



Wet and Wild



2020, Week 3 - Clues

Wonderful Wet & Wild Wetlands

Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Ramsar Wetland

'Located at the mouth of the River Murray, south east of the city of Adelaide, it consists of two lakes forming a wetland system at the river's mouth and a long, shallow brackish-to-hypersaline lagoon which they feed into, separated from the ocean by a narrow sand dune peninsula. The lakes include a unique mosaic of 23 wetland types including intertidal mud, sand and salt flats, coastal brackish lagoons and permanent freshwater lakes. The site is of international importance for migratory waterbirds and supports the greatest wealth of waterbird species in the Murray-Darling Basin. Ramsar site no. 321.' <https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/321>

Solve 24 clues each week and discover the four Australian organisms they belong to.

1. I have white underparts and forehead. My upperparts are mainly grey-brown.
2. I am a tall species of orchid endemic to South Australia.
3. I have a wingspan of 2.3 - 2.5 m and my pink bill is the longest of any living bird at 40 cm - 50 cm long.
4. I catch mainly fish, but I'm an opportunistic feeder and eat a variety of aquatic animals including crustaceans and turtles.
5. I grow to about 6.5 cm long with a deeply notched single dorsal fin and rounded tail fin.
6. I have a single dark green, tubular leaf and a flower spike with over thirty greenish with brown, pink and white flowers.
7. I'm a strong flier and will move to inland lakes during times of drought.
8. Adult males have a rufous or reddish-brown crown and hindneck like a 'cap'.
9. I only grow around the edges of swamps on the Fleurieu Peninsula.
10. I am 14–16 cm long and my wingspan is 27–34 cm; and weigh 35–40 g.
11. I prefer to live in shallow (1-2 m) freshwater streams with moderate to high water flow.
12. I can live over 30 years and it is said that my beak can hold more than my belly can.
13. I live 1-5 years and spawn during spring (September to October) laying eggs on aquatic vegetation in clear, fresh water.
14. My body colour is gold to dusky brown-grey, paler on the belly, with dark spots or blotches along the midline.
15. I mainly eat small molluscs, crustaceans and worms around sandflat and mudflat areas with bare ground.
16. There are between 100 and 150 individual plants of my species growing in two places and I'm listed as "Critically Endangered".
17. My nest is a small depression in the ground, with minimal or no lining, close to a wetland or shoreline.
18. My diet includes insects such as mosquito larvae, molluscs and planktonic crustaceans
19. Mr Percival, Storm Boy's friend on the windswept Coorong was one of my species.
20. I have a clutch of two pale yellowish-brown eggs that are speckled with black spots.
21. The main threats to the species are vegetation clearance, drying of catchments, stock trampling and inappropriate fires.
22. Major threats include wetland drainage, habitat damage, altered water flows and predation by introduced fish including Redfin perch and Mosquito fish.
23. The Coorong is an important breeding ground for me thanks to the area's abundance of fish.
24. I'm one of 30 plants that the Australian Government has prioritised to support the species recovery effort.