

## Lacepede Bay

Pinks Beach

Wyomi



### Site

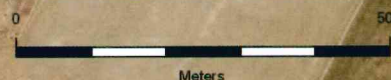
- Brochure Box
- Parking
- Birdhide
- Drain

### Walking Track

- Short Walk
- Long Walk

### TOPO.Roads

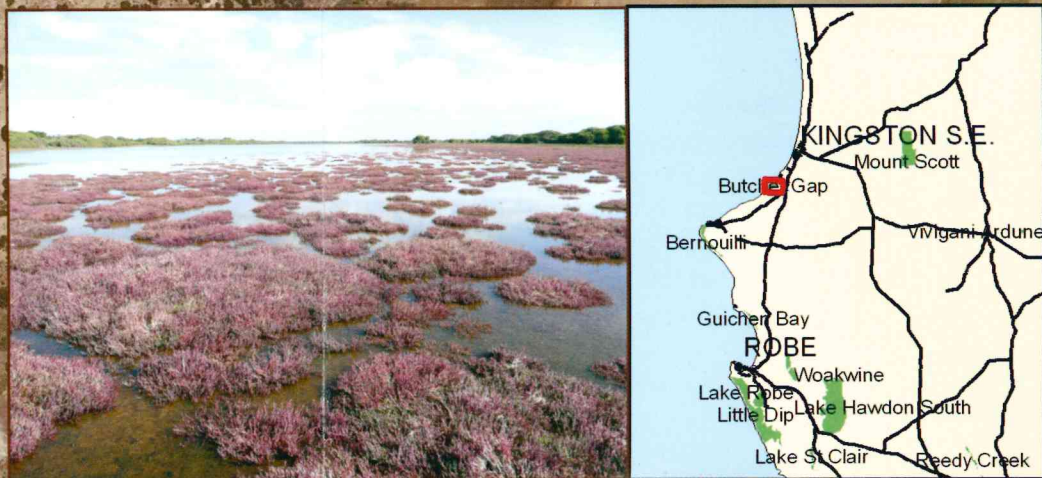
- Sealed
- Unsealed
- Vehicular Track



Butcher Lake

Salt Lake

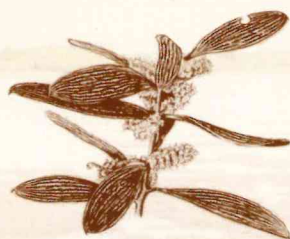
Butcher Gap Drain



#### POST 8.

##### Bush Bird Zone

Listen carefully, if you're lucky you may hear the 'squeaking wheel' sound of the elusive Rufous Bristlebird or the distant sounding descending whistle of the shy Brown Quail. These and many other small birds frequent low coastal scrub near water, taking shelter in the Coastal Wattle and feeding on the insects and fruits that abound here.



#### POST 9.

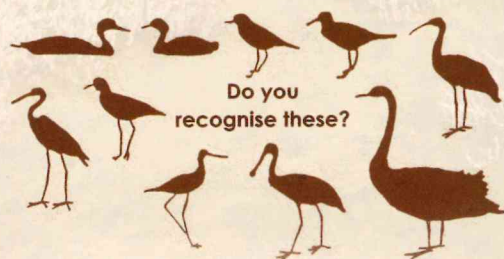
##### Coastal Wattle

(*Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae*)

This tree would have to be the most prolific grower and producer of seed ever to grow on the southern coastal zone. It will grow and spread in most types of soil and under almost any conditions and it is because of this that it has the reputation of being a bit of a pest, to put it mildly. It is cursed by the home gardener and crop farmer in this area but it is also valuable as a stabilising plant in sensitive areas such as primary sand dunes and sand 'blow-outs' on pasture land. It has a well deserved reputation as an aboriginal tucker tree.

#### POST 10.

If you look closely at this dense carpet of rush you may see the mounds of freshly dug dirt and the small tunnels of the Native Swamp Rat (*Rattus lutreolus*). This shy mammal prefers sedges and swampy areas although it also inhabits heath grass and drier tracts. It actually eats its way through the sedge to create the tunnels. These sedges, along with grasses, form the staple diet supplemented by insects when they are available. It is reputed that the Swamp Rat was hunted by coastal Aboriginals and may have been a significant food source.



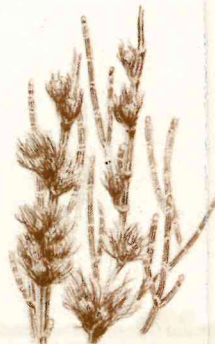
Do you recognise these?

#### POST 11.

##### Tidal Zone

##### Fresh water meets Salt water

This area is often abuzz with activity. The high tides wash seaweed, sometimes in large mounds, onto the beaches and into areas like this. The weed is stranded as the tide goes out again and before long is attacked by numerous insect species. These are in turn devoured by the birds of the area, in particular, the waders.



You may see Plovers, Sandpipers, Turnstones, Greenshanks, Terns, Snipe, Stilts and Lapwings feeding on the area and taking advantage of the short term smorgasbord. Observe the different ways the different birds feed, a good start to identification. This area is now seldom tidal but still retains saline habitats developed over many decades. Only in very wet years when the drain needs to be open early in the season does the sea re-enter and act like a tidal creek.

#### POST 12.

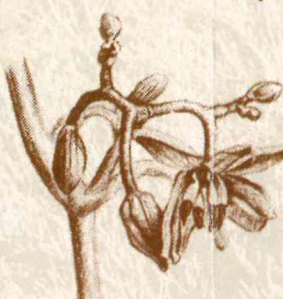
##### Boobialla (*Myoporum insulare*)

Here again is a plant that manages to survive the rigours of the coastal zone and still look good. It is a common plant on sandy soil and flowers mainly in August to October in this area. The small purple fruits are bitterly aromatic and salty sweet. They are much favoured by many birds and are best left for them to enjoy.

##### Detour to Bird hide

If your interest is wetland birds you may follow the signs, cross the culvert and discover the bird hide. Within the hide there are posters to help you identify most birds you will see. The prime season is May to October.

We dedicate this hide to Fernley Burgoyne, president of our friends group for 20 years, who was largely responsible for its design and erection. We hope that you enjoy the experience it provides.



#### POST 13.

##### Drizzling She-oak (*Allocasurina verticillata*)

Previously known as *Casuarina stricta*, this poor plant has undergone more name changes than the Ten Most Wanted. Another valuable shelter tree for the birds, the "He-oak" turns a beautiful golden brown in Summer whilst the Sheoak has no need for such showy behaviour. She has tiny brown or red flowers that are quietly spectacular.

#### POST 14.

##### Paperbark Ti-tree (*Melaleuca halmaturorum*)

Dense communities of these small gnarled trees with the distinctive papery white bark occur alongside most of the water areas in this district. These plants are able to survive in close proximity to saline water, in tracts that remain damp most of the year and in dense clay based soils. Because of this incredible ability this tree is of immense importance around waterways. It also provides valuable habitat for birds and animals, in particular, the Honey-eaters in Spring and the small insect eating birds in Summer. Nests of many species can be seen in the trees here. Because of the close proximity to water there is almost always an abundance of insects and grubs attracting many other birds.

Note the different growth on the tree, is lighter green with larger coarse leaves, this is the parasitic *Melaleuca Mistletoe* (*Amyema melaleuca*) which does the tree little harm. There are many types of mistletoe and some will grow only on particular species, very often with their foliage closely resembling that of the host plant. It is spread easily by the many birds who delight in the ripe sticky fruits.

#### POST 15.

##### Spreading Flax Lily (*Dianella revoluta*)

This is probably the most colourful plant in the park with its dark blue or purple berries made up of a spongy pulp containing a small black seed. Aboriginals used the tough leaves of these lilies to weave dillies and baskets. The leaves were sometimes chewed to make them more pliable. It is not known for certain whether the berries were used as a food source but they are reputedly edible.



Stout footwear and a good hat are advised as the trail has been left as natural as possible.

*Allow 1 hour for the short loop.*

*2 hours for the full walk.*

of this walk.

hopefully, informative description of the finer aspects the slashed walking trail. What follows is a brief, and marker posts, these indicate points of interest on As you walk about the park you will see small green which are raised or lowered to open or close the drain. Currently the outlet is controlled by wooden gates the scheme are simple cuttings through to the sea? tunnel was necessary when most of the outlets for access to incoming high tides. Why do you think the tunnel through the dunes which once allowed East each winter. The water is drained out to sea via large influx of fresh water from the farmlands to the Butcher Gap Drain, transects the park bringing a Part of the South Eastern Drainage Scheme, the of dense reed cover and Melaleuca stands. supporting a habitat consisting of samphire flats, areas park is covered by seasonal lakes of varying salinity persistent strong onshore winds. The remainder of the supports dense low coastal scrub shaped by the high ground consists of calcareous sand which Lacedpede Bay forms the western boundary. The This small park covers a total of 178.3 Hectares.

**Parrot (*Neophema chrysogaster*).**

**feeding grounds for the rare Orange bellied**

**refuge for birds and especially to provide winter**

**between the Coorong and Robe, as a wetland**

**remaining significant stands of coastal scrub**

**1983 for the conservation of one of the last**

**by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in**

**Butcher Gap Conservation Park was purchased**

# Butcher Gap Conservation Park



## Life in a coastal park

*a self guided walk*



*Why do you think there are posts at the end of the enclosure that have no wire attached?*

effects of rabbits of the rest of the park.

pests. Of course, this area is also used to estimate the rate and habit of local plants if unaffected by these erected around it in an attempt to gauge the growth as typical of the area. It has a rabbit proof fence effects of the rabbit. The enclosure is small and chosen This park, like all others in the country, suffers from the

**The Rabbit Enclosure**

**POST 3.**

quickly and densely after fire or clearing.

also a valuable primary coloniser which means it grows able to withstand the constant strong salty winds. It is adapted very well to local conditions with its waxy leaf struggling scraggy specimen but it has areas and it may look like a poor reach about 1 metre in these exposed These spreading shrubs usually only

**Coast Bitter Bush (*Adriana klozchii*)**

**POST 2.**



the ever present Silvereyes.

honeyeaters. New Holland, Spiny Cheeked, Singing and a popular food for various birds including the local white flowers in spring and summer. The sticky fruits are and is a vigorous grower. It has very small but showy of the two climbers with the smooth dark green foliage **Coastal Lignum (*Muehlenbeckia gunnii*)** is the darker documented as with other plants.



**Bower Spinach**

**POST 1.**

**(*Tetragonia 'implexicoma*)**

This plant can be observed growing in dense mats on the sand as well as hanging in curtains from the branches of shrubs. It was often cooked as greens by early settlers, hence the name. Although it is thought the Aborigines made use of the juicy fruits, it has not been as well

**POST 19.**

**Parrot habitat**

Concealed in this seemingly barren featureless flat are 2 plants of immense value to our parrot population. (Samphire spp.) These two plants produce small seed that are highly favoured by parrots. When the food source consists of tiny seeds, large quantities have to be consumed. These parrots will consume as many as 10,000 seed for extended periods. Since the cessation of grazing, the plants in the area have increased providing more seed production. Degradation of coastal sand marshes in Victoria is said to be a major cause of the decline in Orange-bellied Parrots. If more areas are not set aside and maintained, more common species such as the Blue-winged Parrots may follow the same path.

**POST 20.**

You may care to pause a moment at this 'Last Post' to look at the bush, the lakes and the samphire flats and reflect on the varied life forms you have seen. The Friends of Butcher Gap hope you have enjoyed your visit and gained an understanding and appreciation of the unique plants and animals that have managed to find their niche in this coastal park.

Areas such as these are becoming more important as the surrounding coastal habitat succumbs to land clearing practices. It was a desire to do something to highlight this that led to the formation of this Friends Group.

You may like to help by forming or joining a Friends group for a special area near your home. We need more assistance to help care for our Parks so they don't become some memorial to the past and can be appreciated by our children and their children.

**A more detailed brochure is available for plant and nature enthusiasts, for more information contact the local tourist information office, the DENR office in Mount Gambier or the Ranger at Robe.**

obtain valuable moisture. *Turn left here for the short loop.*

easy to gather. Birds also rely on the fruits in summer to with the Aborigines. Because of their abundance they were January. The fruits are sweet and juicy and were popular it presents its delightful white 'currants' from September to unperturbed by the lack of moisture throughout summer. the calcareous ridges seemingly the salty conditions. It survives well on coping with the harsh wind and one has stiff leaves adapted to Like many other coastal plants, this

**(*Leucopogon parviflorus*)**

**POST 7. Currant Bush**



how safe these creatures are from birds of prey.

mammals and if you feel the tips of the rush you'll realise just it forms dense mats which are excellent cover for small South East and is tolerant of both fresh and very salty water. atrocious conditions. It grows well in all damp areas in the This fascinating little rush is capable of growing in the

**Knobby Club Rush (*Isolepis nodosus*)** (previous *Scirpus nodosus*)

**POST 6.**

smorgasbord for any wader or duck.

numbers dictated by the water and salinity levels, a real you can see that it is teeming with all sorts of insects, their game enough to have a really 'close up' look at the water varied birds rely on these areas for their survival. If you're Parks and Wildlife Service is this type of terrain. Many and One of the main reasons this park was purchased by the

**Water Habitat (in season)**

**POST 5.**

distributes its seeds, try blowing gently on one of them.

deep rich pink. It is not hard to imagine how this species wings that start out green and may turn a magnificent Dodonea would have to be its seed with its 3 or 4 papery The most outstanding feature of the how this plant earned its name? Feel the leaves, do they indicate

**(*Dodonea viscosa*)**

**Sticky or Large Hop Bush**

**POST 4.**



**POST 16.**

**Samphire (*Sarcicornia quinqueflora*)**

These squishy salty tasting shrubs form extensive colonies on tidal mudflats and coastal swamps such as this. Though it doesn't look all that appetising and isn't, it was much appreciated by early settlers who didn't have a lot to choose from, in poor salty coastal areas. It has the stamina to withstand the changing salinity, the regular inundation each winter and extreme dryness throughout summer. Its seeds are a valuable food source for the neophema parrots including the Orange bellied Parrot.

**POST 17.**

**Old cattle yards and rubbish dump**

**(*Messus humanis obnoxiousus*)**

*Messus - pertaining to modern man's natural habits*

*Humanis obnoxiousus - ever present and well known to all naturalists.*

This is just the kind of scene one expects to see in an area like this so close to a town. The cattle yards were used when the land here was grazed and the rubbish tip was a 'natural' follow on when the region became too wet to be suitable for anything else. This area looked a lot worse a few years ago before the Friends rallied around and set about cleaning it up. We will now make better use of the old timber by making it into seats for weary bird watchers.

**POST 18.**

**Coastal Sword Sedge (*Lepidosperma gladiatum*)**

May we suggest you do NOT run your hand caressingly over this one. The edges and tips are a real pain. Sedges usually have stems that are solid. This one, like many others, has an edible leaf base and was more than likely eaten by local Aborigines. It is still enjoyed by bushwalkers and campers along with many other rushes and sedges and tastes rather like green peas.

Another important coast plant, as you can see, it grows in very dense mats and forms another barrier against soil and sand erosion. Because of this habit it also affords very safe refuge for small mammals and ground frequenting birds. Unfortunately it also affords protection for the ever present rabbit.