

GLIMPSES
OF
FRIENDS
OF EDITHVALE-SEAFORD
WETLANDS
INC



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When the idea came up to produce a history of FESWI, looking through a collection of documents and photos and making enquiries about early members, it became obvious that it was impossible to mention all the many people who had been involved from the beginning, and the many activities. After a lot of thought I decided to call the information, "Glimpses", as it would be a collection of snippets of our activities. Experience showed that 'Friends' was a fine way of describing people with a special bond with this place, but we found that we had to fight to protect it and maybe the word 'Protectors' should have been used instead.

Many early Friends have moved away, or, in some cases died, so hopefully using "Glimpses" will establish that it is not everything or everyone. It is intended as a "Thank you" to all the people who gave so generously of their time and energy and a recognition of all those who have taken up the protection of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands. Without all of you, it would not have been possible for the wetlands to survive to now.

We thank all who have been with us.

Some of the people who have had direct input into "Glimpses."

Pat Batcheldor, Sybil Bond, Mike Carter, Robin Clarey, Shirley Driver, Tony Flavel, Jenny Harston, Barbara & Frank Jupp, Gwen Meadows, Linda Meadows, Marina Kelly, Cheryl Meier, Ross Nelson, Kath Prior, Kaye Proudley, Barry Ross, Trevor Sasman, Les Williams OAM.

Dorothy Meadows OAM.

Life Member



Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc

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BIRDS OF THE EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS



Photo by Jay K: Pied Stilt



Photo by Robin Clarey: Purple Swamphen

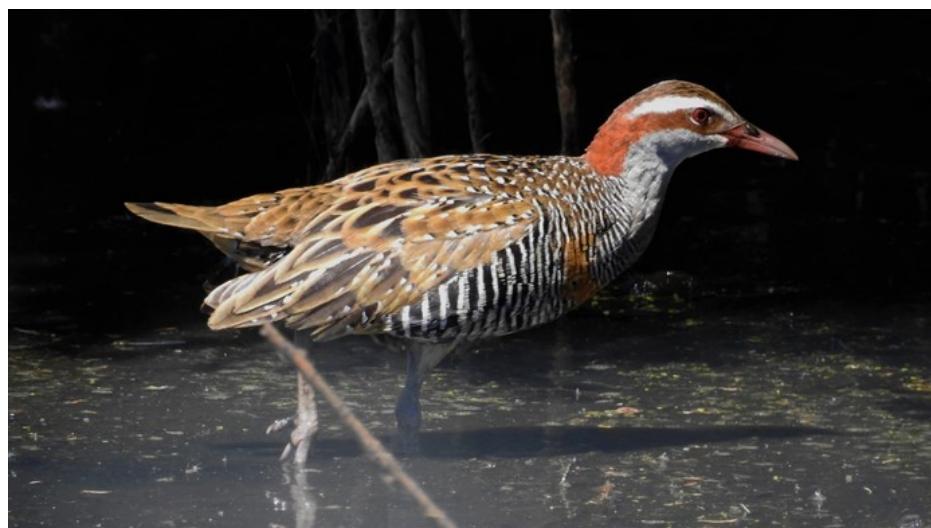


Photo by Steve McDonald: Buff-banded Rail

BIRDS OF THE EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS



Photo by Steve McDonald: Pink-eared Duck

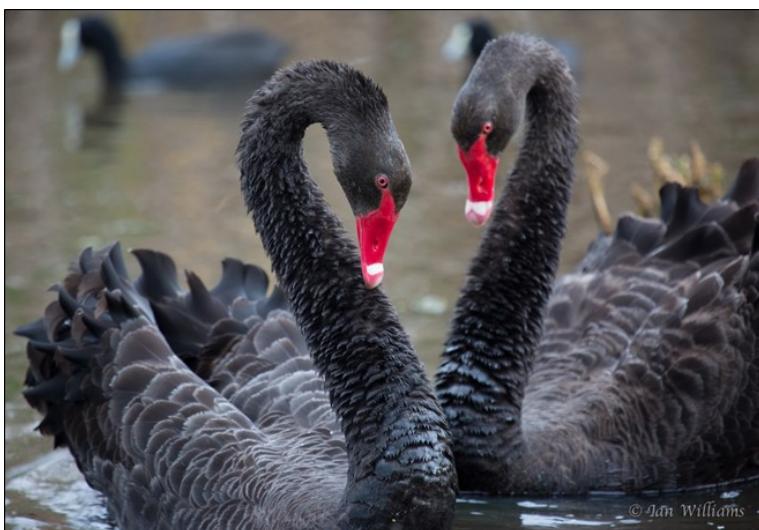


Photo by Ian Williams: Black Swan

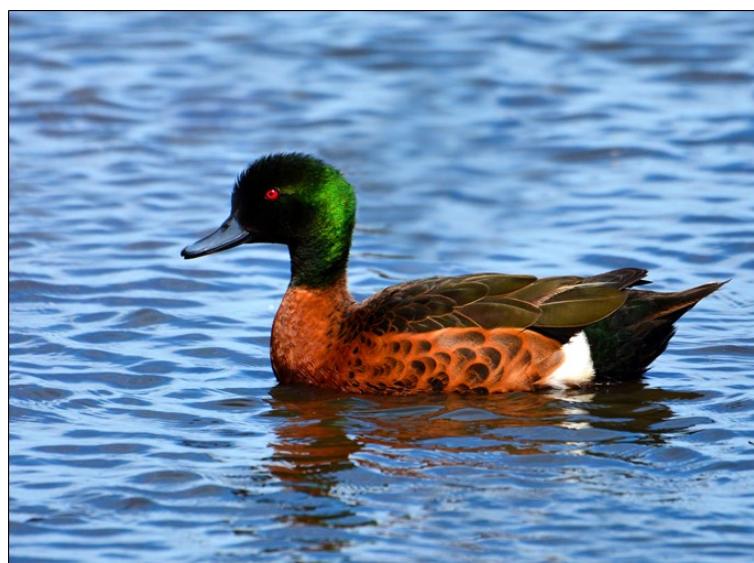
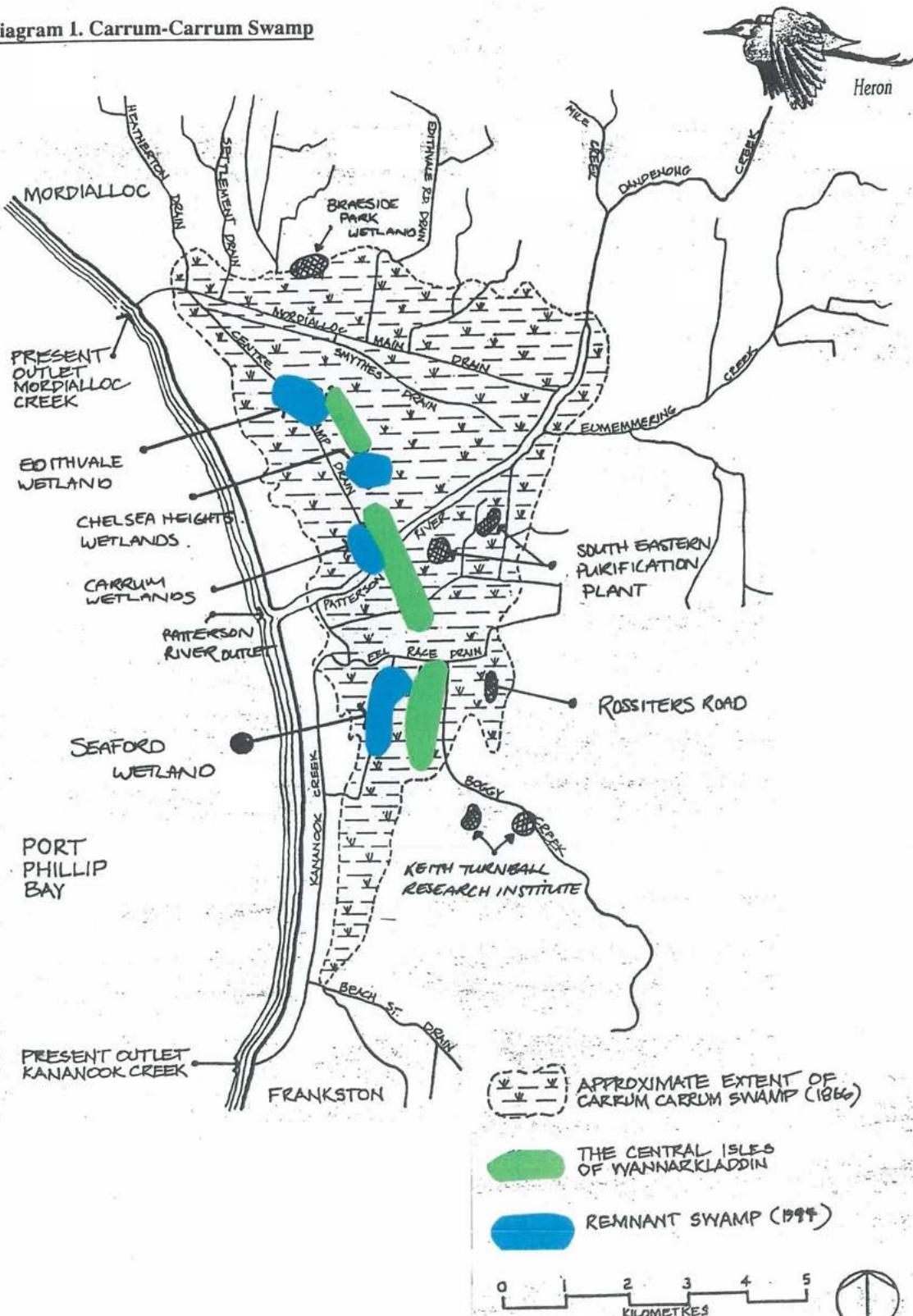


Photo by Jay K:
Chestnut Teal

REMNANTS OF THE CARRUM CARRUM SWAMP

Diagram 1. Carrum-Carrum Swamp



Tread Lightly

The wind moves across its face
In a rustle of its rushes,
The sun and rain alike, soak into its skin.
The swamp bares its belly to the sky,
Open, expansive,
Accepting Nature's tread,
And man's.

The cracked and dry façade
Of its waterless stretches,
Its wind-broken limbs and boughs,
Its native grasses brown and sere,
Are nature's steps and light,
For seasons turn.

But its prickly skin of Spiny Rush,
Its plastics-filtered waters,
Briny, where no thing can live,
Its littered crevices,
And denizens not native,
No season's turn will fix.

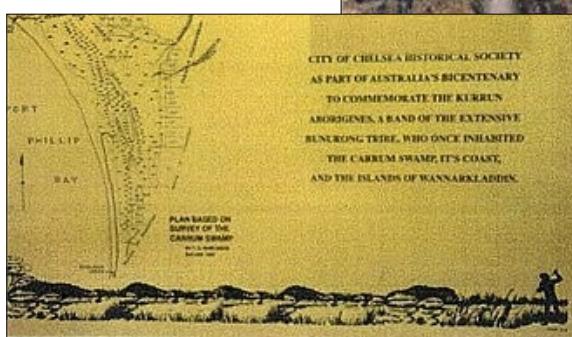
The swamp bares its belly and accepts it all.
Please tread lightly as you pass.

Robin Clarey



FIRST "FRIENDS" OF EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS

Noeline Dalziel,
a Boon Wurrung,
unveiling the plaque
presented by
Chelsea & District
Historical Society,
commemorating
The Boon Wurrung
who cherished this
land.



The First Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands were The Boon Wurrung, members of The First Nation whose land spread from, and including, Wilson's Promontory to the Yarra River. Until about 10,000 years ago it contained the flat plain where Port Phillip Bay is today. On that land they were able to grow yams, a staple food, and hunt for wild animals. Their legend about the sea rising is told on a following page.

Since the sea rose The Boon Wurrung held important meetings near where Government House is today.

Aborigines were all "hunter gatherers" and to survive they needed to tend their land carefully and take only what the land could replenish before their next visit. This care of the land and its produce was essential for the peoples' survival and the reason they were able to live here for 70,000 years, in what is referred to as "the second driest continent on earth."

Chelsea & District Historical Society Inc. erected a plaque in honour of The Boon Wurrung.

THE BOON WURRUNG

Aborigines came to this continent 70,000 years ago. They were here before the last Ice Age and in that time adapted to the changes in sea levels, climate and volcanic activity that continued for about 7,500 years. About 8,500 years ago Port Phillip Bay formed as sea levels rose. The wetter conditions continued so that the sea level in Port Phillip Bay rose to 2 meters higher than it is today. (Presland 1985. Pl 1.) It extended to Governor Road.

The people who settled in the area that evolved into the coastline of Port Phillip Bay were the Boon Wurrung. They were part of the Kulin Nation, Shown on the map. (Cotter. P3.)

The Boon Wurrung have a legend about the sea rising in this event. It is included on page 8. They lost 40% of their land when the sea came in.

Residents of Aspendale, Edithvale and Chelsea, will find sea shells if they dig in their gardens.

For those wanting to know more about the effect of settlement upon the Aborigines, William Thomas, Assistant Protector of the Aborigines of Victoria, 1839-1867, wrote a journal which is excellent reading. It can be obtained from the library which will order it from Canberra. Other reliable reading is "First People" by Gary Presland 2011.

MS CAROLYN BRIGGS—BOON WURRUNG STORY

This story was told by Ms Carolyn Briggs, a Boon Wurrung Elder, at a special Reconciliation Assembly of The Parliament of Victoria, 31st May 2000, during National Reconciliation Week. The story is reproduced here with the author's permission.

Many years ago, this land that we now call Melbourne extended right out to the ocean. Port Phillip Bay was then a large flat plain where Boon Wurrung hunted kangaroo and cultivated yam daisy.

But one day there came a time of chaos and crises. The Boon Wurrung and the other Kulin nations were in conflict. They argued and fought. They neglected their children. They neglected their land. The native yam was neglected. The animals were killed but not always eaten. The fish were caught in their spawning season. As this chaos grew the sea became angry and began to rise until it covered their plain and threatened the whole of their country.

The people went to Bunjil, their creator and spiritual leader. They asked Bunjil to stop the sea from rising. Bunjil told his people that they would have to change their ways if they wanted to save their land. The people thought about what they had been doing and made a promise to follow Bunjil. Bunjil walked out to the sea, raised his spear and directed the sea to stop rising. Bunjil then made the Boon Wurrung promise that they would respect the laws.

(The sea stopped where Governor Road is now.)

LOUISA BRIGGS

The place the Kulin chose to meet as a means of solving these differences is where the Parliament of Victoria is now located. The Kulin Nations met here regularly for many thousands of years. They debated matters of great importance to the nation, they celebrated, they danced.

For my great grandmother it was the strength of these beliefs and the belief that people could work together that helped her survive the crises our people faced when Europeans invaded her country over 160 years before.

My great grandmother was known by her European name, Louisa Briggs. When Louisa was a young girl she went on a journey with her mother, aunt and grandmother to what is now called Point Nepean. This is a special place with a significance for the Boon Wurrung women. While they were there they were kidnapped by sealers and taken to an isolated island in Bass Strait. They were put to work for sealers. But at the age of 18 she took a husband and returned to her country in a small open boat.

When she returned to her country she searched for her people, but they were no longer there. Louisa eventually found some of her people at Coranderrk Reserve and she settled down to live there. She worked at the reserve as a Matron. She became a strong political activist and her family were again forced to move because of their strong stand on land rights. They were banned from the Reserve. She died in the 1920's at a very old age, but in bridging the time between the invasion of her country and the dispossession of her people she provided the cultural link, ensuring that her heritage continued to live. During her life she continued to dream and talk about her country.

Louisa fought oppression, racism and political inequality. Today, as we consider the act of Reconciliation, I hope her story will inspire not only her descendants but that, in the spirit of reconciliation, it will provide a model of strength that can inspire all Australians.

Today Melbourne is the great multicultural city of the world and this special place continues to carry forward the spirit of our tradition. This land will always be protected by the creator, Bunjil, who travels as an Eagle, and by Waarn, who protects the waterways and travels as a Crow. Bunjil taught the Boon Wurrung to always welcome guests, but he always required the Boon Wurrung to ask all visitors to make two promises: to obey the laws of Bunjil and not to harm the children or the land of Bunjil.

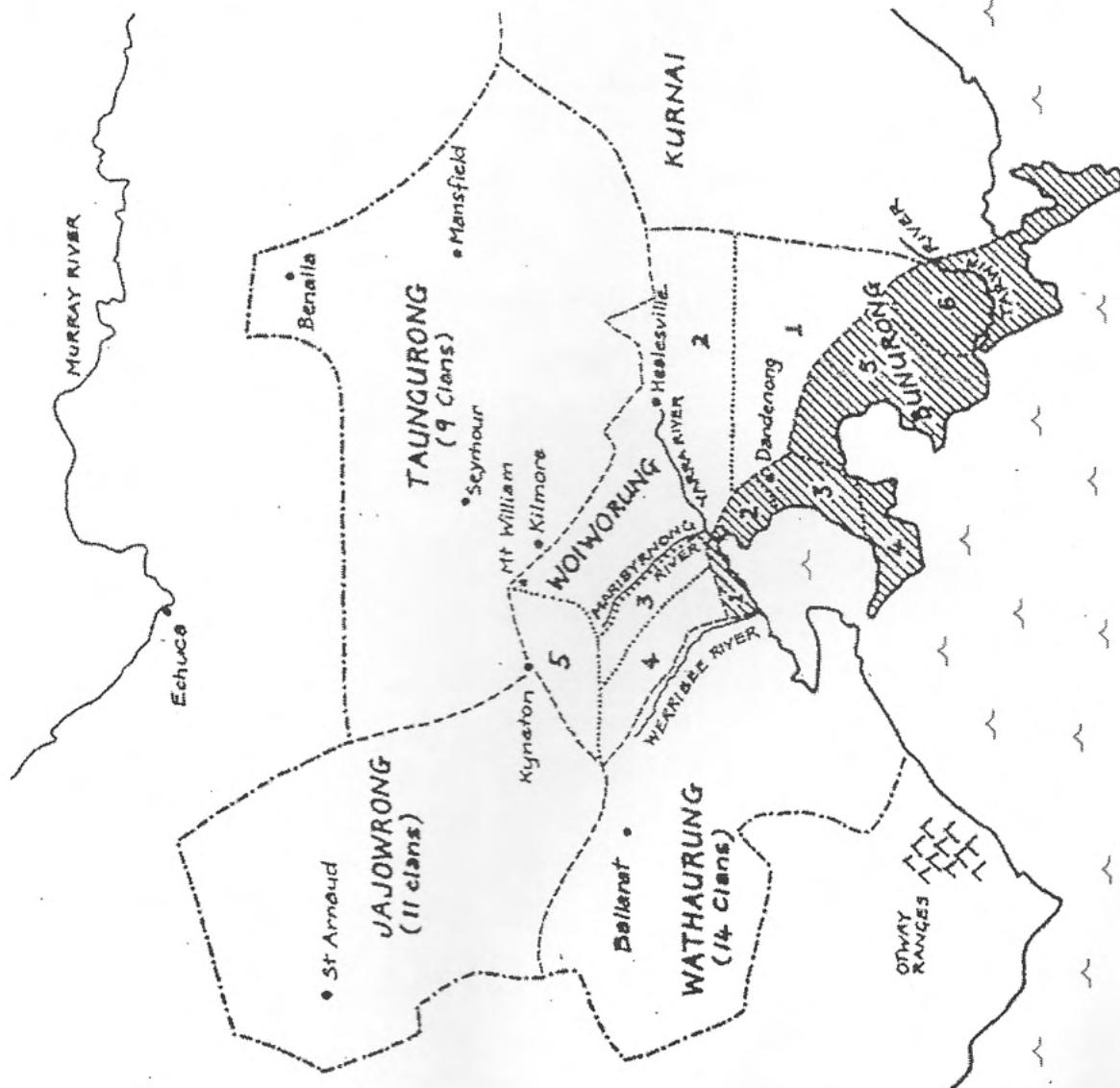
As the spirit of my ancestors lives, let the wisdom and the spirit of generosity, which Bunjil taught us, influence the decisions made in this meeting place.

THE KULIN NATION

THE KULIN NATION

NAME:

The approximate boundaries of the Kulin Nation showing the areas of the five tribes and of the clans of the Bunurong



From p37 'Aboriginal Melbourne' reprinted with permission from the author

GEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS

The Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands form a small remnant of the once extensive Carrum-Carrum Swamp which stretched from near Frankston to Mordialloc.

Geologically speaking, the Carrum-Carrum swamp has been formed in a sunkland which is bounded by Selwyn's fault to the south and a fold structure called the Beaumaris Monocline to the north. The bottom of the sediments was deposited 7,000 years ago. There was a warmer period, after the ice age which reached its peak 20,000 years ago. In the glacial period the sea level was about 150 metres lower than today which meant that Port Phillip Bay was a vast plain crossed by the ancient Yarra River system which eventually flowed out through what is now Port Phillip Heads.

Bass Straight was a plain populated by the indigenous people who moved back and forth between Tasmania and Victoria. About 30,000 years ago when the Ice Age began and sea levels dropped, the land from New Guinea to Tasmania was joined.

When the ice finally melted about 12,000 years ago, Tasmania became separated from the mainland and Port Phillip was again inundated by sea forming the land locked bay we see today.

The recent sediments in the Carrum-Carrum sunkland actually formed part of the ancient Port Phillip Bay. They overlie older rocks, including Upper Devonian granite (about 380 million years old), which are exposed on the shore platform at the foot of Oliver's Hill and fossiliferous marine calcareous sandstone of Miocene age (about 30million years ago) which forms the prominent cliffs at Beaumaris.

The indigenous people whose land reached from the whole of Wilson's Promontory around the bay to the Yarra - The Boon Wurrung - had a legend about the time when the sea came in and formed Port Phillip Bay, stopping at where Governor Road is today.

The first "Friends" of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands were the Boon Wurrung, members of The First Nation who lived in the area from Wilson's Promontory to The Yarra. The Carrum Carrum Swamp provided them with fresh water, food and material for body covering and shelters. It was necessary for their survival. They had had thousands of years to learn how to survive in our environment.

70,000 years ago when seas were much lower than they are today, Aborigines island-hopped from Borneo, Java and New Guinea. It is likely that they travelled on bamboo rafts or bark platforms long before other people crossed over.

EARLY DAYS AT EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS

During 1980, the Dandenong Valley Authority (DVA) drafted regulations under its act to create the Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands as environmental areas, and to facilitate their management as such. The resulting *Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Environmental Area Regulations 1980* created a Committee of Management comprising representatives of the Authority, the Advisory Committee (see below) and the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

It also created an Advisory Committee, comprising two members from each of the municipalities of Chelsea, Frankston and Springvale, as well as a member from a community organisation from each municipality, plus representatives from the Bird Observers Club, the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union, the Conservation Council of Victoria, the Victorian Field and Game Association, the Port Phillip Conservation Council, and the Society for Growing Australian Plants. Additionally, other members could be approved by the Minister from time to time, after being nominated by the Authority.

The regulations also prescribed the duties and operating requirements of the committees, and empowered the Committee of Management to effectively manage the declared environmental areas.

The first item of correspondence received was from the Secretary of the Advisory Committee expressing concern at the lack of water in Edithvale Wetlands, and requesting that high priority be given to restoring a reasonable water level. The Committee also resolved to request the DVA to raise the water level in the southern portion of Seaford Swamp to -0.33m Australian Height Datum (AHD) as soon as possible.

The Committee then discussed the need for a Development Plan for Edithvale Wetlands.

A draft outline development plan was to be prepared to be forwarded to the Advisory Committee for their consideration and comment.

Central to the plan was the provision of a water supply, preferably by means of construction of a permanent diversion channel on Centre Swamp Drain, to avoid pumping. Another essential element was the proposal to construct a flat structural mound between two deeper areas in the southern portion of the swamp.

The DVA operations staff installed a temporary pump to try and raise the water level in the swamp, but the trial failed.

At the management Committee meeting of 18th February 1981, Mr David Venn of Fisheries and Wildlife Division presented a concept plan for sumps, mounds and plantings for the southern section of Edithvale Wetlands. The committee was in agreement with the general form of the plan, and resolved to forward it to the Advisory Committee for their consideration and comments, particularly concerning the gradient of the sumps, the height of the mounds, and the provision of the shallow depressions linking the sumps.

EARLY DAYS AT EDITHVALE-SEAFORD WETLANDS

In May 1981, planning was under way for the piping of the Centre Swamp Drain. Provision was planned for an offtake to be provided in the vicinity of the bird hide, equipped with a windmill to lift water into the swamp. The intent was to provide a continuous source of water to the swamp, and provide water availability over a much greater period of the year.

Subsequently, a trial diversion was carried out. However, it proved unsuccessful due to the excessive height of water required in the Centre Swamp Drain to ensure gravity flow to the wetland.

In July 1981 the Committee decided to request the DVA undertake a study and prepare plans for the provision and regulation of water to the northern section of Edithvale Wetlands.

The DVA commenced barrelling the Centre Swamp Drain in February 1982. Works commenced at Edithvale Road, and an offtake was provided. The mean flow of the drain was determined after gauging, which enabled sizing of a windmill to be carried out. Subsequent investigations revealed that the largest windmill available would only pump about 120,000 gallons per day, and would cost about \$25,000. The possibility of running dry was likely to present maintenance problems.

It was estimated that a submersible pump could be provided at the site for about \$5,000 and would pump over 800,000 gallons per day. Running costs were expected to be about \$1,500 per annum for power. Damage due to vandalism was expected to be greatly reduced. A one cusec (almost 400,000 gallon per day) model 308SLT submersible pump was subsequently purchased from Flygt Australia for \$3,844, including installation.

Electricity to power the pump was not available in the vicinity of the Centre Swamp Drain. The SEC was contacted, and they offered to supply three-phase power for the sum of \$4,140, repayable in forty quarterly payments of \$201.60.

At about the same time, the DVA provided quotations for the construction of sumps and mounds adjacent to Edithvale Road for the sum of \$20,000 and \$2000 for the provision of a rising main approximately 85 metres from the pump station into the wetlands. Sumps and mounds expenditure for the sum of \$10,000 was authorised for the 1981-82 financial year. Works were completed within the allocation of \$10,000.

Construction of the sumps and mounds was completed by the DVA in April 1982. The pump station became operational in August 1982, following the supply of power, and the installation of the pump.

The effect of the additional water was immediate, and the site began to evolve as an expansive, seasonal wetland.



John Scholes, Chairman of the DVA Management Committee.

Absorbing the sounds of the wetlands with his daughter, Emily



A recent example of a 'revived' wetland next to Seaford Wetlands. Water was let into the north-eastern corner of the Downs Estate (previously farmland). Within weeks birds and frogs had moved in and indigenous wetland plants regenerated.

WETLAND WATCH

When vandals became aware of the kangaroos in Edithvale Wetland and began to cut the fence wire to gain access, Les Williams, a Chelsea City Councillor, put a notice in the local paper asking for volunteers to protect the wetland. Several people attended the meeting and a committee was formed. Bob Lloyd President, Barry Ross Vice President, Dorothy Meadows, Secretary and Bill Fitch, Treasurer with several general members.

We organised a patrol of the fence to report, and then mend, any cuts in the fence. We decided that a warning sign was needed so Bruce Saxon, resident on Edithvale Road, Mechanical Drawing teacher, was asked to design a logo for us. Bruce produced our beautiful logo of two swans on water. We had it printed onto metal signs and attached to the fence at intervals. It is also on our letter-head and appliqued on our flag which is up on the flag pole over the hide to denote it is open.

Sadly, Bruce died not long ago.

His legacy is treasured by FESWI

Bruce William Saxon

26th March 1927—26th November 2016



OUR BEAUTIFUL LOGO

DESIGNED FOR US

BY

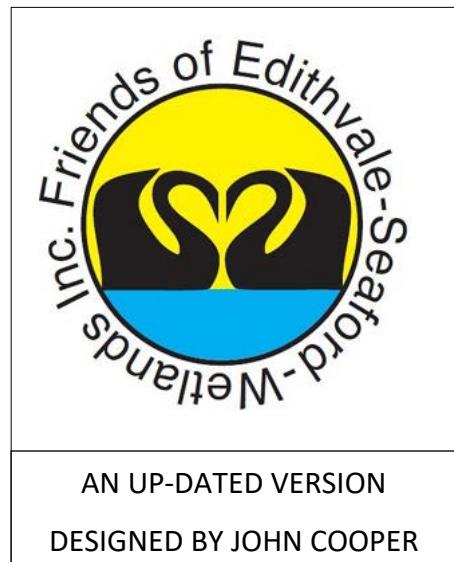
BRUCE SAXON



OUR LOGO



OUR FLAG

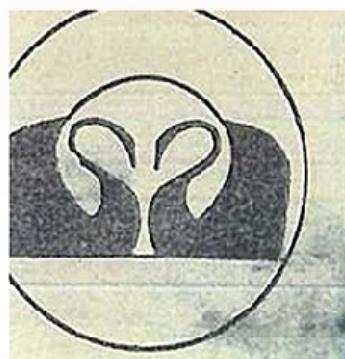
AN UP-DATED VERSION
DESIGNED BY JOHN COOPER

LETTER S: 1986

Wetlands to be watched.

A N interested group of residents have formed a "Wetland Watch" to help protect and develop Edithvale wetlands. All patrol the area and report problems to police and the Wetland Management Committee.

Mr Bruce Saxon, of Edithvale, designed the logo which is to be used on signs around the area. The Incorporation of swans, tree, and water,



Wetland Watch logo.

SEAFORD WETLANDS



Map Source: Google Earth Pro

Map data ©2017 Google

SEAFORD WETLANDS

Seaford Wetlands (as well as those at Edithvale) remained after the draining of the Carrum Carrum Swamp in the 1860's. However, localised additional draining in the early 20th century was followed by farming (both cropping and grazing) until the early 1970's, at which time, the remnant wetlands began to be actively flooded through management intervention, and the wetland ecosystem began to recover and regenerate.

Unfortunately, significant works to expand the Seaford Wetlands in the early 1980's resulted in breaking of the underlying peat layer and the ingress of saline groundwater. Works since then are gradually resolving this problem, although the artificial components of the wetlands are brackish, rather than freshwater.

(Source: Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) 2001 Brett Lane, Principal Consultant, Brett Lane and Associates)

In the early 1990's the three managing bodies of the area - *Melbourne Water*, *Melbourne Parks and Waterways* and the *City of Frankston* - formed a group, the *Seaford Wetland Co-ordination Group*, and pooled their respective funds and knowledge to work together to manage the area. Ken and Victoria Sharp were commissioned by Frankston Council to prepare landscape plans to rehabilitate the wetlands and maximise their value for wildlife, recreation and education.

Privately owned land in the north west corner was purchased in the early 1990's and more recently land in the north east (the Downs Estate) was purchased early in 2000 and, although council owned, has become part of the wetlands site. Water has been let into the property by *Melbourne Water*, which has pooled extensively and has followed the old water course across the property.

Planting bees at Seaford tended to be ad-hoc in the early years - led by Ian Hall, Malcolm Brown (MW) and others - then in the mid 1990's they became more regular, ably led by Malcolm Shapcott, then Barry Ross (who also co-ordinated large planting projects), and, more recently, by Rex Chugg. The 'empty' pasture land (buffer zones around the wetlands) has been gradually converted into extensive, productive woodland. The Friends can be justifiably proud of this.



VIEWS OF EDITHVALE WETLANDS



VEIWS OF EDITHVALE WETLANDS

This photograph (below) shows Edithvale Road, the Hide and viewing platform as well as the bike path (in red) which extends from Thames Promenade to Mordialloc Creek.

The bike path was formed to allow students at Mordialloc-Chelsea High School to travel safely to school.



All photographs from the drone are a gift from my friend, Trevor Sasman, who used the drone from different heights.

Trevor took special note of the birds.

He said they were not disturbed by the drone



The island - Edithvale South Wetland

VIEWING PLATFORMS

Edithvale South

A scheme was introduced to assist unemployed young people by training them in a skill that gave them an opportunity for employment. A group of them was taken to the corner of Edithvale Wetlands nearest to the housing development near Wells Road. The plan was for them to build a Viewing Platform so people could watch the birds.

One of the conditions was that they used only hand-tools. The platforms were made of wood.

The group not only learnt how to make a viewing platform but also, they became very interested in the migrating birds. The platform was completed and used until it was demolished at the building of the Education Centre (2010/2011).

With the success of this exercise another group was offered the opportunity to learn how to use power tools and build another viewing platform near the hide

The Aspendale Rotary Club is renowned for supporting the environment and agreed to help the Friends when they expressed a need for a viewing ramp near the bird hide beside Edithvale Road. The idea was to provide a safe and easy access spot where drivers could pull in so they and passengers could do some bird watching on the side of Edithvale Wetlands.

People in Next Step, a Work for the Dole project, did the work and Barry Ross, Friends of Edithvale/Seaford Wetlands Inc, attended with some Aspendale Rotarians.

Rotarians are to be congratulated in their support of local organisations.



Swans and ducks seen from this viewing ramp

VIEWING PLATFORMS

Edithvale South

In 2012 it was reported that the latest safety-engineering report on the bird hide revealed significant deterioration in the columns and footings that had been submerged in water and the hide had to be closed.

However, MW proposed to rebuild the viewing ramp near the hide into a platform with roof and, possibly, sides; the intention being to extend the new platform out by six meters to give a wider viewing area; and to make the lead-up ramp compliant with disabled access regulations.

The new structure would be open to the community at all times.

At the same time, FESWI was given the right to open the Education Centre every Sunday afternoon to the public.



In the top photo, the viewing platform (photo below) can be seen behind the reeds to the right of the hide (orange roof).



VIEWING PLATFORMS

Edithvale North

If you take a walk along the track in Edithvale north you will notice a viewing platform overlooking one of the ponds. This was built by Aspendale Rotary in conjunction with Next Step - Chelsea Work for the Dole Scheme and it allows a great vantage point for viewing birds.

It was officially opened on Saturday morning 3rd May, 2003, at a handing-over ceremony. Present were Terry Cheshire, President of Rotary Aspendale; Topsy Petchey, local ward member for the Kingston Council; Denis Hyland, District Governor Nominee - Rotary; Owen Griffith, supervisor - Next Step, Yvette Barrington - Manager Next Step, Leigh Crang, principal of Aspendale Gardens PS, a large number of kids from the school, our own president at the time, Malcolm Shapcott, and members Barry, Rete, Sybil, Kath and Robin.



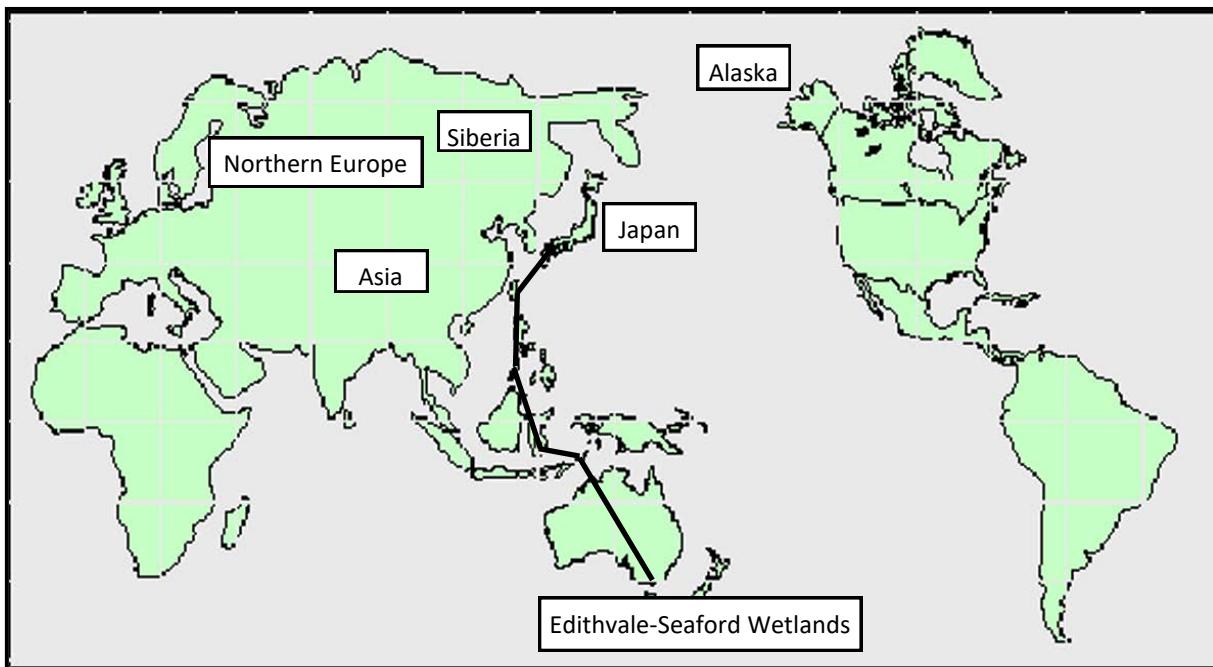
Terry Cheshire, President of Rotary Aspendale, Yvette Barrington, Manager Next Step, and Malcolm Shapcott - President, FEWSI

Seaford

A little later, Frankston Council built a viewing platform over-looking the South Pond in Austin Road.

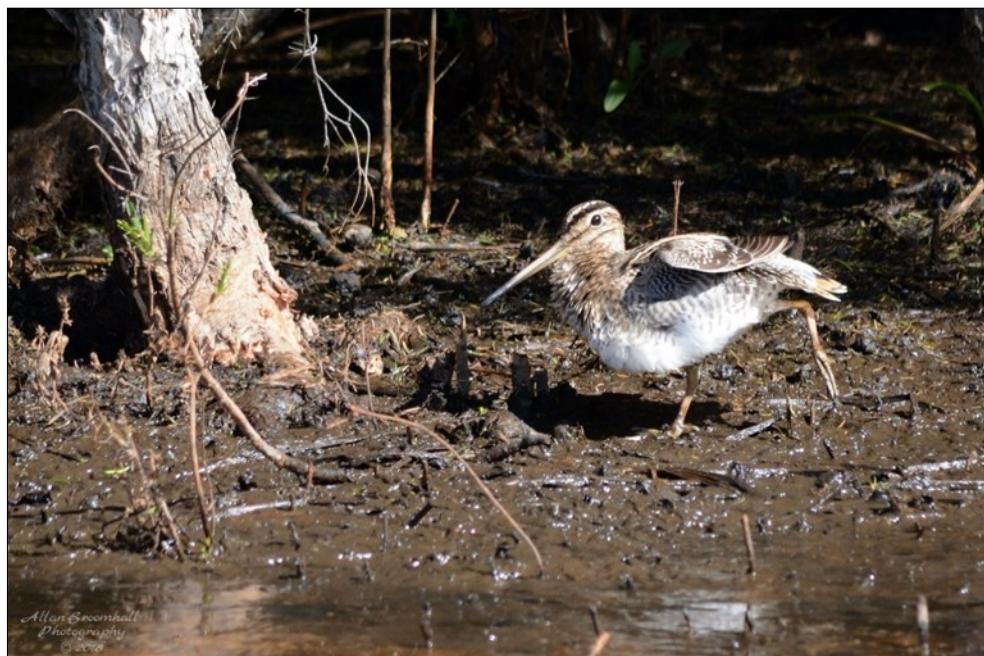


MIGRATORY BIRD FLYWAYS



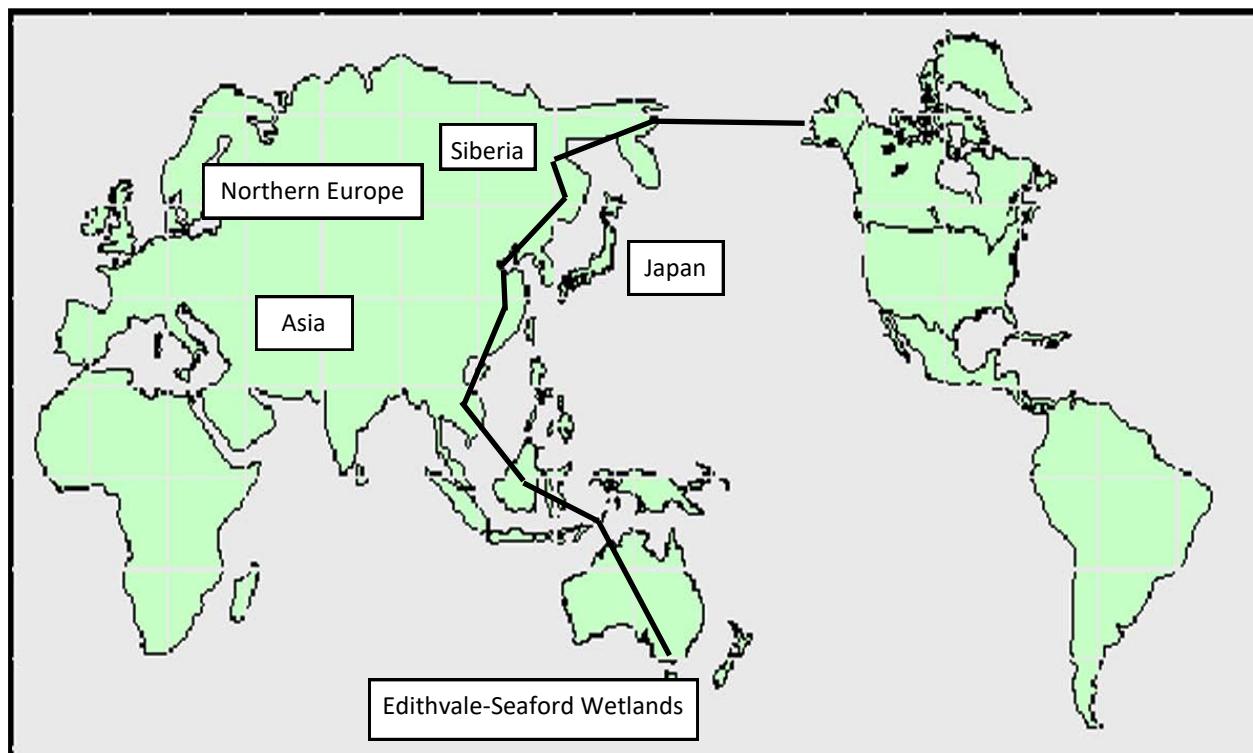
The migration of birds is one of the most fascinating and least understood events in nature. Birds are not especially strong, yet numerous species migrate tremendous distances, often flying many hours or days without stopping. The routes that these birds take are called flyways. The East Asian Australasian Flyway extends from the Arctic Circle through South East Asia to Australia and New Zealand.

One of the migrants that comes into Edithvale & Seaford Wetlands is Latham's Snipe. They come from Northern Japan in August and leave in February/March.



Latham's Snipe Photo: Allan Broomhall

MIGRATORY BIRD FLYWAYS



One of the migrants that comes into Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands is the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. They arrive in Australia about October from Northern Siberia, where they breed, and then leave in March.

Red-necked Stints, the smallest migrant, weighing little more than a box of matches, flies a round trip of 24,000 kms from the high Arctic of Siberia and Alaska to Australia arriving in September, then returning to the northern hemisphere in March-April.

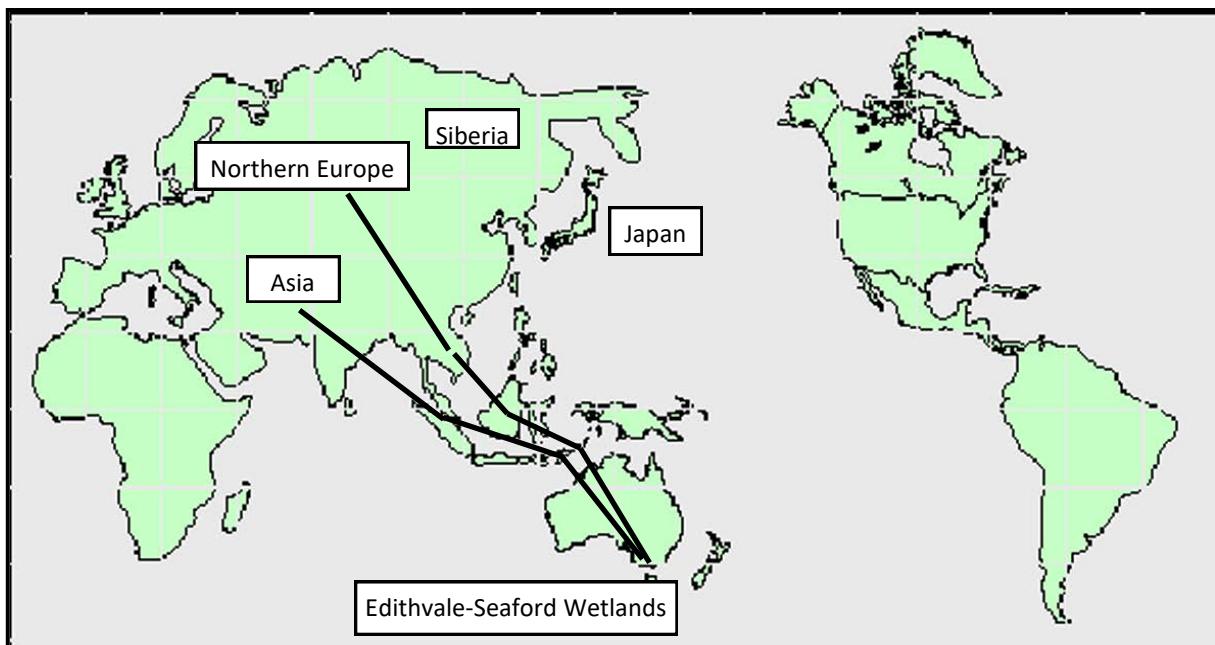


Sharp-tailed Sandpipers Photo: Alison Kuiter



Red-necked Stints Photo: Alison Kuiter

MIGRATORY BIRD FLYWAYS



Another bird which traditionally comes to spend time in our wetlands is the Wood Sandpiper. They also fly incredible distances from Northern Europe and Asia, passing over many different countries with large populations.

Curlew Sandpipers come from Northern Siberia so they also come from the other side of the world. They must survive many dangers along the way.

They pay us a great compliment in continually choosing to come to us.



Wood Sandpiper Photo: Steve McDonald



Bird Hide (rear view) 1991 Photo: John Gertsakis (City of Springvale)

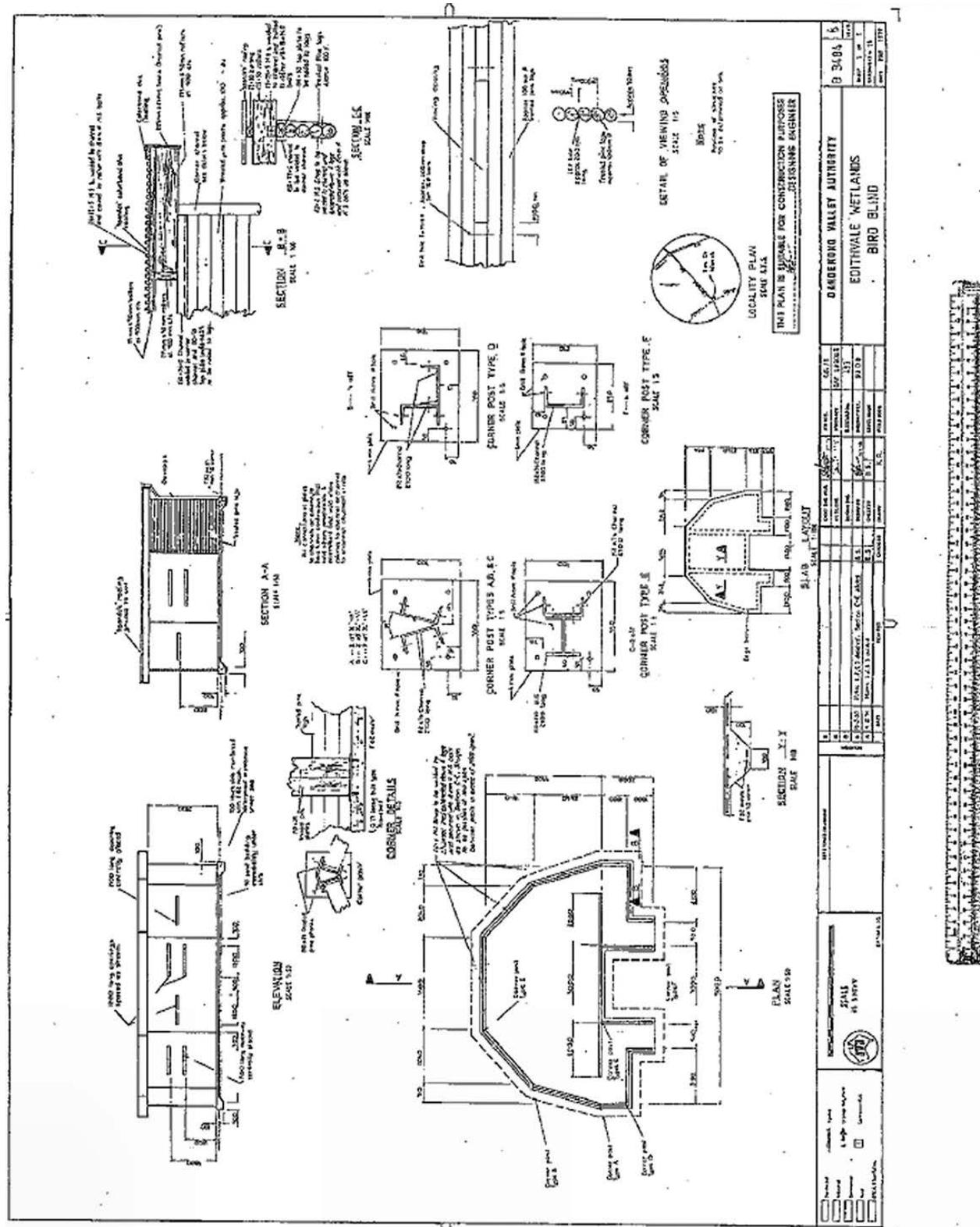
The Bird Hide was built in 1979 by the then Dandenong Valley Authority from material left over from a Frankston project. Initially it had one level but the reeds prevented a good view of the wetland and the birds, so an upper floor was added (see above). Note the flag pole - when the flag was flying it was our way of showing that the hide was open.

A staircase led up to the upper floor which did not extend right back to the rear wall – this gave a sense of openness and allowed light from the skylight to come down to the lower floor. There was a rail along the edge of the upper floor. Not long after hide duty began, a boy who came in climbed over the rail and began to swing his way along. Panic. Ross Nelson was told and he added a wire barrier to prevent future antics. If the boy had lost his grip, he would have fallen down to the floor below.



Early days at the hide.

PLANS FOR THE BIRD HIDE



I remember many years ago, the drive along Edithvale Road was like a country drive. Both sides of the road were grazing paddocks, the north side had cattle and horses at various times. The south was more interesting and changeable with periods of flooding.

Where the main wetlands are, there was coarse grass with Phragmites (reeds) often poking through.

Most years a few swans nested here. It was always disappointing when they got flooded out. All this area had milking cows which were nice to look at. We used to be awakened early in the morning by the cows mooing.

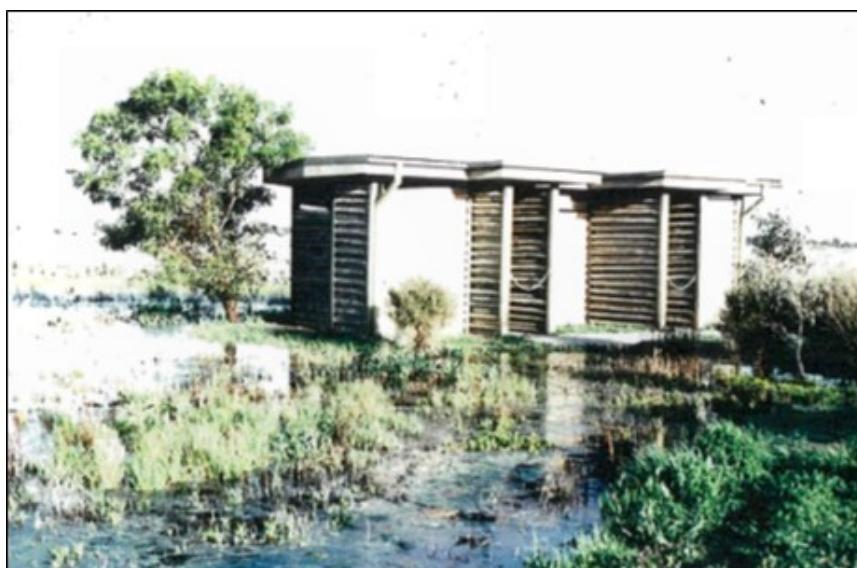
Near the Visitors Centre was a small dam. Half in the dam was the mudguard of an old Skoda car. We used to comment as to why the owner didn't shift it.

One day I noticed what turned out to be the bird hide under construction. It was no sooner done than the roof came off and a second storey appeared. I was interested and went to a FESWI meeting and learnt a lot. On going again the next month the committee seemed surprised and Barry Ross said, "No one comes twice, you'd better come on committee."

Which brings me back to the bird hide. At this time the Dandenong Valley was managed by the DVA (Dandenong Valley Authority) which did drainage and sewerage as well as flood water management.

At this time they were laying large storm water drains in Beach Street, Frankston. A pipe was lowered into a deep hole and huge jacks forced it through the sandy ground. When completed the steel beams and timber were to be discarded. Was it John Scholes or Scott Seymour who decided to use it to make the hide?

Braeside Park was also managed by the DVA, being the sewerage treatment works and some of the staff were the ones who assembled the hide. One, by the name of "Digger", did a lot of the work there. He said the hide had to be made two-storey because the Phragmites would grow so fast when the grazing ceased.

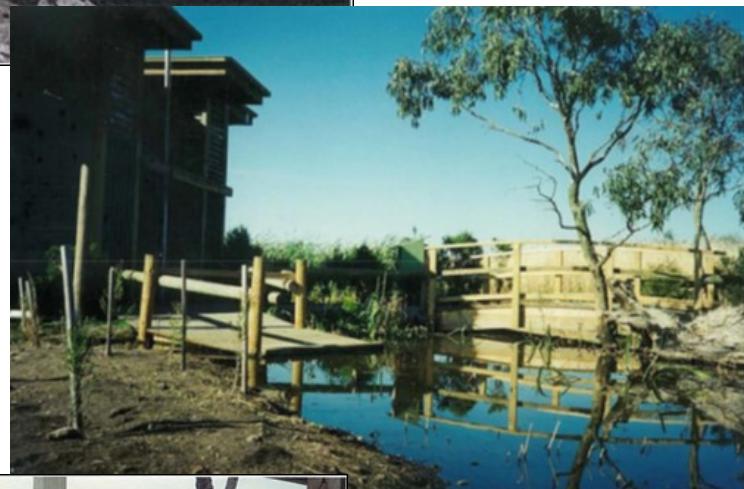


Single-storey
construction

As you walked through the gate to the bird hide, there was a small gravel path which often flooded. There was a narrow deeper section and we hit on the concept of a bridge because if the two low bits on either side of it were connected, the excess dirt from beneath the bridge would raise the remaining path on each side.

My sons, Jamie and Mark, thought the idea had merit so helped out for a few days. Having a bit of spare time, we also did the ponding deck. Once again we applied for a grant, this time to improve this entrance.

Thanks to the hard-working Grants Officer, our grant application was approved. Now there is a small bridge, and the ponding deck had a nice hand rail and edging. The local paper came to take photos. Mark had just had a sort of Mohican hair cut that looked a little strange!



The ponds soon filled with water, and with a little material left over, a ponding platform was built. The photo on the left shows the strong construction. The water is low here but often comes right up to the deck.

THE BIRD HIDE

Hide Openings

As membership increased more volunteers became available for hide duty. The hours were from 1.00pm. to 5.00pm. beginning with Saturdays and then Sundays as well. Numbers of visitors varied often depending on the weather, but averaged around 40 each session. We asked visitors to sign the visitors' book and add comments, as well as where they came from. Those on duty wrote down the birds they identified and Melbourne Water was informed about these records. (To make sure they realised how hard we were working!)

Total visitors for a season averaged around 4000, including local people and those from interstate and overseas. We flew our flag to indicate when the hide was open.

A book was available for noting bird sightings, as well as binoculars and a bird identifying book. We also provided information booklets. Ross Nelson built a cupboard in the corner of the top floor. It had a door which locked so that binoculars etc. could not be taken during a break-in. The wooden benches, made by Terry List and placed under the windows, made bird-watching comfortable. In later years we also provided a telescope. The large front window was special glass so the birds could not see us.

Most people realised the need for quiet. Birds do not like noise. Also, it was very pleasant to be able to hear the birds communicating and enjoy the tranquility.

In the photo (below) of Bill Fitch, Committee Member, the gaps in the wall logs can be seen. It was very cold on windy days. When the walls were lined it was much better.



VIEWS OF THE HIDE



February 2001



Hide Interior 2017



December 2003

KATH PRIOR



Kath Prior not only did hide duty, (Kath knew a lot about the birds) she also took on keeping the hide clean and tidy. Kath also had something special - a beautiful Border Collie called Daisy. People used to ask where Daisy was. To be honest, some people were more interested in Daisy than in the birds. Because Daisy was so well-trained she always behaved perfectly. People liked to pat her.

As if keeping the hide clean wasn't enough, Kath also joined in with planting; with helping Kaye Proudley at the plant nursery, growing seedlings; and with hosting visits from school students.



DAISY

Daisy's right eye was blue and her left eye was brown. She would accompany Kath to the hide and lie quietly on the floor waiting for her admiring public to arrive and start the Patting Daisy Session.

During a time overseas I saw, in England, in a National Park, a slice from an ancient tree, noting a time line of the times of the life of the tree. Following this idea, and being aware of the rapid decline in River Red gums in this area, an approach to Braeside Park rangers led to us obtaining a slice of a River Red gum that had begun to grow in the park around the year 1500.

It had been cut down to allow a building on its site. It was treated by Austin Dixon, a woodwork teacher. Then, with help from Ross Nelson, it was placed in the front alcove of the hide.

A Time-Line was prepared and placed on a board by a Sign Writer. The time-line noted events that took place here from the year 1500 to the present day.

The dates were placed on markers which were attached to the slice using the "rings" on the slice to estimate the dates.

The reason for completing this project was to show how long these huge trees can live. Springvale used to have many, but most have been cut down.

Jenny Lindell, MP, was a long-standing member of Friends of Edithvale-Seaforth Wetlands Inc, so it was appropriate to invite her to unveil the Slice of River Red Gum. Jenny was speaker of the House in 1999 and very busy.



SLICE OF RIVER RED GUM TREE RING DATES

1500. Seed germinated. Boon Wurrung Aborigines lived here.
1522. Disputed exploration of Terra Australis by Mendoca.
1606. First Dutch contact- Janszoon, West coast, Cape York.
1642. Abel Tasman discovered Tasmania (Van Dieman's Land.)
1770. Lt. Hickson, Endeavor, sighted Pt. Hicks
1798. George Bass discovered and entered Westernport.
1802. Lt. John Murray, Lady Nelson, sailed into Port Phillip Bay.
1803. Grimes walked on Long Beach. William Buckley escaped from Sorento.
1827. Expedition from Western Port met "more than 100 Aborigines" near Carrum Carrum Swamp."
1841. Earth tremors in the area.
1866. Aboriginal Settlement at Mordialloc.(Near High School site.)
1879. Patterson Cut.
1887. Railway line comes to Mordialloc.
1834. Flood - Mordialloc, Berwick, Frankston
1958. Patterson River Banks raised 6 foot above 1934 flood level.
1978. Edithvale South fenced, Hide Built.
1983. The tree is dying.
1985. Kangaroo introduced. *Wetland Watch* formed.
1988. *Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc.* formed.
1995. Slice of River Red Gum given to FESWI by Braeside Rangers.



River Reds at Seaford

PLANTING THE BUFFER

As the residential development crept closer to the wetlands at Edithvale, FESWI was invited by Melbourne Water to plant indigenous trees in the buffer to reduce the sounds and sights disturbing the birds in the wetland. There was a little stream close to the side of Edithvale Road where the Education Centre entry is now.

Melbourne Water had the area ploughed and on the planting day we were met by mud and heavy frost. Our volunteers arrived, several children, scouts and parents. None of them were put off by the mud, in fact they enjoyed it.

Some years later I was contacted by Melbourne Water and asked to meet a man at the buffer which by then was a pretty copse of healthy trees. He came armed with a spray can of red paint. The idea was that we stroll through the copse and mark out a meandering path. It was fun doing this, nothing like the energy needed to plant the trees. The path is still there.



PLANTING THE BUFFER

Planting the buffer strip beside Edithvale Road, closest to the residential area.



The area had been ploughed.
Very muddy.



Now for the next
300 trees.



PLANTING EDITHVALE NORTH

Edithvale North is quite different from Edithvale South. It was the site of a rubbish tip for many years from settlement. There were plans to build several special features to educate visitors, but these did not eventuate.

Instead it was decided to tidy it up and form ponds so that long-legged birds (feathered ones) would like to use the area. The person who was organising it told me that he had employed some bulldozer drivers to form the ponds and clear up the area. He said that one of the drivers was a woman and **SHE WAS THE BEST BULLDOZER OF THE LOT!**

As you can see (photos next page), it was muddy but worth the effort to encourage the extra species of birds.



ARBOR DAY EDITHVALE 1990



MUD

GLORIOUS
MUD

PLANTING AT SEAFORD

Planting bees at Seaford tended to be ad-hoc in the early years - led by Ian Hall, Malcolm Brown (MW) and others - then in the mid 1990's they became more regular, ably led by Malcolm Shapcott, then Barry Ross (who also co-ordinated large planting projects), and, more recently by Rex Chugg.



Left: Malcolm Shapcott



Left: Barry Ross

PLANTING AT SEAFORD



Right: Rex Chugg



PLANTING BY BOAT

We had a plan to plant on an island in Seaford Wetland. The water was too deep to wade to reach the island so a boat and life jackets were organised.

Upon arrival volunteers waited in a queue to board the boat, which was not The Queen Elizabeth, and took one to row and one to sit still.

A volunteer offered to row across to the island but the boat persisted in going in circles.

An ex-Sea Ranger offered to row and deposited all the volunteer onto the island with their seedlings and equipment.

It was interesting that at the end of the planting and after all volunteers were safely back on the mainland, the planting volunteers were worn out and grubby. The only volunteer who was "fresh as a daisy" was the ROWER



Volunteers on their way to plant trees on the island (created in 1989 from dredged spoil following the creation of lagoons at the southern end) at the Seaford Wetlands.

TREE GUARDS

One of our aids for encouraging seedlings to grow was the use of tree guards. This went very well at first, but later the kangaroos discovered them. They must have decided the guards were put there just for them, so they could get lovely fresh young shoots to eat. They would gently put their heads into the guard and carefully bite off the young leaves.



THE FURPHY WATER CART

Another time when we planted tree seedlings, it was a very hot day. Melbourne Water loaned us a Furphy so we were able to water in the seedlings.

The Furphy Water Cart

The presence of the cart in military camps in Australia and overseas during the First World War led to the name of Furphy becoming an indelible part of our language.

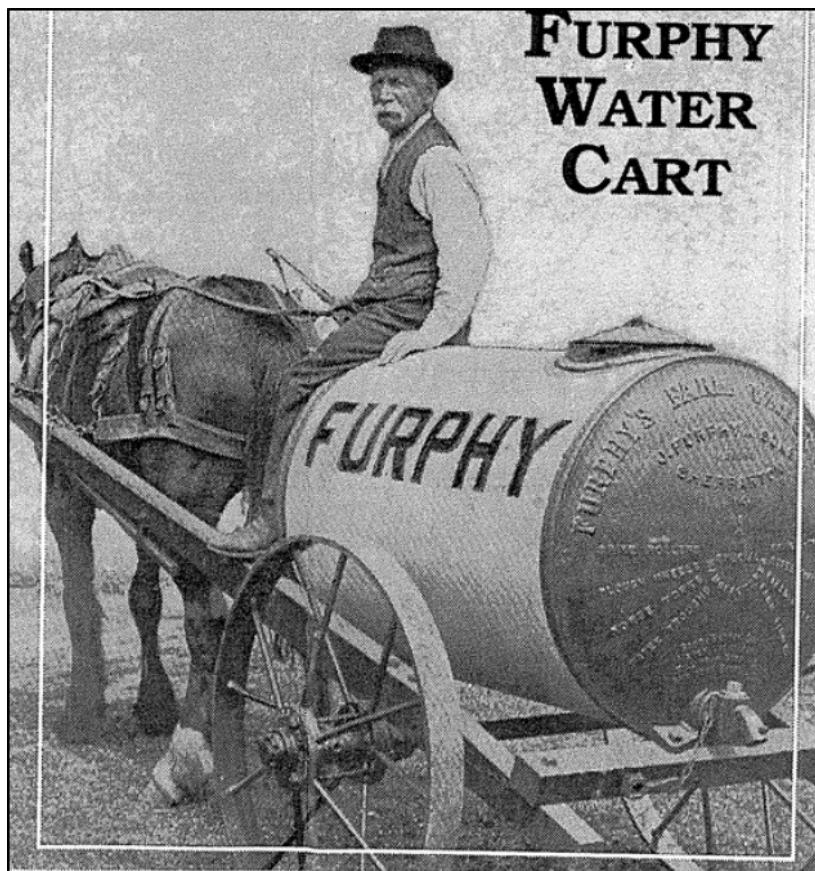
The water cart was used in Europe and the Middle East to carry water to the troops, and the drivers of the carts were notorious sources of information and gossip for the men as they moved from camp to camp.

As could be expected, not all their news was reliable and so it was that the word Furphy rapidly became a synonym for suspect information or rumour.

The first cart was made between 1878 and 1880, with the establishment of Furphy's foundry.

From an information sheet provided by Furphy's Foundry.

Note. The Furphy we borrowed was not horse drawn. It was moved by the muscles of our volunteers.



TRAILER, BIRD BOXES AND KEY BOX

Ross Nelson, who is multi-skilled, made an equipment trailer to use when we were planting, having a display or needing to transport a load somewhere. As can be seen in the photograph (Page 43), it was a great advertisement for FESWI. As well as the trailer Ross also made a big waterproof box which was kept behind the back corner of the Secretary's house and used to leave anything members needed to access, including the hide key. This continued until a special key system was established at the hide gate.

Bird Boxes. Ross Nelson Newsletter 20, March 1992.

To help boost bird numbers at our Wetlands, I recently made 9 bird boxes out of old packing cases which unfortunately are very time consuming to work with.

The first four boxes my son and I put in place near the observation hide at Seaford North Primary School.

The water had receded, but not as much as we expected, and was about 300mm (1 foot) deep. The peat was so soft that boots were no match for the sticky ooze. Braving all I went in bare feet. Luckily the water was warm because with each step I sank up to my thighs.

Each box required two trips – one with the pole and one with the box. An extra trip was required to take a photo, but was well worthwhile.

The other four boxes we located in the lagoon at the end of James Street. This lagoon is man-made and is about 450mm (18 inches) deep with a firm clay base which believe me, is very difficult to drive poles into.

We took the opportunity to inspect the trees our group planted on the island. They were doing well, as were some rushes and other water edge plants that had taken hold. The water in the new lagoon was still very salty and lacking in life but had improved since the previous year. On the other hand, the water in the natural lagoon near Seaford North Primary School was teeming with life including Dragon Flies and schools of small fish.

The last box we used at Edithvale to replace one of the original two boxes that had become worn out.

Whilst at Edithvale we took an inventory of the contents of all the bird boxes. Here are the results.

1. Feathers, not much material.
2. Two large white eggs- Teal. One small blue-green egg - Indian Myna
3. White egg shells.
4. Lots of down and nesting material.
5. Five eggs and down.

TRAILER, BIRD BOXES AND KEY BOX

6. Nine eggs, down.
7. Eight eggs and down.
8. Nothing.
9. Lots of material and teal feathers.
10. Bits of shell, not much material.
11. One egg, not much material.
12. Full up, 5 white eggs with one blue/green one. Seems an Indian Myna moved in after the Teal left.
13. Two eggs, lots of down.



BIRD BOXES MADE BY ROSS NELSON

TRAILER, BIRD BOXES AND KEY BOX

The bird boxes were made because they provide a safe place for birds to hatch their eggs, and also, allow for the examination of the contents of the boxes when, they are vacated - this provides information on the birds' diet as well as the information that Ross has already listed.



DUCK IN RENOVATIONS

This building was originally used by CSIRO for launching weather balloons. It was placed in the path of a strong prevailing wind which comes across the bay, hits first at Aspendale, and proceeds overland to the site and on to Doncaster, thus assisting in supporting the balloons.

Later, Melbourne Water offered us the opportunity to use the building as a headquarters and for storage for our fast growing equipment and tools. Up to then we had been meeting at the Secretary's home and storing tools etc in our garages, all very inconvenient.

We were delighted and somebody said, "What will we call it?" Kath Prior, a long standing Committee member said, " How about Duck In because that is what we will do?" We accepted this brilliant idea.

This began a renovation programme led by President Ross Nelson, using his wide range of skills. We cleaned, cleared, organised and began enjoying having all meetings in Duck In. Under the leadership of Kaye Proudley, committee member, expert "Bird Watcher" and indigenous plant expert, several plantings were organised. In Kaye's notes (Memories) she describes the involvement of Community Services.

Our Logo was painted on the outside.

The top half of the building was open space for balloon launching. We decided, under Ross Nelson's leadership, to use that space. Ross obtained a fire escape from a cinema in Malvern, which we paid for with a Kingston Community Grant. Under Ross's leadership, Frank Jupp and Barry Ross set about installing the stairs and a mezzanine floor using the open space, so we had an excellent store downstairs and meeting room upstairs. Ross also removed the upstairs end walls and installed large windows with great views over the wetlands area. Tony Flavel did the painting.

This building has enabled our willing and skilled members to complete hundreds of hours of manual labour at no cost to Melbourne Water while protecting and nurturing this Internationally Recognised Ramsar Wetland.

DUCK IN RENOVATIONS



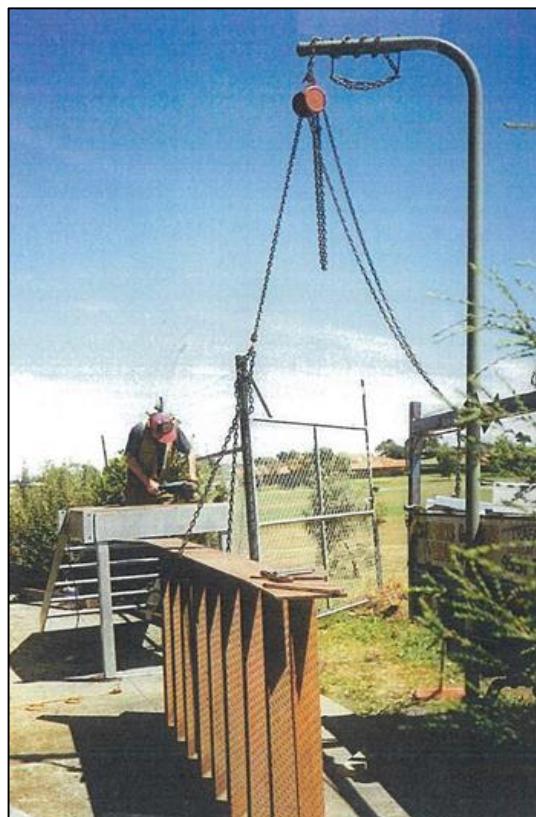
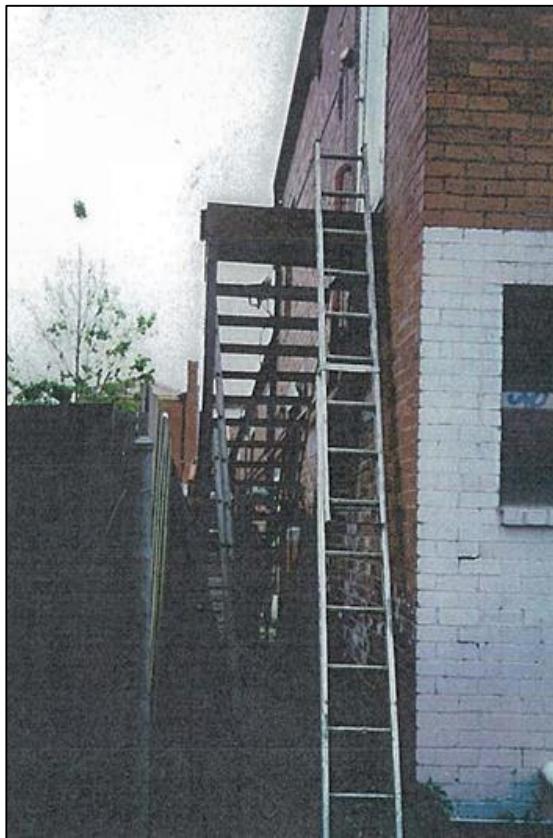
These older photos show the bi-fold doors to which we had given a coat of paint (lower photo).

The first photo shows Kaye Proudley's work on the enclosure, the grass is dead and a load of mulch is ready to spread.

The second photo (some time later) shows a few plants becoming established.

DUCK IN RENOVATIONS

Ross Nelson



A Kingston Community Grant was used to purchase the old fire escape stairs from a cinema in Malvern Road.

The old cinema stairs were in poor condition, the hand rail only needed a push to break it off. It was fortunate it was never used in an emergency.

Removal of the stairs involved cutting a few bolts and lowering the stairs with a chain block which was bolted to the brickwork

Frank Jupp, Barry Ross and Ross Nelson rolled the section out on bits of steel pipe and slid them onto the trailer. The bottom part on the trailer still had the handrail but it came off easily later on.

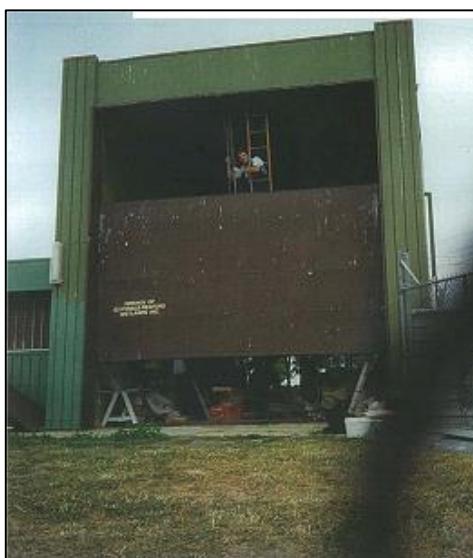
I think we had expected a difficult job but for once it was much quicker than expected. Altering and fixing the stairs took a fair while but Tony Flavel painted it and made it look brand new.

Friends Ross Nelson, Frank Jupp and Barry Ross did the dismantling and re-building renovations and Tony Flavel did the painting.

DUCK IN RENOVATIONS



The stairs looked better painted. These stairs are one-meter wide as required for public use. The landing was also a requirement. Two posts held it at the high ends so it was really self-supporting.



See the difference – the old doors gone and the new windows going in. The big timber ladder (see over) is interesting (an old SEC ladder). It was a bit scary right at the top because it flexed a lot. These were later replaced with lighter, safer wooden ladders.

DUCK IN RENOVATIONS



The first photo shows Mark and Polar, the dog, framing the opening to take the rolla door.

The second shows Jamie and Mark lowering the old ply bi-fold doors. These were extremely heavy, easy enough to let down but hard to slide outside where they were cut into sections.

The bottom photo is the next day carrying in the new doors. Note, in this photo the colour bond surrounds and trim have been installed around the opening.



DUCK IN RENOVATIONS

**Installing Duck In Rolla Doors.**

Jamie Nelson is by the ladder standing on the first section of the re-painted stairs. "Fantastic Garage Doors" supplied the four doors and installed for them for free. It took four of us all day as it was heavy and difficult. Jamie and Ross Nelson had spent the previous day removing the bi-fold doors and preparing the opening.

After the doors were installed, the top section of the stair case was installed. It was a while before we obtained a grant to build the upstairs floor.

Ross Nelson

Gaining grants from government bodies and corporate organisations is the life blood of any community group. It is no different for the Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc. It allows them to undertake projects, programs, buy equipment, promote their group and continue to undertake the fundamentals for working in the community and securing the future of the wetlands.

As I worked for over ten years in various local government authorities as a Recreation Officer I had been intimately involved in the area of community and government grants. The majority of my role was to develop grant schemes, promote them, assist community groups apply for them, assess submitted grants and finally decide on successful applicants. Also involved in my role was seeking of grants for community groups and my local government authority, from State and Federal Governments and other organisations offering grants. Such grants could range from a few thousand dollars to millions.

When I took on the role of Grants Officer for the Wetlands I would seek out possible grants, assess their criteria, aims and objectives, contact the organisations and discuss the type of applications that would ultimately be successful. Then I would find out as much as possible about our own possible projects and programs that we wanted to undertake. Then the main aim was to write up applications to describe our own aims and objectives that corresponded with those of the grant guidelines.

Grants are not often handed out without a matching contribution from the applicant. This can sometimes be on a \$1 for \$1 basis, and/or volunteer labour contribution, equipment or materials all supplied by the applicant. Often the applicants have lots of the above, apart from enough funds to totally undertake the entire project or program themselves. So securing a grant is like getting "Free Money."

As a result, I always felt like I had won Tattslotto every time we were successful in gaining a grant. All I had to contribute was time, brain power and bingo- Free \$.

It was a privilege to have worked as grants officer for over 8 years and see it develop as a result. Looking forward to future progress.

Linda Meadows

OVER THE YEARS

FESWI has regularly sought, and been successful, in obtaining, grant money over the years of its operation including large amounts for weed eradication; promotion and education; plantings at Chelsea Heights; and the renovation and re-opening of the bird hide.

The following Grant Income and Expenditure (next page), is for one year
Each subsequent year varied with the differing needs of the Friends.

GRANT INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2002**Natural Heritage Trust Grant: Purpose - Tree planting at Seaford**

25/11/98 Received	<u>25,000.00</u>
1/07/01 Balance remaining	5,179.21
20/08/01 Utility hire	64.96
11/09/01 5000 stakes	1,397.00
17/09/01 Plants (76R Wells Rd}	2,500.00
26/11/01 Utility hire	78.54
17/12/01 Utility hire	98.10
21/01/02 Site preparation - Weed spraying	<u>1,000.00</u>
	<u>5,138.60</u>
30/06/02 Balance-	40.61

Parks Victoria: Purpose - Seaford Wetlands Bush Corridor Regeneration

. 19/04/00 Received	<u>5,000.00</u>
1/07/01 Balance remaining	1,400.45
30/06/02 Balance	1,400.45

City of Kingston: Purpose - Improving 'Duck In'

15/01/01 Received	2,000.00
1/07/01 Balance remaining	319.38
30/06/02 Balance	319.38

Melbourne Water: Purpose - Seaford 'Swamp Paperbark Project'

16/07/01 Received	3,660.00
16/07/01 Round-up / pump	214.50
11/09/01 2000 Weed mats	984.50
17/09/01 Utility hire	66.20
11/02/02 Water container	39.75
20/05/02 Delivery of stakes	5.00
" 1000 plants	<u>1,000.00</u>
	<u>2,309.95</u>
30/06/02 Balance	1,350.05

Melbourne Water: Purpose - Postage Newsletters 2001/02

16/07/01 Received	<u>810.00</u>
Newsletters Nos. 67-73	810.00
30/06/02 Balance	0.00

Linda Meadows

HOW KANGAROOS CAME TO EDITHVALE WETLANDS

When animals are happy in their habitat their numbers tend to increase. In the late 1970's Healesville Sanctuary and Melbourne Zoo each had the problem of too many young. Experts were consulted and it was suggested that to neuter the breeding male could solve the problem. Two experiments failed - the kangaroos died. The experts learnt from their mistakes and refining their techniques, chose a large Eastern Grey, to proceed with the surgery.

When he recovered he seemed to only be interested in the whereabouts of his ladies. Problem- where could they go to live where they would be safe? Edithvale Wetlands with its high wire fence and Wetland Watch seemed ideal. He was taken there with 6 females and one young un-neutered male.

All went well until the young male, growing older, demanded a chance of "doing what comes naturally." He found a young lady and would take her to the opposite end from the mob, near the hide.

Unfortunately, the grant money ran out so no more was to be learnt, and the kangaroos had privacy.

Then the big guy developed a sore hip and the vet said he was in pain. Had he lived in the wild he would have died - time to put him to sleep.

The young male took over but did not request sole rights, so everybody could have fun. Result- numbers increased.



LIVING WITH AND WATCHING KANGAROOS AT EDITHVALE WETLANDS

Prepared for Melbourne Water by
Bryan Walters, ZOOLOGIST. Ecoplan Australia

COUGH AT A KANGOROO

Kangaroo behaviour	Your behaviour
An animal unwilling to move away	Cough, lower your gaze, bend a little. Move away quietly.
An animal standing upright and staring at you without moving its ears	Cough, lower your eyes, turn away.
An animal standing upright and tipping back on its tail and scratching its chest while staring at you	Cough, bend down quickly and move away quickly. Keep moving away. Don't get between the standing animal and any other
A number of animals caught in a corner and making many small nervous movements	Move back and to one side slowly but definitely so that the animals can see an open exit route
A male pulling grass while looking at you	Cough, lower your body and move away
A male rubbing its chest on the ground while facing you	Cough, quickly lower your body, shout, move quickly backward while turning away. Continue to move away, but watch the kangaroo out of the corner of your eye.
Kangaroos 'following the leader' along a vegetation corridor	Step sideways two steps into the thick grasses immediately to allow free passage of the kangaroos. Keep still. Wait a few minutes in case there are stragglers



NEWSLETTER No: 26 1993

EDITH VALE KANGAROO COUNT

Barry Ross Wetland Warbler No: 66 May 2001

At 8:00am on Tuesday, 24 April a small band of Friends, lead by Angela and Malcolm from Melbourne Water, attempted to count the Kangaroos at Edithvale Wetlands. The reason for the early start being that Kangaroos are more placid in the morning.

Since they were first placed in the Wetlands in 1984, the number of kangas has been steadily expanding to the extent that there is now real concern about the size of the population that the Wetland Reserve can support. Hence the need to ascertain just how many roos are now there.

In case you think counting Kangaroos is easy let me set you straight. Our Edithvale Kangaroos seemed very determined to thwart anything that even looked a head count.

We planned our count with military precision.

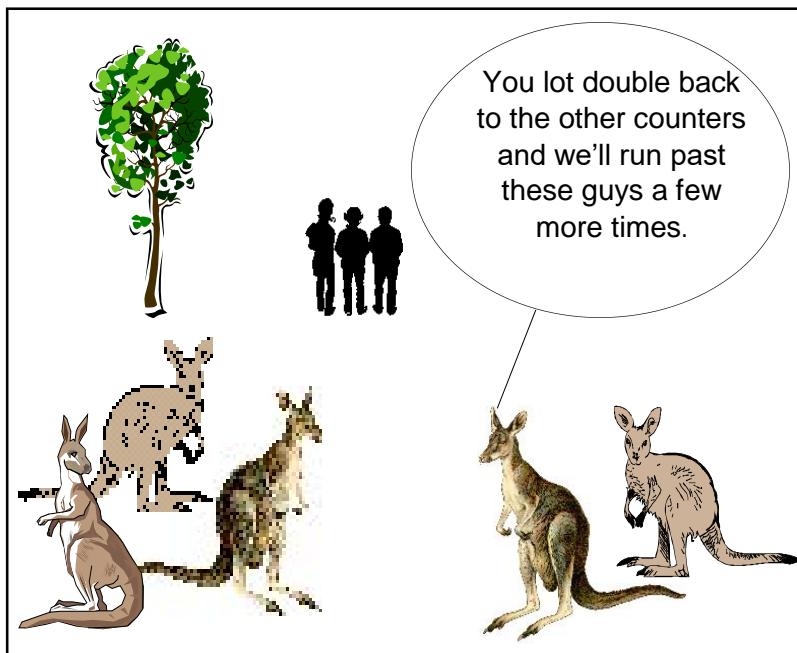
First, we were to synchronise our watches. then surround the roos in small groups. At 8.30am precisely, we were to move slowly in and count any roos seen, and mark their location on a map. This method was to avoid any double counting.

Our plan worked perfectly except the roos spotted us taking our positions before 8:30am and about half the herd bolted into the long reeds never to be seen again.

After comparing notes, we determined that we had spotted around 18 roos, and that those that cleared off beforehand also totalled around 18, making a grand total of 36 kangaroos.

We hope to conduct another count in the not too distant future using a slightly different technique to avoid the problem we incurred this time. More about this in a future newsletter.

Thanks to our intrepid band of kanga counters.



DEVELOPMENT

In December 1989 The Friends had a very big problem to solve. A developer had received permission from Springvale Council to proceed with a development on land next to the Wetland Buffer on the corner of Edithvale Road and Wells Road.

Bill Fitch wrote a long strongly expressed letter objecting to the plan.

The following statistics are clear and demonstrate how large and inappropriate such a development proposal, so close to the wetlands is.

Restaurant 1	100 seats.	Aerobics, Spa, Gym, Sauna	
Restaurant 2	110 seats.	Family Restaurant	250 seats
Conference Store	237 sq ms	Motel Units	38
Medical Centre	300 sq ms	Car Parking Spaces	401
Child Care Centre	30 children	Function Centre	160 seats
Sports Complex	25m pool	Conference Centre	160 seats
Tavern Bar & Drive in	150 spaces		
Bottle Shop (Drive In)		Total People	2,376

The developer contacted FESW and asked for a meeting to discuss the project (the area was in the City of Springvale then).

We had an evening meeting with a spokesperson for the developer. He began by assuring us that the developer was very interested in wetland birds and that he planned to name the streets after them. Les asked him quietly if he had chosen any. He answered, "Yes, Albatross."

Les looked as if he was about to explode. When he got his breath back Les said "We haven't actually seen one lately." With a wing span of 2.2m we wouldn't have needed binoculars!

Then we got a Melways and suggested several appropriate names.

The plan was reduced considerably and we planted the buffer with trees so the houses and other buildings are not visible from the hide.

DEVELOPMENT

Both Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands have often had to deal with developers wishing to build on the wetland buffer zones. A threat at Seaford began in November, 2003

Barry Ross was closely involved in reporting on any progress and leading the defense of Seaford Wetlands. Heading his reports in Wetland Warbler no.81 with "Major Threat to Seaford Wetlands", Barry kept members well in-formed. In articles printed in the newsletter he referred to "This Disastrous Proposal" - to construct 30 housing units almost in the wetland. The application went to VCAT and whilst FESWI did not manage to have the development rejected it won many concessions.

In following Wetland Warblers, detailed reports notified members of the various impending threats to the wetlands including a proposed development of the Downs Estate in 2003. Barry organized objections to this and lobbied Frankston Council until he reported, in Warbler July 2005 no.91, that Frankston Council had initiated action to acquire Downs Farm 20 ha in the NE corner of the wetlands.

Objections to development proposals threatening impact on the wetlands have continued ever since at both Edithvale and Seaford with mixed results – some wins, some losses.

We give our thanks to all those "Friends" involved and particularly to Barry



The Patterson Lake Development right on the northern boundary of Seaford Wetlands

At the time of writing, another potential threat was emerging – the railway trench option at the Edithvale Road railway crossing. The Public Hearing was in June. 2018. FESWI sincerely thanks Sue Telfer, Scott Seymour and Sean Dooley for representing us so brilliantly at the hearing in expressing our concerns. Scott spent many, many hours researching and preparing FESWI's submission, and Sean arrived back from overseas just in time to present passionately on our behalf. Sue co-ordinated our submissions and attended every day of the hearing.

FESWI PRINT PUBLICATIONS

57

Over the years FESWI has produced many print publications to advertise and inform.



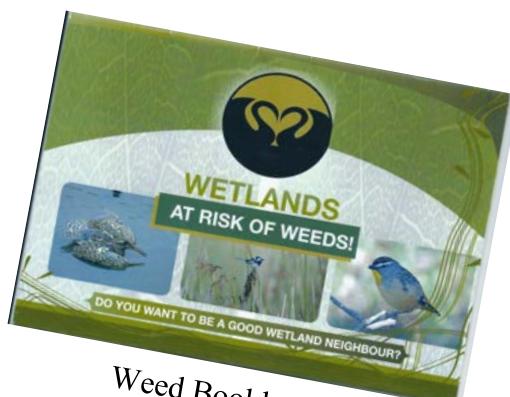
Badges



Newsletters



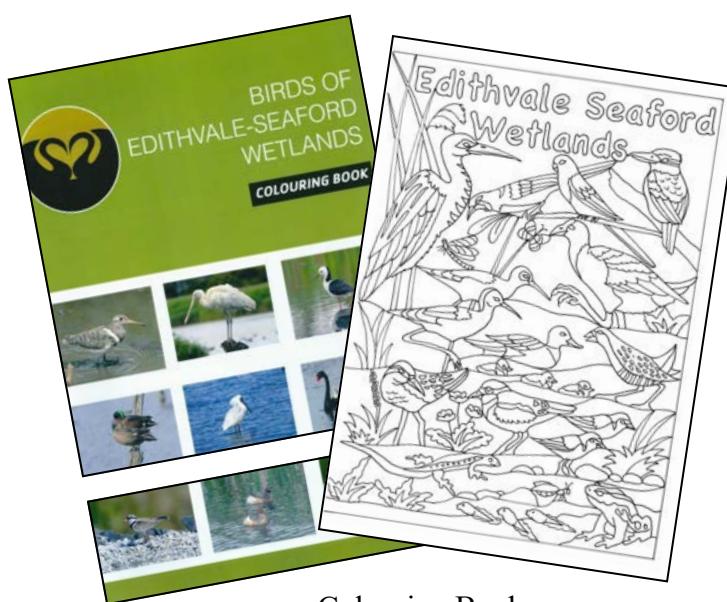
Bumper Stickers



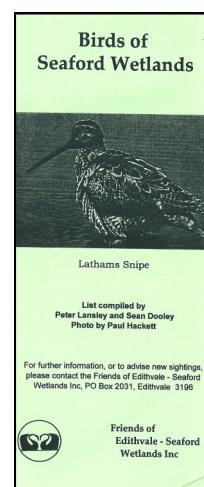
Weed Booklets



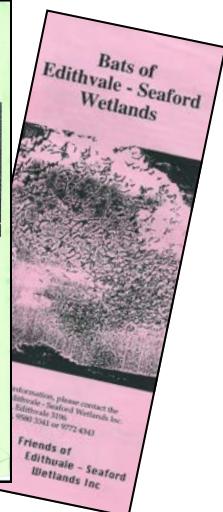
Flagship Pamphlets



Colouring Books



Information Pamphlets



Information, please contact the
Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands Inc.
03 9523 3341 or 9772 4343

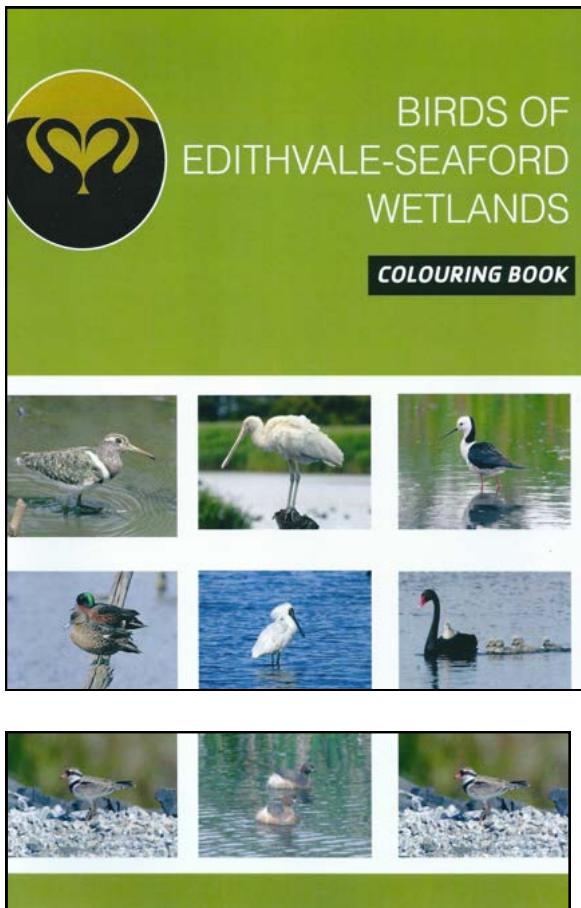
Friends of
Edithvale - Seaford
Wetlands Inc

For further information, or to advise new sightings,
please contact the Friends of Edithvale - Seaford
Wetlands Inc, PO Box 2031, Edithvale 3195

List compiled by
Peter Lansley and Sean Dooley
Photo by Paul Hackett

Birds of
Seaford Wetlands

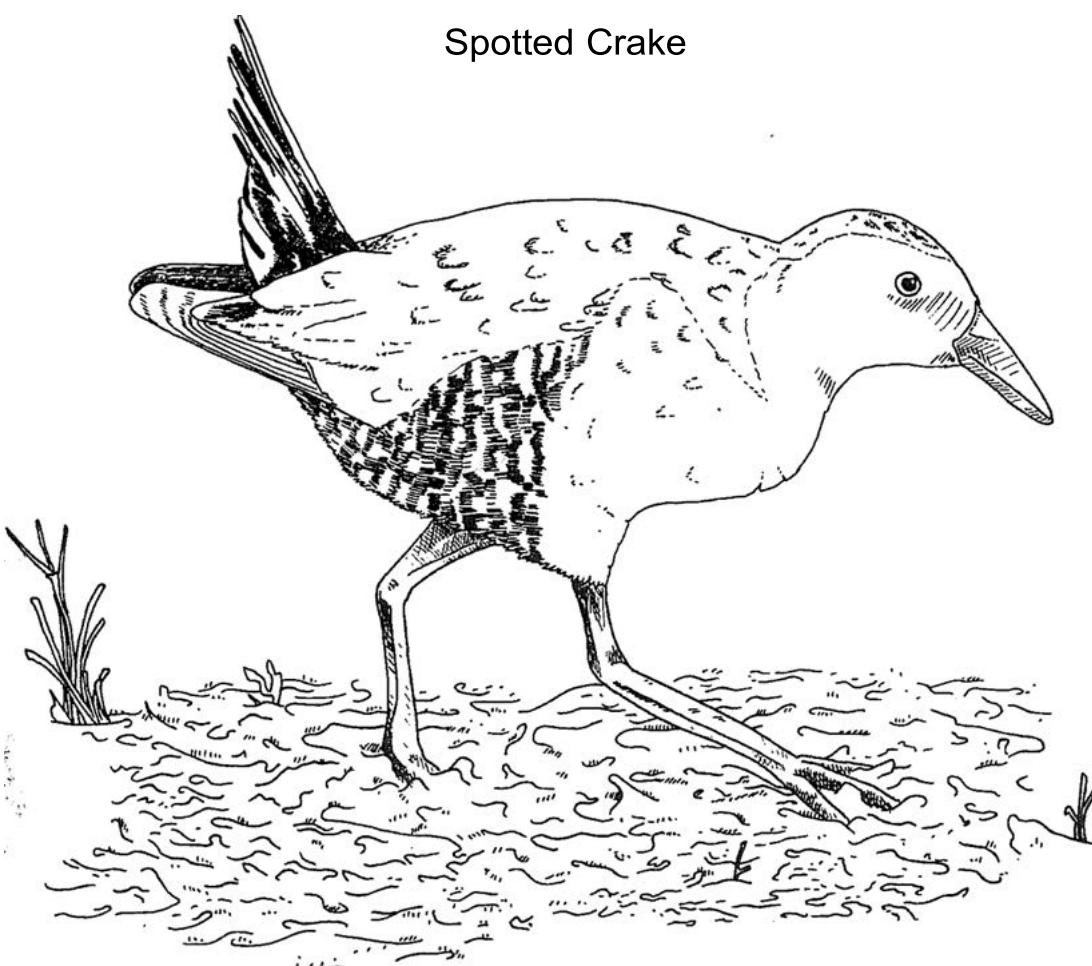
Latham's Snipe



ILLUSTRATIONS

1. **SWAMP HEN**
The purple swamp hen is a good swimmer, but prefers to wander on the edges of water among reeds and on floating vegetation
2. **BLACK SWAN**
The black swan stays in the wetlands and needs 40 metres or more of clear water to take off. They fly at night
3. **WHITE FACED HERON**
The white faced heron needs shallow water in the wetlands so it can forage for food such as fish or crustaceans
4. **BLACK-WINGED STILT**
The black-winged stilt is a wading bird which catches prey that is close to the surface. Sometimes they put their heads underwater to catch prey
5. **CHESTNUT TEAL**
The chestnut teal feeds at the waters edge and dabbles for food while swimming in the water
6. **SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER**
The sharp-tailed sandpiper migrates in summer from Arctic Siberia. It arrives in August and returns to Siberia in March

Spotted Crake



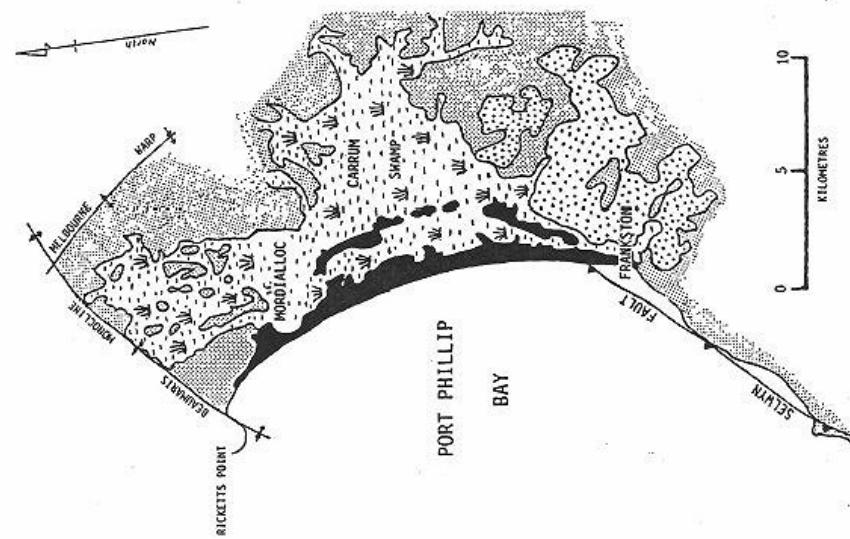
Carrum Carrum Swamp

Further reading:

Donnelly A,
Kunert C &
Schleiger P
(1985)
Ecology and Management of
Seaford Swamp. Monash and
University Graduate School of
Environmental Science.
Environment Report No 25.

Douglas J G &
Ferguson J A
(1988)
Geology of Victoria.
Victorian Division of the
Geological Society of
Australia.

Macpherson J H Marine Molluscs of Victoria.
and Gabriel C J Melbourne Press and
(1962) National Museum of Victoria.



Fossil Shells of Carrum Carrum Swamp



Research and text by David Gilbert

For further information, please contact the
Friends of Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands Inc,
PO Box 2031, Edithvale 3196
Tel 9773 3373, 9580 3341 or 9772 4343

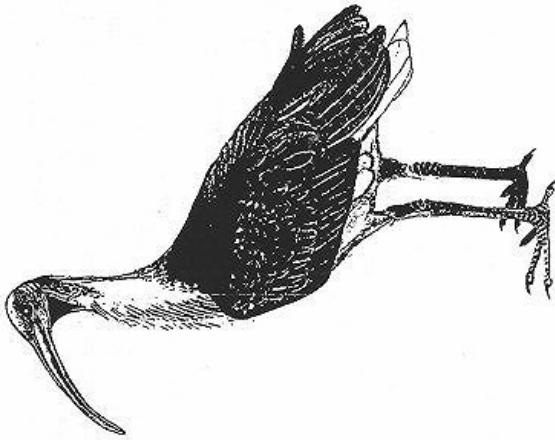
**Friends of
Edithvale - Seaford
Wetlands Inc.**



Illustrations from Macpherson and Gabriel (1962)
Marine Molluscs of Victoria

Birds of Seaford Wetlands

1992 to 1995



Straw-necked Ibis

List compiled by Sean Dooley

For further information, or to advise new sightings, please contact the Friends of Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands Inc, PO Box 2031, Edithvale 3196 Tel 9773 3373, 9580 3341 or 9772 4343

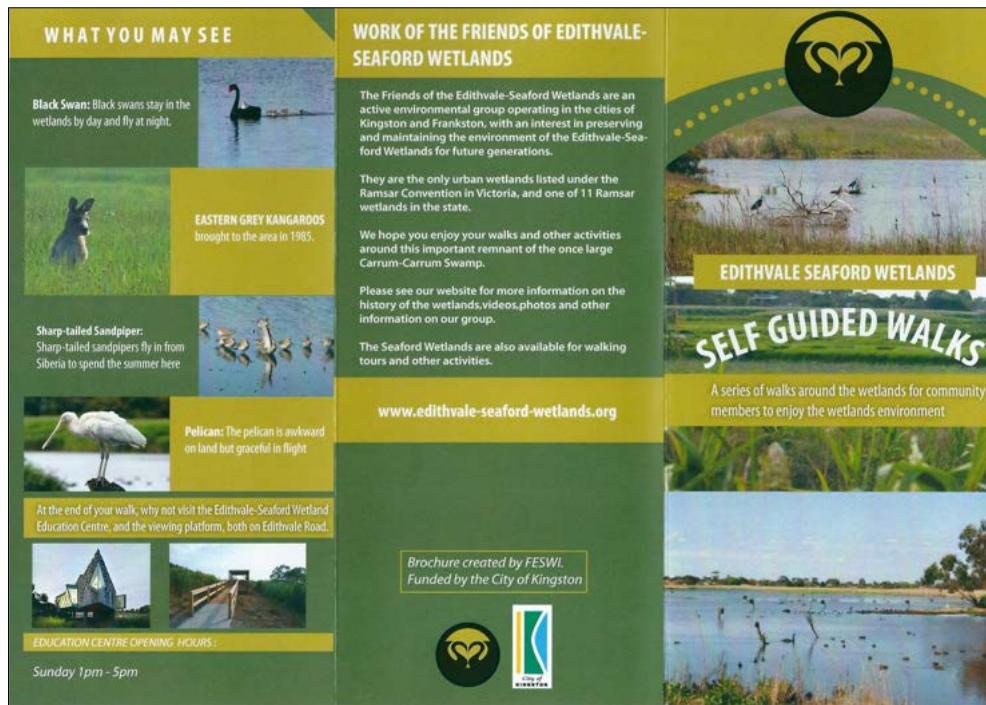
**Friends of
Edithvale - Seaford
Wetlands Inc**



Species	Frequency	Peak Nos	Breeds	Season	Frequency	Peak Nos	Breeds	Season
Pacific Gull	S	1			Flame Robin	O	1	Win
Silver Gull	O	3			Pink Robin	R	1	
Crested Tern	R	1			Eastern Yellow Robin	S	1	
Whiskered Tern	S	2		Sum	Varied Sittella	R	1	
Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	O	2			Crested Shrike-tit	S	1	
Spotted Turtle Dove	O	2	B		Golden Whistler	R	1	Sum
Galah	S	2			Rufous Whistler	R	1	Sum
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	S	1		Sum	Grey Shrike-thrush	S	1	Win
Rainbow Lorikeet	O	2	B		Resless Flycatcher	R	1	Sum
Musk Lorikeet	S	2		Sum	Magpie-lark	O	2	B
Little Lorikeet	R	1		Aut	Grey Fantail	O	1	
Crimson Rosella	O	1			Willie Wagtail	O	2	B
Eastern Rosella	R	1			Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	O	1	B
Red-rumped Parrot	R	1			White-browed Woodswallow	R	3	B?
Blue-winged Parrot	R	1		Aut	Dusky Woodswallow	S	1	Sum
Orange-bellied Parrot	R	1		Win	Grey Butcherbird	S	1	B
Pallid Cuckoo	S	1		Sum	Australian Magpie	O	1	B
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	O	1	B?	Spr	Grey Currawong	R	1	
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	O	1	B?	Spr	Little Raven	O	2	
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	R	1		Spr	Skylark	O	2	B
Barn Owl	R	1			Richard's Pipit	S	1	
White-throated Needletail	S	2		Aut	House Sparrow	O	2	B
Laughing Kookaburra	R	1			Eurasian Tree Sparrow	S	2	
Dollarbird	R	1			Red-browed Finch	S	1	
Superb Fairy Wren	O	2	B		Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	R	2	
Spotted Pardalote	O	2			European Greenfinch	S	2	
Striated Pardalote	O	2			European Goldfinch	O	2	
White-browed Scrubwren	O	2			Mistletoebird	R	1	
Striated Fieldwren	R	1	B		Welcome Swallow	O	3	B
Brown Thornbill	O	2			Tree Martin	S	2	Sum
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	O	1	B		Fairy Martin	S	2	Sum
Red Wattlebird	O	2	B		Clamorous Reed-Warbler	O	2	Spr
Little Wattlebird	O	2	B		Little Grassbird	O	2	B
Splendid Honeyeater	S	1		Win	Rufous Songlark	R	1	Spr
Noisy Miner	R	1			Golden-headed Cisticola	O	2	B
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	R	1		Aut	Silvereye	O	2	
White-phaimed Honeyeater	O	2	B		Common Blackbird	O	2	B
White-naped Honeyeater	S	2		Win	Song Thrush	S	1	
New Holland Honeyeater	O	2			Common Starling	O	3	B
Black Honeyeater	R	1			Common Myna	O	2	B
White-fronted Chat	O	2						

Species	Frequency	Peak Nos	Breeds	Season	Frequency	Peak Nos	Breeds	Season
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Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	O	2			Crested Shrike-tit	S	1	
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New Holland Honeyeater	O	2			Common Starling	O	3	B
Black Honeyeater	R	1			Common Myna	O	2	B
White-fronted Chat	O	2						

INFORMATION PAMPHLETS



Guided Walks

BLACKBERRY - *RUBUS FRUTICOSUS*

NOXIOUS WEED

It has prickly, arching stems that form dense thickets. It produces small white flowers and fruit that turn red or black when ripe.

It was introduced from Europe for the use of its fruit in jam and desserts.

It is highly competitive and grows in most vegetation communities and conditions. It is spread easily by foxes and birds.

Flowers: Spring / Summer **Seeds:** Summer / Autumn **Control:** Spring / Summer / Autumn

MIRROR BUSH - *COPROSMA REPENS*

This shrub or tree has roundish shiny/glossy fleshy leaves.

Male flowers are small, in dense green clusters while the female flowers are larger, white. The green berries turn to orange – red when seed is ripe.

Also known as Shiny Leaf Loquat, Chinese Bush this weed originated in New Zealand. It invades most types of vegetation, particularly coastal and creek reserves.

Replace Mirror Bush with
COMMON BOABIALLA
- *myoporum insulare*

Flowers: Spring

Weed Booklets

NEWSLETTERS



**Friends of
Edithvale - Seaford
Wetlands**

NEWSLETTER

No 2 September 1988

Hon Secretary
Dorothy Meadows
7 Randall Ave, Edithvale 3196
Telephone 772-3952

Hello Friends,
Welcome to our second newsletter. Since our first edition, the number of Friends has continued to grow, with our membership now standing at 80.

As can be seen from the following list of activities and news, your Committee has been working hard to set the foundations for an effective organisation to look after the interests of the Wetlands and its Friends.

Visit to Seaford Wetlands

Saturday 15 October 1988 at 1.30 pm.

Meeting place: bird-hide at rear of the Seaford North Primary School, Airlie Grove, Seaford. Melways 97 F11.

You should not miss this chance to be shown around the Wetlands by Les Williams, who is on both our Committee and the Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands Environmental Area Committee of Management.

Although they are not as well known as those at Edithvale, Seaford Wetlands are about the same size, and also provide excellent habitat for birdlife.

Les will show us over and explain the extensive earthworks being undertaken by the City of Frankston at the southern end. These works are designed to enlarge the wet area and improve aesthetic and habitat values. The work will be finished next summer when the ground dries.

Visit to Braeside Metropolitan Park.

Open day 9 October 1988

The main emphasis of the open day will be to show the public the progress that has been made in extending the wetland areas.

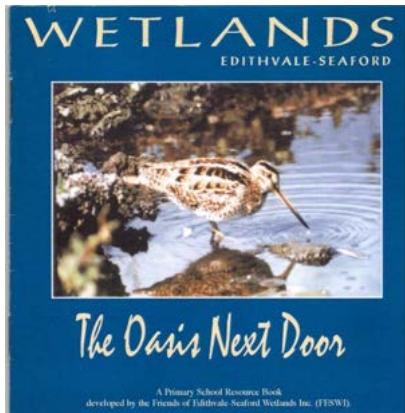
The MMBW will be providing guides to assist visitors.

To attend you must make arrangements in advance with the Ranger. Telephone during business hours 551-1640.

FESWI MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

63

Over the years FESWI has produced many media publications to advertise and inform.



Teaching Resource CD and book



Information Cassette & Slides



Information Up-dated DVD



Website
(www.edithvale-seaford-wetlands.org)



Facebook

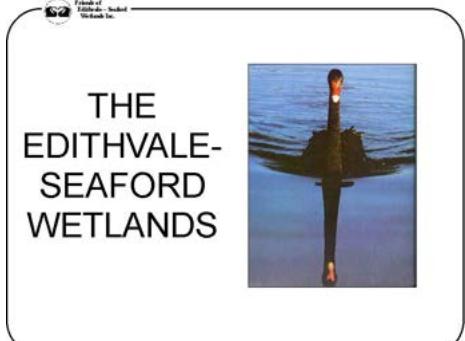
(<https://www.facebook.com/edithvaleseafordwetlands/>)



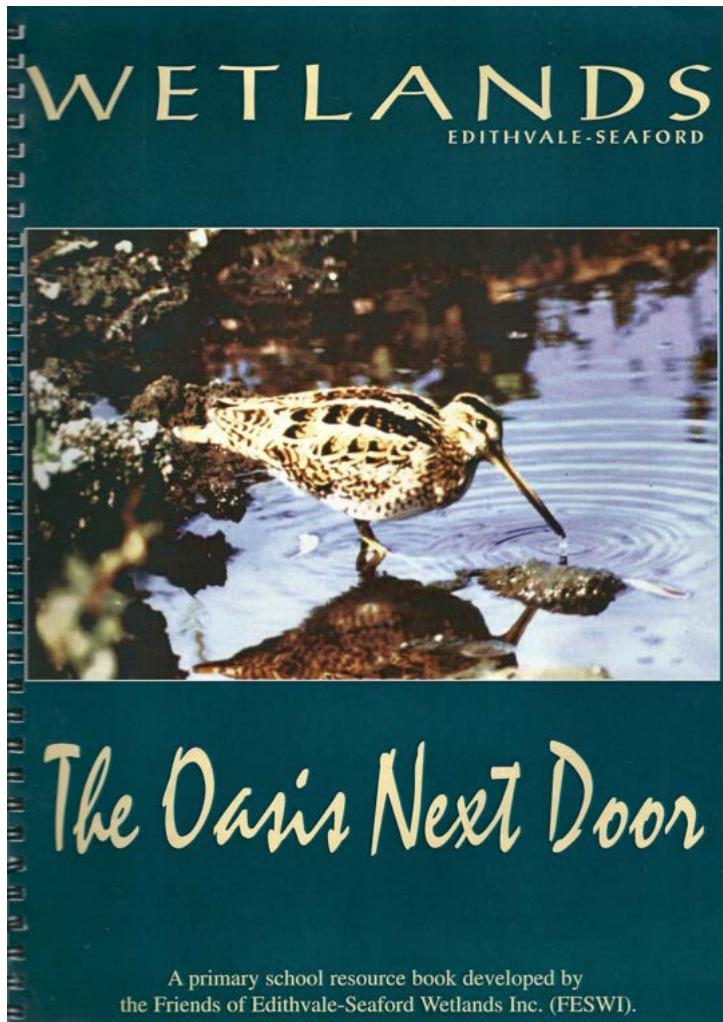
Videos



Videos



PowerPoint Presentations



Book

Acknowledgements

FESWI

Authors

Sybil Bond and Sue Telfer of the Friends of Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands (FESWI)

Illustrators

Alison Kuit
Sybil Bond
Sue Telfer

Assistance

Thanks to:
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Linda Cocks
Bea Edwards
Doug Evans - Kingston Council
Cheryl Jakab
Carol Kunert
Lynne Surman
Seaford North Primary School
Members of FESWI.

Photographs by

Mike Carter
Peter Barker
Sybil Bond
Sue Telfer
Les Williams
Ross Nelson

The publication of this project has been funded by Banrock Station Wines (through the Landcare Foundation) and by Melbourne Water.



Melbourne Water
Managing Our Water Resources

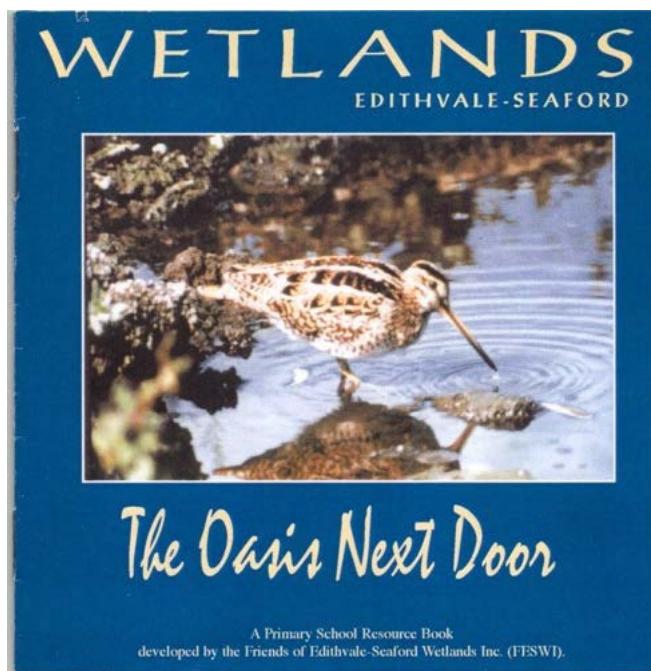
The Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands are in the boundaries of Frankston City and Kingston Councils and are managed by Melbourne Water for

- Flood protection
- Water quality treatment
- Wildlife habitat



The Oasis Next Door

II



CD

The Oasis Next Door

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This Environmental Nature Trail has been prepared by the Environment Committee at Seaford North Primary School who hope you enjoy your walk. We know that this is a special area because our school is at the meeting place of suburban development on one side, and a conservation area, the Seaford Swamp, on the other. You will see remnants of natural bushland as well as views to the Swamp. Basic tree species are labelled. The Trail should take approximately an hour to complete and insect repellent is recommended.

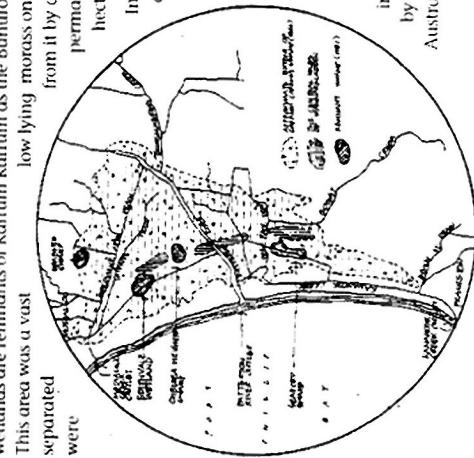


BACKGROUND

The Seaford Swamp is part of a wetland chain stretching from Braeside to Frankston. The wetlands are remnants of Kurrum Kurrum as the Bunurong tribe of Aborigines knew the area. This area was a vast separated area which they used for cattle grazing and pig farming. In 1880 the Patterson Cut (now called the Patterson River) was excavated to drain the central region of the swamp.

In 1835 European squatters moved into the area which they used for cattle grazing and pig farming. Some 1200 hectares permanently underwater with a further 4000 hectares being regularly inundated.

The Wetlands have been recognised as having high conservation significance because they provide important habitat for many species of water birds, including some migratory birds covered by treaties between the governments of Australia, Japan and China.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE WETLANDS

Relevant publications

1. Mosquitoes and Seaford swamp, by Dr. R. Gaymer I.L.S. Dept. Science Victoria College Roslyn Campus
2. City of Frankston Conservation Strategy
3. Wetlands Conservation Program for Victoria, (Ministry of Conservation and Environment)
4. Seaford Swamp Master Plan (revised) 1991, DVWPA & City of Frankston
5. Ecology and Management of Seaford Swamp Grav. School of Environmental Science, Monash University, 1985 (Donnelly, Kunert and Schleiger)
6. Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands 1991 DVWPA

Any enquiries regarding this trail can be directed to:
Seaford North Primary School - 786 5674

THE OASIS NEXT DOOR

Comment on "The OASIS NEXT DOOR" by Ross Nelson

Ross was President at the time.

Sometimes we all tackle jobs that turn out to be much larger than expected. This book is a classic example. Sybil and Sue understood what was needed to fit with the school curriculum and the format they should follow.

They regularly kept us up to date at the meetings. The workload expanded and then there was a change in the school curriculum and some parts had to be altered.

A lot more time was needed and they were quite exhausted by it all.

The big breakthrough was getting Marie Tahan, the State Minister of Conservation and the Environment, to officially launch the very professional publication.

It was a most interesting time and I had fun working with everyone. They all did so much.

Nature trail meanders through history

HISTORY and the environment combine to make Seaford North Primary School's new nature trail a valuable asset.

The trail, which meanders around the northern section of the school's extensive ground abutting Seaford Swamp, was formally opened by Carrum MLA Mal Sandon last week.

The hour-long walk includes historical sites and an abundance of flora and fauna associated with the swamp-lands.

It was developed by the school's environment committee, headed by retired teacher Sybil Bond.

Much of the work was done by offenders serving on community-based orders through the Office of Corrections.

Offenders on rehabilitation programs have had a long association with the school, carrying out maintenance work and growing seedlings in greenhouse "igloos".



Retired teacher, Sybil Bond, Carrum MLA, Mal Sandon, take a walk in the rain along the nature trail.

Mr Sandon said everyone should worry about the environment. "It's too precious to ignore. This nature trail; is a unique asset for the school.

Local paper 02/06/1992

Newsflash in Wetland Warbler, September 2001

News Flash

RAMSAR LISTING FOR OUR WETLANDS

Just recently we received the great news that Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands have been included in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance which is more commonly known as the Ramsar Convention. (Ramsar being the town in Iran where the convention was drawn up around thirty years ago).

Being included in the Ramsar Convention puts us up there with the best wetlands in the world and will provide added protection under a number of Federal and State Acts. Hopefully, it will also open the door for more funding for revegetation, weed eradication and other habitat improvement work.

Many thanks to our members and to the good folks in Melbourne Water and Frankston City Council plus our parliamentarians who have worked and lobbied hard for our wetlands to receive this terrific recognition.



President Malcolm Shapcott proudly displays our Ramsar Certificate



The Ramsar Convention

The Convention's broad aims are to halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve, through wise use and management, those that remain.

RAMSAR DESIGNATION ANNOUNCEMENT 21st AUGUST 2001

What is the Ramsar Convention?

On 3 February 1971, representatives of 18 nations, including Australia, met together in the small Iranian town of Ramsar to put their signatures to the text of a remarkable treaty. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, commonly referred to as the Ramsar Convention, aims to conserve one of the most threatened group of habitats, wetlands. These are shallow, open waters such as lakes, rivers and coastal fringes, and any land which is regularly or intermittently saturated by water, such as marshes, swamps and floodplains. Presently there are over eighty countries which are Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention covering 75% of the world's lands. This

additional listed sites, any difficulties with the management of listed sites, and its efforts to promote the wise use of wetlands nationally.

A Wetlands Conservation Fund has been established to assist developing countries. There is also a small Standing Committee of members representing seven global

regions plus one member from the previous and the next host country of the Ramsar Conference. The Standing Committee supervises the implementation of recommendations made by the previous Conference. Australia is credited with being the first Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention and has regularly represented the Oceania

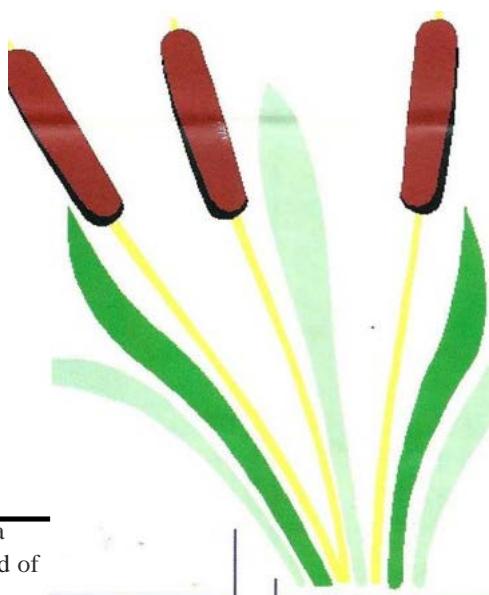


Lake Argyle (Smoke Creek area) a Ramsar wetland in Western Australia. Photo: C Done

region on the Standing Committee since its formation.

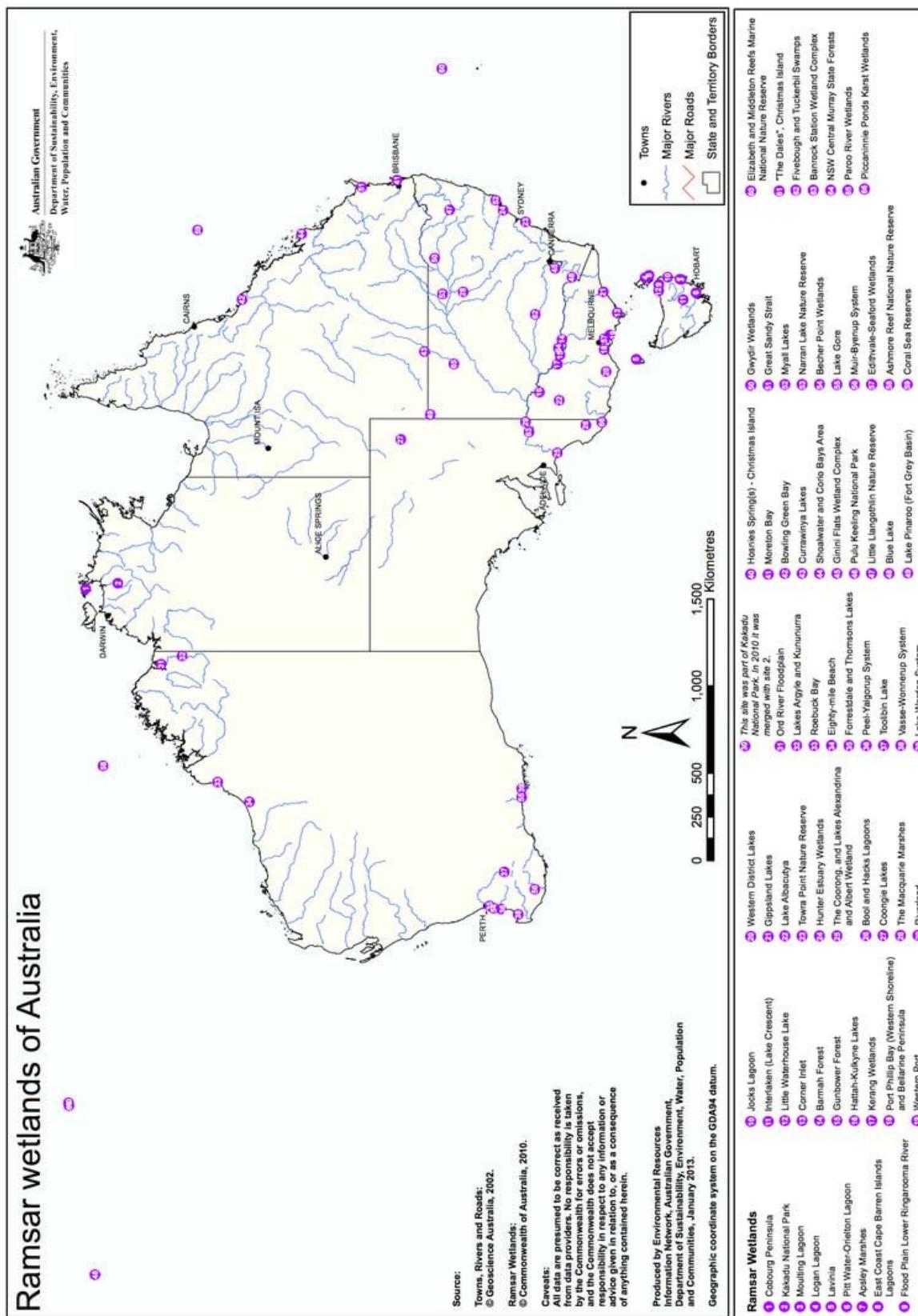
How does the Ramsar Convention operate?

The Ramsar Convention Bureau, based at Gland in Switzerland, provides secretariat support for the implementation of the treaty. The Bureau is funded by annual contributions from each of the contracting countries. Every three years a Conference of Contracting Parties is held where the activities of the Convention are reviewed and new policies and initiatives are set. Each Party presents a report of its activities including a record of



'Wise Use'

Many human practices or activities are ecologically unsustainable and cause degradation and loss of wetlands. The Ramsar Convention has developed guidelines for the wise use of wetlands. This concept of wise use seeks to modify human use of wetlands so that there is continuous benefit to present generations while at the same time the natural properties such as the food webs and other ecological processes are maintained for future generations.



FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

OPEN DAYS

FESWI has continued to run Open Days at both Seaford and Edithvale Wetlands to which other environmental groups were invited to participate. Many activities organised for these days were both fun and educational.



Seaford Fun Day 2005



Wetland Awareness Day 2013

COMMUNITY PRESENCE

FESWI has continued to have a community presence at many community events.

These Days were held in different locations. One year it was on the Edithvale Oval.
They provided great opportunities for publicity.



Mayor's Fun Day Kingston 1991



Mayor's Picnic Frankston 2017

NEWSLETTER June 1992. COLOUR-IN COMPETITION

Our Colour-in Competition has been incredibly successful with over 700 entries many of which displayed great imagination and talent. Unfortunately there could only be so many winners and these were-

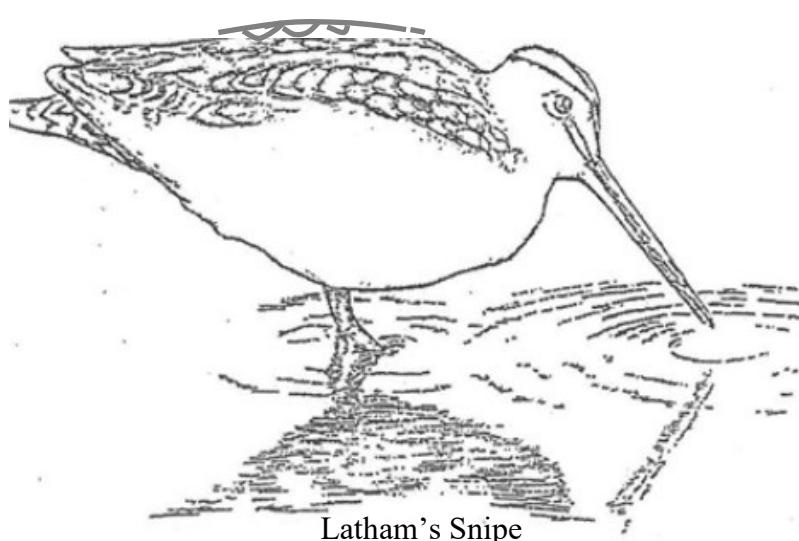
Under 8. Shonna Mitchell, Brooke Hebard and Joshua Geraghy. 9-12. Clare Brown, Taissa Polak and Joshua Smibert. Over 13. Shane Bautista, Helen Dimitrakakis and Laurie Smith.
Best overall - Ronnie Wong.



Ronnie Wong



McDonalds organised a display of many birds on the back wall. The competition was to colour in a picture of a Latham's Snipe and create a background for it. The \$150 prize money was donated by McDonalds, Edithvale



Latham's Snipe

FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

WALKS AND TALKS

Among the many activities of the Friends is an education service which includes hosting the various groups (special interest groups, school groups, community groups and the general public) that visit the wetlands and the bird hide. They would be taken on a guided tour around the wetlands and information was given on its environmental importance, its history and its fauna and flora.

Les Williams did this so often at Edithvale that many people saw him conducting walks, and he became known as "The Old Man of the Swamp". Sybil Bond and Kath Prior also did this, and Barry, at Seaford. More recently Margaret Hunter and Robin Clarey have conducted these.

Les Williams on a Kangaroo Walk



Sybil Bond with a school group at the hide.



FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

WALKS AND TALKS



Tania Ireton (right)—Breakfast with the Birds at Seaford



Margaret Hunter (right) talks to a group at the hide

FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

25TH ANNIVERSARY

In 2013 FESWI celebrated its 25th anniversary with a party at the Cricket Club House on Edithvale Common. It was well attended with past and present members reflecting and reminiscing on past activities and achievements



Dorothy Meadows cuts the cake

OTHER CELEBRATIONS THANK VOLUNTEERS



Party at the Education Centre to thank volunteers.

OPENING THE BIRD HIDE AFTER A LONG CLOSURE

In January 2009 and later in July 2010 the bird hide underwent inspections for safety and regulation compliance, and the latter inspection found a number of concerning issues including the rusting of the building's footings. Early in 2012 a further safety/engineering report sealed the building's fate and the hide was closed. Melbourne Water built a viewing platform to overlook part of Edithvale South, and offered FESWI the use of the Education Centre on weekends. Neither of these provided really good bird watching and FESWI took the initiative to investigate the hide's possible repair.

A small sub-committee was set up in 2013 including Alison Kuiter and Philippa Bailey to follow this through and after many meetings, emails, talks with Kingston's building surveyor, and a structural engineer from Lowe Construction, Kingston Council and Melbourne Water it was decided that the building could be restored. Grant funding was sought and work (by Lowe Construction) started in 2015.

Many thanks to Philippa Bailey, then president, for a magnificent effort in raising the \$40,000, from various grant sources, needed to complete the project.

All of which culminated in the re-opening of the Bird Hide. First, there was the official opening on the 3rd of August 2016 with many people attending including Sean Dooley BirdLife; Mark Dreyfus QC MP for Isaacs; Tim Richardson, MP for Mordialloc and Rosemary West, Councillor City of Kingston. There was a community opening on the following weekend.

During the following months Jim Wilson and Rex Chugg did a fantastic job refurbishing the interior of the hide.



Work in progress



Sean Dooley cuts the ribbon

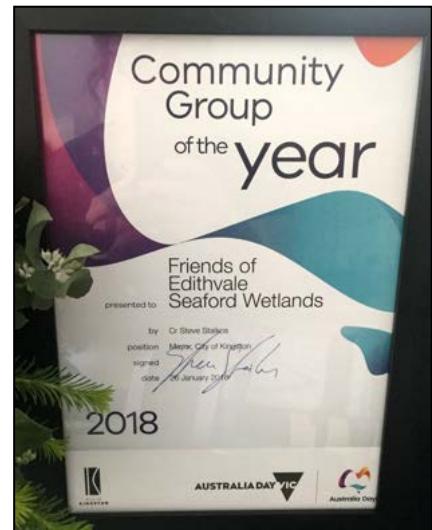


A great day!

FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

CITY OF KINGSTON AS COMMUNITY GROUP OF THE YEAR. (2018)

In the years following the establishment and consolidation of FESWI, the group has gone from strength to strength culminating in its recognition, in its 30th year of operation, by the City of Kingston as Community Group of the Year. (2018)



From left: Les Williams, Mayor Steve Staikos , Kate Spillane, FESWI President, Mark Dreyfus QC MP, member for Issacs, Margaret Hunter, Secretary, Rex Chugg, Philippa Bailey, past FESWI President, and Tim Richardson MP, member for Mordialloc.

Memories

PHILIPPA BAILEY

A PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

I have lost track of the years that I have been President of the Friends Of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc., but I think it equals about 8 years.

I stepped in initially to support Les Williams, the "Old Man of the Swamp" when he became unwell. At that point I had "people" skills and management experience from my work role, but hardly knew a swamp hen from a stilt, and had to feign bad eyesight when I was asked "What is that bird?" Eight years on I could recognise most of the wetland birds but the bad eyesight has become a reality, so I am actually back to where I started.

The purpose of this reflective piece is to focus on some of the highlights I have experienced as FESWI president and to note it has been a privilege and a pleasure to be in that leadership position.

Highlight 1. Working with the exceptional FESWI Committee who became friends and highly valued contributors in all facets of the Friends' work.

Highlight 2. Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of FESWI and catching up with past presidents and FESWI activists.

Highlight 3. Producing brochures and booklets for community education and use.

Highlight 4. Wetland awareness events both at Seaford and Edithvale in particular the year we had the photographic and art competition.

Highlight 5. Leading and participating in walks inside the wetland reserves and introducing new people to the wonders of the wetlands.

Highlight 6. The restoration of the bird hide, and the re-opening to the community.

Of course there have been some low-lights also along the way.

Lowlight 1. The closing of the bird hide in 2010 due to safety issues.

Lowlight 2. The two break-ins at Duck In, resulting in broken windows, the stolen swan and other birds and graffiti.

Lowlight 3. The water and electricity service outage at Duck In

Lowlight 4. The possum invasion at Duck In.

Overall though my time as FESWI president has been really positive. There is now a job vacancy and I can highly recommend this position.

(Filled 2020)

SYBIL BOND

Sybil, a member for many years, instigator for Seaford Nature Trail, co-author of *The Oasis Next Door* with Sue Telfer and taking School Tours.

My recollections are first of all how communication has changed. Then we used word of mouth, hand delivery, Australia Post and telephone. Much would have been hand written and everything took longer. We all know the internet has altered all that. One constant has been the help of local members of parliament at all levels who have helped us with printing, mailing of newsletters and more. Now we can pay our subs online and the Warbler in colour is magic. I recall a short period in the 90's when Kath Prior and I dared to produce an apology for this feature, using my son's computer when he was out. We knew next to nothing.

The strength of FESWI has been its continuity, when the personnel in other bodies were continually changing. Committee meetings were a delight in Ian Hall's garden overlooking Seaford Wetlands. Also at Seaford I recall the boat trips Malcolm Shapcott organised to plant and transform the barren island there. I always had a sense of anticipation as I climbed the stairs in the Edithvale hide, wondering what vista awaited me.

A stroke of 'good timing' and/or genius' at the beginning was the planting of the buffer zone, to enclose the wetlands and screen out the development beyond. I wondered what had happened to my favourite Blue-billed Duck? I remember the presidents who shouldered responsibility, colleagues who shared their expertise and the company of friends over the years. Sean Dooley's visits were always a special highlight. Les Williams was ever present, usually in the company of kangaroos. I always dreaded meeting a 'roo head on in a narrow track through the phragmites.

Finally I'll mention something not everyone will have heard of, the full length musical production created by Aspendale Gardens Primary School. This was in 2003, the title was "In Our Backyard" and it told in song, dance and drama, the story of the migration of the Snipe, from Hokkaido (Japan) and back. Performed by Cranbourne Secondary College, it was their end of year celebration, ever to be remembered.

MIKE CARTER

SOME REMINISCENCES (23RD MAY 2018)

My first visit to the Edithvale Wetlands was in 1964 shortly after I arrived in Australia. At that time, it was basically two paddocks, one to the north of Edithvale Road and the other to the south. Both were subject to periodic flooding. Although basically cow paddocks used for grazing, marsh vegetation maintained a tenuous foothold. In an average year the paddocks were inundated in winter & spring and dry in summer & autumn. It was Crown Land leased for farming and administered by The Dandenong Valley Authority (DVA), the government body responsible for all drainage in the district. As the area was below R.L. 7 ft., it was designated "flood prone". A pleasant place to be and a good spot for birds, I frequented the site whenever it was inundated and kept detailed records.

By the early 1970's, it was one of just three remnant wetlands which together totalled 3% of the original Carrum-Carrum Swamp. The Swamp was formed by the coastal sand dunes of Port Phillip Bay impounding the waters of the Dandenong and Eumemmerring Creeks. When surveyed in the 1860's, it had an area of about 5,200 hectares stretching from Mordialloc in the north to Frankston in the south. Drainage works in the latter half of the nineteenth century reduced the extent of these wetlands, most significantly in 1879 when the Patterson River was cut.

The abundance and diversity of wildlife on the Carrum-Carrum Swamp in the 1850's was documented by Horatio Wheelwright in *Bush Wanderings of a Naturalist* published in 1861. Wheelwright was a professional shooter who hunted the area providing game for the Melbourne market.

By the latter half of the twentieth century, bird-watchers had become aware of the importance of the site and in particular its significance for the number of migratory waders that occurred there. In 1972, proposed changes to land zonings under the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Town Planning Act, (Amendment No. 21) presented an opportunity to restrict further development of the swamp. Les Williams and I, supported by the DVA and the Springvale City Council, proposed that the land be zoned for conservation. At about the same time, attempts to completely drain the Edithvale Wetlands were opposed and eventually thwarted by a disparate group of concerned environmentalists and bird watchers that included Les Williams and myself.

Arising from widespread interest and concern regarding the future of the Edithvale Carrum-Seaford Wetlands complex, a meeting of members of community and special interest groups, called by the Bird Observers Club, was held at Chelsea on 26th June 1974. At that meeting, the DVA announced that it sought public input regarding the future establishment and management of wetland wildlife reserves in the area and it was agreed that; "This meeting (considering that an overall plan for management of the Edithvale, Carrum and Seaford Wetlands complex as a scientific, educational and wildlife complex area is an urgent necessity) urges that a representative committee be formed to prepare a submission detailing desirable areas and their management". A committee chaired by myself as the representative of the Bird Observers Club was set up comprising delegates of twelve different organizations and community bodies. In April 1975 this Committee produced a report entitled *Conservation and*

MIKE CARTER

SOME REMINISCENCES (23RD MAY 2018)

Management Proposals for the Edithvale-Carrum-Seaford Wetland Areas.

By September 1975 the Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands were established as Environmental Areas. The land was reserved for the joint purposes of wildlife protection and flood mitigation. This was declared officially by the Governor in Council on 17th October 1978 and Rules for Management of the area were passed by an Act of the Victorian Parliament on 22nd January 1980. Carrum was not reserved. That wetland was released for development and the Patterson Lakes Estate was constructed thereon.

The South Wetland (south of Edithvale Road) was fenced and the bird hide built in 1978. Earthworks to improve the holding capacity of the South by the creation of sumps and mounds were executed in 1982 and Buffer Zones purchased. Public interest in the project increased and concerns regarding vandalism led to the formation of "Wetland Watch" on 27th November 1985. At the instigation of Melbourne Water (which succeeded the DVA as the controlling authority), this group was expanded to become "Friends of the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc" on 28th February 1988. Tree planting, which commenced in the dry south-western corner of the South Wetland, continued unabated in the North, in adjacent buffer zones and along the cycle track. This significantly increased the total tree cover in the area.

Works to excavate and form deep, permanent water lagoons, north of Edithvale Road and north of the swamp immediately adjacent to Edithvale Road continued intermittently throughout 1987 to 1992. They were completed and filled with water in 1993. Over this same period, a statewide census of wetland birds entitled the Victorian Waterbirds Survey was conducted by the RAOU Vic Group managed by Ian Endersby & David Nicholls. I was in charge of the survey as it applied to the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands. These areas were included in the Register of the National Estate on 15th April 1990 and were recognized jointly as wetlands of international importance by being designated a RAMSAR site on 29th August 2001. The process to achieve that commenced in 1996.



From left, Dorothy Meadows, Sherryl Garbutt (State Minister for Environment & Conservation), Jenny Lindell (State Member for Carrum), Malcolm Shapcott, Les Williams, Rete Besley, Sybil Bond (hidden) and Barry Ross

MIKE CARTER

SOME REMINISCENCES (23RD MAY 2018)

Earthworks such as those outlined above have changed the character of the wetlands since the establishment of the Reserve. Initially it was mainly pasture with some marshland, subject to periodic inundation. Now the inundated portion of the South is all swamp or marsh. About half is vegetated with phragmites, typha, sedges and other wetland plants and about half is openwater.

I continued collecting data on the birdlife at Edithvale for the Victorian group of the RAOU until 2010 when Andrew Silcocks of BirdLife Australia, who had been involved since about 2005 took over. This released me to concentrate on surveying the Eastern Treatment Plant the construction of which was completed in 1977. That too is situated on part of the original Carrum-Carrum Swamp and these days embraces some 24, mostly artificial, water bodies that vary in size from around 5 to 100 hectares. According to Melbourne Water, the Plant occupies 1100 hectares of the original swamp.

A FEW ANECDOTES

Australian Reed Warblers. Somewhere around 1994 I learned that researchers from a Dutch University were looking for a suitable site in Australia to conduct research on Clamorous Reed Warblers as they were then called. They needed to have a substantial population in a protected area so we suggested that the fenced Edithvale South Wetland would fit the bill. Our count team estimated that there were 80 singing Reed Warblers there. They agreed it was an ideal site so with assistance from Melbourne University they commenced studies there by the summer of 1995/96. They advised that to their delight, our claim of 80 singing birds was a considerable underestimate and in fact there were over 400 pairs at the site! Unfortunately my relationship with the researchers soured when on 24th November 1997, I found an abandoned partially furled mist-net, attached to a pole at only one end containing nine dead Reed Warblers, at least one of which was colour-banded! When the chief bander came to collect the mist-net and its contents he agreed that some of the deceased specimens would be donated to the Melbourne Museum. That didn't happen.

Australian Little Bittern. This is perhaps the most exciting bird to frequent the Edithvale Wetlands. I first encountered it there while leading a Bird Observers Club outing on 12th December 1965. We flushed a male from a stand of reeds adjacent to the busy Springvale Road and eager to ensure that everyone in the group obtained good views of it, followed it till it finally settled in lush dense grass that was about one metre tall bordering open water. We could not see it and attempts to flush it failed. We got down on our hands and knees and eventually found it by parting each clump individually. It was standing erect with body and neck greatly elongated with its bill pointing vertically skywards. Its camouflage was almost perfect, rendering it nearly impossible to see even when it was less than half a metre distant. The bird remained motionless while we lifted it clear of the dense grass. An account of this incident was published; see Carter, M.J. (1966), 'The capture of a Little Bittern by hand', *Australian Bird Watcher* 2, 245-246.

In subsequent years the species occurrence at Edithvale was sporadic but from 2006 to 2013 they were present each spring/summer with up to three pairs present. In many of those years they bred successfully rearing young to free-flying stage.



Adult female Australian Little Bittern mist-netted at Edithvale January 2011

Photo by Andrew Silcocks

Australasian Bittern. As it is a regular winter visitor to the Edithvale Wetlands, they are an important refuge for this rare and endangered species. One particularly notable day, 13th August 1997, Peter Crabtree and I saw 9 virtually together on the Northern Wetland and another 3 on the South making a record count up to that time of 12 in a single day.

Black-eared Cuckoo. This was perhaps the least-expected bird that I saw on the Wetlands. Whilst counting in the wooded area in the southwestern corner of Edithvale South during a regular survey on 20th September 1996, I became impatient when my companion Peter Crabtree held up progress intensely studying a bird that he said was a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo. I couldn't see it and said that we must move on. He didn't budge so I moved nearer to him but still couldn't see it. Becoming increasingly irritable, I said "Oh come-on, we can't waste this much time on such a common bird". As I turned to drag him away, my eyes suddenly alighted on the subject of his fascination. Very excitedly, I said 'That's not a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, it's a Black-eared!' Now he became angry and said "Don't be ridiculous, we're not in the Mallee." I agreed that indeed we were not but told him that nevertheless, he'd found a Black-eared Cuckoo on our swamp. That delayed the count even more because we studied the bird and took notes for another 20 minutes or so. These days we would just raise our cameras and take a long series of pictures.

For many years Mike Carter, a professional bird observer, came down to Edithvale Wetland during the week and completed official "Birds Seen" lists. The lists gave us credibility in the lists of sightings of our migrating visitors.

We are grateful to Mike Carter for his important role among "Friends."

STATUS OF BIRDS AT EDITHVALE WETLANDS, VICTORIA,
from 1964 to May 2018.
By Mike Carter ptereodroma@bigpond.com, 18 May 2018

Species	Frequency	Peak No.	Breeding	Main Season
Stubble Quail	Was S, now R	1	B	Sum
Brown Quail	R	1		
Magpie Goose	S	1		
Plumed Whistling-Duck*	R	1		
Wander inq Whistling-Duck*	R	1		
Musk Duck	C	1	B	
Freckled Duck	S	2		
Cape Barren Goose	R	1		
Black Swan	C	3	B	
Australian Shelduck	S	1		
Australian Wood Duck	S	1		
Pink-eared Duck	S	2		
Australasian Shoveler	C	2	B	
Grey Teal	C	3	B	
Chestnut Teal	C	3	B	
Northern Mallard	R			
Pacific Black Duck	C	3	B	
Hardhead	C	2	B	
Blue-billed Duck	C	2	B	
Australasian Grebe	C	3	B	
Hoary-headed Grebe	C	4	B	
Great Crested Grebe	R	1		
Rock Dove	C	1		
Snotted Dove	C	2	B	
Common Bronzewing	S	1		Win
Brush Bronzewing*	R	1		
Crested Pigeon	C	2		
Tawny Frogmouth	R	1		
White-throated Needletail	R	3		Sum
Fork-tailed Swift	R	1		Sum
Australasian Darter	R	1		
Little Pied Cormorant	C	2		
Great Cormorant	S	1		
Little Black Cormorant	S	3		
Pied Cormorant	R	1		
Australian Pelican	C	1		
Australasian Bittern	Was C, now S	2		Win
Australian Little Bittern	S	1	B	Sum
White-necked Heron	S	1		
Great Egret	C	1		
Intermediate Egret	R	1		
Cattle Egret	S	2		

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By Mike Carter ptereodroma@bigpond.com, 18 May 2018

Species	Frequency	Peak No.	Breeding	Main Season
White-faced Heron	C	2	B	
Little Egret	R	1		
Nankeen Night-Heron	s	1		
Glossy Ibis	s	3		
Australian White Ibis	C	2		
Straw-necked Ibis	C	2		
Royal Spoonbill	C	1		
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	s	1		
Black-shouldered Kite	C	1	B?	
Letter-winged Kite*	R	2		
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	R	1		
Whistling Kite	s	1		
Brown Goshawk	C	1		
Collared Sparrowhawk	s	1		
Spotted Harrier	R	1		
Swamp Harrier	C	1	B	
Little Eagle	R	1		Win
Nankeen Kestrel	s	1		
Brown Falcon	s	1		Sum
Australian Hobby	C	1	B?	Aul
Black Falcon*	R	1		
Peregrine Falcon	R	1		
Purple Swamphen	C	2	B	
Lewin's Rail	R	1	B?	
Buff-banded Rail	s	1	B	
Baillon's Crake	s	1	B	Sum
Australian Spotted Crake	Was C, nows	2	B	Sum
Spotless Crake	s	1	B	
Black-tailed Native-hen	R	1		
Dusky Moorhen	C	2	B	
Eurasian Coot	C	3	B	
Black-winged Stilt	C	3	B	
Red-necked Avocet	R	1		
Banded Stilt*	R	1		
Pacific Golden Plover*	R	1		
Red-capped Plover	R	1		
Double-banded Plover	R	1		Win
Black-fronted Dotterel	C	2	B	
Red-kneed Dotterel	C	2	B	Sum
Banded Lapwing*	R	1		
Masked Lapwing	C	1	B	Win
Australian Painted Snipe	R	1		
Latham's Snipe	C	2		
Black-tailed Godwit*	R	1		
Bar-tailed Godwit	R	1		
Little Curlew*	R	1		
Whimbrel*	R	1		
Eastern Curlew*	R	1		

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Species	Frequency	Peak No.	Breeding	Main Season
Common Greenshank	s	1		Sum
Marsh Sandpiper	s	1		Sum
Wood Sandpiper	C	1		Sum
Red Knot*	R	1		
Red-necked Stint	s	3		Sum
Long-toed Stint	R	1		
Pectoral Sandpiper	s .	1		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	C	4		Sum
Curlew Sandpiper	s	3		Sum
Ruff*	R	1		Sum
<i>Red-chested Button-quail*</i>	R (once)			
Australian Gull-billed Tern*	R !once\	1		
Caspian Tern	R	1		
Whiskered Tern	C	2	B !once)	Sum
White-winged Black Tern	R	1		
Common Tern	Wass, now R	1		
Crested Tern	R	1		
Pacific Gull	s	1		Win
Silver Gull	C	2		
<i>Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo</i>	R	1		
Galah	s	1		
<i>Lona-billed Corella</i>	s	1		
<i>Little Corella</i>	s	2		
<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	s	1		
<i>Cockatiel*</i>	R	1		
<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	Was S, now C	2	B	
<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	s	2		
<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	R	1		
<i>Crimson Rosella</i>	R	1		
<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	C	2		
<i>Swift Parrot</i>	R	1		
<i>Red-rumped Parrot</i>	s	1	B	
<i>Blue-winged Parrot</i>	R	1		Aut
<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	s	1	B	Sum
<i>Black-eared Cuckoo*</i>	R	1		One on 20-09-1996
<i>Shining Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	R	1		
<i>Pallid Cuckoo</i>	R	1		Sor
<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	R	1		
<i>Southern Boobook</i>	R	1		
<i>Eastern Barn Owl</i>	R	1		
<i>Laughing Kookaburra</i>	R	1		
<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	s	1	B	Sum
<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	C	2	B	
<i>White-browed Scrub-wren</i>	C	1	B	
<i>Western Gerygone</i>	R	1		First record May 2018
<i>White-throated Gerygone</i>	R	1		First record May 2018
<i>Yellow Thornbill*</i>	R Now locally extinct	2		
<i>Yellow-rumped Thornbill</i>	C	1	B	

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Species	Frequency	Peak No.	Breeding	Main Season
<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	C	1	B	
<i>Snotted Pardalote</i>	s	1		
<i>Striated Pardalote</i>	R	1		Aul
<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	R	1		
<i>Yellow-faced Honeyeater</i>	R	1		
<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Noisy Miner</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	s	1		Win
<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	Was R, now s	2	B	
<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	C	2	B	
<i>White-fronted Chat</i>	R	1		Win
<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	s	1		
<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	R	1		
<i>Noisy Friarbird</i>	R	1		
<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	s	1		
<i>White-winged Triller</i>	R	1		
<i>Crested Shrike-tit</i>	R	1		
<i>Golden Whistler</i>	s	1		
<i>Rufous Whistler</i>	R	1		
<i>Grevillea Shrike-thrush</i>	s	1		
<i>Olive-backed Oriole</i>	R	1		
<i>White-browed Woodswallow</i>	R	1		
<i>Dusky Woodswallow</i>	R	1		
<i>Grevillea Butcherbird</i>	s	1		
<i>Australian Magpie</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Pied Currawong</i>	R	1		
<i>Rufous Fantail</i>	R	1		
<i>Grevillea Fantail</i>	s	2	B	
<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Little Raven</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Satin Flycatcher</i>	R	1		
<i>Restless Flycatcher</i>	R	1		One in 1966
<i>Magpie-lark</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Scarlet Robin</i>	R	1		
<i>Flame Robin</i>	C	2		Aul. & Win
<i>Horsfield's Bushlark</i>	R	1		
<i>Eurasian Skylark</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Australian Reed-Warbler</i>	C	3	B	Sor
<i>Little Grassbird</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Rufous Songlark*</i>	R	1		Spr
<i>Brown Songlark*</i>	R	1		
<i>Silvereve</i>	s	2		Win
<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	C	3	B	
<i>Fairy Martin</i>	s	1		
<i>Tree Martin</i>	R	1		Aul
<i>Common Blackbird</i>	C	1	B	
<i>Song Thrush</i>	R	1		

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By Mike Carter ptereodroma@bigpond.com, 18 May 2018

Species	Frequency	Peak No.	Breeding	Main Season
<i>Common Starling</i>	C	3	B	
<i>Common Myna</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Mistletoebird</i>	S	1		
<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	S	2	B	
<i>House Sparrow</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Eurasian Tree Sparrow</i>	S	1		
<i>Australasian Pipit</i>	R	1		
<i>European Goldfinch</i>	C	2	B	
<i>Common Greenfinch</i>				

NOTES ON THE TABLE

The 195 species of bird listed above, comprising 87 wetland dependent species, 16 raptors and 92 non-wetland dependent species, have been recorded at the Edithvale Wetlands since 1964. That is in the areas shown as being subject to inundation to the northwest (with lakes) and southeast of Edithvale Road on Melway Map 93.

Those species shown in normal type are wetland dependent or raptors. Those in *italics* are non-wetland dependent. However, some of these, such as the Welcome Swallow, Fairy Martin, White-fronted Chat and Magpie-lark often concentrate at wetlands. Others inhabit the wooded, shrubby and grassland areas or may be just passing through or over. Species introduced into Australia, that is they are not native or naturally occurring vagrants, are underlined.

Bird Names and Sequence: The sequence and names are those recommended by Christidis & Boles (2008), * denotes species not seen this century.

Frequency of Occurrence:

C= Commonly (usually) present. S= Sometimes present. R = Rarely present.

1 = 1 to 10. 2 = 11 to 100. 3 = 101 to 1,000. 4 = 1,001 to 10,000.

Peak Numbers:

The numbers given indicate the order of magnitude of the population at its peak.

Breeding: B indicates those species known to have bred at least once; B? indicates those suspected of so doing.

Season: The season when a species is more likely to be present or present in its highest numbers is given. They may also be encountered at other times. Where no seasonal preference is shown the species may occur at any time of year.

Acknowledgements: Andrew Silcocks has made a special contribution to the production of this table. As more than 100 other persons assisted in some way particularly in the collection of data they are too numerous to mention individually but their contribution is greatly appreciated.

Jean & Bob came from England to live in Hampton Park. Bob had always been interested in wild birds and as soon as they were settled he set about learning as much as possible about our birds and migrating visitors. Jean told me he only read books about birds.

When the notice Les Williams put in the local paper regarding keeping the wetlands secure and suggested a meeting, one evening we met and formed our first Committee and Bob became President and Jean a Committee member. We called ourselves "Wetland Watch."

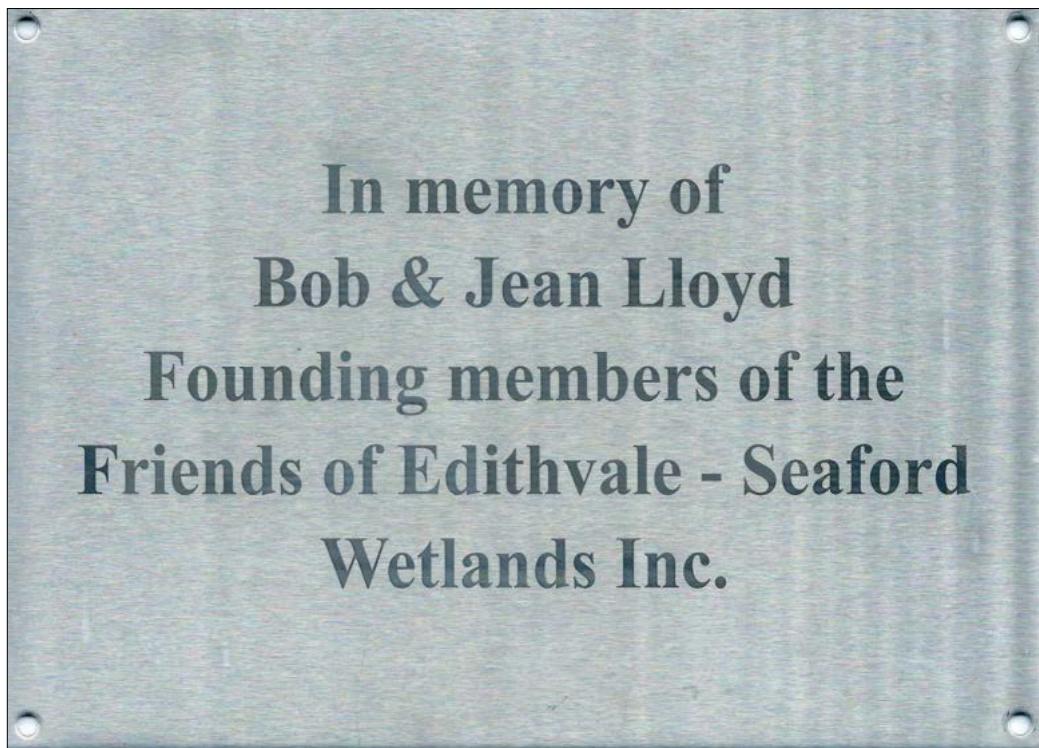
Bob quickly became known for his amazing knowledge about the birds to be seen from the hide. He knew so much about the birds we used to joke and say he even knew about their relatives.

During "Daylight Saving" months, Jean & Bob used to open the hide on Wednesday evenings for members so we could enjoy the magic of dusk in the wetland. Jean used to bring tasty nibbles and hot drinks. .

The Wetlands were their main interest and they fought very hard to protect all its aspects.

Sadly Jean developed breast cancer and Bob only survived for a few days after Jean died.

FESWI put a memorial plaque in the hide. It was taken down during renovations and returned soon after it was re-opened..



DOROTHY MEADOWS OAM MEMORIES OF FESWI.

When we began Wetland Watch, we got very fit because we needed to patrol the wetland fence at Edithvale to detect places where vandals had cut the fence wire. We would make a temporary repair because we were afraid a kangaroo might get out onto Edithvale Road and cause an accident. Some of the vandals just wanted to chase the kangaroos. Others wanted to plant illegal drug plants.

We had arranged for a Mechanical Drawing teacher who lived in Edithvale Road, Bruce Saxon, to design a logo for us which was printed on metal plates and attached to the fence. We also used the logo on our official notepaper and I made a big flag to fly over the Bird Hide indicating when the hide was open.

One time after the back fence was cut, and mother kangaroo got out but finally went back in to her Joey.

Hide duty was unpleasant on cold windy days because of the gaps in the logs used on the outside of the hide. Waste material left over from some sewerage works in Frankston had been used. To start with it had one level but when they opened it the reeds blocked the views so the top floor was added. Ross Nelson built a cupboard in the corner to store binoculars and other equipment - very handy.

Some years later I was on hide duty one Saturday afternoon when a lady came in with two boys, one about 10 and the little one about five. The big one borrowed binoculars and set about identifying birds. The little one was bored until he saw me sitting at a side window looking towards Wells Road. He climbed onto my lap and got very excited, pointing out of the window and yelling "Maccas." Much more exciting than silly birds.

Since Melbourne Water asked me to meet a staff member at the buffer between the residential area off Wells Road and the end of the wetland, to mark a pathway through the copse we had planted, it is not possible to see "Maccas" from the hide. Probably saves parents some money?

We kept a record book for visitors to sign and each year I made records of how many visitors and where from. It was usually around 6,000 and from all over Australia and many overseas countries as well. I sent the records to Melbourne Water each year for the nine years I was secretary.

When we were allowed to use "Duck In" for meetings, we held Committee meetings there one evening a month. We took an alarm clock, set to "go off" at 10.00 pm so we could get enough sleep to wake up in time for work the next day.

One of the delights was receiving school visits. One time we sent drawings of various wetland birds to a local Primary School so the children could colour them in when they visited and could see the birds from the hide. When they arrived they all waved their drawings already coloured in—There were yellow Spoonbills, green and mauve ducks, pink Swans! One secondary College sent year 11's doing Environmental Studies for years, and even Uni students came. We printed numerous information booklets and organised many, many working bees and wetland walks.

The one thing that did not go away was threats from developers wanting to build on the wetlands.

To my mind FESWI has been very successful. However, the initial community action in saving a large part from development was paramount. FESWI worked hard to save many adjoining areas from development. My biggest thrill was in getting international protection with the Ramsar listing. The committee had discussed this on and off for a while, but nothing much had happened. When we had a feeling that politicians were a bit more receptive so decided to act.

I bought a sort of small key board and a printer and with Barry Ross's help composed a number of letters. We sent these to both Federal and State politicians. It was a huge surprise to start getting replies within a few days. Apparently the Federal and State members did talk to each other. Soon we were visited by members of both Houses.

I was quite taken by Senator John Falkner who visited Seaford Wetlands. His staff member asked the questions and we had to address the Senator with the reply. Briefly, Melbourne Water was instructed to carry out the studies and gather information about birds, plants, habitat and of course management. Eventually the binding International Agreement was signed protecting both Seaford and Edithvale Wetlands. Unfortunately, due to a number of factors a few parts were not included, the main ones being Braeside Park and Edithvale Common.

This is just a summary of my involvement. All of the Committee as well as members and lots of others had a huge input to obtaining the result..

Out for The Day Today

We had a good like-minded friend in Scott Seymour at Melbourne Water. Being a hands-on engineer, he had an inside view. His job involved drainage and water ways throughout the original Carrum-Carrum swamp .

The Carrum-Carrum swamp catchment flows from the ridge line at Cranbourne in the south to Dandenong and Eumemmering creek and as far away as Croydon, Bayswater and Wantirna. Other built up areas are Bentleigh, Oakleigh, Moorabbin, some of which flow into Karkarook Park. This was the last bit of original heathland in this part of the green wedge. We all tried to save this heathland but a large retaining basin was constructed to protect the Bentleigh area from flooding.

There were more remnants of heathland to the south which were magnificent and had such a variety of plants.

Scott somehow organised a few bus trips over the year for the various groups of volunteers in the wider catchment area. One interesting trip was to the Western suburbs to see what the 'Friends of the Maribyrnong Creek' were doing; then down to the Latham Salt Works. We also had a warm welcome from the 'Friends of Truganina' a very interesting wetland.

On another bus trip we visited a most magical site—it was at Potts Rd in Langwarrin. I can't really describe it but I remember a mixture of beautiful sandy

ROSS NELSON

heathland with natural swamp, very thick shrubs and some parts with trees and a host of wildlife. The part we visited had largely avoided dumping and intrusion. Only a little was retained, the larger portion being given over to sand mining and housing development. Such a waste for the future generation.

The corner of Frankston Dandenong Rd with Ballarto Road, even I could see the diversity, now it is all fast food outlets and Peninsula Link. Last of remnant heathland was a mass of flowers that day.

Damien Cook put in a lot of effort to gain public support to save the area around Thompson Rd, bordering the Cranbourne Railway Line. Eventually a third of this significant grassland was retained, although the railway station and parking was built on the best part.

Along McClelland Drive south of Cranbourne Frankston Rd is an electrical substation and natural ponds, again the extension of the electrical substation and Peninsula Link has altered them. We visited many smaller sites, largely degraded but councils and volunteers doing their best.

A few areas were fantastic to see and I'm sure Kaye Proudley (our plant expert) had tears in her eyes, they were so divine and most in good condition

Strange Goings On

Some years back there were strange goings on in my street on dark winter nights. A car would turn up and the occupants head off to return close to midnight. What was all that about?

The central character was a chap called Barry Ross whose career was banking and financial administration. He was picking up environmentalists to attend meetings concerned with conservation. The work that he did was meticulous and exacting, an important part of his involvement in numerous groups trying to protect the natural environments and the Green Wedge in particular.

There were the Melbourne Water meetings held at Braeside Park which covered the Carrum Carrum Swamp and water shed areas.

The Kingston Group trying to retain the green areas and have some control over sand mining amongst other issues.

Another group was The Port Phillip Conservation Council. They covered the bay and surrounds so many important and interesting subjects came up. Barry would collect me and the meetings were in a lovely old house in Sandringham.

In the dark we entered the side gate and carefully navigated the path to the lovely wide timber veranda to the rear door

Quite often it was a mixture of largely the same people all trying their best to retain a little open space.

I feel I had little input to make but did represent FESWI and only time will tell.

Barry has long been active with The Defenders of The Green Wedge and has spent so much time at meetings and at home putting submissions together. At the time of writing hardly a week goes by without some part under contention. It's a shame the above is such a *dry* subject because the end results are only too clearly seen when it is too late. Most challenges were a bit of a compromise such as Water Ways Estate. It still got developed but the lake area was enlarged considerably.

Seaford Wetlands had land exchanges with owners which was largely for the good and the saving of the farm land in the north east corner was fantastic.

Ramsar Listing

Now don't forget that the Ramsar listing took a huge effort by lots of volunteers over a long period. It is a shame that a sign or something has not been erected. Hours fighting Council and developers is largely not recognised.

The Big Flood of Friday Afternoon

How quickly we forget events. Was it 2010? We had the big downpour.

I remember it was a late Friday afternoon as I was seeing a customer in Dingley. It started raining and the customer commented how heavy it was. Being busy, I didn't take a lot of notice.

When I went to my car the road was flooded up to just under the door - lucky - I never realized the road had a dip in it just there. I think we must have had 150 mm in that hour, then nothing.

Now, this short downpour resulted in Boundary and Wells Road being closed. Warrigal Road flooded for a while as well as Thames Promenade. Edithvale Road was closed for a month and the Waterways Estate Drive flooded up to the front doors.

The Carrum Carrum Swamp has a huge catchment area which is rapidly getting covered over with paving and buildings. The dividing of what were previously blocks for a single dwelling now take several units. Less and less land is uncovered and can absorb flood water.

While this is happening the Green Wedge and Flood Plain is being nibbled away.

Melbourne Water have been aware of this for a long time and established many wetland retarding basins and water holding areas. They have also included water retention measures on unit developments to slowly release water from flash floods.

Information from overseas warns us of the danger of building over flood plains. Will we learn?

Seaford also suffered flooding

Photo: Susan Buckland
McKenzie Street, Seaford
July 2010



ROSS NELSON

Sad Story at The Bird Hide

That afternoon was a bit gloomy, pleasant apart from the cloud cover.

We were on the first shift of Hide Duty after lunch and we were doing our best to identify the usual throng of wildlife. Luckily water birds to a degree, are easier even with different Ducks and often regular visitors will put you straight.

About half way through a quite different coloured Parrot flew across from Chelsea Heights. It seemed to land in the water at the western side and commenced to splash about. At this stage we were unsure if it was having a bath or in trouble. But it was soon became clear all was not well. As it was a little way out and it can be deeper in places, I rushed home and got the waders.

The water wasn't deep, I could have walked out. Sadly the bird was dead and must have been an escaped pet, a Tropical Parrot quite unsuited to our cooler climate.

Wetland Displays

Years ago there was a variety of Community Days organised by locals and the Councils. The Mayor's Fun Day was a popular one as well as Australia Day. Chelsea would start with a parade of community groups, sporting clubs, emergency groups etc. which would walk from the Town Hall to the local park. Entertainment was provided, a local band, athletic activities, rides of different types, and around the perimeter, stalls and information displays.

We put together a few brochures, photos, and stuffed birds. I would put it all together in the car and different members would come and help. Sometimes it was wet, other years so hot we would end up like beetroots, red.

Eventually we had more displays. I converted a trailer I had into a rather nice enclosed vehicle with writing and bird pictures all over it. We did a lot of INFORMATION DAYS and even evenings at School Fêtes as well as at Public Libraries. Sometimes it was a chore but mostly good fun and entertaining. An added bonus was a bread roll and a hot snag for lunch.

Eventually food and wine festivals took over which didn't generate the same appeal. Those days did get a lot of interest and we can only hope some of it has stayed with the younger ones.



Rex Chugg showcasing
FESWI at The Big
Green Day at Carrum
Primary School, 2011

FESWI WORKING BEES INCLUDING PLANTING WITH HELP FROM
COMMUNITY CORRECTION ATTENDEES

I don't recall when these started or how long they lasted but they certainly ran for several years and accomplished a lot of work around the Edithvale Bird Hide, Edithvale North and South, and Duck In, cleaning up the area and establishing many thousands of trees and under-storey shrubs, along with shifting huge mountains of mulch.

They started out as normal club working bees using just our members but as the workload grew and interest in helping declined over the years, that was when we turned to the Office of Corrections for help.

Some of those men from Community Corrections (people doing public service instead of being fined or jailed) were good workers, but I am afraid many were straight out rogues - some I'm sure were in on the robberies that at least twice took all our hard-earned motor-mowers, whipper-snippers, spades, etc. from us, and one man cheekily wrote his name in weed spray on the grass- which of course didn't show up until after he had done his community time with us.

Then there was another lad whose mother showed up at the wetlands to see her son 'doing his time' but did not find him there. As it turned out he had been taken with 'his crew' down to Chelsea Pub!

Frank Jupp and Peter Fussell, both stout and loyal FEWSI members, were the men who helped me enormously in running that scheme and they deserve this recognition.

Then there were all the other groups we helped train and had working at planting for our Friends group—we had several teams - one I remember being Green Corps (young unemployed adults being trained for employment in order to get the dole).

Today as I drive past the grounds on occasional visits to Melbourne, I see this mini forest of trees around the perimeters of Edithvale North and South and The Common - many have succumbed over the years in that inhospitable ground and with *no* great thanks to council mowers who mowed the new plantings down more than once! And I think fondly of the very hard work of our members.

Another person who absolutely stands out in her help and support of me and all the schemes I organised (bat-trapping nights, insect collection days, propagating the trees we were planting, etc) was Rete Besley ... a mere slip of a woman who was tenacious in getting things done. Vale Rete.

Speaking of bat-trapping nights- these were very popular with the members. I organised leaders like Lindy Lumsden who taught us so much, from the Dept. of the Environment or whatever that department was called in those days, to bring their harp nets and echo-locating sound equipment to find out what bats we had at Edithvale Wetlands and they proved to be very interesting evenings. I do not recall how many species we recorded but it was before many friends groups had tried this sort of activity.

There were of course very many other people who helped, a cast of hundreds over the years (like Ross, Barry, Dianne, Michael, and many whose names, but not faces, escape me now). Thank you all for your help

Plant Propagation

Plant propagation for the Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands was started fairly early on by a young man (whose name is now lost to my memory - perhaps David Godfrey?) and ran for a year or two under his tutelage growing about 8 species of trees; eucalypts, wattles and she-oaks mostly. Barry Ross, Malcolm Shapcott and Roy & Kaye Proudley were four of the people I recall being part of that original team at Frankston City Council's Depot Nursery.

After David? left for family reasons, it was either pack up the scheme and buy trees or find another person to run it. Needless to say and without any qualifications at all, but passion a-plenty, I decided to run the program! We managed to gather a small team including those already mentioned and Rete Besley, sometimes April Nutter, and Robert & Maureen and others I cannot recall the names of (and later - Joyce Stewart, Helen Corcoran and Marcia Davis.)

With help from Greening Australia and several council's training courses on indigenous plants, seed collection and propagation, I went collecting native seed from the area around both wetlands (and a little further afield) and we started growing many more species to give more diversity to the areas we were revegetating and took the total number that our little group grew to around 360 different species. Not a bad effort if I do say so, but that also included plants we grew for the council (when they had gotten rid of their nurseryman) and other friends groups. Over the years we must have grown hundreds of thousands of plants with many thousands of those planted into our wetlands, saving FESWI many, many dollars.

Editor's Note: Kaye Proudley was awarded a life membership as a tribute for her work in propagation

A FRIEND, Reading the draft of Glimpses, commented that it would be a help to many if a list of the trees etc. Kaye chose to have planted was included. Kay provided a list. I have printed the common names.

Plants

Trees	Shrubs and Bushes	Grasses
Silver Wattle	Hedge Wattle	Many species of:
Black Wattle	Prickly Moses	Wallaby Grasses
Black Sheoak	Common Correa	Weeping Grass
Drooping Sheoak	Smooth parrot Pea	Common Tussock
Coast banksia	Common Epacris	Kangaroo Grass
River Manna Redgum	Hop Goodenia	
	Yellow Hakea	
	Furze Hakea	
	Austral Indigo	
	Prickly Tea Tree	
	Swamp Paperbark	
	Kangaroo Apple	
	Golden Spray	

Kaye also listed Rushes, Sedges and Lilies. I have not included these - I presumed the three categories above were more likely to be of interest.



At the nursery—
Joyce and Helen

CHERYL MEIER

Many times on hide duty I had the pleasure of having Cheryl on duty with me.

Cheryl has been with our Wetlands group for well over 20 years, and in all this time has helped with our newsletter, the Wetlands Warbler.

In the early years, whilst on Hide Duty, Cheryl used a monocular (one-eyed binocular,) to watch the birds. Later because of failing eyesight, Cheryl had to give up Hide Duty. One afternoon Cheryl said, "This view changes every month. We should organise a series of photos and then publish a calendar which we could sell."

I thought this was a great idea. (D. Meadows)

Cheryl is visually impaired and is a great asset in Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Inc.

IRENE TRUPKE

A GRANDMOTHER'S JOY— NOT A BIT BIASED

All I knew about the theme for term 3 at Aspendale Gardens Primary School was the continuing study about the "Wetlands".

Having been away for the first two months, I missed the preparation for the whole school production on "In Our Backyard". I had no idea what to expect, even after accompanying a class on a field trip. The Wetlands are indeed like their backyard.

The production was about the history, the human influence and the importance of the wetlands including the story of Latham's Snipe. We learned that this bird migrates every year from Japan to Australia, including our Wetlands, a long journey of around 7000km without stopping.

With the involvement of the whole school, a fast moving, colourful story unfolded with lots of enthusiasm and catchy tunes.

We met the Dreamtime people, the Bugs or Minibeasts, the Birds, the Frogs, the Japanese people (representing the homeland of the Snipe), the Wildflowers, the Developers including Builders, Plumbers (suburbia encroaching) and of course the Ferals.

The all-important message 'Save The Wetlands, Do your Bit' came through loud and clear.

What a marvelous production those gifted teachers at AGPS created, helped by the school resource book 'Wetlands, the Oasis Next Door' produced by FESWI.

Cranbourne Secondary College, it was their end of year celebration, ever to be remembered.

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