

# Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.



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P.O. Box 143, Queenscliff 3225  
Reg. No: A 00 1 7279 U  
home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea

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## **PRESIDENTS REPORT 2008**

Report presented by Jacquie Smith to the Swan Bay Environment Association's AGM on the 20 March, 2009.

It has been a rewarding and also frustrating year for the Swan Bay Environment Association.

Felicity Thyer, our secretary presented the SBEA's presentation to the Stocklands Hearing Panel in June. The Parliamentary Committee on public land management recommended that plans for a residential development at Point Lonsdale, Lonsdale Lakes be abandoned due to unacceptable risks. So it is with great disappointment that we now hear that VCAT has approved the Stockland development. However SBEA is determined to continue to oppose this development.

On a brighter note the Queenscliffe Community Indigenous Plant Nursery was recognized by the Borough of Queenscliffe in the Australia Day celebration as a worthy recipient of the Community Service Award. Congratulations to Jill Warneke and her band of wonderful volunteers. The Nursery has been in operation for ten years and was originally founded by Sue and Roel Wasterval and others. The Association would like to thank all past and present volunteers for their terrific efforts.

During 2009 a further 10,000 plants were ready to make their mark on the landscape. They were planted at Citizen's Park in Queenscliff, Ocean Grove Dunes and Bonnyvale Wetlands at Collendina. They were also planted along The Narrows which incorporates Lover's Walk and The Dog Beach as well as in many private gardens and on properties. Weekly working bees are held in addition to the regular 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday and are very well attended. We are always happy to see more

volunteers. Please contact Jill Warneke on 52581716 or check the SBEA website.

The Wetlands from Collendia make their way to Lake Victoria, Emily Street Reserve, Lonsdale Lakes and Lakers Cutting before entering Swan Bay thus the health of these waterways is vitally important to the health of Swan Bay.

This year the Association provided money for the re-printing of the "Swan Bay Environment Trail" and a re-print of postcards for "Artists for Wetlands".

I would like to thank those on the committee for their time and valuable input and a special thanks to all members for your continued support. We live in such changing times – some good and some not so environmentally sound so it is important for all of us to "do our bit" for Swan Bay, whether it be weeding, replanting, rubbish collecting, letter writing and informing others about her beauty and immense importance to all the animal life that depend on her.

Please remember to visit our website:  
[home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea)

Thank you to Doug Miller for his generous time in updating the information and to Jill Warneke for continued editing of our newsletter.

**Jacquie Smith**  
**President**

## **SWAN BAY SUPERHEROES**

At the AGM guest speaker Harry Thorman gave a wonderful presentation about some slugs (which he insists are "heroes") found in Swan Bay.

Harry is a local who is passionate about our marine environment. He has been involved with

the Marine Discovery Centre for twelve years in various roles that have allowed him to pass on his knowledge to the next generation of marine enthusiasts.

Harry told a fascinated audience about the *Aplysia* sp. more commonly known as the Sea Hare. This large slug visits Swan Bay in summer to eat, have sex and die! (Most of the emphasis was on SEX! Harry seemed to know how to keep his audience attentive.)

Harry even had one of the amazing looking creatures in a small glass tank for us to see. (Some of us thought it was pretty repulsive but still fascinating, even though it was not actually having sex at the time!)

A few different species of *Aplysia* have been identified in the Bay and they all have similar spectacular biology.

Harry presented their main features:

- *able to deter any predator* (they produce distasteful chemical deterrents)
- *faster than most mere gastropods* (they have a strong muscular foot and dorsal wind flaps)
- *more appealing than any bizarre love cult* (they mate in chains up to 12 animals long with the unlucky first and last only having one gender role)
- *produces powerful chemotaxic mesmerizers* (the eggs also release powerful pheromones)
- *may help solve some evils afflicting humankind* (their simple nervous system provides an insight into the biochemistry of learning)
- *champions of all living things in Swan Bay* (they play a vital role in the total ecology of the Bay, e.g. consuming copious quantities of algae).

The following website gives pictures of this fascinating species.

<http://www.underseapix.com.au/nudiviewer.htm>

## **LOCAL ENVIRONMENT COURSE**

There are 3 sessions left in this year's Local Environment Course. The Birds of Lake Victoria Talk will be held later in the year after winter rain attracts more birds to the lake. Phone the Neighbourhood House (52584145) to have your name on the list to be notified of when this will be held.

## **1. Edwards Point State Fauna Reserve**

Saturday May 2nd 9.30am to approx. 11.30am (Meet at the Reserve front gate, end of Beach Road, St Leonards.) A representative of the Friends of Edwards Point will take participants on a tour of Edwards Point. Significant woodlands, salt marsh plants, coastal grasslands, as well as some species of birds and water fowl will be observed. Cost: \$5.

## **2. Swan Bay Ramsar Wetland Walk**

Saturday May 30th. 11.00a.m to 12.30 p.m. (Meet at Queenscliff Railway Station.) Swan Bay is a Ramsar wetland of international importance and part of the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park. Learn about its plant and animal communities and catchment connections, while enjoying a stroll along its southern shores. Wear walking shoes. Bring a drink. Leader: Sue Longmore, Coastal Coordinator, Bellarine Catchment Network. Cost: \$5

## **3. Wetland Connections**

Saturday May 16th.

11.00a.m to 12 noon (Venue: Queenscliffe Neighbourhood House) Take an 'armchair' tour through the beautiful and environmentally significant freshwater and coastal saline wetlands of the eastern Bellarine Peninsula. Discover their incredible diversity of indigenous plant communities, migratory and resident birdlife, and the international importance of protecting these linked wetland environments. Speaker: Sue Longmore, Coastal Coordinator, Bellarine Catchment Network (formerly Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee). Cost \$5

*Working bees at Nursery, 79 Nelson Rd 10am-12pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday each month and mid-week on different days. If you would like to be notified of these mid-week times please give your name and details (email if possible) to Jill Warneke 5258 1716, or [jwarneke@vtown.com.au](mailto:jwarneke@vtown.com.au) Mid-week times are also posted on the Nursery fence*

Working bee times are also listed on our website:

[home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea)

along with a list of the plants grown at the Nursery and other items relevant to Swan Bay and to our Association.