

### Activity – Wetland and Macrophyte Introduction (Grades 1 – 10)

Overview: The DEP website provides a general introduction to Wetland and Macrophyte habitats in the Derwent estuary. In small groups ask students to explore the website to answer a range of general exploratory questions such as:

- Why are wetlands important to us?
- What do we know about wetlands?
- What types of animals live in wetlands?
- Why are plants important to wetlands?
- What are the traditional uses of saltwater and freshwater wetland areas by the local Aboriginal people?
- What surrounds the local wetlands and what impact is that having on the ecosystem?
- What are macrophytes?
- How do macrophytes differ from seagrasses?

This activity provides an introduction to the role each habitat plays in supporting biodiversity, and maintaining a clean and healthy waterway. The available information provides an introduction to habitats, communities, species, with links to some 'Vocalisations of frogs and waterbirds', and key threats.

TASK: In the classroom students of different age groups can browse the website in one of three ways.

Grades 1 – 3 can interact with the conceptual diagram of a habitat by clicking on the animals to see information about that species, and learn about their role in the community (i.e., where they live, what they eat, and who eats them). This approach provides the opportunity to follow links to their relevant vegetation community to learn about other key species that live there.

Grades 4 – 10 can follow the menu items browsing the website students become familiar with the hierarchy, or organisation of species within ecosystems. For each key habitat type (e.g., tidal wetlands) a closely associated habitat is described, and the various vegetation communities occurring within those habitats are introduced. Following this, common species to each or multiple vegetation community types are introduced, with brief captions about where they live and feed. The vital role played by each habitat type is demonstrated by providing examples of their functional roles, as well as their cultural and/or economic importance. Key threats and ways to protect each habitat type are also outlined in this material, with links to classroom activities, factsheets, or other online material provided.

Grades 4 – 10 can also follow the menu items from Educational Resources>For students> to read about catchments, estuaries, and key habitats, animals and plants in the Derwent estuary.