Biodiversity Values

- A number of plant associations, whilst extensive in Lake Connewarre, are rare elsewhere in Victoria. These include Australian Salt-grass grassland along the Barwon River and an extensive area of Silky Watsonia herbland.

- The lake itself harbours extensive seagrass meadows which provide important spawning and nursery sites for fish.

- The combination of dry climate, estuarine influence and large area has contributed to the development of diverse, species-rich salt marsh and sub-saline marsh vegetation.

- Much of the land surrounding and adjacent Lake Connewarre is freehold land which has been cleared for agricultural purposes.

- Poa grassland and Melaleuca scrub add scenic qualities and floristic diversity to the reserve.

- The Barwon River and associated lakes, swamps and floodplains have estuarine fauna not found elsewhere along the Victorian coast. It includes species specially adapted to fluctuations in salinity from full saltwater to full freshwater conditions.

- Lake Connewarre has been considered to be a significant waterbird breeding site and feeding ground, supporting large numbers of migratory waders and waterfowl as well as numerous resident species.

- 149 avian species have been recorded in the reserve which regularly supports 10,000 ducks and swans and 1% of the Australian population of the chestnut teal.

- Straw-necked Ibis and Yellow-billed Spoonbills utilise breeding sites in the area and extensive stands of saltmarsh provide critical habitat for the endangered Orange-bellied Parrot in winter.

- The lower reaches of the Barwon River attract flocks which commonly include Grenshank, Eastern Golden Plover, Curlew Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint.

- Large numbers of Black Swans congregate most of the year on Lake Connewarre, while Pelicans, Caspian Terns and three species of cormorant can be found feeding on open water. During the winter, Coot gather in unusually large numbers.

For further information, contact:

**City of Greater Geelong**
03 5227 0270
www.geelongaustralia.com.au

**Corangamite Catchment Management Authority**
03 5232 9100
www.ccma.vic.gov.au

**Parks Victoria Info Line**
131 963

**Department of Sustainability and Environment**
136 186

**Geelong Field Naturalists Club Inc**
http://home.vicnet.au/~gfnc

**Jirrahlinga Wildlife Sanctuary**
03 5254 2484

**Geelong Gun and Rod Association**
03 5222 4494

This site is part of the Wetland Wanderings Ecotour. Each wetland site has its own brochure highlighting the features of the site in more detail. Some sites may be drive by only and some are close to a parking bay so you can stop, read the site information from the selected brochure and go for a wander around the wetland.

Happy Wetland Wandering.
Welcome to Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, one of Victoria’s most significant wetlands areas, one of the largest estuaries in the state. Lake Connewarre has a variety of swamps, marshes, lakes and river areas providing a wide range of habitat for fauna. Take in the amazing surroundings, masses of birds and see why this area is so important.

LOCATION
Lake Connewarre is situated on the Bellarine Peninsula approximately 8km south-east of Geelong. It is in close proximity of Ocean Grove, Leopold and Barwon Heads. A great spot to visit is directly off the Barwon Heads road. When heading east, take Stacey’s Road left before you reach the Barwon Heads airport. Follow the road down to the end and you will find the perfect spot to stop! Melways Ref: Page 467 H4.

SITE DESCRIPTION
- Lake Connewarre is the largest area of remnant indigenous vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula and is of particular importance for maintaining the ecological diversity of the region.
- Lake Connewarre is a large, shallow, estuarine lagoon linked to the sea by the mangrove-fringed channel of the Lower Barwon River.
- The Reserve contains good examples of a diverse range of wetlands and their associated communities particularly mangrove and saltmarsh communities.
- The lower two thirds of the estuary are essentially unmodified and form an important link in the chain of swamps utilised by migratory waders and waterfowl.

POINTS OF INTEREST
1. Moonah Park Barwon Heads – a beautiful spot on the river in Barwon Heads where there are beautiful old stands of Moonah Trees, a species that is rare and threatened in Victoria.
2. Barwon Heads Estuary – where the Barwon River meets the sea.
3. A good spot to stop.