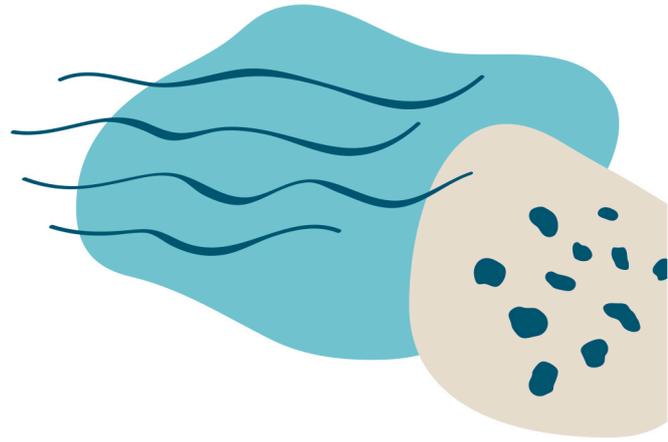


# Media Release



August 11, 2021

## Bryan's Swamp benefits from water restoration trial

A hydrological restoration trial is now being undertaken at the foot of the Grampians as winter rains fill environmentally important wetlands.

Bryan's Swamp, a 666-hectare wetland area north-west of Dunkeld at the entrance to the Victoria Valley, is currently having water levels restored through a temporary weir structure.

The swamp is regarded as one of the best wetlands in the region for bird watching and provides habitat for several threatened species, including the Growling Grass Frog, Brolga, Glossy Ibis, and Australasian Bittern.

Earlier this year it was confirmed Australasian bitterns use the swamp for breeding when eggshell fragments were found in a nest.

Drains were dug through Bryan's Swamp in the 1930s, and the wetland was extensively grazed prior to it being made one of Victoria's first Wildlife Reserves in the 1960s when the need for restoration of the water level to improve the biodiversity of the swamp was recognised.

Works to improve the wetland have steadily been undertaken by the Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Nature Glenelg Trust, Parks Victoria, local Landcare groups and landholders since 2015.

This winter, a sandbag weir has been created in a hydrological trial to increase the water levels in the wetland by 20-30 centimetres. This will ensure water can be retained in the wetland for longer during the summer months.

"Historical drainage works have left the wetland unable to hold water for as long as it could," Nature Glenelg Trust ecologist, Lachie Farrington, said.

"So, in summer it can dry up before the birds, frogs and plants in the wetland finish breeding."

Glenelg Hopkins CMA senior field officer Tim Covey said adding sandbags to create a weir in one of the outlet drains should allow water to stay in the wetland for a few weeks longer.

"We are using sandbags and boards as part of a trial, which means if there are any issues which arise from increased water levels, we can quickly remove the structure and resolve the issue.

"The height of the structure means that in particularly wet years, the swamp will drain out both its outlets, flowing over the sandbag structure, to avoid inundation of nearby farmland," Tim said.

The trial will be monitored for the next 12 months to determine its success.

This project is being undertaken with funding through the Victorian Government's Our Catchments Our Communities program with support from Nature Glenelg Trust and the Panyyabyr Landcare Group.

**ENDS**



**CAPTIONS:**

**LEFT:** The temporary weir structure on the Bryan Swamp outlet which will help retain water for native bird, plant and animal breeding. The structure was built by Glenelg Hopkins CMA staff, Nature Glenelg Trust staff, and local Landcare group members.

**BELOW LEFT:** Sandbags have been used in the temporary structure while the hydrological trial is undertaken.

**BELOW RIGHT:** Building the structure in the already full wetland area.

