

THE PENGUIN NEWSLETTER



PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay respect to Community Elders and Respected Peoples of the past, present and future.

Events

PICS General Meeting

The next PICS general meeting is on **Sunday 2 October at 2.00pm**. The guest speakers are from the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA).

The topic is: **Looking below the blue horizon – Marine education, experiences and conservation at play in the VNPA.**

Join two of VNPA's marine team to explore the underwater world surrounding the island and learn how you can get involved in experiencing and protecting it

Great presentation for people who are keen to learn more about the local marine life and some of the issues they face, and those who might want to get involved.

WORKING BEES

♦ Red Rocks Salt Water Creek - Sunday 9th October

10am - 12 noon: Weeding - location TBA - Contact Nick Stephens snickers162@gmail.com

♦ Scenic Estate Reserve

SER OPEN DAY! Sunday 25 September

This annual event will consist of an informative 1 hour walk and talk about the reserve led by John Eddy. Please meet at the SER carpark at 10am.

Sunday 6 November 10am-12 noon : Last working bee for the year! Weed Control - thistles and gorse will be targeted!

Please contact the FOSER coordinator Jan Fleming at: janetjoyfleming1@gmail.com

SPRING 2022

Contact Us:

W:

www.picsvictoria.org.au

F: www.facebook.com/picsvictoria

E:

phillipislandconservation@gmail.com

Secretary:

Bruce Wilson

T: 0414 236 765

Mail:

✉ PO Box 548, Cowes, 3922

ABN

48 392 256 921

Incorp

#A0011396D

Presidents Report

PICS President Report: September 2022

Council and tourism on the Island

It seems clear that the State Government and its authorities are encouraging large scale tourism developments on the Island. The position of Council in relation to what our tourism sector should look like on the Island and the impact that would have on the community is totally unclear as Council does not have a Tourism policy. We are encouraging Council to engage with the community and establish a tourism policy that includes protections for the natural world, sustainable ventures and recognises the Council declared climate emergency.

We have seen State money being provided to conduct another study into the car ferry (that funding was returned by Council) whilst money has also been given to tourism businesses including the chocolate factory, Newhaven spa and a proposed brewery at Rhyll. The State funded a Council project to enable large scale developments on rural land (refer separate article) and the State is also funding a new Destination Management Plan for the Island.

I believe PICS and the community need to be involved in the future of tourism on the island as the community will need to live with the impacts. Major tourism developments were not identified as needed by the community the current Council Plan. I believe there is a strong argument that Council has no mandate to allow or facilitate large scale tourism developments without community engagement or support.

Island Ark Symposium

PICS presented at the Island Ark symposium held at Phillip Island Nature Parks on 6 September. The title of the presentation was: "The Power of Conservation Partnerships on Phillip Island and Beyond: Preserving Western Port from Industrialisation."

The symposium was a great opportunity to provide a brief overview of PICS to local and international delegates. Feedback from the symposium was that PICS is definitely a key influencer on conservation issues and had made a significant and ongoing contributions to the island.

The presentation focused on two successful PICS campaigns over the last 7 years that prevented the construction of the container port in Hastings and stopped AGL installing their gas factory in Western Port. Both those winning campaigns were ultimately decided by independent authorities being Infrastructure Victoria and the State Minister for Planning.

The momentum and engagement of thousands of people in the AGL campaign has led PICS to establishing a steering committee of alliance partners to seek legal protections for Western Port.



PICS President, Jeff Nottle



PICS President Jeff Nottle presenting at the Island Ark Symposium.

Whilst these protections will not stop all development proposals, they will go a long way in assisting the community, Government and industry seeking to impact on Western Port.

The PICS presentation [PICS Island Ark Presentation](#)

Large scale tourist developments

The Bass Coast Shire Council recently received \$100,000 from the State to undertake a planning review of large scale development on farm land. The project was, we believe, inappropriately named “Unlocking Rural Tourism” (BURT). That name implied there were current planning problems that needed “unlocking”. We do not believe that to be the case.

The draft strategy has the potential to significantly change Phillip Island without support or effective communication with the community that would be directly affected. PICS believe the draft strategy appears to be responding to pressure from investors and developers and also appears to have been written by a panel of developers for developers.

The draft strategy is opportunist in that it seeks to introduce significant large scale tourism on farm land without the Council having a tourism policy, recommends changes that are incomparable with the (not yet introduced) DAL, cites longstanding community input and backlash to developments and then ignores the input. PICS lodged a very detailed submission and then made that available to all Councillors as well as the Council CEO. Read the submission here [PICS Rural tourism submission](#)

Now is the time for you and your neighbours to speak up for your neighbourhood!

If you are one of the 10k followers of Bass Coast Shire Council's (BCSC) social media, you will have read that Council is wanting to know about what we love about where we live. In other words, the attributes that form your Neighbourhood Character; what makes one Waterline "town" or coastal village different from the next one? What is different about Cowes to Wonthaggi or San Remo?

Is it the housing style or period features? Are they set back? What about fencing? Vegetation, is the natural environment flora and fauna important to you? Accessibility? Community facilities? Perhaps there are some desirable residential/commercial developments or undesirable ones in your locality, about which you can describe to Council?



This is a once in a generation chance for Bass Coast Shire Council to protect the specific characteristics we value in all our towns, hamlets, and villages through appropriate changes to the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

For example, you can suggest to council that the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) would be better than the General Residential Zone, immediately restricting maximum building height limits. Another consideration is regarding Commercial buildings with coastal frontage to also come under (NRZ) to protect community views to and from the Coast. Linked buffer zones to create Wildlife Corridors is something else that could be suggested.

Engage Bass
Coast
Neighbourhood
Character
Housing
**Please spread
the word!**

Better hurry public consultation closes 16 September 2022. If the online survey is too narrow for your comments an email is also acceptable. For full details, see Engage Bass Coast.

<https://engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoodcharacterhousing>



PICS Arts Working Group Report

3rd September 2022 Laura Brearley



‘For Our Future’ Update

Supported by a grant from the Bass Coast Shire Council, the *For Our Future* project is about to start. *For Our Future* is a twelve-month project which will run from 31stth August 2022 to 1st Sept 2023.

The *For Our Future* project has been developed by members of the PICS Committee of Management’s Arts Working Group, Dr Laura Brearley, Anne Davie, Jeff Nottle and Michelle Maes. They have established The Eco Arts and Cultural Hub (TEACH) to manage the *For Our Future* project. The guiding principles of TEACH align with those of the Phillip Island Conservation Society.

For Our Future is offering community activities and an educational stream of Eco Arts activities and events across the Bass Coast. Members of an interdisciplinary team comprised of artists, musicians, conservationists and First Nation cultural educators will facilitate environmentally-focused activities and learning experiences in the community. All activities and events are an invitation to listen more deeply and respectfully to the Living World and to recognise ourselves as part of it.

For Our Future 2022-2023 is structured around four projects, Country is Listening, Living Water Ways, Ocean Messages and an Eco Arts Community Celebration at the new Cowes Cultural and Community Centre. The projects will be led by artists supported by interdisciplinary teams of Eco Arts Collaborators who meet the following criteria:

1. Inspiring environmental stewardship and action
2. Working collaboratively in community
3. Deepening our sense of connection with the Living World
4. Incorporating different ways of knowing
5. Engaging people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds.

The role of Lead Artists is to offer creative ideas with an ecological focus that inspire positive environmental action in the community. The role of Eco Arts Collaborators is to invite different forms of engagement, enriching creative ideas through multiple ways of knowing and being together.

Yvonne Lynch is currently uploading Information about the *For Our Future* project to the PICS website. It will be available here <https://picsvictoria.org.au/events/>

Kids Teaching Kids Bass Coast Conference

Michelle Maes and Meg Anderson hosted a PICS information table at the Earthwatch Institute’s Kids Teaching Kids Bass Coast Conference, held at the penguin Parade Visitor centre on Friday 2nd September 2022.

Michelle, Meg and Laura Brearley made connections with teachers from a number of different schools and spoke about the forthcoming *For Our Future* project.

The Conference featured peer-teaching workshops and environmental projects from attending schools:

Wonthaggi North PS, Cowes PS, Bass Coast Specialist School, Our Lady Star of The Sea Cowes,

continued



Newhaven College, San Remo PS, Phillip Island Village School, Bass Coast College, Moolap PS, Inverloch Primary and Wonthagg PS.

The conference was designed to enable students to thrive in taking collective responsibility for the future, and to empower them to become young environmental leaders. Some of the key environmental focuses identified by the Earthwatch Institute in the Bass Coast region are:

- Rehabilitating the 'mineral sands extract' sites
- Rising sea levels impacting coastlines
- Agricultural run-off affecting wetland health
- Movement away from coal fired energy



A short film about the Kids Teaching Kids Earthwatch program can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3aatAXzHXKo>

Source: <https://www.earthwatch.org.au/event/kids-teaching-kids-bass-coast-conference>

Island Arks Symposium, Phillip Island Nature Park

Members of the PICS Arts Working Group are presenting on Tuesday 6th September 1.30pm at the Island Arks Symposium VII on the topic 'The Power of Conservation Partnerships on Phillip Island and Beyond: Preserving Western Port from Industrialisation. The PICS presentation is the first of four presentations under the key theme 'Engaging Island Communities'.

A schedule of all presentations at the Symposium is available here:

<https://islandarks.com.au/files/2022/07/Island-Ark-Symposium-VII-final-draft-schedule.pdf>

Environmental Love-in-Action

The Western Port Woodlands were recently visited by members of an environmental performance group from the Mornington Peninsula, known as the Western Port Sybil Disobedients.

Here is an excerpt from Laura Brearley's article about the Sybil Disobedients' support of the Save Western Port Woodlands campaign which was published in the Bass Coast Post. A short film by Terry Melvin called 'Hands off the Woodlands' about the visit of the Sybil Disobedients can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itVPqkMBnNw>

'Some people prefer to describe environmental activism as love-in-action. We're facing these times as members of a community. We're working together and inspiring each other. There have never been so many humans trying to serve life. Author and psychologist Tara Brach believes that when we recognise that we all belong to the natural world, we widen our sense of identity. We remember that we belong to something larger and there is huge creativity and love on which we can draw. One of the Sybils, artist Hannah Lewis, had read about the Save Western Port Woodlands campaign and reached out to offer the Sybils' support from the other side of the Bay. (She) raised the idea of becoming involved in the Save Western Port Woodlands campaign with the rest of the Western Port Sybils.

They all agreed to their support. They had been involved in the successful AGL Western Port campaign and recognised that when communities come together, they have a strong and positive impact.

In the words of fellow Sybil, Janine Wilson, 'We express our concern for the environment in a very visible way. We become walking billboards. We support each other to take action'.

The Sybils make a strong statement through performance, ritual and messaging. They are a living demonstration that art is a powerful way of communicating with people about what stands to be lost. They help us remember that we're powerless if we feel alone and separate but together we become empowered. That's the kind of power that transforms and extends our sense of belonging.'

The full article 'Environmental Love-in-Action' is available here...

<https://www.basscoastpost.com/laura-brearley/environmental-love-in-action>

Whispers from the Past

Rehearsals are coming along for the Friends of Churchill Island Society's forthcoming production 'Whispers from the Past', a play written by Christine Grayden and David Maunders. John Eddy plays the part of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, who gifted Samuel Amess a Norfolk Island Pine seedling which has grown into the giant tree in the front of Amess House on Churchill Island.

The performances are scheduled for Sunday, September 18 at 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM. If you wish to attend, entry is included in the price of a ticket into Churchill Island, but please let FOCIS know you are attending the performances, by emailing the FOCIS secretary, Leah, secretary@focis.org.au

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/FOCISAust/>

Creativity and Climate Change - ABC Space 22

Can creativity ease climate anxiety in children?

To explore this question, the Southern Forest Arts centre in Northcliffe, WA, is currently facilitating 'Home: Sculptural Habitats', a sculpture commission and community connection project with artist, Peter Hill. Peter is working with schools to create a series of new sculptural installations for the Understory Art & Nature trail in Northcliffe. The project is aimed at battling the sense of powerlessness many young people feel in the face of climate change, and to show them the incredible power of affirmative action - one habitat -creating artwork at a time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q21fR7Pf-DI>

Stream on ABC iview: <https://ab.co/Space22>



A seedling from the original Norfolk Island Pine

John, AKA The Baron. holding a seedling from the Norfolk Island Pine gifted by Baron von Mueller

Botanist Baron Von Mueller



<https://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/image/baron-ferdinand-von-mueller>

Outdoor Working Group Report July-August 2022

The Outdoor Working Group acknowledges and thanks the enormous contribution our enthusiastic volunteers make to the success of our working bees and the environmental work we undertake - many hands make light work!

What's been happening at Red Rocks/ Saltwater Creek?

Saltwater Creek Planting: A successful working bee was held on Sunday 24 July in fine sunny conditions after some heavy rain to continue the revegetation of the western banks of Saltwater Creek, east of Richardsons Way.



Thank you to the wonderful team of 15 volunteers who energetically dug holes, planted and guarded almost 200 indigenous species, including Hop Goodenia, Wattle sp, Casuarina sp and Eucalyptus sp. It was quite hard work as the holes needed to be dug in locations where the grass had recently been poisoned by the BCSC, so had not died down - consequently, we had to spot the blue dye markers amongst the longish grass and dig into the quite hard ground despite the recent rains!

An interesting point is that this lovely area with picturesque views along Saltwater Creek was, until John Eddy and his team started an ambitious revegetation and rehabilitation program 20 or so years ago, cleared farmland covered in introduced grasses but few remnant trees.

Also, it was pleasing to see the success of the experimental plots John Eddy trialed in 2021, where a circular area was sprayed then planted out with individual guards then fenced.



Tranquil scenery!



Planting done, time for a cuppa!



Trial plot success

A welcome morning tea of fruit cake and anzac biscuits was enjoyed by volunteers at the end!

Many thanks once again to **John Eddy** for organising the tools and equipment needed for the working bee and choosing the plant species well in advance, and to Dave Martin BCSC for supplying the plants.

RRSWC Upcoming working bee dates:

Sunday 9th October

10am - 12 noon: Weeding - location TBA

Please contact the **RRSWC Coast Care coordinator Nick Stephens** at snickers162@gmail.com for more information on working bees and/or how to become a volunteer and join the contact list!

What's been happening at Scenic Estate Conservation Reserve?

Due to heavy rain and the area where we planned to continue our assault on gorse being water-logged, the August 21 working bee did not go ahead. Instead we will continue gorse control later in the year.

Pollution concern at SER:



Dumped bagged dog poo!

Unfortunately, some irresponsible dog walkers habitually throw their bagged dog poo into the bushes near tracks in the southern section of the reserve. This is both unsightly and seriously impacts our natural environment. Please watch out for

this appalling behaviour and report to council.

FOSER - upcoming dates for your diary:

Sunday 25 September: SER Open Day! This annual event will consist of an informative 1 hour walk and talk about the reserve led by John Eddy. Please meet at the SER carpark at 10am.

Sunday 6 November 10am-12 noon : Last working bee for the year!

Weed Control - thistles and gorse will be targeted!

Please contact the **FOSER coordinator Jan Fleming** at janetjoyfleming1@gmail.com for more information on joining FOSEF and how to get involved in volunteering at Scenic Estate Reserve.

PICS Outdoor Working Group

(Meg Anderson, Carmen Bush, and Jane Jobe.)

Watch out for weeds -remove them!

Spring is the perfect time to identify problem weeds in your garden and surrounds as they are in flower. So please watch out and remove them before they set seed and spread!



SIX COMMON WEEDS TO REMOVE FROM YOUR GARDEN



Gorse



Polygala



Thistles



Arum Lilies



Cape Weed



Bridal Creeper



Totally Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI)

Earlier this month Jeff Nottle and I were interviewed for PICS by Antony Boxhall, consultant from

Science into Action. Antony was interviewing key partners about the impact of TRPI and suggestions for outcomes for the future. It is proposed that this information will be shared with other communities considering renewable models.

TRPI has nearly fulfilled its mission to get 100 Phillip Island households to take part in a Victorian first 12-month renewable energy trial. The trial will help the Island move to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030. If you are interested: please contact Zoe Geyer at totally.renewable@gmail.com



Progress continues in the installation of the 10MWh battery on the site in Gap Road. Phillip Island Landcare has organised a planting on the site on August 30 th.

Anne Davie



Phillip Island Land Alliance (PILA)

PILA had a Workshop Meeting at the Newhaven Information Centre on Saturday, August 20 th .



The Agenda included the Grants Overview and re-visiting PILA's Terms of Reference.

A local indigenous artist has been asked to create a suitable logo for PILA. The colours of the logo will determine the colours used for the PILA Website.

Anne Davie



Committees

SUB-COMMITTEE OF PICS

Red Rocks / Saltwater Creek Coastcare &

Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve

Volunteer Coordinator: Meg Anderson Ph: 0401 370 406

Email: meganderson213@gmail.com

OTHER GROUPS

Friends of Koalas (FOK) Contact: Ph:0419 552 385

or 0484 921 028

Friends of Churchill Island (FOCIS):

Email: secretary@focis.org.au Bird Life Bass Coast: Pres-

ident: Gil Smith Secretary: Sue Woolley

basscoast@birdlife.org.au

Bass Coast Climate Action Network:

Michael Nugent: BassCoastCAN@gmail.com Ph: 0416

039 933

PICS COMMITTEE 2022

President: Jeff Nottle -

Media enquiries – Ph: 0419 158 232

Vice President: Jane Jobe

Secretary: Bruce Wilson Ph: 0414 236 765

Email: phillipislandconservation@gmail.com

Minutes Secretary: Carmen Bush

Treasurer: Matthew Ingham

Committee: Margaret Hancock (planning)

Dr Laura Brearley (Chair of c/ee meetings/planning)

Penny Manning, Terry Nott, Phil Wright, Anne Davie,

Meg Anderson, Michelle Maes.

The Committee meets at 9.30 am on 1st Saturday

month.

Membership

If you like the work we do, why not become a member? By becoming a member of PICS, you help us continue our mission and in return, you will also receive these great benefits:

- Get 25% off entry prices to all Phillip Island Nature Parks including the Penguin Parade
- Receive “The Penguin” quarterly newsletter
- Invitations to exclusive presentation by expert speakers on planning, wild-life, environment
- Access to advice on planning and environment matters that may effect you
- Opportunities to help the environment through volunteering days.
- Be part of a like-minded community making a difference
- Public Fund donations are tax free.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Single Membership - \$25

Family Membership - \$35

Concession Membership - \$15

Or just donate to the Public Fund.

To become a member or to donate, go to our website and click on:

Become a Member

<https://picsvictoria.org.au/become-amember/>

You can also download a form from the website

or contact the secretary

Bruce Wilson - Ph: 0414 236 765 or

Email:

phillipislandconservation@gmail.com

PICS Facebook page is getting a lot of notice in 2022. Please join the 3000+



people who like our

[Facebook](#) page.

Further Information can be

found on our website.:

<https://picsvictoria.org.au>