

History

1928

Decision made to construct artificial lake on timber/ grazing swampland to generate much needed employment during The Depression.

1929

Victoria Park Lake constructed and filled with Goulburn River water (contributed to excess nutrients and aquatic plant growth).

1929 onwards

Surrounding area developed for community and recreational use (including powerboats), however the Lake was drained and ploughed yearly to control aquatic vegetation.

1993 – 1998

Excessive aquatic plant growth and a number of algal blooms prevented active recreational use on the Lake (powerboat use ceased).

1998 – 1999

Lake Redevelopment Master Plan was drafted with focus on controlling nutrient levels and aquatic plant growth. The council sought input, feedback and recommendations from the community.



2000

Master Plan endorsed by the Council and the community.

1999 – 2008

Research into design and required function of the Lake with extensive stakeholder consultation.

2009

Lake redevelopment begins.

2011

Lake redevelopment completed.

2016

Master Plan adapted to include Shepparton Art Museum (SAM), Kaiela Arts and Visitor Centre.

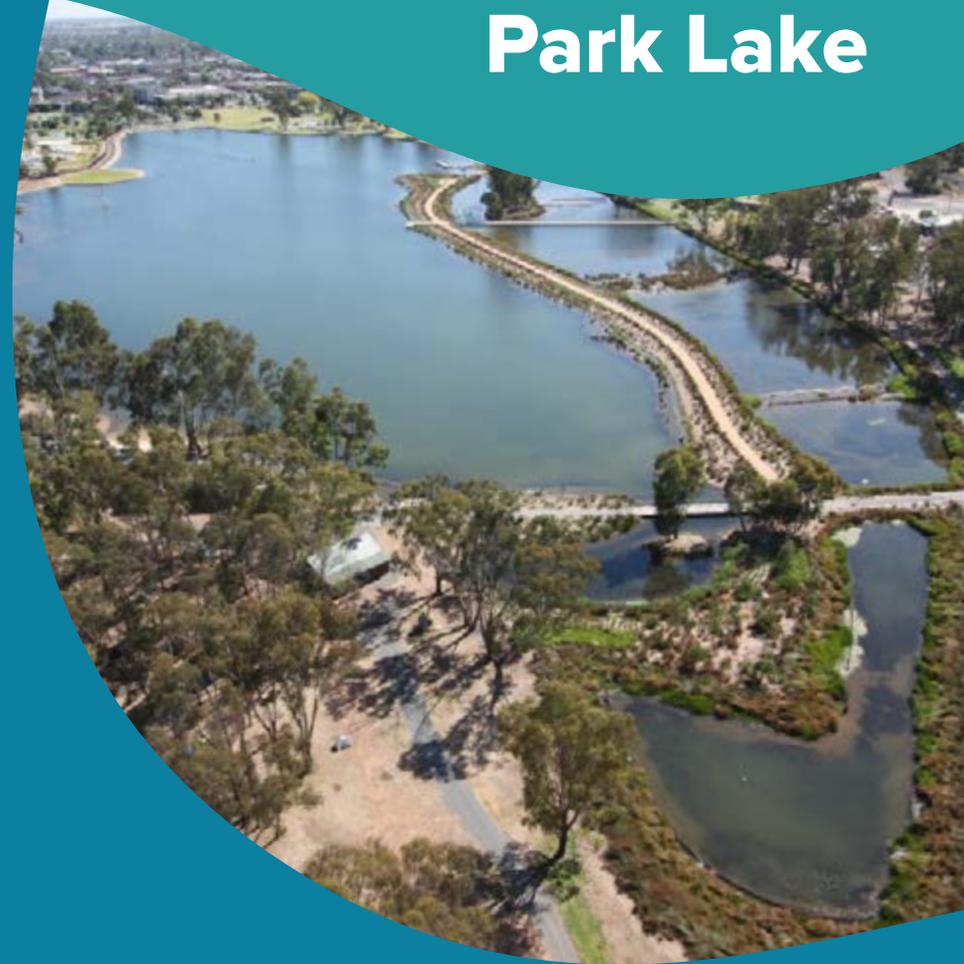
2018

Works begin on new location of SAM, Kaiela Arts and Visitor Centre.

What is at the Victoria Park Lake?

The Victoria Park Lake, inducted into the TripAdvisor Hall of Fame in 2019, provides a public open space that supports a wide range of social, recreational and aesthetic benefits for the community.

Located in proximity to the CBD, the Lake hosts a number of events throughout the year as well as the weekly Saturday morning Shepparton Park Run. The picturesque inclusive area also includes undercover BBQ facilities, new accessible toilet amenities, Shepparton water sport clubs, Aquamoves swimming and fitness centre, S-cape skate facility, and two family play areas, including the All Abilities Playground.



Victoria Park Lake

Greater Shepparton Visitor Centre

1800 808 839 or (03) 5832 9330

www.visitshepparton.com.au





1998

Victoria Park Lake, located near Shepparton's CBD, is a tranquil and picturesque area popular among families, locals and visitors for various leisure and recreational activities.

Named after Queen Victoria and developed in 1929, the manmade lake was originally a shallow, ornamental and recreational lake. Over the years, the Lake and surrounding area were used by the local community for picnicking, lawn bowls, canoeing, swimming, skiing and public events. In 1998, water quality had deteriorated to the extent that water-based recreational activities were ceased.

Redevelopment plans began with identifying how the Lake precinct would meet the needs of the community now and into the future. Using Water Sensitive Urban Design Principles, the Lake design includes a constructed wetland, submerged contoured edges, water circulation, indigenous plants and aquatic habitat features.



2012

Wetland ecology and purpose

Wetlands are among Victoria's most valuable and endangered water environments. They provide a refuge for local wildlife and play a critical role in improving water quality. The Victoria Park Lake wetland is composed of a series of ponds planted with indigenous water plants. As the water travels through the increasingly shallow wetland ponds, heavier material is caught in the primarily deeper ponds, then the fine particles of nutrients and pollutants are absorbed by the plants in the shallower ponds.

The body of the Lake is dominated by Eelgrass (*Vallisneria australis*), which self-populated from the Goulburn River and continues to thrive in the stable water levels of the Lake. This local plant species, together with the other aquatic plants, are crucial to managing the water nutrient cycle and preventing algal blooms; the same way natural wetlands do in our floodplains. The purposely shallow ponds allow prolonged contact for this process with UV rays disinfecting any bacteria.

Water pollution

Much of the rainfall that Shepparton receives drains directly into the Goulburn River, taking all of the litter, nutrients and pollutants with it. The Lake receives water from the river as well as a stormwater catchment that enters via the eastern side of the Lake. Along with the Lake wetland, there are five Gross Pollutant Traps throughout Shepparton that intercept litter before it enters the Goulburn River; however some pollution can still enter the waterways.

Described by the EPA water pollution falls into three main categories:

Litter – includes cigarette butts, plastic waste, cans, etc.

Natural pollution – includes organic waste, animal faeces, etc.

Chemical pollution – includes fertilisers, oil, detergents, etc.



How you can help

The Lake provides an important ecosystem service by removing these pollutants, however by preventing waste travelling down the stormwater drain or household sink, you can help reduce the strain placed on the system and reduce the associated costs. By refraining from feeding water birds with human food, you will help to maintain our wildlife's health and prevent the food-dependent behaviours they may develop over time. The Lake provides much needed refuge in times of drought. Keeping your dog on a lead will also help to reduce the stress on local wildlife.

Management

While the Victoria Park Lake and wetland are environmental features, they are manmade and require active management. To maintain the balance between community recreational requirements and biodiversity values, Eelgrass requires maintenance throughout the year. In the past, Eelgrass was considered a 'pest' or 'weed' species; however it is an important native plant which only dominates due to being in a slow-moving, permanent waterbody. Just like lawn, the Eelgrass requires trimming to prevent it outcompeting other aquatic species. The trimmed plants are then taken to the composting facility removing the absorbed nutrients and pollutants from the system.



Victoria Park Lake

Bird species

Photos by Steve Wilson



Eurasian coot
Fulica atra

With a white bill and forehead shield, these dark grey birds nest on floating material or areas surrounded by water and feed mainly on vegetation.



Pacific black duck
Ana superciliosa

Relatively common to all water habitats, these predominantly brown ducks give birth to two broods of young per year.



Little pied cormorant
Microcabo melanoleucos

Smaller than its Near Threatened relative, the Pied Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax varius*), the little pied cormorant is often seen diving to catch fish or standing with their wings spread open to dry their feathers after a swim.



Great white egret
Ardea alba

Breeding between November and April, this long-legged white bird depends highly on wetland vegetation for their nesting sites and is known to be a highly mobile species.

Plant species

Photos by Sharon Terry



Drumsticks
Pycnosorus globosus

Growing between 0.3-1 metre tall, this perennial species has soft downy grey leaves and bright yellow bulb-shaped flowers that attract many insects including bees and butterflies.



Wavy marshwort
Nymphoides crenata

Found floating on fresh slow-moving waterbodies, this plant can easily move with changing water levels whilst being anchored to the ground. It flowers between September-May with unique star-shaped yellow flowers.



Water ribbons
Triglochin procera

With leaves up to 1 metre long this water plant provides shelter for frogs and fish whilst oxygenating and cleaning the water it lives in. They also can store carbohydrates to use when conditions become dry.



Tall sedge
Carex tereticaulis

With bright green leaves and brown spikey flowers, this plant provides food for caterpillars and butterflies and is very common in riparian and wetland habitats.



Eelgrass
Vallisneria australis

With broad strap-like leaves, this aquatic plant provides an immense role within an ecosystem. It removes pollutants from water but also provides an important food source and habitat for turtles and other aquatic wildlife. Blooming in spring, the gleaming spiral stemmed female flowers await a male flower to float to the surface and pollinate. A native to Australia, it can often be compared to *V. americana*, *V. gigantea* and *V. spiralis* found in other parts of the world.

Banks/edges

Erosion is prevented on the edges by using concrete walling and rocks. The area is then densely planted out to stabilise the bank.

Rowing course

A rowing course runs the length of the Lake.

Contouring

Crenulations just under the water surface are designed to prevent erosion of the Lake edges and promote a unidirectional flow of water.

Wetland inlet structure

Water flows into the wetland through flume gates for treatment through the ponds. Water is pumped from the Lake into the wetland during the warmer months for maximum water treatment.

Island

Area of remnant vegetation that provides habitat and refuge for flora and fauna.

Wetland ponds

As the water moves through the wetland it enters into the first deep sedimentation pond before continuing through increasingly shallower ponds. Each pond contains different aquatic plants suited to grow at that depth.

Water sources

The primary source of water is pumped from the nearby Goulburn River. Stormwater from the drainage catchment to the East also enters the Lake for treatment.



Rakali
Hydromys chrysogaster

With brown fur and a white tail tip, this species is Australia's largest rodent and territorially defends its burrow. They feed on invertebrates and fish and require high water quality to find enough food. This species recently returned to the Lake area and is a key indicator that the wetland ecosystem is healthy.