

Second Quarter: June 2014

## Dates for Your Diary 2014-2015

Sat 5 July: **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m Speaker: PINP research scientist Bec MacIntosh will tell us about "Australia's charismatic otariids: fur seals and sea lions". Heritage Centre Meeting Room, 89 Thompson Ave Cowes. Speaker first, then meeting, then supper. All welcome. Free.

Sunday 6 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Meet at Red Rocks car park 10 a.m. Refreshments and equipment provided. All welcome. Enqs: John Eddy h ph 5956 8501 e: [cgrayden@waterfront.net.au](mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au)

Sunday 13 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per July 6.

Saturday July 26 – 3<sup>rd</sup> August: **John Adam exhibition**: "Phillip Island and Western Port", Seraghi Art Space, Cafe Laguna, Thompson Ave Cowes, in support of PWP.

Sunday 27 July **National Tree Day. Saltwater Creek Coast Care planting day** End of Hayley Ave. Meet at the walking track there 10 a.m. Enqs: Kevin Harris: [Kevin@grating.com.au](mailto:Kevin@grating.com.au) refreshments and equipment provided.

Sunday 10 August: **Community tree planting day**: north side of Saltwater Creek. Meet near WPWB building in Settlement Rd 10 a.m. Equipment supplied, but wear sturdy footwear. Finish about 12 noon with lunch and cuppa supplied. If you are attending, please RSVP to Christine ph 5956 8501 or e: [cgrayden@waterfront.net.au](mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au)

Sunday 28 Sep **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee**. Weed control. Details as per July 6

Sat 4 Oct **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Speaker TBA. Venue details as per 5 July.

Sat 10 Jan 2015 **AGM**.

**Enquiries**: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 m 0400 900 612 e: [cgrayden@waterfront.net.au](mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au)

**Sub-committees of PICS**:

**Preserve Western Port Action Group** (against the Port of Hastings): [preservewesternport@gmail.com](mailto:preservewesternport@gmail.com) Official phone number is: 0456 612 852 Facebook: Preserve Western Port Action Group. Media contact: Jeff Nottall [nottall@bigpond.net.au](mailto:nottall@bigpond.net.au) Secretary: Kate 0409 692 425.

**Red Rocks Coast Care**: contact details see diary.

**Saltwater Creek Coast Care**: Co-ordinator is Kevin Harris [kevin@grating.com.au](mailto:kevin@grating.com.au)

**Other groups**:

**Barb Martin Bush Bank**: Sales and volunteers – every Wednesday + 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:webmaster@friendsofchurchillisland.org.au)

**Groundswell** Bass Coast Climate Change action group: <http://groundswellbasscoast.com> Contact Ray Astbury: [rugged@people.net.au](mailto:rugged@people.net.au) phone 5952 1991.

**Bird Life Bass Coast**: Penny Manning, convener, [donpenma@waterfront.net.au](mailto:donpenma@waterfront.net.au) ph 5956 7586

### PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC

#### GENERAL MEETING

Saturday July 5<sup>th</sup>, 7.30 p.m., Heritage Centre meeting room,  
89 Thompson Ave Cowes.

*PINP's Bec McIntosh will speak on "Australia's charismatic otariids: fur seals and sea lions"*



All welcome – stay after for supper and a chat!

## **PICS COMMITTEE 2014**

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, Lisa Schonberg

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

### ***President's Letter to Members***

Further to the PICS Public Meeting held in Cowes on March 22<sup>nd</sup> as a result of concern about the impact of the proposed expansion of the Port of Hastings [POH] on Phillip Island, the Preserve Western Port Action Group [PWP] is now an extremely active and dedicated sub-committee of PICS.

The Chairman is Jeff Nottle and the Group has met weekly until recently, and now every 2 weeks in St Philip's Meeting Room. There are 6 Working Groups: A Stakeholder Group, Merchandise, Port Logistics, Communications, Key Issues and Events. An Issues Report is being produced. John Adam, acclaimed local artist, will hold an Exhibition at the Saraghi Gallery in Cowes from July 26<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Other artists have offered to display their work. The Exhibition is titled: *Phillip Island and Western port*.

On May 25<sup>th</sup> PWP and WPPPC [Western Port and Peninsula Protection Council] undertook a Tide-Master Tour of Western Port. Lisa Schonberg, PICS and PWP committee member, took some wonderful photos of tidal flats etc which will be used in media releases.

The Bass Coast Council has approved funding of \$5,000 for a study by internationally acclaimed researchers into the impact of the proposed POH. The crucial study will be undertaken by Professor Costanza and Dr Ida Kubiszewski from the ANU.



PWP has held Information Stalls in the last few months and has undertaken ongoing media releases with regard to the issue. There is widespread community support. The Message is: Stop The Port of Hastings – an economic and environmental disaster.

For the second year PICS sponsored an Award at the Artists Society of Phillip Island Easter Exhibition for the Best Art work celebrating the natural environment of Phillip Island and Churchill Island. The winner was Diana Edwards painting titled: Magic Wetlands.

*Anne Davie.*

### ***Red Rocks Coast Care***

1. A well-attended working bee was held on 13<sup>th</sup> April. We sought out and dug up the few remnant Blue Periwinkle plants we could find. Sea spurge was also removed from the Hooded Plover refuge area, which had been inaccessible to us over summer due to the birds breeding. In addition, 14 more guards were installed around Sweet Bursaria and Moonah plants put in last year. The benefit of the 8 guards we installed last year is now dramatically evident, as wallabies have heavily grazed unguarded Bursaria plants.

2. A few of us took part in an informal Spurgebusters outing on 21<sup>st</sup> April, pulling up some of the many thousands of sea spurge seedlings still present west of Justice Rd. There is still much to do, but the risk of a large seed set this year has been averted.

3. Our scheduled early planting day on 1<sup>st</sup> June was cancelled due to lack of rain up til then. Soil moisture conditions have improved since. Our planting day will now be 6<sup>th</sup> July, with 13<sup>th</sup> July also scheduled if needed. We have planned to put in 500 plants, mainly on areas cleared of Blue Periwinkle. Hope to see as many as possible there to help us, starting from the Red Rocks carpark at 10am.      *John Eddy.*

## *Saltwater Creek Coast Care*

Saltwater Coast Care is a newly formed group looking after the coastal area from Anchorage road to Penguin Rock. It is such a beautiful & peaceful part of the Island so we want to look after and preserve it. We are only a small, but enthusiastic, group so keen to encourage more people in the area to help us out.

We will be planting, weeding, picking up rubbish so anyone can help out..... jobs for everyone!!

Our first planting day will be on Sunday July 27<sup>th</sup> (National Tree Day), 10.00 – 12.00. Meet at 10.00 at the entrance to the beach access track towards the end of Heyley Ave, Ventnor.

Equipment supplied, we just need helpers.



For more information or queries, please contact:

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Kevin Harris

0418507355 ( you can also ring this no. if you arrive a bit late and can't find us!!)

[kevin@grating.com.au](mailto:kevin@grating.com.au)

## **Facebook**

Have you been on the PICS facebook page yet? Over 300 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 & SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Our website, put together by c/ee member Steve Angel, is taking shape and is always worth a visit. Thanks to everyone who has already paid their subscriptions. If you haven't yet, we look forward to receiving your subs soon. Remember, now you can pay and make donations securely online on the PICS website with Paypal. Go to [www.picsvictoria.org.au](http://www.picsvictoria.org.au) Donations of \$2 or more to the Public Fund are tax deductible. You will be sent a tax deductible receipt and letter from one of the signatories to the Public Fund.

## *Oil Spill Simulation*

Over 70 participants, including volunteers and staff from Phillip Island Nature Parks, completed a field training exercise on May 21 and 22 to test oiled wildlife response capabilities.

The exercise, dubbed *Exercise Pinguino*, was phase 2 of training designed to enhance Phillip Island Nature Parks' staff and volunteer capabilities in responding to a marine pollution event.

Phase 2 of *Exercise Pinguino* involved a simulated field exercise that tested the activation of volunteer networks, Wildlife Clinic operations and business continuity plans in a mock oil spill scenario using model penguins. Participants rescued fake oiled penguins from several beaches across Summerland Peninsula and then enacted rehabilitation techniques, including washing, to be used in the event of a real oil spill. The training was designed to activate and assess the Nature Parks' Oil Spill Contingency Plan and will assist in further improving and developing oiled wildlife response procedures.

Scott-Andrew Smith from Kirkham-Smith Consultants facilitated *Exercise Pinguino*, with sponsorship provided by the Penguin Foundation, ExxonMobil Australia and Department of



Environment and Primary Industries. Partner agencies involved in the exercise included Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure, Patrick Ports, Bass Coast Shire Council, Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre, Port of Hastings, Parks Victoria, Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Esso.

*Media Release from Phillip Island Nature Park.*

### ***Vegetation Maintenance along Cowes-Rhyll Road***

The Shire Council plans to cut back vegetation encroaching on Rhyll-Cowes Rd in the vicinity of Conservation Hill. I recently looked at the area to be affected with Bass Coast Shire Roads Coordinator, Daryl Major. He explained that he wants to use a special machine for this operation. It consists of a mulching head on an arm that comes down vertically from above the vegetation, leaving mulched branches and leaves as a layer on the ground, and a much neater finish. The result is much more visually acceptable than that left by a flail-type machine which produces torn ends of branches looking untidy and ugly.

This maintenance work is necessary to permit safe vehicle movement along the road, and will also assist drivers to see wallabies which are so common along this section of road, and often hit by cars.

The work, to be undertaken over the next month or two, will mainly target Swamp Paperbark and other shrubs growing within 2 – 3 metres of the pavement, and will not involve existing eucalypt trees. Daryl wanted PICS members to be aware of what is to happen as this section of roadside is of high conservation value. *John Eddy.*



*Cowes-Rhyll Rd showing vegetation too close to the edge of the road – a danger to motorists and wildlife.*

### ***Phillip Island – Stand Alone***

Melbourne members may not be aware that there is currently a move by various members of the Phillip Island community to revert to the Shire of Phillip Island. A public meeting on the issue was held recently and over 1,000 people attended to hear a report on how money was spent by geographic area in Bass Coast Shire in the last 12 months, which showed a bias towards capital works expenditure in other parts of the shire. The meeting felt this was unfair, since Phillip Island contributes almost half of the rate base. The Mayor, Neil Rankine, explained however that a 12 month overview was insufficient as councils do not work on that time frame, and that a five year review would have revealed a different story. A Phillip Island Progress Association (Stand Alone) has been formed to pursue a review of the shire and determine if a Phillip Island Shire Council would be

viable. PICS committee does not have a view at this stage on this issue, but of course whatever eventuates, good planning and care of the environment is foremost in our priorities. *Christine Grayden.*

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC  
MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING 12.4.2014, 7.30 p.m.,  
Heritage Centre Meeting Room, Cowes.

PRESENT: As per attendance book

APOLOGIES: As per attendance book

WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY given by President Anne Davie.

SPEAKERS: Melanie Wright and Bernie McComb

Melanie spoke of her recent experience visiting Cuba with CERES to see how the population there had survived peak oil. The trip was a real eye-opener for Melanie as Cuba is a communist country where everyone gets paid exactly the same low salary supplemented by rations, free health care and free education. Bernie spoke about CERES in Melbourne and several similar though much larger set ups in the UK. Bernie has a vision that a type of CERES could be established on Phillip Island and be a major tourist attraction whilst contributing to the island's sustainability.

After they had spoken, Ryan Wright told us of his contract in the Pacific from PNG to Tahiti, funded by EU and UNESCO, to deliver spatial planning of the area for SPREP: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program.

VOTE OF THANKS: Anne gave the vote of thanks saying how inspiring each of the speakers was and how much we learnt from each of them.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 11.1.2014 (Distributed in March newsletter) Margaret Hancock/Steve Angel *Carried.*

MATTERS ARISING:

1. Fires on Beaches – awaiting BCSC and Gippsland region police response.
2. 'Unloved' land along south coast – nothing to report.
3. New group re Port of Hastings – Preserve Western Port formed. Discussion ensued about PWP being a sub/ee of PICS, with various points in favour and against discussed. The issue of PICS not having public liability insurance was considered a stumbling block and will be investigated. It is possible that one-off pl insurance could be purchased for individual events. Also, according to the PICS constitution, subcommittee members need to be PICS members.  
"That PWP become a subcommittee of PICS on the understanding that PWP members become PICS members and that PWP purchase public liability insurance for one-off events through PICS. PWP to keep their own records and one PWP person to be authorised to deal with the PICS treasurer for PWP accounts. These arrangements to be reviewed at end 2014." Steve Angel/Margaret Hancock. *Carried (not unanimously)*  
Anne and Margaret will take this motion and our concerns to the next PWP meeting.
4. Hot Springs development – nothing further
5. Green waste collection – wrote to BCSC CEO. No response yet.
6. PINP Key Area Plan south coast – nothing further.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Inwards:

Artists Society of Phillip Island re: PICS sponsoring a prize in the Easter Exhibition.

Dagmar Andersen, Acting Inspector, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Chief Commissioner re our letter re fires on Beaches. Referred to Eastern Region.

John Eddy (PICS member) letter regarding PWP being sub/cee of PICS.

Environment Victoria – membership renewal notice

Environment Victoria – petition to “Move Beyond Coal”

Emails regarding Preserve Western Port being a subcommittee of PICS from:

Penny Manning, Gillian Collins, Anne Davie and Dani Angel.

Newsletters:

Bass Coast Shire Council: Coastell Autumn 2014

Silverleaves conservation association: March 2014

Nepean conservation news: March 2014

South Gippsland Conservation Society Inc, March 2014

Environment Victoria: Green Action News Autumn 2014

Australian Conservation Foundation: Habitat, Vol 42, No.2, April 2014

Smiths Beachcomber Asscn Autumn 2014

Notice of Working Bee and Food Swap, PICAL Cowes community Garden, Sun 4 May 10.30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.

Document: Alison Oates Vegetation Survey of Saltwater Creek to Penguin Rocks Foreshore (commissioned and funded by PICS).

#### Outwards:

Consumer Affairs Victoria: enclosing annual statement for year ending 31.12.13

Hon Mr Daniel Andrews, Leader of Opposition re: motion moved at PICS Port of Hastings Forum

Hon Dr Denis Napthine, Premier of Victoria re: motion moved at PICS Port of Hastings Forum

BCSC CEO Paul Buckley re: fires on beaches

Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay re fires on beaches, enclosing copy of letter to BCSC CEO

BCSC CEO Paul Buckley re: green waste kerbside collection trial.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Presented in Dani Angel’s absence by Steve Angel. “That the Treasurer’s report be accepted.” Steve Angel/John Eddy *Carried.*

#### GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. Planning Matters - Developers can now purchase both the Continental and the Isle of Wight Site as one ‘job lot’.

2. Red Rocks Coast Care report and working bee, Sunday April 13. John Eddy gave a quarterly report.

MEETING CLOSE: 9.43 p.m.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING: Sat, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2014, Heritage Centre meeting room, Cowes. 7.30 p.m. Speaker

Rebecca McIntosh on seal research. *BELOW: Lisa Schonberg’s beautiful photo of a seal cow feeding her pup.*





## A Cuban perspective and a vision for Phillip Island

At our last general meeting our two speakers presented us with plenty to think about! Our first speaker, Cr Phil and Irene Wright's daughter Melanie, showed a Power Point, telling us about a trip she did to Cuba with CERES to learn about Cuba's experience of Peak Oil and how they overcame their seemingly chronic food shortage with permaculture. Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba had totally industrialised agriculture, using herbicides, pesticides, broad acre monoculture plantings and harvesting by giant, diesel-guzzling tractors (so like Australia now!). All that stopped when trade stopped and Cubans suddenly could not grow or import food and went from eating 3,000 to 1,000 kilojoules per day. The average Cuban lost 20 kg during this crisis period. They eventually solved the problem with the help of Australian Permaculture inventor Bill Mollison. Now, every available nook and cranny supports the growing of food. Cuba now has huge amounts of urban agriculture that is completely pesticide-free and processed food is a rarity. Ironically, it has become such an ingrained way of life for the Cubans that they couldn't really understand the Australian visitors' keen interest!

Melanie showed us slides of an amazing area known as Las Terrezas – The Terraces, a huge area of land which had been basically trashed – stripped of all natural resources and the people living there reduced to poverty in the days before the Cuban revolution. The government and the people decided to revitalise the area and over a period of years planted eight million trees over 5,000 hectares, including 500 plant species. The area is now famous for 117 species of birds and 13 species of bats and is a major drawcard for visitors. A museum on the site shows graphic before and after images – Las Terrezas must surely serve as an inspiration to all of us when we look at, for example, Indonesian rainforest areas stripped to grow palm oil, or for illegal logging.

Our second speaker, Bernie McComb from Groundswell climate action group, gave us a Power Point talk about CERES - CERES is a not for profit educational organisation located on 4 hectares of rehabilitated landfill in East Brunswick, Melbourne. CERES stands for Centre for Education and Research into Energy Sustainability, and specialises in life-long sustainability learning opportunities. Elements on the site include solar and wind power, market, permaculture gardens and nursery, buildings incorporating many established and cutting edge sustainability design features, an urban orchard, community kitchen, free-range chooks, low mileage, organic kitchen and cafe, aquaponics, adventure playground, courses and tours.

Bernie then went on to show us the mind-boggling set up that is the Eden Project in Cornwall in the UK. Consisting of a transparent geodesic dome 55m high, 100m wide and 210m long, the project is 15,900 sq m in area and is virtually self-sustaining in terms of heating, cooling, energy, etc. Cleaning of the dome is done from hot-air balloon. The grounds also house a concert space the size of the Myer Music Bowl. A description of what they have to offer is on their website: "Here's some of what you'll find when you visit:

1. the world's largest rainforest in captivity with steamy jungles and waterfalls
2. cutting-edge architecture and buildings

3. stunning garden displays all year round
4. world-class sculpture and art
5. evening gigs, concerts and an ice rink in the winter
6. educational centre and demonstrations to inspire all ages
7. brilliant local, fairly traded food in the restaurants and cafes
8. a Rainforest Canopy Walkway, where you can take a stunning walk among the treetops
9. living example of regeneration and sustainable living
10. free ride on our land train, often pulled by a tractor.

Even if you've visited before, our plants, exhibits and events programme change every season and every year. Check our [events calendar](#) to find out what's on when you come."

Bernie's vision is that Phillip Island, being so close to Melbourne, would be a perfect location for a Ceres or even an Eden type development, where we could showcase lots of different sustainability ideas and actions and create a truly beautiful place to visit in all weathers and for all ages and cultures. What a wonderful idea!

*Phillip Island Conservation Society, Inc.*

***The Penguin Newsletter***

Second Quarter: June 2014

If undeliverable, return to:

PICS Inc.

PO Box 548

COWES, 3922





Sea Eagle at Observation Point. Photo with thanks to PICS c/ee member Lisa Schonberg. See more of Lisa's spectacular wildlife photography on our Facebook page. Thanks Lisa!