

banksia

bulletin

summer 2017-18

**Summer
by the Sea**

**Welcome, Friends
of Beaumaris
Reserve**

**Egrets and
Herons Part II**

From the Mayor

Welcome to the Summer edition of *Banksia Bulletin*.

It is my privilege to be writing this column as the newly elected Mayor of Bayside City Council.

If anyone has seen the video showcasing what your councillors are passionate about, you will know that my passion is the environment.

Ricketts Point is most certainly a jewel in our crown and a place I just love to visit regularly.

It is great to hear from so many of our young residents, telling Council that the environment is their passion too.

I have been visiting quite a few schools recently and the main thing the children are telling us is – the environment is priority number one!

It is therefore our job to educate these young minds about conservation and preservation of our local habitat, our marine life, our bird life and why protecting the indigenous species

that thrive in Bayside's heathlands and reserves and along our beautiful foreshore is so important.

It is publications like *Banksia Bulletin* that will help provide this education and enhance enthusiasm to conserve and protect our environment.

I would like to thank all of our Friends groups for the hours of volunteering they put in to look after our reserves and heathlands, and in doing so welcome Beaumaris Reserve Friends Group.

I encourage all readers of *Banksia Bulletin* to pass it on to other members of your family, your friends and your neighbours, because the stories in here show the work that is required on the ground and the tremendous effort that volunteers put in.

Let's get that passion for the environment really gaining momentum across our municipality in 2018.

On behalf of Bayside City Council, I wish you all a safe and happy



Christmas and New Year and I look forward to being involved in the great work you do.

Cr Laurence Evans

Mayor
Bayside City Council



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Cover image: Common Aotus (*Aotus ericoides*)
by Pauline Reynolds.



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Plants of Bayside

With Aaron Hurrell of
Citywide Parks and Gardens

Small-leaved Clematis

Clematis microphylla, commonly known as the Small-leaved Clematis, is a climbing plant that grows up to 5 metres high, can be found growing in a multitude of different environments, and is often found in Bayside's parks and along the coastline. The Small-leaved Clematis is a dense, medium-sized climber and can be found in a variety of forms.



Small-leaved Clematis
(*Clematis microphylla*)

The small leaves, ranging from 8-47mm long and 5-18mm wide, are found on opposite sides of the stem in groups of three, with nine leaflets. It can twine around other stems.

The star-like cream coloured flowers are found between the months of July and October, with the feathery fruit appearing between November and February.

Though preferring well-drained soils with full sun to semi-shade, the Small-leaved Clematis can be found growing in many areas, making it a very suitable garden plant.

Clematis can have a habit of smothering other plants but can handle being cut back. It can be grown from cutting material as well as seed.

Small-leaved Clematis can be a very useful plant.

It can be trained to grow along lattice or wire fencing and looks very attractive when in flower.

Clematis had many uses for Aboriginal people. The tap root was cooked and kneaded to make a dough, stem bases for axe hafts, root fibres for weaving, the leaves crushed and inhaled for headache relief and the young roots could be eaten raw.

The Small-leaved Clematis can be mistaken for the closely related to the *Clematis decipiens*, or the Slender Clematis, and for a long time were even considered to be the same species.

The Small-leaved Clematis can be purchased from the Bayside Community Nursery, although in many gardens, Clematis can pop up randomly.

Source: pp. 131-132 Bull, Marilyn (1991) *Flora of Melbourne: A guide to the indigenous plants of the greater Melbourne area* Carlton Vic: Hyland House Publishing



Citywide's new recruit

Taylor Davine

Citywide Parks and Gardens

I have always been enthusiastic about nature, wildlife and the environment, so I was thrilled to start a parks and gardens apprenticeship with Citywide in July 2017.

My career aspirations include working across the beaches, parks, gardens, reserves and bushlands that Bayside has to offer. I am delighted to be learning about new indigenous plants daily.

In the Beaumaris Long Hollow Heathland, I discovered Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictum*) with its fragrant violet flowers in full bloom.

Here too are beautiful clusters of Common Rice-Flower (*Pimelea humilis*), with its attractive foliage and flowers.

Also in Beaumaris, Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary houses the beautiful pink-tinged Heath Tea-Tree (*Leptospermum myrsinoides*).

Discovering these plants has been exciting, and I look forward to exploring Bayside further, expanding my plant knowledge with the expert team at Citywide, and sharing it with the community.



Friends of Beaumaris Reserve up and running

By Chris Sutton

Convenor Beaumaris Reserve Friends Group

After several years in the planning, the Beaumaris Reserve Friends Group has finally been launched and held its first working bee on Sunday 20 August.

Many surrounding residents have long considered themselves informal friends of the Beaumaris Reserve (the Community Centre on Reserve Road). Their efforts include watering new trees, helping the stressed fauna and birds during hot summers, picking up rubbish and supporting Council efforts to retain and nurture the many indigenous species across the Reserve.

Joining me as initial Friends are Kelly Royle and Greg Mier. Between the three of us, we have lived in Beaumaris for 150 years!

The Beaumaris Reserve is a special area of open space.

The entrance to the library has a plaque reminding visitors that 65 years ago the residents of Beaumaris conceived the idea of a Community Centre to provide 'spiritual and moral well-being, physical comfort, healthy recreation and cultural interests of the whole community'.

This vision of healthy recreation and cultural interests has been realised with the Community Centre being home to the Beaumaris library, community hall, playground, Senior Citizens' Club, University of the Third Age, Beaumaris Art Group and the cricket, tennis and soccer sporting clubs.

Just as importantly, the Beaumaris Community Centre has realised the vision of providing vital public space to Beaumaris residents for the spiritual and moral well-being and physical comfort provided from passive recreation.

Over the years, the Community Centre has hosted many events and community groups including RSL marches, the infamous Saturday night dance (once



For over 50 years Beaumaris resident Margaret and her border collies have enjoyed the beauty of a daily walk around the Beaumaris Community Centre.



Gracefully arching tea tree typifies the vegetation spread across the Beaumaris Community Centre open spaces.



Newly planted indigenous species by the Friends of Beaumaris Reserve Group enjoyed the rains in early December.

headlined by Marcia Hines and Skyhooks), ballet classes, little athletics, football, school sports days, even a dog show.

Some may remember the sight of lions and elephants on the oval when the circus came to town in the 1970s.

For many years after the hall was built in the early 1960s, the frontage to Reserve Road was an eyesore of barren car parks and lawns.

The planting of many species and an informal garden treatment in front of the library has restored Beaumaris' vegetated character to most of the frontage along Reserve Road. However, many areas of the reserve are in need of weed clearing and revegetation.

The vision of the Beaumaris Reserve Friends Group includes working with Bayside City Council to assist implementing the Beaumaris Reserve Masterplan 2008.

Specific tasks will include restoring and revegetating the remnant bushland areas with indigenous species, protecting the integrity of vegetated

areas for both passive and non-passive users, weeding, and improving wildlife habitat. One important planned action is to complete the informal planting along Reserve Road from the library to Victor Street.

Planned activities for 2018 include removing creeper and weeds and spreading mulch along the rear of the oval.

On behalf of the Beaumaris Reserve Friends Group, I would like to thank Council officers Jill Robinson and Damian Carr for helping us organise our Action Plan and Council approvals, and Paul Tope from Citywide for helping at our working bees held in October and November.

As relevant as it was 65 years ago, the Beaumaris Community Centre is for the whole community. Please, come along to our next working bee, say hello and join as a 'friend'.

We look forward to many fellow residents getting involved with the Friends Group to help achieve our objectives.

Turn to page 18-19 for more details and working bee dates in early 2018.



Careful where you tread

Banjo Frog

By Michael Norris

Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Around 200 years ago, Eastern Grey Kangaroos lived in Bayside. Weighing up to 100 kilograms, they are the heaviest marsupial, but their impact on the soil would have been nothing like that of the numerous humans that walk and run around our open spaces these days.

One result is soil compaction, which can suppress some plants but make room for others. Those flocks of galahs on sports fields and golf courses are mainly digging for the corms of the South African Onion Weed *Romulea rosea* that would probably not be there without human foot pressure.

Treating the soil may be the best way of tackling this and some other weeds. However, the crushing of young plants and the often ignored mosses and liverworts can cause irreparable harm.

Our feet can damage wildlife too. Native wasps, bees and spider burrows are all delicate, often found in bare sand that appears to be safe to walk on.

Look out for the attractive blue and black Sand Wasps *Bembix* sp. along the foreshore paths in summer, and enjoy watching what they get up to.

Recently, I had two more reminders to be careful. One was at the Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary near an artificial fibreglass pond. Late last year the 'friends' cleaned mud and much else from that pond and were amazed when Johann Tiede of Citywide found tadpoles in December.

They were still growing in November, which suggests they are immature Banjo Frogs or Pobblebonks (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*), which can



Sugar Ant turrets



take 15 months from birth to turn into adults.

At the September working bee, I fished out a couple to show others and then took two young helpers to return them to the pond. Thank heaven for their sharp eyes as I almost trod on the Banjo Frog pictured. Maybe the tadpoles were its offspring.

Six days later, I was touring the Sandringham Golf Course to discuss conservation issues. At one point, I realised the party was in danger of walking on some of the entrances to Sugar Ant (*Camponotus* sp.) nests. The entry holes, made by ants about

1cm long, were about 3cm wide with the tallest turret around 12cm high.

By later that month, they had all been flattened. Maybe by machinery, but probably also by feet.

They will most likely rise again since Sugar Ants are well-used to rebuilding, for instance after rain.

So, does walking on nests, a frog, a wasp burrow really matter? Yes.

For example, Sugar Ants should be numerous but I am not aware of them thriving anywhere in Bayside. Maybe that's because they are one of the canaries in our coal mine but, in any case, their contribution to our ecology is diminished.



The precautionary principle applies: if in doubt don't tread on it.

Isotome update

By Rob Saunders
Rare Plants Group

In the Summer 2016/17 edition of *Banksia Bulletin*, the Rare Plants Group reported on Jason Stewart's re-discovering of Swamp Isotome (*Isotoma fluviatilis* ssp. *australis*) growing at Cheltenham Golf Course.

As far as we knew, it was the only local remnant of a plant that must have been more widespread before settlement.

Since then, we have grown the plant from a couple of tiny pieces Jason

collected for identification purposes. The results have been amazing.

Swamp Isotome is a carpeting ground cover that grows quickly and easily, and flowers prolifically with a massed display over a long period from late spring.

It takes full sun or part shade, but it needs to have moisture.

According to Elliot & Jones (*Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants* Vol 5, 1990), Swamp Isotome is excellent for the edges of paths, driveways and beside pools. It is ideal for growing

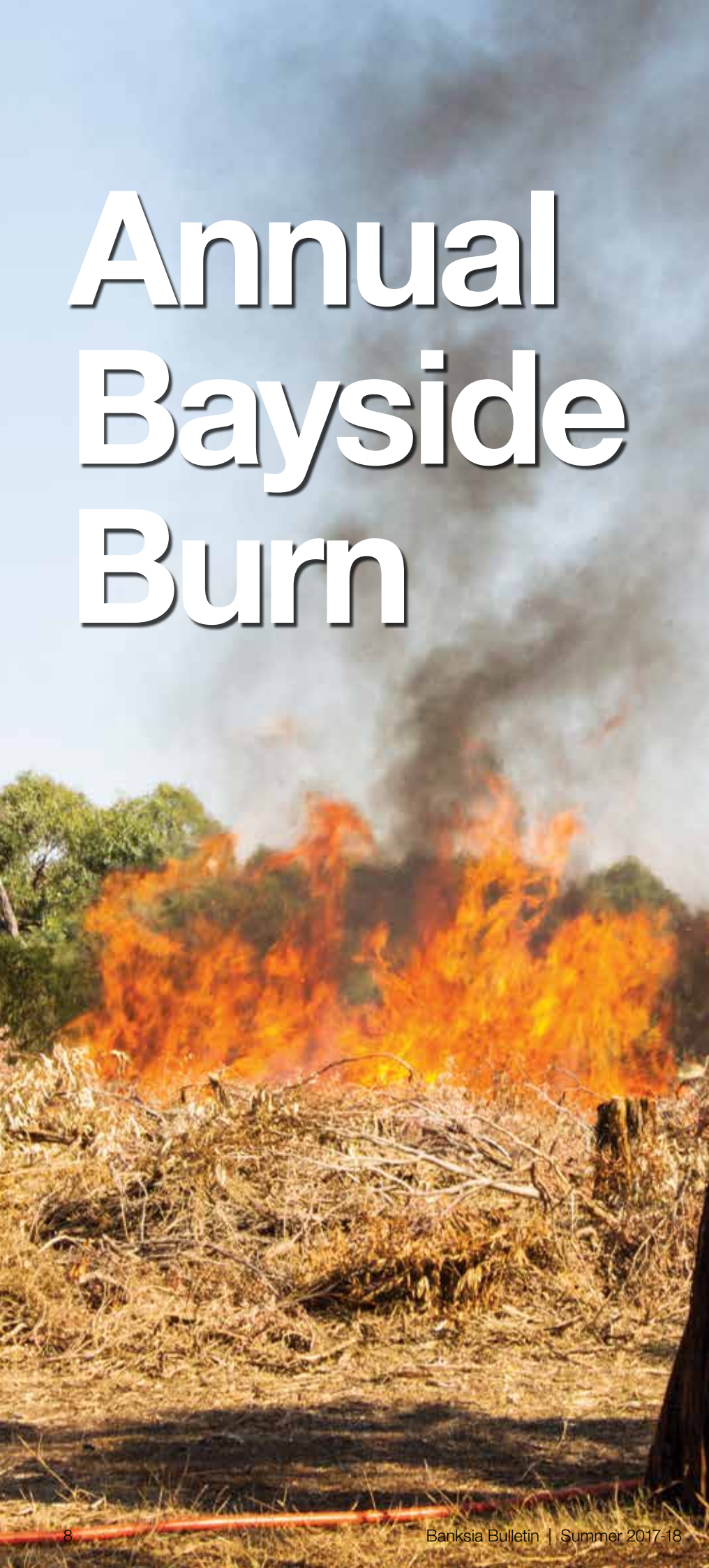


in crevices in brick paving and even tolerates light foot traffic. It sometimes grows very well in lawns.

If Native Violet (*Viola hederacea*) has been successfully grown, it is likely that Swamp Isotome will be successful.

Keep an eye out for Swamp Isotome at the Bayside Community Nursery next year.

Annual Bayside Burn



By Johann Tiede

Citywide

Photos by Kim Croker

As we reach the end of 2017, the Citywide bushland crew will shortly begin preparations for Bayside's annual controlled burn. Each year Citywide is entrusted to decide which of our seven heathlands would be the most appropriate site for burning. This decision is supported by the recommendations of ecological specialists who assessed the bushlands of Bayside in 2015 and identified optimum timing regimes for regeneration burns at each heathland.

The annual controlled burning of heathlands is hugely beneficial to the ecosystems that they contain.

Many variables are taken into account when deciding which heathland will undergo a controlled burn each year.



In determining the heathland, the following questions are considered:

- Are we going to see significant benefit to the specific ecosystem?
- Are we going to be able to control invasive species that may compete with the newly germinating vegetation?
- Viable seed doesn't last forever. If we leave the heathland for any longer, are we at risk of losing much of the seed bank?
- Are we going to be able to complete the burn in a manner that is safe for the neighbouring public?

After working through these variables, it has been decided that the most appropriate candidate for the 2018 controlled burn will be the Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary.

Bay Road is home to a significant population of *Banksia marginata* or Silver Banksia, which relies heavily on the occurrence of fire in order for its seed to germinate correctly.

Being such a well maintained, though old heathland, many of the existing *Banksias* are very mature.

The remaining specimens are producing limited viable seed and without fire there is a lack of immature trees to replace the ageing population.

It is therefore vital that a controlled burn take place to successfully supplement the existing population and ensure that the existing seed bank and all of the genetics that it contains are not lost.

The *Banksia marginata* is only one of the many significant species that is contained within the Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary.

A quick look and it is easy to see some of the more prolific species such as the *Leptospermum myrsinoides*, *Leptospermum continentale* and *Acacia mearnsii*.

However with a little more time, some of the less prevalent species to Bayside such as the *Dillwynia cinerascens*,

Hypolaena fastigiata and *Thysanotus patersonii* can also be found.

A burn within the heathland will bring with it a large amount of work and as such the help that we receive from the Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary is greatly appreciated.

This group runs from 10am to 12pm on the second Saturday of every month and new members are always welcome.

Some Bayside residents are aware of the importance of fire to native vegetation and I encourage them to share this information with neighbours and friends about the positive effects controlled burns have on Bayside's reserves and heathlands. Local residents adjacent to the heathland will receive a letter in the coming weeks to notify them in advance of the proposed date and time of the burn.

Future publications of *Banksia Bulletin* will provide an update on the controlled ecological burn.



SUMMER BY THE SEA

– explore, learn and
discover Bayside's
environmental treasures

The Bayside Environmental Friends Network (BEFN) is gearing up to deliver another fantastic calendar of summer events for residents and visitors this January.

The Summer by the Sea 2018 program kicks off on Tuesday 2 January 2018 and will feature a host of family-friendly activities centred around Port Phillip Bay.

Highlights of Summer by the Sea

EXPLORE

The abundance of local wildlife living in Bayside.
The modern treasure hunt where family teams use GPS-enabled devices to find a hidden geocache.



LEARN

History and culture of our First People – the Boon Wurrung people and how they managed this land.
Beach formation over millennia on a guided walk that includes discussion about the trends and impacts of sand movement, history of local rock geology, issues of coastal erosion and spot Bayside's living museums of local fossils.

DISCOVER

Take a guided tour with local experts to learn about the amazing natural colours, textures, shapes and sights along our foreshores.
Rock pool rambles, shell discovery beach walks and guided snorkelling.



INCLUSIVE

Disabled Beach Access and Snorkelling providing people of all abilities the opportunity to experience a day at the beach.

Join the fun of Summer by the Sea 2018

DATE	TIME	EVENT NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Saturday 6 and 27 January	10–11am	Rock Pool Ramble	Beaumaris Lifesaving Club, grassed area adjacent to club and car park	A one-hour walk and talk to find out who and what lives on our rocky shores. Get up close and personal to discover the colourful and strange looking creatures that lurk in the rock pools of coastal Victoria.
Saturday 6 January	10–11am	Sea Country – A foreshore walk	Beaumaris Yacht Club at the disabled access ramp, adjacent to car park	Take a guided foreshore walk and talk to learn about the 60 000+ years of Aboriginal people's presence in Australia. Discover how the Boon Wurrung (local First People) cared for, utilised and lived in harmony with their Sea Country.
Wednesday 10 January	10–11am and 12–1pm	Disabled Snorkelling	Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary, Beaumaris	Disabled Snorkelling, delivered by the Disabled Divers Association (DDA), provides people of various abilities the opportunity to experience a day at the beach in a new light.
Saturday 13 and 20 January	9–10am	Snorkelling Experience	Beaumaris Yacht Club, disabled access ramp, adjacent to car park	A one-hour introduction to the enchanting underwater fish and other marine life, reefs and seagrasses of the Teahouse Reef in the Sanctuary. Take part also in a separate 45 minute snorkelling lesson in the shallow 'inner lagoon' for beginners. Visit www.marinecare.org.au for further information about snorkelling.
Saturday 13 January	10–11am	Country – A foreshore plants and heritage walk	Ricketts Point Teahouse, Beaumaris	This insightful session is an introduction to many indigenous plants of Ricketts Point, and their role in traditional Aboriginal food and culture. Easy one-hour walk and talk along mostly grassed area.
Saturday 13 January	10–12pm	Dog's Breakfast	Sandown Spit, Brighton, look for signage	Breakfast for both dogs and humans provided along with information from the Citywide Bushland and Nursery crews including the local environment and the importance of keeping dogs on a lead in sensitive vegetation, bird habitat and more.
Sunday 14 January	9.30–11am	Our Evolving Coastline	Sandringham coastline via beach path, meet at the playground (beachside) opposite Sims Street	A fascinating guided walk and talk to learn how beaches form over millennia, the trends and impacts of sand movement, the history of local rock geology, issues of coastal erosion, Bayside's living museums of local fossils and more.
Tuesday 16 January	8.30–9.45pm	Microbats by the Sea	Ricketts Point, Beaumaris, meet at the foreshore Car park south of Ricketts Point Teahouse	Explore Ricketts Point foreshore at dusk and discover the abundance of wildlife living here. Learn about our small flying mammals, their importance in our ecosystem and use equipment to see them in digital format.
Tuesday 16 January	9am for 9.30am start–12pm	Geocaching	Cheltenham Flora & Fauna Reserve	Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. This fun outdoor activity is suitable for the whole family.
Saturday 20 January	10–11am	Beach Walk, Shells and Seaweeds Experience	Beaumaris Yacht Club	Discover the diverse array of shellfish and seaweed at Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary and learn about their interactions and surprising encounters during this one-hour walk and talk.
Saturday 20 January	10–11am	Foreshore geology and fossil walk	Beaumaris Yacht Club	Explore rock outcrops in the sanctuary for an appreciation of how environmental conditions have evolved at Ricketts Point over the last six million years during this one-hour walk and talk.
Sunday 21 January	6.30–9.30pm	Geocaching	Cheltenham Flora & Fauna Reserve	Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. This fun outdoor activity is suitable for the whole family.
Tuesday 23 January	9–10.30am	Discover Bayside's Coastal Wonders	Half Moon Bay, Black Rock, meet at the northern end of Love Street (beach) car park	Experience Bayside's beloved Half Moon Bay in a new light. Using clue cards, discover the amazing natural colours, textures, shapes and sights you will experience on a guided walk with our local experts. Bring your family and friends.
Thursday 25 January	4.15–5.30pm	Shell Safari & Nurdle Hunt	Middle Brighton beach, meet on beach walking path, where the Esplanade & Park St intersect. Just south of beach car park B2. Look for marquee.	Nurdle hunt! Hundreds of plastic pre-production pellets have been found on Bayside beaches and in streams flowing into the Bay. Learn about the issues of plastic pollution and what we can do about it.



SUMMER BY THE SEA

Numbers are limited for many of the Summer by The Sea events.

Avoid disappointment by booking online at www.summerbythesea.vic.gov.au/

For more information and booking links, visit:

[f/summerbythesea/](https://www.facebook.com/summerbythesea/)

[f/Bayside-Environmental-Friends-Network-178293368874446/](https://www.facebook.com/Bayside-Environmental-Friends-Network-178293368874446/)

Weeds at work, George Street Reserve

Words by Valerie Tarrant
Photos by Pauline Reynolds

The tackling of Bracken is a demanding task but a necessary one when it becomes dominant and crowds out other species.

Such was the situation when the Friends of George Street Reserve gathered for its October working bee and concentrated on removing a number of these plants.

Bracken has many uses. Australian Aboriginal women, while foraging for

food, would look for the rhizomes of young ferns and prepare them to make small cakes from a mixture that involved washing and beating into a paste. The small cakes would then be roasted in hot ashes.

As well as being a staple food, Bracken had medicinal properties. The juice from young fronds can stop itching and some soreness from bites. As a child I gained comfort from this remedy after being bitten by a Bull Ant.

Gardeners may shred the ferns collected in late Spring, mix them with manure and add to compost, gaining the addition of potash which is present at that time of the year.

A Black Rock neighbour once told me that he and his friends would play near the Cheltenham railway and pick Bracken to weave into the strands of the line's wire fence. Some bushwalkers have made a kind of bed by using heaps of Bracken to place under their sleeping bags.

People have reported that the fern makes a good habitat for Superb Fairy Wrens and White-browed Scrub wrens, so that provides another reason for valuing the plant.

The George Street Bracken grows inside the Tulip Street Reserve boundary fence and can be easily seen from the pathway.

Close to the You Yangs is a sanctuary, which like our Bayside reserves, is a haven for birds and supported by a Friends group. The Kevin Hoffman Walk is named after its founder who turned into reality his vision of creating an oasis for plants and wildlife – 'there are gentle paths that allow the walker to wander and explore the many stimulating sensations of the Australian bush ... in the 1.3km along Hovells Creek.'

Listeners may hear honeyeaters, magpies, rosellas and watch native wood ducks on a spring-fed pond.

Walkers can enjoy the track with nearby gums and grasses, and reflect on the efforts of 'friends' who, like the George Street Reserve volunteers and staff from Bayside City Council and Citywide, weed out invaders and plant local species.

Acknowledgments

'Birds in Backyards: Stand up for "Bracken"'. [webcache. googleusercontent.com](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com)

Gardeners' Gazette Autumn 2017
Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria.



Keeping roads litter-free

By Derek Jones

Convenor Friends of Bayside Roads

Since the Friends of Bayside Roads pilot program was launched earlier this year, the eight-member litter patrol team and its support group of a further eight people have collected around 750 large bags of roadside litter around parks and gardens, sporting arenas, golf courses and public open spaces including car parks and civic infrastructure.

Following the successful completion of the pilot program, which has been strongly supported by Bayside City Council, Royal Melbourne Golf Club and Sandringham Golf Links, Friends of Bayside Roads convenor Derek Jones has started preparing for the launch of stage two of the program.

The friends group is now seeking volunteers from Council's southern ward neighbourhoods — Sandringham, Black Rock, Beaumaris and Cheltenham — for eight new patrol routes to complete that ward's roadside litter clean-up coverage.

The objective of Friends of Bayside Roads is to regularly patrol and remove litter from the roadside reserves (nature strips) around parks and gardens, golf courses, sporting venues, schools and civic reserves, all of which are continuously under litter attack, mainly from drivers and passengers of private and commercial vehicles.

Each of the litter patrol volunteers cover a total of about 2kms on each side of the road once or twice a week, which represents around 35 kilometres of nature strips in an area from Charman Road to Bluff Road and from Bay Road to Balcombe Road.

Each volunteer team member works independently, carrying out their roadside clean-up when and how often it suits them according to the need, the weather and naturally, their other commitments.

Typically, volunteers pick up litter on their routes once a week depending on the condition of their patrol route.

Items generally collected include drink bottles and cans, plastic and paper



Friends of Bayside Roads has completed its pilot program and is now looking for volunteers to start stage 2 of keeping local roadsides around parks, gardens, golf courses and sporting venues free from litter.

Volunteers are fully briefed and provided with work and safety kits. To be involved, please contact Convenor Friends of Bayside Roads Derek Jones at derekhjones36@gmail.com

bags, tissues, fast food packaging of all types, newspapers, lolly wrappers, masses of general merchandise packaging, cardboard cartons, broken glass, cigarette butts, bottle tops and miscellaneous items of hard rubbish.

Members notify Council of any major illegal rubbish dumps they find, which are then collected within 24-48 hours. Volunteers also keep an eye out

for and report, suspicious behaviour and events relating to litter, as well as graffiti around bus shelters, which are frequently targeted.

Along with the abundance of litter thrown from cars and other vehicles, there are also major dumping incidents such as builders' rubbish, paint cans, tyres, carpets, household and office furniture and equipment.



Cranes, storks, egrets and herons

Part II

By Lewis Hiller

Friends of Native Wildlife Inc.

The term 'egret' is often used to denote species of heron which display mostly white plumage. Many species belong to the *Egretta* and *Ardea* genera of the Ardeidae family, with the Night-herons forming a distinct clade in the *Nycticorax* genus (Slater 2009).

Foraging habits vary between species. Some prefer to stalk aquatic prey such as frogs and aquatic invertebrates by wading in shallow water and striking unassuming prey by following prey movement. Others, like the Cattle Egret, are more typically denizens of pastures, with a few species like the ever-common White-faced Heron being more generalist and opportunistic and encompassing both.

Species likely to be encountered in the Bayside region include the White-faced Heron, White-necked Heron, Great Egret, Nankeen Night-heron, Cattle Egret, and occasionally Little Egrets and Intermediate Egrets as irregular visitors.

The **White-faced Heron (*Egretta novaehollandiae*)** is by far the most likely heron species to be encountered in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. They may visit small urban ponds in search of frogs and fish, and are often sighted coastally in marine environs. Additionally, this opportunistic tendency

is reflected in the nation-wide range of the species, occurring wherever suitable moisture exists (Slater 2009). Unlike many other species, which nest colonially, the White-faced Heron often nests by itself far from water-sources during the warmer months, constructing its nest out of sticks (Birds in Backyards 2017). They may typically raise up to four chicks (Slater 2009), with recordings of clutches as high as seven (Birds in Backyards 2017). Large irruptions of these herons may occur after flooding rains in drier inland areas and in irrigation districts (Pizzey & Knight 2012).

The **White-necked Heron (*Ardea pacifica*)**, also known as the Pacific Heron, is a larger species and an infrequent visitor to the south-eastern suburbs including Bayside. Although, there may be periodic irruptions of the species as occurred in early 2017, with birds being seen at Ricketts Point, and even one seen in a suburban backyard in Beaumaris.

On the ground the species is readily identifiable and in flight may be recognised by the presence of white patches on the shoulders of otherwise dark wings and by its overall very large size (Flegg 2002). Juvenile birds feature heavy black spotting on the otherwise white neck. The White-necked Heron is associated with freshwater wetland

locales and is only occasionally reported in marine environs (Slater 2009). Nesting is a more colonial affair than its White-faced cousin.

The **Great Egret (*Ardea modesta*)**, or Eastern Great Egret is the largest Egret in Australia, reaching around one metre in height (Pizzey & Knight 2012). The Great Egret is another wetland specialist and prefers rivers, marshes and inundated pastures and similar environs. This species' hunting strategy comprises freezing in the shallows for an often-considerable amount of time, awaiting an opportune moment in which to strike prey that consists mainly of fish, amphibians and large aquatic invertebrates (Pizzey & Knight 2012).

Occasionally, the Great Egret is more successful capturing large fish prey than it is at swallowing them. In these cases they are often drawing attention from avian pirates such as Whistling Kites (Birdlife Australia 2017). During breeding season this egret sports beautiful wispy long white plumes. Unfortunately this and several other egret species were nearly hunted to extinction in the 19th century, particularly in Europe, for their feathers which were used in fashion statements of the era (HeronConservation.org 2011). The Great Egret usually raises about three chicks in a nest, often located in



Nankeen Night Heron by Ed Dunens,
Flickr, Creative Commons



White-faced heron
by Hasitha Tudugalle
Photography, Flickr,
Creative Commons

a mixed colony alongside other egrets, herons and ibis (Pizzey & Knight 2012).

As its name suggests, the Nankeen night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*), also known as the Rufous Night-heron, is mostly nocturnal. It usually hunts in shallow water for aquatic creatures by night and spending the day skulked up in the foliage of waterside trees, often in a loose colony.

As a result it is often overlooked and may be more common than generally realised in areas of ideal habitat like Elster Creek in Elsternwick. It also adapted quite well to more urban European-style landscapes with water; for instance a colony exists at Caulfield Park and another at Carlton Gardens in the city.

A well-known population also inhabits the leafy surrounds at the lakes in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens. The night-heron is also sighted along the coast around Brighton and Sandringham piers (own observation and FoNW).

The 'nankeen' part of the name is derived from the tones of the bird's plumage, claimed to resemble a Chinese cloth of a buff hue (Birds in Backyards 2017). Immature birds lack these appealing cinnamon feathers and instead have a streaked plumage consisting of alternating white and brown, and are sometimes misidentified and reported as being

members of locally rarer members of the heron family, for instance bitterns (Slater 2009). Breeding condition in night-herons is indicated by the development of white plumes on the back of the head (Slater 2009). Nesting again comprises colonies and many pairs nesting in close proximity in dense trees situated near water. Nankeen night-herons have bluish-green eggs (Pizzey & Knight 2012).

The **Cattle Egret (*Ardea ibis*)** is a relative newcomer to Australia shores, first colonising from Asia in the mid 20th century (Pizzey & Knight 2012).

The Cattle Egret is a winter visitor to southern Australia from large breeding colonies in the north of the continent. As the name suggests, this bird is closely

associated with cattle and tends to feed on their parasites, as well as other insects and other creatures disturbed by cattle movement. Due to urbanisation in Bayside and a local lack of cattle this bird is accordingly uncommon. Although, it may be easily found in quite large numbers at nearby Braeside Park in the winter months. Additionally, it is occasionally reported in wetland and coastal habitats within Bayside during this period, for instance at Ricketts Point.

Part I of Lewis Hiller's article, titled *Cranes, storks, egrets and herons*, was published in the Spring edition 2017 of *Banksia Bulletin*. Access this edition online at www.bayside.vic.gov/banksiabulletin

Reference list

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- Pizzey, G & Knight, F 2012, *The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*, Ninth Ed., Harper Collins Publishers, Pty Ltd,
- Slater, P, Slater P & Slater R 2009, *The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds*, New Holland Publishers Australia Pty Ltd, Sydney.



Our jewel –

Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary

Ricketts Point is the jewel in Bayside's crown.

This summer, head to the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary in Beaumaris and wander the shoreline of this magnificent 115ha marine sanctuary.

Explore rockpools close to shore, visit sandstone platforms and cool down in the beach, patrolled by the lifesaving club.

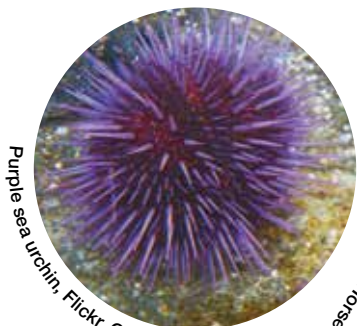
There is a range of habitats and animals to see; from local, regional and migratory birds to a huge array of fish and marine life.

Keep a look out for these bird and marine life friends at Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary:

Royal Spoonbill, Shellie Evans, Flickr, Creative Commons



Velvet sea star, Photo by Richard Ling, Flickr, Creative Commons



Purple sea urchin, Flickr, Creative Commons



Zebra Fish, Flickr, Creative Commons



Australian Pelican, Flickr, Creative Commons



Horsehoe Leatherjacket, Flickr, Creative Commons



Crested Tern, Photo by Gary Leavens, Flickr, Creative Commons

Kids' Corner



Summer Recipe

Mango, kiwi and watermelon layer pops

Makes: 10 x 80ml icy pops

Prep time: 10 minutes + freezing time

Freezing time: 4-5 hours

Ready in: 5 hours 10 minutes

Freezable, Gluten Free, Wheat Free, Dairy Free, Egg Free, Vegetarian

Nutrition note: 100% fruit
100% homemade icy poles.

Ingredients

- 1½ cups diced mango
- 3 sweet kiwi fruit, peeled and diced
- 1 cup diced watermelon, seeds removed

Tip: This is just one combination!
Choose any three different coloured fruits and follow the method below
(eg peach, banana, raspberry or rockmelon, strawberry, honeydew melon).



Method

- Place the mango in a food processor or blender and blend until smooth. Remove and set aside. Rinse and dry the processor clean and repeat with the remaining fruit.
- Spoon the mango puree into the popsicle moulds and place in the freezer for 30-45 minutes. Remove from the freezer, add the kiwi puree and return to the freezer for a further 30-45 minutes. Remove from the freezer, add the watermelon puree being careful not to overfill, place the sticks or lids on and return to the freezer until frozen solid.
- To remove the popsicles, dip the molds into warm water for a few seconds and then ease the popsicles out.



Source: www.kinderling.com.au

Where to find Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary




Fairy Penguin, Flickr, Creative Commons


Dumping squid, Flickr, Creative Commons

Friends Groups

Friends of Balcombe Park

Convenor: Ian O'Loughlin
Mobile: 0412 432 618 **Email:** ianoloughlin@optusnet.com.au
Melway Ref: 86 C4
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 28 Jan, 25 Feb, 25 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Convenor: Michael Norris
Phone: (03) 9521 6879 **Email:** menorris@ozemail.com.au
Melway Ref: 77 B11
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 13 Jan, 10 Feb, 10 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm


Friends of Bayside Roads

Contact: Derek Jones
Phone: 0417 360 747 **Email:** derekhjones@gmail.com


Bayside Environmental Friends Network

Convenor: Jill Robinson
Phone: 9583 8408 **Email:** friends@bayside.vic.gov.au


Friends of Beaumaris Reserve

Convenor: Chris Sutton
Phone: 0438 327 924 **Email:** sutc@bigpond.com
Melway Ref: 86 D6
 **Upcoming working bees:**
For more information contact convenor


Friends of Brighton Dunes

Convenor: Jenny Talbot
Phone: (03) 9592 2109
Melway Ref: 76 C2
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Every Tuesday **Time:** 8am-10am


Friends of Cheltenham Park

Convenor: Valerie Tyers
Phone: (03) 9588 0107 **Email:** valerietyers@hotmail.com
Melway Ref: 86 G1
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 4 Feb, 4 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm


Friends of Donald MacDonald Reserve

Convenor: Kim Croker
Phone: (03) 9589 2443 **Email:** kcroker@bigpond.net.au
Melway Ref: 86 B6
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 7 Feb, 7 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm


Friends of George Street Reserve

Convenors: Val Tarrant, Pauline Reynolds
Phone: (03) 9598 0554 **Email:** vtarrant@ozemail.com.au
Phone: (03) 9598 6368 **Email:** pauline.reynolds.au@gmail.com
Melway Ref: 86 B1
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 21 Jan, 18 Feb, 18 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm


Friends of Gramatan Avenue Heathland

Convenor: Ken Rendell
Phone: (03) 9589 4452
Melway Ref: 86 C6
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 4 Feb, 4 Mar **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Long Hollow Heathland

Convenor: Rob Saunders
Phone: (03) 9515 3383 **Email:** srednuas@hotmail.com
Melway Ref: 86 D5
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 28 Jan, 25 Feb, 25 Mar **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Merindah Park & Urban Forest

Convenor: John de Cruz Douglas
Phone: 0417 386 408 **Email:** jdecddouglas@internode.on.net
Melway Ref: 77 B12
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 14 Jan, 11 Feb, 1 Mar **Time:** 9am-11am


Friends of Native Wildlife

Convenors: Anne Jessel, Elizabeth Walsh
Phone: (03) 9585 6788 **Phone:** (03) 9598 9009
Email: info@bayfonw.org.au
Website: www.bayfonw.org.au


Friend of Picnic Point Sandringham

Convenor: Terry Reynolds
Phone: (03) 9598 2978 **Email:** reynolds_family@hotmail.com


Friends of Ricketts Point

Acting Convenor: Jill Robinson
Phone: (03) 9583 8408
Melway Ref: 86 D9
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 31 Jan, 28 Feb, 28 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm


Friends of Ricketts Point Landside

Convenor: Sue Raverty
Phone: (03) 9589 2103 **Email:** sraverty@westnet.com.au
Melway Ref: 86 C9
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 16 Jan, 20 Feb, 20 Mar **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Table Rock

Convenor: Ken Rendell
Phone: (03) 9589 4452
Melway Ref: 86 E10
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: 30 Jan, 27 Feb, 27 Mar **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Elster Creek

Convenor: Gio Fitzpatrick
Phone: 0432 045 303 **Email:** gio@ecocentre.com
Meeting point: Elwood Canal, Glen Huntly Road Bridge
 **Upcoming Event:**
www.facebook.com/friendsofelstercreek/events

Magpie voted Australia's favourite bird

The Australian Magpie has been officially voted Australia's Bird of the Year for 2017, having won the BirdLife Australia/ Guardian Newspaper Bird of the Year poll. The humble magpie scored nearly 20,000 of the 149,000 votes cast. Runner up was the early leader, the often-maligned Australian White Ibis, with just over 19,000 votes.

For a full list of the top 10 Australian birds, visit <http://birdlife.org.au/media/magpie-voted-bird-of-the-year/>



Environment Groups

Bayside Bushwalking Club (Charman to Cromer Roads, Beaumaris)

Contact: Jo Hurse

Phone: (Citywide Park Care) 9283 2052

Beaumaris Conservation Society

President: Greg Mier

Contact: PO Box 7016, Beaumaris 3193 **Email:** info@bcs.asn.au

Black Rock and Sandringham Conservation Association

Convenor: John Neve

Phone: 0479 196 260 **Email:** jneve@ozemail.com.au

 **Upcoming working bees:**

Dates: 2 & 16 Jan, 6 & 20 Feb, 6 & 20 Mar

Time: 10am-12pm

Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc

Website: www.marinecare.org.au

Melway Ref: 86 C9

Sandringham Foreshore Association

President: Dr Vicki Karalis

Contact: PO Box 52, Sandringham, 3191

Email: sandyforeshore@optusnet.com.au

Website: sandringhamforeshore.tumblr.com

School Groups

Firbank Girls Grammar

Contact: Mary-Ellen Johnson

Phone: (03) 9591 5188 **Email:** mjohnson@firbank.vic.edu.au

St Leonard's College Conservation Group

Contact: Simon Daniels

Phone: (03) 9909 9300 **Email:** simon.daniels@stleonards.vic.edu.au



banksia

bulletin

Editorial Policy

The purpose of publishing the Banksia Bulletin is to circulate information, report on events, and to profile relevant environmental issues important to our community. The Bulletin is also published to support the network of people involved in enjoying and protecting our local environment.

Bayside City Council encourages people from our local community groups to submit articles of interest, share experiences and news about any upcoming events. All articles are reviewed prior to publication and Council reserves the right to omit or edit submissions.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the people who have contributed to this issue of Banksia Bulletin.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the Banksia Bulletin are not necessarily those of Bayside City Council nor its representatives.

Editor

Damien Van Trier
Manager Open Space,
Recreation and Wellbeing

Content Coordinator

Kristi High
0407 366 466

Copy deadlines

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Banksia Bulletin is published quarterly by Bayside City Council to service people interested in enjoying and protecting the local environment.

If you would like to be added to the Banksia Bulletin mailing list, please contact Bayside City Council on 9599 4444 or email: banksia@bayside.vic.gov.au. Please indicate whether you would prefer to receive your Banksia Bulletin by email or via post.

Corporate Centre

PO Box 27 Royal Avenue
Sandringham VIC 3191
Telephone: 9599 4444
www.bayside.vic.gov.au
banksia@bayside.vic.gov.au
Hours of business
8.30am–5pm
Monday–Friday
(except public holidays)



A close-up photograph of two vibrant purple Common Fringe Lily flowers (Thysanotus tuberosus) in bloom. The flowers have a distinctive fringed or feathery appearance on their petals. Several green buds are visible on the stems, and the background is a soft-focus green foliage.

Do you want to know more
about Bayside and the
Banksia Bulletin?

Please refer to our website

www.bayside.vic.gov.au



Bayside
CITY COUNCIL

Common Fringe Lily
(*Thysanotus tuberosus*)
Photo: by Pauline Reynolds