

Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.



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LOCAL NATURE WALKS

As well as the Swan Bay surrounds there are many nature walks available within easy reach of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale. These include:

Rail Trail/Bike Track

The shorter version – *the Swan Bay Environment Trail* – is from the Queenscliff Railway Station (brochures are available in the box at the start of the walk) to the DPI buildings in the Narrows. The long walk (or bike ride) follows the railway line all the way to Drysdale Station (approx. 16kms).

Swan Bay Boardwalk

Located off Murray at the end of Ward Rd. Traverses the saltmarsh to a seat which overlooks Swan Bay. A beautiful spot to sit and observe the birds at low tide and watch the sunset no matter what the tide.

Lovers Walk

The complete trail (from the Queenscliff Recreation Reserve to the car park at the Springs, Point Lonsdale) runs through the sand dunes and the Moonah woodland. Along the way you can view the revegetation areas planted with plants from the SBEA Queenscliffe Indigenous Plant Nursery.

Emily St Wetlands

To see this go along Emily St, Pt Lonsdale and continue on to: Lake Victoria with its wonderful bird life.

Burnt Pt

Follow Macdonalds Rd to the end where it joins a walking track to the end of Burnt Point

Foreshore bike/walking track

The paved shared bike/walking track from the Dog Beach car park to the Point Lonsdale shops gives wonderful access to beach/ocean views in all types of weather. This walk continues to the Ocean Car Park, the Point Lonsdale jetty and the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse areas.

DPI Saltmarsh Garden

Visitors are welcome to stroll along the boardwalk between the DPI building and the Swan Bay shore to view the saltmarsh plants which are so vital to the ecology of the Bay.

Edwards Pt Reserve

This Reserve includes woodland and beach walking tracks (the spit is 4kms long). Enter from Beach Rd, St Leonards – brochures are available at the entrance to the walk.

Ocean Grove Nature Reserve

Enter off Grubb Rd to see the largest (143 hectares) significant remaining woodland on the Bellarine Peninsula. It includes a lake, walking tracks, abundant wildflowers and bird sightings.

Buckley Park

Enter from the corner of Fellows and Ocean Rd.

RAMSAR and Swan Bay

In 2011 RAMSAR celebrated 40 years since its establishment.

On February 2nd 1971 18 countries met in the Iranian city of Ramsar and created an international treaty to protect the world's wetlands.

40 years later there are 100 member countries and over 1900 Ramsar sites. The treaty covers 190 million hectares of wetlands – the largest global network of protected areas.

Ramsar defines wetlands as permanently or temporarily wet areas and includes rivers, ponds, bogs, reefs, swamps, deltas, billabongs, etc.

Wetlands are extremely important for water, fisheries, aquaculture, flood protection and enhancement of biodiversity as well as places of beauty and recreation.

But too often these values are under-appreciated (especially when the areas look like bogs or mud flats) and wetlands are being destroyed for coastal and inland development and degraded by pollution and water extraction.

Swan Bay is part of the Ramsar Treaty. It has enormous importance as a fisheries nursery and as a sanctuary for birds, both local and migratory. And of course its value for recreation and as a place of beauty and inspiration is obvious.

(Swan Bay's importance is also recognised by other international treaties – e.g. Camba and Jamba which cover international bird migrations.)

BOOKS on local vegetation

The best sources of information about our local plants are the two booklets (new editions at \$2 each, available from the Council or the Plant Nursery) titled "*Coastal Plants of the Bellarine Peninsula*" and "*Inland Plants of the Bellarine Peninsula*". There is also a free booklet "*A Field Guide to Coastal Moonah Woodland*".

Other useful books which, although not specifically targeted locally, do describe much of our local vegetation include:

"*Flowers of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet*" by Margaret MacDonald, published by Angair. This is particularly useful as it arranges the plants by flower colour.

"*Indigenous Plants of the Sandbelt*" by Rob Scott and others, published by Earthcare. Although aimed at South-eastern Melbourne it describes the plants which grow in similar conditions to ours.

"*The Coast in Flower*" by I.R. McCann, published by VNPA. This presents beautiful and clear flower photos.

"*Flora of the Otway Plain and Ranges*" by Enid Mayfield, published by CSIRO. A detailed botanical (but accessible) presentation of plants of the Otway Ranges Plain, which includes our area.

In 2012 plant prices at the Nursery (79 Nelson Rd) will increase to \$1 per plant.

Working bees are held:

Every Wednesday	9-12
Last Friday of the month	9-12
3 rd Sunday of the month.	10-12

We are always happy to see more volunteers. Just come, or contact Jill Warneke on 5258 1716 or visit our SBEA website: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sbea/>