An ocean of treasures

The Southern Ocean is a giant weather machine and home to a wealth of unique plants and animals.

Throughout the world, around one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals are killed every year by plastics, either entangled and strangled or choked and starved.

You can help!
Please pick up and remove any fishing line or plastic you see and help wildlife survive!

Soft sea coral
Many animals prosper both above and below the water. Undersea arches and deep canyons are covered with colourful gardens of sea-stars, sponges and corals.
The greatest diversity of invertebrates on limestone reefs in Victoria occur near here.

A big visitor
Whales pass by here on their annual migration from Antarctica to breed along the warmer Australian coast.
Look further out to sea and you may be lucky enough to see Southern Right Whales passing by from June to October.

An engineer
The Southern Ocean engineers weather patterns.
The frozen continent of Antarctica (west and south of here) plays a major role in the global energy balance.
Cold temperatures and high air pressure transfer energy as winds, clouds and rain.

An artist
The amazing shapes of this coast are shaped by these powerful winds and waves.

Explore more
Visit the Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre and ask about boat tours and diving opportunities.
Hardy survivors

‘Adapt or die’ is nature’s rule.
It’s tough living here under the constant blast of salty winds.
These hardy survivors have different special features to survive coastal wind, salt, heat and cold.

Coast Cushion Bush
Round and compact in shape. Small silver coloured leaves of this bush help it resist wind and salt-blast pruning. Creates shelter for small birds and other animals.

Silvery Tussock Grass
An important grass in the heathland as its tough narrow leaves and thick growth provides food for wallabies and bandicoots. Also a great nesting place for bandicoots which shelter beneath its thick cover.

Coastal Spinach
Fleshy, diamond-shaped leaves store water to survive summer heat. Thick leaves also protect it from harsh salty winds. Red berries are a food for local wildlife such as birds, bandicoots and koalas.

Sheoak
Look closely at the small tree with drooping glossy stems. Notice it’s tiny rings of ‘leaf teeth’ spaced about 1cm apart. These mini leaf teeth slow water loss through leaf surface evaporation. Dark red flowers grow into small wooden nut/cores.

You can help!
Millions of feet pass this way every year.
Please stay on tracks - for your own safety and to protect the local residents! (plants and animals)

Explore more just down the road
Loch Ard Gorge - (5 km west of here), explore the ‘Living on the edge nature walk’
Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre - ask about a host of walks and activities you can do in the area.
Small, secretive and often hard to see

This narrow piece of parkland, wedged between farmland and ocean, is in its own way, a thriving city!

Hiding in the vegetation are shy animals and birds. Put your detective thinking hat on! Looks for clues such as footprints, scats (poo), small diggings, holes and feathers or fur caught on bushes.

Wallaby
Small and kangaroo-like, shelter in the heathland by day and move around at night. Feed on grass, fungi and shrubs.

Short-beaked Echidna
Powerful claws, a ‘pogo’ beak-like nose and long sticky tongue. Look for “finger-sized” holes where they have been poking about for juicy ants and termites.

Echidna’s prickly quills ward off most predators. They dig down quickly, hiding tight in the soil when danger is near.

Southern Brown Bandicoot
Eat insects and fungi they dig up. Carry their babies in a backward facing pouch.

About the size of a large rat with a pokey snout and large ears.

A rare and threatened animal of the park, relying on thick coastal heathland for food and protection from introduced cats and foxes.

Raggy Possum
Hard sized or smaller.

A native marsupial, they carry their young in a pouch.

Feed on flower nectar, pollen, insects and seeds.

Shelter in rock crevices, tree hollows and bird nests.

Explore more just down the road
Loch Ard Gorge – 15 km west of here, explore the ‘Living on the edge nature walk’
Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre – ask about a host of walks and activities you can do in the area.
Up high or down low, we call it home

Different birds often live together by using different spaces in their shared habitat.

**Rufous Bristlebird**
The last stronghold for this special bird that depends on coastal heathland protected in national parks.
Watch for them as they dash across the walking tracks or sit on a perch to sing their loud, proud song of home.

**Nankeen Kestrel**
Hover above watching with sharp eyes for prey below.
Drop quickly onto unsuspecting animals moving below.
Food is unsuspecting small animals (lizards and mice) and insects moving on the ground below.

**Singing Honeyeater**
Feathery tongues lick sweet nectar from wildflowers.
A loud whistling song tells other honeyeaters: ‘this is my place, my food, my family.’
Listen - are any singing today?

**Short-tailed Shearwater (Muttonbird)**
Fly a 30,000km round trip from Siberia each year to nest in burrows.
Hunt for fish in the open waters of the Southern Ocean.
Nest at Muttonbird Island, near Loch Ard Gorge. View hundreds of birds fly in each evening from October to March.

Ocean, beach, cliff, heathland, wetlands and farmland with their different plants, pathways and spaces can be thought of as a city with suburbs, streets and houses.

What can you see flying above you?
What are the holes in the tops of the Apostles?

Explore more just down the road
Loch Ard Gorge - 15 km west of here; a variety of easy walks including Muttonbird Island.
Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre - ask about a host of walks and activities you can do in the area.