

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

Chance to preview floral attraction

Great Southern residents have until April to take a sneak peek at a growing tourist attraction in Albany.

Discovery Bay now hosts a 13.5-hectare development behind the Historic Whaling Station, formerly known as Whale World, overlooking King George Sound near Frenchman Bay.

Royalties for Regions funding of \$380,000 through the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) supported infrastructure developments at the site, which include a Botanic Garden and Australian Animals display.

For the past two years, Discovery Bay's 130,000 carefully catalogued and cultivated native plants have been growing into an attractive and educational display of the region's floral diversity.

Signs around the garden beds give details of the plant species.

Discovery Bay Tourism Experience general manager Glenn Russell said the display was nearing readiness for a full opening as a fee-for-entry tourism attraction.

"At the moment, the display is open to the public for entry by donation," Mr Russell said.

"We're all proud of what we've got out here, it's quite an achievement.

"Locals who want to take a look should get in before the end of April."

Mr Russell said that from the end of April the display would be closed to the public for final works before the spring opening, when visitors will be charged a small fee for entry.

GSDC Chairman Peter Rundle said the Commission's support for the project was a long-term investment in the continued health of the tourism industry in the Great Southern.

"Discovery Bay is set to build on Whale World's solid track record as a premium tourist attraction at the same time as it focuses attention on the region's amazing biodiversity," Mr Rundle said.



Building partnerships for regional prosperity

Work still under way at the display includes a 120m floral mural of a monitor lizard, outlined by 6000 mauve and yellow plants on a hillside behind the Discovery Bay parking area.

Mr Russell said the monitor should be visible in spring this year.

Apart from the floral display, the site includes some created wetlands, a series of six ponds that are part of Discovery Bay's water management and also show aquatic habitats with appropriate flora and fauna.

The adjacent Australian animal enclosure enables visitors to get a close look at native animals including birds, possums, lizards, kangaroos and koalas.

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