

# Restoration of the Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps

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The first project to address artificial drainage of Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps is up and running at Stipiturus Conservation Park.

Glenshera Swamp, situated six kilometres west of Mount Compass, South Australia, was first surveyed in February 1899. When the first aerial photograph was taken 50 years later in April 1949, the main change observed was the diversion of surface flows away from the swamp.

Today a sizeable portion of the former extent of Glenshera Swamp is located within Stipiturus Conservation Park and is widely considered one of the most important remaining swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula, a nationally-threatened ecological community. The site retains a suite of important biodiversity values despite efforts over several decades (up to its reservation in 2003) to make the area more suitable for agricultural production through artificial drainage, as well as clearance and grazing activities.

A restoration options report, completed by Nature Glenelg Trust, in March 2016 comprehensively described the history of change that led to the current modified condition of the site. The report defined the location, past purpose and impact of the artificial drains across the entire wetland for the first time and proposed six actions to address key elements of the hydrological regime. Four of these were implemented in the autumn of 2017.

In April 2017, Nature Glenelg Trust completed the construction of a series of seven restoration structures along the main drain in the park with the support of a range of volunteers, including Conservation Volunteers Australia Green Army Team, the Youth and Community in Conservation Action group and a range of other helpers.



*Top left: Structure #5—the point where flows are now diverted north, back to the swamp—before works (Nature Glenelg Trust)*

*Top right: Structure #5—autumn works complete (Nature Glenelg Trust)*

*Bottom: Structure #5—winter diversion towards the swamp (Nature Glenelg Trust)*

Despite a dry June, the works have been fully operational since July 2017 when the catchment started to generate sufficient runoff to reactivate the former creek channel and a narrow band of adjacent floodplain and restore all low-moderate creek flows towards the main swamp for the first time in seven decades.

As a result of the early success at Glenshera Swamp, Nature Glenelg Trust has recently assessed the restoration feasibility of Fleurieu swamps in the nearby Tookayerta catchment, south east of Mount Compass. The Trust is looking at opportunities to initiate similar projects there, including at Hesperilla Conservation Park. Given the extensive array of drains across the valleys of the Fleurieu Peninsula, there is significant potential to replicate this type of restoration and improve the overall condition and resilience of the swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula ecological community.

For more information on the progress of the Fleurieu Swamps eco-hydrology project or other Nature Glenelg Trust projects, please visit the Trust's website [www.natureglenelg.org.au](http://www.natureglenelg.org.au) or email [info@natureglenelg.org.au](mailto:info@natureglenelg.org.au).



*Bottom: Structure #5—NGT and the Green Army team* (Nature Glenelg Trust)

*Top: Structure #6—Youth and Community in Conservation Action group* (Nature Glenelg Trust)