

Mar-May

2014

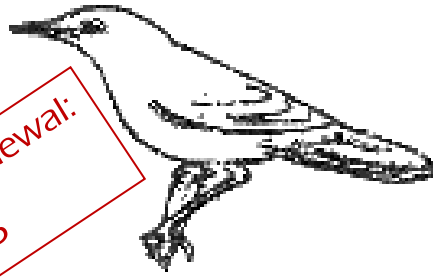
Friends of Edithvale – Seaford Wetlands Inc.



Number 136

Wetland Warbler

Membership renewal:
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Clamorous Reed-Warbler

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BEHIND THE BIRD-WATCHING

Philippa Bailey: President

When a person decides to join a group of people with common interests, such as bird-watching, they will probably expect to learn about wetland birds and the migratory species and maybe increase their knowledge of wetland plants. Perhaps some weed identification and tree planting may take place.

The Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc. (FESWI) are now in their twenty sixth year as protectors and advocates for our local wetlands. There have been many challenges and struggles during that time, from the early campaigns to save the wetlands from development, through to the monumental task of achieving Ramsar protection for Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands in 2001.

Some of our past and present committee members have become well-briefed on local council planning processes and we have had some success in raising the best interests of the wetland environments to oppose large scale development.

We have become skilled in applying for grants and creating events that put the grant money to the best possible use through community engagement. We have had to learn about legal

processes, insurance etc. in dealing with break-in and burglary.

In 2014, risk management and compliance are the current items on the FESWI agenda. We are assisted these days by internet resources and helpful websites to keep abreast of these legal issues.

There is a nagging fear that community groups such as FESWI will become so tied up in bureaucratic red tape, that we may be swallowed up in local authorities. At present, FESWI enjoys a cordial and positive relationship with key Melbourne Water personnel who oversee the wetlands. We meet every quarter as part of the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Community Liaison Committee. FESWI and others are briefed on management and initiatives to enhance the wetlands functioning.

The FESWI committee have recently been advised of potential re-structuring within Melbourne Water, which may affect the key liaison role of the River Health Officer. A loss of this vital link and connection to the authority, could seriously undermine any influence that FESWI might hold in the future in regard to the wetlands management.

FESWI committee members were also disappointed to learn that Managing Director Shaun Cox has left Melbourne

FRIENDS OF EDITHVALE - SEAFORD WETLANDS INC.

Assoc No. A0017388A

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Membership Database
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70 ARMSTRONGS ROAD and URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Robin Clarey

FESWI congratulates both the Frankston Planning Officers and the Councillors, particularly Councillors James Dooley and Glenn Aitken, in denying the proposed development at 70 Armstrongs Road, Seaford comprising three dwellings (two double storey) on the very edge of the wetlands. A good win for the wetlands and for common sense.

This particular application represents a microcosm of what's happening over much of Melbourne at the moment. The Napthine government's Big Victoria policy is putting pressure on local councils to come up with housing strategies to accommodate the projected huge increases in Melbourne's population. Victoria's population grew by 2 per cent or 110,500 people to the year ending September 2013, new ABS data shows. (*The Age: March 31, 2014*), translating to about 1,500 – 1,700 people per week in Melbourne.

So much for liveability!

There seems to be so many negative outcomes with this policy.

- Multi-dwellings on former single dwelling lots results in loss of canopy trees and gardens, which adds to the heat sink effect, which in turn, results in the increased use of air conditioners which then results in an increase of carbon in the atmosphere.

Urban environments are changed forever with the loss of a sense of openness, greenery and birdlife, which is what most people value and love about their suburbs.

- Do you remember, once upon a time, when you could drive down an ordinary suburban street – no problems? Have you noticed *now* how you invariably have to negotiate with on-coming drivers to get around all the parked cars in the streets. And it's not going to get any better!
- And what happens when people are forced to live in close proximity to each other? Exactly. It's pretty much a no-brainer that it results in higher levels of neighbourhood disputation.

- Greatly increasing populations gives developers more fire-power in pressuring councils to allow development in the green wedges, which is happening even now. And they seem to believe that they should be the only ones to make decisions about urban development. Take for example the outrageous comment made by the executive director of the Property Council of Victoria, ("Sky is limit for city growth" *Herald Sun* April 4) that councils should not be allowed to lock down their suburbs to prevent over-development. Hey! We actually live in a democracy! Councils, and by implication, residents, have as much right as any other group to say how they want things to be.
- In the paper only recently (*Herald Sun* "Fringe Farm Food Fight" May 25) there was an article about how fertile farm land on the city's fringes is being sold off for housing development with little thought to the economic cost (fringe farms contribute \$1.3 - \$1.6 billion to the economy and provide more than 6,000 direct jobs (*Food Alliance*)); or the loss of future food production. Given these alarming proposed population increases, one would think that food production would be an urgent consideration.
- Greatly increasing populations will also place massive pressure on an already creaking infrastructure. And following the recent federal budget, Victoria will have to find even further money itself to fund education and health!

The Napthine government cares only for the economics of population increase; it cares nothing about urban environments, natural environments or social environments.



Over development at Seaford. All vegetation gone. Buildings cover almost the whole block. Single car garages.

BEHIND THE BIRD-WATCHING CONT.

Continued from Page 3

Water in recent months. Shaun was supportive to FESWI and instigated Melbourne Water assistance to review the Bird Hide repairs, which are now moving into a new stage.

It is vital that community Friends groups, such as ours, maintain vigilance and focus in spite of the setbacks of accountability and compliance, which can be daunting at times. We hold the history of our particular environmental area and the local

community relies on us to protect their precious natural asset.

So we are not about to give up on our task to protect the Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands and to educate the community about our local wetland environment. However, don't ask me what interesting birds I have been watching lately – I have been stuck on the computer, learning about Essential Safety Measures!



A GOOD DAY FOR A KANGAROO WALK



The Kangaroo Walk on Sunday 30th March was ably led by Les and Margaret with about 20 or so people participating. It was an exciting experience to walk inside the sanctuary area, to follow the tracks made by the kangaroos through the phragmite and through the unexpectedly tall bulboschoenus plants. The kangaroos were reasonably co-operative, sticking their heads and shoulders up above the bulboschoenus, as curious about us as we were about them.



Discovery Centre: Looking out the main window; and kids creating their own models of migratory birds.

If you would like to help on the 2nd or 4th Sundays of the month, give Kate a ring on 9773 0224.

DUCK IN BACK UP TO SPEED

Graffiti has been removed from the building, with the window and grill repaired from the second break-in. The broken Kiwi case was also repaired.

The offenders from the second break-in have been apprehended to appear in court. FESWI will prepare a victim impact statement for this hearing.

Kingston Council removed the graffiti from the exterior using a spray gun, free of charge, which was much appreciated.

Margaret is preparing a report on the security situation at Duck In for the Mordialloc Police Focus Group as requested by Sgt Peter Milligan. We thank FEWSI member, Chris, too for his work at cleaning up around the building

SEAFORD WORKING BEES

Four Working Bees have taken place this year with two new members turning up on April's – welcome to Colin and Dario (see photo 1). During June's a family group, Tim, Will and Georgie stopped to give us a hand which was

great—thanks. (See photo 2). The committee has decided to purchase an A-frame to advertise our group during planting activities.

If you would like to help plant for the future, give Rex a ring on 9766 6056



Photo 1

From top left, Dawn, Colin, Lorraine, Rex and Jacqui. In front, Dario



Photo 2

Jacqui assists Will and Georgie.



Send to Editor at robin.clarey@hotmail.com

Donna Bauer



FESWI was saddened to learn that Carrum MP Donna Bauer has had some major health issues recently. Donna has been a good friend to the wetlands and FESWI has appreciated her support on a number of issues.

We wish you a speedy and full recovery, Donna.



May 2014

Not applicable if you have joined in the past year.

Friends of Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands Inc.

Assoc No. A0017388 ABN - 95 886 101 621

Name: _____

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_____ Post Code _____

Email: _____

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- \$10.00 Individual
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Bird Watching Plants Nature Study Education

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Details (Other)

Please send your payment, together with this account, to our Treasurer at:

PO Box 2031
EDITHVALE 3196

Corporate Members

Following is a list of our corporate members. Please give them your support.

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 Frank and Isobel Baguley's Nursery
 Bird Life Australia
 Bonbeach Primary School
 Chelsea Heights Community Centre
 Chelsea RSL
 Edithvale Primary School
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 Instant Garden Nurseries at Gardenworld Keysborough
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Time to renew your membership. See page 5