



Australian Government



Celebrating 50 years of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands



Peel-Yalgorup System, WA

Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Ramsar Convention, which aims to halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and conserve those that remain. Australia designated the world's first wetland of international importance (Ramsar site) under the Convention – Cobourg Peninsula in the Northern Territory – in 1974.

Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) in southern Western Australia

Australia has an amazing diversity of wetlands. They include marshes, billabongs, rivers, lakes, coasts, mangroves and coral reefs.



Thrombolites in Peel-Yalgorup System, WA



Waterbirds in Peel-Yalgorup System, WA

Wetland ecosystems provide many benefits. They are important habitats for plants and animals, including frogs, fish, turtles and migratory birds. For Indigenous Australians, healthy wetlands are important for culture and wellbeing.

Australia has 66 Ramsar sites, which are protected under national legislation.



Ramsar sites such as the Muir-Byenup System are important stop-over sites for shorebirds such as the red-necked stint.



Toolibin Lake, WA (credit Roger Jaensch)



Monitoring shorebirds, WA (credit Peel-Harvey Catchment Council)

Wetlands improve water quality, provide nurseries for fish and reduce the impacts of floods and storms. Wetlands also support recreation and tourism.



Vasse-Wonnerup System, WA

For more information visit www.environment.gov.au/wetlands