



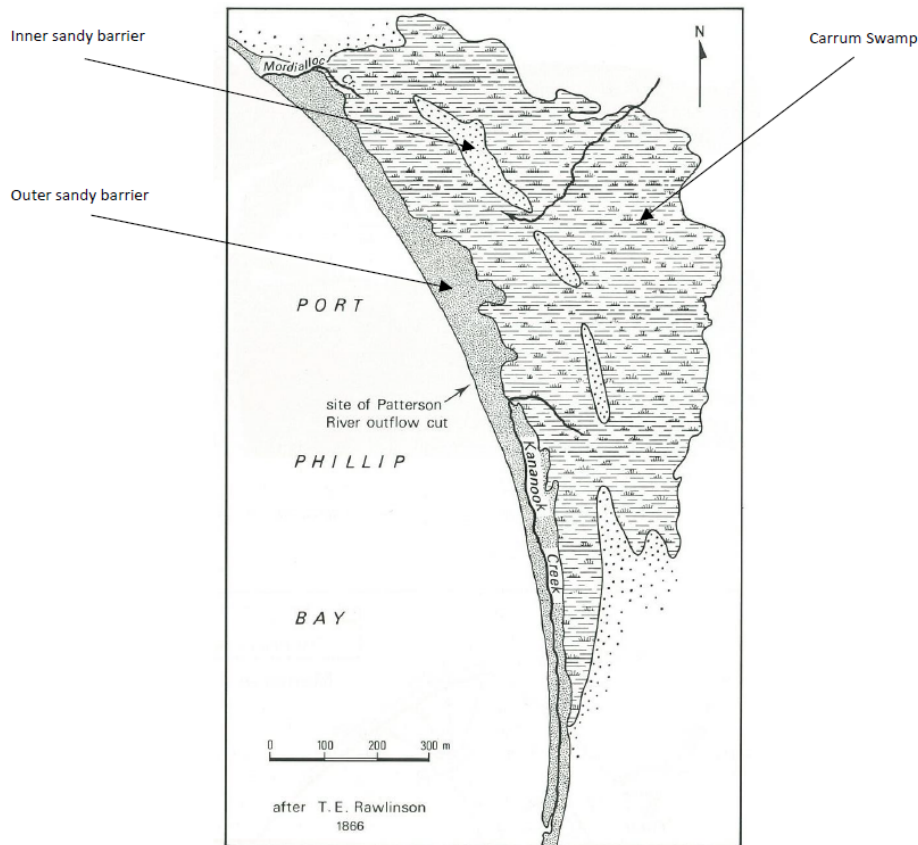
Seaford Wetland Reserve
Picture: Frankston CC

Inquiry into Ramsar Wetlands Edithvale Seaford Wetlands Overview

Mr John Woodland, Manager, Regional Services (South East)

Tuesday 3 December, 2019

From The Carrum Carrum Swamp



- Once part of the 5,000 ha Carrum Carrum Swamp
- Patterson River cut through in 1879

Figure 1: 1866 survey map of Port Phillip Bay coastline between Mordialloc and Kananook creeks (source: Bird 1993: Figure 112)

To the Edithvale-Seafood wetlands



Ramsar site
coordinator and
manager: MW
Seafood wetlands
jointly managed with
Frankston Council

Two sites:

- Edithvale wetlands (101ha)
- Seafood wetlands (159ha)

Ramsar listed in 2001



Bird life

197

Different
bird species
recorded

5000+

Birds at any
one time

68

Protected
migratory
species
recorded

1%

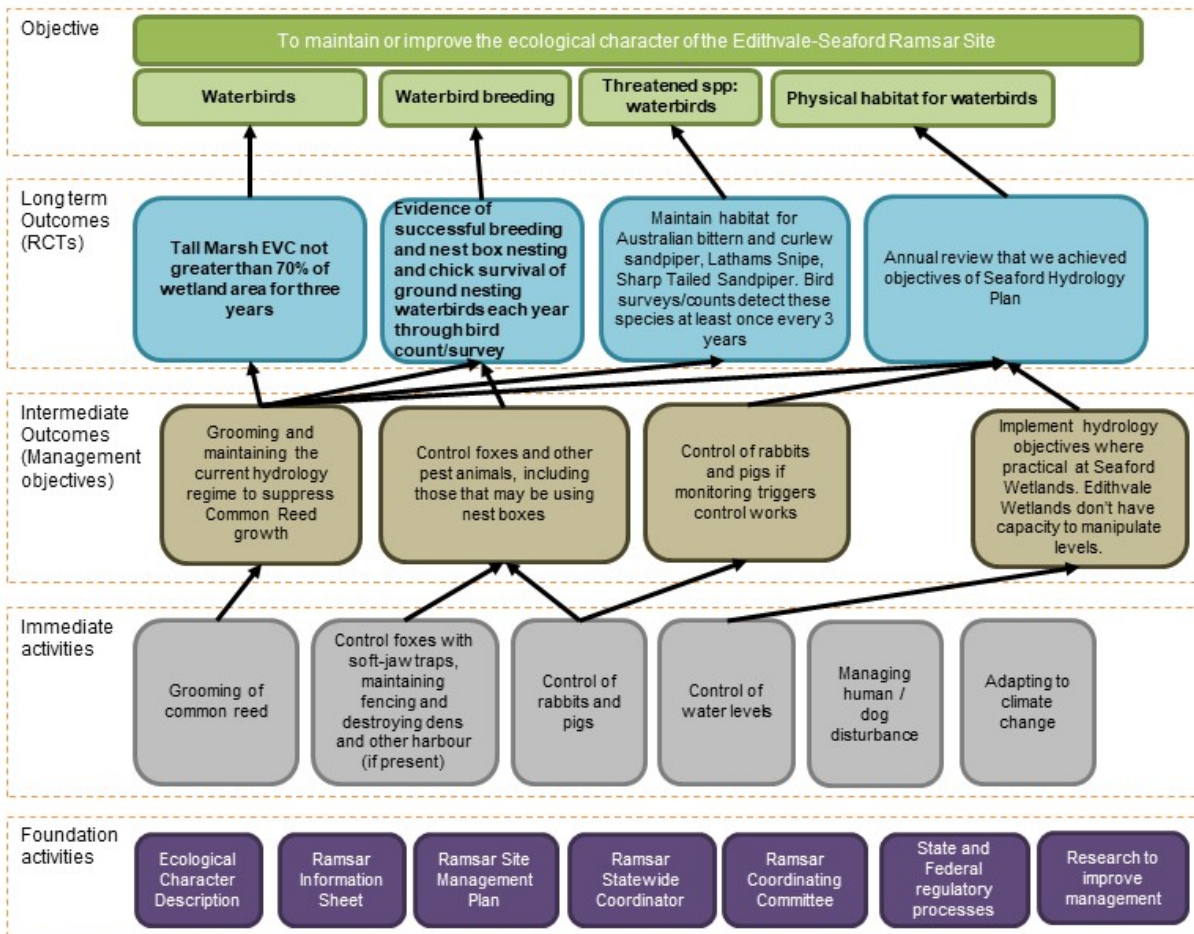
Of global
Sharp-tailed
Sandpiper
population



Benefits from the VAGO audit

- Annual Works Plan
- Annual site coordinators meeting
- New MERI plan
- Dedicated Ramsar investigations and monitoring budget
- The roll out of the Ramsar Management System (RMS)





Assumptions:

Grooming of phragmites maintains habitat diversity to support waterbird diversity abundance and breeding success.

Control of foxes will result in an improvement in breeding success of waterbirds. (Black swan Blue-billed duck, Chestnut teal, Dusky moorhen, Purple swamphen, Calmorous Reed warbler and Swamp Harrier)

Control of rabbits improves condition/extent of emergent wetland vegetation.

Pumping and outlet control (Wadsleys Pump and regulator gates) helps to maintain an appropriate salinity regime and water levels to support waterbird habitat.

A combination of actions including: vegetation buffers, fencing signage and restricting access for dog walkers (access only to specific areas i.e the Dog Pond) reduces disturbance of bird populations and facilitates waterbird breeding.

The EC of Seaford will most likely be affected by rising sea levels and storm surges (tides) and adaption / habitat migration options will need to be considered. There is highly likelihood of Seaford becoming more saline. Edithvale is more protected due to levees and other factors.

Furthermore both wetlands will experience an increase in frequency and intensity of fire due to climate change.

Monitoring and control of pigs (as required) will reduce disturbance of wetland soils and trampling of wetland vegetation.

Limits of Acceptable Change:

Water birds

- Abundance of waterbirds will not decline below the following (calculated as a rolling five year average of maximum annual count):

- Total waterbirds – 2500
- Migratory waders – 900
- Australasian waders - 125
- Ducks - 650
- Fishers - 200
- Large wading birds - 100
- Herbivores – 450

- Abundance of sharp-tailed sandpiper will not decline below 0.5% of the population as stated in the most recent Wetlands International Population estimate (based on a five year rolling average of annual maximum counts).

Waterbird breeding

- Breeding of the following species at least once every five years:

- black swan
- blue-billed duck
- chestnut teal
- dusky moorhen
- purple swamphen
- swamp harrier
- Clamorous reed warbler

Threatened species: waterbirds

- Presence of Australasian bittern and curlew sandpiper in at least three out of every five years

Physical habitat for waterbirds

- Wetland habitat that comprises open water, emergent native vegetation (sedges, rushes and reeds) and exposed mudflats, with no habitat comprising more than 70 percent of the total wetland area for more than five successive years.

Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) – protecting Ecological Character

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Edithvale Seaford Community Liaison Committee

- Running since 2004
- Meets every three months
- Members include:
 - Frankston City Council
 - Kingston Council
 - Friends of Edithvale Seaford Wetlands
 - Melbourne Water educational, scientific expert and operational staff



Looking ahead

Challenges

- Climate change (sea level & salinity level rise)
- Pest animal control
- Increasing urbanisation
- Public access management



Opportunities

- Learning from other Ramsar site managers
- Trialling methods in managing the kangaroo population at Edithvale
- Public amenity and education

Thank you

