

SILVERLEAVES CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC.

Reg.no 0015325J

NEWSLETTER

December 2023



SEASONS GREETINGS

The SCA committee members and friends would like to wish you a happy new year and thank you for your ongoing support protecting Silverleaves for future generations to enjoy as we do. We look forward to another busy year ahead and hope you will join us at our working bees and other activities planned for 2024.

WHAT THE SCA HAS BEEN DOING

2023 was a busy year for SCA, and we have been working hard to protect this special place we all love. This included a presentation in March to the Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Advisory Committee advocating to protect the Rhyll Inlet from any development as well as lobbying the Bass Coast Shire Council for the protection of the foreshore after significant erosion along the Silverleaves foreshore over winter.

We have also had meetings with Bass Coast Shire to discuss planning strategies for Silverleaves for 2024 including nature strips and revegetation options as well as weed removal and restoration of the beach access tracks which are in poor condition.

In April we ran a successful plant stall and have now organised an EFTPOS machine for future events, the SCA website has been updated and membership payment options reviewed.

We had a great working bee weeding in September at the Silverleaves Reserve and you may have noticed the recent works removing dead trees to make the reserve a safer place for the community to enjoy and the mountain of mulch ready for spreading!



The SCA is a small group of dedicated volunteers, and we welcome newcomers and residents alike. Come along to our planned working bees during the year, meet other Silverleaves people and let us know your concerns - the more voices the stronger we are.

JOIN THE SCA

Your support will help with the important work being done by the SCA for the protection of Silverleaves for the future. The annual membership fee is only \$20.00, and you will receive four issues per year of the SCA Newsletter.

Fees for 2024 are now due and can be paid by credit card through our website <http://www.silverleavesca.org>

Or make a direct deposit online.

Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000

Account 132 984 592.

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

Complete a membership form and send to: The Secretary Silverleaves Conservation Association Inc P.O. Box 9037 Cowes, VIC 3922 Or via email. silverleavesconservation@outlook.com

The SCA has a Facebook page where you can get updates on activities and events. <https://www.facebook.com/silverleavesca>

SCA COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday 28 January at 10.00am at the Silverleaves Reserve.

Please come to the meeting and hear more about SCA plans, propose ideas, and meet other residents of Silverleaves. We are keen to hear from you about any issues or concerns regarding the Silverleaves environment and we look forward to seeing you then.

UPDATE ON SILVERLEAVES EROSION

Last year we were all devastated to see the terrible erosion along the Silverleaves foreshore over winter, particularly at the western end of Silverleaves at the Sanders Road beach, where about 15 metres of foreshore was lost.

As short-term measures, in July Bass Coast Shire Council bulldozed sand and woody debris barricades at the Sanders Road beach, and in late August, further sand renourishment works began, where sand was taken from below the high tide line using excavators and moved to the upper beach. Most of this has now been washed away.

Bass Coast Shire Council have said without a better understanding of the coastal processes at Silverleaves, poorly considered works could worsen the erosion or transfer the issue further down the beach. The State Government (DEECA) will undertake a Coastal Processes Study which will assess risk, inundation, existing coastal protection infrastructure, coastal processes. The report will determine all options for adapting to climate-change-induced sea level rise, plus increased storm activity over coming years and decades.

It appears any erosion protection works will not happen for some time, as DEECA are only now assessing tender applications to appoint a preferred contractor to undertake the study.

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT EROSION

Stay away from erosion areas and eroded sand cliff faces as this can cause further damage.

Use the designated beach access tracks and avoid using small beach tracks in front of foreshore properties. These tracks make the sand more vulnerable to further erosion.

Protect the foreshore vegetation as it plays an important role in stabilising sand dunes, tree roots and grasses make the sand more stable. The foreshore is home to wildlife and birdlife and protects properties from the elements.

Consider joining the ongoing work by the SCA working bees revegetating the foreshore and do your bit by planting a tree!

Spread the word, talk to your neighbours and visitors about the importance of preserving the Silverleaves foreshore for the future.

Bass Coast Shire manage all foreshore reserves and if you notice any clearing of vegetation to gain a view or path notify the Bass Coast Shire 1300 226 278.

SILVERLEAVES HISTORY

The beach at Silverleaves is always changing. It appears from this ariel photo taken in 1930 the sea used to come in near the Silverleaves Reserve, which was probably then a lagoon.



image source.

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/63212ed7a25bc20fee382ebe>

SUMMER AT SILVERLEAVES

Summer has finally arrived and so have the mosquitoes and sandflies! The hooded plovers have started their breeding season, and other migratory shorebirds such as eastern curlews, bar-tailed godwits and red necked stints have arrived, having flown thousands of kilometres from their Arctic breeding grounds to Rhyll Inlet at the east end of Silverleaves beach.

When you walk along the beach you can help protect marine life and birds by collecting pieces of plastic, plastic bags, fishing line, bits of rope and many other careless discards. Take them home for disposal in your rubbish bin.

MOZZIES

The wet and warm weather is the perfect breeding environment for Mozzies so take care to protect yourself this summer. There have been cases of Ross River fever reported on Phillip Island in recent years and mozzies also carry Murray Valley encephalitis virus, Japanese encephalitis virus and the Buruli ulcer bacterium.

BE PREPARED FOR BUSHFIRES

Silverleaves offers a beautiful environment in which to live and enjoy, however there is always the risk of bushfires. Bushfire activity can also occur outside the Silverleaves area and can move quickly and come from many directions. Campfires on the beach at night are prohibited and are of grave concern as embers travel and can start a fire in the foreshore and then spread. If you see a fire on the beach ring 000, or the Cowes Police 59522037.

Cleaning up and maintaining your property is also an essential part of living in the area and can reduce the chance of property loss during a fire. 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

HAVE A BUSHFIRE PLAN

Consider your individual circumstances and plan ahead about what you will do on a day of a high fire danger. Leaving early before a fire has started is the safest option, if the road becomes blocked you will be limited to move around or access services that you require.

Going to the beach is an option, but bushfires usually occur on hot and windy days and access to the beach is through bush lined tracks. You may end up stuck at the beach in extreme heat and heavy smoke, so take water and protection with you.

Be prepared and consider how far your hoses reach if you need to put out small ember fires and be prepared for radiant heat with suitable clothing. Check in with your neighbours and see if they need assistance. A supportive community is a safer community.



Stay informed by using the Vic Emergency app which provides emergency information and warnings to help you make informed decisions about your safety. You can download it from the **App Store** and **Google Play**. In order to receive location specific app alerts when warnings are issued or incidents occur, you must **create a watch zone**.

THE WEATHER

It has been a wet start to the year. The Rhyll weather station recorded 23.2mm of rain on the 8 January and a further 18.4mm of rain on the 9 January, double the rainfall for January in 2023, where just 11mm fell in the entire month.

According to the records at the Bureau of Meteorology, the median rainfall for January since records began in 1990 is 36.6mm at the Rhyll station. So far, 45.6mm has been recorded this month in Rhyll.

YOUR NATIVE GARDEN

Your garden can be a haven for birds and wildlife. Many Silverleaves residents are choosing to plant their gardens with native plants and grasses which grow well in coastal areas, require less water, are easier to maintain and add to the natural neighbourhood character.



Image source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Correa_alba

Correa Alba are an indigenous species to Bass Coast and do well at Silverleaves, they can be grown in part shade and full sun and love a cover of mulch to keep the soil moist. They do well with a yearly prune to maintain a bushy shape.

You can buy indigenous plants suitable for the sandy soils of Silverleaves at the Barb Martin Bushbank Nursery, 1810 Phillip Island Road. Open Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 9am – 3pm.

WEED OF THE MONTH



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

Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca*)

This is an environmental weed creeper which will completely smother all ground flora. It spreads primarily by stem rooting. Small infestations can be forked out which is best done when the soil is moist and ensure that all roots and stems are removed otherwise the plant will continue to grow. Dispose of the plant material carefully as it spreads very easily.

BLUE RINGED OCTOPUS

The small blue ringed octopus is usually found in rockpools but last year a few have been found washed ashore along Silverleaves beach. A bite may be painless but can cause paralysis, and the person may stop breathing. Apply a very firm bandage around the bite and then apply a second bandage over the whole limb. Make sure the bandage is not too tight and cutting off the circulation. Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance. Be alert when walking barefoot on the beach.



Image source <https://www.healthline.com/health/blue-ringed-octopus-bite>

RECYCLE YOUR BOTTLES AND CANS

Victoria has introduced a new Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) which will reduce the state's litter by up to half and turn used drink containers into new, recycled products. People can return eligible drink cans, plastic bottles, glass bottles and paperboard cartons under one litre for a 10-cent refund at the Cowes IGA, San Remo IGA and Can Collect Cowes at 14 Harvey Drive.

Over summer, give it a go, instead of putting your cans and bottles in the yellow bin, collect them in a cardboard box and take them up to the IGA in Cowes.

NEW BUILDINGS AT SILVERLEAVES

If you are concerned about the appropriateness of any new building planning permit, you can find detailed information on the Bass Coast Shire website.

<https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/building-planning/advertised-plans-and-planning-register/submission-or-objection-to-a-planning-application>