20 Years of The Living Murray

Hattah Lakes



Hattah Lakes includes over 20 semi-permanent freshwater lakes and is listed as an internationally important wetland. The lakes are very important as drought refuges and as breeding places for waterbirds, regent parrots, frogs, turtles, and native fish.

The Hattah Lakes system is a significant region for First Nation cultural values and lies on the border of two language groups, the Latii Latii and the Jari Jari. Groups with an interest in Hattah Lakes include Latii Latii Latii Mumthelang, Tati Tati Kaiejin, Tati Tati Land and Water, Wadi Wadi Land and Water, Murray Valley Aboriginal Corporation, Gilby, Dadi Dadi Weki Weki, Culpra Millee, Nyeri Nyeri and Munatunga Elders.

Improving health of floodplain trees

Hattah Lakes is a living example of how environmental infrastructure can be used to preserve iconic Australian species such as river red gum and black box.

Both species were suffering the impacts of severely reduced overbank flooding when a pump station and regulators were installed in 2012/13. This infrastructure makes it possible to deliver water for the environment effectively and efficiently, without impacting other river users.

Since the first watering in 2014, the growth, flowering and seed production of trees at watered sites has demonstrated a marked improvement in comparison to trees at unwatered sites. Flooding has prompted the trees to produce more flowers, which are a source of nectar for birds and insects. They in turn become food sources for other animals, keeping the food web alive.

Bush birds such as parrots, honeyeaters, and wrens have also benefited. Monitoring has shown the total numbers of bush birds were 60% higher for up to 3 years after a flood event, which demonstrates the lasting effects of watering on tree health and the food resources they provide.



Local businesses are among the biggest fans of Hattah Lakes. The direct economic value to the Hattah Lakes from recreation and tourism has been estimated at \$1.5 million per year.

Water in the lakes results in bigger visitor numbers and this also delivers benefits for local businesses. Tourism operators offer bus tours, hiking, birdwatching, and kayaking adventures when water is present, while schools and universities also visit for parts of their curriculum. In addition to this, apiarists often rest bees at the lakes prior to the busy pollination season in nearby almond orchards; this generates beautiful honey and contributes to Australia's \$640+ million almond export industry.





20 years of The Living Murray Much achieved, much to do

We all love to be around water

