

# SILVERLEAVES CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC.

Reg.no 0015325J

## NEWSLETTER

June 2024



### SCA PLANT STALL



Photo Myra Homes

The SCA plant stall at the Silverleaves store in June was a great success with most of the indigenous plants and grasses going to new gardens around Silverleaves. The plant stall is important in educating people about the importance of planting natives and encouraging biodiversity.

Many thanks to Christine Irvine, Gillian Armstrong, Will Dwyer and Judith Bond for organizing the event and setting up the stall and signs. And thanks to other SCA members who helped on the day.

If you missed the plant stall and would like some Banksias for your garden, there are some still available for \$5.00 each. Send an email to SCA Committee member Gillian Armstrong and she will give details about where and how to pick them up from her place in Silverleaves Avenue. Gillian's email address is [gillian2@aapt.net.au](mailto:gillian2@aapt.net.au)

### SCA COMMITTEE MEETING

The SCA committee met in June to review our strategic plan and discuss strategies to achieve this. We identified a number of important issues and will focus on these top priorities for this year.

The Silverleaves Coastal Processes Study report is due to be released in late July, The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has received the draft report, has provided feedback and should receive the final version soon. DEECA will be in touch in the coming weeks regarding a time for a community engagement meeting where the consultants (FSC Range) will discuss the findings of the study. The meeting details will be emailed to interested parties and advertised on social media for the broader community.

The SCA will seek active engagement with the Silverleaves community about the report findings and implications for the protection of the beach and foreshore. We want to get in touch with as many Silverleaves landowners as we can so that we can actively represent their concerns and views. We will shortly be doing a letterbox drop encouraging people to register their contact emails with us.

We know that many Silverleaves people are very passionate and concerned about the future challenges and threats to our Silverleaves environment. That's why we are reaching out to make sure that we are able to seek people's views and keep them up to date with key developments.

It is a challenging time for the SCA and Silverleaves; there are many ongoing issues ahead and much work to be done. We welcome your suggestions and encourage you to become involved.

## HOW TO JOIN THE SCA

Membership is only \$20 and subscription forms are available via our website.

<http://www.silverleavesca.org>

Make a direct deposit online.  
Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000  
Account 132 984 592.

Please include your name on your transfer for our records, otherwise we cannot identify payments made.

Complete a membership form and email to: The Secretary Silverleaves Conservation Association  
[silverleavesconservation@outlook.com](mailto:silverleavesconservation@outlook.com)

OR mail to The Secretary, Silverleaves Conservation Association  
P.O. Box 9037 Cowes, VIC 3922

The SCA has a Facebook page where you can get updates on activities and events.  
<https://www.facebook.com/silverleavesca>

## DISTINCTIVE AREA LANDSCAPE PROJECT

The SCA submitted a detailed report to the Distinctive Area Landscape Project (DAL) last year which has significant implications for Silverleaves and Rhyll Inlet planning controls. The submission also addressed the key objectives of the DAL such as Climate change mitigation and adaptation, Environment and biodiversity, Landscape, Strategic infrastructure, Settlements, Building height restrictions, Town character and Landscape. We are still waiting to hear the final recommendations

## WHALE SEASON

May to October is the time when Humpback and Southern Right Whales migrate from Antarctica along the Victorian coastline up north to warmer waters off Queensland for calving, before returning south to Antarctica in Spring. They have occasionally been seen off our very own Silverleaves beach over the years.

## SCA WORKING BEE

The SCA had a very successful working bee pulling up sea spurge along the foreshore from Robin Rd beach access track to the end of Silverleaves in March.

Sea spurge is a toxic weed and is very invasive and outcompetes native dune flora. The CSIRO has recently begun trials using a biocontrol fungus at field sites in Tasmania and Victoria which have successfully established and begun to spread. It is hoped over time the fungus will reduce sea spurge density growth and seed dispersal via ocean currents.

<https://www.csiro.au/en/news/all/articles/2024/february/french-fungus-sea-spurge>

### SEA SPURGE



Image source <https://weeds.org.au/profiles/sea-spurge>

## SCA WORKING BEE

**Saturday 13 July 10.00am – 12pm**

**Meet at the Silverleaves Reserve.**

Come and join us, we will be planting and weeding at the Silverleaves reserve, weather dependant! BYO garden gloves.

If it's raining, we will go to Anerie café for a cuppa and a chat. Everyone welcome.

## FLORA AND FAUNA AND FUNGI

During Autumn you may have seen fungi of all shapes and colours. These are the fruiting body of incredible underground structures that remain hidden underground. Some even glow in the dark!

Birds such as Yellow Robins, Flame Robins, Striated Pardalotes, Tree Martins and Marsh Harriers have arrived after flying across the Bass Strait from Tasmania.

## OYSTERS

Historically Western Port had a healthy shellfish ecosystem. In the 1820's the first commercial fishery of oysters began, initially as a source of lime for building before being harvested for consumption in the 1850's. Up to 14,000 oysters were harvested by up to 30 boats every week, until the oysters became scarce by the early 1960's. By the 1970's there were no oyster reefs left.

Scientists from The Nature Conservancy of Australia (TNC) are investigating the potential for shellfish restoration in Western Port Bay including off Silverleaves and other locations. The aim is to restore an important marine ecosystem that will improve water quality and habitat for juvenile fish stocks. A mature angasi oyster can filter a bathtub of water per day and could provide a huge filtering system for Western Port Bay.

If oysters were to be reestablished, reefs would be constructed with a base of tonnes of limestone rocks and /or recycled seafood shells away from shipping channels and other sensitive habitats such as seagrasses. Then thousands of angasi oysters would be added where they would grow and attract other species. It would take about seven years for the reef to become self-sustaining.

Shellfish are being investigated around the world as a way to stop coastal erosion with shallower hybrid reefs reducing wave energy hitting the coastline. Imagine, fresh oysters and no erosion!

## STING RAYS AND BANJO SHARKS

Western Port bay is home to stingrays and banjo sharks. The smooth stingray is occasionally seen in the waters off Silverleaves beach. It is greyish brown with a grey underside. It can have a wingspan of 1 to 2 metres and is one of the largest stingrays in Australia. It is common in shallow waters and in estuaries. Although not aggressive the spine is venomous.

## THE SMOOTH STINGRAY



Image source;  
<https://portphillipmarinelife.net.au/species/10384>

The southern Fiddler ray, commonly known as a banjo shark has a pattern of dark edged bands and is oval shaped with a wingspan of about one metre. Recently a few have been found washed up on the beach at Silverleaves beach.

## THE SOUTHERN FIDDLER RAY OR BANJO SHARK



Image source  
<https://fishesofaustralia.net.au/home/species/1839>

## YOUR SILVERLEAVES GARDEN

Your garden can be a haven for birds and wildlife. Many Silverleaves residents are choosing to plant their gardens with native plants and grasses which grow well in coastal areas, require less water, are easier to maintain and add to the natural neighbourhood character.

Winter is a good time to plant to get as much rain as possible and allow plants to become established over winter and before summer. Even in winter, when you are planting new plants remember that often rain isn't enough, especially in sandy soils such as Silverleaves. Give them a good water over the coming months to make sure the roots don't dry out.

## YOUR NATURE STRIP AT SILVERLEAVES

We remind property owners that your nature strip is land is not privately owned but Council reserve. Check with Council if in doubt about plantings and you may need to get a permit. Nature strips are important as they absorb rainwater and stormwater runoff, provide habitat for birds and insects and should complement the natural setting of the Silverleaves environment. Native shrubs and grasses are a sensible choice as these can be pruned so as not to impede vision or traffic.

### RAPTORS

Phillip Island has several species of Raptors (birds of prey) and Wedge tailed eagles are often seen at Observation point. As well, there are peregrine Falcons, brown falcons, black shouldered kites, Whistling Kite, Swamp Harriers and White breasted sea eagles.

### SWAMP HARRIER



Image source  
<https://australian.museum/learn/animals/birds/swamp-harrier/>

The Swamp Harrier is a large bird of prey with long, thin legs and a long, rounded tail. The species is mostly dark brown, with a distinct white rump. Its face mask resembles the face mask of an owl. In flight, the wings are long and broad, with five 'fingers' on the wing tips.

### RAT POISON CAN KILL RAPTORS

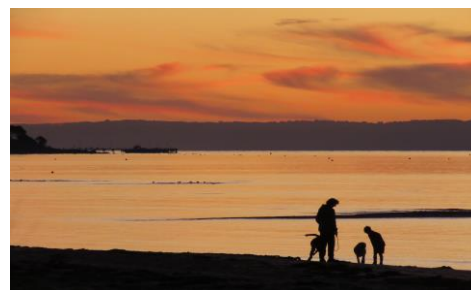
Raptors eat rats and mice and are vulnerable to secondary poisoning from rat poison. These poisons are based on anticoagulants chemicals that kill by promoting uncontrolled internal bleeding.

Older types of anticoagulants, called First Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (FGARs), require rodents to take multiple doses and therefore kill more slowly but have less effect on animals that eat poisoned rodents. More recently developed Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) are a single dose poison and kill rodents more quickly, but more residual poison is ingested by raptors or other predators.

Properly seal your home and shed to restrict entry to rodents and restrict access to any food, put all food in containers especially if you are not often in the house. Rodents have a strong sense of smell and Peppermint, Eucalyptus and Citronella oil are natural repellents, try soaking some onto a cotton ball and place around the house or in your cupboards.

### THE WEATHER

It has been a cold start to winter with very little rain, and the cool clear days have resulted in some wonderful beach sunsets if you have been brave enough to venture out onto the beach at dusk.



Photo; Gillian Armstrong