

# Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.



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## NEWSLETTER NO. 68 – November 2014

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### Worm Farms (Rob Hurley)

The Borough of Queenscliff has approved funding of \$490 to support the purchase of two worm farms, which are now located at the Nursery. SBEA has contributed the full cost of a third bin to be located at the Queenscliff Community Garden.

- The aim of the project is to be a working model for all members of the community. Over time we expect many members of the community will install their own worm farms.
- The worm farm is relevant to all ages. We will aim at the young through schools and our volunteers are mainly in the retired age group. The Worm Farming project can help connect kids to the fundamental processes in nature, and instil great waste management habits for the future.

We have chosen Hungry Bins because:

- The Hungry Bin is a continuous flow system, which makes it far more efficient than worm farms that use stacked trays. The unique shape of the bin creates a large surface area, allowing the worms to easily access the food scraps at the top – they're surface feeders after all – allowing them to process more waste, more quickly. The tapered sides encourage the worms to stay on the surface, while compressing their castings below.
- In consideration of Workplace Health & Safety the lid is at a comfortable operating height, and convenient to open and close.

- Harvesting castings does not involve any heavy, messy lifting. The floor of the bin just clips off, allowing around 4 litres of castings to break away at the bottom of the taper. Removing the castings is a relatively clean process and the castings are largely free of worms.

The Worm Farms have now been installed at the Nursery and here is what they look like.



### **Gardens for Wildlife** *(Bob Fuller)*

The committee is considering initiating a Gardens for Wildlife project in the Borough. The scheme would be similar to that already in existence in the City of Knox and details of their scheme which has been running for eight years can be seen at <http://www.knox.vic.gov.au/g4w>

The purpose of the project is to encourage local residents to make their gardens user-friendly to the local fauna. Primarily this will mean planting indigenous plants to attract local birds and insects. However, it could also include features such as installing a bird bath and/or a frog pond. Natural mulching will provide habitat for insects which in turn will encourage local birds to enter the gardens.

The scheme (we hope) will be endorsed by our council – as it is in Knox – and will be a contributor to the Borough's Community Environment Alliance. The scheme is likely to operate in a similar way as the Knox G4W. Prospective gardens will be assessed by someone trained to provide advice on plantings and other features. Once successfully assessed, residents will receive a certificate, information pack, sticker for their letterbox and some free indigenous plants.

Discussions about the scheme are in their early stages, but we would encourage any feedback or comments from members so that these may be taken into account at this planning stage.

### **Community Environment Alliance**

The second edition of Footprint eNews came out early last month. This is the Newsletter of the Borough's Community Environment Alliance. Features of the

last newsletter included promoting a bulk buy for solar panels, Sustainable House Day and the Smart Living Expo in Geelong. To ensure that you don't miss events in coming months, you can subscribe to Footprint eNews by contacting the BoQ's Sustainability Office, Jacqueline Wilson by email at: [Jacqueline.wilson@queencliffe.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jacqueline.wilson@queencliffe.vic.gov.au)

Individual membership, as well as organisational membership is possible. Members will be encouraged to pledge some action to make a change in their lifestyle, no matter how small, that will make a positive difference to our environment. SBEA has already signed up as an organisational member to this important initiative in the Borough.

### **Swan Bay Monitoring Update**

*(Greg Parry)*

The new owners of The Point have provided the Department of the Environment with a report on the monitoring of the project but as yet have not had a reply. The report is apparently very large. The modelling of the project is also apparently underway but the company inform us that they are a couple of months away from having meaningful results to discuss. We will keep you informed of progress as this occurs.

### **Newsletter Electronically?**

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please contact Greg Parry at [greg.parry@marecol.net.au](mailto:greg.parry@marecol.net.au)

### **Grass Trees for Sale**

The nursery has Grass Tree seedlings for sale at \$5 each. Please visit the Nursery during opening hours (every Wed 9-12; last Friday of the month 9-12; third Sunday of the month 10-12) if you would like to purchase one.