

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Saturday, 8 May 2021

FREE ENTRY TO PHILLIP ISLAND FOR LOCAL HEROES

Local heroes who fought devastating bushfires in Victoria and who continue to work at the frontline during the coronavirus pandemic will have free access to Phillip Island's attractions for a month.

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today joined Phillip Island Nature Parks Chair Liz Stinson and CEO Catherine Basterfield to announce the free entry, which will run until Sunday 6 June.

One of the many attractions first responders and medical staff will have access to is the new Joan Kirner Education Wing – also launched today.

The wing recognises the instrumental role Mrs Kirner played in protecting Phillip Island's penguins. As Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands in 1985, Mrs Kirner bought back 774 housing and other lots that made up the Summerland Residential Estate, protecting the penguin colony from extinction.

The wing is one highlight of the Penguin Parade visitor centre, which opened in July 2019 thanks to \$48.2 million in funding from the Andrews Labor Government and \$10 million from Phillip Island Nature Parks.

Students will learn about penguin lifecycles at the wing through digital technologies and hands-on activities and tour groups will get briefings from rangers.

Police officers, firefighters and SES members and medical and health workers can visit penguins.org.au and use the promo code First Responders, or email bookings@penguins.org.au to book their free ticket. ID must be shown on arrival.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"This small gesture is to say a big thank you to Victoria's first responders for their brave work on the frontline."

"For the next four weeks our frontline workers can access Phillip Island's stunning attractions for free – whether it is watching the world-famous Penguin Parade, or visiting Koala Reserve, Antarctic World or Churchill Island."

"It is fitting that we also pay tribute to Joan Kirner's significant contribution to Phillip Island's penguin colony by officially naming this education wing in her honour."

Quote attributable to Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale

"Phillip Island is a world-class tourist destination and this gesture will enable our first responders to enjoy these popular attractions for free over the next four weeks."

Quote attributable to Phillip Island Nature Parks Chair Liz Stinson

"We're thrilled to officially open the dedicated education wing at our Penguin Parade visitor centre and to name it in honour of Joan Kirner, and her dedication to saving the island's Little Penguins."

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