



**SOUTHCOAST**  
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INC.

## Media Release

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**Thursday 12 May 2011**

### **Time to celebrate Warden and Gore**

Lake Warden and Lake Gore may be recognised locally as important wetland systems but they happen to be famous on the international scene as top biodiversity hotspots.

The two are in the spotlight this week with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ramsar Treaty, signed at the Convention on Wetlands in Ramsar, Iran, in May 1971.

This June marks the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the recognition and listing of Lake Warden as a wetland of international significance while Lake Gore celebrates 10 years on the list this year.

Esperance Regional Forum community officer Kathryn Ashby said Australia was one of the original signatories to the convention and had an international obligation to protect wetlands considered internationally significant.

Lake Warden and Lake Gore are two of 12 wetland systems in Western Australia listed under the international Ramsar Treaty known as the 'Ramsar Listed Wetlands of International Importance'.

"This obligation is very relevant to the Esperance community because our wetlands play host to thousands of waterbirds, many of which are rare, vulnerable or endangered," Ms Ashby explained.

"The tiny Red Necked Stint for instance weighs less than a box of matches and makes a massive journey every year from their breeding grounds in the Arctic Circle to our summer playground."

Rare birds such as the Hooded Plover and the Banded Stilt can also be found in and around these wetlands.

Ms Ashby said many wetlands and the species they support remained under threat through expanding rural and urban subdivisions, pollution and climate change.

Wetlands are rich in biodiversity and many species of plants and animals cannot survive anywhere else.

During the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ramsar Convention in 2011, Esperance Regional Forum, South Coast NRM and the Department of Environment and Conservation will continue to highlight the need to protect and enhance these precious natural assets.

**ENDS**

**Jenelle Carter**  
**Communications and Public Relations Coordinator**  
**South Coast NRM**  
Direct (08) 9845 8521  
Mobile 0428 928 536  
Email [jenellec@southcoastnrm.com.au](mailto:jenellec@southcoastnrm.com.au)