

# TWO BAYS 2014



## **Catchment connections for Coastal Communities**

Ian Walker (former General Manager for Environment and Heritage at Parks Victoria) says involving the community is an important element of the Two Bays program.

*“Only by keeping track of the changes to the marine habitats in these two special bays can we work towards keeping them healthy. The Two Bays program is not just valuable marine research, but a way to show the extraordinary richness of the marine life in our bays, and the importance of preserving it.”*



*Photo: Carolyn Briggs- Boonwurrung Elder talking to a group of Two Bays participants during the Kingston Council's Sea Country day.*

## **Learning by doing, participating and being involved in Caring for Sea Country**

*“It has to be one of the best and most valuable learning experiences a child – and adult can have. The Pelican and its' crew were wonderful and although the day had a relaxed feel to it, both Jack and Evie learnt a lot and have been discussing the bays and its stewardship every day since.”*

Feedback from a Two Bays 2011 participant



Port Phillip and Western Port support a range of highly important ecosystems and habitats, a diverse and range of animals and plants, and provide many environmental, social and economic benefits to Victorians.

The bays are an important part of the cultural heritage for the Kulin people and continue to be the focus for a wide range of cultural activities and endeavours.

The future health of our two bays depends on the way in which we use and manage our catchments. There are also many risks to the marine environment posed by climate change.

Two Bays provides a unique opportunity for bay managers and stakeholders to build knowledge, engage coastal communities, form partnerships to better understand and protect bay values, and to highlight the our links with bay health. The program is designed to develop deeper cross-collaboration and knowledge sharing. The program has also created a unique curriculum based on the science and traditional knowledge of both bays. This year we are planning to develop the program to include a focus on sustainability, climate change and migratory species.

**WHAT:** The Two Bays project utilises Pelican 1, a 62 foot catamaran, to conduct marine research, community engagement activities, and provide opportunities for dialogue and information sharing on key bay environmental themes.

The Two Bays project has been successfully completed over the last nine summers and seeks to build on the outcomes achieved in these programs. It was Finalist in the partnership category in the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2011.

Specifically the Two Bays 2014 project will undertake:

- A marine science program, involving a citizen science focus investigating the bays rich and diverse marine habitats, marine protected areas, climate change, water quality and bay health





- An Indigenous program building links between traditional ecological knowledge and Western science

**WHERE:** This project will occur in Port Phillip and Western Port Bays, and along the linking coast. Destinations planned to visit for Two Bays 2014 include Beaumaris, Williamstown, Rye, Queenscliff, Flinders, Hastings and Geelong.

**WHEN:** The project will take place in the second half of February - Early March 2014

**HOW:** The Two Bays 2014 Program will schedule a range of activities designed to:

- Improve understanding of the bays' natural and cultural values, and the threats to these values posed by poor water quality and climate change
- Engage local communities and schools in collecting baseline data about the local marine biodiversity and water quality through citizen science
- Involve agencies, local government, and communities in exploring and developing solutions to issues impacting bay health
- Promote awareness of bay initiatives in local and state-wide media.

**WHO:** Pelican Expeditions initially developed the project with active involvement by Parks Victoria, EPA, Nautilus Educational, Kingston City Council, Catholic Education Office, Association of Bayside Municipalities, People and Parks Foundation, Coast Action | Coastcare, Boonwurrung Foundation, Wurundjeri Council and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency. The Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program has supported the project. Key project partners for Two Bays 2014 also include our diverse bay communities, and coastal and marine community organizations. Two Bays curriculum written by Andrew Vance.

### **Opportunities for Project Partners:**

Two Bays 2014 will provide Project Partners with opportunities to

- Undertake marine research and community engagement programs focussed around bay water quality, climate change, recreational activity, and marine protected areas.
- Focus community attention on the high natural and cultural values of the bays including Indigenous values and bay Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries.
- Promote awareness of threats to the health of the bays while working with community members and partner organisations to examine solutions.
- Promote the importance of water quality improvement plans to future bay health.



- Improve community awareness of the link between catchment health and the health of Port Phillip and Western Port.
- Create exciting media opportunities to promote key messages for Project Partners.
- Build partnerships between agencies, local government, community organisations and bay residents that work to reduce risks to bay values.

### **Opportunities for Coastal Communities:**

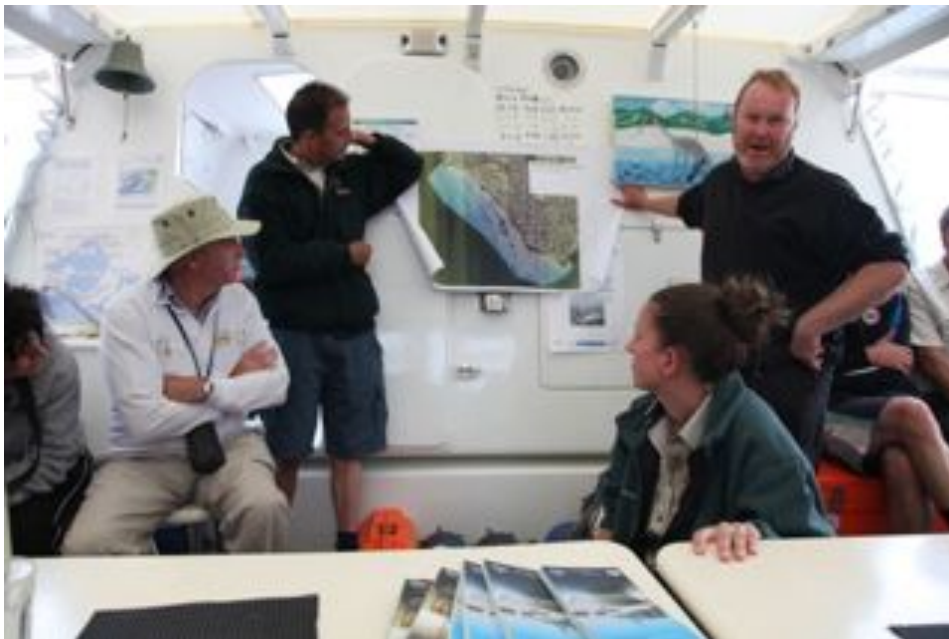
Two Bays 2014 will provide Coastal Communities with the opportunities to:

- Explore the values of the bays habitats and participate in research and monitoring programs to assess the bays health,
- Gain Indigenous perspectives of the Two Bays through shared dialogue and storytelling with Indigenous Elders and rangers.
- Better understand water quality impacts on bay health and future plans to improve water quality.
- Hear the Two Bays Story – an ongoing story created during the journey of the Pelican 1 through the different environments threading Indigenous stories as an essential part of connecting with Sea Country.
- Connect with existing bay community groups to share information and ideas, or find common ground to establish a new one
- Gain access to information and data collected through the project, as well as existing Two Bays materials, for use by schools and community groups
- Celebrate bay environments and iconic bay species such as the Weedy seadragon, seagrass, seabirds, mangroves and dolphins.
- Focus community attention on the important and unique natural and cultural values of the bays including Indigenous values and Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries.
- Connections to schools in both bays and working with the Two Bays curriculum.



## Who are Pelican Expeditions?

- Pelican Expeditions collaborates with marine research bodies, indigenous communities, private enterprise and government to provide a range of inspirational projects connected with the marine world. Programs provide an integrated approach to marine science, community involvement, education and industry training.
- Pelican Expeditions believe that effective public education and awareness are important tools to help protect and preserve our marine and coastal environment. More information on projects developed by Pelican Expeditions, including previous Two Bays programs, is accessible at [www.svpelican.com.au](http://www.svpelican.com.au)
- The project is being run through the not-for-profit company **Saltwater Projects Ltd**. Saltwater Projects has been one of the driving forces behind the building of Pelican1 and development of our programs. We are utilizing the not-for-profit arm to build up stronger support for our unique, collaborative style of work. Our patron is Andrew Denton.



*Photo: Looking at a citizen science project at Ricketts Point*

**Our Two Bays are unique living environments – a healthy future depends on us all working together now.**

**For more information on Two Bays 2014 contact:**

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Our Saltwater blog - <http://saltwaterblog.wordpress.com/>

Join Two Bays on Facebook –

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Two-Bays/255933467752914?ref=hl>



*Photo: Aunty Carolyn Briggs with young Koori students on board for Two Bays 2013*