

TRIABUNNA COASTAL SALTMARSH - MACLAINES CREEK ESTUARY

Coastal saltmarsh wetlands are at the interface of land and sea. They are our fish nurseries, water purifiers, flood buffers and carbon sinks, among other critical ecological functions that enhance our quality of life. Saltmarsh wetlands act as sponges to help slow down and filter contaminated water running off from the land. The function of these wetlands as sponges also helps mitigate against flooding and coastal erosion.

Another important function of saltmarsh wetlands is its role in supporting fish populations in estuaries and nearby coastal areas. Black bream, for example, spend most of their life cycle in estuaries and move to the upper reaches of freshwater streams and rivers to spawn. The creeks and shallow margins in and around saltmarsh wetlands provide important shelter and feeding habitat for a number of juvenile fish species, including the bream. Other juvenile fish that can be found around saltmarshes are mullet, salmon, flounder, hardyheads and gobies. The fish are attracted to an abundance of food in these wetlands, including crab and insect larvae, algae and other plant material.

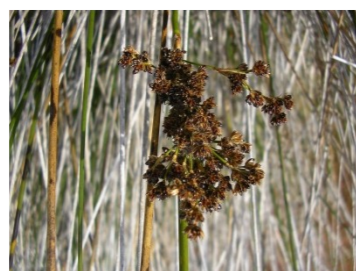
Saltmarsh vegetation is defined by the presence of salt tolerant plants, or 'halophytes'. The vegetation here is dominated by halophytic grasses, sedges and rushes, while halophytic succulent shrubs and herbs are also present to a lesser extent. Most remarkably, the saltmarsh here is one of three places in the world where you can see the rare Tasmanian Sea-Lavender. The other two places are also in Tasmania, one just along the marina in the Vicarys Rivulet Estuary Saltmarsh.



BELOW: Some of the plants and birds commonly occurring in and around this Saltmarsh.



Coast Speargrass
Austrostipa stipoides



Sea Rush
Juncus kraussii



Tasmanian Sea-Lavender
Limonium australe var.
baudinii



Pied Oystercatcher



Great Egret



Crested Tern