

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC



“The Penguin” Newsletter

Fourth Quarter December 2012

Editors: Christine Grayden & John Eddy

cgrayden@waterfront.net.au PH: 5956 8501

WEB SITE: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~piconsoc>

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Dates for Your Diary 2013

Sat 12th Jan 2013: Animals of Oz presentation: reptiles, marsupials, birds. 10 – 10.50 a.m., then 11 – 11.50 a.m. No booking required. Bring along any primary school children you have with you! Funded by Bass Coast Shire Council and PICS.

Sat 12th Jan: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. PICS street stall, outside Baker’s Delight. Drop by and say hello and admire our new feather banners, designed by PICS member Steve Angel, collect some Seed Stick giveaways and catch up with the Bass Coast Shire Council’s environment information.

Sat 12th Jan 2013: **AGM**, Parish Hall, Cowes. Bring and share meal 6.30 p.m., meeting – annual reports and election of office bearers 7.30 p.m.

Sun 13th Jan: Red Rocks Coast Care working bee. Meet at car park 10 a.m. Rubbish removal. Refreshments to follow. Other RRCC dates in later newsletters.

Sat-Sun 9th & 10th March: Saltwater Creek Campaign 25th Anniversary Celebration. See article below.

Sat 6th April General Meeting, 7.30 p.m. Heritage Centre Meeting Room. Speaker TBA

Sat 6th July General Meeting, 7.30 p.m. Heritage Centre Meeting Room. Speaker TBA

Sat 28th September General Meeting, 7.30 p.m. Heritage Centre Meeting Room. Speaker TBA

Enquiries for all events: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 m 0400 900 612 e: cgrayden@waterfront.net.au

Barb Martin Bush Bank: Sales and volunteers – every Wednesday + 1st Saturday of each month 10 – 1. Phone Anne Davie ph 5956 8216

Friends of Koalas (FOK) Habitat Days: First Sat of every month at 10 a.m. **Koala Count** at the Koala Conservation Centre, second Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Contact Patsy Hunt ph 5952 2407

Biosphere – Bass Coast Round Table meets at San Remo on the third Friday of every month at 8 p.m. Contact Jane Jobe, convenor: 0409 530 898

Friends of Churchill Island (FOCIS): email: webmaster@friendsofchurchillisland.org.au

Groundswell Bass Coast Climate Change action group: Neil Rankine 5672 1185 neilnola@netspace.net.au

Bird Life Bass Coast: janetfleming1@bigpond.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: SAT JAN 12, 2013

PARISH HALL COWES

Bring and share meal 6.30 p.m. AGM – annual reports, election of office bearers
7.30 p.m. General Meeting for general business to follow. All are welcome!

PICS COMMITTEE 2012

President: Anne Davie (media contact 5956 8216) e: bimbadeen@nex.net.au

Vice President: Pauline Taylor ph 5952 5485

Secretary: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 e: cgrayden@waterfront.net.au

Minutes Secretary: Gaye Cleeland (Margaret Hancock in Gaye’s absence)

Treasurer: Danielle Angel

Committee: Terry Nott, Steven Angel, John Jansson, Penny Manning (Chair of c/ee and sub c/ee meetings), Margaret Hancock.

C/ee meets at 10.30 a.m. on 4th Sat of each month at Community Room, Parish Hall Cowes.

Letter to Members

Dear Members,

Season's Greetings to all. The persistent rain finally stopped in mid-October and the warm Spring that followed was welcome, with good growth in pastures and tree plantings.

2012 has been another busy year on the Island. Three excellent recent events-25 years of Landcare Celebration, World Environment Day and the Shearwater/Biyadin Festival celebrated our unique environment and the community's engagement with it.

Bass Coast Shire Elections resulted in 6 new Councillors, who have already been active in attending functions and events, in order to be better informed. PICS sent letters of congratulations to each. Cr Phil Wright, a PICS member, was the only Councillor in the previous Council, to be re-elected.

A successful Meet The Candidates Forum, organised by PICS, was held on October 5th at the Parish Hall, Cowes. Over 60 people attended, the candidates each giving a 3 minute presentation. An interesting Question Time followed.

PICS has provided comments to the Bass Coast Shire's Rural Land Use Strategy Directions Paper. The rural land is highly valued for its production and its amenity.

On the next occasion PICS has a presence on the Island, it will have 2 very handsome colourful banners to identify itself. These have been made possible by Steve Angel, a committee member. Following initial discussions with the committee, Steve has been able to have the eye-catching banners produced for the Society.

It is 25 years since the successful campaign by PICS and others to stop the Canal Development on Ventnor Beach. A Celebration of this important milestone event is planned for the long week-end in March and everyone will be invited to come along.

Look forward to seeing you at the Dinner/AGM on Saturday, January 12th in the Parish Hall, Cowes.

Anne Davie, President

STUDENTS' CORNER

1. Name three ways that you can cut your greenhouse gas emissions at home...

2. Name three types of transport you could use instead of your private car...

(See answers near end of newsletter)



A Silver Anniversary Reminder

Next year, 2013, it will be twenty five years since the great planning battle of SALT WATER CREEK. To mark the 25th Anniversary, PICS is planning a celebration over the Labour Day weekend in March. On Saturday March 9 we will have a "Bring and Share" dinner at 6.00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, *and* a display of memorabilia – please start sorting through your old photographs, T-shirts and banners – and on Sunday March 10 we are planning a picnic on the beach, and a walk through the Salt Water Creek Reserve.

If you would like to help in planning the celebration, please contact me, ph 5952 2557, or come to the PICS Committee Meeting on the fourth Saturday of the month at 10.30 a.m. in the Meeting Room at the Parish Hall.

Red rocks coastCARE

1. Our last working bee for the year was held on 30th Sept, with 5 participants. We concentrated on control of thistles, sundry woody weeds and sea spurge.
2. A successful Public Meeting and Site Inspection to inform the community about our Grants Projects was held on 7th Oct, attracting 17 participants. Thanks to our president Anne Davie, for her welcome and introduction, and to the other PICS members who gave good support. We gained 2 new volunteers on the day. Prior to the meeting, 300 printed leaflets had been locally letter-boxed, and an ad and article had appeared in the local paper. A follow-up article appeared in the 17th Oct edition of the *Advertiser*.
3. Much progress has been made with the Grants Projects. The stairway at Appley Ave track was started on 29th Oct, and completed within a few days, with BCSC Derek Hibbert providing some supervision. Though the final design was not quite as was discussed, the structure seems sturdy and effective. Of some concern is the wing fencing, which makes the structure unnecessarily obtrusive on the beach landscape, though future planting may help screen this. This project was funded by a \$13,000 Communities for Nature Grant through the Dept of Sustainability and Environment, with an additional contribution from the Bass Coast Shire Council.
4. The first round of spraying of the 3 target weeds in the Noxious Weeds Project was completed by the contractor, “Envirogain” in Oct. The vast expanse of Blue Periwinkle is showing signs of succumbing, but will need to have follow-up treatment which is scheduled before the end of the year. This project is supported by Coastcare Victoria Community Grants – a joint program delivered in partnership between the Australian Government’s Caring for our Country program and the Department of Sustainability and Environment’s Coastcare program. This project will continue during 2013, with BCSC support.
5. Hooded Plovers have again nested at Red Rocks. The first breeding attempt failed in November when the nest was destroyed, apparently by a very high tide accompanying a storm. The pair then established a new nest, with 3 eggs, but this also disappeared. The pair have remained at the site and PICS member Sue Saliba has organised a volunteer roster for monitoring them. ***More volunteers wanted.***
6. While not a RRCC project, work has begun on Bayview Park (just east of Red Rocks Rd) by a small team of PICS members. The project aims to remove weeds from a patch of remnant swamp paperbark scrub and to revegetate as bird habitat. The BCSC Parks and Gardens Dept supports the project, which will take place over several years.
7. **Our next working bee for RRCC will be Sunday, 13th Jan 2013, 10am – 12noon**, concentrating on rubbish clean-up and weed control. All welcome.
John Eddy, RRCC Volunteer Co-ordinator.



Facebook & WEB SITE

Thanks to those people who have “liked” us on Facebook. We still need more “likes”, so if you are on Facebook, please go to the PICS page and “like” us, and keep up to date with what’s happening in environment matters on Phillip Island! <http://www.facebook.com/picsvictoria?ref=ts&fref=ts>
Thanks to Simon Eddy who has kept the web site running for the last several years. C/ee member Steve Angel will be setting up a new website for us in 2013, so stay tuned for that. Current web site is at home.vicnet.net.au/~piconsoc/

NEW COUNCIL

Following the council elections, only one sitting councillor, PICS member Cr Phil Wright, was returned. The new council is:

Mayor, Cr Clare Le Serve, Leadbetter Ward
Deputy Mayor, Cr Neil Rankine, Hovell Ward
Cr Bradley Drew, Anderson Ward
Cr Phil Wright, Churchill Ward
Cr Kimberley Brown, McHaffie Ward
Cr Andrew Phillips, Thompson Ward
Cr Jordan Crugnale, Townsend Ward

Deputy Mayor, Cr Neil Rankine, is well known for his “green” credentials, and is a prime mover in the Groundswell Climate Change Action group. All of the other councillors have publicly stated their support for the environment, so we are hopeful of a good term for the Bass Coast environment.

SCRAP BOOKS

Thanks to Alison Thomas for bringing our scrap books up to date for 2010. If anyone has any time, there is still 2011 and 2012 to do! Please contact Christine if you can help. Ph 5956 8501, e: cgrayden@waterfront.net.au

MEMBERSHIPS

All members will soon receive a mailed membership renewal/application form for your 2013 memberships. Subscriptions remain the same: \$25 family; \$15 single; \$10 concession; \$30 supporting member. You may add a donation to the General Fund with your membership, or use the bottom of the form to donate to the Public Fund, which is a tax deductible donation. Please note that these are two separate donations. You can only receive the tax deduction if you make your cheque/postal order out to Phillip Island Conservation Society Public Fund. Memberships and donations to the General Fund are to be made out to Phillip Island Conservation Society Inc.

Answers to Students' Corner questions:

1. Switch off appliances when not in use so no standby lights keep burning. Install an automatic switch that sends your TV and computer accessories (monitor, printer) to sleep when not being used. Switch off lights, air conditioners and heaters when you leave the room. Set your air conditioner a few degrees higher in summer (e.g. around 25°). Keep your computer searches to a minimum – remember, 6 searches on the internet are the equivalent greenhouse gas emissions as boiling the kettle! Buy some solar panels for your roof for photovoltaic power or solar hot water.
2. Bicycle, unicycle, bus, tram, train, car pool, roller blades, skate board.



MESSAGE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

In April this year Australian governments announced a plan, pushed by business, to handover authority for environmental approvals from the Commonwealth to the states. This would have been the biggest backwards step in environmental law in decades. Last week, the environment earned a reprieve. While the campaign is far from over, the Commonwealth has put on hold plans to hand over its power to approve ecologically unsound projects with potential to damage Australia's unique habitats.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of maintaining momentum on this issue. The push to delegate environmental responsibility to the states is not dead, merely resting. It will return to the national agenda, and we need to be prepared to push back.

On the other hand, Australia managed to dodge a bullet, and demonstrated to the big business lobby that we are not to be ignored. In that sense, the 85 per cent of Australians who support keeping environmental regulations with the Commonwealth should be celebrating a win.

Even if the business lobby had got its way at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting, the "uncertainty" they often point to when arguing for lax environmental laws would have increased. Concerned communities would surely have responded to approvals of environmentally damaging developments with protest and litigation.

The environment is not divided along arbitrary lines as our states are, and it is impossible for such disparate groups to consistently regulate for environmental protection. For instance, take the century of state vs. state conflict over the Murray-Darling Basin as an example of what happens to environmental standards when the states are at loggerheads. In the end, it took **federal** intervention to reach an agreement.

Without the intervention of past federal governments in other cases, there would be oil rigs on the Great Barrier Reef, cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park and the Franklin River would be dammed. Historically, the states have been focused on development at all costs, and certainly are disinclined to care about environmental impacts of their actions in other parts of the country.

Perhaps the best thing to come from this campaign is a renewed sense of the importance of the environment movement when we're all pulling in the same direction. Big congrats are in order for our colleagues in the other 30+ groups who were part of the campaign, especially the leadership shown by WWF, the Humane Society, Birdlife Australia and the Environment Defenders Offices.

Vested interests will return, arguing for what is essentially a back-door to lowering environmental standards. And we all need to be ready to stand against them. By last week, the crucial week in this stage of the campaign, the environment movement was smarter, louder, and quicker than those in the business groups who were trying to regress environmental protection.

Charles Berger, Director of Strategic Ideas, ACF.

PICS wrote a strong letter to the Federal Minister on this matter, and we are very relieved at the outcome, although we know that the battle will continue.

ENVIRONMENT GROUPS NETWORKING FORUM 2012:

This annual event, held at the Bunurong Environment Centre, Inverloch on the 10th November, was hosted by the South Gippsland Conservation Society Inc and supported by Coastcare Victoria. After a welcome by Dave Sutton, president of SGCS, participants were given the choice of two walks, either Screw Creek

Reserve, Inverloch, or Shack Bay, Bunurong Marine Park, to view impressive revegetation projects that followed years of grazing. *Report continued on last page...*



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Fourth Quarter: Dec 2012

If undeliverable, return to:

PICS Inc.
PO Box 548
COWES, 3922

Environment groups networking forum continued...

Following afternoon tea back at the Environment Centre, guest speaker Phil Ingamells of Victorian National Parks Association, discussed aspects of “Development” and “Fire Management” in our National Parks. Various representatives of most of the participating groups then summarised their group’s activities. They included:

Pam Mathieson	Bunurong Coast Education
Rod Webster	(SGCS) proposing formation of “Friends of Bunurong”
Gary Martyn	Cape Paterson Residents & Ratepayers Association
Geoff Glare	Friends of Wonthaggi Heathland and Coastal Reserve
Amaryll Perlesz	Residents, Ratepayers and Friends of Harmers Haven
Elizabeth Shaw	Birdlife Bass Coast
Andre Chiaradia	Phillip Island Nature Park (Geosystem model for N.W.Bass Strait)
John Eddy	PICS
Daryl Hook	Anderson Inlet Landcare Group
Lis Glynn	Wonthaggi Urban Landcare
Bruce Atkin	Coastcare facilitator for East Victoria, who thanked all volunteers for their work at the conclusion of this very valuable and informative gathering.

PRECINCT MASTER PLAN FOR BEACHCOMBER/YCW

Planning has started, with Bass Coast Shire Council Bushland and Coastal manager Derek Hibbert, meeting on site with various stakeholder groups, including PICS. A draft master plan, aimed at upgrading facilities at the car park and adjacent foreshore reserve will be available shortly, with submissions sought until mid-February 2013. Individual PICS members who have an interest in the area are encouraged to consider the draft and make comments.