



Artwork excerpt: *I Am Because We Are* 2019, Safina Stewart, Wuthathi Country (QLD) and Mabuiaig Island (Torres Strait Islands).

RAP UPDATE OCTOBER 2024 LET'S TALK RECONCILIATION

It's a RAP - Launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan (Stretch) June 2024-2027

The Nature Parks launched the *Reconciliation Action Plan (Stretch) June 2024-2027* at an intimate event on 25 September at the Koala Conservation Reserve.

The cover of the RAP features a beautiful artwork by Bunurong artist Kobi Sainty called 'Natures Connection', testimonials from key stakeholders and partners, staff profiles, case studies and most importantly the deliverables under three pillars of respect, relationships and opportunities which will drive the reconciliation actions we take as an organisation over the next three years.

This Reconciliation Action Plan provides the Nature Parks, as land managers, the

opportunity to deepen our understanding of Country through meaningful relationships, enable Bunurong to drive outcomes for Country through shared responsibility, and drive positive social change by supporting our team to be truth tellers and allies for self-determination, voice, and treaty.

To read the full plan go to **Our Reconciliation Action Plan - Phillip Island Nature Parks** (penguins.org.au)



Board members, Catherine Basterfield, Kate Adams and Sally O'Neill with the new RAP.

The Board of Reconciliation Australia visits Millowl

The Nature Parks and the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network hosted the Board members of Reconciliation Australia over two days in August. The Board were keen to learn about the reconciliation achievements and conservation work of the Nature Parks and the structure and achievements of the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network as a model of place-based reconciliation.

They were impressed with what we are achieving here on Bunurong Country and have since invited the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network to attend the annual Reconciliation Australia conference in Brisbane in November to be part of an expert panel to talk about place-based reconciliation.



Reconciliation Australia Board members and staff with Bass Coast Reconciliation Network representatives.



Mary and Anne from the Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group

NAIDOC Week Art Exhibition

The annual NAIDOC Art Exhibition was a huge success with over 130 people attending the launch on 7 July at Wonthaggi Artspace and the highest ever sales recorded since its inception, 20 years ago. This event is presented by the Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group and sponsored by the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network.

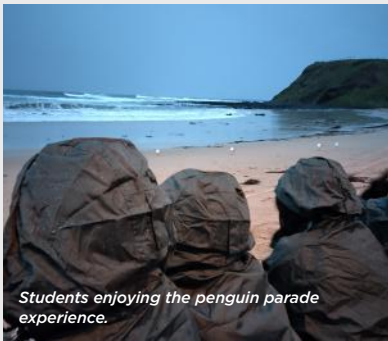
Sixteen artists including four under 18 years of age showcased 26 paintings and 20 artefacts as part of the exhibition. A wonderful array of stunning paintings, woodwork, jewellery, textiles, animal skins and more, from First Nations artists from Bass Coast and South Gippsland.

If you missed the exhibition, you can still check out the artworks at **NAIDOC Week First Nations Art Exhibition 2024** (naidoc-art.com.au).



The Bass Coast Reconciliation Network events team

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and waters of Millowl, the Bunurong. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.



Students enjoying the penguin parade experience.

Walungurru School visit

Students from Walungurru School visited Phillip Island (Millowl) for the second time as part of their annual school excursion and once again loved their time here. The school is 650 km from Alice Springs on the NT/WA border and for some of the students, it was their first ever visit to the ocean. They loved seeing all the birds, especially the little penguins. Providing free entry to groups like this is a commitment in our RAP and one way we can support First Nations people to have unique experiences on Bunurong Country.

Lost at Sea Project

The Lost at Sea Project is a partnership between Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC), and Monash University that aims to study and preserve cultural heritage values on Seal Rocks and protect the fur seal colony.

The BLCAC have identified Seal Rocks as a culturally significant site to Traditional Owners and with their invaluable knowledge and deep connection to the land, we hope to capture critical information before it is lost forever. Rising sea levels and increasing erosion compels an urgent Cultural Heritage Assessment to be undertaken. It is critical to have the knowledge and expertise of Bunurong in the process. This project will mark the first stage of a three-year effort to document and protect these cultural and environmental treasures and the project is supported by funding from Telematics Trust and the Penguin Foundation.



Adam Magennis and Dr Caroline Hubschmann from BLCAC undertaking cultural heritage assessment.

Continue your self-guided cultural learning

The Nature Parks worked with Bunurong training providers on the cultural awareness and cultural safety training sessions for board, leaders and staff in June – August as part of the learning and development program.

Here are some suggestions for how you can learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.



WHAT TO READ: Ask Aunty: Seasons an Introduction to First Nations Seasons by Aunty Munya Andrews and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis. This is a delightful and educational childrens picture book that introduces First Nations seasonal calendars.



WHAT TO LISTEN TO: Victorian Aboriginal News - the VAN Talks podcast features interviews with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from all over the State talking about a diverse range of topics including Treaty, cultural heritage site protection and truth-telling. **Home - Victorian Aboriginal News**



WHAT TO COOK: SBS Food is a 24/7 foodie channel for all Australians, with a focus on simple, authentic and everyday food inspiration from cultures everywhere, including the recipes. Check out the recipe for Saltbush and Warrigal greens damper. **Saltbush and warrigal greens damper | SBS Food.**

2023-24 RAP IMPACT

The Nature Parks completed the annual RAP Impact Survey for Reconciliation Australia in September, and the results indicate that even though we had a 12-month gap between RAPs, we continue to achieve great outcomes for reconciliation. Here are some of the achievements that we can be proud of from the past 12 months.



The **commitment from senior leaders** continues to encourage staff participation through playing an active role in delivering RAP commitments.



We now have **nine established partnerships** with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

105

new staff completed cultural awareness training.



We committed over **\$240,000** in procurement with **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.**



We provided **\$7,600 in pro bono and sponsorship** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Sponsorship of Millowl Shooters

The Nature Parks were proud sponsors of the Millowl Shooters, an Under 10s basketball team that competed in the Victorian NAIDOC Junior Basketball Tournament in Cranbourne in July this year. Playing deadily, the team made it to the semi-finals, a great achievement for their first tournament.



Millowl Shooters at semi final

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