

# SWAN BAY ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NO 84 – February 2020



P.O. Box 143, Queenscliff 3225

Reg. No: A 00 1 7279 U

<http://sbea.webuda.com>

## NURSERY NEWS

Our nursery plants are loving the recent rains and high humidity. Sarah Roberts, the nursery's coordinator, is very busy in the nursery at this time of year and also provides advice to gardeners who drop in to buy plants on Wednesday mornings and every third Sunday morning.

Sarah is also finding a new use for old potting mix, which she is popping it into a compost bin for later use on veggie gardens. Another project is the development of the nursery's seed bank, which volunteers are helping organise.



*Volunteers busy in the nursery on a Sunday morning.*



## SWAN BAY ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

17th April 2020

7.30pm

Queenscliff Uniting Church

Guest Speaker: Dr Danny Rogers

### “Birds of Swan Bay”

Danny is one of Australia's best known shorebird ecologists with an unsurpassed knowledge of birds of Swan Bay. He is a research biologist at Arthur Rylah Institute (Dept Environment, Land, Water and Planning) and is a co-author of the recently published “Australian Bird Guide”.

**Martin Gill, CEO, QBC**

will also address progress on Council's climate emergency plan

Membership renewals are due at the AGM. You may pay by direct deposit to 633-000 136521358 or by mail to PO Box 143, Queenscliff VIC 3225

If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else to the SBEA Committee, nominations should be submitted by 10 April 2020. For a nomination form, or if you wish to register an apology if you cannot attend, please contact the Secretary [evamutton@bigpond.com](mailto:evamutton@bigpond.com)

## GARDENS FOR WILDLIFE

### Interested in getting involved?

Felicity Thyer, the Coordinator of the Gardens for Wildlife (G4W) program, is on the lookout for more volunteers as garden guides. There are training sessions with the Bellarine Catchment Network, as well as some ‘on the job training’. You can decide how many garden visits you would care to make.

Please contact Felicity if you would like to get involved in the program. You can email [ftHYer@yahoo.com](mailto:ftHYer@yahoo.com) or call 0407 556 229.



*Nursery Coordinator, Sarah Roberts (right), provides advice to Jenny Brown and Peter Cook on what they could plant in their Point Lonsdale Garden for Wildlife. The plants will go in along their west-facing back fence.*

### **Visit by new council CEO**

The SBEA Committee and Sarah Roberts, our nursery coordinator, had much pleasure in welcoming the Borough of Queenscliff's new CEO, Martin Gill, to the nursery. He showed great interest in our activities and had a friendly chat with some of our volunteers.

### **DECLARATION OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

The Borough of Queenscliff declared a climate emergency at last December's Council meeting and are now working out how the Council will develop a response plan with the help of the community. The CEO will provide a brief update to SBEA members on progress with the response plan at our upcoming AGM.

The declaration of a climate emergency was a direct result of the great work done by the recently formed Queenscliff Climate Action Group (QCAG) who organised and submitted a petition with more than 1,100 signatures from local residents. This called on the Borough of Queenscliff to declare a climate emergency and develop a response plan in conjunction with the local community.

Neil Mathison, one of our committee members has joined the QCAG working group. At the December Council meeting he raised a question on behalf of the SBEA, highlighting the potential damaging impact of climate change on Swan Bay through rising sea levels, storm surges and coastal erosion.

Mayor Ross Ebbels supported the motion, describing climate change as being among the most important issues of our time. He later attended a National Climate Emergency Summit in Melbourne in February along with six members of QCA.

At the Summit the Mayor joined more than 100 local government representatives from all over Australia (representing more than 30% of the population) to form 'Climate Emergency Australia'. This will be a national network of local governments and sector partners that aims to provide the climate action leadership that Australia desperately needs.

The SBEA committee will continue to work with QCA and Council to promote the protection of Swan Bay's environment and biodiversity in the response plan for the Borough.

### **BELLARINE CATCHMENT NETWORK**

#### **Where the rivers run**

The Geelong Nature Forum is back bigger and better for 2020 with the theme 'Where the Rivers Run'. The forum is a week of activities celebrating the animal and plant life of the Geelong region's rivers, creeks and wetlands and the volunteer groups who help look after them.

This year's forum opens at the National Wool Museum on Saturday 28 March with a series of lectures, presentations and exhibits. Entrance to the National Wool Museum will be free on 28 March – a great opportunity for visitors to also explore other museum exhibitions, including the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition!

Lachlan Forbes, BCN's Biodiversity Officer, will be presenting at the forum on how to create a garden for wildlife. You can register for Lachlan's

presentation here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/gardens-for-wildlife-workshop-geelong-nature-forum-tickets-90070506309>

You can find more info on the forum here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/geelong-nature-forum-2020-opening-event-tickets-83573383239>

## SBEA PLANTS STALL

### Call for volunteers

SBEA is planning to hold a regular street stall for the sale of nursery plants and the promotion of its Gardens 4 Wildlife program.

Would you be interested in volunteering for an hour or two every couple of months to help out on the stall? If you are interested, please contact Neil on 0450 525 839 or [nrmathison@gmail.com](mailto:nrmathison@gmail.com).

### Summer by the Sea with the Point Lonsdale SLSC Nippers

BCN welcomed 60 of the Point Lonsdale SLSC' under 10s Nippers to the Coastcare Challenge on Monday 6 January.

The Nippers were split into six groups and went head to head cheering for their team to win the challenge.



Point Lonsdale SLSC under 10s Nippers taking part in the BCN's Coastcare Challenge. Photos: BCN.

On what was a calm and smoky morning, the Nippers competed through the course learning about different ways they can care for their coast. They completed five tasks: planting indigenous moonah trees; weeding the invasive weed *Polygala*; picking up litter; picking up after your dog; and giving hauled seals space.

## NURSERY PLANTS FOR SALE

After some new plants to pop in your garden? Why not buy them from our nursery at 79 Nelson Road, Point Lonsdale for \$2 each?

The nursery is open during working bees every Wednesday from 9am–12pm, and on the 3rd Sunday of each month from 10am–12pm.

Enquiries: Sarah Roberts, Nursery Coordinator:  
0401 281 448



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month can be busy at the nursery when gardeners come to choose and buy their plants, and get some advice. You can also purchase plants every Wednesday between 9.00am and 12.00pm.

## BELLARINE LANDCARE

### Help record the flora & fauna of the Bellarine!

At the upcoming March meeting of Bellarine Landcare, Rod Lowther of the Geelong Field Naturalists Group will give training on how to use iNaturalist at Marcus Hill Hall, cnr Bellarine Highway and Banks Road, at 7.30pm, 11 March.

iNaturalist feeds into the Atlas of Living Australia, and is an easy citizen science app for members of the community to use. Hopefully we can get lots of people on the Bellarine adding new flora and fauna sightings, as there is a lack of data.

Download the app if possible before the training via the Apple Store or Google Play. Bring your phone or iPad if you have one although it's not essential. You don't need to have a smart phone or iPad in order to be able to attend and get a lot out of this workshop! Laptops or desk computers can also be used to add data from home.

Skilling us up on iNaturalist will enable us to take part in the City Nature Challenge: a BioBlitz occurring over the Anzac long-weekend in April. Visit <http://citynaturechallenge.org/>

This is the first-time cities (4) in Australia will be participating in the worldwide event, with a total of 260 cities having confirmed being involved as of the start of this week.

To make the best of Rod's time, we're keen to see as a many people there as possible at the meeting.

### **Otway Ranges Subterranean National Park**

The Land and Water Resources Otway Catchment Landcare Group (LAWROC) have been working for many years to draw attention to the degradation of the Otways around Big Swamp and Boundary Creek, south of Colac, through over-extraction of water for Geelong's drink water.

Barwon Water pumped water from Barwon Downs borefield on and off from 1982 until last year, when the Minister for Water, Lisa Neville, called a halt, after the land degradation was acknowledged. The impacts of the ground water over-extraction have been: Barwon River flows have slowed; swamps have dried out and peat has been exposed to bushfire, releasing acid sulphate soils, and leading to acidification of the waters, fish kills and disappearance of platypus, along with leaching of heavy metals into the creeks.

Barwon Water have been ordered to remediate the damage and scientists have estimated it will take over 300 years until the aquifer can recover to its pre-extraction levels. LAWROC are concerned

that the extraction could be restarted in the future and are calling for this area to be protected permanently by a subterranean national park, of which there are two others existing in America and Asia. They are seeking community support through letters of support for the concept [http://otwayrangessubterraneannationalpark.org.au/pdf/Letters\\_of\\_Support.pdf](http://otwayrangessubterraneannationalpark.org.au/pdf/Letters_of_Support.pdf)

And the signing of a change.org petition: [https://www.change.org/p/state-government-of-victoria-create-an-otway-ranges-subterranean-national-park/psf/promote\\_or\\_share](https://www.change.org/p/state-government-of-victoria-create-an-otway-ranges-subterranean-national-park/psf/promote_or_share)

### **BOB'S CHAIR**



Bob Fuller, a long-time member of SBEA and lover of Swan Bay, died in April 2018. He is remembered with a new bench seat overlooking Swan Bay on the bike path (near the basketball court on Stevens St). The Borough provided the new seat and plaque, while SBEA assisted Bob's partner with the costs.



*Bob's chair overlooks Swan Bay along the walking trail.*