



Geelong





Geelong Days 2026







GEELONG DAYS 2026

～ Connecting People, Nature, and the Future through Tidal Flats ～

Published by Environmental Bureau, Nagoya City

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Published: September 2026

Let's Go to Greater Geelong!

On March 25, 2026, eighteen junior high school students selected from Nagoya set off for Greater Geelong, Australia.

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Introduction

Off to Australia!

Every two years, Nagoya City sends junior high school students to Geelong with the aim of developing young people who can take an active role in environmental conservation. In March 2026, we visited Geelong, Australia, where we interacted with local people and learned about efforts to conserve and make use of wetlands.

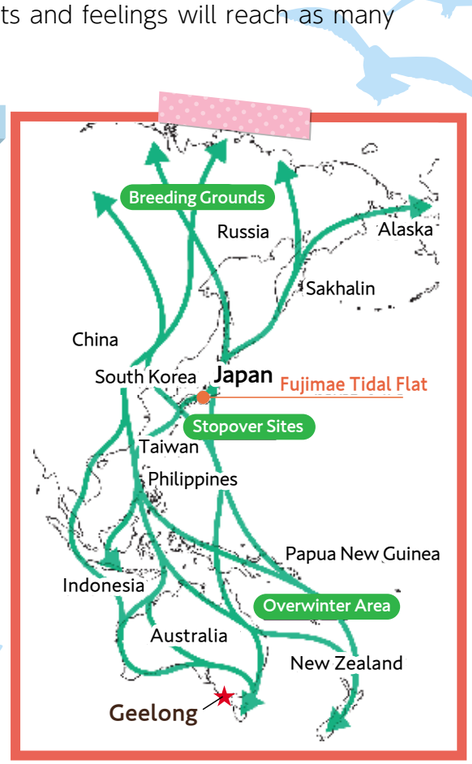
We, the junior high school students, created this booklet ourselves, from planning and writing the text to selecting the photographs, in order to share what we experienced firsthand. We hope that our thoughts and feelings will reach as many readers as possible.

The Connection Between Nagoya and Geelong

Fujimae Tidal Flat in Nagoya is an important stopover for long-distance migratory birds. After resting and feeding on the abundant food available here, the birds take flight for destinationOOs such as Siberia and Australia.

Geelong has wetlands that are connected to Fujimae Tidal Flat by migratory bird routes. As both cities have wetlands designated under the Ramsar Convention, they established a wetland partnership on May 22, 2007. Since then, the two cities have worked together to conserve and make use of wetlands in ways that help protect migratory birds.

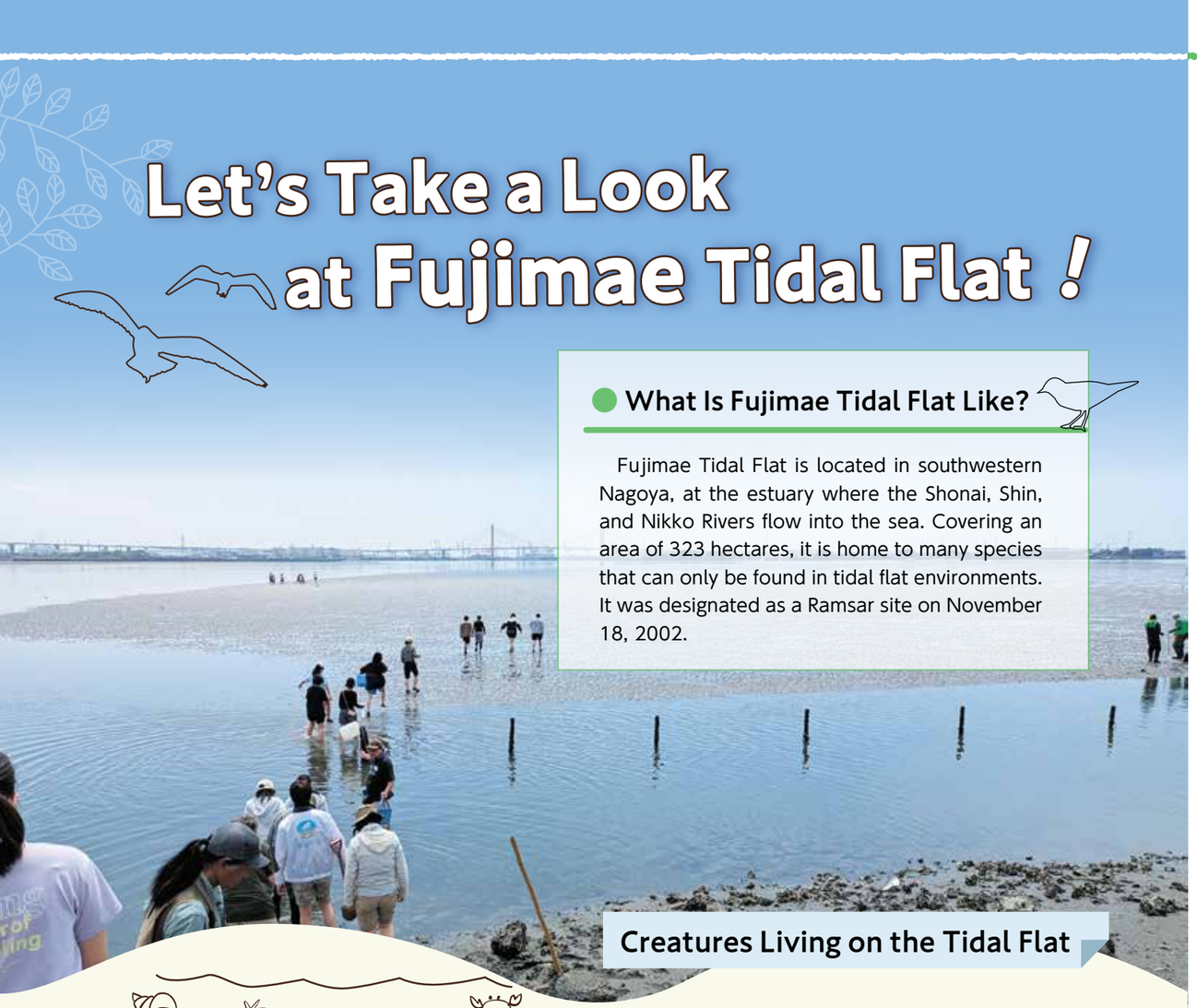




Migratory Bird Routes



Let's Take a Look at Fujimae Tidal Flat !



What Is Fujimae Tidal Flat Like?

Fujimae Tidal Flat is located in southwestern Nagoya, at the estuary where the Shonai, Shin, and Nikko Rivers flow into the sea. Covering an area of 323 hectares, it is home to many species that can only be found in tidal flat environments. It was designated as a Ramsar site on November 18, 2002.

Creatures Living on the Tidal Flat



Japanese mitten crab



Japanese basket clam



Mudskipper



Red-necked stint

Characteristics of Tidal Flats

As the tides rise and fall, tidal flats emerge twice a day when the water level drops.



At low tide



At high tide

History of the Tidal Flat

In the 1980s, the City of Nagoya announced a plan to turn Fujimae Tidal Flat into a waste disposal site.

This was because the amount of waste generated in Nagoya continued to increase, and the Aigi Final Disposal Site was expected to reach capacity within a few years. However, if the tidal flat were lost, many of the creatures living there would disappear, and migratory birds that feed on them would also lose an important place to rest. To protect this valuable stopover for migratory birds, local citizens began a campaign to save Fujimae Tidal Flat.

They sought to raise public awareness of the importance of the tidal flat through activities such as lectures and nature observation events. As a result, the City of Nagoya cancelled the landfill plan in January 1999, issued a "Waste Emergency Declaration" the following month, and began working with citizens and businesses to reduce waste.

Thanks to the cooperation and efforts of citizens and businesses, the City of Nagoya was able to reduce its waste by 20% (200,000 tons) in just two years.

Activities at Fujimae Tidal Flat

We went out onto the tidal flat and observed the creatures living in the mud. We also tried seine-net fishing with a Gata Ranger from the Fujimae Tidal Flat Conservation Group. We caught lots of small fish.

Seeing the tidal flat from a distance was completely different from actually going out onto it and experiencing it firsthand.

Swan Bay Tidal Flats and Fujimae Tidal Flat were completely different in terms of the feel of the mud, the water temperature, and the water depth, giving us the chance to experience many different things.

We Went Birdwatching Too! We saw many different kinds of birds.







Summary

Fujimae Tidal Flat is an important habitat for many living creatures. There was once a plan to turn it into a landfill, but it has been protected through the efforts of many people. By going out onto the tidal flat and watching birds, we learned about the richness of nature and the importance of life. Let's each do what we can to continue protecting Fujimae Tidal Flat.

Discover the Charms of Geelong!

~ The Townscape and the National Wool Museum ~

Geelong's Townscape

With its historic buildings and the sea nearby, Geelong was a beautiful place!



A Clean and Beautiful City

There was very little litter, and I thought the city was very clean.



City Hall

It was a magnificent building that looked like something straight out of a movie!



A Townscape Steeped in History

Many old buildings remain, giving the area a calm and peaceful atmosphere.





Geelong Waterfront

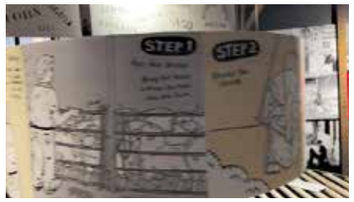
It felt great walking along the waterfront, and we were able to relax and take our time.

~ Reflections ~

With its historic buildings and beautiful natural surroundings, even just walking around was enjoyable. The people of Geelong were all so kind, and the city felt warm and welcoming!

National Wool Museum

We learned about the history of the wool industry!



How Wool Is Made

We learned how sheep's wool is processed step by step. It was very easy to understand!





A Huge Machine!

We didn't get to see it in action, but we were told that it still works.

The Museum Building

The exterior was very stylish and had a real sense of history.



Wool

There was so much wool, and it was fluffier than we expected!

~ Reflections ~

We learned that the wool industry played a major role in Geelong's development. Seeing the actual machinery and exhibits gave us a firsthand experience that we could never get from a textbook!

Geelong was a wonderful city where nature, history, and industry coexist! ♥ Thank you!

The Wadawurrung People

It is called *"Wadawaran"*.

In front of City Hall, members of the Wadawurrung People welcomed us.





This is a Smoking Ceremony, performed by burning eucalyptus wood.

During a Smoking Ceremony, you let the smoke wash over your body. It is also performed on special occasions, such as the birth of a child. They say that if you make a wish while surrounded by the smoke, it might just come true!

It smells different from ordinary smoke.





The Mayor also let the smoke wash over him.

An Indigenous Musical Instrument

This is an Indigenous instrument called a didgeridoo. It produced a deep, low sound.







Check out this jacket!

It's made of possum fur.



This fur comes from possums, which are native to Australia. Apparently, possum pelts are sometimes even used to make musical instruments like drums.

Presentation at Geelong City Hall

Three groups presented what they had learned during their pre-trip studies to the mayor and local residents at Geelong City Hall.

We were nervous, but all our practice paid off.



A Group Photo to Mark the Occasion!



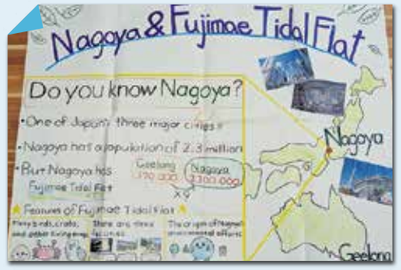
After the Presentation

Presenting to the mayor and local residents was nerve-wracking, but we were able to share what we had learned and what we thought, which gave us a great sense of accomplishment.

Group A

The Appeal of Nagoya and Fujimae Tidal Flat





★Comment★ We tried to make our explanation easy to understand by using plenty of photos and illustrations, and by including a few quiz questions!

Group B

Creatures Seen Year-Round at Fujimae Tidal Flat



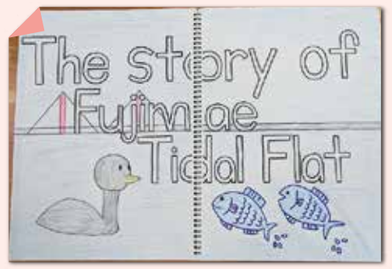


★Comment★ For our poster, we avoided using too much text, highlighted important points, and varied the text colors and sizes to make it easier to read!

Group C

The story of Fujimae Tidal Flat





★Comment★ We used a ***kamishibai*** (picture-story show) style so that the local audience could enjoy our presentation too!

We Received Gifts!

After the presentations,
we exchanged gifts with the people of Geelong.







We received notepads, postcards, and 3D animal puzzles.

Sparrovale Wetlands

Role

It continues to supply nutrients to the Ramsar-listed wetland to the east.
It is a very important site for wetland conservation.



Observing Wildlife

We used spoons to scoop up creatures that had been collected from the river beforehand. We saw aquatic insects and fish, but shrimp were by far the most abundant.

Wildlife Observed


A type offreshwater shrimp


Aquatic insects


A type of seablite (Suaeda)

Purchased by the City

As this area was developed, more houses were built.
To prevent this wetland from being developed, the city purchased 500 hectares in 2019 and has protected the area ever since.

★Reflections

This is a place rich in nature, with vast grasslands and endless skies, a river stretching for about 4 km, and over 100 species of birds. I hope this beautiful landscape will be protected for generations to come.

★Challenges

Water shortages are becoming more serious, and wildlife populations are declining.
Many people are working hard to protect this area.

Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre

A state-run educational facility where visitors can learn about the ecosystems around Swan Bay.







Exhibits and information about wildlife found around Swan Bay

• We were able to touch the creatures!
• We felt much closer to the wildlife!


Touch pool

Swan Bay Tidal Flats

While Fujimae Tidal Flat is a mudflat, Swan Bay has sandy flats with seagrass growing across them. Like Fujimae Tidal Flat, it is home to many different kinds of wildlife.



Observing Wildlife

We went out onto the tidal flats, where we caught fish with a seine net and carefully searched around our feet for shellfish and other creatures.

Afterwards, we observed the creatures we had caught, and when we didn't know the name of a species, we asked members of a local environmental conservation group in English.

Q1. Which one is Swan Bay Tidal Flats?
(Answers at bottom right.)

A



B





Q2. What animal's droppings are these?

A.
Black Swan



B.
Pelican





Birds Observed at Swan Bay


crested Tern


White-faced Heron


Little Pied Cormorant / Silver Gull



★Reflections

What surprised us most was how many droppings there were. Microorganisms break down the droppings, providing nutrients for seaweed. Benthic organisms and fish eat the seaweed, and birds then feed on them. We learned how this cycle forms part of the ecosystem.



Answers: Q1. B, Q2. A

Queenscliff Harbour

Queenscliff Harbour is about 30 minutes from Geelong. Located at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, it is visited by many ships.



Because the area is known for its rough waters, we saw many pilot boats.

We even climbed the tower!



About Invasive Species

At Queenscliff Harbour, invasive species brought in by ships from overseas have spread, causing problems such as the loss of habitats for native species.

Some of these invasive species actually come from Japan. Do you know what the plant on the right is? It's *wakame* seaweed! But over there, they called *wakame* a "bad guy." As invasive species have increased, native species are sometimes mistaken for invasive species too. Because of this, they have increased monitoring at the harbour and efforts to raise public awareness.



We also got to see fur seals in Port Phillip Bay.



My Thoughts

- A species can become a problem simply by living in a different place!
- To solve the problem of invasive species, we need to look at the bigger picture, including global cooperation and efforts to protect native species at home!

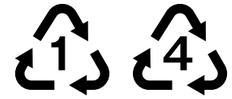
~Recycling Plastic Bottle Caps~

From Plastic Bottle Caps to Keychains

1. Wash the plastic bottle caps



2. Sort the caps by type



Look for these two marks!

Then sort them by color too.

3. Shred them into small pieces



4. Feed them into the machine

Inside the machine:
①Melted by heat into a gooey material
②Poured into a mold
③Cooled and hardened
⇓
Finished!



You Yangs Regional Park



- It was home to a wide variety of wildlife, including birds and insects. → We learned that more than 200 species of birds live there.
- We learned that many of the plants there can survive Australia's dry climate.



Bushfires are common in Australia because of the dry climate.

One Planet Festival

We went to an environmental festival in Australia!

What Is One Planet Festival?

It is a community-led event focused on a sustainable future for the planet!

The 2026 event was held in Ocean Grove, Victoria.

With the theme of "eco-friendly lifestyles," there were various booths about topics such as local plants and Hooded Plovers!





A booth about the Hooded Plover, an Australian bird

There were plenty of bins throughout the venue.





There were also food stalls and a stage for musical performances!



Melbourne Zoo



This is Australia's oldest zoo. In addition to native Australian animals such as koalas and kangaroos, we saw many other animals.

★What We Learned

We explored the zoo while learning about how the animals are cared for, the behavior and habitats of native Australian animals, and the differences between Melbourne Zoo and zoos in Japan!

Differences from Japan

- While Japanese zoos often use cages or glass enclosures, Melbourne Zoo mostly used low fences.

  ||

  The animals felt closer and were easier to see, and we thought the open environment was better for the animals too.

- The enclosures were more spacious than those in Japan, and the environments were designed to closely resemble the animals' natural habitats.

  ||

  We could see that they were trying to reduce stress for the animals.

- Japanese zoos provide both paper and digital maps, but Melbourne Zoo only had a digital map.

Everyone is listening intently.

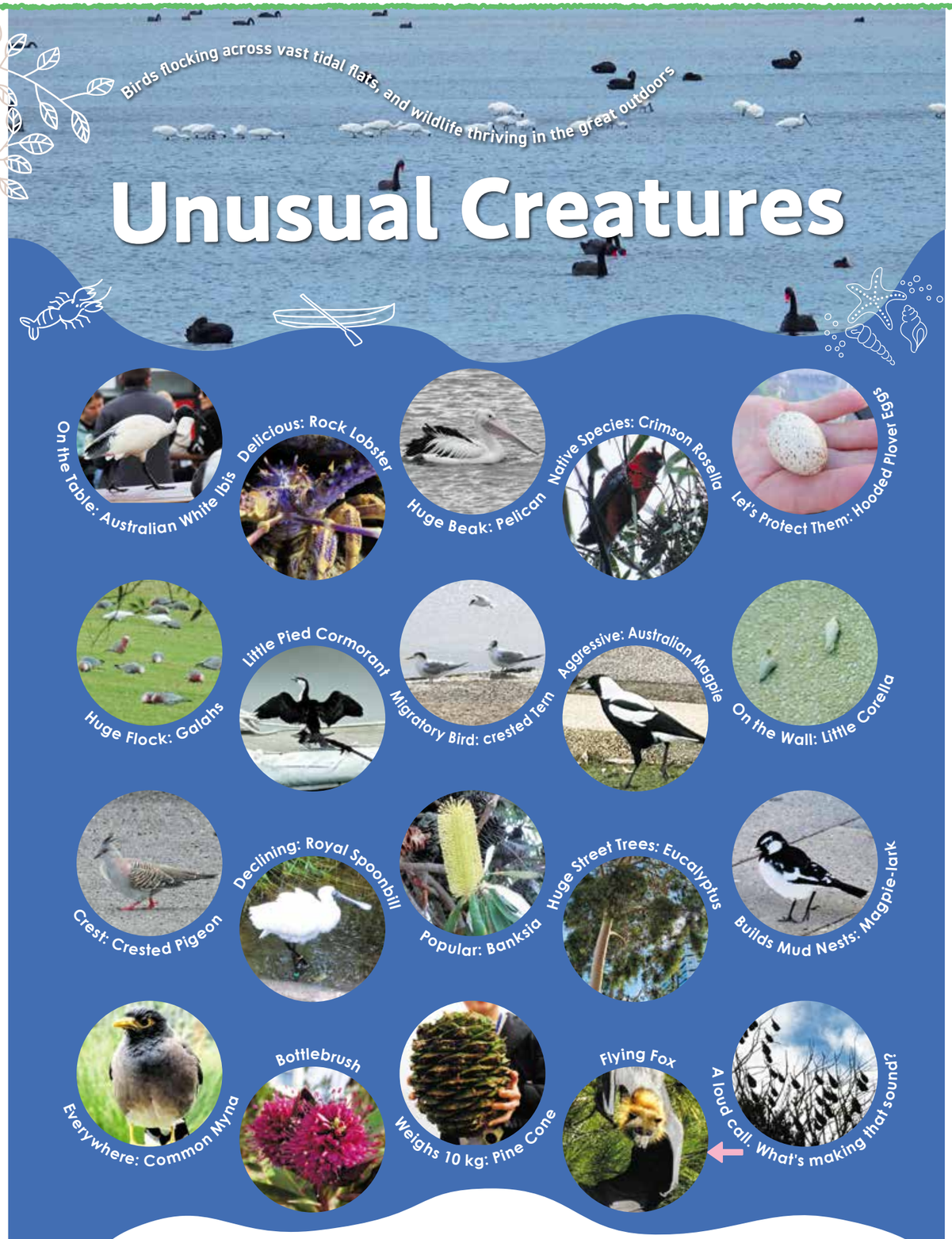



Koala


Kangaroo


Emu

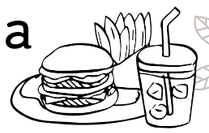

Wombat



There were so many different kinds of wild birds among the large street trees, throughout the green city, and even inside the forest-like zoo!

Food We Ate in Australia







Breakfast



Steak



Fish & Chips



Quiche, etc.



Wagyu Beef Burger



Croissant



Crème Brûlée



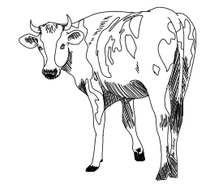
Tiramisu



Pizza

Q. Which ones come from the UK?

We ate lots of British food. Perhaps this is because of Australia's colonial history.



When it comes to Australian food culture, beef is a highlight. Hamburgers, steaks, beef stewed in tomato sauce, and other beef dishes were all wonderfully juicy when eaten right where the beef is produced. Breakfast was an English breakfast, with sausages, grilled tomatoes, baked beans, and other British-style foods. Dishes that reminded us of Australia's British colonial past included burnt cream (crème brûlée) and fish and chips. Everything was delicious and left a lasting impression on us.

A.
Fish & Chips
Breakfast
Crème Brûlée

Participants' Reflections
Geelong Days 2026

We wrote about what we learned, felt, and thought.



I was very impressed by how dedicated the junior high school students were in preparing for the trip. During their pre-trip studies, they were determined to clearly convey the history of the conservation of Fujimae Tidal Flat and its appeal to the people of Geelong. In Geelong, they confidently gave presentations in English in front of the mayor and actively interacted with people involved in environmental conservation. Through this program, I was able to see how much they had grown.

I hope they cherish what they learned and the connections they made through this experience, and that they continue to share the value and importance of wetlands, including Fujimae Tidal Flat, with many people, while passing their passion on to the next generation.

Accompanying Staff: **Rina Itakura**, City of Nagoya

This was my second time participating in the Geelong program, after taking part in the first program 18 years ago.

I remember the first program being rather passive, with many activities simply involving visiting and observing local sites. This time, however, I was very impressed by how actively the students participated, asking the guides and local staff many questions.

Even when they could not speak English, they made full use of smartphone apps and whatever English words they knew to communicate with local people and listen to what they had to say. I would like to follow their example and show the same willingness to communicate.

I hope the students will not see their participation in the Geelong program as a one-time experience, but will continue to work together with us to care for nature, including Fujimae Tidal Flat, and to address environmental issues in their own communities.

For my part, I would like to work even harder in my activities at the tidal flat, inspired by the students' enthusiasm.

Yukitoshi Umemura,
of the NPO Fujimae Tidal Flat Protection Association





This was my second time accompanying the group to Geelong, following my first visit in 2018.

What left a particularly strong impression on me was seeing Swan Bay at low tide, something I had not seen on my previous visit. Seeing large numbers of Black Swans and spoonbills gathering on the tidal flats made me realize once again just how rich Swan Bay is. The warm welcome at Geelong City Hall and the thoughtful guidance provided by those involved in wetland conservation were also unforgettable experiences. I was very happy to see the junior high school students actively asking local people questions in English and learning from them.

I hope they will make the most of this valuable experience, made possible by the support of the City of Greater Geelong, the City of Nagoya, their families, and many others, in the years ahead. I, too, will continue to share the appeal of Geelong and the wildlife of Fujimae Tidal Flat.

Nagoya City Wild Bird Observation Center
Designated Administrator:
Tokai-Inae Network **Tomoko Nomura**

Through this program, I feel that you have grown a great deal by learning to think of environmental issues as something that affects you personally and to take action. I think you also realized how difficult it can be to communicate in English what you have learned and experienced.

I think many of you knew little about Fujimae Tidal Flat at first, but now each of you can clearly explain its history and appeal. As the staff member in charge of the program, I was very happy to see how seriously you all took part.

I hope this program will inspire you to stay involved in environmental conservation, including the conservation of Fujimae Tidal Flat, in many different ways.

I look forward to working together with you again someday.

Accompanying Staff: **Koki Kashihara**,
City of Nagoya

Lessons from a Leader in Environmental Conservation

What left a strong impression on me while listening to several Australian environmental conservation groups was how they gave people a reason to take action right away.

For example, at the One Planet Festival, one group handed out native plants and explained how to identify invasive plants that should be removed. They encouraged people who found these invasive plants nearby to replace them with the native plants. Another group handed out hourglasses to help people limit the time they spent in the shower and save water.

I think these activities can really change the way people think and inspire them to pass what they have learned on to others. Through this experience, I also want to take part in activities that inspire more people to get involved in environmental conservation.

Saku Ito

The Importance of Environmental Conservation

What left the strongest impression on me was how different Fujimae Tidal Flat and Swan Bay Tidal Flats looked. Fujimae is a mudflat, while Swan Bay has seagrass growing across the tidal flats. I was surprised to see how different the environments can be even though they are both tidal flats.

As a member of Gata-Ranger Jr., I have taken part in conservation activities at Fujimae Tidal Flat and learned that it is home to many creatures, including mud shrimp, shellfish, and wild birds. I also learned that many creatures live at Swan Bay Tidal Flats, which made me realize once again how important tidal flats are in supporting so many forms of life.

Through this program, I learned how important it is to protect nature and preserve it for future generations. I would like to continue taking an active part in environmental conservation activities and share their importance with many people.

Kano Kawaguchi

What I Learned in Geelong

In Geelong, surrounded by wide-open landscapes, I had the chance to learn about different ways of thinking about the environment. On the third day after we arrived, we visited a festival in a park with beautiful green lawns. It was bustling with people and filled with parasols, where many different things were being explained. Under the parasols, various plants were being sold. I saw elderly people, children helping out, people listening carefully to explanations, and products made from recycled materials. There, I learned about the effects of microplastics on fish and the environment, as well as ways of sorting waste that were different from ours. I realized that although environmental problems are shared around the world, the ways of dealing with them can be different. At Swan Bay Tidal Flats, which I experienced firsthand, I waded through the squelchy water and watched Black Swans with red beaks flying overhead. The birds' droppings become food for microorganisms, the microorganisms become food for fish, and the fish become food for birds. I saw how life is connected. Even in a small area, so many different creatures live together. During those six days, the experience opened my eyes and made me realize just how important nature is. I want to make use of what I felt and learned and share it with the people around me.

Marie Oguri

Life Thriving Out of Sight

The most memorable part of the Geelong program was visiting the wetlands. We actually went into a wetland and used a seine net to look for wildlife. At first, it did not seem like many creatures lived there, but I was very surprised to find lots of small fish and shrimp in the net. This experience made me realize how important wetlands are in supporting so many forms of life. In Geelong, I also learned about efforts to protect the natural environment and saw how people and nature live together. There was very little litter in the city, which showed me how much people care about the environment. I had already learned about Fujimae Tidal Flat in Nagoya, but actually seeing and entering the wetlands in Geelong helped me understand that wetlands are important places that support ecosystems, no matter what country or region they are in. I also realized that once a natural environment is lost, it is difficult to restore, so we need to continue protecting it. I would like to use what I learned in my future studies and continue to take an interest in the nature around me and in environmental issues.

Wakaba Ito

"Every little thing makes a difference."

"Even the smallest things matter. Even the smallest actions have the power to change the world."

Through this program, I strongly felt that the world is connected and that protecting the environment requires cooperation across national borders. In Geelong, many bins were placed throughout the city, making it easier for people to help protect the environment. I also learned about many other efforts, such as saving water at home, protecting native species, and cooperation between local government and environmental groups. I realized that just because people do things differently does not mean that one way is wrong. They may have different ways of thinking, but they all share the same desire to protect the environment, and I believe that each of these efforts is important. I want to share what I learned through this experience with many people and do my part as a member of the global community working to protect the environment.

Mitsuki Kimpara

My Reflections

Four things stood out to me during this program in Geelong. First, the local people protect wildlife habitats. As a result, there was still a lot of nature around the city.

Second, they do not stop at simply "knowing" about environmental issues. I felt that this makes it easier for people to pay attention to environmental problems and think about what they themselves can do. Third, people have found ways to live in harmony with nature. They protect nature while also allowing people to live their lives. Finally, many people are working hard to protect nature. Some of their efforts were different from those in Japan, and I realized how important it is to connect with others who are working toward the same goal.

This experience gave me a real sense of our connection to the world beyond Japan. Environmental issues cannot be solved by the efforts of just one country. Learning about the efforts being made in different countries made me feel that we, too, must do our part.

Saya Kurimoto

Seeing the Beauty of Nature

What left a particularly strong impression on me during this trip to Geelong, Australia, was that there were bins throughout the city and that people seemed very aware of the environment. I felt that this awareness was connected to their desire to protect the beautiful sea, sky, wild birds, and other parts of nature around them.

In contrast, perhaps because there are fewer bins in Nagoya, I have seen litter on roads and in parks. This made me realize that in Japan, too, each of us needs to think of environmental issues as our own responsibility and take action to protect the environment.

Through this experience, I learned about the relationship between people and nature. From now on, I want to be even more aware of the environment and start by doing what I can.

Kohaku Kodama

To Protect the Environment

Through this program, I learned that there are many different ways to protect the environment. The recycling workshop in Queenscliff and the activities at the One Planet Festival were all different, but each of them helped protect the environment.

Replacing invasive weeds with native plants, or even simply learning about invasive species, is also a way to help protect the environment. We cannot immediately achieve big goals such as preventing species from becoming extinct.

However, we can start right away with small actions that can help us reach those goals. I want to let more people know that there are things we can do to protect the environment, even if they do not have a direct effect, and share what we can do right now.

Sayuki Shintani

Everything Is Connected

"Everything is connected." This is what I felt most strongly during this program. When we spoke with the staff at Swan Bay, I learned that microplastics have been found in Geelong in the Southern Hemisphere, just as they have at Fujimae Tidal Flat. The snack wrappers, plastic bottles, and excessive packaging we use today might be harming the environment in Australia. The thought of that frightened me. Migratory birds cannot be protected by just a few people. That is why it is important for people around the world to work together.

I realized that the first step is to "learn." Even if we cannot do anything big, learning about the problems and what we can do about them can help spread the circle of conservation. Now that I have learned about these issues, I want to help expand that circle by sharing what I have learned with others.

Mizuki Sugino

Wetlands Connecting the World and the Future

I learned that wetlands play an important role by providing homes and breeding grounds for many different creatures and by helping to keep the water clean. I also learned about the Ramsar Convention and realized that wildlife, water, and the natural environment connect the world across national borders. In Geelong, I visited many wetlands and learned about the differences in their ecosystems and surrounding environments.

Wherever we went, local people stayed with us and carefully and enthusiastically explained the wetlands and the creatures living there. Through this program, I was deeply impressed by the importance of caring for nature and taking action to protect the environment around us.

I want to use what I have learned in my daily life and think about what I can do to protect the natural environment. I also hope to return to Geelong someday to share what I have done and the results of my efforts.

Ai Sugiyama

Geelong's High Environmental Awareness

Through this program, I was able to interact with local people and learn firsthand about Australia's efforts to protect the environment. What impressed me most when I visited Geelong was that there was no litter wherever I went. I was very surprised to see how much effort the whole city puts into protecting the environment and how environmentally aware the people are. At the environmental festival, I was also impressed to see people of all ages having fun while learning about environmental conservation.

The six days I spent learning so much together with my fellow participants will be a lifelong treasure for me. I want to share what I learned with many people and help more people become interested in the environment, even if only a little.

Yua Nakamura

Environmental Awareness Among Local People

Many of the local people were very aware of the environment. Of all the places we visited, the people at Melbourne Zoo left the strongest impression on me. I learned that they care about the environment in many ways, such as using toilet paper made from recycled paper, and I could really see how much they value the environment. I also realized that there are things we can do, such as not using too much water, sorting our waste properly, and not using too many tissues. Each of our actions can affect the environment in other countries and also have an impact on the future.

Through this program, I also realized that I want to share what I have learned with more people, help them understand the value of wetlands, plants, and animals, and share this knowledge with more and more people who visit tidal flats.

Rinon Yamazaki

What I Learned Through Experience

Through this program in Geelong, I realized that it is important not only to learn about the environment but also to actually visit places and experience them firsthand. Until then, environmental issues had seemed like something I only heard about in the news or learned about in class. However, actually seeing the wetlands and watching what people did there made me realize that protecting the environment is not something special. It is something each of us can do little by little in our daily lives.

Through my interactions with local people, I also learned that even when we speak different languages and have different cultures, it is important to try to understand one another. I was nervous during the gift exchange and presentations, but I was able to interact with many people and realized how important it is to take action on my own.

I do not want what I learned through this program to end here. I want to put it into action through conservation activities at Fujimae Tidal Flat and in my daily life. I also want to remember that there are some things we can only understand by experiencing them firsthand.

Sakura Funaki

Reflections on the Program

This was my first time traveling abroad, and I left Japan feeling more nervous and anxious than ever before. Once I arrived, everything I saw was new to me.

What left the strongest impression on me during this program was how environmentally aware the people in Australia were. An environmental festival happened to be taking place during our visit, and people from the local community were working together on many different activities. They kindly answered our questions, and I felt that I learned a great deal from them. Even just walking around the city, I could feel the energy of the people, and there was not a single piece of litter on the streets.

Through this program, I gained important ideas about how we can protect the environment in the future. I want to make use of what I experienced during this program and continue to be involved in environmental conservation in Japan.

Koki Matsuoka

Awareness of Wildlife and the Environment

What impressed me most during this program in Australia was how much people cared about wildlife and the environment. In many places, I saw different efforts to protect them. At Melbourne Zoo, for example, the enclosures were designed to reduce stress for the animals. They were spacious, with water, plants, and trees inside. This allowed the animals to live in an environment similar to their natural habitats. I also did not see any litter in the zoo, at the other facilities we visited, or along the roads. When I looked more closely, I noticed that there were bins everywhere. The areas around the bins were clean, with no overflowing rubbish, and this showed me how environmentally aware people were. I thought that in Japan, too, we could protect the environment if each of us became more aware and took action. I had many valuable experiences during this program. I want to remember what I learned and continue to take part in environmental conservation activities in the future.

Ha Aehui

Memorable Experiences in Australia

Before taking part in this program, I knew very little about environmental issues. This was because I did not have any friends around me who paid particular attention to environmental issues.

What surprised me when I visited Australia was how many people cared about the environment. At the One Planet Festival, many people of all ages took part, and there were activities that we do not often see in Japan, such as recycling plastic bottle caps. Perhaps because of these efforts, although I had always thought of Japan as a clean country, I found that the towns in Australia had even less litter, more nature, and were very clean.

Many people in Australia told us that it is important for each person to work together with others. I strongly felt that while it is important for me to learn a lot about environmental issues, it is even more important for many people to become interested and work together. So I want to share what I learned in Australia with the people around me and try to get them interested too. I hope to make use of this valuable experience in the future.

Rino Yamamoto

Days of Learning with All My Heart

Through this program, I really felt how rich nature is. I was amazed by the vast wetlands and unusual waterbirds. I was also surprised to see so many wild birds at Melbourne Zoo. Even though the zoo is in the city, there seemed to be more wild birds than animals kept at the zoo. Just outside the city, we also saw vast grasslands stretching into the distance. These experiences made me wish that Nagoya could also become a city where we can feel closer to nature in our daily lives.

I also faced challenges, such as the language barrier and various worries. Trying new things was scary, but I kept challenging myself while reflecting on my experiences and overcame those difficulties. By finding the courage to try, I learned firsthand that taking on new challenges can open up a whole new world.

I want to make use in many different ways of what I could only have learned on this journey, including the richness of nature, the creative ideas I saw, and the kindness of the people I met.

Nao Yoshikawa

What I Learned About the Environment

It was my first time on a plane and my first time traveling abroad, so I couldn't stop feeling excited. When I finally arrived in Geelong, I saw many different animals, tried different foods, and enjoyed the vast and beautiful scenery.

Melbourne Zoo left a particularly strong impression on me. The animals felt very close, and I was able to see koalas and Black Swans up close. I also learned that Melbourne Zoo puts a lot of effort into environmental conservation. It is not just a place to see animals, but also a place where people can learn about protecting the environment.

In Australia, I felt that being so close to animals helped people care more about the environment. I want to make use of what I learned through this program and continue to take an interest in environmental conservation activities.

Chito Yoshida

MEMORY ALBUM

Best Memories of Geelong

BEST PLACES

1 Swan Bay Tidal Flats



2 Melbourne Zoo



3 One Planet Festival



BEST ANIMALS

1 Koala



2 Wombat



3 Kangaroo



BEST FOOD

1 Fish & Chips



2 Wagyu Burger







3 Steak



BEST SOUVENIR

1 Tim Tam



2 Tea（T2）





3 Plush Toys



Reflections

By actually visiting the area rather than just learning about it, we were able to see firsthand how it differs from Nagoya. We realized that even small changes in the way each of us thinks and acts can make a big difference to the environment around us. Let's start little by little with simple things, such as disposing of waste properly and taking an interest in the nature around us!