



EUNGEDUP WETLANDS  
WETLANDS FOR WILDLIFE

PROSPECTUS 2023



# EUNGEDUP WETLANDS

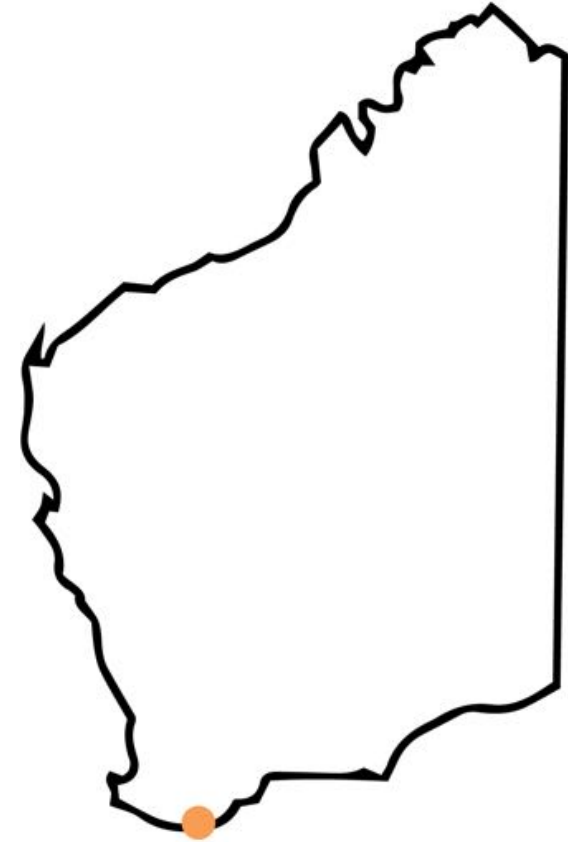
Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee is raising funds to purchase Eungedup Wetlands.

Nestled between Denmark and Albany on the south coast of Western Australia, these remarkable wetlands provide a unique opportunity to preserve endangered wildlife.

In early 2022, a group of concerned citizens and conservation groups came together to buy farmland featuring a unique wetland, Eungedup Wetlands, containing several breeding endangered Australasian Bitterns.

Eungedup Wetlands presents a unique opportunity to overcome many of the threats faced by wetland birds. Water levels in Eungedup can be managed using an existing network of channels to ensure they provide ongoing habitat for its inhabitants, including the endangered Australasian Bittern.

By purchasing these wetlands, we can provide the necessary protections for its precious inhabitants.



**“The Eungedup Wetlands give one hope for the future. As south-western Australia dries due to climate change, such rare, magnificent wetlands become critical to conservation of birds like the Australasian Bittern.”**

*Professor Stephen Garnett, Professor of Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods, Charles Darwin University*

**“Eungedup is an exceptional part of an incredibly significant wetland complex, not just for threatened species like the Australasian Bittern but for waterbird populations on a much larger scale. Conserving the site will significantly improve waterbird resilience to increasing external pressures in the south west.”**

*Paul Sullivan, BirdLife Australia CEO*

**“The Wetlands Conservation Society of WA would like to see these important wetlands being purchased for conservation.”**

*Professor Philip Jennings,  
President of Wetlands Conservation Society*

**“This is one of the best wetlands I have ever seen. It is critical that we conserve it for our future.”**

*Michael Morecombe AM,  
Author Field Guide to Australian Birds*



## The Value of Eungedup Wetlands

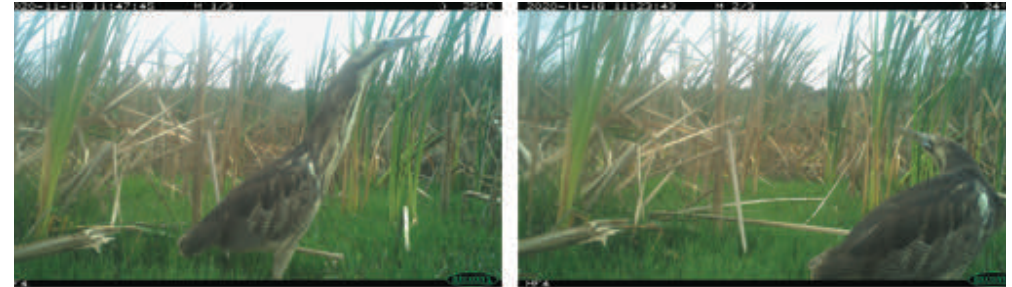


Eungedup Wetlands are critically important for a number of nationally and internationally significant waterbirds including the endangered Australasian Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*). The global population is estimated to be fewer than 2,500 mature individuals and decreasing (Birdlife International, 2016). The Western Australian (WA) bittern population declined by 25–50% from the 1980s – 2010, and continues to decline. It is estimated that fewer than 150 mature individuals remain in WA.

The historical draining of swamps for development in south-western Australia has been a major contributor to the decline of the Australasian Bitterns. Dry periods have also increased the susceptibility of wetlands to fire and predation by foxes and cats. Changes in rainfall patterns that drive fluctuations in wetland availability is predicted to be the greatest threat to the survival of Australasian Bittern in the future.

The Eungedup Wetlands population may represent 5–10% of the extant breeding population in WA. Eungedup Wetlands present a unique opportunity to overcome many of the threats faced by Australasian Bittern. Water levels can be

controlled, if required, using an existing network of channels which connect Eungedup to the nearby nationally significant Nenamup Inlet and the internationally significant Wilson Inlet (Nullaki). The control of invasive predators, weeds, revegetation works, and water quality monitoring will be undertaken, to ensure the wetland remains optimal for the Australasian Bittern and other wetland dependent species.



Eungedup camera trap photo of Australasian Bittern (photo courtesy Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions)

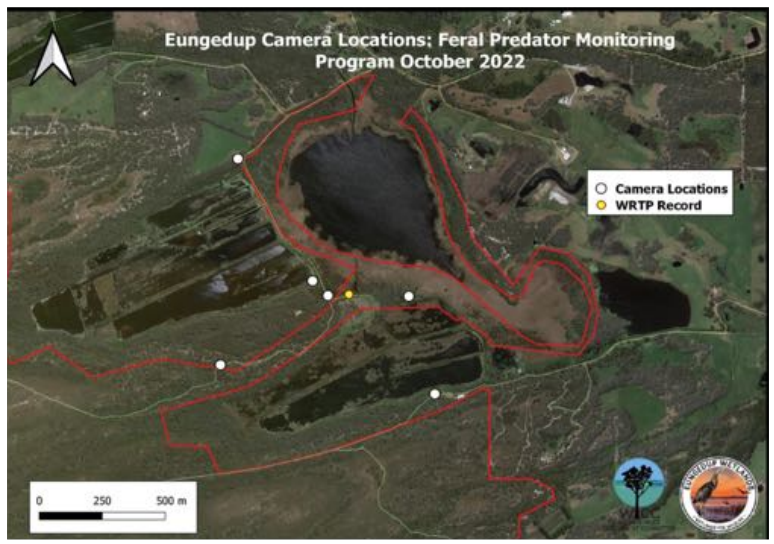


Western Ringtail Possum (photo courtesy of Jake Bamford)

In addition to a vast diversity of waterbirds Eungedup also supports the critically endangered Western Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*). The Western Ringtail Possum is recognised as a threatened species under State and Commonwealth legislation. In Western Australia the species is listed as fauna that is 'likely to become extinct' in the wild (Specially Protected) under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 and has been assigned the threat status ranking of critically endangered using International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria.



Juvenile Motorbike frog (photo courtesy Tim Gamblin)



Wilson Inlet

Youngs Lake

Koonamup Inlet

Lake Salde (Eungedup)



Eungedup Camera Locations: Feral Predator Monitoring Program October 2022

○ Camera Locations  
● WRTP Record



## How Eungedup Wetlands will be managed

The Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee (WICC) has formed the Eungedup Wetlands Management Group. This group includes experts in conservation, revegetation, water quality monitoring, Australasian Bitterns and feral management. We will be carefully monitoring water levels, salinity and pH of the wetlands to ensure their suitability for Australasian Bittern and other waterbirds. A Menang Elder (traditional owners) has a permanent position in the Management Group.

Motion activated cameras are in operation to ensure wildlife are carefully monitored and can be protected from feral animals (and humans). We are implementing a feral management program which includes the trapping of cats and foxes. WICC has begun carrying out feral management across the surrounding landscape and will extend this to Eungedup, to ensure that the native wildlife is free from the threats of cats and foxes. The management group aims to covenant the Eungedup Wetlands so their protection is guaranteed forever, and they can never be cleared of native vegetation.

Eungedup Wetlands will be owned and managed by WICC with the full support of BirdLife Australia, Birdlife WA, Wetlands Conservation Society WA, Conservation Council of WA and Gondwana Link.

WICC is managed by a nine-member board of conservation-minded farmers and scientists. WICC has been delivering award-winning landcare programs for 28 years. Ongoing management will be provided by the Eungedup Management Group and a host of passionate volunteers with the requisite skillsets required to conserve these wetlands.



Quenda (Bandicoot) (photo courtesy WICC camera trap)



Hoary-headed Grebe (photo courtesy Georgina Steytler)



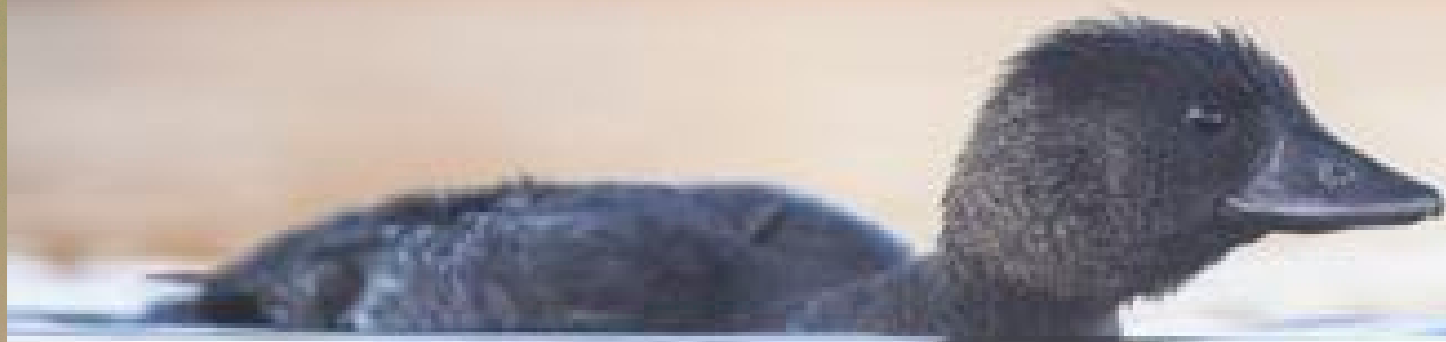
Volunteer checking camera trap



## Use of Funds

Our target is to raise \$505,000 to purchase the 254 acres Eungedup Wetlands by December 2023. Your funds could help secure this property for conservation and provide ongoing management and protection. This includes revegetation with local provenance native seedlings, weed control, feral predator management of foxes and cats, nutrient management on adjacent properties, and monitoring of water quality, birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates. Funds can be donated directly to the Wilson Inlet Public Fund which is managed by the WICC. Your donation is fully tax deductible. WICC is a registered charity and is on the Commonwealth Register of Environmental Organisations.

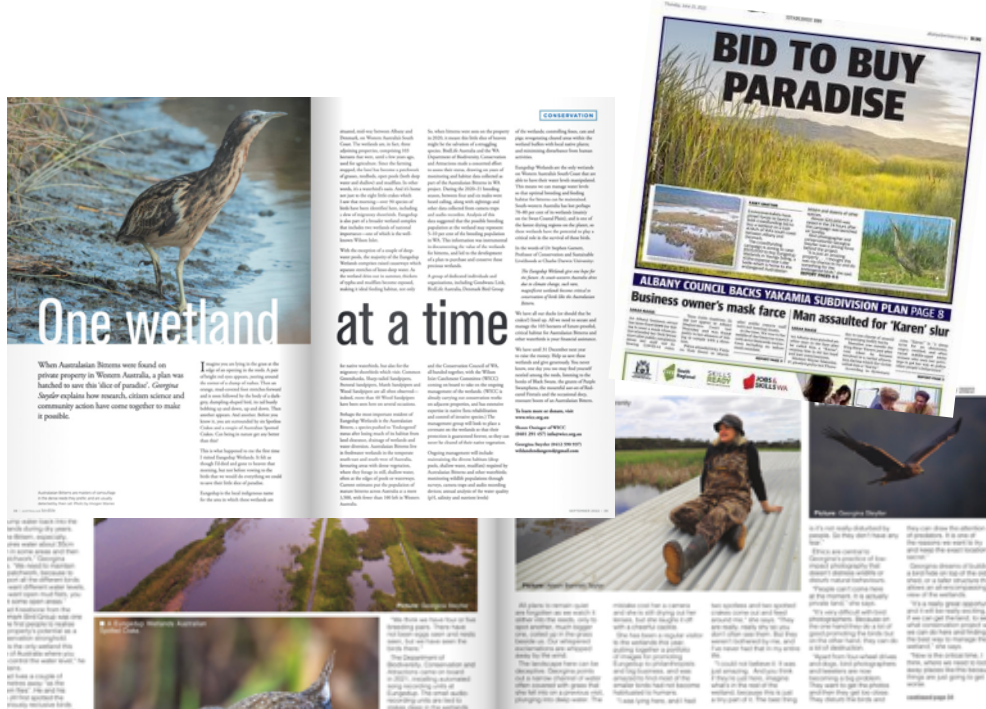




Musk Duck (photo courtesy Georgina Steytler)

## Current Status (January 2023)

By January 2023, WICC has received 219 donations totalling \$115,000. Over 80% of these donations are from the south-west of WA. We need to raise a further \$390,000 by 31st December 2023 to secure the wetland under freehold title. Eungedup Wetlands has featured in Australian Geographic, Southern Magazine, Albany Advertiser and Birdlife Magazine.



WICC has negotiated management access while we fundraise. We are monitoring a range of infrared cameras which are informing the development of a comprehensive feral predator management program. Bird surveys have recorded 89 bird species, of which 43 are waterbirds / shorebirds. These wetland-dependent species have been thriving as there are permanent deep-to-shallow water pools throughout the wetland, providing a variety of foraging habitat to suit a range of species. Our surveys have also recorded critically endangered Western Ringtail Possums. This represents one of the most westerly records of this species on the South Coast.

## Advantages of investing in Eungedup Wetlands

Investing in the protection of Eungedup Wetlands not only provides ongoing protection for some of our most vulnerable waterbirds, it is a values statement for your brand. There are few ecosystems facing greater peril than wetlands. Eungedup is an example of community, scientists and business coming together to preserve one of our most fragile and precious environments. We are open to negotiation where it comes to the ongoing acknowledgment of your contribution.

## What happens if we don't buy Eungedup Wetlands?

The wetlands were previously cleared for agriculture. Since this time, the flora has come back to a level which now provides ample protection for the wildlife residents. If we are unsuccessful in our bid to purchase Eungedup there is the potential the wetlands will once again be cleared. We also would not be in a position to manage feral predators and water levels in order to ensure the safety of its inhabitants.



Red fox with waterbird in its mouth at Eungedup

If you are interested in learning more we would love to talk. We would be delighted to present to you in person, or better still, give you a tour of this wetland paradise. Please phone Shaun Ossinger on 0401 291 457 or Georgina Steytler on 0412 590 937. Donations can be made at [www.wicc.org.au/donate](http://www.wicc.org.au/donate).





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