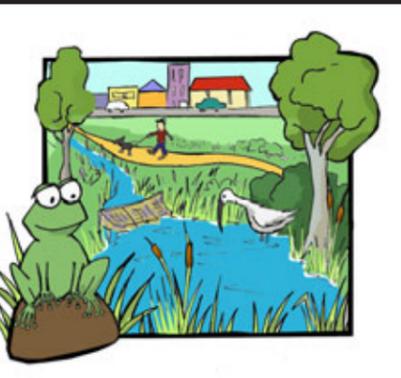


# Visiting The Wetlands

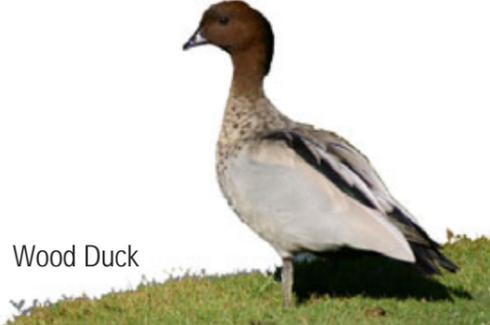


Apex Park is the most visited park in the City of West Torrens. It has ample parking, BBQs, interpretive signs, picnic facilities, a playground, toilet and tennis courts.

Breakout Creek is part of the River Torrens Linear Park and is easily accessible along the bike and walking track.

## Fast Facts

- Design and construction costs: Apex Park \$500,000 and Breakout Creek stage 1 \$550,000, stage 2 \$3.4 million
- Apex Park Wetland was excavated to a depth of 1m below groundwater level, to maintain water levels all year round - maximum depth 2.5m
- KESAB Patawalonga and Torrens Waterwatch, now NRM Education (Central), coordinated a 12 month, \$20,000 rehabilitation project at Apex Park in 2000
- Approx. 60,000 cubic metres of soil was removed at Breakout Creek to create a permanent wetland 1.2km in length
- Planning for Breakout Creek wetland included the most detailed flood modelling research ever undertaken on the River Torrens



Wood Duck

NRM Education proudly delivers the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative - SA. We acknowledge the support of Local Government and, in particular, those Councils who are working in partnership with NRM Education and the AMLR NRM Board. KESAB environmental solutions is also a key partner and we recognise their ongoing support.



Government of South Australia  
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges  
Natural Resources Management Board

# NRM Education

climate change biodiversity water food air waste transport energy



The Apex Park Wetland (pictured right) is surrounded by Apex Park Reserve, covering an area of 6.17 hectares. It is located off Burbridge Rd, West Beach, adjacent to the Breakout Creek section of the River Torrens Linear Park.



The wetland was built in 1993 to detain and improve stormwater prior to discharge into the River Torrens, which then flows into Gulf St Vincent. Stormwater pipes divert water into the wetland which consists of 2 ponds that filter water through reed beds. The larger pond retains water all year round, while the smaller pond holds additional stormwater flow during winter. When stormwater input exceeds the ponds' capacity water overflows into an adjoining pump station.

Upstream from the Apex Park Wetland site is the Breakout Creek Wetland (pictured right). Stage 1 (upstream of Henley Beach Rd) was constructed by the Torrens Catchment Water Management Board on the lower reaches of the River Torrens at Lockleys in 1999.



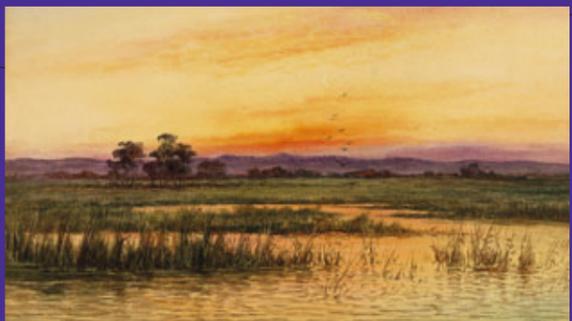
Stage 2 (between Henley Beach Rd and Tapleys Hill Rd) was completed by the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Management Board in 2010. Water travelling along the River Torrens is slowed down by the wetland, where sedimentation and absorption of nutrients improve water quality before discharge out to sea.

Breakout Creek Wetland now offers an attractive space for the community as well as providing a home for numerous plant and animal species, including fish, frogs, birds and invertebrates.

Photomaps courtesy NearMap ([www.nearmap.com](http://www.nearmap.com))



# Wetland History



The Lower Torrens catchment area was originally swamp land called, 'The Reed Beds' (pictured right), which extended from Glenelg to Grange and as far inland as Torrensville. Water from the River Torrens entered the Reed Beds and, during the winter months, flowed slowly out to sea through the sand dunes or via the Port River to the north and Patawalonga Creek to the south.

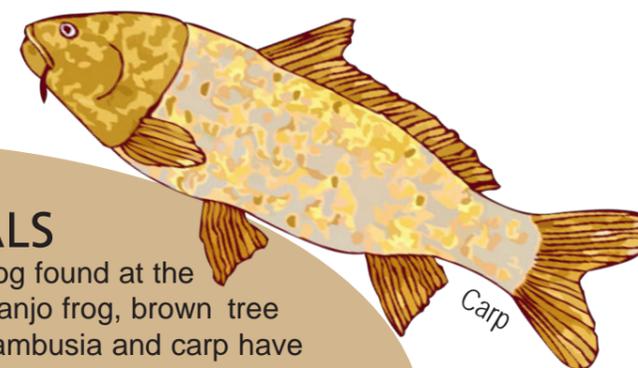
The Kaurna people visited The Reed Beds and the coastal regions of Adelaide during the spring and summer months. The dunes and beaches provided shelter, reeds from the nearby wetlands were used to make baskets and mats. Early settlers used some of the surrounding land for grazing and growing crops and large estate owners subdivided the land for urban development. An increase in roads and buildings meant an increased volume of stormwater, causing regular flooding in the area.

In 1934, the 'Lower Torrens Floodwater Vigilance Committee' was granted permission to clear and widen Breakout Creek and a flood channel was created through the sand dunes.

What lives there?

## BIRDS

Apex Park Wetland provides a safe habitat for swamp hens, mallards, cormorants, moor hens and coots, with protected areas for breeding. The area is also visited by pelicans, herons, egrets, silver gulls and black swans. Breakout Creek is home to common ducks and is a feeding ground for a variety of migratory bird species.



## OTHER ANIMALS

The four species of South Australian frog found at the wetlands are the common froglet, eastern banjo frog, brown tree frog and spotted grass frog. The feral fish gambusia and carp have reduced native fish species in the area by competing for food, shelter and spawning sites.

In 2000, the Apex Park Wetland was drained and over 1000kg of carp were removed, along with many gambusia. Native crimson-spotted river rainbow fish were released into the wetland when the ponds were refilled. A wide variety of aquatic macroinvertebrates, including damselfly nymphs, scuds, backswimmers and water fleas, provide a rich food source for birds and fish.

## WHERE IS THE STORMWATER FROM?

The catchment area for Apex Park Wetland is approximately 1 square kilometre of the suburb of West Beach. The catchment area is primarily residential, plus sporting fields and reserves.

Stormwater from Lockleys, Kidman Park, Fulham and Fulham Gardens enters the Breakout Creek Wetland via the stormwater system. Breakout Creek Wetland is part of the River Torrens, which carries water from as far away as Mt. Pleasant and Birdwood. Water from the River Torrens discharges into Gulf St. Vincent through the river mouth at West Beach.

Pied Cormorants



## PLANTS

Revegetation has been an important part of Apex Park Wetland. It is an active Our Patch site with over 5000 indigenous species propagated from local remnant sources and planted by local school and community groups. Along with reeds, rushes and sedges, coastal wattle, salt bush and swamp paper bark have been reintroduced to the area.

The rare creeping monkey-flower, *Mimulus repens*, has re-established itself on the swampy banks of the ponds.



Monkey-flower

## Why were the wetlands constructed?

To provide educational opportunities

To provide habitat for plants, birds and other animals

Ecotourism

To improve the quality of water discharging into the River Torrens and eventually the sea

Stormwater retention, pollution management and flood control

