

# Electric dreams

**Steven Mullie** is the founder of Eco Boats, a company bringing electric-powered boats to Australian waters.

Interview by **Leesa Hamilton**

**I**'ve always had an interest in 'being green' and, coming from Holland, I grew up around boats. When I came to Australia it just made sense to combine my two interests in a new business venture.

Electric boats create zero emissions, so they're great for the environment. People love them because they're so quiet and peaceful, and since they don't go faster than about 10 knots you don't even need a boat licence to drive them. With no fumes and hardly any noise, they're great for checking out wildlife and just appreciating the experience of being on the water.

You can find electric boats all over Northern America and Europe, but there are hardly any on the Australian market. Someone tried to introduce them

about 15 years ago, but I think they got laughed off the market. Now, as people are becoming more and more eco-conscious, they're realising that these boats are a viable and enjoyable option.

The boats are powered by rechargeable batteries which connect to the motor and stay charged for six to eight hours, depending on how fast you go. The batteries last about 10 years, which means you can recharge about 700 times! It only costs about a dollar to recharge a completely dead battery and there's not much that can break down, so they're very reliable.

When I started, I wasn't sure whether people would be open to the idea of electric boats, but now it's exciting to be promoting them to the mainstream.