofund Round 9 Grant was used to protect rare or threatened vegetation and wetland values at Fishers Wetland from Tall Wheat Grass, and at Green Lake and Swan Lake from Kikuyu and Phalaris. Ecological burns were undertaken in

summer/autumn then followed up with contractor spraying. A Melbourne Water grant is being used to control Bridal Creeper in Rhyll Swamp and Rowell Wetland. As part of this project, staff and volunteers are removing a large infestation of Pittosporum. Staff attended a community meeting to organise the island wide distribution of the rust fungus biological control for Bridal Creeper to aid the long term control of this weed. The Park was also successful in obtaining a Good Neighbour grant to follow up with Gorse control between Pyramid Rock and Sunderland Bay.

Weed mapping and monitoring continued and a herbarium was started that will be an invaluable record of both native plants and weed species.

pest animals

foxes

An individual fox demonstrated the multiple killing behaviour of this species in May 2008. It killed 28 penguins in a single night. Foxes remain the most significant terrestrial threat to Little Penguins. Rangers successfully developed and licensed the Nature Park's own Red Fox Eco-bait, a liver based 1080 bait. Rangers extended the island-wide baiting program by baiting more frequently over a longer period. 1080 baiting accounted for almost twice the number of foxes killed as all other methods combined this year.

Researchers and Rangers continued to monitor fox biology, signs and sightings to enable effective control of their detrimental effects throughout the year.

The Nature Park's DNA research program with Invasive Animals, CRC and University of Western Australia has genotyped 200 fox samples from Phillip Island and the adjacent mainland. A further 300 samples remain, however preliminary analysis indicates that foxes from Phillip Island have significantly less genetic variation than mainland foxes. These results indicate that:

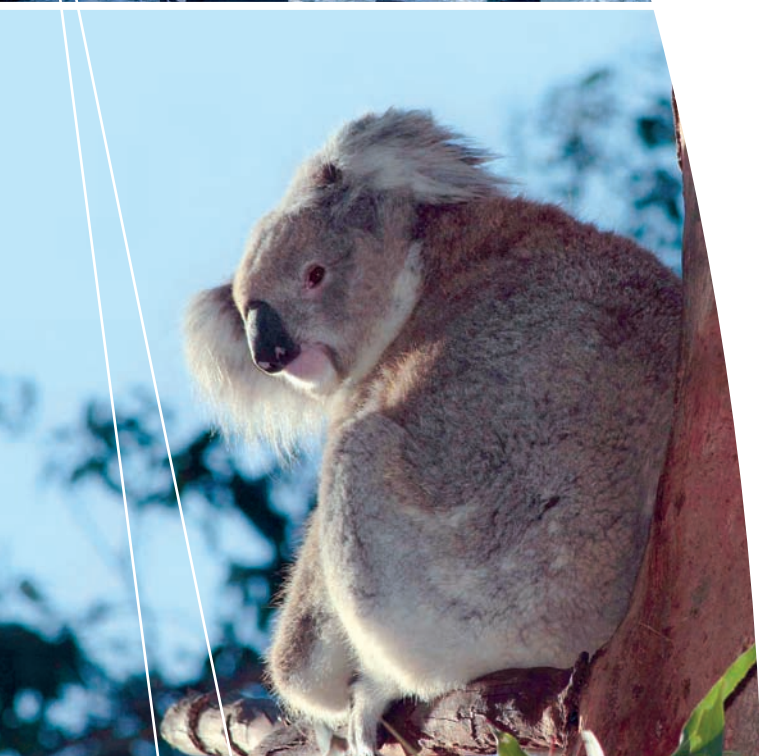
1. Phillip Island foxes are very isolated from mainland populations.
2. The population is small.
3. Recent immigrants would be easily recognised in the sample.

This work will help the Nature Park to estimate the numbers of foxes on Phillip Island based on the phenomenon known as 'genetic drift' which is detectable from analysis of the DNA results.

We are also working closely with the Tasmanian fox program, especially in the use of their scat collection sniffer dogs and project techniques to monitor foxes using scat collection techniques. This extensive and costly expertise developed by the Tasmanian fox program, Invasive Animals CRC and Bristol University, UK, will be used this breeding season on Phillip Island. The scat detector dogs will help find fox dens. We will also use the scat data collection protocols to help assess the fox population on Phillip Island.



conservation continued



feral and roaming cats

Feral and roaming domestic cats are a constant threat to Phillip Island's native wildlife. In the past year, 103 feral cats (including 78 from April to June), were removed from key areas of the Nature Park, including important breeding areas for Little Penguins, Short-tailed Shearwaters and Hooded Plovers. This is the highest number of feral cats ever removed from the Nature Park in a financial year.

rabbits

A broad scale rabbit control program based on Pindone oat baiting was initiated in partnership with landowners and Landcare for eastern Phillip Island. A fence was constructed to limit migration of rabbits from east to west Phillip Island. Other harbour removal, warren fumigation and destruction continued in the Cape Woolamai and Newhaven area.

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 in plague numbers at Newhaven / Churchill Island salt marshes. Common (Indian) Myna trapping commenced during the year to help protect tree hollows for native birds. Feral Bee removal continued at wetland bird nesting boxes.

infringement notices

Over thirty Infringement Notices were issued over the Christmas to Easter period as rangers enforced Nature Park regulations to protect the natural environment.

emergency management

There was one small oil spill on Summerland Beach to Berrys Beach on 2 February. Clean up took less than a day. This is consistent with previous years.

Two visitors were washed off the rocks and drowned from the Summerland Peninsula near the Nobbies. More signage has been installed to help prevent future tragedies and rescue equipment has been purchased.

wildlife rehabilitation

Highlights of the year in wildlife rehabilitation included:

- The successful establishment of a community Wildlife Rescue and Transport Group.
- Only six Little Penguins were treated for oil contamination during the year which is consistent with the last three years.

- The successful rehabilitation and release of a Northern Giant Petrel (listed as threatened in Victoria under the FFG Act and is nationally listed as vulnerable by the EPBC Act).

In total, 140 Little Penguins were treated in the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre. Of these, 116 (83%) were adults, 9 (6%) were juveniles and 15 (11%) were chicks. The main causes for admittance were starvation (39%), serious injuries (16%) and heat stress (11%). These are all relatively common occurrences at certain times of the year and consistent with previous years.

A total of 366 animals other than penguins were also treated in the facility. Seven Pacific Gulls were admitted for fishing hooks and/or line injuries this year.

Only three Koalas were admitted to the Koala Conservation Centre's Rehabilitation Facility.

Of the 152 Short-tailed Shearwaters admitted, 131 were admitted within a three week window in late April, early May during the fledging period. This number is significantly higher than other years. Seventy per cent of these young birds were successfully released with good weight gains recorded in a short time. Rehabilitation Centre staff have been trialing new methods for these birds and they have proved extremely successful.

The program to minimise the risk to penguins nesting in the public bus and car parks at the Penguin Parade continued. A total of 194 relocations were carried out on 62 adults during September and October.

Most 'new' adults were successfully relocated and did not breed in the car park. Nine of the 14 active burrows identified in the car parks produced chicks. The 17 chicks were hand raised for the last two weeks before fledging and released from a safe area within the Penguin Parade. The Nature Park has a 25 year plan to phase out breeding in this area.

significant species

hooded plovers

This year there were 34 Hooded Plover nests, 76 eggs and 17 chicks, of which four fledged. Nest records were kept for all sites and all chicks were banded and colour leg flagged. Fledging was from the isolated beaches of the western half of the island; one each from Summerland Beach and Woolshed Bight, and two from Hutchison Beach.

There were fourteen breeding pairs that nested on twelve beaches. An average of 0.29 chicks fledged per pair which is low. However, the fledging success has increased when looked at in the five year comparisons table. Preventable nest losses have traditionally been from dogs, foxes, stock and crushing. Many of these issues have been addressed through management actions, however this season over half (59%), were lost to unknown

predation, a few were predated by ravens and only 12% were lost to windblown sand or high tides. Foxes appear to have had less of a role than in the past, however we could not account for ten of the chicks. Because of this, the future focus of Hooded Plover management on Phillip Island will involve keeping up pressure on pest plants and animals, using more chick shelters and identifying the causes of unidentified predation.

'Hooded Plover Watch' volunteers spent 110 hours monitoring nests and chicks over the summer. This does not account for extra time spent monitoring breeding activity. Volunteers often alerted staff to management issues and breeding activity. They picked up hazardous rubbish, such as fishing line, and looked after nesting habitat. There were dedicated ranger patrols from January to March targeting breeding beaches. Staff and volunteers were again involved in four island-wide Hooded Plover/Gull Counts.

	1st five seasons 1992 - 1997	2nd five seasons 1997 - 2002	3rd five seasons 2002 - 2007
number of clutches	74	87	164
% eggs hatched	20 %	32 %	23.5 %
number fledged	13	29	35
fledged per clutch	0.18	0.33	0.21

Table 1: Hooded Plover Breeding - Five year comparison

koala conservation

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

Six koalas were conceived and born in the KCC bringing the overall population to 40 at the end of the year. The annual health check of KCC koalas involved collection of data on growth and fertility, and some animals were target tested for Chlamydia. Stress testing of a sample group of koalas was also carried out.

Staff received 42 reports of wild koalas from the public throughout the year. Six injured wild koalas were received at the KCC. Two were successfully treated and released, while four needed to be euthanased (one of which had a pouch young). In addition, four koalas were relocated to safer locations.

During 2007/08, another holding pen was added to the facilities at the KCC. A permit was successfully received from DSE for the collection of two young male koalas which will enhance the genetic diversity of KCC koalas.

conservation continued

capital works

The Nature Park Ground Services department completed the major project of constructing three environmentally sensitive designed 'pods' or facilities to house the Research and Environment departments. These facilities were officially opened by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, The Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC, on 10 May.

The beach access at Shelly beach was also upgraded to a raised boardwalk and the Nobbies boardwalk was upgraded for visitor safety. A new all-access Penguin Skybox was also built for the comfort of our visitors.

volunteer accommodation

During 2007/08 there were 1041 volunteer nights spent in the Volunteer Accommodation Centre. These facilities enable substantial conservation works to be carried out across the Nature Park.

planning

Fifteen planning applications for developments on properties abutting the Nature Park were reviewed for Bass Coast Shire Council (BCSC). One ten-day Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal hearing regarding an appeal against the BCSC refusal for a permit to build a hotel and golf course was attended. The appeal was denied. Comments were made on five amendments to the BCSC planning scheme including: Healthy by Design, Heritage Overlay and Environment Significance Overlay. Input to the BCSC Vision and Planning Reviews for townships on the island was also made.

grants

Successful grant applications were made to:

- Envirofund Round 9: 'The rehabilitation of four wetlands in the Nature Park' \$36,954.55.
- Melbourne Water: 'Protection of the Biodiversity of Rhyll and Rowell Wetlands'. \$20,000.
- Bush Guardians: 'Protection of Swamp Scrub and Plains Grassy Woodland and VROT species in the Ventnor Koala Reserve, Phillip Island Nature Park, Victoria'. \$14,300.
- Good Neighbour Grant: 'Phillip Island Integrated Gorse Management'. \$9,450.

biosphere reserve

The 'Bass Coast Roundtable' of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve meets locally to discuss sustainability issues relating to the reserve. The Nature Park has been supportive from the beginning and has a staff representative who attends meetings six times per year.

The roundtable is involved in a number of local projects such as the proposed 'Sustainability Centre' at the Koala Conservation Centre. The roundtable initiated the 'Bass Coast Business Sustainability Program' to accredit 'green' businesses. It will also aim to widen the terms of reference of the Shire's upcoming review of the municipal bicycle strategy beyond safety and infrastructure to include biodiversity, sustainability, and education/interpretation aspects. The group has been working with other community groups on climate change and other initiatives.

The Biosphere Reserve produces a newsletter and projects include: Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery, support for the Western Port Seagrass Partnership, energy/greenhouse study (including 'net balance'), a database of reference material, an inventory of biodiversity, modelling scenarios for key species including consideration of global climate change and human land use. Also, indicators that will measure progress towards environmentally sustainable development, a sustainability accreditation scheme, a review of the Shapiro Study, and social research relating to sustainability are being developed. The Nature Park has a partnership role in the success of these programs.

cultural values

indigenous heritage

The Nature Park acknowledges and respects the traditional owners, the Bunurong people.

All construction and earth removal works are assessed for cultural heritage management plans via the Aboriginal Affairs online tools. Liaison continues with the two Aboriginal corporations who have made claims for Cultural Heritage on Phillip Island.

european heritage

In partnership with the Phillip Island & District Historical Society, five 'story board' interpretive signs were installed in key heritage areas within the Nature Park and the Churchill Island collection was managed.

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.
- Penguin habitat rehabilitation days with Toyota and Streets.
- Work with Landcare on pest plants/animals, wildlife corridor, Urban Landcare and Salinity mapping and management.
- International Student Volunteers (ISV) and Conservation Volunteers Australia contributed approximately seven weeks of plant propagation, weed control, revegetation and habitat rehabilitation.
- A Green Corps team assisted the Nature Park, BCSC and Landcare with conservation projects from May to October 2008.
- Practical placement tertiary students from Holmesglen Tafe, RMIT Tafe and other tertiary institutions undertook approximately eight weeks cat trapping and weed removal works.
- A total of 14 conservation working days with various Coast Action Groups, Friends of Koalas, Friends of Churchill Island, Cape Woolamai Surf Life Saving Club, and Western Port Biosphere Reserve.

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

events

During the year the Nature Park hosted the following events:

- Two Chill Island Music Festivals
- Churchill Island Working Horse Festival
- Garden Lovers Festival, Churchill Island
- Amway and GZL events at Churchill Island.



research

The main research directions for the year included projects on:

- The foraging ecology of penguins at Phillip, Rabbit and Notch Islands and St Kilda.
- The attendance patterns of penguins.
- Further development of technology to clean oiled seabirds.
- Diving and satellite tracking of juvenile Australian fur seals.
- Commencement of studies of penguin and seal diets based on DNA in the scat.
- Commencement of a study on seal diseases.

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 to consider the external research review and the research program and budget for the coming year. The team acknowledges their generous major sponsors, BHP Billiton, Toyota, the Penguin Foundation and the Australian Centre for Applied Marine Mammal Science.

highlights

6th international penguin conference

Staff attended the 6th International Penguin Conference in Hobart from the 3-7 September where current penguin research from around the world was showcased. Nature Park staff and students made a substantial contribution to the conference, with 12 oral presentations, nine posters and chairing five workshops. This was by far the biggest contribution by any research institute.

australian fur seal pup census

A count of live Australian fur seal pup numbers at all breeding colonies, including Seal Rocks, was conducted this year. The Nature Park managed the project which was a collaboration between researchers from the Nature Park, Deakin University, Tasmanian Government, Parks Victoria and DSE. Results indicated an overall increase in pup numbers since the last all-island count. Approximately 19,800 live pups were recorded in 2002/03 compared to 21,400 recorded this year. Seal Rocks came out as the biggest colony, with 5,628 pups, representing 26% of the total for the species.

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 collaborations

with universities and other research institutions, supervision of students, provision of lectures to university departments, public and conference presentations, and the production of theses, reports and research papers. A full listing of these for 2007/08 is provided in the Publications List.

Significantly, eight papers and three theses were prepared on the diving behaviour and attendance patterns of Little Penguins. One study showed that flipper bands increase the diving effort of the penguins and another demonstrated that penguins increase their feeding rate when foraging further from the colony during incubation. We investigated the degree to which females ingest shell grit to supplement calcium intake during egg formation, and group associations during beach crossings. Also a study found that penguins tend to form non-random groups when crossing the beach in years of high breeding success. A 3D study of the foraging behaviour of penguins from St Kilda also showed where they forage within Port Phillip Bay. Most of these studies were in collaboration with Australian universities and research institutes from overseas.

marine ecology of little penguins

breeding ecology

For the past three years, the average annual number of birds crossing the beach at the Penguin Parade has been higher than the long term average of about 550. The averages have been 650 in 2005/06, 636 in 2006/07 and 636 again in 2007/08. It appears to have been a very successful breeding year for our Little Penguins at the Summerland precinct, see Figure 1.

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), see Figure 2.

Breeding success was examined at six study sites around the Summerland Peninsula and 1.09 chicks fledged per pair which was just above the long-term average of 0.95. The average laying date of the first clutch was 28 October, almost three weeks after the long term average of 6 October. Chicks weighed 1020gm on average, just prior to fledging, which is 100gm (10%) more than the average of 917gm for the last 39 years, see Figure 3.

new discoveries

For years, penguins have been observed eating shell grit on the beach but no study has investigated this behaviour. As part of an honours project, we examined the role of shell grit ingestion on the breeding of Little Penguins. Mostly, females eat shell grit

research results

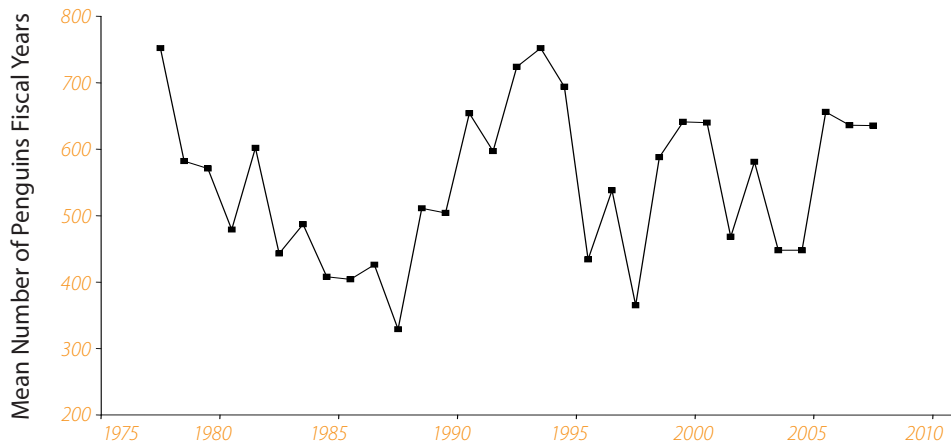


Figure 1: Annual mean numbers of Penguins crossing Summerland Beach at the Penguin Parade, July 1977 - June 2008

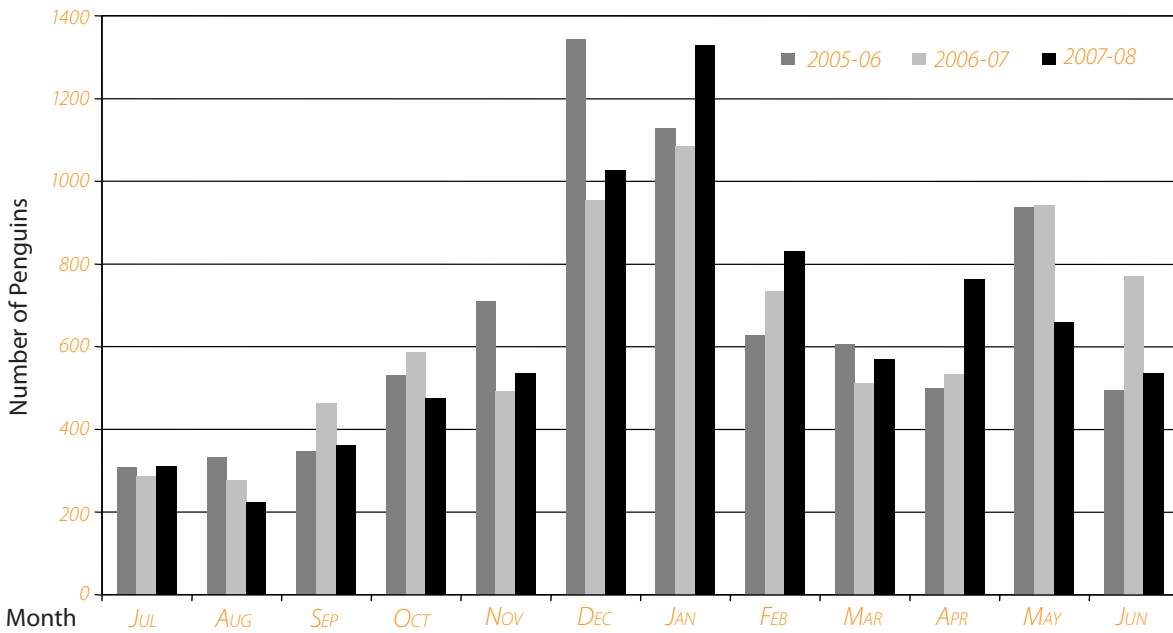


Figure 2: A monthly comparison of Penguin Parade beach counts over the past 3 years

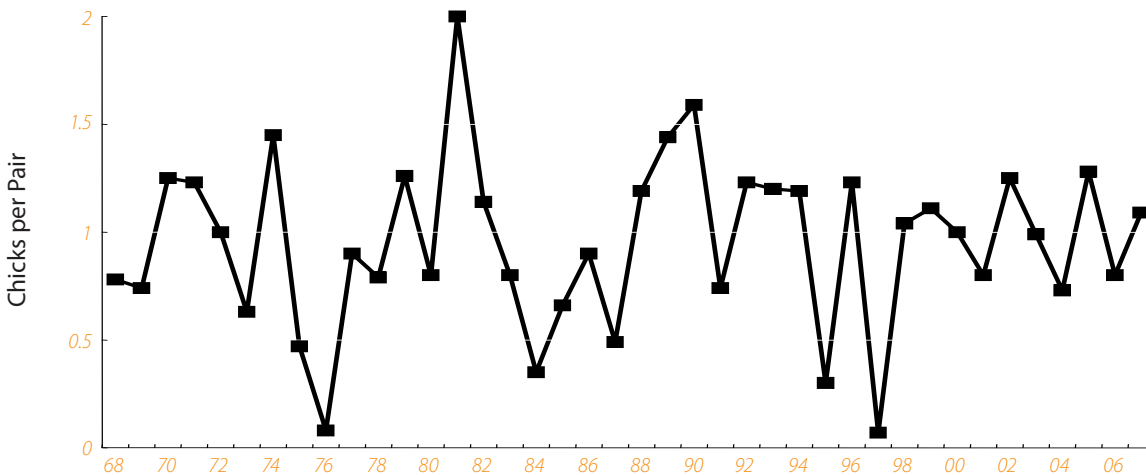


Figure 3: The mean number of Chicks produced per pair of penguins between 1968-69 and 2007-08

research continued

during visits to the beach just before egg-laying. Measurement of calcium content and egg thickness suggested that calcium in the shell grit helps to strengthen the eggs, rather than assist embryo development.

grouping to cross the beach

Novel research on beach crossing behaviour of Little Penguins was published in the prestigious journal, *Animal Behaviour*. The study, part of an honours project, reported that Little Penguins are likely to cross the beach in groups that include the same birds during good breeding seasons but were random in the selection of which groups to cross with during bad seasons.

satellite tracking of little penguins

The foraging areas of Little Penguins were examined for three breeding colonies in northern Bass Strait using satellite telemetry. We tracked birds from Phillip, Notch and Rabbit Islands during the guard and early post-guard periods. During guard, parents tended to forage within 30 km of the island, and then during post-guard they hunt prey further afield. This was particularly the case from Phillip Island where some parents ventured over 100 km away. The normal pattern was reversed at Notch Island, however, with parents travelling further away during guard than they did during post-guard. The findings probably relate to patchy prey distributions. This information will help us understand what influences chick survival, how food resources are distributed around the colonies and how penguin populations might be regulated.

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 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 and shipping channels

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.

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, 1,826 tern chicks were banded in collaboration with the Victorian Wader Study Group and the colony was estimated at 2,100 pairs, a substantial reduction on the 3,150 pairs recorded the previous year. Other colonies in Victoria also suffered a decline with only 1,050 pairs at Mud Islands and the colony at Corner Inlet failing to produce any chicks. Crested Terns are listed under JAMBA and the Marine Provisions of the EPBC Act.

marine ecology of australian fur seals

juvenile seal tracking project

This was the fourth year of a five-year study of foraging by juvenile Australian fur seals. In July, we deployed six satellite trackers at Seal Rocks bringing the total juveniles tracked so far to 25 from Seal Rocks and 12 from Lady Julia Percy Island. This year, the seals' movements were followed for periods of 20 to 100 days. In following field trips, four of the six devices were recovered.

juvenile seal diving

Dive data transmitted from the SPLASH tags collated dives into bins of dive depth. Recovered SPLASH tags provided detailed profiles of all dives.

australian fur seal pup production

Current data on population sizes and trends are important for understanding and conservation of marine mammals. This year, we estimated live Australian fur seal pup numbers at all colonies, repeating the first thorough census of pup numbers which was conducted by us in 2002/03. All known colonies and many haul-out sites of Australian fur seals were visited to record live pup numbers present. In addition, numbers of New Zealand fur seal pups were estimated. Overall, there were about 8% more Australian fur seal pups recorded in 2007/08 than there were in 2002/03. Seal Rocks came out as the biggest colony, with 5628 ± 83 pups, representing 26% of the species' total of about 21,400 pups.

seals around phillip island

Monitoring of live seals ashore on beaches on and around Phillip Island continued. A total of 31 seals was recorded ashore this year. Several of these were being fed by people and so lingered around jetties and boat ramps for several months.

australian fur seal diet

Diet monitoring continued at Seal Rocks with collections on 20 July, 21 August, 18 September, 25 October, 27 December, 24 January, 19 March and 30 April. All samples collected between 1997 and Dec 2006 have been sorted and a scientific paper on the results is in press in the journal, *Marine Ecology Progress Series*.

In addition to diet monitoring using prey hard-parts in scats, a project commenced to re-evaluate seal diet by pyrosequencing prey DNA in the scats. This project is in collaboration with the Australian Antarctic Division, and was funded by the Australian Centre for applied Marine Mammal Science.

Traditional diet determination, through analysis of prey hard-parts in scats, may miss prey that has no hard-parts (e.g. sharks and rays which are cartilaginous). DNA-based analysis through



research continued

the use of pyrosequencing technology could provide a new prospective on diet of Australian fur seals and a template for future diet studies on other pinnipeds and whales. Fresh scat samples (100) were collected from three sites, Seal Rocks, Lady Julia Percy Island and The Skerries. Prey DNA in the scats is being isolated, extracted, amplified and identified.

epidemiology of australian fur seals

Investigations into the disease status of fur seals commenced as part of a PhD project. This project seeks to present and assess their significance as potential population regulatory factors. Surveillance in 2007 showed a high prevalence of antibodies to a *Brucella sp.* which warrant further investigation to isolate the organism and define the pathology it causes. Abortion may result from *Brucella sp.* infections. A partial alopecia (hair-loss) syndrome is also being investigated using a case-control study. Preliminary sampling suggests there are no parasitic or infectious causes of the alopecia. Investigations will continue.

entanglement in marine debris

We have monitored seal entanglement in marine debris since 1997. In a total of 128 days at Seal Rocks, we have seen 392 entangled seals (including resights) at a rate of 3.1 per day. Excluding resights, there have been 269 entangled seals. We were able to catch and remove the debris from 114 (42%) of these, at a rate of 0.89 per day visit. In 2007/08 at Seal Rocks, we saw 31 entangled seals and removed debris from 17.

animal experimentation ethics committee

The committee met three times during the year. The March meeting was cancelled as there was no business. Six new research projects were approved and commenced including research on Little Penguins, Australian fur seals, koalas, shorebirds and Whiskered Terns.

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

Topic	Candidate	Institution
Completed		
Effects of flash photography on Little Penguins	Melissa Ferrugia	Honours Deakin University
Importance of shell grit ingestion on the hatching success of Little Penguins	Paula Wasiak	Honours Monash University
Detoxification of plant secondary metabolites on feeding koalas and possums	Karen Marsh	PhD Australian National University Canberra
In progress		
Disease surveillance and epidemiological investigations in Australian fur seal populations	Michael Lynch	PhD Deakin University
Behavioural ecology of Little Penguins	Tania Billing (Cullen scholarship)	PhD Melbourne University
Genetic differentiation of Little Penguins in Australia	Amanda Peucker (nee Mitchelson)	PhD Deakin University
Life history and trophic relationships of red cod in south-eastern Australian coastal waters	Jody Kemp	PhD Melbourne University
Foraging ecology of Little Penguins at St Kilda	Tiana Preston	PhD Monash University
Sexual differences in the diets of Little Penguins over 25 years	Tracy Shaw	MSc University of Pretoria
New		
Responses of Australian fur seals to boat activity	Julia Back	MSc Deakin University
Foraging trip duration of Little Penguins during non-breeding in relation to breeding success	Rohan Long	Honours Monash University
Winter foraging by Little Penguins from Phillip Island	Clare McCutchen	Honours Deakin University

marketing

Visitation to the Nature Park hits over 1,057,000... our record year!

Our marketing team focuses on increasing visitor numbers, front gate yield and external sources of income in order to grow overall revenue.

In 2007/08, visitation increased by 2.7%. Front gate yield increased by 3.7% per visitor. Nature Park visitation was made up of 42% domestic and 58% international visitors.

domestic marketing

The focus of our domestic activities was:

- Achieving an audience circulation of 36 million 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 47%.
- Promotion of different penguin viewing options and focusing on ecotourism branding and products.
- Fully integrated major sales and marketing promotion (Go Wild) which resulted in an extra 2,991 '3 Parks Passes' sold between 26 December to 14 April.
- Improved events with Chill Island family music festival, Garden Lovers Festival and the annual Working Horse Festival.
- Maintaining relationships with existing sponsors, wholesalers and inbound operators and developing new opportunities.
- Continual development and upgrades to our website to increase online bookings.

international marketing

The focus of our international activities was to:

- Increase visitation in the Eastern markets and continue to be the lead attraction for the China market and introduce the trade marketing initiative – Penguin Loyalty Club, which resulted in an increase of 4,589 (5.5%) from China.
- Improve the product perception in key western markets by focusing on our new penguin viewing options which resulted in an increase in sales to Penguins Plus, Penguin Sky Box, The Ultimate Penguin Tour and launching the Private Penguin Parade Experience.
- Host the biggest business event to Melbourne; Amway China, which contributed 6,700 high yield incentive travellers to the Nature Park.
- Be represented at major international sales missions organised by Tourism Australia and Tourism Victoria.
- Continue focus on building relationships with international wholesalers, Inbound Tour Operators and Day Tour Companies.
- Have a strong presence at Australian Tourism Exchange in Perth. New material was designed in appropriate languages and customised itineraries developed to target eastern and western Hemisphere buyers.
- Increase media exposure and opportunities (such as Visiting Journalists Program with Tourism Australia) in key markets

penguin foundation

This registered charity is a separate entity to the Nature Park and is administered by a separate board. Achievements include:

- To celebrate the second anniversary of the launch of the Penguin Foundation, Kylie Minogue agreed to become the Foundation's latest Ambassador.
- Enrolled close to 3,200 individual members, 40 corporate members and 32 school members.
- Raised more than \$450,000 since inception.
- Continued with Fosters Wine Estates as a major sponsor.
- Distributed over \$100,000 to 13 Penguin Research projects.
- Enlisted the support of 16 high profile Ambassadors to promote the Penguin Foundation.
- Held the annual Penguin Foundation Members' Open Day with over 250 people attending.

The penguin foundation achieved great results this year!



education

Over 49,000 visitors participated in our education programs

The Nature Park's Education department delivers a variety of ranger guided activities to school students, international visitors and the general public. 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 further increase in students participating in an education program as well as the development of many new programs and initiatives, including becoming a strategic partner with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and receiving funding for the 2009-11 period.

Overall 20,047 students were involved in formal education programs such as Rockpool Rambles and Koala prowls, and a further 23,939 students experienced the three main precincts in the Nature Park.

A significant increase in people participating in the school holiday programs (20,926 in total) occurred due to the development of new programs across the island, particularly at Churchill Island.

education programs

Education Manager Bridget Cornish was sponsored by the Lewin Education Centre (a corporate sponsor of the Penguin Foundation) to visit Singapore to talk to over 1,600 students from the centre and Raffles Girls Primary School.

Five new curriculum based programs were developed for school students, including a history tour on Churchill Island, research talk, weather talk and programs for students with special needs. A new Penguin Academy program was also developed for International students.

Education staff attended and presented at various teacher and subject conferences throughout the year and 15 staff from other departments were trained to assist with the school curriculum and holiday programs, visitor tours and to help out at various expos and festivals.

Education was successful in receiving further funding from ExxonMobil to develop Australian Fur Seal Education packages for Secondary schools, using the data and information collected by the Nature Park's Research Department.

Education staff delivered a variety of training sessions for Nature Park staff including the annual 'All Hail the Mighty Little Penguin' day and new tour training for Rangers and ticketing staff.

community involvement

The Education team organised and was involved in a number of community events such as the World Environment Expo, Schools National Tree Day and 'Children's environment mornings' at the Cowes Library in conjunction with the Phillip Island Conservation Society. The Education team was also involved in the development of the Bass Coast Shire Council Education Plan 2008-2012 and will facilitate the achievement of the objective 'to support the environmental sustainability of the Shire through education'.

school based traineeships

This year, the Nature Park's School Based New Apprentices (SBNA) Traineeship Program offered traineeships in Hospitality, Retail and Conservation and Land Management. In total, 24 school based trainees were employed across these three disciplines. The Nature Park continued to work with Traineeship Advisory Services Australia (TASA) to deliver quality training and to ensure that the community education initiatives instilled by the Nature Park are ongoing.

coastal ambassadors

Two Coastal Ambassador camps were run this year with 23 students and three teachers participating. This week-long camp is where students learn about marine and coastal environments and develop skills to take action in their own local environment. Students were involved in various educational talks from rangers and researchers and participated in outdoor recreation activities such as kayaking and surfing.

eco tours

The Nature Park continued to provide a range of interpretive services and programs to welcome visitors and to interpret the Nature Park's natural and cultural values. A total of 2,697 people participated in the ranger-guided eco tour at the Penguin Parade, whilst 2,132 people participated in the 'Ultimate Penguin Tour'. Due to high visitor demand a third 'Private Penguin Parade Experience' tour was developed, with a total of 3,794 people participating. These tours provide visitors with a unique and intimate penguin viewing experience with a highly qualified ranger.



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 2006/07 to 2007/08:

Staff	2007/08	2006/07
Full Time	79	73
Part Time	130	134
Male	75	73
Female	134	134

As the largest employer on Phillip Island, the Nature Park had a total of 209 employees as at 30 June 2008. Some 24 of these part timers are schools based apprentices.

The annual turnover of employees was 7.1%. 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

A thorough program was implemented throughout the year with 100% of staff undergoing training. Our continued commitment to employee development saw staff undertaking tertiary and TAFE courses in Frontline Management, Project Management, CPA and Sustainability, together with recognised training programs in Management, Information Technology, Occupational Health and Safety, Manual Handling, Maintenance, Risk Management, Hospitality, Retail and Customer Service. We continued our partnerships with Chisholm TAFE Bass Coast and TASA, with staff completing certificate courses in Hospitality Supervision and Hospitality Operations funded by the Nature Park.

conferences

Management and staff attended 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. A new Coast Action group was initiated at Surf Beach-Sunderland Bay and a new 'injured wildlife Rescue and Transport group' was commenced during the year.

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 Observers Club volunteers spent in excess of 110 hours protecting nesting birds and chicks and provided education and information to the public.

Penguin Study Group Volunteers monitor penguins monthly. The group celebrated its 40th year of service.

Bird Counts were undertaken on key species including Cape Barren Geese, International waders, Hooded Plovers, Gulls and wetland birds, totalling hundreds of volunteer hours across Phillip Island.

Wildlife Volunteers rescue and rehabilitate injured wildlife across Phillip Island.

Friends of Koalas Volunteers spent hundreds of hours assisting with monthly Habitat days and koala counts.

International Student Volunteers assisted with propagation, weed removal, revegetation, and habitat rehabilitation activities. Three groups of 11 participants (including a team leader) were with us for two week periods.

Churchill Island Volunteers contributed to restoration projects, gardening, tree planting and ongoing conservation and the promotion of Churchill Island. The main event for the Friends of Churchill Island Society is the Working Horse Festival which is made possible by valuable contributions by volunteers.

Churchill Island Guides work in the Historic Area of Churchill Island seven days a week. Guides wear period costume and welcome 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.

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.

community partnerships

- The Nature Park continues to work closely with Phillip Island Landcare in revegetation and weed 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 over 6,000 plants 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

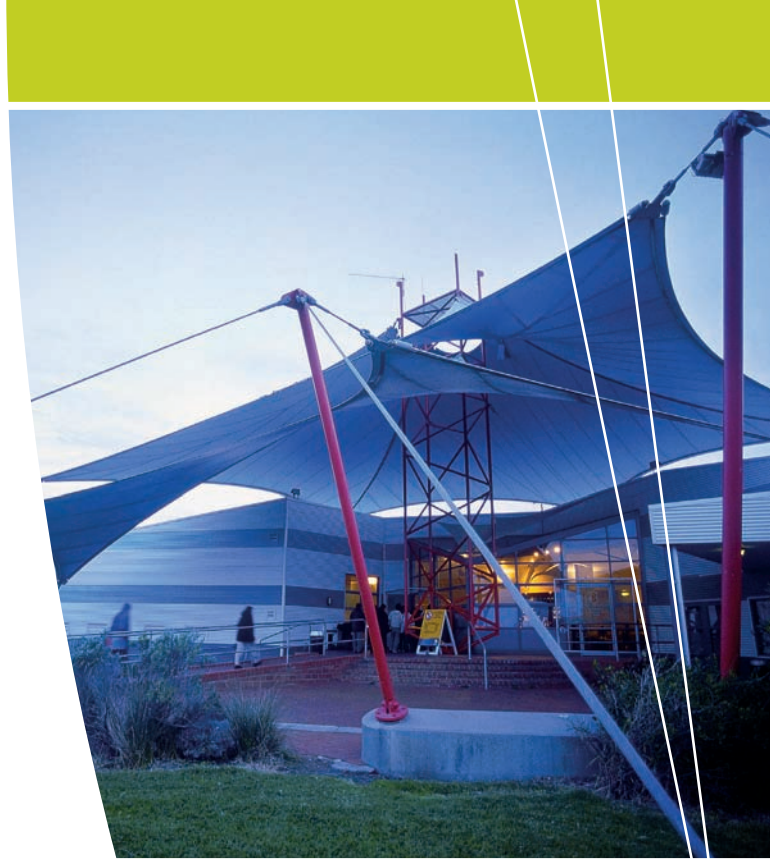
operating position

The Nature Park's operating revenue was up by 8.7% on the previous year. Operating expenses also increased by 8.1%.

The operating result was a profit of \$350,600, after including all abnormal and extraordinary items.

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 establishing a dedicated retail stock and inventory storage facility, a better-than-forecast retail performance at the Nobbies Centre and Churchill Island, and the appointment of a new Retail Management team. Another highlight was the greenscreen photography that increased its sales revenue and per cap yields to its highest levels ever.

food and beverage

The Food and Beverage operations 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 highlight of the year was the ongoing support from our key suppliers including Cadbury Schweppes (beverage and confectionery), Streets (ice-cream), Grinders (coffee) and Fosters (alcohol). All companies strongly supported the food and beverage department and offered leading brands and promotional strategies.

The Nobbies Centre café and function areas were busy during their first full year of operation. Seasonal menus in a bistro style were introduced to the café while the stunning function space hosted a range of weddings, conferences, wakes and tour groups.

admissions and bookings

During the year the 'admissions and bookings team' was established as a stand-alone department allowing greater focus on customer service, sales and product training. This approach led to a significant increase in pre-paid tickets sales, particularly of our premium product range. Additional service windows and directional signage were added which reduced queues and congestion over busy holiday periods. Online booking systems and information were improved resulting in an increase in online ticket sales.

abridged financial statements

operating statement for the financial year ending 30 June 2008

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING REVENUE					
Sales	5,680	4,942	4,784	4,313	3,737
Cost of Sales	2,304	2,121	2,056	1,854	1,754
GROSS PROFIT	3,376	2,821	2,728	2,459	1,983
Admissions	8,062	7,527	6,830	6,299	5,655
Interest	251	253	130	99	88
Other Operating Income	2,308	1,019	915	835	579
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	13,997	11,620	10,603	9,692	8,305
Assets Received Free of Charge				711	1,480
Assets Recognised for the First Time				935	
Proceeds from Oil Spill			260		
Nobbies Project Operating Grant		1,200			
TOTAL REVENUE FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES	13,997	12,820	10,863	11,338	9,785
OPERATING EXPENDITURE					
Employee Benefits	7,505	6,847	6,117	5,449	4,881
Materials and Supplies	1,109	981	916	898	482
Depreciation	1,671	1,213	866	883	765
Other Operating Expenses	3,360	2,027	2,198	2,051	1,927
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	13,646	11,068	10,097	9,281	8,088
Write of Assets on Revaluation				108	
Nobbies Project Non Capital Expenses		1,200			
TOTAL EXPENSES FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES	13,646	12,268	10,097	9,389	8,088
NET OPERATING RESULTS FOR THE YEAR					
(excluding one off specific revenue and expenses)	351	552	506	411	217
NET RESULT FOR THE YEAR	351	552	766	1,949	1,697
Increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	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	4,358	3,837	2,864	7,661	1,697

balance sheet as at 30 June 2008

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash Assets	4,926	799	1,779	866	817
Other Financial Assets		3,051	2,572	1,000	1,450
Receivables	361	734	576	674	497
Other Current Assets	59	56	62	120	
Inventory	697	758	586	845	578
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	6,043	5,398	5,575	3,505	3,342
NON CURRENT ASSETS					
Property, Plant & Equipment	51,621	48,101	43,510	42,952	35,399
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	51,621	48,101	43,510	42,952	35,399
TOTAL ASSETS	57,664	53,499	49,085	46,457	38,741
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Payables	1,025	1,262	923	1,102	1,072
Employee Entitlements	1,022	932	745	787	492
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,047	2,185	1,668	1,889	1,564
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Payables					
Employee Entitlements	138	193	133	148	418
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	138	193	133	148	418
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,185	2,378	1,801	2,037	1,982
NET ASSETS	55,479	51,121	47,284	44,420	36,759
EQUITY					
Contributed Capital	28,881	28,881	25,596	23,499	23,499
Accumulated Surplus	6,193	5,842	5,290	4,523	2,574
Asset Revaluation Reserve	20,405	16,398	16,398	16,398	10,686
TOTAL EQUITY	55,479	51,121	47,284	44,420	36,759

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. Justin Madden MLC, from 1 July 2007 to 2 August 2007 and then the Hon. Minister Gavin Jennings MLC, from 3 August 2007 to 30 June 2008 were the Ministers for Planning Environment and Climate Change.

committees

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

audit committee

The members of the audit committee were:

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 Lisa Trood

environment advisory committee

Christine Wardle - Chair (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

community advisory committee

Stella Axarlis - Chair (Board of Management)

Michael Gatehouse (Board of Management)

Ian Baker (Board of management)

Cr Kelly Simrajh Margaret Hancock

Patsy Hunt Fred Allen

Jock McKechnie Stephen Fullarton

John Adam Pauline Taylor

Peter Huthwaite Kim Storey

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 – 91.5 % of workforce with employer contribution of 9%.

- Defined Benefits – 8.5% 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 371.5 hours.

industrial relations

Nature Park 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 Privacy Policy is also available on our website penguins.org.au

compliance issues continued

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

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.

Ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities. The 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 were no individual consultancies above \$100 000 entered into during the reporting period. There were twelve consultancy appointments made during the year at a total cost of \$61,742.

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

external reviews

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

fee policy

The Nature Park has a policy of reviewing entry fees annually and has the ability to increase prices greater than the CPI every four years. Consequently, during the reporting period, fees were increased by an average of 10.58%.

statement of availability of other information

Information not fully detailed on pages 33-34 is available in the Full Financial Statements. A DOPI was completed by all relevant officers. Publications are listed on pages 36-38 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 2007/08 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 has been prepared to facilitate identification of our compliance with these statutory disclosure requirements.

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22B	Objectives and performance against these objectives	7-25
22B	Major changes or factors affecting performance	1-2, 22
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22B	Details of consultancies > \$100,000	NA
22B	Details of consultancies - total No. and cost < \$100,000	34
12A	Major contracts	NA
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FFS = Full Financial Statements – available on request.

publications

Reviewed publications, conference presentations, reports and thesis (Staff members and Nature Park fellows in bold and Scientific Research Advisory Committee members in italics). Further information also at penguins.org.au.

reviewed publications

Penguins

Sidhu, L. A., Catchpole, E. A. and **Dann, P.** (2007). Mark-recapture-recovery modelling and age-related survival in Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor*. **Auk** 124, 815-827.

Billing, T. M., Guay, P. -J., **Peucker, A. J.**, Mulder, R. A. (2007) Isolation and characterization of polymorphic microsatellite loci for the study of paternity and population structure in the little penguin *Eudyptula minor*. **Molecular Ecology Notes** 7, 425-427.

Chiaradia A, Ropert-Coudert Y, Kato A, Mattern T and **Yorke J** (2007). Diving behaviour of Little Penguins from four colonies across their whole distribution range: bathymetry affecting diving effort and fledging success. **Marine Biology** 151:1535 – 1542.

Chiaradia A, McBride J, **Murray T** and **Dann P** (2007). Late arrival at colony under fog: evidence of visual navigation in the Little Penguins? **Journal of Ornithology**. 148:229 - 233.

Cullen, J. M., Chambers, L. E., *Coutin, P. C.* and **Dann, P.** (in press). Predicting the onset and success of breeding of Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* on Phillip Island from ocean temperatures off south-eastern Australia. **Marine Ecology Progress Series**.

Daniel T, **Chiaradia A**, Logan M, Quinn G and Reina R (2007). Synchronised group association in Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*). **Animal Behaviour** 74: 1241 – 1248.

Hoskins, A. J., **Dann, P.**, Ropert-Coudert, Y., Kato, A., **Chiaradia, A.**, Costa, D. P. and Arnould, J. P.Y. (in press). Foraging behaviour and habitat selection at sea in Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* during the chick-guard stage of breeding. **Marine Ecology Progress Series**.

Kato A, Ropert-Coudert Y and **Chiaradia A** (in press). Foraging strategies of an inshore forager: regulation of trip duration by Little Penguins during incubation. **Auk**

Kirkwood R, Lawton K, Moreno C, Valencia J, Schlatter R and Robertson G (2007). Estimates of Southern Rockhopper and Macaroni Penguin numbers at the Ildefonso and Diego Ramírez Archipelagos, Chile, using quadrat and distance-sampling techniques. **Waterbirds** 30:258-267

Nisbet, I. C. T. and **Dann, P.** (in press). Reproductive performance of Little Penguins in relation to Year, Age, Pair-Bond Duration, Breeding Date and Individual Quality. **Journal of Avian Biology**

Overeem, R. L., **Peucker A. J.** (nee Mitchelson), Austin, C. M., **Dann, P.** and Burridge, 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 Burridge, C. R. (in press). Phylogeography in the Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*: Forster 1781). **Auk**

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.

Endangered Species Research 4, 95-103.

Ropert-Coudert Y, Knott N, **Chiaradia A** and Kato A (2007). How do different data logger sizes and attachment positions affect the diving behaviour: A case-study with Little Penguin **Deep Sea Research II** 54: 415 – 423.

Wienecke B., Robertson G., **Kirkwood R.** and Lawton K. (2007) Extreme dives of free-ranging Emperor penguins. **Polar Biology** 30:133-142.

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**

Oil and birds

Orbell, J. D., Van Dao, H., Kapadia, J., Ngeh, L. N., Bigger, S. W., **Healy, M.**, **Jessop, R.** and **Dann, P.** (2007). An investigation into the removal of oil from rock utilising magnetic particle technology. **Marine Pollution Bulletin** 54, 1958-1961.

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

Dann, P. (2007). The Population Status of the Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* in Victoria. **Corella** 31, 73-75.

Schumann, N., Arnould, J. P.Y. and **Dann, P.** (in press). The diet of the Common Diving-petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix* in south-eastern Australia during chick-rearing. **Waterbirds**

Marine mammals

Arnould JPY 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

Kirkwood R and Arnould J. (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 (in press). Sea temperature variations mediate annual changes in the diet of Australian fur seals in Bass Strait. **Marine Ecology Progress Series**.

Kirkwood R, Warneke RM and Arnould JPY (in press) Recolonization of Bass Strait, Australia, by the New Zealand fur seal *Arctocephalus forsteri*. **Marine Mammal Science**

Foxes

McLean S, Brandon S and **Kirkwood R** (2007). Stability of cabergoline in fox baits during laboratory and field trials. **Wildlife Research** 34:239-246.

Other studies

Lawton K, **Kirkwood R**, Robertson G and Raymond B (2007). Preferred foraging areas of Heard Island albatrosses during chick raising and implications for management with regard to fisheries by catch. **Aquatic Conservation** DOI: 10.1002/aqc.857

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

Robertson G, Moreno CA, Lawton G, Arata J, Valencia J and **Kirkwood R** (2007). The status of Black-browed and Grey-headed albatrosses at the Diego Ramírez Archipelago, Chile. **Emu** 107:239-244

reports and theses

(jointly supervised by the Nature Park research staff)

Sidhu, L. (2007). Analysis of Recovery-recapture data for Little Penguins. PhD thesis, University of New South Wales at Australian defence force Academy, Canberra.

Salton M. (2007). The effect of colony attendance during the non-breeding season on the breeding biology of the Little Penguin. Monash University, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Buick, E. (2007). Factors influencing the foraging range of Little Penguins. Deakin University, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Taylor, A. (2007). Winter breeding in a temperate cormorant: the Black-faced Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscescens*. Deakin University, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Weller D. (2007). Inter-colony movements of the crested tern *Sterna bergii* as a result of food resource quality and availability. University of Melbourne, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Marsh, K. (2008). Detoxification of plant secondary metabolites on feeding koalas and possums. PhD thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.

Wasiak P. (2008). The role of shell grit ingestion in the reproductive biology of the Little Penguin. Monash University, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Farrugia, M. (2008). Effects of flash photography on Little Penguins. Deakin University, B.Sc (honours) thesis.

Books

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

conference presentations

Dann P. The power of penguins: the Phillip Island Experience. Keynote address. 20th anniversary Yellow-eyed Penguin conference –Otago Peninsula –almost an Island. New Zealand (12-13 October 2007).

Peucker, A., Dann, P. & Burridge, C. Phylogeography of the Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor*. Evolution 2007. Christchurch, New Zealand June 2007.

Kirkwood R, Hume F, Hindell M & Arnould J. Interannual variability in diet of Australian fur seals: evidence for climate oscillations influencing ecosystem fluctuations. International Marine Mammal conference, Cape Town, Dec 2007

Chiaradia A, Kato A, Robinson S, and Ropert-Coudert Y. Alternating short and long foraging trips on seabirds: foraging strategy or response to food limitation? Australasian Ornithological Congress, Perth, Dec 2007

Dann, P., Renwick, L., McInnes, J., Chiaradia, A., Kirkwood, R., Buick, E., Hoffman, J. & Arnould, J. Foraging areas of Little Penguins during chick-rearing: evidence of changing food availability. Australasian Ornithological Congress, Perth, Dec 2007

Penguin conference, Oamaru New Zealand, June 2008

McInnes, J., Billing, T., Macreadie, P. & Dann, P. Can little penguin chicks be sexed using morphometrics? Penguin Symposium, Oamaru, New Zealand, June 2008.

Jessop, R. & Healy, M. (2008). Causes of sickness and injury in Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* rehabilitated at Phillip Island, Victoria. Penguin Symposium, Oamaru, New Zealand, June 2008.

Dann, P., Renwick, I., McInnes, J., Chiaradia, A., Kirkwood, R., Buick, E., Hoffman, J. & Arnould, J. Foraging areas of Little Penguins during chick-rearing: evidence of changing food availability. Penguin Symposium, Oamaru, New Zealand, June 2008.

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 2007/08:

government support

Bass Coast Shire Council
Community Events Program
- Working Horse Festival

Commonwealth Government
- Australian Tourism Development Program
- Community Water Grants Fund
- Envirofund

Melbourne Water

Victorian State Government
- Bush Guardians Program
- Department Victorian Communities
- Coast Action Coast Care program
- Good Neighbour Program
- Nobbies funding
- Smart Water Fund

volunteers

Clare Davis
Green Corps
Hespa Mann
Hooded Plover Watch
Jan Gorman
Kate Raisbeck
Kerry Ritchie
Lyn Blom for penguin jumpers
Marion Thomson and Jenny Mattingley
Penguin Study Group
Schools and students
Shearwater Rescue Volunteers
Tanya Murray
Wildlife Victoria

local community groups

Friends of Churchill Island Society
Friends of Koalas
Garden History Society
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 Observers Club
Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club

supporting organisations

Air Services Australia
Australian Antarctic Division
Bass Coast Landcare Network
Bass Coast Shire Council
Cadbury Schweppes Pty Ltd
Canadian Wildlife Services
Cheetham Salt Limited
Coast Action / Coast Care Community Grant Program
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas (Spain)
Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA)
Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE)
Environmental Protection Authority
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Healesville Sanctuary
Heritage Victoria
Hi-cone ECO CARRIERS
Japanese Penguin Fund
McLaughlins/Juro Pty Ltd
Melbourne Water
Monash University
Museum Victoria
National Institute of Polar Research (Japan)
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
Nestlé Peters
Newhaven Veterinary Clinic, Wonthaggi Veterinary Clinic & Cowes Veterinary Clinic
Parks Victoria
SP AusNet
Surfing Victoria
Sylvania Lighting
Tourism Victoria
Traineeship Advisory Services Australia
University of Melbourne
VicRoads

major supporters



publications continued

6th International Penguin Conference, Hobart, 3-7 September 2007

Chiaradia, A., Hume, F., Renwick, L. & Dann, P.

Changes in the diet of Little Penguins over a decade at Phillip Island, Victoria (1995-2005): the impact of mass mortality of a major prey, Pilchard.

Dann, P., Renwick, L., McInnes, J., Chiaradia, A., Kirkwood, R., Buick, E., Hoffman, J. & Arnould, J. Foraging areas of Little Penguins during guard and post-guard stages of breeding: evidence of intraspecific competition and "halo" effect?

Shaw, T. R., Chiaradia, A., Dann, P. & Bester, M. N.

Sexual differences in the diet of Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* at Phillip Island over 20 years.

Preston, T., Ropert-Coudert, Y., Kato, A., Chiaradia, A., Dann, P. & Reina, R.

Do Little Penguins selectively forage in shipping channels? A three dimensional investigation of the foraging behaviour of Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) breeding in the vicinity of a busy port.

Hoskins, A. J., Dann, P., Ropert-Coudert, Y., Kato, A., Chiaradia, A., Costa, D. P. and Arnould, J. P.Y. Foraging behaviour and habitat selection in Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) during the chick-guard stage of breeding.

Wienecke, B., Candy, S., **Dann, P.**, Jarman, S. & Robertson, G. Foraging strategies of King Penguins from Heard Island during incubation.

Green, J. A., Horne, L. R., **Dann, P.**, Butler P. J. & Frappell, P. B. Winter energy expenditure of Little Penguins.

Salton, M., Chiaradia, A. & Reina, R. The effect of colony attendance during the non-breeding season on the breeding biology of the Little Penguin.

Chambers, L., Cullen, M., **Dann, P. & Coutin, P. C.** The influence of regional ocean temperatures on timing of breeding in Little Penguins.

McInnes, J., Billing, T., Dann, P. & Mulder, R. The effect of brood composition on growth and fledging success in Little Penguins.

Peucker, A., Dann, P. & Burridge, C. Conservation genetics of the Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*).

Daniel, T., Chiaradia, A., Logan, M., Quinn, J. & Reina, R. Synchronized parade in Little Penguins.

Poster presentations

Did penguin flipper shapes evolve from dietary preference or body size?

André Chiaradia, Ken N. G. Simpson, David Beaune & Yan Ropert-Coudert

Spheniscidae and the city: Little Penguins in St Kilda.

Zoe M Hogg, Tiana Preston.

Factors influencing the distribution of Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor* burrows on Phillip Island, Victoria, Australia.

Rosalind Jessop, Olivia Haltmeier & Twiga Van Der Werf

Dog trial: protecting Little Penguins from fox predation

Amanda J. Peucker, Ian Fitzgibbon, Kristie King

Allan Marsh, David Williams

Phylogeography Of The Little Penguin *Eudyptula Minor*

Amanda J. Peucker, **Peter Dann**, Chris P. Burridge

Effect of fire on Little Penguins at Seal Island, south-eastern Australia.

Leanne Renwick, Peter Dann & Sally Thompson

Effects of implantable heart rate data loggers on Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*)

W.J. Ritchie, J.A. Green, **P. Dann** & P.B. Frappell

Workshop presentations - Little Penguin management issues

1. Amanda Peucker. Middle Island Maremma project.
2. **Andre Chiaradia**. Management of Little Penguins at sea.
3. **Peter Dann**. Oiling of Little Penguins.
4. Tiana Preston & Zoe Hogg. Dredging & management of an urban colony.
5. **Ros Jessop**. Little Penguins and fox predation



Phillip Island Nature Parks
PO Box 97 Cowes Victoria 3922 Australia

penguins.org.au

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.