



SUMMARY BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

2017–22

Providing a *greenprint*
for Hobsons Bay's future

Our Place 
Connected, green, healthy

**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**





WHY IS HOBSONS BAY SO UNIQUE?

We have some of the most beautiful biodiversity hotspots within sight of Melbourne's CBD, but these areas are also some of the most fragile. In June 2017, Council launched Hobsons Bay's first ever Biodiversity Strategy - a *greenprint* for how we can protect, preserve and enjoy our local environment. This brochure represents a summary of that document. The full strategy is available at: www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/biodiversity

Coastal wetlands

Our coastal wetlands are globally recognised and are a significant biodiversity areas, containing important habitat for many significant and endangered species. This significant area goes all the way from Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve to the Ramsar listed Cheetham Wetlands, taking in Kororoit Creek and Truganina Swamp.

Migratory shorebirds such as sharp-tailed sandpipers, red-necked stints, curlew sandpipers and greenshanks feed along these coastal areas during the summer months before returning around April to their breeding grounds in Siberia and Alaska. Population numbers for shorebirds are declining rapidly as development across Asia and the Pacific encroaches on their feeding grounds.

Grasslands

The first European settlers reported kangaroo grass as far as the eye could see and wallaby grass coming up to one's knees. Now, less than 1% of this grassland remains across Victoria. This connection with history will be lost forever if we do not conserve areas such as the Laverton North Grasslands, Maidstone Street Grasslands and Emu Foot Grasslands.

Mangroves

Mangroves (pictured above right) are not just nurseries for fish and crustaceans, they provide protection along coasts and waterways from storm surges and flooding. Altona Coastal Park, Sandy Point and Jawbone Reserve have some of the most southerly located mangroves in the world which will increasingly become an important protector for coastal habitat.

WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT FOR US?

It is estimated Australia's ecosystems provide benefits equivalent to \$1.3 trillion. Some of these benefits are collective: for instance, trees are important for storing carbon, and healthy waterways can provide water during drought.

There are other benefits that are more personal. Connecting with nature has been proven to be good for both our physical health (by providing places to walk or exercise) and mental health (by helping us to relax and unwind).

Why is biodiversity important for our environment?

Changing one part of an ecosystem has an impact on every species within that ecosystem. The cascade effect is very real: a small change can have enormous repercussions.

One of the biggest threats facing biodiversity in Hobsons Bay is the unpredictable nature of climate change. Our main areas of biodiversity are coastal and along waterways, and they are vulnerable to rising sea levels and extreme flooding events. Resilient ecosystems adapt better to these events. Vulnerable ecosystems do not.

Connectivity

Connectivity is perhaps the key to understanding how to make our ecosystems more resilient, but what do we mean by increased connectivity?

Here's an example:

There is a very real possibility that flooding and rising sea levels will force our coastal wildlife to retreat inland, and many will perish if there are no areas of suitable vegetation available. With sea levels predicted to rise and inland creeks and streams susceptible to extreme flooding, the destruction of natural habitat is a genuine concern. Managing these corridors along Kororoit Creek and Laverton Creek will be particularly important if wildlife is forced to retreat from areas like the Altona Coastal Park and Cheetham Wetlands.



WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING?

Land use planning

Council is investigating the protection of native vegetation within the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme via tools such as Environmental Significance Overlays.

Mapping and monitoring

Council will be strengthening the mapping and monitoring of our main biodiversity areas to ensure that we have good data to enable us to prioritise those areas which are most in need of revegetation or pest management control.

Pest plant and animal management

Weeds and pest animals are two of the greatest threats to our local biodiversity. Effective management of these threats means prioritising control methods for those areas of highest biodiversity value, as well as working with neighbouring landowners to undertake control programs.

Conservation activities

We run over ninety conservation-related events every year. Some involve planting or weeding, others are more educational like our walk and talk tours where you can find out about our native plants and animals. Council works closely with schools to ensure that the next generation become aware of the importance of protecting and preserving our unique biodiversity.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Get involved

Come along to one of the many community events. Information on events and volunteering can be found on our website at www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/biodiversity

Get informed

Subscribe to the monthly enews Ranger Ramblings which features the latest conservation news as well as information about upcoming events.

Garden sustainably

Consult our Sustainable Gardening in Hobsons Bay booklet to see what species might be the most appropriate to plant for your garden to help attract native wildlife.



HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE

9932 1212
INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES
Your Council in your language

www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Biodiversity