

Mar-Apr

2022

Wetland Warbler

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Number 177

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Clamorous Reed-Warbler

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr Rosalie Cooper



Welcome back to our new year of normal operation.

The Hide is now being opened almost every weekend and there are lots of visiting birds and

new humans enjoying the atmosphere. I spent an enjoyable couple of hours there today (April 30) despite cool damp weather. Our repaired skylight is a great improvement.

We are looking for new volunteers to fill in the roster, Robin Clarey is always keen to hear from interested folk. An expert knowledge of the birds is not required, there are many illustrated leaflets and reference books there. Having two volunteers on duty together and many enthusiastic photographers who come through, means you can always seek information from others.

The folk who just drop in for an initial visit are always happy to browse and ask questions. They appreciate a chat about the wetlands and our organisation. The children often ask questions and like to talk about their school programs.

Now that Covid regulations have eased we are happy to assist new volunteers

who can spare a couple of hours once or twice a month. For more information you can contact me or Robin Clarey for a chat about this.

We also have some planting programs and school visits coming up. The committee meets monthly and members who are interested in supporting FESWI in any of our activities or have new ideas to discuss with us can also call/email, or contact the Secretary, Margaret Hunter.

And in saying that, we warmly welcome Ali Fulcher to the committee.

What a delight to be back into freedom (with care) and soon we will have lived through the upcoming elections, Federal then State!

Regards to all, Rosalie Cooper

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THE EYES HAVE IT



Tawny Frogmouth
Photo: Steve McDonald

FRIENDS OF EDITHVALE - SEAFORD WETLANDS INC.

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SOME SAD NEWS

VALE KAYE PROUDLEY

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Kaye Proudley, who died on Friday 27th March.

Kaye could almost be likened to a juggernaut in the early and middle years of FESWI. Joining in July 1989 and becoming a committee member in 1993, she took on the role of Working Bee Coordinator in Edithvale for the following 7 years, and is responsible for the 1,000's of trees now in the buffer zones around Edithvale North and South.

But her involvement didn't finish there. She initiated or participated in all kinds of ventures - Clean Up Australia; supervision of people on CBO'S working in the wetlands; bush bird breeding boxes; bat banding; insect collection and ID; bird and wetland walks for the public; Arbor Week and other special tree planting events; and working with students from the SDS schools, to name just a few. She was also a prolific contributor to Wetland Warbler.



Kaye working at the Indigenous Nursery.

Following Frankston Councils offer to allow FESWI to make use of the Frankston Indigenous Nursery, she took on the coordinating role for many years working one morning a week with FESWI volunteers to produce the plants that went into the buffer zones around Seaford Wetlands.

In late 2005, she and husband, Roy left the area to live in Binginwarri in Gippsland. What a loss to FESWI!

VALE KATH PRIOR

It is also very distressing to report the passing of member Kath Prior in early April.

Kath joined FESWI in September 1989. She was an active volunteer in many roles including working/planting bees; working with Kaye at Frankston Indigenous Nursery in seed collection and propagation; helping with hosting visits from school students; and doing bird hide duty. She also took on the role of hide coordinator keeping it tidy and its displays up to date.

Following FESWI's take-over of Duck In Kath was active in helping to set it up and even suggested its name. In the years following she kept a close eye on it when walking Daisy the dog around Edithvale North.



Kath (middle, in white top) with student group.

FESWI extends our deepest sympathies to both families.

SNIPPETS

Hide Skylight Fixed

On 12th April, FEWSI employed the services of Ben Gott from Proline Facilities Management and worker Corey to replace the leaking skylight (and clear out the spouting!) in the bird hide roof.

An excellent job was done – the skylight looks so good, no lichen to cut out the light and no more rain-catching buckets to be deployed.

Many thanks to FESWI's John Cooper who managed all aspects of this replacement.



Working Bees Resume—Planting for the Planet

On Sunday 1st May, planting resumed at the southern end of Seaford Wetlands after a long Covid caused break.

Under the expert guidance of co-ordinator, Rex, four members turned up to put in 100 Dichondra repens (ground cover) plants close to the McKenzie Street entrance. Thanks to Julie, Colin, Denise and Robin.



Julie, Colin and Rex

MELBOURNE WATER AT WORK IN THE WETLANDS

Grooming

Melbourne Water is currently controlling Common Reed (*Phragmites Australis*) in sections of Edithvale and Seaford Wetlands.

The Common Reed plays an important role for birds in providing breeding sites and shelter for water and marshland birds, however its tall and dense habitat can make it largely impenetrable for critically endangered birds to forage in the mudflat areas that are found throughout the wetlands.

The conditions of the wetlands are ideal for the Common Reed which means it spreads rapidly throughout the wetlands.

Under the guidance of a Ramsar Management Plan, Melbourne Water is now undertaking its annual grooming of the Common Reed to enhance the habitat diversity for a range of bird species, particularly water bird species that visit these internationally significant wetlands from the northern hemisphere.

(Source: Melbourne Water Sign, Seaford)



The grooming machine

Other Work

Also recently, Melbourne Water officers have been working at Edithvale Wetlands clearing out the bird boxes on Edithvale South, replacing the old hay with new. They found and removed many unviable eggs and discovered that two of the boxes were still being used by Chestnut Teals (which they left alone).

They also cleared away many of the reeds around the lookout and tidied up the car park.

(Source: Allan Broomhall and John Cooper.)

SILKY OAK TREASURE

Peter Murphy

On a bird outing with the Bass Coast Club at Ryll Inlet we were told of a nearby Noisy Friar Bird. It was November and saw some Greenshanks and Godwits way out on the Spit.

Afterwards we drove a few blocks away and pulled up at the only flowering Silky Oak tree in the street. Sure enough and without raising our binoculars, we could see the Friar Bird with its nodule or casque on top of its beak. Amazing!

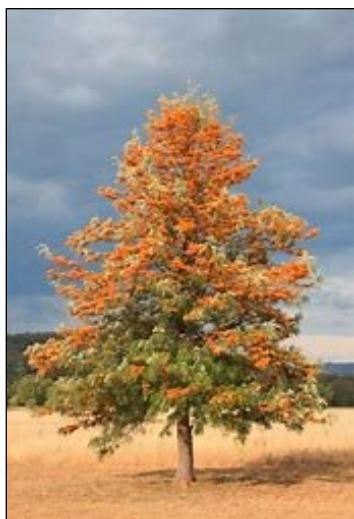
These birds are often seen with Wattle Birds and, sure enough, three Wattle Birds were hassling it but it stood its ground.

Next time you are passing a flowering Silky Oak, look up. You never know.



The Noisy Friarbird (*Philemon corniculatus*) is a passerine bird of the honeyeater family Meliphagidae native to southern New Guinea and eastern Australia. It is one of several species known as friarbirds whose heads are bare of feathers.

Source: Wikipedia,



Grevillea Robusta (Silky Oak) is the largest tree species under the genus Grevillea within the remarkably trim family Proteaceae. Sometimes named Silky Oak or Southern Silky Oak, the plainly distinct tree isn't even remotely related to the ubiquitous oaks we all know.

Pic aussietreeecare.com

SNIPE SURVEY

Sue Telfer

The snipe are back! (this report was written earlier this year) The water in the ponds at both Edithvale and Seaford is finally receding and the muddy bottom with its rich source of nutrients exposed.

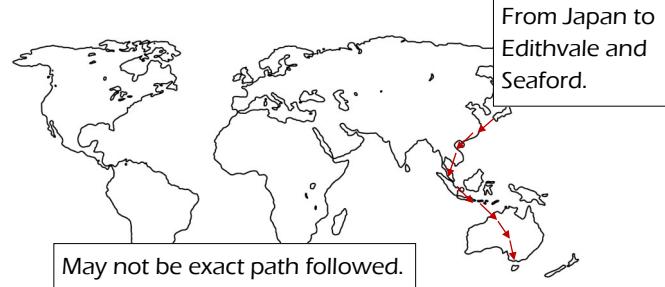
On Saturday Jan 15th at least 50 were spotted at Seaford and at least 20 at the Edithvale (north) ponds. This time our team of counters Roger Francey, Craig Brunnen and Sue Telfer were happy to report they had returned in such numbers. Three individuals have been spotted from the bird hide also.

It seems that unusually wet conditions in other parts have attracted them this season but their recent return to Edithvale/Seaford shows this remains an integral link in the chain of wetland habitats sought by these beautiful and vulnerable birds on their migratory journey.

Our involvement in his project helps build a picture of the characteristics, habits and requirements of this species and an understanding of the crucial need for natural habitat conservation.



Latham's Snipe Photo: Roy Burgess



THE EDUCATION FILE

Visit by Minaret College Students to the Edithvale Wetlands

Margaret Hunter

VCE students from Minaret College in Springvale, with their teacher Kit McPhee, regularly visit the Edithvale Wetlands to learn about development pressures, and changes impacted by these to Edithvale each year as part of their VCE studies. Earlier this year, seven students attended, to view the bird hide, with the refurbishments and displays since reopening, and learn about the pressures on the wetlands.

They then visited Patterson Lakes to explore the canals and wetlands (former McLeod Swamp) and viewed the pressures from urban development and population and traffic pressures. At the end there was a question about the role of Melbourne Water in maintaining the wetlands, which was referred to Melbourne Water. For the information of members reading this, it is in the Ramsar Management Plan.

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Talk to RMIT Students

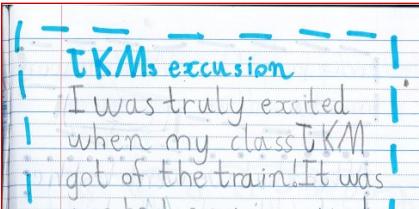
..... Robin Clarey & Rosalie Cooper

In late March FESWI was invited to give a talk to Masters students in Landscape Architecture and Landscape Design programs at RMIT.

Robin and Rosalie attended the *Blackboard Collaborate* internet session to talk about the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands, the urban pressures on them, and the need for thoughtful and careful planning when considering development in their vicinity.

The students were attentive and asked some good questions at the end. FESWI truly appreciates these occasions to talk about the wetlands and thanks Matt Arms, RMIT Academic & Researcher, for the opportunity.

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Extract from one pupil's report on the day's outing.

Visit by Bonbeach Primary Students to the Seaford Wetlands

Robin Clarey & Hilary Bray & Peter Murphy

On the 29th of March FESWI hosted visits by two groups of Grade 1's and 2's from Bonbeach Primary School at Seaford Wetlands. Each group numbered between 50 and 60 students so there was some trepidation about how we would cope with such large numbers.

Bur we needn't have worried! The teachers and parents who attended managed them beautifully. The kids were polite and friendly. They sat on the grass and listened attentively during our short talk then asked lots of questions. They also showed a lot of curiosity about the various items we had on display.

FESWI members – Peter, Hilary and Robin worked well to make this event a success. Many thanks to Bonbeach PS teacher, Kylie Middleton, for organising the visit.



TKM's excursion

I was truly exited when my class TKM got off the train! It was a school excursion and we were going to Seaford.

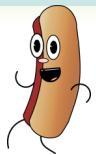
The first stop was the Seaford Wetlands. My class TKM met a lady called Robin and two more people that were volunteers. I learned that there are Pobblebonk Frogs, Marsh Frogs and many more frogs.

The wetlands were my favourite place.

After that we went to Seaford Beach Then to Kananook Creek



SAUSAGE SIZZLE SUCCESS



FESWI ran its first Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings Carrum Downs on Saturday 9 April. 16 of us helped over the course of the day to sell sausages and drinks to make an amazing profit of \$1,071.10.

The four different team members co-operated so well with hard work, willingness and good humour. Great stuff! Thank you so much to you all.



Team 1—Cathy, Helen, Geoff, and Arlis



Team 2 — Julie, Pam, Helen, and Hilary



Team 3— Chris , Marg, Rex and Janet



Team 4— Colin, Sandy, Colin and Juliette,

And yes, they all assured me they were smiling under the masks!

RAPTORS AT EDITHVALE



On the left:
Brown
Goshawk
resting on a
branch.

On the Right:
Magpie-lark
chasing the
Swamp Harrier
off.

Both
photographed
from the hide
by Roy Burgess



FOXES AND CATS ARE KNOCKING OUT AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE WITH A DEVASTATING ONE-TWO PUNCH

The combination of feral cats and foxes is inflicting a staggering annual death toll on Australia's native wildlife.

Key points:

- Foxes and cats combined are killing more than 2.6 billion mammals, birds, and reptiles every year.
- Foxes dominate in the southern forested areas, whereas cats are more widespread. A number of control measures are available and need to be ramped up to avoid more extinctions

Their ability to take down different prey, and their capacity to flourish in different habitats, means they are putting immense pressure on the survival of a number of native animals across a large portion of the country.

And where their diets and range overlap, they're delivering a one-two punch to some of our most vulnerable species.



Photo: Steve McDonald

They're some of the key lessons from [new research published in the journal Diversity and Distributions](#) today and supported by the *Threatened Species Recovery Hub*.

According to the findings, cats and foxes collectively kill in Australia each year:

- more than 1.4 billion mammals;
- almost 700 million reptiles; and around 510 million birds. The findings highlight the urgent need for greater control of invasive species in order to

curb Australia's worrying decline in native wildlife, the authors said.

"We need to deal with this problem of foxes and cats," said lead author Alyson Stobo-Wilson from Charles Darwin University.

"People think that a couple of cats and foxes aren't having an impact, but it adds up."

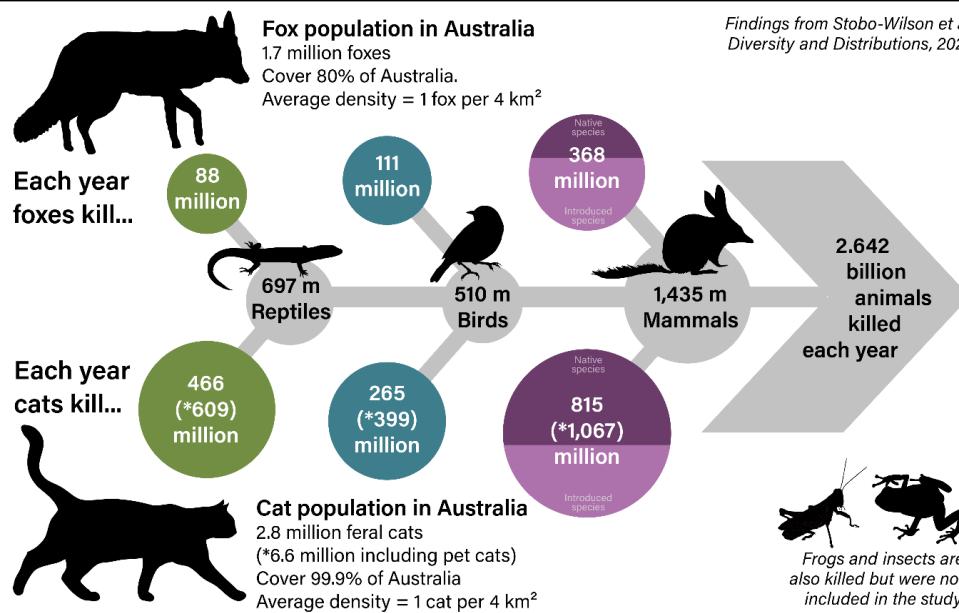
[ABC Science](#) By environment reporter [Nick Kilvert](#)

Posted Wed 16 Mar 2022

Help keep family & friends informed by sharing this article abc.net.au/news/cats-foxes-feral-pests-native-wildlife/100902790

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Animals killed in Australia each year





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Production of this newsletter funded through



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