



Sept-Nov

2010

# Wetland Warbler



Clamorous Reed-Warbler

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## PRESIDENT`S REPORT— ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup> 2010

### FESWI COMMITTEE AND VOLUNTEERS

2010 has been a 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, Jacqui Sheppard, Rex Chugg, George Madden and Kate Spillane. Les Williams has continued to support and inform the committee from retirement and the committee was honoured to nominate Les for Kingston Citizen of the year 2010, a position that Les has fulfilled admirably, imparting his knowledge of the local environment at several community functions throughout the year. Barry Ross will be relinquishing his role as Special Events Coordinator and representative on the Melbourne Water Community Liaison Committee and FESWI thank him most heartily for the knowledge and passion that

he has shared with the committee, keeping us informed and aware of potential developments and opportunities in the best interests of FESWI. The Meadows family have continued the hide key arrangement which is always much appreciated.

Once again a big thank you to all the Bird Hide volunteers (40 in number) and the committee hopes that you will all be keen and available for duty when the Bird hide



opens again.

### EVENTS

**The Wetlands Discovery Day and Photographic Competition** was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November at Duck In in collaboration with the Edi-Asp Cricket club, which provided a barbecue. In spite of unrelenting rain, which lifted all our spirits, but affected activities and attendance numbers, about 100 people participated in the event. Activities included visits to the Bird Hide, tree planting, music, water displays, children`s activities, photography compe-

**FRIENDS OF EDITHVALE - SEAFORD WETLANDS INC.**

**Assoc No. A0017388K**

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- Treasurer** Gwen Meadows 9584 4607
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- Rex Chugg
- Matthew Mitchell
- George Madden
- Kate Spillane
- Tanya Bearup

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- Philippa Bailey 9772 2941
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- Public Officer**
- Dorothy Meadows 9772 3952

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## PRESIDENT`S REPORT CONTINUED

tion and information. Funding from the City of Kingston was appreciated for this event.

**Department of Sustainability and Environment Summer by the Sea program** included two wetlands tours hosted by Margaret Hunter and Barry Ross.

**Volunteer Appreciation** twilight wine and cheese was held in February to thank everyone for their involvement with the Bird Hide roster.

FESWI, through Rex Chugg, played a key role in the **Clean Up Australia Day** program at Seaford Primary School in March.

**A Dry Walk through Edithvale South** was held in May and attended by 30 community members who were thrilled to see the kangaroos in full flight.

**The Walk for Wildlife** was held on September 19<sup>th</sup> through Seaford Wetlands in conjunction with the City of Frankston, and hosted by Barry Ross and Robin Clarey.

The **Local Wetlands Tour** planned in early October had to be cancelled due to excessive inundation of the proposed tour areas.

### EDITHVALE

A major disappointment to all bird lovers and community members has been the closure of the hide in late July due to safety concerns. Melbourne Water conducted a safety audit on both the hide and Duck In and found in the hide that the metal plates supporting the columns had corroded to such a condition that the building was pronounced unsafe and closed to members of the public. The committee were extremely disappointed that this action was taken and participated in several discussions with Melbourne Water to try to organise reduced access, particularly with regard to the high water levels and the birds returning to Edithvale in great numbers. In March 2009, a Melbourne Water inspection had authorised minor amendments to comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements, but at that stage no major concerns were raised about the hide structure.

A structural engineer`s report (August 2010) outlined the seriousness of the structural deterioration in the hide and subsequently Melbourne Water has sought quotes for the repair of the columns.

A meeting with Melbourne Water and the committee occurred at Duck In on 19<sup>th</sup> October. FESWI have subsequently received a written commitment from Melbourne Water that the hide will be re-

paired in March 2011 when the federal government restrictions regarding building and noise in migratory bird environments ends for the dry season. The committee agreed unanimously that the hide should be repaired as soon as possible as it is felt that the character and architectural uniqueness of the hide are qualities to be retained. Discussion was held regarding the design and construction of a completely new hide. Melbourne Water indicated that should this be the chosen direction regarding the hide, it could take some years for the funds to become available.

### WALKS AND TOURS

A number of walks and tours of Edithvale South have been held for school groups, community groups and walking clubs, facilitated by Margaret Hunter and Les Williams.

### DISCOVERY CENTRE

Building on the Discovery Centre commenced in May and FESWI representatives met with Melbourne Water to advise on educational components and design of the centre.

### SEAFORD

A partnership has developed with Seaford Primary School for input from FESWI to environmental programs. Rex and Margaret have been involved in developing this collaboration.

Tree planting occurs once a month and appreciation of the volunteers who regularly participate in this activity is noted.

### WEBSITE

Matt Mitchell has created an excellent website for FESWI and thanks to Alison Kuitert who has provided photographs and information for the site. It is worth visiting on [www.edithvale-seaford-wetlands.org](http://www.edithvale-seaford-wetlands.org)

### BROCHURES

New FESWI brochures were designed and printed with assistance from Councillor Trevor Shewan`s community fund which was gratefully received.

### NETWORKS

FESWI have joined Kingston`s Climate Change and Biodiversity Reference Group.

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

**Philippa Bailey**  
President FESWI 2010

# SNIPPETS SNIPPETS SNIPPETS

## Receive your copy of Warbler via email

Feswi has recently up-graded its publishing software which will allow the newsletter to be sent via email. If you would like to receive your copy electronically, please let me know (by email).

Send to [robin.clarey@hotmail.com](mailto:robin.clarey@hotmail.com)

### Victorian Senior of the Year Awards 2010

Congratulations to Les Williams (former FESWI President) who achieved another award. Les was recently awarded with The Council of the Ageing (COTA) Victoria Senior Achiever Awards. , Les, whose vision 40 years ago helped establish the Edithvale Seaford Wetlands, still provides inspiration to young and old today through his passion and dedication to the environment. Well done Les!



### The Australian Wetland Alliance

FESWI has been approached by AWA, which is looking to put together a map of important wetlands and key wetland issues across Australia - a map in the form of a poster that can be used for promotion, to make a point at meetings, presentations etc – a resource for all.

We will of course, be helping AWA with information about our wetlands for inclusion on the map.

AWA - The Australian Wetland Alliance is an association of non-government organisations with an interest in wetlands. AWA was formed at the Brisbane Conference of the Parties in 1996, to provide a coordinated representation for Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) working in wetlands at an international level. AWA provides a communications tool for people working in non-government organisations via an email list for correspondence and through regular forums.

### Big Green Festival

I am writing to tell you about THE BIG GREEN FESTIVAL that we are holding at our school (Carrum PS). As a 5 Star Sustainable School, we are very excited about all things 'green' and are keen to share this with the community and encourage them to think and act in more environmentally friendly ways.

The festival is a whole community event which will include an overall green theme involving environmental organisations, stall holders, food vendors, musical performances and the Big Green Short Film Festival.

It's all happening on Sunday, December 12. 3–8pm at Walkers Road, Carrum  
Hope to see you there!

Sally Dizgalvis  
BGF Committee Member

### New Committee Member

FESWI Committee is very pleased to that Tanya Bearup has joined the Committee following the 2010 AGM.

WELCOME Tanya!

### Bus Tour Cancelled

Apologies to all of you who booked to go on the local wetland bus tour scheduled for the 10th October.



The tour was cancelled upon advice re poor viewing conditions and paucity of birds.

The tour will be rescheduled next year.



# HIDE REPAIRS

## FESWI HAS RECEIVED THIS LETTER

Further to the meeting held between representatives of Melbourne Water and the Friends of Edithvale/Seaford Wetlands on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October, I wish to confirm Melbourne Water’s commitment to undertake repairs to the Bird Hide located at Edithvale Wetlands.

As you are aware, Melbourne Water has closed public access to the bird hide following a safety audit that deemed the structure unsafe.

Recently we received the final report from the structural engineer, which stated the need for numerous items to be repaired, including the steel columns that support the structure. These items need to be repaired before the hide is suitable for public use.

Melbourne Water is currently in the process of receiving quotes for the repair of the hide based on recommendations outlined in the report and we are keen to see the structure open again. Unfortunately due to the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands being listed under the Ramsar Convention, the earliest time repairs can occur is March 2011.

We look forward to working closely with the Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands to ensure that repairs are made in a timely matter post peak bird season, and will keep you updated on our progress every step of the way.

Yours sincerely  
Anne Randall  
General Manager, Communications and Community Relations

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## SNIPE AT THE E.T.P.

Alison Kuitert

At the end of each month a dedicated band of birdo’s head out to the Eastern Treatment Plant to count the birds. The current band of regulars are Dawn Neylan, David Stabb, Andrew Wood, Andrew McCutcheon led by Mike Carter who has been counting there since 1975. The monthly figures for most species are fairly predictable.... except this wet year when duck, coot, swan and grebe numbers have plummeted.

No need to panic though as they have probably all headed inland to take advantage of the water that has spread across most of the continent. I recently travelled out the back of Bourke and the bird numbers are extremely high and everything is breeding as there is so much water everywhere.



a feeling of spring in the air. Some birds already had young in nests whilst others were still choosing mates. No migratory waders had been counted for this season yet, so it was with great excitement that we flushed a couple of Snipe in the long grass along the eastern boundary of the Plant....then another two and some single birds took to the air. My day was already complete having seen half a dozen of our visitors.

On the way back to the car we circled around an excavated area which had what we reckoned was great snipe habitat, a couple took off, then another and then 8 birds took off in tight formation and circled around us. The camera went up and I fluked a nice shot of all 8 birds nearly in focus. On further inspection by some of our wader experts Mike Carter

The latest bird count at the ETP was Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September and despite a chilly morning there was

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# SNIPE AT THE E.T.P.

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commented that “the 8 in this photo by Alison Kuitert flushed simultaneously as if travelling together.” He was surprised at the extent of moult in the 8 birds (adults he assumed) that have only just arrived. He commented that moth-eaten birds like these would not be in a fit state for migration and having flown here from Japan would have replaced fat reserves prior to expending energy on feather replacement.

One of our other great wader experts Danny Rogers – replied to the email -

“The moult condition of these birds doesn't surprise me enormously. It's typical for our waders to migrate south on a wing that's quite worn, and for them to start primary moult as soon as they arrive on the non-breeding grounds. They don't worry about replacing fat reserves first - excluding oddities like penguins, it's usual for birds to be at their lightest when they are in primary moult. It was once thought to be due to the energetic costs of moult, but now the thinking is that it's strategic - primary moult reduces the wing area, and there will be an increase in wing-loading and a decrease in maneuverability unless birds compensate by reducing their mass.

Swinhoe's and Pin-tailed Snipe are something of an ex-

ception to the above rule, because they typically moult a few primaries and then suspend moult before they migrate south; they resume moult once they get to the non-breeding grounds. In contrast, Latham's doesn't seem to start primary moult until it gets to Aus. But when it starts, it starts with a bang, dropping a lot of inner primaries at more or less the same time. Usually that initial flurry of primary moult involves the replacement of 3-4 feathers, but it can involve as many as 5-6. The inner primaries, being relatively small, don't take very long to grow, and it's possible that the birds Alison photographed have only been moulting for 2-3 weeks. The outer primaries will take longer, and these birds will likely wrap up their moult in Dec or Jan.

The primaries do look quite worn in this image, but I suspect they wouldn't have seemed too bad during migration. Wear of outer primaries in waders always seems to accelerate after the first primaries get dropped. No-one has looked closely at why; my suspicion is that they stop preening their primaries once moult has begun, and without regular anointment of preen wax the outer primaries get brittle quite quickly.”

Not only did I manage to capture a nice picture, but I also received information from Mike and Danny about the snipe that come and visit the ETP each year.



### Bird Hide Pictures from Jacqui on a recent trip north.

This bird hide, at Hasties Swamp Atherton, was a simple design with an excellent viewing facility. No storage room though, but the bench all way round the windows was great for book and binoculars (and wine & nibbles as we sat there to see the sunset). The external staircase made for more room inside and the windows all round gave great viewing.



Hasties Swamp Birdhide, Atherton.



Hasties Swamp Birdhide, Atherton.

# UPDATE ON EDITHVALE REVEGETATION PROJECT

1) The planting beds were successfully sprayed by Marie-Claire Van Besouw during the week ended 31 Oct '10 at a cost of approx \$1,500.

2) On Monday 1 Nov, Robin, Rex and I hired a ute and transferred sufficient stakes, guards and weed mats from Duck In to the planting site to cover the expected 1,600 trees to be planted.

3) While we were working the Melb Water contract mower arrived and said that he needed to mow there and then. We asked that he delay for a week or so because if he mowed now he would remove the paint around the edges of the planting beds and we would not know where to plant. He insisted that he had to mow that day and so we lost our bed markings.

4) On Friday 5 Nov, Rex and I hired another ute to collect the plants from Carrum Indigenous

Nursery and take them to the planting site. Also, we needed the ute to move the plants, stakes, guards and weeds around to the respective planting beds.

The planting was to be undertaken by Green Corps, which is a Federal Govt initiative aimed to give young people on Newstart (the dole) experience and qualifications in green type work. Unfortunately, Friday is not a good day for the Green Corps and only four workers turned up, plus their supervisor.

They were all nice kids and good workers and we were able to get 400 trees planted. We did our best to follow the plan but there was a fair amount of guess work involved and we have probably planted a significant number of trees in unsprayed grass.

5) Carrum Indigenous Nursery recently was invaded by rabbits

that devoured a good proportion of our trees which had been growing for many months. The nursery was forced to give us replacement trees which were much smaller and not as robust as we would have preferred. We decided to continue with our planned Friends working bee the following Sunday, 5 Nov using the larger plants and return the rest to the nursery for on-growing and planting next year.

6) On Sunday we planted approx 200 trees, which was an excellent effort and a credit to those that participated.

7) All up we have now planted 593 trees.

8) The total costs to date are:

Spraying \$1,500

Hire of utes \$179

Trees 593 @ \$1.50 each = \$889.50

Barry Ross



1. Rex unloads mats ready for the plantings
2. Josh helps during the Sunday Working bee.
3. Part of the finished planting.
4. Aerial view of area to be revegetated.



# WALK FOR WILDLIFE

On the 19th September there were walks in a number of Frankston reserves and parks to mark the *Walk For Wildlife* event.

Some of these included Seaford Wetlands, Sweet-water Creek, Seaford Foreshore and Kananook Creek, Frankston Foreshore, The Pines, George Pentland Botanic Gardens and Baden Powell Reserve.

Matt and Robin assisted Barry to conduct the walk on a sunny Sunday morning in the Seaford Wetlands.



## 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 February

6th March

3rd April

10:00am – 12 noon

Ring Rex (9766 6056)  
for meeting place.

Committee Meetings held 3rd Monday of each month at Duck In.

Observers welcome.

Ring Philippa on 9772 2941

## SPONSORS OF FESWI

### 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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**Friends of  
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