

Sept-Oct 2022

Wetland Warbler



Number 180

Inside this issue:

Councillors Visit Wetlands	3
The Hide Car Park	4
Encounters with Birds— My Blackbirds	5
Mighty Mount Worth	6



Clamorous Reed-Warbler

Wetland Warbler

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Dr Rosalie Cooper



Welcome everyone to our wet world. Flooding of the Hide continues to be a problem with the lower level almost constantly underwater. We have been able to welcome visitors to the upper level

and relief from Covid restrictions is making this easier. Our noble volunteers are opening the Hide on most Sunday afternoons, but Saturdays have slightly reduced opening dates, due to a shortage of folk who can spare their time to support us. The exact details of opening hours are listed on the Home Page of our website and on signs at the gates. Hopefully the spring and summer will bring relief from the heavy rain and even more volunteers to support our efforts.

As advertised, our Annual General Meeting is on Sunday November 6th, start at 2.00 pm, at the Education Centre, 278 Edithvale Road, with sealed parking, east of the Hide, towards Wells Rd. It would be great to see lots of you there. There will be presentations by myself and Treasurer, Scott King, on our achievements this year and future plans. The committee elections will be held as

usual. A visiting speaker from our neighbouring organisation, Friends of Kananook Creek, will give a short presentation. This local creek drains the water from our Seaford Wetland down to the Bay. It has been active in preserving the environmental values of our area for many years.

Please, come armed with questions about the mutual interests of the two organisations. Afternoon tea will be provided and there will be time for catching up with old and new friends. Such a delight to be able to meet face to face again.

The Hide will not be open during the AGM as all the action will be up the road at the Education Centre. This will be an opportunity to see this Centre run by Melbourne Water and used to provide activities for visiting school groups. They have been doing lots of online presentations during the lockdown but only just reopened to visitors recently.

I look forward to seeing lots of our members and interested folk at this meeting. Do come along and find out more about us, especially if you are new to our organisation.

Regards to all,
Rosalie Cooper,

FRIENDS OF EDITHVALE - SEAFORD WETLANDS INC.

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SNIPPETS ABOUT THE HIDE

The wetlands are as full as The lower floor of the hide is regularly inundated, water marks are creeping up the walls, the top floor only can be opened to the public at the moment, the migratory birds cannot feed there being no muddy banks.....



But there are the odd silver linings – broods of ducklings have been spotted; a young photographer, Aaron, has captured a great photo of a Chestnut Teal; and a couple of swallows visited the hide then politely showed themselves out....

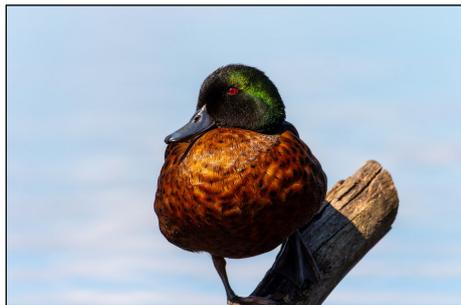


Photo Aaron Finger Chestnut Teal See also Page 6

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WORKING BEE AT SEAFORD

On Sunday 2nd October, planting continued at the southern end of Seaford Wetlands. Five members arrived to put in another 100 *Dichondra repens* (ground cover) plants close to the McKenzie Street entrance.

Unfortunately, many weeds are being encouraged to show their faces due to the frequent rains. This month's planting was done on cleared land to counter this. Thanks to co-ordinator, Rex, Julie, Denise, Renae, Robin. Great work!

If you too would like to plant for the planet, join the crew.. Ring Rex on 9766 6056.



A_wfully G_ood M_oments



Lots of cheerful greeting
 At the Annual General Meeting.
 Lots of comfy seating
 At the Annual General Meeting.
 We'll even put on heating
 At the Annual General Meeting.

Interesting speaking
 At the Annual General Meeting.
 And after - yummy eating
 At the Annual General Meeting.
 So, no about the bushes beating
 Let's see you at *that* meeting!

The Annual General Meeting 6th November 2:00pm Education Centre. Invitation is coming by email or post.
 Be seen there! Be one of the cool people!

COUNCILLORS VISIT THE WETLANDS

On Saturday 1st October a number of Councillors from four councils (Cities of Kingston, Bayside, Greater Dandenong and the Mornington Peninsula Shire) visited the Bird Hide at Edithvale and the Education Centre to learn more about the wetlands, their importance and their management.

Margaret, Paula and Robin hosted the first part of the visit at the hide. The Councillors had a good look around and did a bit of networking among themselves. Listening to their conversations it was clear that they were well informed and environmentally oriented.

Following that they then walked up to the Education Centre to chat to Rosalie and to hear a talk from Melbourne Water's Jane Petch who spoke about Ramsar, and its management. She also commented on the good working relationship between FESWI and Melbourne Water.

FESWI truly appreciates that the Councillors took the time to visit the wetlands and learn more about them. We thank them for their interest and attention..



At the Hide



At the Education Centre

THE HIDE CAR PARK

The Bad News

The hide car park seems to have accrued many roles apart from being a place for visitors to the look-out and hide to park their cars.

It is used by fast food consumers who park there to eat their meal, purchased from down the road, and then invariably throw their rubbish out the car window. It is used by people who find it a handy spot to dump their green rubbish and unwanted household goods. This is so exasperating because FESWI members are constantly cleaning up after the former, and Melbourne Water after the latter.

It is regularly used by semitrailer drivers as a resting station (some of whom also throw their rubbish out the window). And occasionally SUV vehicles have been seen to tear through one entrance and out the other – for no apparent reason! These are also exasperating because the car park was recently re-graded, but these vehicles are damaging the surface so that indentations and depressions are re-forming.

It is time to seriously consider installing swing-bar gates at each entrance.

The Good News

Melbourne Water, FESWI and McKinnon Secondary College are working together to clean up some of the plant beds in the car park and put in low-level indigenous plants.



The usual fast food rubbish



Parked semitrailer



Regraded car park in June 2021



Depressions and hollows reforming



SANDRINGHAM FORESHORE ASSOCIATION

**A special invitation from the Royal Society of Victoria,
Geography Victoria & the
Association of Bayside Municipalities**
JOIN RSV/GEOGRAPHY VICTORIA ON THEIR NEXT FIELD
TRIP.....

[Association of Bayside Municipalities](#)

COST: \$15.00 plus a small booking fee.

REGISTER [HERE](#)

BOOK EARLY - places are limited.

EXPLORE MELBOURNE'S DYNAMIC COASTLINE

Saturday 12 November 10.00am-3.00pm

Cost \$15 per person - see further details below

ENCOUNTERS WITH BIRDS

MY BLACKBIRDS by Juliette Foenander

A couple of years ago, I decided to plant a passionfruit vine as I love passionfruit and also to cover a fairly ugly metal barrier fence. A year later it grew and produced lovely passionfruit for me.

This year, it has grown more bushy and to my delight, I noticed a couple of blackbirds making a nest. I had seen them around the garden and certainly heard the lovely male singing. I saw them gathering twigs and bits and making a lovely nest. Before I knew it, I saw the female sitting on her egg and I was so excited to watch the journey of these two, sitting on an egg and watching the little one grow. Here is the female (in yellow circle).

As it was school holidays, I was happy to be at home and be able to watch them. This went on a few days/maybe a week or so until I noticed some grey Noisy Miners hanging around. The two blackbirds would chase them and shoo them away. Unfortunately, I started to notice that the miners would come in groups of 4, 5 or 6 and sit on top of the vine and in the lemon tree and on the roof of my place, almost next to the vine. It had me worried because they seemed interested in getting into the nest and I was nervous that they would get the egg when the blackbirds were out chasing others away. I also have an acorn type tree in my yard, and I started to throw acorns towards the miners to help scare them away from the nest.

Sure enough though, unfortunately, when I was out one day, I came home to hear a lot of

commotion. There was also a black & white/grey type bird, not a magpie or the smaller black and white bird, but this one had quite a large black beak. I hadn't seen it before and it sat on my fence like a silent assassin, quietly watching

everything. I helped to scare them all away again and I heard the male blackbird making a lot of his noises that he usually did, communicating with the female.

Unfortunately, that evening, I didn't hear him singing, which he loved to do to keep her company and let her know he was nearby. I went to have a look at the nest as I couldn't see her sitting on it and sure enough, the egg was gone. I was devastated. I

have just hoped since that she/they are ok and that they have gone off to find somewhere else to potentially build another nest. I do hear some blackbirds every morning, but I don't think they are the two that built their nest. A friend of mine said that blackbirds in her yard had come back four times and re-tried, so that has given me hope, but I still fear that if they try now in the same spot, the other birds will be back.

Thank you to Robin Clarey who shared with me that she felt they were probably juvenile blackbirds who hadn't chosen a very good place to build their first nest. I hope that's the case and they are somewhere more protected now and are possibly building another nest or learning skills for future egg-laying.



Blackbirds are introduced and can be pesky because they damage a variety of soft fruits. They are thought to spread weeds and may compete with native birds for food and nesting sites.

However, they are also songbirds. Songbirds can compose diverse, elaborate and melodious songs, which are lovely to listen to.

Some birds, like human beings, are better singers than others.

MIGHTY MOUNT WORTH

Peter Murphy

Mount Worth is a damp, wet sclerophyll forest which provides habitat to many a flora and fauna that thrive in those conditions. It is part of the Strzelecki Ranges and just south of Warragul. I must say that it is the best birding experience that I have yet to encounter.

Many tall tree ferns are in abundance. The tracks wind their way underneath this canopy. Rose Robins are plentiful and like to hang out just beneath these tree fern heads. These beautiful birds are tiny. Half the size of Flame Robins. Also seen were Olive Whistlers, Large-Billed Scrubwrens and Gerygones.

What is also in abundance are the comedians of the bush. The Lyrebird. They are the

masters of mimicry. Loudly talking to themselves in multiple species of bird calls. I even heard consistent hand clapping. The odd one was a bit quieter than the rest. Maybe it hadn't mastered that one yet. A little old man talking to himself. Laugh out loud funny.

Along the tracks are many perfectly shaped holes the size cigars. Even in parts that were gravel. These are the homes of Gippsland Burrowing Crayfish. Small and orange in colour. The large claw at the front, not unlike its sea cousin. It spends most of its life underground, only coming out at night.

To me, it is a place that time forgot. Perhaps how nature was like 100 years ago.

Mighty Mount Worth.



Large-Billed Scrubwren www.arthurgrosset.com



Lyrebird. isciencemag.co.uk

IF YOU HAVE A GREAT BIRD PHOTO

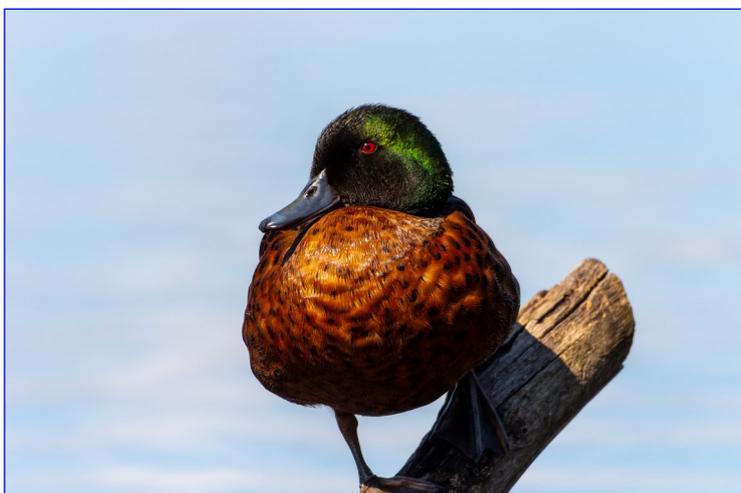


Photo by Aaron Finger—youngest and latest contributor

... taken at the
**Edithvale-Seafood
Wetlands** and would
like it featured on the
bird hide wall, email it
to the editor at:

feswiwetlands@gmail.com

WHAT CAN YOU SAY!!



Natural conservation areas are home to numerous endemic species and they should be protected.

These natural areas are important because they protect the places of natural beauty, and the land that is set aside for animals and plants where they live.

Natural parks play a big role in keeping the environment healthy because they house many plants. And provide resilience against climate change.

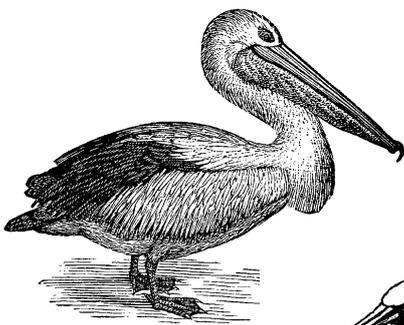
What a pity fences and gates protecting nature conservation areas can't be respected and left alone. In Seaford, some people just can't get over the closure of a track going through the nature conservation area in the northern part of the Seaford Wetlands. Holes are now regularly cut through the fences on either side of the gates so that they, their bikes, and their dogs can get in.

In the photo below a hole about a metre by metre was cut on the right-hand side of the fence. When this was finally mended, within a week or so, massive damage was done to the gate.

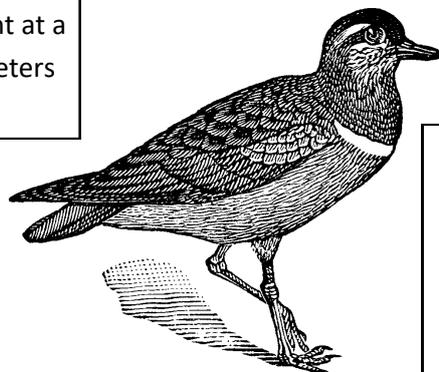
What can you say!!



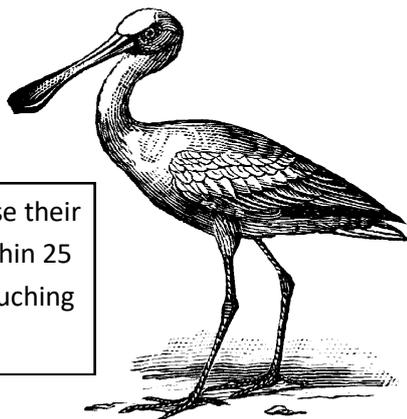
INTERESTING WETLAND BIRD FACTS



Pelicans have been recorded flying at night at a height of 3,000 meters (3 kms).



A pair of Black-fronted Dotterels nesting between the rails in an Adelaide shunting yard did not leave their nest even when the trains passed over their heads.



Spoonbills can close their beaks on prey within 25 milliseconds of touching it.

Sources: Steve Parish: Discover and Learn about Australia
Simpson and Day: Field Guide to the Birds of Australia

Corporate Members

Following is a list of our corporate members. Please give them your support.

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Peninsula Pedallers,
Sonya Kilkenny

Ray White, Chelsea
Peter Murphy

Corporate Edithvale Family And Children's Centre

Longbeach RSL
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