




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Lake Lomandra, Eels

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (9.02 pm): I rise to speak on a Mermaid Beach matter that is of interest not only to my residents but also to all visitors to our wonderful Gold Coast, many of whom visit to experience our outdoor lifestyle and also our gorgeous parks and local wildlife. The change of seasons brings with it a variety of cute and cuddly new inhabitants to our parks and manmade lakes for visitors and residents alike to admire and watch grow, in the shape of baby swans and ducklings.

Therefore, it was saddening to have one of my local constituents, retired Supreme Court Judge David Ashton-Lewis, recently bring to my attention the extremely high mortality rate of cygnets and goslings born on Lake Lomandra, one of the many lakes and waterways in the Mermaid Beach electorate. Residents and visitors to the lake enjoy the amenity provided by the varied wildlife and, in particular, the beautiful black swans. The appearance of the nesting pairs each spring and the subsequent arrival of their cygnets is eagerly anticipated by adults and children alike.

Disappointingly, my constituents have noticed that over the past eight years, while there are four different nesting pairs of swans, none of the 19 newly hatched cygnets survived past day 3 on the lake, due to the voracious appetite of marauding eels, which are not native to those manmade water catchments. The marauding eels can be safely removed through the use of licensed eel catchers, whose traps are specifically designed not to harm other water-dwelling residents such as elusive turtles. With the removal of this scourge from the local lake and others in the nearby waterways requiring the cooperation of the Gold Coast Council, whose land must be crossed to access Lake Lomandra, and the state Department of Agriculture and Fisheries—we will get a minister shortly, I am sure—which licenses the eel catchers, I anticipate a swift resolution, hopefully protecting the most recent hatching of three new cygnets.

To this effect, I have written to the Gold Coast mayor regarding this issue. With Mayor Tate's full support and I hope the cooperation of the state Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, a positive resolution may be arrived at so that Lake Lomandra's newest residents can mature into beautiful black swans. This is a soft and fluffy subject! If there are any difficulties emanating from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in relation to the birdlife-destroying eels, I will most certainly be catching up with the new minister, when appointed, to bring a sense of reality and practicality to the problem of the disappearing bird life due to those slippery, slimy, voracious eels.