

Blue Swimmer

Newsletter of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent

Issue 6 – June 2006

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Welcome to the Blue Swimmer

Hopefully everyone around the gulf is having a 'swimmingly' good time, although it is possibly a bit too chilly for swimming at present, unless you have a good thick wettie. In this edition you'll find information on the upcoming forum at Pt Vincent, native coastal plants for your garden, calendar of events around the Gulf and much, much more.

Welcome Aboard

A warm welcome to our newest member: Port Vincent Progress Association Inc. If you are not a financial member and would like to become one please contact the treasurer Nick Crouch on Nick.Crouch@tafesa.edu.au or (08) 8372 6887. Membership fees are only \$10 for individuals and groups.

Friends of Gulf St Vincent updates

There are some exciting events in the pipeline for SA Living Artists (SALA) Week including the design and production of a coastal flag, based on the Friends of Gulf St Vincent logo and the creation of the old style fish-boxes by school children.

Henley Beach Primary School students are already busy assembling boxes with help from the City of Charles Sturt, Henley Woodworkers and Friends of Gulf St Vincent. They will decorate them for display at the Henley Community Centre (for more information check out the "Arts Festival to carry an Environmental message" article below).

On a less festive note, concerns have been raised again about plans for a marina at Port Wakefield, with the proponents seeking 'state government approval for "thousands of houses" to be built south and east of Pt Wakefield,' according to The Australian newspaper.



The draft plan of the proposed Port Wakefield development, Wakefield Waters (sourced from YP Country Times).

The coastal and marine environment at Pt Wakefield is quite significant with relatively

undisturbed mangrove and samphire communities. To the north sits Clinton Conservation Park at the head of Gulf St Vincent and to the south the protected shores of the Proof Range have been flagged as a potential site for RAMSAR listing.

Congratulations Dr Scoresby Shepherd and Dr Mike Bossley

Two members of Friends of Gulf St Vincent have received recognition through the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Dr Scoresby Arthur Shepherd received an Officer of the Order of Australia award for service to marine science, particularly in the fields of abalone biology and ecology through research, education and international collaboration, and to the conservation of coastal areas.

Dr Mike Bossley received a Member of the Order of Australia award for service to the protection of marine mammals as a biologist, academic and conservationist and through involvement with a range of organisations that aim to protect these species.

Congratulations!!!

Pt Vincent forum

Following last year's successful event the Friends of Gulf St Vincent are hosting another forum at Pt Vincent for everyone interested in the Gulf or general coast and marine issues.

This year, the forum will feature a number of expert speakers talking about the chapters they are contributing to a book for the Royal Society's Natural History Series, entitled *The Natural History of Gulf St Vincent*.

Some of the topics for the forum will include: -
Intertidal and rocky shores (Kirsten Benkendorff)
Seagrass Fishes (Keith Jones)
Prawns in the gulf (Claire van der Geest)
Threats to the gulf and marine planning (Linda-Marie McDowell)
What can the community do? (Jim Douglas)

For more information check out the Friends of Gulf St Vincent website

<http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/fogsv/index.htm>
or phone Pat on 8522 4714 to register your attendance.

Get to know your gulf forum

Port Vincent Institute

Marine Parade, Pt Vincent

Saturday June 24 2006

9:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Coffees and lunch will be available for \$10

Art Festival to carry an Environmental Message

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent and the Western Adelaide Coastal Residents Association [formally Henley and Grange Residents Assn.] are working with the South Australian Living Artists Festival (SALA) officers to conduct the "Living Coast" arts event in August.

The group have been meeting for many months with six sea side Local Government Councils involved from Pt Adelaide to Pt Noarlunga and many events happening linking the arts to the environment.

Events will include: -

- Photographic and visual art exhibitions,
- Schools from both sides of the Gulf connecting as part of "Casting The Net".
- "Fishing boxes and Jetty Culture" with fish-boxes made by school children
- "Art on the Rocks" a creative and informative walk,
- "Sea Sculptures",
- "Bluey the Crab" in which school children will be able to cast Bluey the cartoon character in their own story and marine situation,
- "Walk In Aquariums"
- The "Friends Of Gulf St Vincent Flag" and much more.

The Living Coast opening event Launch

Saturday 5th August

On the Esplanade,

End of Grange Road at 1pm.

A huge Sea Eagle sculpture will be perched on one of three uneven jetty pylons and the Sea of Flags

will be unveiled and unfurled to show our collective commitment to respect and regenerate Gulf St Vincent.

Every one is invited to celebrate this wonderful event.

More information on the exhibitions and locations can be found in the SALA program.

By Jim Douglas

Wetland "a must" for Torrens River (Breakout Creek)

Recently members of Friends of Gulf St Vincent, Western Adelaide Coastal Residents Association, representatives from Coastal Protection Branch, AMLR Natural Resource Management Board, the Conservation Council of SA and Mayor, CEO & staff of City Charles Sturt met to discuss making a joint application for Federal Government funding through the Water Smart grants program to construct a significant wetland at the lower end of the Torrens River (Breakout Creek).

The proposal of those present is to construct a deep and wide retention wetland that would provide sufficient containment of storm water to cleanse before it travels out to Gulf St Vincent.

The Adelaide Coastal Waters Study so far indicates that the most significant cause of seagrass loss is attributed to the turbidity caused by sediments washed down to sea and remobilised due to wind and tidal movement.

We know that the Torrens River is a major contributor to sediment loads and there is very little opportunity for large wetlands to be installed along the existing creek system.

The largest section of land available is the Breakout Creek stretching more than three kilometres and sufficiently wide enough to take very large volumes of storm water.

We believed there was a window of opportunity to obtain a substantial amount of grant money to improve water quality and to investigate storm water reuse, however we are also realistic enough to know that we would need substantial technical and engineering support.

The City of Charles Sturt and the AMLR NRM Board suggested a feasibility study could be undertaken to ascertain the potential of the project and investigate other suitable locations.

By Jim Douglas

Coastal, yeah we're coastal

This was the title Jeffrey Reid, former president of the Australian Plants Society, provided for a captivating talk on 3rd of June about native coastal plants and the benefit of growing them in your gardens.

Over **100 people** packed into the West Lakes community centre to hear him speak and grab a free coastal plant to help kick start their native coastal gardens.

This successful event was an initiative of Val Wales and other members from the City of Charles Sturt combined Coastcare groups.



Isolepis nodosa



Senecio lautus



Carprobrotus rossii attracts an array of insects

Jeffrey showed an array of indigenous coastal plants and clearly demonstrated they can be as, if not more, attractive and colourful as any other garden species. He also mentioned other benefits of growing local coastal plants in your garden such as; providing habitat for local fauna like butterflies, birds and lizards and by replacing foreign species with native plants the spread of weeds from our gardens into our coastal reserves will be

minimised. And of course, in our current climate local plants have the huge advantage of requiring

little water and maintenance. In fact many will live a very long and happy life by just popping them in the ground, giving them a couple of initial drinks, sitting back and watching them grow.

Now that's my kind of garden!

Beach combers column: - Get to know the Australian Giant Cuttlefish

The Australian Giant Cuttlefish (*Sepia apama*) is the bio-icon of Upper Spencer Gulf, however they often frequent Gulf St Vincent and most beach combers around the Gulf would have seen their eggs or little "surfboard shaped" cuttlebones washed up on the shore, which they may have even taken home for the budgie. Cuttlebones are a bit of a misnomer as the so called "bones" are actually a trait of cephalopods (the family to which Cuttlefish belong), in which the shell has 'shifted' to the inside of the body.



While Cuttlebones sighted on the beach are usually quite drab their appearance and behaviour in the water is far from lacklustre.

They have been called the "chameleons of the sea" and males put on mesmerising visual displays during the breeding season, including sending electric pulses through their body, which create a rippling of metallic colours across their skin.

Perhaps it is their three hearts which create such longing and desire for a mate, but during the mating season the waters in which they breed (in particular the huge spawning grounds at Whyalla) become a frenzy of flashy colour and flailing tentacles.

Image from "Beyond the Coast" documentary produced by SARDI and Flinders University



Curry and Casserole nights at Reedbeds – Dr Anthony Cheshire on "Healthy Seas"

For those who have not attended a Curry & Casserole Night at the Reedbeds Community Centre it is an event combining good food and renowned speakers talking about environmental issues in a relaxed and social atmosphere. Proceeds go towards the Reedbeds Environment Resource Centre and Friends of Patawalonga Creek (a member group of Friends of Gulf St Vincent) making it an even more rewarding night.

The next guest speaker will be Dr Anthony Cheshire who is a founding member of *ReefWatch* in SA, a consultant in marine ecology and member of the Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board, to name but a few of his credentials. He will be talking about "Healthy seas: a vision for Adelaide's coastal waters and environments in 2020.

So if you are going to be in the metropolitan area on Saturday 15th July make a booking and join in the discussions. Bookings are essential to assist with catering (no need to pre-pay). You can book via email littoral@chariot.net.au or by contacting the Reedbeds Community Centre (Ph: 8235 1644).

When: 15th July 2006 6:30pm start
Where: Reedbeds Community Centre, corner of Fitch & Halsey Roads, Fulham
Costs: Meal \$15 (\$10 Friends of Reedbeds, S/P/U)
Attendance at talk only is free

Coastal Branch to trial New Toy

The Coastal Protection Branch have informed beach residents that they are preparing to trial a "Sand Shifter" to transport sand from the southern sides of the Patawalonga and West Beach Boat Harbour groynes.

The Sand Shifter sits in a fixed location on the seabed and fluidises the sand allowing it to flow like liquid and pumped to a dedicated location. As the sand is drawn into the shifter it is screened and the seaweed separated allowing clean sand to be placed directly onto the beach.

The West Beach Boat Harbour has been selected to start the trial during July and August due to the severe erosion of the West Beach dunes.

One always wonders with despair why the Government and developers failed to listen to the people who warned, "that any obstruction to the natural northern sand drift was going to cause severe damage to our coastline".

Let us all hope that this new method of sand movement will prove to be successful in reducing costs and less damaging to our precious environment.

By Jim Douglas

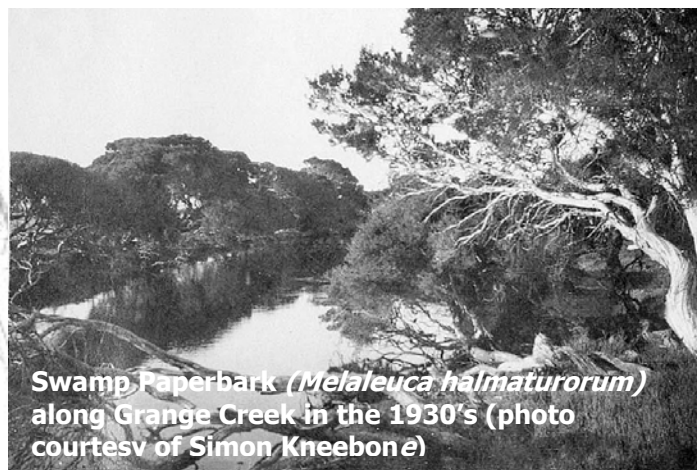
Significant tree register

Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca halmaturorum*) occurring at the remnant Patawalonga Creek in the western suburbs of Adelaide has been accepted by the National Trust of SA for its "Register of Significant Trees" recently.

The significant trees register began in 1983 and although it provides no formal means of protection it acts as a symbolic recognition for trees that have significance due to their rarity, aesthetics, contribution to biodiversity conservation or define our identity or connection to a place. There are over 600 trees (or stands of trees) listed in South Australia. Other trees on the register include one of the first domestic plantings of Quandong in Quorn and an old River Red Gum at Currency Creek which is an old Aboriginal Canoe Tree.

The Swamp Paperbark or Kangaroo Honey-Myrtle is significant at Patawalonga Creek because it is the last stand of the species in the metropolitan area. They can also be found on the southern Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island and parts of Yorke Peninsula. They typically inhabit the brackish waters of estuaries along the coast.

To find out more about the National Trust of SA or significant tree register visit their website at www.sa.nationaltrust.org.au/significant_trees.htm



Birds on beaches

No we're not talking about young lasses in bikinis, but rather those of the feathered variety and in particular the Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*).

The Hooded Plover is an attractive and distinctive wader with black cap, red-ringed eyes and red beak with a black tip (which kind of looks like they have dipped their beak in a pot of ink). It is endemic to Australia (found nowhere else in the world). Unfortunately only about 5000-7000 birds remain.

Their breeding behaviour makes them particularly susceptible to human disturbance. The adult excavates a shallow depression in the beach often lined with flotsam such as seaweed. Compared to other plovers they have a long incubation period of about 4 weeks and once the eggs have hatched the juveniles are flightless for some time. They typically breed from September to January. The long incubation period and camouflaged nests make them susceptible to dogs, bikes, 4WD and pedestrians who may not spot the nest until it is too late.

They are quite picky when it comes to selecting their homes; they tend to occur on broad sandy beaches backed by coastal dune habitat with lots of beach-cast seagrass. They may also be found in inland and coastal saltlakes and occasionally on tidal flats. Unfortunately there are few places left like this that are protected from the impact of humans or predators such as foxes.

To protect the Hooded Plover beach goers should refrain from driving on the beach, keep dogs on leashes, take all litter home or to a bin and be vigilant when walking in known nestings sites. These simple rules will protect all our birds on beaches including other susceptible species such

as Sooty Oystercatchers and Little Terns also found on beaches around the Gulf. Known sightings around the Gulf include near Port Willunga, Black Point, Port Julia, Marion Bay, Foul Bay, Waterloo Bay and a number of sites on Kangaroo Island.

For more information on Hooded Plovers or other birds on our beaches check out the Birds Australia Website www.birdsaustralia.com.au



Photo showing the type of habitat preferred by Hooded Plovers (Photo NY NRM)

Josephine's Journal: upcoming events around the Gulf

For more information about Friends of Gulf St Vincent please contact the secretary; Ian (ianrk@iprimus.com.au). To add your event or workday to Josephine's Journal, contribute an article, photo or snippets of information contact Mel (0418 802 816, melanie-rees@lycos.com).

Future events:

When	What	Further Details
June		
Mon 5 th	World Environment Day	http://www.unep.org/wed/2006/english/
Thurs 8 th	World Ocean's Day	http://www.gdrc.org/oceans/oceans-day.html
Sat 24 th	Get to know you gulf forum, Pt Vincent	http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/fogsv/index.htm
Tues 27 th	Rapid Bay Jetty stakeholder meeting	http://www.rapidbayjetty.org/
July		
Sun 2 nd	Friends of Pat Creek workday	http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/
9 th – 14 th	Catchments to coast international conference, Cairns	www.catchments.org.au/
Thurs 13 th	Public Lectures on Intertidal Monitoring (Reef Watch)	7pm, SA Conservation Centre (Contact Agnès Cantin, 0427 183 734, agnes.cantin@flinders.edu.au)
Sat 15 th	Curry Night – Reedbeds Community Centre.	http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/activities.htm
Fri 28 th	School Tree Day	www.planetark.com/treeday
Sun 30 th	National Tree Day	www.planetark.com/treeday
August		
Frid 4 th	Tide Lines – Port Adelaide (photo competition) Launch	6pm at Café Dom, 61 Semaphore Rd, Semaphore
Sat 5 th	The Living Coast (the Sea Eagle & Sea of Flags) Launch	1pm on the Esplanade, Grange
Sun 6 th	Friends of Pat Creek workday	http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/
Sun 6 th	Beyond Red Launch – (photographic competition)	3:30pm at Henley Hotel, Esplanade, Henley Beach
Mon 7 th	Fishing Boxes/ Jetty Culture (local school art/ craft) Launch	6pm at Henley Community Centre, 196 Military Rd, Henley Beach
Sat 12 th	Tide Lines – Onkaparinga (photo competition) Launch	11:30pm at Aldinga Library, Aldinga Rd

Friends
of Gulf St Vincent

