
Newsletter

January/ February 2017

NEXT ACTIVITY:

Mulching Day

Sunday 26th March

1 pm - 3 pm, Bromage Close

Hoppers Crossing

[Melway Map 203 B11]

This will be a mulch-spreading day, plus pinning the last stretch of the weed matting. This is at our new site - a 70 m extension just north of our previous plantings, accessed from Bromage Close (*see photo next page*).

As usual, afternoon tea provided, with a Wyndham Council ranger(s) in attendance.

Further enquiries to Denice Perryman on 0429 167 013 or deniceperryman1@gmail.com.

FoSC Working Bees Galore!

We've had five working bees in January and February (three unscheduled) due to the fact that we did a huge amount of planting last year and the plants grew so well with the cool summer.

... So much so that the plants were coming out the top of their guards!

Hobsons Bay and Wyndham councils rangers were keen for us to keep on top of our sites and we have a willing volunteer workforce.

The situation stirred Denice into action and organised the extra 'guards & stakes removal' activities for Creek Water Close, Clarendon Court, Markham Way and Bromage Close.

It was literally FoSC working bees galore!

Thanks to those volunteers who answered Denice's call at short notice, in addition to our regulars coming to our scheduled activity days!

Photos of the working bees follow.

Have you liked our FoSC Facebook Community Page yet?

It's regularly updated with the latest news, events and photos. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofskeletoncreek/>

FRIENDS OF SKELETON CREEK

Volunteers restoring our local creek



Skeleton Creek Interpretive Signage Panels now Installed!

The panels are in so it was time for some publicity! The 'picture post-card' Ailsa Ave, Altona Meadows, site was chosen for our photo shoot for the Maribyrnong & Hobsons Bay

Star Weekly newspaper, with photographer Damian. The article to accompany the photo should appear in the Star Weekly the first week of March. Key players in getting the signage done were on hand for the photo shoot - Bob Winters, John Dawes, Denice Perryman, Wetlands Ward Cr Colleen Gates, and HBCC Senior Ranger Andrew Webster (*who took this photo*).

The nine interpretive signs were installed along the creek by a contractor on 20th January - from just west of Point Cook Rd Bridge, Seabrook, to the Point Cook Footbridge, Cheetham Wetlands. Hobsons Bay City Council were able to fund the signs through last year's annual budget process. Our FoSC subcommittee, including Bob Winters - the flora and fauna contents provider, had worked tirelessly on finalising the signage in conjunction with Andrew Webster and the HBCC's conservation and communications departments, along with Hayden Goodall of Sardine graphics studio in Newport. The signage will benefit the community in educating and enhancing their experience of our creek.

It was appropriate that our unscheduled guards and stakes removal working bee on Thu 9th February was at Clarendon Court/ Point Cook Rd bridge, Seabrook. This is the section we previously planted and where one of our new interpretive signs is located - aptly titled 'Locals Restoring Skeleton Creek'.

Pictured from left are: HBCC Ranger Libby Rigby, Denice Perryman, Vicki Dunn, Wayne Dunn, Kristine Konings and Anne Barclay.



A 'Before & After' Transformation

One of our unscheduled activities was held on Tuesday 31st January, when we carried out guard and stake removal with Wyndham Council's Darren Wright, at Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing.

All concerned should be well pleased with this conservation transformation outcome.

It's also nice to be embarrassed by your success and the fantastic turnout of 10 made Denice's lunch a little short!



More plantings for Bromage site

Our work has already begun preparing for our new plantings at Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing, a 70 m extension just north of our previous plantings (*shown opposite*). (This is where our next working bee on Sunday 26 March is being held.)



On Tuesday 14th February, volunteers laid and pinned jute matting. Those who survived last year's pinning at our Bromage Close site were not looking forward to the hard effort required to get the pins in – however, Arborgreen's new matting was pinned in no time – a breeze for us all!

Another Transformation!

Creek Water Close and Markham Way/Merton St Altona Meadows

On Sunday 26th February we had busy bees for our plant guards and stakes removal day - which saw a complete transformation of the area. Now you can see the plants without the green guards!



Thanks to the 12 FoSC volunteers and our HBCC Ranger Libby whose vehicle and trailer we loaded up with the reusable guards and stakes!

And another nice afternoon tea put on as usual by FoSC secretary Denice Perryman.



Friends BBQ and then go wildlife watching Mt Rothwell Night Tour

On Saturday 14th January, 15 people associated with the Friends of Skeleton Creek had an enjoyable evening viewing wildlife at Mt Rothwell, near Little River, south-west of Melbourne, the largest predator-free ecosystem in Victoria. The fenced-off property is exclusively managed for the conservation of some of Australia's most threatened faunal species, including the Eastern Barred Bandicoot and Eastern Quoll.

Our guide Sarah Box provided an informative talk about the work done at Mt Rothwell and led our party after dark up to Mt Rothwell, with a brilliant view over Melbourne and Geelong on a chilly but a spectacular full moon night! Thank you Denice Perryman for organising the night tour.



The Friends enjoyed a BYO BBQ at the Mt Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretive Centre



This Eastern Barred Bandicoot was hard to spot in the long grass. (Photo courtesy Bob Winters)



A Southern Brush Tail Rock Wallaby posed for us for quite a long time. (Photo courtesy Bob Winters)

Friends of Skeleton Creek Calendar of Activities 2017

This is our calendar of activities for both Hobsons Bay and Wyndham City councils in 2017.

Note sometimes we may need to adjust our plans close to the time of each activity.

Details of the activities are always publicised in this newsletter and on our [Facebook Community Page](#).

*Except where shown, all FoSC activities are held on a **Sunday from 1 pm to 3 pm***

26 March

Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Mulch spreading

Tuesday 11 April, 10 am to 12 pm

Labassa Way, Seabrook
Sign rejuvenation and shrub planting

23 April

Clarendon Crt, Seabrook
Maintenance

28 May

Spicer Blvd, Altona Meadows
Planting

Tuesday 13 June, 10 am to 12 pm

Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Planting

25 June

Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Planting

23 July (alternative National Tree Day) (official day is Sunday, 30 July 2017)

Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Planting

27 August

Spicer Blvd, Altona Meadows
Planting

24 September

Bushcare's Big Day Out
Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Mulch spreading

22 October

Merton St/Markham Way, Altona Meadows
Maintenance

26 November

Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing
Maintenance

2017-18 Environment Grant Approved

Our group's application for a Hobsons Bay City Council's environmental grant, which is tied in with our yearly conservation field day for the Seabrook Primary School students, has been successful. We can now fund the Seabrook Primary School field day, held in April, through the \$800 grant, which includes purchasing plants for the students to put in, and to upgrade our group promotional and educational materials used on the day and at future events.

Sailing to Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary North Western Shorelines Network get-together

FoSC volunteer member Catherine Curtain represented our group on Sunday 19th February when invited by the North Western Shorelines Network for their information sharing get-together on the S.V. Pelican, a 19-metre sailing catamaran, from Gem Pier, Williamstown, to Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary.

We were all aboard the S.V. Pelican by 9:30 am to set sail on a grey drizzly Sunday morning. Spirits were high, despite the weather, and many of the hopefuls had brought along snorkelling gear with the intention of getting in the water at the Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary.

The event, organised by Marilyn Olliff from Friends of Williamstown Wetlands and Matt McArthur, Baykeeper Ambassador, was a networking opportunity for groups working to protect the North West shoreline of Port Phillip Bay. The day was jointly funded by the Wader Beach Litter Hotspots Project and the Baykeeper Ambassador Program.

We were inside most of the sailing time listening to members of the various groups represented who provided information about their activities.

After being enticed by the aroma of muffins and apple slice being freshly baked in the galley below, the crew



served us morning tea. Nothing brings a crowd together like food and a hot cuppa!

We were very interested to hear from Heidi Taylor about her and her husband's challenging work to eradicate marine litter in the remote communities of Cape York through the Tangaroa Blue Foundation project. She emphasised the importance of collecting data and encouraged all the different environmental groups to standardise their data collection variables so that stronger evidence can be presented to government.

The database is available on the Tangaroa Blue website <http://www.tangaroablue.org/>

Heidi suggested that we in Victoria should wait to approach the state government to introduce a deposit scheme for glass and plastic bottles because it is likely they're waiting to see how a similar scheme is implemented in NSW.

Matt McArthur, a marine ecologist, showed us part of the presentation he uses with children and at street events when talking about marine litter. His wife has made him a 'Sam the Leafy Sea Dragon' puppet that has proven to be very popular at events, such as at the Eco Marquee at Logan Reserve, Altona, on Australia Day this year.

Microplastics

We trawled for microplastics from the back of the boat and then had an interesting session looking at the contents of the trawling bag.

After lunch we heard from Marilyn Olliff and other representatives from the Wader Beach Litter Hotspots Project, such as from Jawbone Marine Sanctuary Care Group, also from the Marine Care Point Cooke group, Melbourne Water, Hobsons Bay City Council, 3030 Beach Patrol Werribee, 3016 Beach Patrol Williamstown, and others.

Unfortunately, with the bad weather, we chose to forego the opportunity to snorkel at the Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary, but I was happy that I at least spotted an Australian Gannet on the water, at the very edge of the Sanctuary.



Thank you to Marilyn and Matt for organising. A great day was had by all and there was much support for planning future North Western Shorelines Network get-together meetings. Marilyn offered to circulate the contact details of the various groups for those interested.

'Suburbs to Sea – Our Bay, Our Jewel' (Wyndham Council's Green Living Series)

Friday 17th March, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, Wyndham Civic Centre, 45 Princes Hwy, Werribee

Friends of Skeleton Creek will be represented at this event. More information, next page ➡

Friends of Skeleton Creek at 'Suburbs to Sea' (Wyndham Council's Green Living Series)

Bruce Boddington, a FoSC volunteer and Point Cook Open Spaces Coordinator, has invited us to another 'Suburbs to Sea' film night on the Friday 17th March, 6:30 pm – 8.30 pm. This will be in the main function area at the Wyndham Civic Centre, 45 Princes Hwy, Werribee.

The 'Melbourne Down Under' film is to be shown - which reveals how precious the bay at our back door is; Sheree Marris, the film maker and marine enthusiast, will be attending to answer any questions. Other short films about our local environment, such as Werribee River and its habitat, will also be shown.

Friends of Skeleton Creek will have an information table and display, along with other local groups concerned with the environment, such as Werribee River Association, Melbourne Water, Department of Environment Land and Water, and Point Cook Open Spaces. Further information:

<https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/whats-on/suburbs-sea-our-bay-our-jewel-green-living-series>

Denice has asked Bruce for two trestles and one pin board. We should have three or possibly four from our group represented and answering questions on the night.

We hope to see a good turn out from all our Friends as this event was well organised, interesting and well catered for last year.

Updating displays

As discussed at our FoSC February meeting, Denice and John D need to update our promotional and display materials for events like 'Suburbs to Sea', as they're about 15 years old.

Officeworks has free-standing display boards, and we could also get our media printing done there at the same time.

The display format would have our new logo at the top, some key messages underneath with a few of John D's photos taken at our working bees and other activities.

We came up with the following themes, supported by photos, for six or seven boards.

- Working bees
- Family friendly
- Feeding volunteers
- Public education
- School activities
- Social outings
- 'Before and after' photos

Membership

Friends of Skeleton Creek & Altona Bay Wetlands Inc.

Your volunteering at our activities is highly valued, even if you can only find time to contribute a few hours during the year.

Membership is not compulsory, but it can help you feel more connected with our group.

Cost is: Individual FoSC Membership/Mailing List - \$10.00; Family FoSC Membership/Mailing List - \$15.00

Membership is effective from the AGM date of 2nd November 2016 through to the next AGM and renewal date of 1st November 2017.

Payment details are on the FoSC Membership Form. Completion of the FoSC membership form and payment can be made at one of our monthly meetings or at an activity day.

The FoSC Membership form is attached in the email of this newsletter.

You can also request the membership form by emailing: friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com

FoSC Newsletter Subscription

Email Changes? Unsubscribe?

If you want to advise a change to your email address or unsubscribe from this newsletter, please email us with the necessary details to:

friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com

Friends of Skeleton Creek meetings are held the first Wednesday in the month (except January), starting at 7:30 pm, Old Laverton School, Altona Meadows (corner Kiora St and Cameron Ave).

The next FoSC meeting will be on Wednesday 1st March. All Welcome.



The Friends of Skeleton Creek & Altona Bay Wetlands Inc. gratefully acknowledge the support of Melbourne Water

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