



# The Penguin

Newsletter of Phillip Island Conservation Society - Fourth Quarter, December 2003

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Newsletter

## Dates for your Diary

**Saturday, 17th January, PICS AGM** 8 pm, Heritage Centre, Cowes.

**Sunday 18th January:** Working Bee (plce to be announced)

**Friday 6th February Committee Meeting,** 8 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Friday 20th February:** Bass Coast Biosphere Roundtable.  
Kindergarten, Back Beach Rd, San Remo 8.00 pm.

**Saturday 21st February:** Seasonal Walk. Ring Margaret Hancock (5952 2557) for details

**Friday 5th March:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 17th April:** Planning (possibly a symposium) 10 am;  
General Meeting 6.00pm

**Friday 7th May:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 15th May:** Seasonal Walk.

**Friday 4th June:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 3rd July:** General Meeting

**Sunday 4th July:** Working Bee

**Friday 6th August:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 21st August:** Seasonal Walk

**Friday 3rd September:** Landcare Dinner

**Friday 10th September:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural

Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September:** General Meeting

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September:** Working Bee

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November:** Seasonal Walk

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December:** Committee Meeting, 8.00 pm, Cultural Centre, Cowes

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dear Members,**

As usual I'm going flat out to try to meet the deadline! And, as usual, we are not short of news. Please consider standing as an Office Bearer or Committee Member ♦ there is always much on the 'PICS PLATE', and we are glad of all willing hands and brains to help deal with the never-ending issues which beset our beloved Phillip Island.

Committee Meetings generally are held on the first Friday of each month at 8.00 p.m. in the Cowes Cultural Centre. Meetings are open to all members, so please come along if you would like to join in the debate or raise any issue of concern to you. We need you, whether you are a full time resident of Phillip Island or live mainly somewhere else. I think this is all the space I ♦m allowed! So may I wish you a joyful and peaceful Christmas time for 'R & R', and good health and lots of energy in 2004.

Yours sincerely,

**Margaret Hancock, President.**

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## BARB MARTIN BUSHBANK

If you haven't visited the Bushbank lately, it is probably a good idea if you do. The place is looking great with much work being done by Bec with the assistance of a very dedicated Green Corps team. Attractive walking tracks down to the Bushbank have been put in place and there are now some seats to stop and have a rest. The shed is looking splendid with the new bookshelves. The comfortable chairs around the table were intercepted on their way to the tip!

The volunteer watering roster has been re-activated now the warm, lengthy days are upon us. Once again with the help of the Green Corps Team and the volunteers, the tables and hothouses are starting to look like a great planting year for 2004.

Anne Davie

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## MEMBERSHIP

In response to our request for help, Moragh Mackay has volunteered to manage our membership list, generate labels for the newsletter, and initiate a program to attract new membership to PICS. Less than half of our current members live in Bass Coast — in other words, we have 70 members from our area. The rest are generally from the Melbourne metropolitan area or country Victoria. Since Bass Coast has about 23,000 residents, and since the work we do benefits a large percentage of them, it would be nice to have some help with regard to recruitment. We can all use the

would look as though we have some rich ground to cultivate! we can all see the increased pressures on the environment that our growing popularity is bringing. More members will help us with the work that we need to do, and spread the word about the importance of conservation to our future.

Please give Moragh you support and flood her with ideas for a great membership campaign!

Gillian Collins, Treasurer

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## OUT AT LAST!

YES! The 'Phillip Island and San Remo DESIGN FRAMEWORK' and the Urban Design Report — Appendix 'COWES FORESHORE PRECINCT' have been adopted (with various amendments) by the Bass Coast Shire Council.

Now the work begins for the Shire's Planning Department, so that the necessary changes can be made to the BASS COAST PLANNING SCHEME. Both documents are available at the Libraries in the Shire and at the Customer Service Centres.

PICS has purchased a copy (cost \$180) of each document and been given a copy on disc. Margaret Hancock (PH/FAX: 5952 2557) has the hard copy, and Margaret Johnson (PH: 9439 9853) has the disc copy that was kindly given to PICS by the Shire. The Design Framework and its Appendix will become our 'Planning Bible' for the next 10-20 years and will figure prominently at all Planning Tribunals.

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## PHILLIP ISLAND NATURE PARK NEWS

MARK MANTEIT, the new CEO of the P.I. Nature Park is continuing the policy, begun by his predecessor, RAY LIEVERS, of holding bi-monthly meetings with the various environmental groups on PI — PICS, FOK, WESBOC & FOCIS. The meetings are held on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of the EVEN MONTH at 4.30 pm in the Board Room at the Penguin Parade.

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday February 11, 2004**. If you would like to come to the meeting, or would like to have an issue raised, please contact Margaret Hancock or Margaret Johnson.

Items of interest from the December meeting were:

### APPOINTMENTS:

JOHN PLAXTON has been appointed COMMERCIAL MANAGER. John has had 20 years experience in retailing with 'Big W'. MATTHEW JACKSON is the new OPERATION MANAGER. Matthew comes from 'Kurumbin'. He is 35 years old, and had fourteen years experience in managing wildlife, including working at the San Diego Zoo.

JULIE THOMAS will continue as the Assistant Operations Manager. Gary Burns will concentrate on International Marketing, whilst a new person will be appointed to head Domestic Marketing.

SALLY O'NEILL is the new Communications Manager.

### RESEARCH:

SEALS: Esso has agreed to fund further SEAL RESEARCH projects with annual grants of \$55,000 for five years. This is a substantial increase on Esso's previous grants for seal research.

FOX ERADICATION: The PINP Board has allocated \$70,000 beginning at the end of February for additional research into fox eradication.

PENGUIN GENETICS: The PINP Board has allocated funding in cash and in kind for a PhD student from Deakin University to study the relationship between the penguin colonies at Wilson's Promontory, Phillip Island and St Kilda.

#### **KOALA CONSERVATION CENTRE:**

The new 'Koala Walk' is almost ready for its official opening. Six koalas are in residence and will soon be ready to receive visitors. At the eastern end of the Koala Walk there is a stunning view across the wetland to Western Port — take your binoculars (once it's open) for some interesting bird watching).

#### **NEW TELESCOPES FOR NOBBIES:**

Six new TELESCOPES are being installed at the Nobbies to replace the existing binoculars. The existing binoculars will be placed in other parts of the Nature Park including Conservation Hill/Rhyll Inlet walk. If you have any ideas about the BEST SITE please contact a PICS Committee member.

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### **PINP ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

You may remember the Press Release from Ministers Thwaites and Delahunty which was published in the September issue of *The Penguin* included this paragraph:

"In line with the previous management approach, one of the Board's first tasks will be to appoint a series of advisory committees, which may include members of the local community, to provide input to the Board on issues such as science and research, community, environment plus education and interpretation."

PICS nominee, Margaret Hancock has been accepted for the community committee, which will be chaired by Board member Stephen Davie.

PICS nominee PENNY MANNING has been accepted for the Education Committee, chaired by Stella Axarlis.

PICS nominee ROSE THOMAS has been accepted for the Environment Committee, chaired by Ann Keddie.

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### **'THE CLOCK CAFE' REVISITED**

*The story so far:* an Application for a three level building on the 'Clock Cafe' site, The Esplanade, Cowes, was approved by the Bass Coast Shire Council. A new Application for a FIVE level building was REFUSED by BCSC and PICS supported the Shire at the following VCAT hearing.

Recently an Application for a FOUR level building was refused by BCSC. So, off PICS goes to VCAT again to support the Shire's refusal of this Application! The Hearing will be held at VCAT, 55 King St, Melbourne, on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January at 10.00 am. Please come along to VCAT and give moral support to the members who will be speaking for PICS.

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<p><b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING &amp; ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS &amp; COMMITTEE</b></p>
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If you wish to stand for election, or to nominate someone else, the completed NOMINATION FORM **PLUS** the nominee's ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION must reach the PICS Secretary, P.O. Box 548, COWES, 3922 **by Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2004**, one week before the Annual General Meeting, to be held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2004, 8 pm, Heritage Centre, Cowes. Subscription and Nomination forms are the gold insert in this *Penguin*. Any queries, please ring Margaret Hancock: 5952 2557. Thank You.

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## PATERSON'S CURSE IN COWES

An observant PICS member, Hylton Hergt, has spotted *Paterson's Curse* growing in nature strips in Church St and nearby streets. This unwelcome return visitor in Cowes (it was here in the '80s) has been reported to the Shire and, hopefully, swift action has taken care of the problem. BUT — Please watch out! Weed invasions rarely happen in just one place!

It is likely that, as in the '80s, this infestation has been introduced with inferior feed brought in from anywhere and everywhere because of the drought. Fortunately, Phillip Island conditions don't seem to favour its wide-spread establishment, but we never know.

For interesting information on this weed, and biological methods of severe infestation control, Hylton suggests these web sites:

1. Stateline story: <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/act/content/2003/s980788.htm>
2. Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Tasmania, <http://www.dpiwe/tas.gov.au> go to Quarantine, Pests & Diseases
3. CSIRO, fascinating article on insects associated with Paterson's Curse:  
[www.eno.csiro.au/research/weedmgmt/weedsdespatch/despatchsix\\_seven.html](http://www.eno.csiro.au/research/weedmgmt/weedsdespatch/despatchsix_seven.html)
4. Victorian Dept of Primary Industries, Map Database:  
[www.nre.vic.gov.au](http://www.nre.vic.gov.au)

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## "...Government counts cost of Seal Rocks"

Extract from *The Age*, 21.11.03. By Angela O'Connor:

"Yesterday the Auditor-general's report tabled in State Parliament revealed that settling the dispute over the Seal Rocks center cost the State Government \$55.9 million. A total of \$42.9 million was paid to the centre's owner. Of this sum, \$37.3 million was awarded by an arbitrator appointed to settle the dispute and a further \$5.6 million was paid in costs. Legal fees of \$9.3 million were paid in the course of the dispute, which continued in the Supreme Court when the Government appealed against the arbitrator's award. A spokeswoman for the Environment Minister, John Thwaites, said most former staff had found jobs. "Of the 35 former staff, most have taken up positions with the Phillip Island Nature Park or found other employment," she said. The Government is still considering the building's future."

## Australia's estuaries at the click of a mouse

Geoscience Australia has developed an online resource — [www.ozestuaries.org](http://www.ozestuaries.org) — to provide interested people with comprehensive information about Australia's estuaries and coastal waterways. With approx 85% of the population living on the coast or in coastal catchments, the health of these environments is under increasing pressure due to associated impacts such as habitat loss and increased nutrient inputs.

Information on OzEstuaries includes:

- A condition assessment of almost 1,000 Australian waterways
- Models that illustrate the biophysical processes operating there
- Indicator Fact Sheets on biophysical health indicators, coastal issues and human pressure in coastal zone, economic and social impacts of a change, and management of important factors.
- And online GIS containing data for Australia's estuaries and oceans, including geomorphic habitats, estuary condition, colour composite satellite images, suspended solids, sea surface temperatures.
- Links page

OzEstuaries represents the collaborative efforts of more than 100 coastal scientists from a range of government agencies and universities.

*From: Waves (Natural Heritage Trust Marine & Coastal Community Network Newsletter) Spring 2003*

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## A Book of Phillip Island Walks

A new book about Phillip Island is being produced and members of the community are invited to participate. It is a book of walks titled *Exploring Phillip Island: A Collection of Natural and Historical Walks*. The book will include walks that highlight the island's unique natural environment and human history. Profits from the sale of the book will be donated to various non-profit groups on the island.

An unusual aspect of this book is that all walks will be written by different contributors who provide their own knowledge and personal perspective. The walks will vary from easy to more challenging and will include walks suitable for all age groups. All walks will follow the same format and will be selected by an Editorial Committee to ensure that the collection is varied and extensive.

The Committee and their contact numbers are: Diane and John Baird (9844 1471); Cathie Roby and Reg Elder (9439 9527); Penny Manning (5956 7586); and Phillip Island Landcare (5952 5403). There is a form available to guide contributors in writing up their walks and any member of the Committee will be happy to discuss details with you.

We encourage contributors to submit their walks as soon as possible, but no later than Wednesday, 17 March 2004. We look forward to your involvement in this project.

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## YOUR PICS COMMITTEE

The PICS Committee, elected at the last AGM, meets once a month to discuss issues of immediate concern to conservation on Phillip Island. These meetings are very informative and challenging. Members are welcome to attend at 8 pm on the first Friday of each month in either the Heritage Centre or Cultural Centre, Cowes.

**The elected committee for 2003 is:**

<b>President</b>	Margaret Hancock (Ph/Fax 5952-2557)
<b>Senior Vice President</b>	Rose Thomas
<b>Secretary</b>	Margaret Johnson
<b>Minutes Secretary</b>	Bruce Howe
<b>Treasurer</b>	Gillian Collins (Ph 5956 8840)
<b>Other Members</b>	Anne Davie, Penny Manning, Greg Johnson, John Jansson, Julie Box, Pauline Taylor
<b>Other PICS Responsibilities:</b>	
<b>Newsletter</b>	Christine Grayden/John Eddy (Ph 5956 8501; Fax 5956 8314; <a href="mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au">cgrayden@waterfront.net.au</a> )
<b>Meeting notices and publicity</b>	Rose Thomas
<b>Ventnor Public Land Committee</b>	Gillian Collins
<b>Red Rocks Coast Action Project</b>	Gillian Collins
<b>South Coast Walking Track</b>	Penny Manning
<b>Bike Paths</b>	Penny Manning
<b>Friends of Churchill Island Liaison</b>	Julie Box
<b>Barb Martin Bushbank Liaison</b>	Anne Davie
<b>Membership Officer</b>	Morag Mackay (Ph 5678 2240)
<b>Landcare Salinity Committee</b>	John Jansson
<b>Website Manager</b>	Diane Baird ( <a href="mailto:dianeбайд@yahoo.com">dianeбайд@yahoo.com</a> )
<b>Grant Investigation</b>	Tim Patkin

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## And also

The hard copy of our newsletter contains some items that may not be included in the online version. The PICS newsletter is available at the Phillip Island Library.

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