

# Wetland importance realised

## Community campaign for international Ramsar listing rewarded

A UNITED community effort has secured international Ramsar listing of the Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay, prompting a public celebration.

Around 50 people visited the Princess Margaret Rose Caves recently to celebrate the inclusion of the iconic area on the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

The Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay complex stretches over more than 22,000 hectares of land, including the Lower Glenelg National Park, Discovery Bay Coastal Park and the Nelson Streamside Reserve.

“What makes this Ramsar site particularly special is that it is the first site in a very long time that has been nominated by the community,” Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (CMA) chief execu-

tive Adam Bester said.

“We have much to thank the local community over the last 12 plus years, particularly the Nelson Coastcare Group, driven largely by the late Leila Huebner OAM.”

Mr Bester paid tribute to the late Ms Huebner.

“Her passion and knowledge played a significant part in pushing this process through and gave the CMA and other agencies a local face to link with this process,” he said.

In 2013, Glenelg Hopkins CMA won the Australasia Riverprize and announced its commitment to submit the pristine complex to the Victorian and federal governments for consideration to the Ramsar Convention.

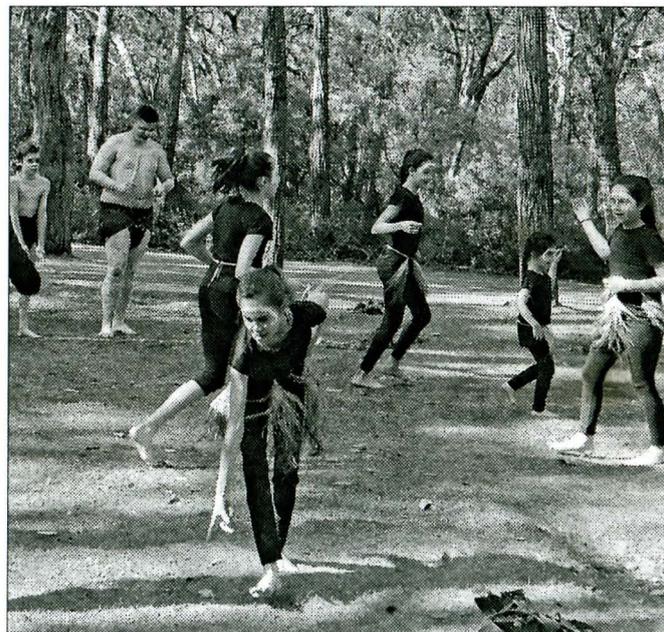
With the initial push from the Nelson community and support from Parks Victoria and the state environment

department, various parties worked together to develop the required documentation and scientific evidence to support listing of the iconic lower south west region.

The relationships between the community, government agencies, Glenelg Shire Council and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation were seen as instrumental in the nomination process.

Mr Bester expressed gratitude for the community's strong drive throughout the application process.

The recent event also featured a welcome to country and smoking ceremony from the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners and speeches from department Barwon South West regional manager Colleen White and Nelson community representative Mark Bachmann.



**SPECIAL CELEBRATION:** Koondoom Yarkeen Karweeyn dancers entertain the crowd at the Princess Margaret Rose Caves celebrating the inclusion of the Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay site to the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.