

Nov-Dec

Friends of Edithvale – Seaford Wetlands Inc.



Number 125

2011



Clamorous Reed-Warbler

Wetland Warbler

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 16th Philippa Bailey

2011 has been an interesting and challenging year for the FESWI committee, but all the members have once again worked hard and committed their time to ensure that the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands are protected and maintained at the highest level. A sincere thank you to the committee: Robin Clarey, Margaret Hunter, Gwen Meadows, Matthew Mitchell, Rex Chugg, Kate Spillane and George Madden. Tanya Bearup was a welcome new committee member who was unable to continue with FESWI due to family commitments. Les Williams has continued to support and inform the committee from retirement, and in spite of his move out of the Wetlands area, Barry Ross has represented and informed FESWI of community initiatives.

EDITHVALE BIRD HIDE

The biggest challenge for FESWI over the year has been the continuing closure of the bird hide, due to waterlogged conditions that have prevented the planned repair schedule proceeding. The committee thanks all the Bird Hide volunteers and bird enthusiasts for their understanding of the situation. Melbourne Water has approved funding and appointed a contractor to do the work and must now seek permission from the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Dept for the work to be completed over spring. The commit-

tee hopes that all hide volunteers will be available for duty when the bird hide opens again. FESWI has approached Melbourne Water for permission to use the new Discovery Centre on Sunday afternoons as an interim measure until the hide is available again. FESWI are waiting for a response to this request. FESWI are pleased to be back in Duck In, after Melbourne Water conducted a safety audit and identified asbestos. We were homeless for a few months, until approval was given for FESWI to use the building again.

COMMUNITY EVENT POSTPONED

FESWI received funding from the City of Kingston to organise a community open day. We need the bird hide to be available for this event so a date is yet to be decided upon. Councillor Trevor Shewan has generously supported FESWI again from his ward funding and this money will be used in the community initiative.

(Continued on page 2)



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PRESIDENT`S REPORT CONTINUED



area that pose a threat to the wetlands. A training session will also occur as the final part of the project.

FESWI have formed an alliance with Seaford North Primary School to protect and restore the native bush reserve at the school, which abuts the wetlands. FESWI was involved with SNPS some years ago, so it is a positive move to restore this relationship with the school and once again have input into the environmental education curriculum.

FESWI have been working with Peninsula Link on the new bike and walking path alongside Seaford wetlands. Rex has been advising Peninsula Link about tree planting and FESWI will coordinate the planting of 1,000 trees, donated by Bunurong Memorial Park.

Monthly tree planting at Seaford has continued all year.

WALKS AND TOURS

Walks and tours of Edithvale South have been restricted over the past season due to the excess water and advice from the Melbourne Water ranger that the area is too wet and boggy. Even the nesting boxes have had to be accessed by boat!

NEW PROJECTS

The DSE Coastaction / Coastcare project has been taking up a lot of our time. Rex Chugg has done a brilliant job co-ordinating the re-vegetation area on Edithvale South boundary. Rex has organised community volunteers to plant nearly 2,000 trees and under-storey plants. Robin and Barry have assisted with this project, which has transformed a barren piece of land.

FESWI have contracted Ace Alliance to carry out weed eradication, in particular spiny rush or junctus acutus at Seaford. We are currently developing brochures for residents in wetlands areas, to alert them to weeds in the

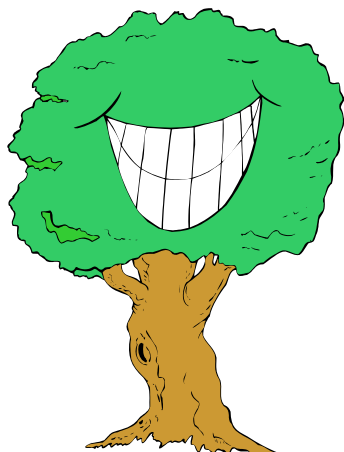
WEBSITE

The FESWI website has been further developed and is being used regularly for information and referral. Matt Mitchell continues to maintain the website and is developing a Facebook page for FESWI.

NETWORKS

FESWI attends the Edithvale – Seaford Wetlands Community Liaison Committee, the Eastern Treatment Plant CLC, Frankston Friends network, Downs Farm planning group, Kingston`s Climate Change and Biodiversity Reference Group.

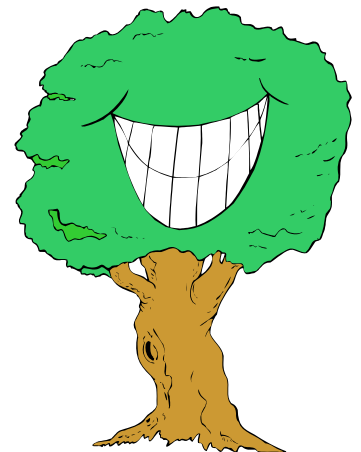
The FESWI committee wishes all members another year of peaceful enjoyment of our unique suburban wetlands.



Receive your copy of Warbler via email

If you would like to receive your copy electronically, please let me know (by email).

Send to robin.clarey@hotmail.com



Do you have strong views on any thing? Have you an interesting idea? Does something really bug you? Write to *My Say* and tell us .

My Say

THE GREAT REED CUT-BACK

Kaye Proudley

Several weeks back I had occasion to come back to Melbourne briefly and drove along Edithvale Rd through the wetlands.

To my horror, the reeds were severely cut back....yes I know they grow back and grow back fast like, like, well....like weeds probably! And I know it is probably done for fire safety of the public or residents. Of course they'll be back and dry before summer is over most likely! But why so severe? Why right back to the fence line?

BUT this area, as all of the reeds all over 'our' wetlands are, is prime habitat for our very enigmatic Australasian Bittern.

And this bittern sits on the EPBC's List of Threatened Fauna as ENDANGERED. That's only two steps below EXTINCT. As in: There are no more Australasian bitterns anywhere!! (It was recently listed because of a sharp decline in numbers observed.)

And this happens in an internationally important RAMSAR, JAMBA and CAMBA protected area.

What were Melbourne Water thinking?

It wouldn't have had anything to do with the open days for the new Visitor Information Centre they were running just after the reeds were cut back would it?

This same Melbourne Water who had such a marvelous write-up in the November issue of *The Bird Observer* (page 15, *Surveying Birds in Urban Wetlands* by Jenny Lau) for the studies they are having undertaken at many of their 'man-made' wetlands around the Dandenong Catchment.

Of course it was also prime habitat for many other bird, insect and aquatic species that used to, and will

probably again (when it grows back) call it home. Let's just hope there were no babies of too many species in there when the contractors so severely slashed the reeds and most species could move out of the way.

Here is an excerpt from the article quoted above. "Most birders know that the loss and degradation of natural wetlands across south-eastern Australia has been accompanied by significant population declines in many waterbird species. It is arguable that the most dramatic losses of wetlands, swamps and waterways have occurred in Australia's cities and towns. Where rain once fell on soft soil or vegetation, it now falls on hard roads or roof tops before entering drains that lead to highly modified creeks and rivers."

One might add that that run-off then also carries a load of human-induced pollution.

The article goes on to say that the observations made by volunteer birding people around the 10 other wetlands in the Dandenong Catchment have found some of these bitterns at half of their study sites (5 out of 10.) All to the good. But you can't just decide which wetlands should keep their populations

of birds intact and which shouldn't. Melbourne Water is charged to be guardians of all the wetlands they manage and should uphold the treaties they have signed.

I would like to formally call upon the FESWI committee to request an explanation, in writing from Melbourne Water as to why it was done, and why just then. Why they are allowed to do such extensive damage to habitat when it is part of the breeding ground for some of the last remaining Australasian Bitterns? And I would then call on the committee to publish both its letter to Melbourne Water and MW's reply.



SEAFORD NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL SUCCESS

As reported in the last issue FESWI collaborated with Seaford North Primary School to submit an application for funding to clean up their bush reserve, and reinstate environmental education through use of their nature trail and its surroundings.

The application was successful to the tune of \$12,500 - well done SNPS! This money will be augmented by \$5,000 from FESWI's grant from DSE Coastcare in 2010; this grant was to identify and eliminate noxious weeds in the wetlands, and given that the nature trail abuts the wetlands it makes good sense to help eliminate weeds from it so that it is not a source of future contamination.

FESWI views this opportunity to clean up the bush reserve and reinstate environmental education through use of the nature trail and surroundings as a way to extend knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Edithvale- Seaford wetlands to the Seaford community.



Philippa with some of SNPS pupils in the reserve

FESWI will take on the role of auspicing agency for the grant.

FESWI looks forward to working with Seaford North Primary School on this important community environmental initiative



Chelsea Heights Project Report

Rex Chugg

Recently in November, sixteen members from the Eastern Treatment Alliance Group planted 380 trees; they also spread mulch around the plants in an effort to keep the weeds down.

Also in November The Green Corps Group planted and mulched 150 trees. I am very grateful for the help given by both these groups.

The project has been very successful with around 2500 trees planted over the past 12 months.



PPWCMA link to Peninsula Link

The Port Phillip and Westernport CMA is active in an inter-agency environmental advisory group for the Peninsula Link freeway, enabling it to put forward views on environmental conservation. The group meets approximately every two months and in the past year has been on several field excursions to inspect environmental protection works.

Peninsula Link is delivered by the Linking Melbourne Authority and the Southern Way consortium. Over the life of the project the PPWCMA has advised about the importance of native vegetation and other natural resource matters, the Peninsula Link environmental management strategy and opportunities to be involved in environmental improvement.

Peninsula Link is expected to be open to motorists in early 2013. You can learn more about Peninsula Link and its environmental management plans and conservation works by visiting: www.linkingmelbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/home.asp

Source: PPWCMA Newsletter October 2011

And Our Link



On 16th November, FESWI, Peninsular Link and seven clients from Beachlynn—Statewide Autistic Services Inc. worked together to plant out trees and shrubs along the new dual purpose pathway (built by Abigroup part of the Peninsular Link project) along the eastern side of Seaford Wetland’s buffer zone and through the former Downs Farm. A barbecue followed this, provided by Frankston North Rotary Club. Thanks to everybody who contributed to this successful morning.



The Discovery Centre was completed in October and Melbourne Water invited the public to be among the first to visit it on the 6th and 13th November. The meeting place was the Edithvale Common Cricket Ground where groups of interested people gathered to join the tours. FESWI set up a display on the common which was visited by many people. Thanks to Philippa, Robin, Margaret, Matthew and Jacqui who helped out on the day.

KEEP THE GATE!

With the recent closure of the Aspendale-Edithvale RSL there has been concern expressed by Edithvale residents about an access point to the Edithvale Wetlands.

For many years the public have had safe access (avoiding the very busy Edithvale Road) to the wetlands and Edithvale Common through a gate from the RSL carpark on Kinross Avenue. What will happen when the new development starts?

It has been suggested (in a letter to the local paper by Glenda Mattson) that the RSL insist on a covenant to be placed on the sale of the site to include a public pathway to the wetlands. Not a bad idea—the letter writer suggests all residents contact the RSL requesting this. Also not a bad idea



WINGBEATS



WINGBEATS FOR ETP BOGGY CREEK NOV/DEC2011

ETP Boggy Creek Wetland 38°05'11"S 145°09'20"E (adjacent Banyan Waterhole)

Bird Count for November/December 2011

Survey Date: 04/12/2011 **Times:** 11.50-13.15 **Observers:** Mike Carter & Dawn Neylan.

Weather: Overcast, gloomy with some drizzle, fresh SSE wind. Cool to cold.

Coverage: 100%; conducted from my 4WD vehicle and on foot.

Water Area: 70% but debris indicated that recent flood level was ~1 m above current level presumably from deluge on 26 November. Water at inlets was below top of concrete zigzag baffle walls by ~7 cm on both east and west sides. Water had ponded in natural hollows. Boggy Creek was flowing ~0.3 m below causeway level. Thus the spate had passed rapidly.

Summary: This site is still maturing.

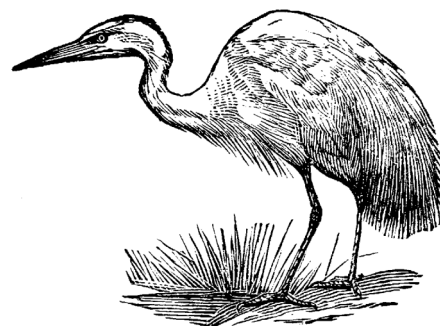
Bird List: Highlights (in red) include another Brown Quail & the first Eurasian Coots.

<i>Brown Quail</i>	1	Red-kneed Dotterel	-	Australian Hobby	1
Black Swan	-	Masked Lapwing	-	Purple Swamphen	16
Australasian Shoveler	-	Common Greenshank	-	<i>Baillon's Crake</i>	1
Grey Teal	20	Wood Sandpiper	-	Australian Spotted Crake	-
Chestnut Teal	24	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	-	Dusky Moorhen	-
Pacific Black Duck	46	Silver Gull	1	<i>Eurasian Coot</i>	21
Hardhead	8	Whiskered Tern	-	Black-winged Stilt	-
Australian Grebe	1	<i>Little Corella</i>	-	Black-fronted Dotterel	3
Hoary-headed Grebe	2	<i>Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo</i>	-	Black-shouldered Kite	2
<i>Spotted Dove</i>	-	<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	-	Whistling Kite	-
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	-	<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	-	Brown Goshawk	-
Little Pied Cormorant	1	<i>Blue-winged Parrot</i>	-	Swamp Harrier	1
Great Cormorant	-	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	-	Little Eagle	-
Little Black Cormorant	3	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	7	Nankeen Kestrel	-
Australian Pelican	2	<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	-	Brown Falcon	-
White-necked Heron	-	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	-	<i>Flame Robin</i>	-
<i>Little Egret</i>	2	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	-	<i>Eurasian Skylark</i>	7
Eastern Great Egret	2	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	-	<i>Australian Reed-Warbler</i>	10
Cattle Egret	-	<i>White-fronted Chat</i>	-	Little Grassbird	6
White-faced Heron	1	<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	-	Golden-headed Cisticola	10
Australian White Ibis	1	<i>Australian Magpie</i>	-	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	4
Straw-necked Ibis	1	<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	3	<i>Fairy Martin</i>	2
Royal Spoonbill	3	<i>Little Raven</i>	3	<i>Tree Martin</i>	-
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	-	<i>Magpie-lark</i>	5	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	1
				<i>Common Starling</i>	5
				<i>Common Myna</i>	-
				<i>Australasian Pipit</i>	-
				<i>House Sparrow</i>	-
				<i>European Goldfinch</i>	-
				<i>Common Greenfinch</i>	-

Number of Species: 26 wetland & raptors + 10 non-wetland = **36**.

Number of Birds: 189 wetland & raptors + 38 non-wetland = **227**.

Report by Mike Carter, Tel. (03) 9787 7136 pterodroma@bigpond.com



OUR FULL WETLANDS (Oct 2011)



Seaford North



Seaford South



Edithvale from the north

Where We Are

Duck In - Melways map 93 C 7/8. About 100 metres after pedestrian lights near bird hide on Edithvale Rd, turn right down the dirt entrance way to football oval, follow dirt track through reserve. Duck In on left.

Bird Hide - Melways map 93 D 8. On south side of Edithvale Rd, close to pedestrian lights.

Austin Road Lookout - Melways map 99 F 3. North side of Austin Road, Seaford

Seaford Working Bee Dates

Seaford

(First Sunday of the month)

6th November

4th December

10:00am – 12 noon
Ring Rex (9766 6056)

Committee Meetings held 3rd Monday of each month..

Observers welcome.

Ring Philippa on 9786 1591

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Corporate Members

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

Aspendale Edithvale Ex Services Club

Aspendale Primary School

Aspendale Gardens Primary School

Frank and Isobel Baguley's Nursery

Bird Observers Club of Australia

Bonbeach Primary School

Chelsea Heights Community Centre

Chelsea RSL

Edithvale Primary School

Frankston Primary School

Gales Marine Centre

Instant Garden Nurseries at Gardenworld Keysborough

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Seaford North Primary School

Seaford Park Primary School

Seaford Primary School

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Merry Christmas to All



**Melbourne
Water**

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**Friends of
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