

Jan-Feb 2023



Clamorous Reed-Warbler

Wetland Warbler

BEGA WORKS WONDERS

On Tuesday 21st February personnel in the Bega Group (which has a subsidiary in Chelsea) came out to the hide to work in the car park as part of a Corporate Initiative Project.

This included cleaning up the plant bed running along Edithvale Road, which involved weeding, raking, planting (*Dianella longifolia* and *Lomandra longifolia*), and mulching. The bed was a real mess but the team's willingness, energy and hard work soon made short work of that!

It was a combined effort involving the Bega Group (which initiated the project, and whose personnel were brilliantly organised and did most of the hard work); FESWI (provision of the plants and whose members also worked hard; Kingston Council (which provided the mulch and will take away the weedy rubbish); and Melbourne Water.

Many thanks to Bega's Johanna, Wayne, Courtney, Chris, Adele, Hannah and Erez, and FESWI's Rex, Cathy, Julie, Allan, and Colin for a great day's work.



BIRDS RETURN

Now that the water level is dropping, a variety of birds are visiting Edithvale South. We probably won't see the shorebirds there this year unfortunately - although 20 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were sighted at Seaford. Make a visit the hide before the water dries up completely.



Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Photo: Allan Broomhall



Little pied Cormorant with yabbi
Photo: Roy Burgess

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FRIENDS OF EDITHVALE - SEAFORD WETLANDS INC.

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MORE GREAT WORK AT THE HIDE

Many thanks to Jo, Cathy, Nola, Peter, Juliette, Allan, Rosie and Brendan, Arlis, Kirstin and Jody for their great work on at the hide and hide carpark on Wednesday 13th January.

were cleaned up and left looking really good; all the information pamphlets were folded; and the third and final internal plant bed in the car park was planted out.

Cobwebs and dust were tackled as well as the little souvenirs left by our visiting rats. The hide entrance and path leading to the hide

The plants seem to be doing well and should look great when fully established. Great work!



Left: Pamphlet Folding - Rosie, Jody, Juliette, Cathy and Kirstin.

Right: Vacuuming - Nola



Left: Sweeping - Juliette

Right: De-cobwebbing - Rosie



A MOST CURIOUS THING

Peter Murphy

A dotting pair of Willie Wagtails have built their spider web constructed nest very near to the entrance of the hide. Note: no one should get too close to the nest. Any sign of stress from the birds then you should walk away.

Upon marvelling at their constant care and attention to their three little chicks, I noticed a metallic leg tag on one of the parent's right leg. It appears to have a " 97 " on it and a further two lots of symbols under that. Can't quite make those out sadly.

I wonder who would tag a fairly common bird and for what purpose. I have looked up the government website " Report- band - sightings" The examples given don't quite match this one. If anyone could shed some light on this then please contact me.peterjamesmurphy@yahoo.com.au



WORLD WETLANDS DAY

FESWI celebrated this special day on Sunday 12th February at the hide. Tables and displays were set up in the carpark which included many activities for kids, most of whom who came had a go at. Of course there were prizes to be had as well as the chance of learning something new.

Margaret conducted a walk to the 'Dog Pond' and beyond on the northern section of the wetlands.

All in all, a successful afternoon. Many thanks to Inez, Mick, Hilary, Nola, Russell, Jacqui, Allan and Marg who helped make it so.



As well as all of the above FESWI members have been busy in the following ways as well

- **Radio Interview:** Monday 23rd January - Robin gave an interview on Southern FM 88.3 advertising World Wetlands Day and the wetlands in general.
Podcast: <https://www.southernfm.com.au/show/newsman/friends-of-the-wetlands/>
- **The Waterfront Festival, Frankston:** Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th February. Hilary (Sat) and Robin (Sun) attended to represent FESWI and to support two other environmental groups in their opposition to the Council's proposed 'Great Wall of Frankston'.
- **BirdLife Group Visit:** Sunday morning 19th February - Jacqui Sheppard conducted a walk/talk with this group at the hide and Edithvale Wetlands.
- **Shorebird Citizen Science Project:** Sunday morning 19th February - Sue Telfer in conjunction with Richard Akers (Melb Water) spoke about the project, the main purpose of which is to evaluate the impacts of vegetation management, e.g. brushcut plots, on the bird populations, particularly our migratory shorebirds. A number of attendees have volunteered to take part.
- **Seaford Wetlands Rejuvenation Pop Up Engagement:** Sunday 26th February - Hilary and Robin attended to give some feedback on the Draft Signage and Facilities Upgrade Plan.
- **Advertising:** Peter has been in touch with the Mornington Peninsular News Group to advertise the hide and to encourage visitors and new members. This listing will go into the Community Events page which appears in the paper once a month.

Up-Coming Events

- Home School Visit to hide on a Thursday (date TBA) next term.
- Sausage Sizzle – booked at Carrum Downs Bunnings for Saturday 29th April.

MUTTON BIRDS

Peter Murphy

In late spring I had the privilege of witnessing the arrival home from a day's fishing of Short-tailed Shearwaters returning to their burrows and mates. This can be done with the Bass Coast Birdlife Club on an annual basis.

It is a smaller club with many friendly people involved. The walk was a late afternoon affair, eating our pizza's whilst waiting for the sun to set. I was starting to doubt the voracity of the claim as the sun was setting. Nothing on the horizon but a spectacular sunset. At five minutes to nine pm they arrived.

A few dark shapes with silvery underwings and little or no tail feathers could be seen. YIPPEE!

Soon there were probably 100 plus. We could hear the mate calling out to its partner from inside the burrow. Dark shapes flying overhead then landing into their burrows which looked exactly like a snake or rabbit hole. One chap was even hit on the back of his legs. Don't worry. The bird was OK. We even saw a few Little Penguins arriving to their adjacent burrows.

All in all, amazing. This occurred on Phillip Island.

After feeding the chicks inside their burrow 'til they are rotund, the parents head south to the Antarctic Ice Edge. There they feed up before their long journey back to the Bering Sea. This is the sea that separates north-eastern Russia and north-western Alaska.



Mutton Bird - Wikipedia

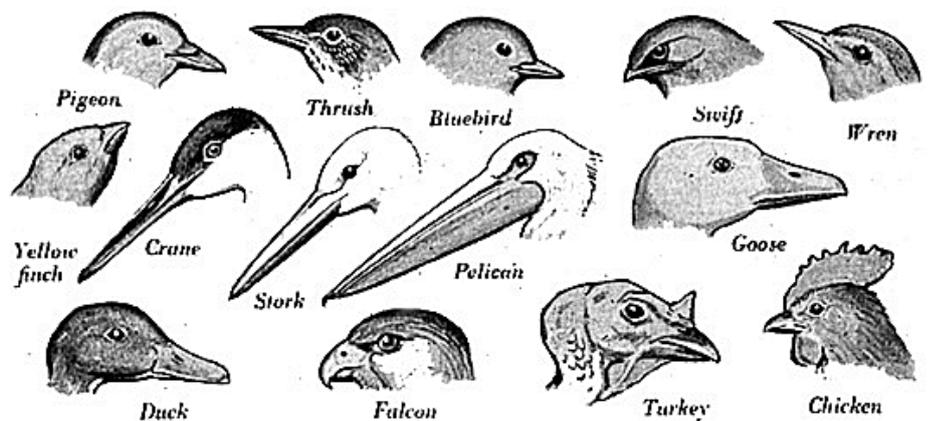


They fly northeast across the Pacific Ocean. Quite the journey, but amazingly so will the fledglings, for the first time. This will be done after a last month of their fat turning into muscle inside the burrow. I think that we are privileged to have this enormous migration right on our doorstep.

BIRD BILLS AND THE TUCKER THEY EAT

Birds' bills are adapted for the food they eat. Cardinals have strong, conical bills that help them crack open seeds. Hummingbirds have long, thin bills that help them collect nectar. Hawks and falcons have strong, hooked bills that help them tear into their prey.

Pelicans have large pouches of skin on their lower bill that can hold fish. Ducks, swans, and geese have flat bills that help them filter food from the water. Woodpeckers have strong, point-



ed bills that help them drill holes into trees and extract insects. Looking at a bird's bill can often tell you a lot about what and how the bird eats, where it lives, and even how it behaves!

A TRIP OF A LIFE TIME

THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA—PART 1

by Inez and Humphrey van Polanen Petel

From Ushuaia (Argentina), the most southern town of the world, cruise ships sail to the most northern part of the Antarctic, the Antarctic Peninsula. Crossing the infamous Drake Passage can be two days of seasickness which is why some people fly to South Georgia to board the ship there. We sailed. But we were lucky. The *Sylvia Earle* has an X-bow, a brand-new design which makes it behave like a dolphin, diving in and out of the waves instead of crashing into them. And while we did have a snow-storm, it was a reasonably calm sea so we could enjoy the birds.

Both the Wandering and Black-browed albatrosses could be seen gliding past the ship. Making use of the wind, these amazing birds can glide for 1000 km in a day. And there were petrels, the Giant petrels and the smaller Wilson's petrels, the latter sometimes called the 'butterflies of the sea' because of their dancing and flitting across the waves. And lots of Cape petrels, high speed fliers, also called 'flying chess boards' as to 'why' you can see from the picture. Closer to the Peninsula we saw Prions, Skuas and both Kelp and Dolphin gulls.

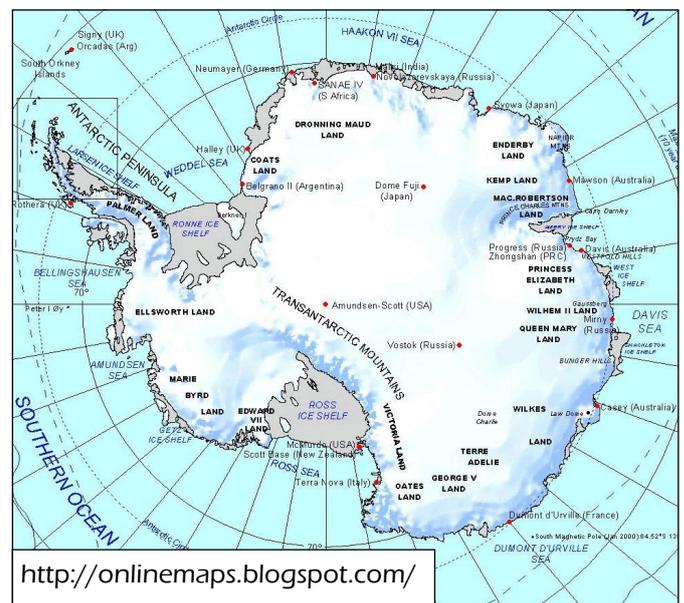


The Peninsula has mountains and glaciers with icebergs calving off continuously, something only seen by a lucky few (not us).

The passages between the Peninsula and the islands to the west were clear or filled with a veritable sculpture garden of icebergs depending on the wind. The picture below was taken while passing through the Lemaire Channel which only a week before was totally blocked with icebergs. The Peninsula with all its islands is another world, not quite the Antarctic proper with its endless vistas of white, but still impressive. In winter the mountains are covered in snow but now in summer there was bare rock as well. The result was breathtaking.



(All photos are from ourselves.)



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Corporate Members

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

Patterson River Golf Club

Ray White, Chelsea

Longbeach RSL

Peninsula Pedallers,

Peter Murphy

Tania Ireton

Sonya Kilkenny

Corporate Edithvale Family And Children's Centre

Viridans Pty Ltd

Annual Subscription

\$15.00 — Individual

\$15.00 — Family

\$15.00 — Concession

\$50.00 — Corporate

Account name: Society Cheque Account
BSB: 063-118
Account number: 1005 9942

Committee Meetings held 3rd Wednesday
of each month at the Education Centre

Observers welcome.

Production of this newsletter funded through



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