

SILVERLEAVES CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC.

Reg.no 0015325J

NEWSLETTER

December 2017



Vital to protect the heart and soul of Silverleaves

There was much discussion at the recent meeting of the SCA committee held in the Silverleaves Reserve on Sunday 19 November about inappropriate development in Silverleaves. SCA has a campaign aiming to prevent the removal of indigenous vegetation and inappropriate development. Silverleaves Conservation Association Against Inappropriate Development (SCAAID) has unfortunately been very active in recent months, with the worrying trend towards the purchase of Silverleaves' treed blocks followed by wholesale removal of trees and the vital native understorey.

In October and November, a bobcat was seen pushing over trees and shrubs on several blocks in the area, removing the understorey, destroying vegetation in a wholesale manner down to the bare earth. The Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser took action and published high profile stories in its 15 and 22 November editions on what has been happening in Silverleaves focusing in particular on several examples on the foreshore side of Silverleaves Avenue.

Councillor Michael Whelan together with all Bass Coast Shire councillors were alerted and the SCA together with many residents of Silverleaves and the Island more broadly are gratified that Council is taking action. Indeed, in the Advertiser's most recent story on the destruction in Silverleaves of 22 November, it was reported that Bass Coast Shire Council has "confirmed planning permits in Silverleaves were breached when landowners in two properties recently destroyed a swathe of trees earmarked for protection."

As reported in the Advertiser story, Councillor Whelan condemned the destruction and committed to taking steps to strengthen the regulations in Silverleaves to help prevent any further such incidents. His quoted comment sums up why such removal of trees and vegetation is so heart-breaking: "People go there (to Silverleaves) and see how wonderful it is, buy a block and then destroy it. These people have plenty of money but no soul." Mayor Rothfield and Councillor Fullerton added their voices recognising that the community was devastated by the vegetation removal.

The SCA is strengthening its campaign for improved protections for all of Silverleaves through better permit controls that put native vegetation first. That way, we can hope to stop the 'suburbanisation of Silverleaves' – and protect our beautiful and fragile bush/seaside community.
M.A. Johnston - SCA President



Recent destruction of significant vegetation on a foreshore property at Silverleaves

SUPPORT THE SCA

The SCA relies on membership subscriptions and donations to continue its vital work such as valuable weed clearing in the foreshore and revegetation projects amongst other activities. Due to rising costs of mail and printing, the SCA in the future will only be able to mail newsletters to current SCA members. We encourage you to receive the newsletter by email if possible.

Renew your SCA Subscription for 2018 and beyond

- One Year \$20.00
- Two Years \$40.00
- Five Years \$100.00
- Seniors/Students \$15.00 p.a.

Membership includes four issues per annum of the SCA Newsletter and will help fund the important work of conservation, vegetation protection, weed control and replanting with indigenous species.

We encourage you to join for the longer membership period, then you don't have to worry about keeping your membership up to date each year. Payment options are on page four.

SCA DATES TO REMEMBER FOR 2018

Silverleaves Nature Walk

Jarvis Weston, SCA Secretary and Phillip Island Nature Park Projects Coordinator has kindly offered to take us on a Nature Walk along Silverleaves beach.

Sunday 14 January 2018

10.00am-12.00pm, 2km walk

Learn about the coastal environment of Silverleaves, including nesting shorebirds, migratory birds, weeds that threaten their habitat, and what we can do to help. Meet at the very end of Silverleaves Ave (the east end closest to Observation Point). Car parking is limited. Bring your binoculars, a hat and water to drink. Bring your neighbours, friends and children, everyone is welcome.

SCA COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2018

Sunday 14 January 2018

2.00pm at the Reserve

AGM Sunday 11 March 2018

11.00am at the Reserve

Saturday 9 June 2018

3.00pm Koala Conservation Centre, Chisolm Room

Saturday 22 September 2018

3.00pm Koala Conservation Centre, Chisolm Room

Sunday 18 November Sunday 2018

11.00am at the Reserve

SCA PLANT STALL 2018

Saturday 10 March 2018

10.00am – 2.00pm Silverleaves Store

Sunday 10 June 2018

10.00am – 2.00pm Silverleaves Store

SCA WORKING BEES 2018

Sunday 11 March – weed mapping exercise along the foreshore. Meet at Silverleaves Reserve at 10am

Sunday 17 June – weeding/planting along foreshore. Meet at Silverleaves Store at 10am

Sunday 15 July – weeding/planting along foreshore. Meet at Silverleaves Store at 10am

Sunday 19 August – tidy up of Silverleaves reserve. Meet at Silverleaves Reserve at 10am

SCA WORKING BEES

Please consider coming along to the SCA working bees to remove invasive weeds, plant indigenous plants. We are currently fighting agapanthus, cacti succulents and other exotic 'escapees' in the foreshore. All efforts to help the battle are most welcome. If you notice a large infestation, contact SCA and we will organise a working bee to remove them.

silverleavesconservation@outlook.com

Fire safety at Silverleaves, are you prepared?

Silverleaves is rated as an EXTREME bushfire risk area. Bushfire activity can also occur outside the Silverleaves area and can move quickly, come from many directions and be unpredictable.

Residents and visitors must be prepared and have a bushfire plan, especially for days when the fire rating is severe, extreme or Code Red. Leaving early is always the safest option.

Due to the road network Silverleaves access is limited. Roads may become blocked and visibility poor due to smoke. Power may be out, communications limited and you may not receive an official warning about fire in the area.

There is no Community Fire Refuge in Silverleaves, however there is a Neighbourhood Safer Place at Cowes Recreation Reserve, 10-14 Church St, Cowes. As a last resort, go to the Silverleaves beach if safe to do so.

You need to know:

Where you will go ahead of time

How you will get there

When you will leave

What you will take with you

Be prepared. Reduce your bushfire risk and prepare your house and property for the impact of burning embers and radiant heat. Be aware of the regulations about removing vegetation without a permit, for more details contact the Bass Coast Shire 1300 226 278, www.basscoast.vic.gov.au Visit the CFA website at cfa.vic.gov.au or ring 1800 240 667 for more information on how to prepare for the bushfire season. If you see a fire in the area, call 000.

Beach Fires

There have been a number of fires on the beach during the year and are of grave concern as embers travel and can start a fire in the foreshore. If you see a fire on the beach ring 000, or the Cowes Police 59522037.

Thin Bubble Shell, *Haminoea tenera*



Image source <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haminoea>

In mid-November, a SCA member found hundreds of these tiny and fragile Bubble Shells washed up on the beach. These beautiful shells are approx. 2 cm in size and live in sandy mud sea-beds in Port Phillip and Western Port.

Nesting Shorebirds

We are hopeful shorebirds such as Red-capped Plovers and Hooded Plovers will be nesting again soon at Silverleaves, so keep an eye out for them. The peak laying season is usually in December and continues through to March next year. If you would like to assist in monitoring these precious shorebirds please contact us at silverleavesconservation@outlook.com. You will be provided with training and information. The assistance provided by volunteers is vital in managing the species to ensure their ongoing survival.

Dogs and Cats at Silverleaves

Help protect this unique area and keep control of your pets when they are outside. Bass Coast Shire and Phillip Island Nature Park have regulations about where and when dogs are allowed on the Silverleaves beach. **No dogs anytime past the last access track at the east end of Silverleaves Ave.**

1 December to 30 April-

On leash only during restricted hours

7.00am – 10.00am and 5.00pm – 8.00 pm

Green Waste Amnesty

Until Tuesday 19 December Council provides a green waste amnesty period to encourage residents to prepare for the fire season each year. You can dispose of green waste at the Waste Disposal Facility in Cowes at no charge during this period. Weed species and species that cannot physically be mulched (e.g. palm fronds) are not accepted and fees will apply.

Marine debris and its effects on marine life

In June 2009, the Australian Government made the *Threat Abatement Plan for the Impacts of Marine Debris on Vertebrate Marine Life* (the Plan). It noted: "Marine species can confuse plastics including bags, rubber, balloons and confectionery wrappers with prey and swallow them. This debris can cause a blockage in the digestive system. Turtles are known to eat plastic bags, confusing them with jellyfish, their common prey. Sea birds eat polystyrene balls and plastic buoys, confusing them with fish eggs and crustaceans, and whales are also known to eat plastic debris."

What Can We Do?

Anyone who has walked along Silverleaves beach will have seen pieces of plastic, plastic bags, fishing line, bits of rope and many other careless discards.

You can help protect marine life and birds by collecting these in a spare bag when you go to the beach to dispose of in your rubbish bin at home. Even one piece picked up can prevent a painful death.

Endangered Bandicoots on the Island



Image source <https://www.zoo.org.au/werribee/animals/eastern-barred-bandicoot>

A trial release of 20 Eastern Barred Bandicoots on Churchill Island in 2015 has seen the population increase to approximately 120. Recently another 44 bandicoots have been released at the Summerland Peninsula.

Eastern Barred Bandicoots have been wiped out on the mainland by foxes and habitat loss. Now the Island has been declared fox free it is hoped this will give the marsupial its best chance of survival. This project has been undertaken by researchers from the Phillip Island Nature Park, Zoos Victoria and the Eastern Barred Bandicoot Recovery team.

Maybe one day Silverleaves may also see the return of the Bandicoot.

Weed of the month



Image Source-<http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au>

Blue Periwinkle

Flowers are 3-5cm across and have 5 lilac-blue petals, flowering from winter to summer. Stems can grow up to a metre in length.

Blue periwinkle spreads by means of creeping stems that take root at the nodes and tips. New infestations can establish from plant fragments when broken off and transported by dumping of garden waste, soil movement or floods. The plant eventually forms a dense mat that smothers native vegetation and then prevents any new native plants from growing.

Remove by Hand: Small infestations can be forked which is best done when the soil is moist, usually following rain. Ensure that all roots and stems are removed, otherwise the plant will continue to grow. Dispose of plant material carefully as it spreads very easily.

Bare ground attracts WEEDS!!! For effective long term weed control we recommend habitat restoration and revegetation with indigenous and native plant, or non-invasive garden species.

Cowes East Foreshore Preventative Action Group Inc.

The objectives of the group are to protect the foreshore and sandy beaches from east of Erehwon Point all the way to Silverleaves from further erosion. The group is advocating further repair and extension of the existing rock wall and replacement of many timber groynes. For further details contact the secretary Leon Sweeney- oncepag@gmail.com

SCA Membership is now due for 2018

- One Year \$20.00
- Two Years \$40.00
- Five Years \$100.00
- Seniors/Students \$15.00 p.a.

Complete a membership form with your cheque and send to:

The Secretary Silverleaves Conservation Association Inc
P.O. Box 9037 Cowes, VIC 3922

Or make a direct deposit online:

Bendigo Bank
BSB 633 000 Account 132 984 592.

Or make an online payment through the SCA website using your credit card.

<http://www.silverleavesca.org>

Please include your name on your transfer for our records, otherwise we cannot identify payments made.

To request a membership form, or to let us know your email address, or if you have a query about your membership contact the SCA Secretary; silverleavesconservation@outlook.com



Like us on

Facebook

Silverleaves Conservation

Association has a Facebook page where members share photos and stories of Silverleaves. Become a part of our online community. We would love you to share your experiences of Silverleaves as well!

Please visit our wonderful new SCA webpage, which includes archived newsletters and membership forms. <http://www.silverleavesca.org>

If you have a story to tell about Silverleaves or would like to make a contribution to the newsletter please contact the SCA Newsletter Editor by email myra.holmes.000@gmail.com