

# Friends of Skeleton Creek & Altona Bay Wetlands Inc.



## October 2016 Newsletter

### NEXT ACTIVITY:

#### **Maintenance Day**

**Sunday 23rd October, 1 pm to 3 pm**

**Markham Way/Merton St  
Altona Meadows**

**[Melway Map 208 D3/D4]**

We can call this a 'Maintenance Day' - doing weeding, hammering in stakes on loose plant guards, removing guards on well grown plants, and litter collection.

Meet and register at the sign-in table, gate entrance to shared path, corner of Markham Way, Altona Meadows.

FoSC member Catherine Curtain will be bringing along six other Altona Lions Club members and showing them the newly installed microbat bat boxes, which the Lions Club funded.

Our ever-obliging Hobsons Bay Council Ranger Libby is also putting on a BBQ! Denice will provide tea, coffee and fruit. Further enquiries to FoSC Secretary Denice Perryman on 0429 167 013.

### Annual General Meeting

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

**Food from 6:30 pm, meeting from 8 pm**

#### **All Welcome!**

Our AGM will be held at our regular monthly meeting venue - Old School House, cnr Cameron Av and Kiora St, Altona Meadows.

John Hogg, a FoSC member, will be our guest speaker. John, a former Hobsons Bay councillor and deputy mayor (and candidate in the current council election) will talk about local Friends groups like ours, from a historical and council perspective, and how our group could be further supported for the sake of the creek and our environment.

Please bring food to share for dinner. This can be cold, but if it is hot it will need to be brought already heated,



*Our last activity on Sun 25th Sep at Bromage Close, Hoppers Crossing, was a mulch spreading day. The four big piles of mulch had been well placed by Wyndham Council, and we muscled up to fill big pots and push wheelbarrows to spread it along our recent plantings - and some around the trees we planted on the hill 10 years ago! Sal from Wyndham Council was on hand to help 12 volunteers get the job done. We welcomed newbies Elizabeth and Cliff. We also heard the distinctive sound of the Growling Grass Frog in its local habitat. Hear its sound from this YouTube clip:*

*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLRilbTnIBY>*

*[More photos next page]*

as there are no food-heating facilities at the venue. Denice Perryman is providing paper plates, cups, knives and forks and two large bottles of soft drink.

We will start serving the food about 6:30 pm and begin the meeting about 8 pm.

John Dawes, our Publicity Officer, will do a 'FoSC year-that-was' PowerPoint presentation, followed by a look at what we've prepared for our interpretive signage panels.

All helping hands at our volunteering activities are most welcome to attend to celebrate the year that was. Further enquiries to Denice Perryman on 0429 167 013.



Above, some of the volunteers moving the mulch were Sonya Findlow, getting a good run-up with her wheelbarrow, while Denice Perryman carried a big pot.

Bruce Boddington of Point Cook Open Spaces volunteered to do litter collection. It was amazing how much he collected along the creek!



### **November activity**

#### **‘Walk & Talk’ 1:00 pm from St Nicholas Ct, Tarneit**

Our November activity on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> will be a Friends ‘Walk & Talk’ starting at 1:00 pm from St Nicholas Ct, Tarneit, and heading off in a westerly direction.

More information to come in our November newsletter and on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofskeletoncreek/>

#### **Emu Foot Grassland Planting O’k’d**

Angela and Denice met with HBCC’s rangers Andrew Webster, Libby and Frank at the Emu Foot Grassland (the fenced area at the western end of Spicer Blvd in Altona Meadows) to look at the site to plant using the Melbourne Water grant in 2017.

Our point-of-contact Gerard Morel, River Health Officer, at Melbourne Water has since ok’d the site for us to plant.

#### **Melbourne Water End of Grants**

John Dawes sent a media release (based on the information provided by Denice) about finishing our Melbourne Water grants to Goya Dmytryshchak, journalist for the Maribyrnong & Hobsons Bay Star Weekly.

Melbourne Water appreciates some recognition and publicity (as we do) for the conservation work that's been done along Skeleton Creek.

At the FoSC meeting on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October, John informed us that Goya’s father had passed away that day. John said he had passed on his condolences to Goya.

### **Finalising FoSC Interpretive Signage Design**

We are currently finalising the wording and photos for up to nine interpretive signs to be installed along Skeleton Creek in the Hobsons Bay City Council municipality.

The first six interpretive panels have been funded from the current Hobsons Bay Council’s grant. Alternate funding is to be found for the remaining three panels.

The siting and installation of each panel we’re proposing, in consultation with Andrew Webster (and keeping our local HBCC Wetlands Ward councillors in the loop) are:

- **Panel 1 - Aboriginals caring for Country** [suggested siting – the playground, end of Creek Waters Close, Altona Meadows]
- **Panel 2 - An explosion of reeds** [suggested siting – Emu Foot Grassland, west end of Spicer Blvd, Altona Meadows]
- **Panel 3 - Is Skeleton Creek healthy?** [suggested siting – ‘Denice Perryman Seat’, midway between Selwood Pl and end of Merton St, Altona Meadows]
- **Panel 4 - Locals restoring Skeleton Creek** [suggested siting – FoSC plantings, midway between Clarendon Crt and Point Cook Rd bridge, Seabrook]
- **Panel 5 - Skeleton Creek traffic report** [suggested siting – near the lone seat along the shared path, opposite Featherby Way, Altona Meadows, midway between end of Merton St and Point Cook footbridge and spillway]
- **Panel 6 - Home to remarkable animals** [suggested siting – near the playground, end of Ailsa St and Ayr St, Altona Meadows, midway between Bruce Comben Reserve and Point Cook Rd bridge]

For next grant:

- **Panel 7 - Our saltmarshes are endangered** [suggested siting – near the spillway and Point Cook footbridge, Altona Meadows]
- **Panel 8 - Living with wildlife** [suggested siting – near the ‘vegetation triangle’, end Ascot St, Altona Meadows, western side of Bruce Comben Reserve]
- **Panel 9 - Weeds and introduced pests** [suggested siting – opposite Shane Ave, Seabrook, south-western side of Point Cook Rd bridge]

We received a \$20,000 grant for the signage design and construction, which our local Wetlands Ward councillors Cr Colleen Gates and Cr Carl Marsich put in for us in the Hobsons Bay City Council’s 2016-17 Annual Budget, as part of the Skeleton Creek Trail upgrade.

This is in addition to an important and separate \$2000 design content grant received earlier from HBCC for local flora and fauna expert Bob Winters’ content design (not including his ‘in-kind’ contribution).

Andrew Webster, our HBCC Senior Conservation Ranger, is working through the signage costs and design details with Hayden Goodall of Sardine graphic design studio, in collaboration with Bob Winters.

Patricia Fitzsimons, Strategic Integrated Transport Planner, Hobsons Bay City Council, is overseeing our interpretive signage grant and, following Denice’s request, has given us a two-week extension to complete the work.



## Bat Boxes Up!

By Denice Perryman

We have now put up six microbat boxes (*not four as previously reported in the last newsletter*).

Greg Orr originally came up with the idea to provide homes for our local native microbats. He also meticulously researched and designed and worked with Ian Miller in the making of the bat boxes, along with the colour and stenciling of the boxes.

The cost of making the bat boxes was kindly donated to us by the Altona Lions Club.

The three installers at the Altona Meadows sites on Saturday 10th September were John Dawes, Greg Orr and Matt Nielsen.

Matt, an abseiler, provided his safely harness and ropes. John had his long legs and arms to climb the long ladder and install the boxes.

Greg had thought of everything, having marked out the trees and height earlier, and provided the exact type of nails, fasteners and tools to make the job much easier.

The two installations at Merton St/Markham Way (two boxes on each tree) were quite difficult due to the slope, while the one at Carinza Ave (two boxes on the one tree) on flatter ground was more straight forward.

Well done team!

*Microbats are essential for maintaining healthy ecosystems as they eat huge amounts of insects, including mosquitos, and many of the nasty bugs that harass outdoor gatherings.*



*Greg Orr will monitor how the bats are settling into their new homes. He came up with the idea, meticulously researched and designed and worked with Ian Miller in the making of the bat boxes, along with the colour and stenciling of the boxes.*



*John Dawes had his long legs and arms to climb the long ladder and install the boxes.*



*At a Merton St/Markham Way, Altona Meadows, bat box installation site on 10th September were regular FoSC volunteers (former USA and now Altona residents) Angela & Matt Nielsen and son Ryker, with Denice Perryman and Greg Orr.*

## New Friends of Skeleton Creek Logo Coming!

At our October meeting we finalised our choice of logo, among four draft options that Hayden Goodall of Sardine graphic design studio had sent us. This was easier than expected as we eliminated one, then talked our way through the rest until only one remained.

We came up with some ideas to add and improve the chosen logo, such as a slogan underneath, which were passed on to Hayden by John Dawes, who's leading this project. The new FoSC logo will be used on the new interpretive signs, along with our QR code for our Facebook page. Look out for a brand new FoSC logo in coming weeks!

## Visited our Facebook Community Page?

It works like a community noticeboard. The page's contents are always fresh and up to-date. Our events and photos are regularly posted, as well as late changes and cancellations of events.

To join the Friends of Skeleton Creek Facebook page, go to [www.facebook.com/friendsofskeletoncreek](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofskeletoncreek) and 'like' our page to 'join'. It's that simple!

The page (administered by John Dawes) is also linked to the NatureWest web page, where we also have all our recent newsletters in PDF format:

<http://naturewest.org.au/municipalities/353-hobsons-bay/hobsons-bay-groups/436-friends-of-skeleton-creek-6>

If you haven't taken the plunge yet and you don't have a Facebook account, you can create one in a few easy steps:

1. Go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
2. If you see the sign-up form, fill out your name, email address or phone number, password, birthday and gender. If you don't see the form, click 'Sign Up', then fill out the form.
3. Click 'Sign Up'. Once you sign up, you'll need to confirm your email or phone number.
4. The basic privacy settings and tools then can be looked at - and applied. Follow this link: <https://www.facebook.com/help/325807937506242>

## 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.

You can request the membership form by emailing: [friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com)



## FRIENDS OF SKELETON CREEK

### 2016 CALENDAR

**\*\* Starting and finishing time of activities are 1 pm to 3 pm, unless otherwise advised.**

**Sun 23 Oct** - 'Maintenance Day' at Markham Way/Merton St, Altona Meadows

**Sun 27 Nov** - 'Walk & Talk' starting from St Nicholas Ct, Tarneit

*Note: sometimes we may need to adjust our plans close to the time of each activity. Details of the activities are shown on the earlier pages in this newsletter and on our Facebook page.*

**F**riends 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 is our AGM on Wednesday 2nd November, from 6:30 pm when food will be served. All are welcome.

### 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](mailto:friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com)



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

## Marine and Coastal Act Consultation Paper

### Have your Say

The paper explores Victoria's vision and values for a healthy coastal and marine environment and discusses the strengths of the current system.

Comments and submissions on the Marine and Coastal Act Consultation Paper are now open and will close on Sunday 23 October 2016. Further information at:

<http://haveyoursay.delwp.vic.gov.au/marine-coastal-act>

| Friends of Skeleton Creek Committee   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Secretary   | President  | Vice President / Publicity Officer   |
| Denice Perryman<br><a href="mailto:deniceperryman1@gmail.com">deniceperryman1@gmail.com</a> | Angela Whiffin<br><a href="mailto:angelawhiff@hotmail.com">angelawhiff@hotmail.com</a> | John Dawes<br><a href="mailto:dawesj2@gmail.com">dawesj2@gmail.com</a>             |
| Tel 0429 167 013, 93158072  | Tel 0430 551 631, 93692892   | Tel 0408 663 376   |
| Treasurer   | Postal Address   | Facebook Community Page  |
| Ewen Cowie<br><a href="mailto:de.cowie@bigpond.net.au">de.cowie@bigpond.net.au</a>          | 12 Hopetoun Court<br>Altona Meadows 3028   | Administrator John Dawes   |
| Tel 93158603  | CAV Incorporation No. A0029721P  | Friends of Skeleton Creek Email  |
|   |  | <a href="mailto:friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com">friendsofskeletoncrk@gmail.com</a> |