

SILVERLEAVES CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC.

Reg.no 0015325J

NEWSLETTER

March 2017



News Update

Silverleaves Protection Overlay

At the recent SCA Meeting held in late January, the Committee discussed intensifying the focus on inappropriate development – its Silverleaves Conservation Association Against Inappropriate Development (SCAID) - a campaign launched in 2012. The SCA plans to obtain a Protection Overlay that will strengthen the existing Vegetation and Protection Overlay and Design and Development Overlay currently in existence in Silverleaves.

While protection guidelines are written into the Bass Coast Shires Council's own Strategy Plan they are rarely enforced and seem to carry no weight at forums such as VCAT. We understand vegetation removal fines are anywhere from \$350 - \$75,000 (the latter is a fine given for illegal tree removal at Merricks). However prosecution is a matter for each Council.

The SCA have commenced liaison with Bass Coast Shire Council to discuss achieving greater protection for all vegetation in Silverleaves as well as preventing large-scale developments and over development of blocks in terms of scale and height. Watch this space for progress reports on SCAID.

If anyone wishes to report an inappropriate development application or illegal vegetation removal in Silverleaves please let SCA know by email silverleavesconservation@outlook.com

Don't Bag It! Silverleaves Waste Management Alert

One of our members recently received a notice about incorrect use of their yellow recycling bin. Through a mix-up this was sent to her incorrectly and the real culprit was actually at another Silverleaves address. However it drew attention to an ongoing blight in our beautiful area – bins stuffed with recyclables placed in plastic bags. It's especially a problem at 'schoolies' time, and over the summer break.

In the communication with Waste Management staff at Bass Coast Shire Council to clarify the notice, our member was alerted to the seriousness of this problem which can cause significant damage and cost in the waste collection supply chain. According to Council Waste Management, just one plastic bag of items can destroy an entire truck-load of other 'good' recyclables.

It is illegal to place recyclables in plastic bags within the yellow recycling bin. **ONLY LOOSE ITEMS** that match the list of accepted recyclables allowed for collection may be put into the bin.

Let's recall that ratepayers are paying for this service so please try to do the right thing:

- take a few extra minutes to sort items
- don't ever bag recyclable items
- Make sure they go into the correct bin.

Positive outcomes help Silverleaves, the broader environment and Council Waste Management.

Vale Jeff Teele - 1935 – 2017

The President and Committee of the Silverleaves Conservation Association bid a sad farewell to a long-standing Silverleaves resident and SCA Office Bearer, Jeff Teele. Jeff, who died in January this year, joined the Association at the March 2003 AGM and held office until 2012. He attended the AGM in March 2016 together with his wife Joan Teele and at the meeting expressed his delight at seeing the SCA forging ahead.

Jeff was well known for his excellent report at each meeting of any illegal tree removal along the beach front properties of Silverleaves as he was frequently out in his boat and he would see what was going on. (Our Secretary notes that Jeff would be an apology at July or August meetings each year as he and his wife Joan always travelled north to Queensland for at least a month to escape each Melbourne winter!) Otherwise, he was a very regular and dedicated attendee at committee meetings. He will be greatly missed by us all and the SCA sends its sincere condolences to Joan Teele, the Teele family, and friends.

Hooded Plovers Update



Photo: Barb Wilkinson 21st January 2017

These two Hooded Plover chicks were seen a few hundred metres past the no dogs sign in the Nature Park managed area. The eggs were laid on 23 December 2016 and this photo taken a month later shows just how little protection they have, and how vulnerable they are, particularly to dogs, which is why it is so important that everyone respects the No Dogs sign at the east end of Silverleaves and keeps this area of the beach all the way to Observation Point free of dogs.

Hooded Plover (Hoodies) update to 14 February 2017:

The February island-wide count was conducted on 09/2/17 and a total of 49 hoodies were recorded. This is slightly up on the 47 this time last year. There have been 31 nests with 70 eggs, with under half resulting in chicks. These include 28 chicks from 11 nests at the following sites;

- One at Surf Beach (Park St., banded and flagged Yellow leg galg (YLF) '31' on 23/01/17 (fledged)
- One at Justice Rd YLF 34 (fledged)
- Two at Bella Vista Rd YLF 32 and YLF 33 (fledged)
- One at Colonnades YLF 35 (fledged)
- Two at Silverleaves 2-3 week old chicks
- Three at Elizabeth Cove 2-3 week old chicks

Daniel Lees, the 'Hooded Plover Ranger' for the Nature Park this summer has been training volunteers, putting up nest refuges, banding chicks and giving presentations. He has also been maintaining equipment, developing nest progress signs, monitoring nests and entering data on the portal. In addition he has been working with Bass Coast Shire Rangers Rhiannon Grinham and Dave Martin to help manage hoodies along the shire managed Ventnor, Cowes and Silverleaves foreshore.

If you spot a nest please report it to the Nature Park 5951 2800 or Bass Coast Shire Council 1300 226 278.

What exactly is Ramsar?

The Ramsar Convention also known as the Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands across the globe. It was signed in the city of Ramsar in Iran 1971. The philosophy "wise use" of wetlands lies at the heart of Ramsar. When Contracting Parties accede to the Ramsar Convention, they commit to work towards the wise use of all the wetlands and water resources in their territory, through national plans, policies and legislation, management actions and public education. It is a very serious commitment.

Ramsar defines wise use of wetlands as "the maintenance of their ecological character, achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development." Wise use can thus be seen as the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and all the services they provide, for the benefit of people and nature.

The inclusion of a "Ramsar Site" on the list and Western Port is included, is the Australian Federal Governments commitment, and via it, State and Local Government, to ensure that the ecological character of a wetland is maintained. Wetlands included in the List acquire a new national and international status: they are recognized as being of significant value not only for the country or the countries in which they are located but for humanity as a whole.

Bass Coast Shire highlights the Rhyll Inlet Ramsar Wetland in its C140 Amendment

"The Rhyll Inlet is a Ramsar listed wetland providing important habitat for migratory wading birds. The inlet is also identified in the Victoria Coastal Inundation Dataset, as an area at risk of inundation due to climate change." As a Ramsar wetland, Western Port is also part of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve. This includes the whole of Mornington Peninsula Shire and parts of the City of Frankston, as well as coastal areas of the municipalities of Casey, Cardinia and Bass Coast including Phillip and French Islands.

Western Port was described by UNESCO in 2016 as "a coastal embayment incorporating vast and relatively undisturbed mudflats with salt marsh vegetation. It is considered an internationally important feeding and roosting area for numerous species of summering waders, many of which are listed under the bilateral Migratory Birds Agreements (with China and Japan). The site periodically supports over 10,000 waders and 10,000 ducks and swans, and a rich invertebrate fauna of some 1,380 species."

Cruise Boats Mooring off Silverleaves



Photo: Cassandra Thumwood January 2017

There have now been three Cruise Boats mooring off Silverleaves this year. This photo was taken on 17 January and is the Golden Princess, 290 metres in length or one and a half times as long as the MCG, it can carry over 2500 passengers plus crew. Passengers disembarked onto tenders to transport them to the Rhyll Jetty, where buses took them to various parts of the Island.

A second boat the Seabourn Encore arrived on 4 February and the Golden Princess visited again on the 18 February. They ships only for the day and leave late at night.

Weeds in the Silverleaves foreshore, you can help; one less weed now means many less weeds later

SCA is committed to keeping the foreshore clear of invasive weeds, they can out-compete our native plant communities, resulting in the reduction of plant diversity and loss of habitat for native animals.

But in spite of our best efforts, weeds still occur. Local resident and SCA committee member Gillian Armstrong recently pulled out 130 Polygala from the foreshore in a single day. Please help by removing these weeds if you see in the foreshore. If you notice a large infestation contact SCA and we will organise a working bee to remove them.



Have you noticed these mysterious marks when the tide is out, does anyone know what makes them?

Creating a home for the Micro Bat



Photo: Bruce Road Micro Bat Box 2017

Victoria has 21 species of microbats (insect bats), and they are a protected species weighing up to only 150 grams and growing to 15 cm. Microbats are native to both Phillip and French Islands and are classified as a mammal – the only mammal capable of flying.

Microbats are nocturnal and use echolocation to "see" what is around. They make high pitched sound pulses through the nose and mouth which, when returned to them, can help gauge the distance, size and mobility of insects. Travelling several kilometres a night searching for food it is estimated a single microbat will eat 500 insects an hour – or up to three quarters of its body weight in a night. During winter the microbat enters a state of semi hibernation, or torpor, after building up fat during the summer and autumn. It can live up to 30 years old.

One of the main threats of the microbat is the domestic cat, as well as foxes, land-clearance and road traffic.

The microbat roosts in tree hollows and in built structures including microbat boxes. We were delighted to see an SCA member in Bruce Road has built and placed four microbat boxes around their garden. In the US, some farmers put hundreds of boxes near their crops recognising that the tiny bats are better insect managers than dangerous pesticides sprays which enter the food chain. Think about it! It's been a wet season with many more mosquitoes than usual, maybe you could have your own resident bat to deal with them.

If you find a microbat that you think may need assistance, please call the Nature Parks on 5951 2800 - 7:30am to 4pm daily or after hours - 4pm to 7:30am daily - Wildlife Victoria on 1300 094 535. Cases can also be logged at wildlifelifevictoria.org.au

KEY DATES FOR SCA 2017

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- **Sunday 12 March 2017**
- **11.00am Silverleaves Reserve**
- **The newly elected Mayor of Bass Coast Shire Pamela Rothfield will be attending the AGM**

Please feel welcome to come along to the meeting and hear more about SCA plans, propose ideas, and meet other residents of Silverleaves. We'd love to see you.

SCA Committee Meetings

- **Saturday 10 June 2017**
- **3.00pm, Silverleaves Store**

- **Saturday 23 September**
- **3.00pm Silverleaves Store**

- **Sunday 19 November**
- **11.00am Silverleaves Reserve**

Plant Stall

SCA are having three Plant Stalls in 2017. There will be a range of indigenous plants available from tube stocks to mature plants ranging in cost \$3 - \$10.

- **Saturday 11 March 2017**
- **10 am – 2 pm**
- **Silverleaves Store**

- **Sunday 11 June 2017**
- **10 am – 2pm**
- **Silverleaves Store**

- **Sunday 24 September 2017**
- **10 am – 2 pm**
- **Silverleaves Store**

The SCA are looking for volunteers to help out with Committee members at the Plant Stalls. Please join us, it's a great way to meet your neighbours and only for an hour or two.

SCA Working Bees 2017

SCA holds regular Working Bees and welcomes you to join us. Please consider coming along to remove invasive weeds, plant indigenous plants and do your bit to preserve the unique area of Silverleaves for the future.

- **Sunday 18 June 2017**
- **Meet at 10 am at the Silverleaves Store**
Planting along the foreshore

- **Sunday 1 October 2017**
- **Meet at 10 am at the Silverleaves Store**
Planting along the foreshore

SUPPORT THE SCA Have you renewed your SCA subscription yet for 2017? It's never too late.

SCA relies on membership subscriptions and donations from local residents and associates to continue its vital work and help it complete valuable weed clearing and revegetation projects amongst other activities.

Membership renewal is at the beginning of the calendar year and you can now renew for one, two or five years at \$20.00 per annum or \$40.00/\$100.00 respectively. Seniors and Students \$15.00 p.a. Membership includes four issues per annum of the SCA Newsletter.

Due to rising costs of printing and postage we encourage you to receive the newsletter by email. Please let us know your email address at silverleavesconservation@outlook.com if you are happy to receive the newsletter by email.

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>

For any queries further queries or to request a membership form
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>