

**“The Penguin”
Newsletter**
Fourth Quarter: December 2013



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Editors: Christine Grayden & John Eddy
New website: www.picsvictoria.org.au
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Dates for Your Diary 2013-2014

Sat 11th January 2014: “Animals of Oz” with Dr of Zoology, Lee. Two sessions: 10-10.50; 11-11.50. Free. Funded by Bass Coast Shire. Australian animals, birds and reptiles in a controlled, educational environment.
Sat 11 January 2014: **AGM**: 6.30 p.m. bring and share meal. 7.30 p.m. meeting. Annual reports; election of office bearers.

Sun 12 January **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee** Clean up and sea spurge control. Meet at car park 10 a.m. Refreshments available. Enquiries John Eddy 5956 8501 e cgrayden@waterfront.net.au

NB: We are trying to get Mike Lean, CEO of Port of Hastings Development Authority, as a speaker over January, but cannot confirm this as yet. Please see our website, Facebook page and local newspapers for further information later on.

Sat 12 April **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Heritage Centre Meeting room, 89 Thompson Ave Cowes. 7.30 p.m. start. Speaker TBA. All welcome. Followed by supper and chat.

Sun 13 April **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee**: weed control. Details as per 12 January.

Sunday 1 June **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 12 January

Sat 5 July: **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Details as per 12 April.

Sunday 6 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 12 January

Sunday 13 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 12 January

Sunday 28 Sep **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee**. Weed control. Details as per 12 January

Sat 4 Oct **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Details as per 12 April.

Sat 10 Jan 2015 **AGM**.

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

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

Groundswell Bass Coast Climate Change action group: <http://groundswellbasscoast.com> Neil Rankine 5672 1185 neilnola@netspace.net.au

Bird Life Bass Coast: Penny Manning, convener, donpenma@waterfront.net.au ph 5956 7586

<p>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: SAT 11 JANUARY 2014 PARISH HALL, Cnr Church St & Thompson Ave COWES Bring and share meal 6.30 AGM 7.30 p.m. Annual Reports; Election of office bearers. All welcome!</p>

PICS COMMITTEE 2013

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: Gillian Collins

Treasurer: Danielle Angel

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

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,

The last Newsletter for 2013! And always a thank-you to Christine and John for putting it all together for the 4 PICS issues a year.

The environment continues to dominate the local, State and Federal landscape and most often for the wrong reasons. The Napthine Government's Report Card on the environment, released last week, is not good. It is also of much concern that the urgency of Climate Change is not being addressed by the Federal government. And disappointment that Australia was not represented at government level at the recent international climate talks in Warsaw. Mike Cleeland, was the PICS speaker at a Climate presentation in Cowes on the national climate day event in Australia, last month.

PICS held a Special General Meeting on November 16th to pass changes to the Constitution, and new Model Rules and requirements by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

A successful Meet The Candidates forum, for the Federal Election, was held on August 30th and was well attended. PICS was the host to the Bass Coast Shire Environment Group in September at the Koala Conservation Centre. Nineteen people attended and had a great day walking through the KCC and the Barb Martin Bushbank. Bass Coast funded the meal provided by PINP (who gave us the Chisholm Room and free entry into KCC) and the day was very informative, learning of the activities of the other groups.



Environment group get together.

Penny Manning, Margaret Hancock and I continue to meet with a Bass Coast Planner every 2 months.

Some PICS members went to the presentation of the new Victorian Coastal Strategy in San Remo recently. We were very disappointed in the lack of strength of the document, its observations and recommendations. Also as it has no status as a referral document. Christine has submitted a strong response on behalf of PICS.

The Port Of Hastings Development Authority [POH], held a presentation of the proposal in the Heritage Centre, Cowes, recently. Community members were encouraged to visit the Display and speak with POH personnel. At the Community Forum, initiated this year by Cr Phil Wright and Mary Whelan from the South Coast communities, Mike Lean, CEO of POH was invited to talk about the project. I spoke on behalf of PICS, highlighting the 50 years of our commitment to the welfare of the Bay. Of course our greatest concerns are the potential oil spills and the effect of the dredging on tide flows, resulting in serious impact on the coast-line. This issue is the big one!

Wishing everyone a Joyous Christmas. Hope to see you at the AGM on January 11.

Anne Davie



PLANNING UPDATE

We come to the end of 2013 with two big planning issues which have a long way to run.

Firstly, the extension of the eastern Cowes township boundary from the western side of Cogland Road to the east – to embrace the Noonan property, which includes the “Lechte Land”; the higher ground which was the site for a proposed housing development. The Planning Panels Victoria report for Amedment C112 had supported the extension of the township boundary, but at the November Bass Coast Shire Council meeting, which was well managed by the newly elected Mayor, Cr Rankine, the councilors rejected the recommendation. Cr Phillips of Thompson Ward withdrew as he had an interest in the matter, so there were six councilors left to make the decision. Crs le Serve and Drew spoke and voted in favour of accepting the Panel’s recommendation, while Crs Wright, Crugnale and Brown spoke and voted against. By now, the council’s rejection of the Panel recommendation is with the Victorian Minister for Planning, who has the power to accept or reject the council’s decision – we we await news from Spring Street!

The Port of Hastings development has been bubbling along in the background since the days of Henry Bolte’s “Little Ruhr”! The current proposal for a large container port is in the early stages of development. *Any* port development brings with it enormous risks to the environment of Western Port, so please find out all that you can, and be ready to take a full part in the debate which is just beginning. We will soon be seeing the jack-up barge taking borehole samples in Western Port. If nothing else, this should trigger public awareness of ‘something going on’.



An updated draft Victorian Coastal Strategy has recently been released. It is a very comforting document – full of good ideas and aspirations – and of very little use, as it has no legal standing in planning matters! We can only hope that it will be the basis for changes to existing legislation.

Margaret Hancock

RED ROCKS COASTCARE

Control of troublesome and persistent weeds continued to be the focus of our working bees in late September and mid-November. Blue Periwinkle re-growth was again the main target, as we employed herbicide dabbers on the fresh green shoots. This is an effective but tedious method, and required painstaking searching through thick undergrowth and fallen limbs, but we are winning. We also continued hand-pulling of Sea Spurge and control of Spear Thistle and Slender Thistle. Thanks to Patsy, Maurice, Ross, Marilyn, Sue, Bruno, Gary, Mark, Robert, Robyn, Daryl, Jan, John and Mike. Our working bees continue to be well-attended.

During October, Dave Martin from Bass Coast Shire Council also arranged for contractors to spray patches of Blue Periwinkle regrowth that were too big for us to tackle manually. We much appreciate Dave's support.

Fifty wire tree guards, each 110 cm high to fend off wallabies, have been assembled, and some have been put in place around Sweet Bursaria plants established this year. The rest will be used in next year's planting. This project was funded by a Discretionary Fund allocation from Cr Kimberley Brown.

Plants established this year continue to thrive, due to welcome late Spring and early Summer rain. However, as always, the coming summer months will be the real test.

Beach fires have again become a concern, with several fires being noted during "Schoolies" weeks. Police were informed and agreed to some patrolling of the area.

To our delight, Hooded Plovers at Red Rocks have hatched out three chicks. So far they are doing well, but it will be after the hectic Christmas/New Year period before they are fledged. Hopefully, the local community, especially the dog-walkers, will again be supportive of our efforts to protect them.

Funds provided for the revegetation of nearby Bayview Park, again from Cr Brown's discretionary fund, have been finally spent, with the reservation of 70 plants at the Barb Martin Bush Bank for next year's planting. That will follow the further removal of *Pittosporum* from the site.

John Eddy, RRCC Co-coordinator.

Research by Students at PINP

Although only a handful of research staff work at Phillip Island Nature Parks, a power of research is done there, thanks to the dedication of staff in supervising many students each year. Here is the student research currently being done:

PostDoc

Dr Ilka Zimmer. Effect of age and experience on the diving behaviour of Little Penguins. (Postdoc., Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien, Strasbourg, France) (André Chiaradia and Yan Ropert-Coudert)

PhD

Natalie Sheppard. Foraging ecology and spatial dynamics of the Hooded Plover on Phillip Island: an obligate, beach-dwelling shorebird. (Deakin Uni., Burwood) (Peter Dann & Mike Weston)

Marcus Salton. The influence of oceanographic profiles on foraging behaviour of fur seals. (Macquarie Uni.) (Roger Kirkwood & Rob Harcourt, David Slip)

Annett Finger. Trace metals in Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor* populations along the Victorian coastline of Australia. (Victoria Uni., St Albans) (Peter Dann & Carol Scarpaci).

Nicole Kowalczak. Trophic interactions of little penguins at St Kilda: predator-prey relationships in a limited foraging zone and a specialised diet. (Monash Uni.) (André Chiaradia & Richard Reina)

Laure Pelletier. The thermal structure of the water column in the foraging zone of little penguins: influence of stratified waters on hunting efficiency and breeding success at Phillip Island. (PhD, Universite de Strasbourg, France) (André Chiaradia & Yan Ropert-Coudert)

Tania Billing. Evolutionary ecology of Little Penguins. (Uni. of Melbourne) (Peter Dann & Raoul Mulder)

Jennyffer Cruz. Effect of predation and resource availability on western brushtail possums. (Uni. of Queensland) (Duncan Sutherland, Luke Leung, Paul de Tores & Nicky Marlow)

Megan Dewar. Gastrointestinal microflora of seabirds: phylogenetic and dietary relationships. (Deakin Uni.) (Peter Dann, John Arnould & Stuart Smith)

Kasup Munaweera. Development of improved pre-conditioning agents for the removal of oil contamination from wildlife and rocky foreshores. (Victoria Uni.) (Peter Dann & John Orbell)

Nicole Schumann. Resource partitioning among breeding seabirds in Bass Strait. (Deakin Uni.) (Peter Dann & John Arnould)

Jakub Stoklosa. Estimation of population size and demographic parameters on various capture-recapture datasets. (Uni. of Melbourne) (Peter Dann & Richard Huggins)

Kasun Ekanayake. The potential of Little Raven (*Corvus mellori*) as predators of bird eggs. (Deakin Uni.) (Duncan Sutherland, Peter Dann & Mike Weston)

Masters

Billie Ganendran. Climatic factors and Little Penguin survival in Bass Strait. (MPhil, Australian Defence force Academy at University of New South Wales, Canberra)

Mary Cowling. Responses of New Zealand fur seals to boat approaches. (Victoria Uni.) (Roger Kirkwood & Carol Scarpaci)



Honours

Lauren Angel. The foraging ecology of little penguins in relation to the Bonney Upwelling in western Bass Strait. (Deakin Uni.) (Peter Dann & John Arnould)

Adam Cardilini. Parental care and breeding ecology in the Masked Lapwing. (Deakin Uni.) (Peter Dann, Mike Weston & Craig Sherman)

Daniel Lees. Responses to human approaches in the Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*. (Deakin Uni., Peter Dann & Mike Weston)

Lachlan McLean. Impacts of sea level change on Australian fur seals. (Deakin Uni.) (Roger Kirkwood & John Arnould)

We know that having records as far back as the 1960s of our Little Penguins is invaluable and a record-breaking research effort, but PINP research team's importance in mentoring our next generation of researchers is equally important. PICS values the great work they do!

facebook

Have you been on the PICS facebook page yet? Over 200 people a week visit to catch up with Phillip Island environment news, and all the PICS action, including Red Rocks Coast Care photos and information. Find us at <http://www.facebook.com/picsvictoria>

PICS WEBSITE

Our 'new' website, put together by c/ee member Steve Angel, is taking shape and is always worth a visit. Soon everyone will receive their membership subscriptions, which are due in January each year. Now you can pay securely online on the PICS website with Paypal. Go to www.picsvictoria.org.au

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY
Minutes of the General Meeting held Saturday 5th October 2013
Heritage Centre Meeting room, Cowes, 7.40 p.m.

1. Present: as per attendance book
2. Apologies: as per attendance book
3. The President acknowledged indigenous elders past and present and welcome members.
4. Minutes of the previous meeting held Sat 6th July 2013. Margaret Hancock/Pauline Taylor. *Carried.*
5. Matters arising:
 - a) Fires on Beaches: Anne will ask at the next council meeting on 16.10.13
 - b) Illegal paling fences at Shearwater Estate. Shire endeavoring to enforce regulations, but the wording of the S173 agreement is difficult.
 - c) C132 – Planning Panels Victoria recommended the rezoning proceeds. Very disappointing. Now will proceed to BCSC in November. Need to lobby councilors.
 - d) The Bass Coast Shire Environment Groups Get together was held at the KCC Sat 14 Sep, hosted by PICS. 19 people attended representing groups across Bass Coast. PINP gave us the Chisholm Room and entry to KCC for free. BCSC funded the afternoon tea. A most successful day.
 - e) Christine and John attended the Victorian Coastal awards, as John had been nominated for outstanding individual. He did not win, but they had a good night, with PINP winning one award and South Gippsland Conservation Society being finalists in two others. The draft Victorian Coastal Strategy was launched. PICS will respond.
 - f) Meet the Candidates forum was held for the federal election with a room full of people and seven of the ten candidates. Very successful event.
6. Correspondence:

Inwards:
Draft Victorian Coastal Strategy 2013
Invitation to attend information session on Coastal Strategy. San Remo Silverwater, 21 Oct, 6-7 p.m.
Rod Quantock event for Groundswell. Wonthaggi Arts Centre, Oct 31, 7.30 p.m. \$25/\$15
2013 Community Grants presentation invitation, Mon 30 Sep, Kilcunda. Report.
Victorian National Parks Association joint statement in response to the Native Vegetation Policy
Rural land use strategy overview from BCSC's web page
From Steve Angel on new website

Outwards:
Western Port Biosphere Growing Connections grant application \$6,250, revegetation at Saltwater Creek reserve.
Sun, Surf and Sand entries: Animals of Oz and AGM, both Sat 11 Jan, 2014
"That the correspondence be accepted." John Eddy/Michaela Wright *Carried.*
7. Treasurer's Report:

The report had been emailed by Dani Angel, Treasurer, and was presented by Christine Grayden. "That the treasurer's report be accepted"
Christine Grayden/Margaret Hancock *Carried.*
8. General Business:
 - a) Constitution/Model Rules: There is a new Incorporations Act and a new set of Model Rules which we have to conform with. Christine, Anne, Pauline and Margaret met prior to this meeting this evening to decide what to include in the new Model Rules to create a new constitution for PICS. The changes have been decided on and will be sent out to members in the near future. A Special General Meeting will be held on Sat 16 Nov to determine whether members accept the new constitution.
 - b) Bob and Anne have joined the Climate Council. "that PICS make a \$50 donation in order to be sent up to date information from the Climate Council". Margaret Hancock/John Eddy *Carried.*
 - c) Last Thursday Anne, Margaret, John and Michaela Wright met with Raoul Humbert to discuss siting of a bridge and bike track at Saltwater Creek. There is a problem on the south bank where John Anderson has "acquired" public land. Margaret is in touch with the Environment Defenders Office on how to resume land that's been annexed.

- d) Anne and Margaret have been consulted by Phoebe Harrison with regard to PICS and Matthew Guy's actions re the Ventnor Cadogan land episode.
- e) Barb Martin Bush Bank had its 15th birthday recently.
- f) Bob Baird spoke about C132. He felt that at the PPV hearing PICS should have pushed for the area to be a conservation zone. The golf club has an overdraft of \$150,000, but they still have to get 75% of members to agree with the development for it to go ahead. Developing of the greens etc is estimated to cost \$1.2-1.3m. PICS reps at PPV felt that PINP should have been there the whole time, or at least for the expert witnesses. PPV described PICS and FOK submissions as "erudite". Bob reported that Rhyll Inlet is ideal feeding habitat for the Orange Bellied Parrot, which is the rarest parrot on the planet.
- "Should the opportunity arise for objectors to put their case again, PICS will approach PINP to determine which group will speak about which aspects". Margaret Hancock/Pauline Taylor *Carried.*

Red Rocks Coast Care report – John Eddy, co-coordinator

A spring working bee was held last Sunday with 14 people working on control of regrowth of Blue Periwinkle. Can't spray so used dabbers with herbicide. Need to keep on top of this problem. Tomorrow an 'elite' group is coming to John and Christine's house to construct wire tree guards, particularly for Sweet Bursaria protection from wallabies. 45 guards X 110cm high. Long life wire netting with 20 year life.

The meeting was followed by a viewing of the video The Story of Stuff, which outlines the processes involved in extraction, manufacture, distribution, retail and disposal, including how poor countries are plundered for resources and their workers are grossly underpaid to make cheap items for the developed world. To view this and other anti-consumerist videos go to www.storyofstuff.org

Meeting closed 9.00 p.m.

Next General/Annual General Meeting: Saturday 11th January, 7.30 p.m., Parish Hall, Cowes.

CLIMATE CHANGE TALK

Mike Cleeland's Review of Climate Change Data:

To mark Climate Change Action Day on 17 November, PICS member and environmental educator Mike Cleeland gave an excellent presentation reviewing up-to-date research on Climate change. Summarised mostly in graphical form, the detailed slide show was inspired by Mike's geology background and his frustration at the 'extremists' on both sides of the climate debate.

The presentation included the following sets of data:

- CO₂ content of the air at Cape Grim Tasmania (consider the Earth's best-mixed air)
- Atmospheric CO₂ changes over the geological time scale
- Geological event known as the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (55 million years ago)
- Global temperature since 1860
- Satellite data since 1955
- Global temperature trends adjusted for The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), volcanic activity and the Solar cycle
- Temperature trends over the past 10,000 years
- Temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere compared with the Southern Hemisphere
- Corrected global temperature allowing for the relatively few temperature measuring sites in the Arctic and Antarctic regions
- Ocean heat content trends
- Trends in average cyclone energy
- Sunspot cycle and Solar Irradiance
- Cooling effects of aerosols and soot
- CFC's in the atmosphere



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Phillip Island Conservation Society, Inc.

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Climate talk continued...

- Decline in polar ice caps and glaciers
- Temperatures across Australia since 1950
- Sea level rises
- Ocean CO₂ content and changing acidity

Mike concluded that the overwhelming proportion of the data supports the reality of global warming, and the alarming rate at which it is occurring. There also seems little doubt this is man-made climate change, but what sort of future we are heading to is not so clear.

John Eddy



Some of the attendees at the climate talk, with Mike Cleeland centre rear. Bernie and Ray had just returned from the Melbourne rally.