

# Restoration trial underway in Long Swamp, south-west Victoria

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In a previous edition of *Wetlands Australia* (Issue 22, February 2013), readers were introduced to Long Swamp, a nationally recognised wetland of significant public interest in Discovery Bay Coastal Park in south-west Victoria.

Wetland birds are a key attribute of Long Swamp, and are just one of many ecological values underpinning the Nature Glenelg Trust's support for its designation as a Ramsar site. The swamp is home to the western-most known population of the eastern ground parrot (*Pezoporus wallicus*), which became extinct in nearby South Australia where no confirmed sightings have been recorded since 1945.

Based on the findings of the initial investigative work, the Trust has been awarded grant funding from the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) to undertake a hydrological restoration trial at Long Swamp, in conjunction with an aquatic ecology monitoring program.

The trial will involve raising the water level in one part of the swamp to increase the water volume and surface area. The location for the trial is at Nobles Rocks, the site where the last remaining artificial outlet drain exits Long Swamp. The natural site for discharge from the swamp to the sea is several kilometres away to the west via the Glenelg River mouth and estuary.

The aims of the trial are to address a decline in the wetland values of Long Swamp at the artificial outlet by:

1. increasing wetland habitat diversity in the vicinity of the Nobles Rocks drain outlet
2. increasing the seasonal connectivity of wetland habitats throughout the system
3. re-creating additional habitat for the most sensitive indicator freshwater aquatic species.

The trial will progress in stages over the next 2 years, enabling the Trust to progressively record and measure the impacts of hydrological restoration in real time, and providing the information necessary for determining a future permanent solution.

The first stage of the restoration trial involved 45 willing volunteers from the local community getting together on 9 May 2014 to construct a low-level temporary sandbag structure at Nobles Rocks, initially at the most accessible and technically feasible section of drain in this rugged coastal environment. A few hours and 600 sandbags later, the trial structure was in place and operating as planned, with water spilling down the drain at the new trial retention height. The initial upstream effects on the drain and swamp will now be assessed, before progressing with the next stages of the trial which are likely to involve further incremental increases in the operating height of the trial structure over the next 12 months, and full implementation of the hydrological and ecological monitoring program for the project.

A big thanks to DEPI, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, Nelson Coastcare and the wide range of the other community groups that helped us get the trial and this important restoration project underway.

Nature Glenelg Trust will keep you up to date on the progress of the restoration trial and our upcoming ecological monitoring of Long Swamp through its website ([natureglenelg.org.au](http://natureglenelg.org.au)) and future editions of *Wetlands Australia*.



*Forty five local volunteers help to construct the first stage of a hydrological restoration trial at Long Swamp, south-west Victoria*  
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