

Spring Creek's Flora



As you walk along Spring Creek you will notice that different communities or groups of plants occur where there is a change in the micro-climate for example, where the soil is heavier or wetter or where the slope of the land changes.

Lining the creek are the twisted Moonah trees of the Coastal Alkaline Scrub community, with a carpet of low-growing plants such as Seaberry Saltbush, Coast Flax-lily, Poa and Bower Spinach.

The Grassy Woodland community is found a little further inland, with trees such as the beautiful Bellarine Yellow Gum and Manna Gum. Beneath the trees you will find Varnish Wattle, Sweet Bursaria and native grasses.

Some wetter areas have no trees at all and in these Estuarine Wetlands or Tall Marsh communities, you will see a variety of native rushes, sedges and grasses.



Small-flower Flax-lily
Image: Graeme Stockton



Spring Creek
Image: Surf Coast Shire Council



Coast Spear - grass
Image: Graeme Stockton



Moonah trees
Image: Alison Watson



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Coast Bone - fruit
Image: Graeme Stockton



Australian Darter
Image: Barry Lingham



A Biodiversity Hotspot



Waterways such as Spring Creek are biodiversity hotspots. Waterways are special because they offer a wide variety of habitats that suit many different animals. There are places where the water pools for longer after floods or heavy rains, old trees with hollows, low growing shrubs and tussocks of native grasses and rushes.

Some animals such as frogs and dragonflies need both aquatic (water) and terrestrial (land) environments to complete their life cycle. Other species including Herons and Cormorants feed in the water but shelter or roost in the plants along the creek banks.

The Darter spreads its wings to sun itself and dry out its feathers.

Some of the birds and animals you might see as you walk along Spring Creek are the White-faced Heron, Brown Thornbill, New Holland Honeyeater and Brush-tailed Possum. Other animals like the Southern Brown Tree Frog and Growling Grass Frog are rarely seen but you may hear their calls especially around dusk.

Frogs are indicators of environmental health.

How many can you hear?

Frog calls:

- Growling Grass Frog:** 'crawak, crawak, crok, crok'
- Southern Brown Tree Frog:** 'creee, creee, creee, creee'
- Spotted Marsh Frog:** 'tock'
- Striped Marsh Frog:** 'plock'
- Common Froglet:** 'crik, crik, crik, crik'

Meadow Argus
Image: Mark Trinham



Growling Grass Frog
Image: Valda Dedman



White-faced Heron
Image: Phil Watson



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Changing Water Levels

Spring Creek flows into the sea around 500 metres from here. Sometimes the mouth of the Creek becomes blocked with sand and when this happens, the water level in Spring Creek rises.

At other times, generally after heavy rain, there is enough water in the Creek to carve a channel through the sand opening a pathway to the sea. At these times the water level drops, exposing mud flats along the banks.

These changing water levels are natural and the plants and animals living along Spring Creek are used to coping with these extremes.

Crakes and Rails are secretive birds that feed along the edge of the water. The Lewin's Rail is a nationally significant species.



Drier times

Image: Surf Coast Shire Council



Buff-banded Rail

Image: Rob Ganly



Lewin's Rail

Image: John Stirling



Dusky Moorhen

Image: Craig Morley



Beaded Glasswort

Image: Alison Watson



Estuarine wetlands

Image: Graeme Stockton



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