Silverleaves Conservation Association

Introduction

The Silverleaves Conservation Association has a proud history spanning over 50 years of preserving the natural environment, indigenous trees and plants and the local habitat for wildlife and working to rehabilitate and protect the foreshore and coastal inlet around Silverleaves Phillip Island.

As a small local community group, the Silverleaves Conservation Association has significant achievements in raising awareness of the impact of loss of vegetation, coastal erosion and other developments which threaten the natural environment and amenity of Silverleaves as a place to live, visit and enjoy and for wildlife to thrive.

This Strategic Plan outlines the aims, objectives and key activities for the SCA over the next 5-10 years.

Our Purpose

To enhance community understanding of the need to preserve and enhance the indigenous flora, fauna and natural environment of Silverleaves for current and future generations of residents and visitors.

Vision

Residents, home-owners of and visitors to Silverleaves respect and value the indigenous flora, fauna and the natural environment of Silverleaves as a significant coastal location on Phillip Island.

Objectives

We will build connections, educate, and advocate to enhance community awareness and maintain a natural environment that provides a thriving coastal habitat for wildlife in Silverleaves. We will adapt to the changing environment by undertaking and promoting activities that build environmental resilience. We will seek to sustain our operations by growing our base membership and partnerships with similar organisations.

Advocate

Advocate for enhancement and protection of Silverleaves including the Rhyll Inlet, Silverleaves beach, foreshore and wildlife conservation and weed control.

Key activity	Frequency
Advocate for emergency protection of the Silverleaves beach and foreshore against ongoing erosion – encourage an integrated approach at local, state and federal government levels	Commencing Sept 2024
Advocate for the development of a comprehensive Silverleaves coastal management plan (including vegetation protection and dune stabilisation) by Bass Coast Shire Council and DEECA with SCA involved as a key stakeholder	Commencing Sept 2024
Take an active role in land management and development proposals (e.g. Distinctive Areas and Landscapes, Tracks and Trails, Coastal Hazards, Neighbourhood Character study, urban development)	Ongoing
Support the protection and conservation management of private land adjoining Silverleaves and the Rhyll Inlet	Ongoing
Coordinate working bees and/or activities in Silverleaves with environmental events (e.g. Clean Up Australia Day, Environment Day) to encourage larger participation	Ongoing

Communicate / Educate

Design a program of community engagement to build understanding and awareness about indigenous plants, invasive weeds and the natural Silverleaves environment as well as new challenges to the Silverleaves environment arising from foreshore erosion. Ensure that residents and visitors are informed about sensitive areas, beach tracks and shorebird habitat.

Key activity	Frequency
Maintain and update the SCA notice board on Silverleaves Reserve, which will include information on indigenous plants, weeds, and wildlife	As required
Distribute the SCA newsletter to members (and non-members wherever possible)	Four times / year
Redevelop the SCA website to provide information to local residents, including advice on appropriate plantings, removing environmental weeds, and guidance for sustainable gardens	Ongoing
Keep SCA membership regularly updated through emails and via SCA website on SCA strategies and actions to protect the Silverleaves foreshore and beach against the impact of erosion	Commencing Sept 2024

Distribute SCA brochures and welcome packs (of plants and SCA information) to new residents in Silverleaves (possibly with the aid of Bass Coast Shire Council)	As required
Participate in the LandCare Garden Visits scheme (incl. training)	As required
Offer guided walks of Silverleaves, showcasing key weeds and good indigenous garden design	One – two times / year

Connect

Enhance connections between our members and the local community, land managers (e.g. Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bass Coast Shire Council, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)), First People's custodians, and volunteer groups (e.g. Cowes Foreshore Group, LandCare, Small Coastal Townships Alliance, Phillip Island Land Alliance, Phillip Island Conservation Society).

Key activity	Frequency
Represent SCA as a member of the Phillip Island Land Alliance and regularly contribute to online calendar of events	Ongoing
Engage with First Peoples (Bunurong and / or Boonwurrung) where possible or required	Ongoing
Invite relevant land managers to a general meeting to explore local issues, funding sources and connection opportunities	Annual (or when possible)
Hold plant stalls to promote the use of indigenous plants in Silverleaves gardens	One – two times / year
Maintain and improve the SCA website, and use social media to connect to the Silverleaves community	Ongoing
Hold regular social events for members and the broader community (e.g. tea/coffee after working bees)	Ongoing
Host a BBQ in the Silverleaves Reserve to encourage a sense of community and promote the Silverleaves Conservation Association	Annual

Adapt

Participate in and promote activities that build resilience in the Silverleaves environment, in the face of past land use pressures (e.g. clearing of habitat and changes in herbivore abundance) and future challenges (e.g. sea level rise, changing climate).

Key activity	Frequency
Improve the condition of roadside reserves, beach track and foreshore vegetation through plantings, weed removal and protection in partnership with Bass Coast Shire Council and engagement with local residents	Ongoing
Support research into coastal management (e.g. the Banksia population study)	Ongoing
Actively engage with Bass Coast Shire Council and Silverleaves community on the second Silverleaves Reserve (corner Honeysuckle Grove and Chale Court)	Commence 2024

Sustain

Grow our financial sustainability through extending our membership base, grants, fundraising and sponsorship efforts. Build an inclusive and engaging approach to SCA interests and activities.

Key activity	Frequency
Seek community grants through various government programs for awareness, rehabilitation and enhancement of our local habitats and environment	When possible
Seek sponsorship from businesses on the island to fund SCA activities	Ongoing