

Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.



P.O. Box 143, Queenscliff 3225
Reg. No: A 00 1 7279 U
<http://sbea.webuda.com>

NEWSLETTER NO. 70– August 2015

Backyard Bird Count (*Bob Fuller*)

19-25th October is Aussie Backyard Bird Count week. This is the second year of this national activity when organisations and individuals are encouraged to spend 20 minutes in the week counting the birds in their backyard or favourite green space in the neighbourhood. The results of your 20-minute observation must be entered on to a national database which can be found at:

<http://www.aussiebirdcount.org.au>

The committee encourages all members to take part in the count.

Gardens 4 Wildlife (*Bob Fuller*)

We applied for funding from Borough of Queenscliffe's Community Grants Program. We were hoping to attract about half our estimated cost of launching the project. Unfortunately, we were not successful and are now applying for funding from the Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale Community Enterprise Grant Program. We should know the outcome by the time of the next newsletter and will hopefully be able to announce a successful outcome.

Swan Bay Monitoring (*Greg Parry*)

In the previous newsletter it was noted that the development of Stages 4-14 of 'The Point' at Point Lonsdale (400+ houses) cannot proceed until further monitoring and modelling of impacts of nutrients on Swan Bay are completed, and that this work has been shrouded in secrecy.

Since the last newsletter SBEA has met with Lisa Neville's ministerial advisor (see below) and Greg Parry was invited to a council sub-committee meeting with a senior representative from the (Federal) Department of Environment to discuss the status of Moremac's current monitoring. This meeting confirmed that the conditions of the Minister's approval in August 2009 still apply. Following the constructive meeting further information on these conditions has been requested, particularly the following:

1. Prior to the submission of a Water Quality Management Plan, a Monitoring Plan must be developed by the proponent and then approved by the Department for the Environment. Has the Monitoring Plan been submitted to the Department for the Environment and if so, has it been approved?
2. A further condition is that monitoring must be undertaken and a report forwarded to the Department for the Environment. Have the monitoring results been submitted to the Department for the Environment and if so, has it been approved?
3. Clarification has been sought on how Condition 2(f) can be achieved given that the nutrient information produced and published by the proponent indicates that the nutrient

levels already exceed the baseline threshold.

4. Clarification has been sought of the method and criteria to be used to assess the water flow modeling through the Point Lonsdale Residential and Waterways Development site into Lakers Cutting.
5. Clarification has also been sought on how Conditions 3(g) and 3(h) can be achieved, and if necessary applied, without causing flooding to the Point Lonsdale residential development. Condition 3(g) states that if SEPP WoV aquatic segment trigger values for streams entering into Port Phillip Bay are exceeded all discharge of water from the Point Lonsdale Residential and Waterways Development site into Lakers Cutting must cease immediately, except when Lake Victoria is discharging into the site under flood conditions, while Condition 3(h) requires that water above trigger levels cannot be discharged into Lakers Cutting from the Point Lonsdale Residential and Waterways Development site.

We await the Department of Environment's response with great interest.

Meeting with State Minister's Adviser
(Greg Parry)

Roel Wasterval, Greg Parry and Rob Hurley met with Lisa Dundas, Senior Adviser, Office of the Minister for Environment, Climate Change & Water (State Government).

The key issue was the status of monitoring by Moremac, the current developers of "The Point", originally named "Stocklands" in Point Lonsdale. We discussed:

- Our support for the Geelong Environment Council Proposed Bellarine Wetlands Nature Conservation Reserve. Refer to further summary in this Newsletter.
- Ramsar – extend boundary to include Lakers Cutting
- Monitoring of Swan Bay,
- Unique nature of Swan Bay
- Lack of monitoring in Swan Bay and Port Phillip Bay in general.
- Loss of research and monitoring expertise in Victoria's marine environment, following the near closure of the marine research at Queenscliff marine laboratories.

This led to discussion of the inadequate response from Moremac. Despite our requests Moremac have been unwilling to provide information on their monitoring. Requests for basic information on where monitoring samples are being taken, and parameters being measured have been met with blunt refusal. We have sought State Government support to know what monitoring is being undertaken as we would like to be reassured that it is adequate. The initial monitoring undertaken was not adequate and SBEA will pursue this further if the Borough (see above) does not receive an adequate response to their recent request for information.

Fluker Post *(Bob Fuller)*

Many of our members and supporters will have been involved in past years in the replanting of the sand dunes adjacent

to the Dog Beach. This activity has taken place in order to stabilise the dunes and prevent their erosion. In order to monitor the state of the dunes using reliable data, a Fluker Post has been set up on the rockwall path leading down onto the Dog Beach. This technology encourages locals and visitors to take photos of the site and then to post them on a publicly-available website. The project is initiative of the Bellarine Catchment Network in conjunction with council officers and the community. We hope you will take part in the project by taking a photo with your smart phone and uploading it. Just follow the instructions on the Fluke Post.

Greening Australia

At our last committee meeting, the Committee made a donation of \$250 to support their on-going work in conserving and restoring Australian landscapes.

Vale Dr Dick Cotton *(Bob Fuller)*

In June, one of SBEA founding members, Professor Dick Cotton, sadly passed away. Those of you who attended our 25th anniversary will have heard Dick as he spoke of the Association's early days in the late 1980s. Dick was on the initial 1988 Steering Committee and then a member of the first official SBEA committee between 1989-1990. We send our condolences to his family together with our on-going gratitude for the hard work of Dick and others to establish the SBEA. Our thriving existence today is a testament to him.

Bellarine Wetlands Nature Conservation Reserve *(Rob Hurley)*

The proposal for a park for waterbirds conservation is presented by the Geelong

Environment Council and the Queenscliffe Environment Forum.

The sites proposed for inclusion in the Bellarine State Nature Reserve are:

- Balyang Sanctuary
- Jerringot Wetlands
- Cheetham Salt Fields
- Point Henry Wetlands
- Point Richards Wetlands
- Salt Lagoon St Leonards
- Edwards Point Reserve
- Sand Island and Lagoons
- Lakers Cutting and South-West shoreline of Swan Bay
- Lake Victoria
- Freshwater Lagoon
- Begola Wetlands
- Reedy Lake
- Lake Connewarre Complex
- Lake Murtnaghurt at Barwon Heads
- Lake Lorne, Drysdale
- Macleods Waterholes
- Breamlea – Karaaf Wetlands and Breamlea Flora Reserve
- Blue Water Lagoon

The purpose is to promote and ensure the protection and conservation of these wetlands. They are a component of the natural ecosystems of the Peninsula and absolutely essential for the survival of the many thousands of migratory and resident wading and shore birds. The full report can be downloaded from the Geelong Environment Council website.

<http://www.geelongenvironment.org.au/>