

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

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



Saturday, 27 November 2021

## 100 YEAR MILESTONE FOR PHILLIP ISLAND'S LITTLE PENGUINS

Today marks a significant milestone for Phillip Island Nature Park and the very popular little penguins – which were put on the map as a must-see experience 100 years ago today.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today joined Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale, Phillip Island Nature Parks staff, Traditional Owners and local families to celebrate the milestone.

Penguin numbers on the island have almost tripled since the mid-1980s – from 12,000 to around 32,000 breeding birds today thanks to extensive conservation work.

The former Cain Labor Government and then Minister for Forests, Conservation and Lands Joan Kirner were key to this come back with the Government buying back 774 housing and other lots that made up the Summerland Residential Estate – protecting the penguin colony from extinction.

The Andrews Labor Government also provided \$48.2 million for a major redevelopment of the attraction's Visitor Centre, which opened in 2019, replacing the outdated 1988 facility with a larger and better equipped centre.

The story of the penguin parade began in 1921 when His Excellency the Governor, the Earl of Stradbroke, viewed the little penguins – kicking off a hugely successful ecotourism industry on the island.

Over the past 100 years, tens of millions of people from more than 70 countries are estimated to have visited to watch the nightly parade of penguins – and that's just in person. Another 25 million viewers watched Live Penguin TV from their homes during coronavirus pandemic restrictions.

Phillip Island forms part of the traditional lands of the Bunurong People, whose connection with the Summerland Peninsula and its Little Penguins extends for thousands of years.

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

*"These little penguins have become global sensations, attracting visitors from all over the world and going viral on the internet."*

*"Today we also recognise the significant conservation efforts made by Labor Governments that have contributed to the conservation of these adorable animals."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale**

*"Now Victoria is opening up we can once again welcome everyone to Milow/Phillip Island to walk with nature and enjoy all our Gippsland offerings including seeing the little penguins that are thriving due to the longstanding conservation work by so many over many years."*

### **Quote attributable to Phillip Island Nature Parks CEO Catherine Basterfield**

*"We are delighted to be back at full capacity so visitors can join us in celebrating this milestone – and we look forward to a fantastic 100 years ahead, making people smile while they share in protecting the penguins."*