

LOCAL SCHOOLS PREPARING FOR WORLD WETLAND DAY

Primary school students from the three local schools were at Marine Discovery Centre (MDC) this week for a preliminary viewing of the migratory shorebird silhouette flocks they created as part of an interschool environmental art project.

The flocks will be on public display in the Department of Primary Industries Saltmarsh Gardens at Queenscliff on Sunday, January 31 to recognise World Wetland Day.

MDC Education Officer Anne McLaughlin said the display will be part of a series of events being held in the wetlands of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site.

Victoria has 11 internationally significant Ramsar Wetlands, which are visited by tens of thousands of migratory birds from the Northern Hemisphere each year.

“Birds studied and reproduced as silhouettes by the budding artists were the Red-necked Stint, the Eastern Curlew and the Bar-tailed Godwit,” Ms McLaughlin said.

“The Red-necked Stint weighs only 25 grams and is the smallest and most abundant species of our migratory visitors.

“The Eastern Curlew is the largest, weighing up to 900 grams.

“The Bar-tailed Godwit is renowned for its amazing endurance. Studies have shown they fly as far as 11,000 kilometres non-stop from Alaska to Eastern Australia.

Information on “Celebrating World Wetlands Day 2010- A Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Event” is available on the website www.dse.vic.gov.au/worldwetlandsday