



*We do what we can,
where we are*

Earthcare News

April - May 2006

**Earthcare Meeting
and
AGM
Thursday
April 20
8.00pm**

**Nominate yourself
or someone else for a
position on the
Earthcare committee**

**There are always
interesting things on
the go in Earthcare
and with many hands
the work load is not
too great.
Nomination form
on page 3**

**Port Phillip
Nature Watch
with Rose Robin
Page 4**

**Beth Gott
DVD
Growing Local
Knowledge
Page 5**

**PENGUIN
SYMPOSIUM
June 11th
11am-5pm
Book early there are
limited spaces.
page 2
Sponsored by
The St Kilda Pier
Kiosk and Restaurant**



EARTHCARE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Jenny Warfe
from
Blue Wedges**

will be talking to us about the latest
developments of
Channel Deepening in Port Phillip Bay

7.30 for 8.00pm

Port Phillip Ecocentre

corner Blessington and Herbert Sts. St Kilda

Thursday April 20

PENGUIN SYMPOSIUM

20 years of
St Kilda Penguin Protection

SUNDAY JUNE 11

11AM-5PM

\$5.00

At The Port Phillip EcoCentre

Items on the agenda will include:



Penguin Vocalisation
Digital Tracking of Penguins
Penguins at the Zoo
DNA sampling of penguins along the Victorian Coast
St Kilda colony Update
Rabbit Island Penguin Colony
Film of the St. Kilda Team at work
Lunch provided

At 6.00pm

those of you who wish to go out to the St Kilda Breakwater and find a penguin or two will be invited afterwards to celebrate in the old time favoured St Kilda team way with snacks chocolate cake and Southern Comfort at the new St Kilda Pier Kiosk

BOOK EARLY, NUMBERS ARE LIMITED

Penguin Symposium Booking Form

Name.....

Address.....
.....

Phone number.....

email.....

I wish to book

people for the Penguin Symposium

I / We, will be going out onto the breakwater and will be attending the Kiosk Celebration.

I enclose \$..... being forpeople at \$5 each

Send to. PO Box 287 Elwood 3184



RAKALI

We are seeing Rakali in good numbers around the breakwater in St Kilda, moderate numbers in the Elwood Canal, none in Albert Park Lake. We will concentrate on the Lake after the Commonwealth Games and Grand Prix have finished. The sightings around the breakwater have been spectacular with one animal lying on its back in the water, like an otter, eating a crab.

Our major project of the year is to make a short film on Rakali suitable for showing to interested groups. So far this project is going well with some footage of a Rakali swimming and diving, and one bringing a fan worm ashore and eating it. We are hopeful of joining the Bayside group when they start trapping them, we should be able to get some great footage then.

If you would like to join us then phone Bob or Alyson on 9531 5001.



Lifetime Achievement Award Victorian Coastal Awards

Zoe Hogg would like to thank all those people who have helped during many years of Earthcare Activities. Without the hours of dedication to Earthcare projects by Earthcare volunteers there is no way she would have achieved this award. Thankyou one and all. It was a great pleasure to work with you and a very proud moment in my life to receive the award.

EARTHCARE COMMITTEE

I would like to nominate

Telephone number.....

For the position of

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- General member

Please return to Earthcare St Kilda Inc
PO Box 287 Elwood 3184
by 19th April 2006



PORT PHILLIP NATURE WATCH

In this report there is a mix of good and bad news regarding wildlife in CoPP. First I will deal with the bad news which involves the Superb Fairy Wrens along the Elwood Foreshore.

It seems that the wrens have almost disappeared. Almost to the end of 2005 I was seeing the wrens and indeed got some of my best photographs of them on 19 December 05. Since the New Year I have not seen them on my regular walks along the foreshore. After hearing of brief glimpses of the birds by Natalie and her Spotless staff working on the foreshore NHA's Neil Blake and I decided to do a blue wren survey of the foreshore from Elwood Life Saving Club to Elwood Canal on the afternoon of 4 April. To our relief we managed to see four birds, two behind Elwood Sailing Club and another two in the dense vegetation at Point Ormond. My favorite group of wrens near Elwood Canal was nowhere to be seen. It is very difficult to determine the cause of the decline, but I suspect predation by Black Rats, of which there are plenty at the moment. I have recently seen Superb Fairy Wrens in other places such as Port Melbourne Foreshore and elsewhere throughout Victoria, so it seems we have a local problem specific to Elwood.

And now some good news. The Tawny Frogmouths in the St Kilda Botanical Gardens are still there, although the two young birds have moved on. The pair of parent birds can still be seen roosting in either a dying elm or high up in a mahogany gum each day.

It is that time of the year when interesting birds migrate through this area in their seasonal movement from one patch of bush land to another. The range of species seems to be much more limited than last year as I have only seen lots of Grey Fantails from the middle of March to early April and a single Rose Robin in the northeast corner of the St Kilda Botanical Gardens on 15 March. Neil Blake has informed me that he has not seen a Rose Robin in the gardens for approximately 12 years, so it was a significant sighting. I managed to get some photos of the bird, which was a young male, not quite in its full colours. According to David Eades, a local bird expert who regularly watches birds in the gardens there have been at least two other Rose Robins visiting the area. He suggested there were at least two more because the birds he saw were juveniles with less colour than the bird in the image I showed him.

I have not had any reports from anyone else over the last two months until today (12 April). I got a call via the Ecocentre from Judy Solomon (Friends of Port Melb. Foreshore), who found and picked up a dead Southern Boobook Owl for identification at Gasworks Park beside a cyclone fence bordering a development site on Sunday 9 April. After a phone discussion with Judy we have assumed that it met its fate by flying into the fence and breaking its neck as the connection between the head and body seemed very wobbly. Judy also reported to me a sighting of a Laughing Kookaburra in Albert Park opposite the Gasworks site in early December 2005. Kookaburras are generally very infrequent visitors to the CoPP.

If you see any interesting wildlife no matter how insignificant they may appear to you, please send in or email me a report. I can be contacted on 9531 2270, or email
amccutcheon@aapt.net.au Andrew McCutcheon

GROWING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

a DVD about

Beth Gott

and her extensive knowledge
of the indigenous flora of Victoria

This DVD was made by Bronwyn Weingott
with a grant from the City of Port Phillip



The DVD is available from the Port Phillip Ecocentre

www.earthcareskilda.org.au

PO Box 287 Elwood 3184

earthcareskilda@mossie.com.au

Have you paid your membership fee yet?