

# Blue Swimmer

*Newsletter of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent*  
*September 2006*

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## Welcome to the Blue Swimmer

Well winter has ended (not that we really had a decent winter to begin with) and spring appears to be in full swing. Many of the coastal dunes around the gulf are in full flower (see photos in Gulf Views) and birds and reptiles have embraced the warmer weather.

One couldn't ask for better weather to get outdoors and down to the coast to enjoy what the gulf has to offer.

On that happy note this edition of the Blue Swimmer is jam packed with lots of positive outcomes and events including the success of the SALA festival, the retention of the old jetty at Rapid Bay, funding for on ground coastal activities and some progressive steps that are being taken towards management of coastal development. Not to mention the sale of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent flags which were flown proudly during the SALA festival. Order forms for these flags are included in this newsletter.

Another positive note from the recent Science Week in which Friends of Gulf St Vincent member Neville Forde received an "Unsung Hero of SA Science" award for his work on bird and plant interactions. Congratulations!

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent are also about to hold their Annual General Meeting and we welcome everyone to come and join us in what will be an informative and social occasion.

## Welcome Aboard

A warm welcome to our newest members:

Eric Nicholson  
Inshore Fish Group  
Angela Gackle

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](mailto:Nick.Crouch@tafesa.edu.au) or (08) 8372 6887. Membership fees are only \$10 for individuals and groups.

## Invitation to the Friends of Gulf St Vincent Forum and Annual General Meeting

If you have an interest in Gulf St Vincent you are welcome to attend a community forum being held by Friends of Gulf St Vincent with support from the Department of Environment and Heritage. The day will include presentation by coast and marine experts followed by the Friends of Gulf St Vincent's Annual General Meeting.

We are hoping to extend the existing committee by three and therefore if anyone wants to join the executive committee please contact Pat or Ian to register your interest.

**INVITATION TO THE FRIENDS OF GULF ST VINCENT  
FORUM AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**WHEN: Saturday November 25<sup>th</sup> 2006  
10:00am until 4:00pm (lunch provided)  
WHERE: Maslins Beach Community Hall**

To nominate for the committee or RSVP for the forum and AGM please phone or email:  
Pat: [pharbison@adelaide.on.net](mailto:pharbison@adelaide.on.net) (08) 8522 4714 or  
Ian: [ianrk@iprimus.com.au](mailto:ianrk@iprimus.com.au) (08) 8269 3928

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### Will we "love" our coasts to death?

The Environment, Resources and Development Committee are commencing an enquiry into coastal development along the South Australian coastline.

SA's unique and diverse coastal habitat and relatively pristine beaches attract increasing numbers of tourists and those looking for the ultimate "Sea Change".

Whilst the coast is an environment that should be enjoyed by everyone we have to ask whether there is potential to love it *too* much, to the detriment of the coastal ecology and seascapes that draw us to this unique environment in the first place. Not only is the direct destruction of coastal environments an imminent threat, but increased stormwater runoff, habitat fragmentation from inappropriately designed access paths and lack of sewage treatment especially in the more remote seaside developments pose serious threats.

If you have a concern about the impact of coastal development on the natural surroundings make your concerns heard. Submissions to the enquiry can be made to:-

Presiding Member of the ERCD  
GPO Box 572  
Adelaide, SA 5001

[Erdc.assembly@parliament.sa.gov.au](mailto:Erdc.assembly@parliament.sa.gov.au)

Or for further information visit  
<http://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/committees/committee.asp?doCmd=show&intID=131>

or call

the Secretary (08) 8237 9387  
the Research Officer (08) 8237 9277

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### Environmental change in our coastal wetlands

Eric Nicholson, a PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide, is currently undertaking a research project entitled "Environmental change in the coastal wetlands near Adelaide, as inferred via diatom analysis of mangrove sediments".

The results of this project will hopefully determine the major environmental factor(s) driving changes in coastal diatom assemblages and the magnitude of impact that anthropogenic activity has had on the coastal wetlands near Adelaide.

Eric expects to continue fieldwork in the mangroves north of Adelaide until about April 2007. Scheduled trips will occur in early October, mid December of 2006 and mid January, early February, early March and early April next year.

A brief description of his project is delineated below. If anyone is interested in registering to volunteer on what will no doubt be an informative project, or would like more information about this work, you can contact Eric (contact details below). Eric has a strong background in limnology and wetland ecology with an interest in conservation and restoration activities. He undertook a Bachelor of Science (Honours) at the University of Waterloo in Canada and has since worked on Benthic ecology in Canada and Orangutan Health in Sumatra.

#### Project summary

Australia has a strong coastal culture that is being further developed by the phenomenon called 'sea change'. Increasing migration to coastal regions, whether urban or rural, is a demographic trend that negatively affects Australia's coastal environment. Coastal wetlands are susceptible to anthropogenic activities, notably the effects of sewage discharge and stormwater runoff. The result of this land-based activity is the loss and degradation of temperate marine wetlands. Metropolitan Adelaide is an example of an urban centre where one 'sea change' appears to be leading to another, more literal sea change.

The coastal wetlands near Adelaide are comprised almost exclusively of the Grey Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*). This native vegetation is a natural resource that has numerous suggested functions, including coastal buffering, mitigation of terrestrially derived nutrient runoff, fish nursery habitat and also ecotourism. Much of the coastal wetlands to be studied in this project lie within two marine protected areas that extend from Barker

Inlet to Port Gawler. As such, it is important to understand how this coastal environment once existed so as to provide a reference for how to optimise current natural resource management practices.



In the relatively calm marine environment provided by the Grey Mangrove, sediments are trapped amongst the roots and pneumatophores. Within these sediments fossilised diatoms (a single-celled algae capable of fossilising due to high cellular silica content) may exist thereby providing a means of reconstructing past environmental conditions for the region. Diatoms have the potential to act as strong indicators of environmental changes as has been shown through numerous freshwater studies and increasingly in coastal and marine studies.

Ultimately, through a diatom-based reconstruction of past environmental conditions in the coastal wetlands near Adelaide, a template for planning potential restoration programs may be provided.



**Figure 1. Project Study Region.**

The mangrove wetlands are outlined in green.

Knowledge of how the coastal ecosystem existed prior to European settlement, as well as how the system responds to various environmental changes (particularly as a result of anthropogenic activity)

may aid in the development of practical and sustainable environmental policies.

By Eric Nicholson

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DP313

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### All the colour from the SALA festival

Recently Friends of Gulf St Vincent assisted with some of the exhibitions during the SA Living Arts Festival. Some of the wonderful pieces of artwork showcased during the festival, with a "Gulf" or "coast & marine" theme, are shown below.



The Friends of Gulf St Vincent flag displayed along with the wonderful fish boxes created by Primary School Students during SALA Week (photo courtesy of I Kirkegaard)



Primary schoolers display of 'Fishing Boxes' at Henley & Grange Community Centre (Photo courtesy I Kirkegaard)



"Christies Beach 2" by Fernando Goncalves at exhibition entitled Tide Lines. Prints are available for sale by contacting Fernando (media@innocent.com)



"Tourville Bay" by Fernando Goncalves at exhibition entitled beyond RED. Prints are available for sale by contacting Fernando (media@innocent.com)



Indiana James' Sea Eagle sculpture watches over the large crowd of spectators who gathered at the end of Henley Beach Road to see its' unveiling (photo courtesy J Douglas)

## Rapid Bay Jetty to be saved!

The old jetty at Rapid Bay built during the 1940's is to be retained whilst building a new 260m jetty to provide access for fishers and divers. Whilst the old woody jetty is derelict, it is an icon and the pylons and shelter from the jetty provided a haven for many reef species. Removal of the old jetty could have induced much environmental damage and so the outcome of building a new jetty whilst still maintaining the old one has benefits for all, both the local environment and tourism.

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## Funding opportunities for on ground activities

### Coastal Participation Grants – coastal areas across the state

The Coast Protection Board manages the Coastal Participation Grants program to support local community participation in management of the coast. Grants are delivered through coastal councils to continue to foster the partnerships between the State Government and local governments. The Coastal Participation Grants program will target community groups that have had little or no previous engagement with the Natural Heritage Trust.

For further information please contact Carole Hutchens on 8124 4877 or email

[hutchens.carole@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:hutchens.carole@saugov.sa.gov.au)

For an application form and more information you can also visit

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/coasts/pdfs>

### Funding opportunities along the Gulf in the Northern and Yorke Region

Funding is available for on ground activities through the Northern and Yorke NRM Board's *nrm Action Program*. The Northern and Yorke region covers coastline from Middle Beach in the south, the whole of the Yorke Peninsula to Blanche Harbour in the north.

Activities along the coast previously approved for funding include fencing, bollards or railing to exclude both stock and unauthorised public access (especially 4WD) on fragile coastal habitats, environmental weed control work in coastal remnants and revegetation with local native species. Other projects, which have a positive benefit on the coastal environment through on ground activities, may be considered for funding.

Applications are as simple as a phone call to the On Ground Works Coordinator or your local NRM Officer. Technical officers will visit the site to discuss ideas for on ground activities and develop an application for funding with you on site. Funding is provided on a cost-sharing basis with applicants required to contribute towards the cost of the project (this can include in-kind labour valued at \$25/hr).

Applicants can register their interest in funding at any time (given sufficient notice of when a project is planned to commence) by contacting one of the following people: -

*On Ground Works Coordinator* – Mel Rees  
(08) 8842 6256  
[Rees.melanie2@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:Rees.melanie2@saugov.sa.gov.au)

*NRM Officers:* -

David Sloper – Kadina (08) 8821 1555  
Deb Allen – Pt Augusta (08) 8648 5177  
Mike Head – Clare (08) 8842 6255

### **Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges funding**

For information of funding opportunities along the coastline in the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges region (Middle Beach to Middleton) contact the Coastal Project Coordinator on (08) 8278 0619 or your local Coastal officer.

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### **Cheltenham Park Racecourse's future still in limbo.**

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent have drafted a submission to the Land Management Corporation (LMC) in relation to Cheltenham Park, which we hope can be utilised as a wetland or for Aquifer Storage and Recovery to help minimise polluted urban runoff entering the Gulf. This site offers one of the last areas of open space in metropolitan Adelaide to treat substantial quantities of stormwater. An independent assessment of the site indicates that the Cheltenham catchment (about 500ha) could provide half a million kilolitres for aquifer recharge. The aquifer under Cheltenham is also contiguous with the depleted aquifer at Virginia and the result could be a potential return of several million dollars worth of reusable water a year. At present the site is earmarked for private sale and residential development.

The Land Management Corporation has submitted plans on the proposed residential redevelopment should the sale of the site proceed which are presented on their website at [www.lmc.sa.gov.au](http://www.lmc.sa.gov.au).

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### **Who thought boxthorns could be useful?**

This season wasn't exactly fantastic for coastal rehabilitation work given the unusually dry winter and the extreme frosts which had impacts along much of the coast. The combination of these two factors has probably resulted in many of this season's revegetation works having poor success, however below are a couple of ingenious ideas from a landholder on Yorke Peninsula, which may help save money by using the regenerative capacity of nature to do the work for us.

#### **Waste not want not!**

Blowouts in dunes are a relatively common feature around the Gulf. Whilst coastal dunes are dynamic and naturally will move and drift, previous removal of native vegetation in some areas has resulted in unnatural and unsightly erosion of dunes.

Typically management of such areas has involved activities like drift-net fencing or revegetation to try and stabilise the area, but such methods are costly. Another well-known method is to lay brush or natural barriers that will help trap moving sand and native seed. This is a cheap method but in the past many of the species used (such as brush) have been native or dead branches have been used from remnant vegetation. This dead wood is better left where it is to provide shelter and hollows for coastal fauna. One thing, which appears to be in no short supply in the coastal environment, is boxthorns (a proclaimed weed which landholders are responsible for removing).

In the photo below the landholders have used the dead boxthorns to help stabilise what was once a huge blow out. The boxthorns have proven very effective as the thorns tend to grasp the sand and therefore do not tumble along the dunes with the first gust of wind. Just ensure the boxthorns are dried out and remove any berries before using. In the situation below the landholders have laid the boxthorns and after one season sand has accumulated against the boxthorns and natives started to regenerate.



boxthorns accumulating drifting sand

previous boxthorns have trapped sand and native seed

### Are tree guards costing you a fortune?

Another great use for dead boxthorns is to use them as barriers to prevent rabbits and kangaroos from nibbling your new seedlings. Pick a small patch to revegetate or let regenerate naturally and lay a barrier of prickly boxthorns around the work. The landholders have found that roos and bunnies will not risk being spiked by those frighteningly sharp thorns to get at your young plants. An added bonus is that the boxthorns will deteriorate naturally unlike tree guards, which can be easy to forget and not removed until it is too late.



native pine regenerating

boxthorns laid around plants

### Gulf Views: Spring scenes from around the Gulf



Painted dragon



Lotus australis flowers



Young Bearded Dragon



Carpobrotus rossii flowers

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:melanie-rees@lycos.com)).

#### Future events:

When	What	Further Details
<b>October</b>		
20 <sup>th</sup>	Reef Watch Quiz Night	For more info or to book a table email <a href="mailto:info@reefwatch.asn.au">info@reefwatch.asn.au</a>
15 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup>	National Water Week	<a href="http://www.savewater.com.au/">http://www.savewater.com.au/</a>
<b>November</b>		
6 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	National Recycling Week	<a href="http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/9/story.htm">http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/9/story.htm</a>
25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Friends of Gulf St Vincent Forum and AGM</b>	<b>Ian: <a href="mailto:ianrk@iprimus.com.au">ianrk@iprimus.com.au</a> (08) 8269 3928</b> <b>Pat: <a href="mailto:pharbison@adelaide.on.net">pharbison@adelaide.on.net</a> (08) 8522 4714</b>
<b>December</b>		
5 <sup>th</sup>	International Volunteer Day	<a href="http://www.ifrc.org/voluntee/volday.asp">http://www.ifrc.org/voluntee/volday.asp</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Coastcare Week	<a href="http://www.landcareonline.com/page.asp?pID=78">http://www.landcareonline.com/page.asp?pID=78</a>



THOSE WHO ADMIRE THE FRIENDS OF GULF ST VINCENT'S NEW FLAG DURING ITS UNFURLING AT SALA WEEK NOW HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN.

IF WE CAN GET ENOUGH ORDERS WE CAN OFFER A 1 METRE LONG VERSION OF THE FLAG FOR \$70 DELIVERED. PLUS AS AN ADDED BONUS THOSE WHO ORDER FLAGS WILL RECEIVE ONE-YEAR FREE FRIENDS OF GULF ST VINCENT MEMBERSHIP.

THE FLAG COULD ADORN YOUR BOAT, SAILING CLUB, SURF-LIFE SAVING CLUB OR BE FLOWN FROM A FLAG POLE AT YOUR HOUSE OR COMMUNITY VENUE. THE FLAGS WOULD ADD A BIT OF COLOUR AND SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING GULF ST VINCENT. MANY OF THE COASTAL COUNCILS HAVE ALREADY PURCHASED LARGER VERSIONS OF THE FLAG AND WILL FLY THEM ON 'COASTAL AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL OCCASSIONS'.

YOUR FLAG WOULD BE PROCESSED IN 4 COLOURS, MIRROR IMAGED, ON WOVEN POLYESTER AND SEWN TO SUIT A FLAG POLE.

**Friends of Gulf St Vincent Flag Order Form**

NAME: .....

POSTAL ADDRESS:.....

.....

TOWN/CITY..... STATE..... POST CODE.....

PHONE NUMBER:.....

NUMBER OF FLAGS REQUESTED:.....

Order form can be sent to Ian Kirkegaard before November 30<sup>th</sup>:  
 8 Severn Street GILBERTON, SA 5081  
 Alternatively just email your contact details and how many flags you  
 would like to: [ianrk@iprimus.com.au](mailto:ianrk@iprimus.com.au)  
 For enquiries phone (08) 82693928