

Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd  
[ACN: 153 577 907]

as Trustee for



ABN: 23 917 949 584

## Annual Report: 2015-16 Financial Year



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## ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE

Nature Glenelg Trust is a mission-driven, not-for-profit organisation that has been established to operate as:

1. a community environmental NGO;
2. a source of professional ecological knowledge available for delivering project work that improves environmental management outcomes; and,
3. a recipient of charitable donations for supporting habitat restoration and other environmental work consistent with the priorities set out in our Deed of Trust.

This operating model enables the organisation to (1) seek and deliver grants for community environmental benefit, but also (2) provide ecological consulting services under two registered trading names, Aquasave – NGT (for aquatic ecology) and NGT Consulting (for general ecology). In furthering our organisational purpose by working with clients on important conservation management projects, our consulting services also provide a financial contribution to support the costs of running our not-for-profit organisation.

Since Nature Glenelg Trust was admitted to the Register of Environmental Organisations in 2014, this model also seeks to diversify organisational funding streams and minimise the need to rely upon any precious future donated funds to support day-to-day operations and administration. In this way, we aim to give supporters the confidence that their donation to our Public Fund will achieve maximum impact in furthering the on-ground environmental objectives (such as wetland habitat restoration) of Nature Glenelg Trust.

All activities of Nature Glenelg Trust (including our ecological consulting services) meet at least one of our organisational objectives from our Deed of Trust, namely:

1. To protect and enhance the natural environment, with a particular emphasis on wetland conservation and restoration activities in the Focal Region<sup>\*1</sup>, supported by the Habitat Restoration Fund.
2. To generate and provide high quality scientific information that enhances management of the natural environment.
3. To support and undertake key conservation ecology research predominantly within, but not limited to, the Focal Region.
4. To promote public awareness of nature through education, and involving the community in the activities of the Trust.

<sup>\*1</sup>: Our focal region includes the NRM regions situated between Melbourne (Victoria) and Adelaide (South Australia).

## DIRECTORS REPORT

### 1. Summary of the year's activities

#### 1.1 Project work overview

Nature Glenelg Trust delivered a total of 80 projects during the 2015-16 financial year, with 31 of these projects completed before the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

Type of Project Work	Number of Projects Active during 2015-16 Financial Year
Native flora, vegetation management or ecological monitoring	26
Native fish	23
Other fauna	5
Community engagement	5
Multi-faceted projects (several types combined)	3
Wetlands	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>

#### 1.2 Grant funded project work

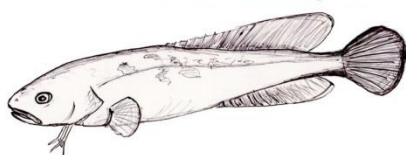
Nature Glenelg Trust was awarded grant funding to commence or continue the delivery of the 26 grant funded projects in the 2014-15 financial year. Nine grant funded projects were acquitted during the financial year, with the remaining seventeen remaining active into the 2016-17 financial year.

#### 1.3 Environmental consulting project work

Nature Glenelg Trust delivered a total of 54 contracted environmental consulting projects for a range of (mostly government) clients in the 2014-15 financial year. Twenty two (22) of these projects were completed and closed during the financial year, with the balance remaining active into the 2016-17 financial year.

As previously explained, irrespective of whether they are grant funded or professional contracted fee-for-service or consulting projects (as delivered under our registered trading names: Aquasave NGT, or NGT Consulting – logos below), NGT only delivers projects that are consistent with our organisational objectives, making a positive contribution to regional environmental management. The breakdown of these projects by category is included in the overall summary table presented in section 1.1.

AQUASAVE - NatureGlenelgTrust



Ecology, Monitoring, Conservation



## 2. Achievements: Case studies from across the NGT focal region

### 2.1 Threatened Species Protection Initiative projects

The Threatened Species Protection Initiative was a \$5.2 million Victorian Government program to support immediate action on threatened species and habitat protection. Nature Glenelg Trust delivered seven projects funded under the Critical Action and Strategic Partnership grants component of this program. The seven projects ranged from native flora protection on the Victorian Volcanic Plain through to identifying critical refuge habitat for threatened aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate species. What follows is a brief summary of each project:

#### 2.1.1 Salt Lake Tussock Grass (*Lake Linlithgow*)

The nationally vulnerable (*EPBC Act 1999*) Salt Lake Tussock-grass (*Poa sallacustris*) grows in patches on the shore of Lake Linlithgow and Lake Bullrush, two significant water bodies within a wider complex of volcanic lakes in western Victoria. Salt Lake Tussock-grass is a small, spreading *Poa* reaching only 30cm. It is thought to have the ability to spread rhizomatously in response to inundation and soil property changes around the lake, hence making it a good coloniser of shorelines following water level retreat. Invasive weeds such as Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus*), Tall Wheat Grass (*Thinopyrum ponticum*), and Phalaris (*Phalaris aquatica*) are encroaching into the habitat of the Salt Lake Tussock-grass along the lake shores, competing with and shading it out. Nature Glenelg Trust worked in conjunction with the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club and land managers Parks Victoria and the Southern Grampians Shire Council, to undertake strategic management of threatening weeds. An additional aim of this project was to promote the conservation of this species and its local habitat to the wider community.

The project achieved the following outcomes:

- Monitoring of long-term *P. sallacustris* quadrats in 2015 and 2016 and mapping of all *P. sallacustris* patches around the shores of Lake Linlithgow, Bulrush Swamp and Krause Swamp.
- Chemical treatment of Phalaris which was encroaching on *P. sallacustris* habitat.
- Treatment of Spiny Rush infestations around the lake.
- Slashing and spraying of Tall Wheat Grass – particularly around the Boonawah Creek terminus.
- Treatment of African Boxthorn on the banks.
- Removal of exotic (European) trees.
- Mapping of all woody weeds for further removal efforts



### 2.1.2 Linear roadside reserves (Victorian Volcanic Plain)

This project supported the Linear Reserves Program (LRP), a strategic management partnership delivered by DELWP, and the Corangamite and Glenelg Hopkins CMA's, which delivers key conservation actions for priority linear grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP) at a regional scale. Natural Temperate Grasslands of the VVP is listed as Critically Endangered (CE) under the *EPBC Act 1999*, with less than one percent estimated to remain from the pre-European extent. Within the western Victorian region, the small remaining linear grasslands (on rail or road reserves) and the many threatened flora and fauna populations they contain are still subject to a large number of significant threats, particularly given the numerous roadside uses and management entities involved.

Providing current and accurate information on the status of these grasslands, their significant populations, and the present or potential threats is critical for determining strategic, prioritised and appropriate conservation management. Given the high number of individual linear reserves stretched across a large geographic area, many high conservation priority grasslands have not been assessed for numerous years.

The outcomes of this project included:

- Assessment of the status of threatened flora and community populations and habitat condition.
- Assessment of weed threats and management recommendations.
- Assessment of other key emergent threats including disturbance.
- Desktop and site review of Vulnerable, Rare or Threatened (VROT) grassland flora populations that were not currently included on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) database.

NGT was able to assess 61 roadside grasslands in four key areas in late spring 2015: Dunkeld-Cavendish, Dunkeld-Penshurst, Dunkeld-Glen Thompson and Derrinallum areas. Forty-seven of these grasslands were assessed to be of high or very high conservation value which contained vulnerable, rare or threatened flora species. Frequent burning as part of the CFA strategic burn program appeared to significantly increase the overall condition and floristic diversity of Themeda-dominated grasslands. Small disturbances including vehicle access, culverts, soil movement, gravel dumping etc. were prolific and were a key source of weed invasion into the core of the grassland sites. Three hundred and ninety weed threats were assessed and management recommendations provided. The most significant threat came from pasture grasses such as *Phalaris aquatica*, and *Thinopyrum ponticum* which colonised areas of disturbance. Following desktop reviews, 28 locations of VROT species including *Prasophyllum suaveolens* (Fragrant Leek-orchid), *Leucochrysum albicans* subsp. *albicans* (Hoary Sunray) and *Thelymitra gregaria* were also assessed to be absent from the VBA database, and have since been collated for submission.





### 2.1.3 *Protecting threatened orchids on the urban fringe: conserving the Basalt Leek-orchid at Maam Reserve*

The Maam Water Reserve is a small and unique reserve near Warrnambool that retains a number of threatened flora species, including the FFG-Act listed Basalt Leek-orchid (*Prasophyllum viretrum*) – known only from a handful of sites on the south-west Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP). The reserve management plan (Geoff Carr, 2011) recorded 44 significant, rare or threatened flora species at the site. It has extremely high value as a small remnant of VVP flora communities, including high quality Plains Grassy Wetland, Plains Grassy Sedgeland and Aquatic Herbland EVCs. Invasive flora species have established on the reserve and pose an ongoing threat to the orchid populations, as well as the overall diversity of the site.



Using funding from the TSPI program, Nature Glenelg Trust continued critical weed control work, treating 3.5 hectares of invasive shrubs and herbs including briar rose, wild gladiolus and gorse, as well as weedy grasses including phalaris, Yorkshire fog and cocksfoot. In addition, neighbouring landholders have been helped with gorse and hawthorn removal.

These efforts have had a tangible and lasting impact by removing the immediate threat from transformative woody weeds and competitive grasses. In encouraging signs, one more treatment may be enough to eliminate the extremely invasive wild gladiolus – listed by respected botanist Geoff Carr as one of the key threats to the reserve in his Management Plan for the reserve (2011).

In late summer, grassland monitoring was conducted to give an indication of biomass levels and overall grassland health. NGT consulted with grassland ecologists from the Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) to determine the most suitable method, eventually settling on the plot-based GBM (golfball method) due to its common use at other grassland sites, its low impact, and its time efficiency in the field. Ten randomly-located biomass plots were established in the grassland, with small marking stakes installed at each plot and GPS points recorded making monitoring repeatable in future years. The monitoring found biomass levels to be high to very high in 80% of plots, making the site a strong candidate for biomass reduction to benefit threatened grassland species. Trial burns were not carried out due to extremely dry conditions (and the perceived risk to adjacent housing), but discussions are continuing about how to implement ecological burns at the site that will also benefit the surrounding community by reducing the grass fire risk.

In addition to the funded actions at the reserve, a volunteer aquatic survey carried out by Dr Lachlan Farrington (NGT Senior Wetland Ecologist) and Dr Lauren Veale (NGT Aquatic Ecologist) made some discoveries that further add to our



understanding of the unique value of the site. A population of the Little Galaxias (*Galaxiella toourtkoourt*) – a native fish listed as threatened in Victoria and vulnerable in Australia – was discovered, as well as Southern Pygmy Perch (*Nannoperca australis*) and Long-neck Turtles (*Chelodina longicollis*).

As a result of investigations and activities undertaken during this project, encouraging progress in grassland quality, and some clear ways forward to improve the prospects of the Basalt Leek-orchid have been identified. With the interest in the reserve that has been developed throughout the project, it is hoped that this positive trajectory can be continued in the coming years.

#### *2.1.4 Strategic on-ground management to retain and enhance threatened flora and ecological communities of the Mortlake Common Flora Reserve.*

This project enabled delivery of previously identified critical weed control actions aimed at protecting the only known population of the Western Gaping Leek-orchid (*Prasophyllum* sp. aff. *correctum*) at Mortlake Common Flora Reserve. The population has been under threat from a number of woody weeds, including a large 3 hectare outbreak of Gorse, along with scattered Boxthorn and Briar Rose. Additionally, in Blind Creek which runs through the reserve, Spiny Rush is currently contained to the waterway but the dispersal of seed by animals represents a significant invasion threat to the large grassy wetland in the centre of the reserve.

These transformative weeds threaten the rare values of the reserve, which are unique in the region. During the project, gorse control was undertaken across 3 hectares, with chemical treatment of all regrowth and emergent seedlings in the previously treated patch. The utmost care was taken to traverse the entire infestation and search for any plants, and hygiene measures were taken to stop the further spread of seed. Plants were treated across the whole patch, but plant size was much smaller than in the previous round of control, allowing work to be performed accurately and with less chemical usage. In January 2016, the boundaries of the Gorse infestation were mapped to a fine resolution using handheld GIS devices.

Six hectares of weedy grass and thistle control was also undertaken, focussing on the east of the reserve but also targeting outlying populations across the rest. One hectare of spiny rush was treated along Blind Creek, taking care to use frog friendly methods and only when no water was present. On revisiting the site, the treated spiny rush has died off well and surrounding vegetation appears healthy. Also, Boxthorn and Briar Rose plants were treated across 2 hectares.

Additionally, monitoring and investigation of restoration options have provided guidance on ways to enhance overall grassland quality. In summer 2015/16, grassland monitoring was conducted to give an indication of biomass levels and overall grassland health. Due to an early onset of dry, hot conditions and the associated lack of emergence of key species, the focus was on biomass rather than threatened flora and structure. NGT consulted with grassland ecologists from the Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) to determine the most suitable method, eventually settling on the plot-based GBM (golfball method) due to its common use at other grassland sites (making results somewhat comparable), its low impact, and its time efficiency in the field.



Fifteen randomly-located biomass plots were established in the grassland, with small marking stakes installed at each plot and GPS points recorded, making monitoring repeatable in future years. The monitoring found biomass levels to be high to very high in 87% of plots, making the site a strong candidate for biomass reduction to benefit threatened grassland species. Results have been prepared for land managers, and NGT continues to support plans for biomass reduction at the reserve.

As well as on-ground work and monitoring, continued engagement and collaboration was sought with other agencies and nearby landholders. Good progress was obtained, with an adjacent landholder with a large gorse infestation treating the patch successfully and performing follow-up control after receiving technical advice and encouragement from NGT. The interest in the site has been encouraging, and in a related development, details and descriptions of the reserve were provided to Dr Nick Williams who is developing a grassland app to go with the Land of Sweeping Plains book. It is hoped that the app may help others discover the Mortlake Common grassland.

A draft hydrological restoration plan has been prepared for the grassy wetland in the centre of the reserve, describing the site and the shallow man-made drains that run across the wetland and out to Blind Creek. The document proposes a restoration scenario that allows a more natural hydrological regime by blocking these drains, and is currently incorporating feedback from land managers. At Mortlake Common, hydrological restoration offers an opportunity to create positive ecological outcomes at low cost, and is a further step forward in preserving and enhancing the natural values of the site.



### 2.1.5 Western Swamp Crayfish (*Gramastacus insolitus*) (Grampians region)

Western swamp crayfish (*Gramastacus insolitus*) is a little known species which is reliant on frequent inundation events. It is thought to be relatively short lived (1-2 years) and only breeds during inundation events. Its preferred habitat is areas of slow flowing or still water with thick aquatic vegetation. The species is a poor burrower and hence relies on the burrows of other crayfish species for refuge during dry times. Previous sampling has



identified the species from a number of sites around the Grampians National Park and also to the south around Penshurst, and further west to the South Australian border. This current project aimed to identify known locations of the species and to determine nearest available wetland habitat, which is critical for recruitment and localised species persistence. In 2014, a number of breeding individuals were recorded in Brady Swamp, following wetland restoration activities, thus highlighting the importance of maintained inundation episodes in wetlands throughout the species range.

Unfortunately, the 2015/2016 years coincided with the sixth driest rainfall period on record and a majority of aquatic systems failed to fill. Lack of flows and floodplain inundation throughout the Wannon River in 2015 meant that the species did not emerge in any great numbers and sampling at other more permanent sites failed to detect any individuals. Inspection of other crayfish species burrows also failed to detect any western swamp crayfish, despite recording other species e.g. *Cherax* sp.

Our assessment of restoration opportunities therefore relied on existing records of distribution, using a combination of Landsat imagery and normalised difference water index (NDWI), to determine reliable wetland areas in close proximity to where the species has been found. In addition, and on the back of the success already revealed following the restoration of Brady Swamp, Bryan Swamp in the Victoria Valley has emerged as an important potential focus for future restoration work. *Gramastacus insolitus* has been recorded in tributary sections immediately upstream and downstream of the site and, while the site does still retain significant amounts of water in wetter years, its capacity is reduced by an excavated outflow channel. Further investigation revealed that adjacent landholder sentiment toward restoration, via raising of the outlet channel, was strong.

Our restoration feasibility study for the site has investigated anticipated inundation scenarios modelled on rainfall patterns with a determination on the likelihood of increasing habitat available for mass recruitment events.

### 2.1.6 *Wimmera Bottlebrush & Little Galaxias (Gooseneck and Brady swamps)*

When the recently restored Brady swamp wetland complex (near Dunkeld, Victoria) receives seasonal flows from the Wannon River, it provides key floodplain habitat which facilitates the successful breeding and recruitment of native species, including little galaxias. In addition, the floodplain area also contains the largest regional aggregate of *Callistemon wimmerensis*, a threatened bottlebrush which was only recently described. The wetlands in this area have been subject to artificial drainage for several decades but have recently had their sill levels restored and are hence primed to store water in line with what would have occurred pre-modification. Restoration trials were carried out in 2013 and 2014 and in the first year post-restoration works, prolonged inundation was experienced compared to similar rainfall years prior to the works. This project aimed to investigate the early response of both little galaxias and Wimmera bottlebrush in order to determine if there had been a signature shift in both abundance and recruitment of both of these wetland dependent species.

As a result of severe rainfall deficiencies during 2015 and 2016, the Brady and Gooseneck Swamp wetlands, and their associated floodplains, have remained dry since late 2014. In light of this lack of availability of aquatic habitat, fish surveys focused refuge pools upstream and downstream of the Brady swamp complex to improve our understanding of species specific habitat requirements and also to collect standardised baseline data for the lower Wannon River. Follow up surveys of sites previously surveyed (autumn 2015) provided a basis for assessing annual variability within available refuge habitat. Mapping of the extent of *C. wimmerensis* was undertaken in order to provide an overall assessment of where the species occurs in relation to wetland restoration zones of influence, and to investigate overall condition and status of recruitment occurring within the local populations.

#### *Fish sampling*

Upstream of the wetland complex, little galaxias were detected at only one of six surveyed sites, which while being small (5 m<sup>2</sup>), provided suitable water quality and adequate submerged and emergent vegetation. Provided this pool has connectivity with the Wannon River once flows return, the discrete population could provide important downstream passive dispersal of individuals to the wetland. Other sites upstream were typically characterised by faster flowing water and in-stream woody debris that were better suited to other native species such as river blackfish, Glenelg spiny crayfish and mountain galaxias.

Refuge pools downstream of the wetland were generally slower flowing or still and proved to be better suited to wetland specialist species including little galaxias. However, compared to surveys in autumn 2015, species abundance declined from 49 to 29 fish per net and area of occurrence dropped from 100 % (across 4 sites) to 50 % (across 6 sites). This trend was attributed to declines in available habitat and water quality, with salinity at most sites being well over double that of last year. A new significant refuge pool (presumably spring-fed) was discovered during 2016 monitoring and despite being saline (>9000 EC), supported low numbers of little galaxias, while a smaller nearby pool which was less saline (<4000 EC) supported the highest number of little galaxias. The refuge pools along 'Grampians retreat' had maintained reasonable water levels since 2015 and were the only sites to not show increased salinisation (remaining around 2000 EC). This proved to be a key determinant for the increased abundance of little galaxias and other native species, including southern pygmy perch and river blackfish.



Overall, despite the lack of flows along the Wannon River over the past 18 months, there are still a small number of suitable permanent pools which are providing critical refuge for key native species over these drier periods. Hopefully the long awaited flows from the Wannon River will arrive this winter (2016) and we will have the opportunity to assess how native fish communities respond to the expected increase in inundation of Brady and Gooseneck Swamps following permanent hydrological restoration works.



### *Callistemon* mapping

Remote sensing combined with field-surveys revealed several new records of *C. wimmerensis* within the area around Gooseneck and Brady swamps. Previous estimates put the local population size at around 5000 although this has now estimated to be somewhere close to 100,000 plants based on colonies found during this study. In terms of historical changes, aerial imagery from 1950, 1971 and 1985 shows that vegetation has increased around the edge of contemporarily mapped *C. wimmerensis*. No doubt linked to the acquisition of some of the area by Parks Victoria in 1986, it is likely that *C. wimmerensis* has mirrored this vegetation expansion. Patterns of recruitment, evidenced through different size cohorts, also suggest an influence of burning and/or high flow events. In addition, there appears to be a more recent recruitment event which would correlate with the 2013/14 wetland restoration trials. A large number of juvenile plants (<1m) were observed in an area at the south of the Wannon floodplain, at the point where the river flows enter Brady swamp and based on growth estimates, would have seeded when the wetland filled under its restored level in 2014. Historical flow records reveal that 2014 was not a particularly high-flow year,



compared with other major events which correlate to other dominant *C. wimmerensis* age classes. Overall, this study of the Brady and Gooseneck swamp populations of *C. wimmerensis* has revealed that the largest geographical aggregate of the species is healthy in terms of both individual plant health and signs of continuing recruitment. In addition, observations suggest that wetland restoration works undertaken at the site may result in greater opportunities for recruitment, i.e. not limited to above average rainfall seasons.



#### 2.1.7 Stream habitat for Glenelg Freshwater Mussels (Glenaulin Creek)

Following the recent discovery of Glenelg freshwater mussels in Glenaulin Creek, actions to protect stream habitat have been identified as a priority for threat management for the species. Staff from Nature Glenelg Trust have met with landholders abutting Glenaulin Creek in an effort to understand the land management practices and identify areas of common ground which are compatible with streamside protection. During the course



of this project we have worked closely with one landholder whose property joins areas of the creek which contain features compatible with the requirements of Glenelg freshwater mussels. In combination with a wider survey of aquatic values along the entire length of the creek, we have identified two new locations in this section where the species occurs. This survey also provided follow up records at two sites where the mussels were previously recorded and also identified a number of other aquatic species of conservation value (e.g. variegated pygmy perch, river blackfish and Glenelg spiny crayfish).

Aquatic surveys proved to be a valuable exercise in increasing landholder sentiment toward the values of the creek and one fencing project, aimed at reducing sediment inputs, has been delivered under this project. In conjunction with growing interests from farmers, and also managers of plantations bordering the creek, conservation based management considerations for streamside areas have increased and further efforts to undertake activities on additional properties are well placed.

## 2.2 Sustainable Fishing Clinics

The fishing clinics, primarily funded by a grant from the SA Government, took place from Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and involved 76 participants who ranged from 9-12 years of age. Some great fish were caught during the clinics, including Tommy Ruff, King George Whiting and Flathead. A donated prize was given for the biggest fish, the most memorable being a 1.5 m Banjo Shark, caught by an angler at Port MacDonnell. For many anglers it wasn't about catching the biggest fish, but rather their first. For Nature Glenelg Trust, it was fantastic to witness the excitement of kids catching their very first fish.

One of the main objectives of the clinics was to teach kids the basic skills of rigging and casting and provide an opportunity for them to catch and successfully release fish. At the beginning of each clinic, we demonstrated the basic steps to casting then gave kids an opportunity to practice on the lawn. The teaching continued on the jetty with staff and volunteers providing additional help to those that needed it. A large proportion of kids caught a fish, and therefore had an opportunity to follow the best handling and release procedures that were highlighted at the start.

With an emphasis on sustainable fishing, participants were divided into smaller groups at the beginning of the clinic and given an overview of the responsible code of fishing and the fisheries rules and regulations for South Australia. Kids were encouraged to be sustainable anglers by following 'three simple ways to keep fish alive'. The first was to 'know the size and bag limits', which made kids aware of why we need fisheries regulations. We then spoke about the 'correct handling and release procedures for fish', explaining how fish friendly tackle can help minimise our impact on fish and their environment. Finally, we spoke about our responsibility as fishers to look after our coastal environment by always taking home rubbish with you.

At the end of the clinics, kids were given a demonstration on how scientists dissect fish, the types of information they record (and why it's important) and how they determine the age of a fish. The importance of knowing the length and age at which fish become sexually mature was highlighted as a key piece of information in setting appropriate size and bag limits for species.

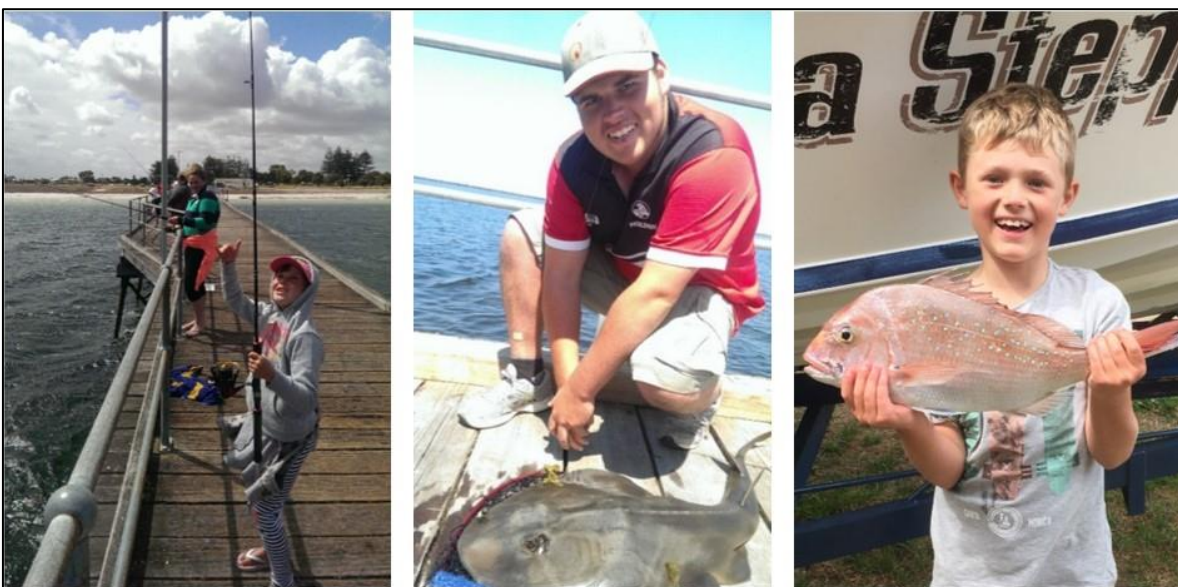
The need for different management regulations for different species was shown by conducting an ageing workshop, where each participant got the chance to record the length and age of their own fish. Kids were given a life-size cut out of either a bream or mullet and an accompanying otolith section to age their fish. They were asked to measure and record the length of their fish and determine its age by counting the number of 'rings' on their otolith. They were then asked to group into species and form a line from the smallest to the biggest fish. A line was drawn to represent the minimum size limit for each species and we spoke about the differences in growth rates between the two species. Many kids were surprised to know a 40 cm bream was 20 years old compared to a 55 cm mullet which was only 3 years of age.





***Kids at Donovans Landing gather around to see how an ear bone or 'otolith' is extracted from a mullet (left) and later enjoy a chance to measure and age their own mullet (right).***

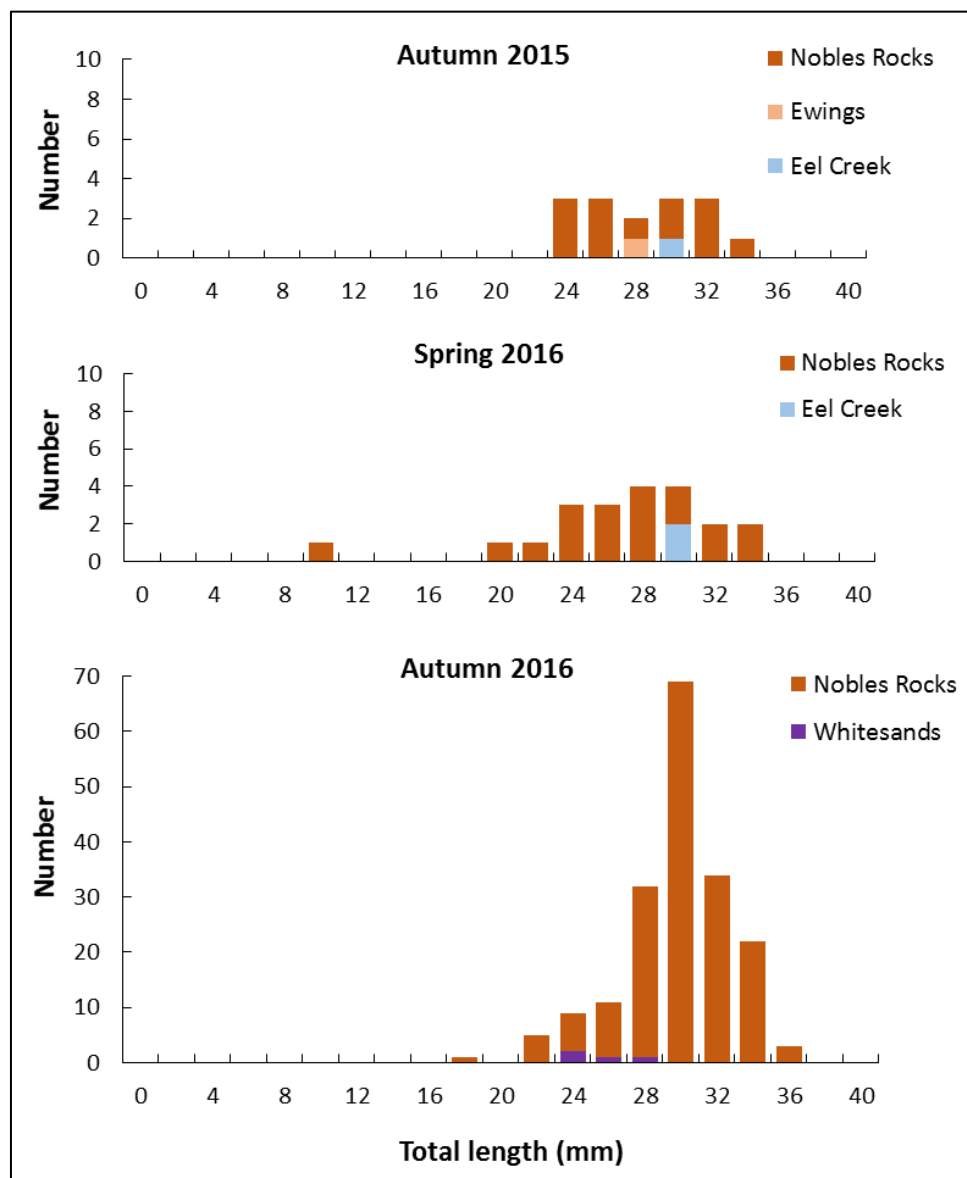
The fun continued after the clinics with a Fishing Photo Competition running until the end of school holidays. The deserving winner of the competition was 7 year old Ryley Munro, who won his very own Silstar Rod and Reel (valued at \$130) for his fantastic snapper photo! Ryley, who attended the clinic in Robe, later used his new skills to catch a snapper with his family, while his father caught a mullet. After hearing about the mullet citizen science project being undertaken by Nature Glenelg Trust (funded by the Victorian Government), Ryley insisted that his father donate the mullet frames to research.



***Happy anglers at Kingston Jetty (left), angler from Kalangadoo with his 1.5 m Banjo Shark caught at Port MacDonnell (middle) and Photo Competition entrant, Ryley Munro with his snapper (right).***

### 2.3 Monitoring restoration success at Long Swamp

The construction of the trial structure at Long Swamp back in 2015 was one of our most ambitious on-ground undertakings. However, the rapid response of the wetland has been equally impressive. In a year when most of our wetlands of interest remained dry, Long Swamp has filled and spilled down its original, historical route i.e. behind the dunes and into the Glenelg River rather than out to sea at the Nobles Rocks cutting. Even more impressive is that much of the shallower area of wetland behind the structure maintained inundation to knee depth throughout the summer of 2015/16. Vegetation transects have revealed an instant retreat of invading terrestrial vegetation alongside the expansion of aquatic plants, like water ribbon, particularly in open areas of now flooded shrubs. Fish monitoring has also revealed a transition from a diadromous fish community to one resembling more of an obligate freshwater underpinning. Of particular note has been the increased detection of little galaxias in the wetland area behind the structure and a corresponding decline in number of the diadromous, common galaxiid.



*Length frequency distributions of little galaxias, collected in autumn and spring 2015 and autumn 2016.*





*Fyke net, in the wetland area behind the Nobles Rocks weir (trial structure)*



*Transect photopoint showing vegetation transition: August 2015 (above) and May 2016 (below)*

## 2.4 Hydrological restoration options for Glenshera Swamp, Stipiturus Conservation Park.

Glenshera Swamp, within Stipiturus Conservation Park, is one of the most important remnants of a nationally threatened ecological community – the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula. The site has managed to retain a suite of important biodiversity values, despite attempts over a 50 year period (up to its reservation in 2001) to make the area more suitable for agricultural production through drainage, clearance and grazing activities.

Consistent with a current trend of growing concern surrounding the availability and sustainable management of water resources in the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM region, there is considerable interest in the hydrology Glenshera Swamp. With this in mind, Nature Glenelg Trust was asked to undertake an assessment of the site for DEWNR, to review the feasibility of different hydrological restoration options, with a goal of ensuring the future sustainability of the wetland ecosystem.

The assessment, which occurred from September 2015 until January 2016, culminating in the production of a report detailing restoration options, and involved: site visits, LiDAR and aerial imagery acquisition, historical research, and, detailed discussions with a wide range of people that have an intimate knowledge of the site.

Our assessment found that although the site is underpinned by regional groundwater, it is also strongly influenced by seasonal rainfall and its relationship to localised (surface and groundwater) catchment flows. Past drainage activities, which occurred over several decades from the 1940s, deliberately sought to favour agriculture over the pre-existing environmental values through diverting inflows, drying out the slopes, draining the bed of the swamp and increasing downstream drawdown. These activities were all aimed at significantly speeding up the flow of water out of the system, irrespective of its source.



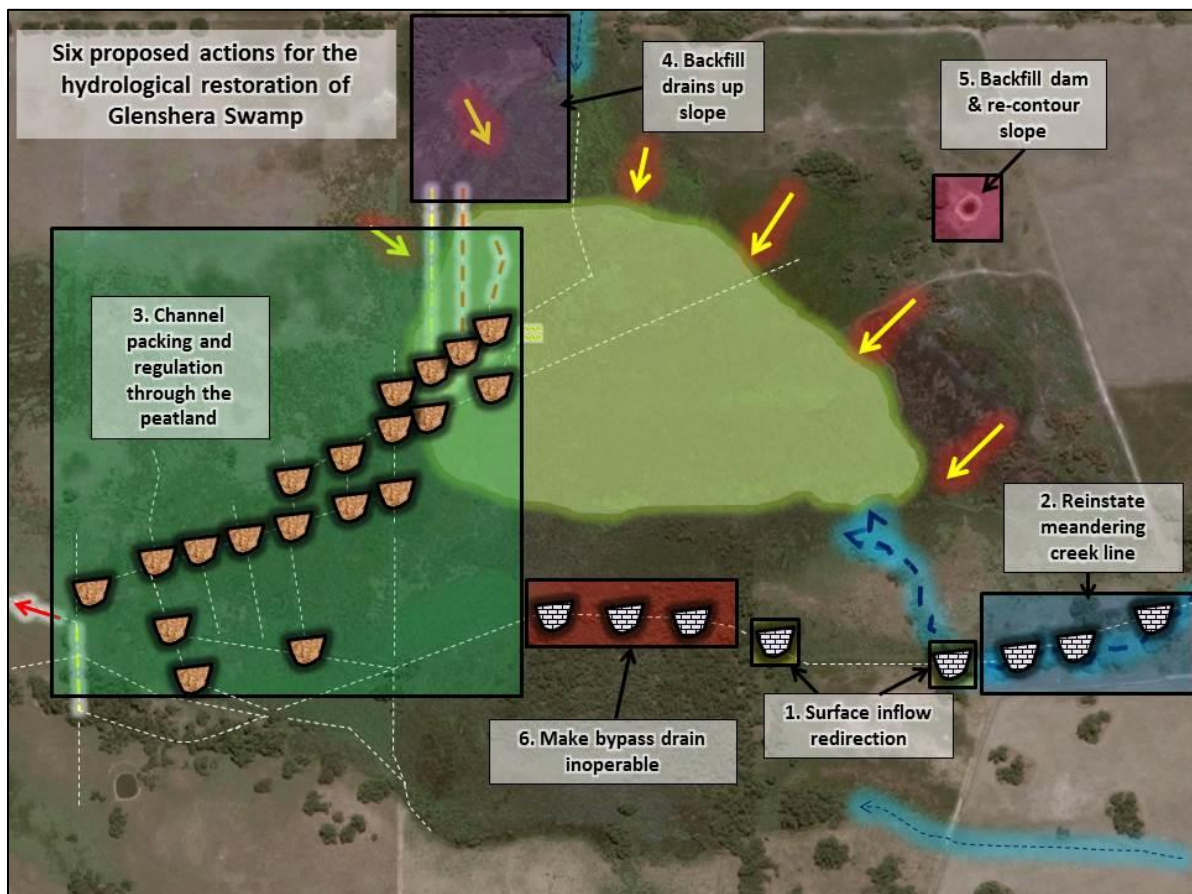
*The Bypass Drain at Glenshera Swamp, Stipiturus CP – flowing in spring 2015*



Therefore, the goal of restoration is to trial and implement measures that are capable of significantly slowing down, and making better use of, water passing through Glenshera Swamp to preserve (and if possible enhance) its ecological values.

As a result of a detailed assessment of site values, threats and options for restoration, six key actions were proposed for implementing the next phase of the project:

- ACTION 1:** Flow redirection of the natural creekline
- ACTION 2:** Full meandering flow path reinstatement of the natural creekline
- ACTION 3:** Channel packing and regulation - measures for slowing and dispersing flow through the core area of peatland
- ACTION 4:** Earthworks to physically backfill steep drains that target hillslope seepage
- ACTION 5:** Decommission the dam to the north-east of the swamp, reinstating the original bank profile
- ACTION 6:** Install a series of blocks to render the bypass drain inoperable



On the basis of the findings of the investigation, it was recommended that the hydrological restoration of Glenshera Swamp commence as a matter of some priority.

It is hoped that the logic of the assessment presented in the report may provide the basis for a wider discussion about the potential for hydrological restoration to be used as a proactive management tool in other swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula, or indeed to improve the condition of other degraded wetland ecosystems in the wider region.

### 3. Plans for the 2016-17 Financial Year

#### 3.1 Strive to be universally viewed as leaders in aquatic ecology and wetland restoration in south-eastern Australia

Nature Glenelg Trust has already had considerable success delivering a wide range of general biodiversity projects. However, consistent with having an organisational emphasis on aquatic ecology, we continue to strive to be universally viewed by current and future project partners as leaders in aquatic ecology and wetland restoration in south-eastern Australia.

**Goals:**

- Forge new partnerships to achieve positive on ground results for aquatic habitats and species, based on the ecological expertise of Nature Glenelg Trust.
- Increase the geographic reach of NGT's wetland restoration activities in south-eastern Australia.

#### 3.2 Continue to consolidate NGT's presence within our focal region

Although Nature Glenelg Trust has staff based at a number of locations in western Victoria, creating a regional community hub in the South West similar to the successful nursery site in Mount Gambier (South Australia), would have obvious benefits for the organisation, our work and the wider community we are seeking to engage with. However, this concept relies on the right site and tenure arrangements becoming available; hence it remains a priority for NGT to be attentive to potential opportunities and willing to capitalise on this concept in the future should the opportunity arise.

**Goal:** Establish a community hub and small office in Warrnambool in the next 2 years.

#### 3.3 Continue to explore opportunities for creating a strategic wetland restoration demonstration site

The *Habitat Restoration Reserve* concept focusses on Nature Glenelg Trust:

- tackling property-scale habitat restoration in our focal region;
- empowering the regional community to participate with us in the land management process;
- inspiring others to act similarly on private land; and,
- delivering a tangible environmental benefit that people can see and experience.

The successful purchase of Eaglehawk Waterhole as a *Habitat Restoration Reserve* in the Bangham district is a perfect illustration of NGT's mission in this regard, and something the organisation is keen to repeat over the coming years at a small number of strategic demonstration sites situated across our focal region. A site that requires property-scale wetland (hydrological) restoration works in a strategic location for wider conservation benefit is a currently identified priority.

**Goal:** To purchase and establish at least one additional Habitat Restoration Reserve, with an emphasis on wetland restoration, over the next 2-3 years.



### 3.4 Implement a philanthropy strategy for NGT

Nature Glenelg Trust's Habitat Restoration Fund was accepted onto the Register of Environmental Organisations on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2014. This makes NGT a Deductible Gift Recipient under Australian taxation law, with donations over \$2 eligible for a tax deduction. At the time of writing, three strategic private purchase/restoration projects are currently available to NGT to pursue (similar to Eaglehawk Waterhole), hence an immediate focus for NGT is developing our tools for communicating such opportunities to potential donors. As these projects require significant finance, this is something that clearly requires active promotion. A simple mechanism for smaller-scale donating to NGT will also be introduced to our website, making it easier for supporters to financially invest in our work.

**Goals:**

- to communicate strategic purchase/restoration opportunities to potential donors; and,
- to introduce new content on the NGT website that increases awareness and makes it easier for supporters to financially invest in our work.

### 3.5 Encourage staff to pursue their ecological interests

As our greatest asset, Nature Glenelg Trust staff are encouraged to develop their ecological expertise through their work with NGT. Where possible, staff are encouraged to pursue and develop their professional skills and interests through their work with us, and we aim to provide diverse and meaningful opportunities for them.

**Goal:** To encourage our staff to pursue their ecological interests where possible within the scope of their roles with NGT.

### 3.6 Celebrate our success so far

It has been an incredible journey that began with NGT's launch on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012, and our 5<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2017 provides a great opportunity to share our successes with our staff and supporters in SA and Victoria.

**Goal:** To hold a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for NGT in January 2017, open to the general public.

## 4. Employee Statistics

Nature Glenelg Trust employed a total of twelve full-time or part-time staff throughout the 2015-16 financial year, and a further sixteen staff on a casual basis.

Ten of these full-time or part-time staff remained in active service at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016:

1. Mark Bachmann (Manager / Principal Ecologist)
2. Jessica Bouchier (Administration Support and Project Ecologist)
3. Lachlan Farrington (Senior Wetland and Landscape Ecologist)
4. Bryan Haywood (Senior Ecologist)
5. Lauren Kivisalu (Project Ecologist)
6. Yvonne Riley (Community Nursery Officer)
7. Rose Thompson (Project Ecologist)
8. Jonathan Tuck (Ecologist and Project Logistics)
9. Lauren Veale (Aquatic Ecologist)
10. Nicholas Whiterod (Senior Aquatic Ecologist)

## 5. Membership

As a duly constituted fixed trust, Nature Glenelg Trust does not have its own financial membership base. As a charitable NGO committed to filling gaps, we are specifically interested in using our expertise to work with (not compete with) other membership-based community groups to increase their effectiveness, and ultimately help them to retain and attract members. We also hope to provide regular and meaningful volunteering opportunities for these groups' members (and the wider community) through participation in our projects.

Nature Glenelg Trust is listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations, enabling the organisation to seek tax-deductible financial contributions to our Public Fund. Supporters of Nature Glenelg Trust are also encouraged to register their email address on our website ([www.natureglenelg.org.au](http://www.natureglenelg.org.au)) to receive regular updates on our projects and organisational activities.

The Board of the Trustee for Nature Glenelg Trust, currently has six voting members:

1. Mark Bachmann
2. Catherine Dickson
3. Lachlan Farrington
4. Michael Hammer
5. Melissa Herpich
6. Nicholas Whiterod

At present, the members of the Trustee for Nature Glenelg Trust, also comprise the organisation's Committee of Management, which meets 3-4 times a year to oversee the strategic direction of the organisation, and are legally accountable for the administration of the Public Fund (the Habitat Restoration Fund).

## 6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### 6.1 Statement of Comprehensive Income

#### NATURE GLENELG PTY LTD T/A NATURE GLENELG TRUST

#### STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>Revenue</b>			
Sales		1,741,087	1,047,785
Administration Fees		128,232	120,352
Donations		175,095	-
Other Income		151,087	26,111
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<u>2,195,501</u>	<u>1,194,248</u>
<b>Less</b>			
<b>Expenses</b>			
Cost of Goods Sold		858,602	165,391
Employee benefits expense		798,064	781,020
Other expenses		159,669	156,729
<b>Total expenses</b>		<u>1,816,335</u>	<u>1,103,140</u>
<b>Net surplus for the Year</b>		379,166	91,108
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<u>379,166</u>	<u>91,108</u>

## 6.2 Balance Sheet

## NATURE GLENELG PTY LTD T/A NATURE GLENELG TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents		1,483,681	988,340
Receivables	2.	213,114	164,670
Inventories	3.	583,245	864,528
		<u>2,280,040</u>	<u>2,017,538</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>			
<b>Non Current Assets</b>			
Property Plant and Equipment	4.	722,002	555,228
		<u>722,002</u>	<u>555,228</u>
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>			
		<u>3,002,042</u>	<u>2,572,766</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade Creditors and Other Payables	5.	1,615,983	1,142,669
Provisions	6.	216,478	162,602
		<u>1,832,461</u>	<u>1,305,271</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Non Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade Creditors and Other Payables	5.	-	493,689
Provisions	6.	54,754	38,145
		<u>54,754</u>	<u>531,834</u>
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>			
		<u>1,887,215</u>	<u>1,837,105</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>			
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>1,114,827</u>	<u>735,661</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Issued Shares&Settled Sum		396	396
Retained Surplus		1,114,431	735,265
		<u>1,114,827</u>	<u>735,661</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>			



## 6.2 Notes the Financial Statements

### NATURE GLENELG PTY LTD T/A NATURE GLENELG TRUST

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016

##### NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012, Australian Accounting Standards-Reduced Disclosure Requirements, accounting interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. The financial report is for the entity Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd T/A Nature Glenelg Trust as an individual entity. Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd T/A Nature Glenelg Trust is a Propriety Limited company incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd T/A Nature Glenelg Trust is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements. The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this report:

##### **(a) Basis of preparation of the financial report**

###### Historical Cost Convention

The financial report has been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by revaluations to fair value for certain classes of assets as described in the accounting policies.

##### **(b) Revenue**

Revenue from sale of goods is recognised when the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have passed to the buyer and the costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably. Risks and rewards of ownership are considered passed to the buyer at the time of delivery of the goods to the customer.

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

##### **(c) Contributions - Government Grants and Donations**

A non-reciprocal contribution or grant is recognised when the entity obtains control of the contribution or grant and it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the entity, and the amount of the contribution or grant can be measured reliably. If conditions attached to the contribution or grant that must be satisfied before the entity is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of contribution or income is deferred until those conditions are met. A non-reciprocal donation is recognised when the right to receive a donation has been established. When the entity receives grants but is obliged to give directly approximately equal value to the contributor, recognition of grant income will be deferred until the delivery of service.

##### **(d) Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at banks, short-term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less held at call with financial institutions, and bank Overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities in the statement of financial position.


### 6.3 Independent Audit Report

#### **NATURE GLENELG PTY LTD T/A NATURE GLENELG TRUST**

#### **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016 (Cont.)**

##### **Auditor's Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial report of Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd T/A Nature Glenelg Trust is in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and of its performance for the period and complies with Australian Accounting Standards and Not-for-profits Regulation 2013 to the extent described in note 1 to the accounts.



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**Christopher Clarke**  
**Partner**  
**Clarke & Brownrigg**  
**Chartered Accountants**

**Dated in Adelaide this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of November 2016**