Penrith Lakes
Project Update: Wildlife Lake

Returning to the Wild ... Native Wildlife Comes Back to Penrith Lakes

Back in 1984, PLDC commissioned a Regional Environmental Study. It identified environmental and technical issues that needed to be resolved before the Penrith Lakes Scheme could be carried our successfully.

Among the most important was the need to create and preserve wildlife habitat within the Scheme. To help achieve this, the landforms and lake at the northern end of the Scheme were designed and built be a magnet for native wildlife while still supporting flood management and water quality improvement. It is purpose-built, ideal habitat for native fauna and an invaluable site for wildlife research.

It is called *Wildlife Lake*.

Construction and revegetation of *Wildlife Lake* was finished in December 2013. The design and layout reflects the character of a natural open water form with refuge islands, wetlands and a strong emphasis on wildlife habitat.

It was designed to be visually integrated with the floodplain and river, including use of the trees, shrubs and grasses of the original floodplain. All of the native trees, shrubs and wetland plants planted within the precinct (more than 80,000) were grown from seeds collected within 10km of the site.

They were cultivated and grown at our on-site nursery by the land management staff of the Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Education Centre. PLDC expects to hand over this completed area to the NSW Government in early 2015.
Since the land was revegetated and the lake filled with water, wildlife has flocked to the area, thriving in the restored habitat. Surveys have identified 122 bird species as well as marsupials (Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Swamp Wallabies), reptiles (Goannas, snakes, turtles and lizards) and even platypus within the precinct.

Such a large and diverse range of species at such an early stage is extremely encouraging in the effort to establish a long-term, stable ecosystem. To encourage even more animal life in the area, PLDC has adopted a ‘minimal interaction policy’. Access is restricted to essential maintenance works only.