



SOME OF OUR BELIEFS & ACTIVITIES

Promoting the beauty

The WPSP believes that showcasing the natural wonders of Western Port will raise public appreciation of its value and give impetus to efforts to preserve its wonderful natural features.

A major project to facilitate this objective is a magnificent DVD currently being produced by WPSP Board member and media personality John Clarke.



A leafy sea dragon (left) glides over the surface of one of Western Port's famous seagrass meadows.

Spotlighting the challenges

The ecology of Western Port and its catchments and coastal regions has been significantly changed by historic events associated with European settlement. These adverse effects are still with us. The region is also subject to new challenges as Melbourne's population and business focus moves progressively eastward toward and around Western Port. The WPSP aims to raise the profile of these challenges and make them the subject of appropriate examination, debate and planned response.



Rampant coastal erosion near Lang Lang produces tonnes of slimy mud adding to the barren mudflats that once supported luxurious meadows of seagrass. What happened to the protective ring of mangroves and saltmarshes? Can the seagrasses recover whilst this erosion process continues?

Why can't I catch a whiting daddy?

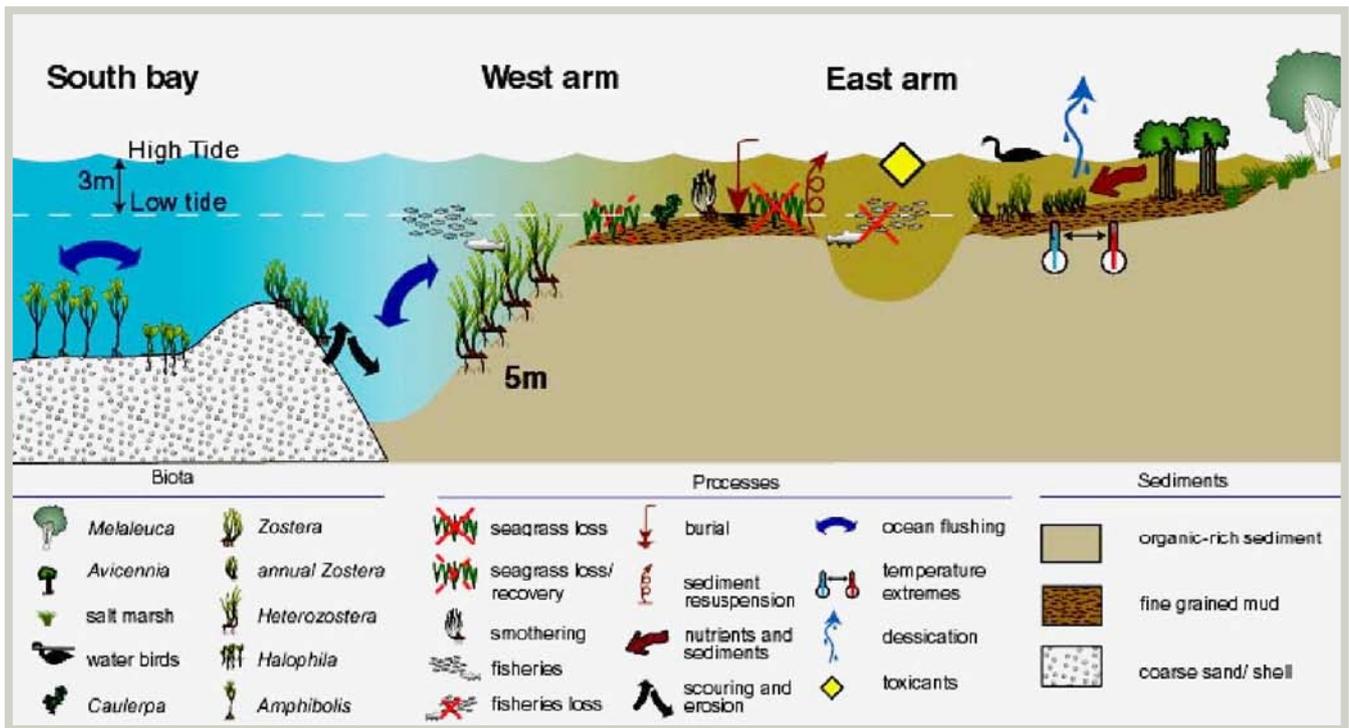




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Science not belief

The WPSP is a science – based organization and we promote good science and effective research to provide the basis for effective action. Part of our role is to challenge established beliefs because they can often enlarge problems and waste limited resources.



Above: A conceptual model for the Western Port ecosystem created by seagrass and marine science experts at a science workshop sponsored the WPSP and used to establish key factors influencing seagrass health.

Left: Seagrass replanting trials. Site selection and planting methods were derived from theoretical modeling to maximize success. The technical advice was provided by our partner EPA Victoria.



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Putting Theory into Practice

Theoretical science provides broad foundations for success, but often the means for achieving the right outcomes in specific circumstances comes from field testing. The WPSP is not afraid of experimentation or failure; it believes that we learn from both success and failure, but inaction is generally unproductive.



A plug of replanted seagrass shows a positive response to treatment with osmocote fertilizer applied to the roots. However, high nutrients in the water column had adverse effects due to the stimulation of epiphytic growth (e.g. algae) which smother leaves and inhibit photosynthesis.

Working Together

The WPSP believes that the task of protecting Western Port is too big for one organization and the best outcomes will come from cooperative partnerships and building strong community involvement and ownership of the issues and actions. The WPSP also relies on the generosity of its sponsors and partners to help fund its projects.





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Awareness builds involvement

The WPSP believes awareness is a key stage in building interest, commitment and ownership. The WPSP runs awareness activities and provides briefing sessions for key organizations and decision makers.



Learning by doing

The WPSP strongly believes that understanding is reinforced through practical application. Our education programs focus on direct involvement and interactive experiences rather than passive information sharing.



Bass Valley Primary School Children help plant mangroves which they have grown from seeds.

Calling in the Champions

The WPSP seeks out and encourages champions who will inspire others to work to protect and restore Western Port's ecology. Champions in local communities or leaders in their field, they all play a key role in influencing attitudes and behaviors.

The WPSP Board is empowered by recruited champions, all respected leaders in their field and sharing a passion for this magnificent bay. Our number includes two of Western Port's favorite sons:



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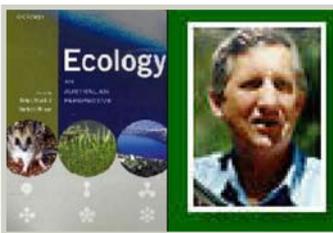
- Professor John Swan – WSPSP founding chairman, internationally respected scientist, and tireless advocate for the bay.
- Dr Tim Ealey – our much loved and dynamic Dr Mangrove!

Dr Tim Ealey, board member and resident of Coronet Bay. Winner of the Central Coastal Board's Award for Excellence 2006 and the Commonwealth Government 2006 Community Coastal Custodian Award. In recognition for his special efforts to protect coastal environments of Western Port.

Providing Expert Advice

The WSPSP Board has directors with considerable skills and experienced and a long working knowledge of Western Port. Several of our scientists worked on the original Western Port Environmental Study that provided a solid foundation for our current state of knowledge.

As part of our commitment to Western Port these directors are active in providing advice and contributing to planning and strategic processes of key organizations in the region.

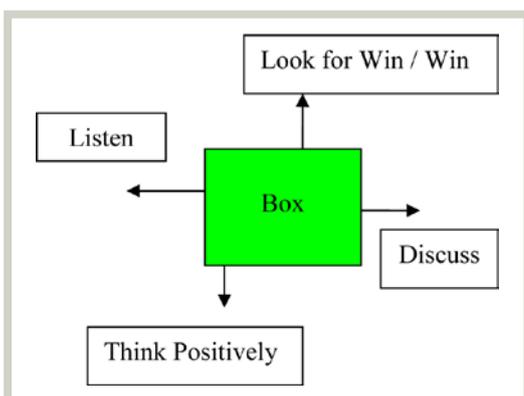


One fine example:

Peter Attiwill, Reader and Associate Professor, School of Botany, University of Melbourne is the Principal Investigator of the Scientists for Sustainability project. Worked on mangroves, seagrasses and saltmarshes as part of the Western Port study.

Author of "Ecology – An Australian Perspective."

Win – Win Outlook



The WSPSP encourages positive mentality and “out of the square” thinking. It is too easy to fall into despair and negativity when faced with rapid change and the diversity of the many challenges facing Western Port.

In nearly all scenarios we have examined, we have found positive opportunities and with creative thinking it is not hard to find win – win outcomes. We have been pleased to find that this positive approach has opened many doors and started dialogue.

[Learn more about Western Port Seagrass Partnership](#)



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Make a donation that will help WPSP be more effective in its role as advocate, custodian and champion for Western Port

Tax Deductable Donations:

If you wish to make a tax deductible donation, please make out cheques or money orders to “Western Port Seagrass Public Fund”

Mail address:

The Management Committee Western Port Seagrass Public Fund “Pleasant Point”
McFees Road Rhyll Victoria 3923

To enable us to issue a receipt, please fill in and enclose the following form with your donation:

Name of donor (individual or organization):

Address (where you wish us to send your receipt):

Postcode:

Donations or financial contributions in respect of which no tax deduction will be claimed, can also be made to: “Western Port Seagrass Partnership Ltd”

Mail to:

Treasurer WPSP Ltd.
PO 2590 Mount Waverley VIC 3149