

## Wetland care in the Eurobodalla

A special World Wetlands Day update by Nature Conservation Council member group, Coastwatchers .

The Eurobodalla on the south east coast of NSW is blessed with many wetlands, including coastal floodplain swamps and lagoons that have high value as habitat and feeding areas for waterbirds, as well as being drought refuge for many inland birds.

Coastwatchers has long been concerned about the need to protect our unique freshwater wetlands, some already identified as being endangered ecological communities and for the need to update maps of all the wetlands in the Eurobodalla. In November 2009 several of our members attended a workshop organised by Wetland Care Australia and designed to help local communities to protect and repair their local wetlands.

The process involves a review of all wetlands and their classifications, using local knowledge and participation. Stage one is to produce useful maps for everyone to use.

Wetland Care will undertake the wetland health assessments and work has already been undertaken by The Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA) to prioritise wetlands for conservation, protection and restoration.

Reed Swamp Lagoon Long Beach Reed Swamp Lagoon at Long Beach, north of Batemans Bay, is a SEPP 14 Wetland and an EEC. SRMCA prioritised it as the number one wetland in the Eurobodalla requiring future investigation of its condition. It has been a concern of Coastwatchers and Landcare for some time because of its vulnerability to degradation from encroaching urban development and infestations of environmental weeds. It will now be assessed to see what is required for its improvement and rehabilitation.

The time frame for the review is April 2009 to June 2101 and will be funded by SCRMA through grants.

A DVD containing all project information will be made available to interested parties at the end of the process. This will be an extremely useful tool for local government, local communities and environmental groups such as Coastwatchers.