

VH Coastcare – Chairman’s Report for year ending 31 March 2022

This year has been an improvement on last year with less impact from Covid-19 issues, and only one working bee had to be cancelled.

The final triumph was on the last day of the year when we won the SA Landcare Award for Coastal work. An exciting success reflecting the work of all our members. We now go forward into the National Awards which will be announced in August at the National Landcare Conference.

Work Area Activities

We have worked in a number of different areas:

The Bluff

Work Area 1G We have had six working bees working on the removal of the suckering sheoaks (*casuarina glauca*) from the two copses on the slope behind the Whalers apartments. This has proved to be very difficult on the large trees higher up the slope which constantly reshoot in spite of significant poisoning treatment. Further aggressive poisoning is scheduled for our April working bee after the planned felling of some of the larger trees by Council staff.

The smaller saplings on the lower part of the slope which are easier to treat are showing better signs of permanent control.

Some revegetation is scheduled by the Council for next winter.

Work Areas 1C Nearby on the slope below the first car park we received a \$5,000 Coastal Community Participation Grant from the Coastal Branch of DEW for a contractor to work on similar trees. That allowed for ten days of his work which were spread between October 2021 and March 2022. So far the effect of his work looks excellent but it is too early to properly evaluate any possible regrowth and the long term success.

Boat Ramp

We cut several large acacia cyclops near the Boat Ramp car park and the prunings were collected by a staff member of the Monarto Safari Park for animal feed.

Franklin Parade

Work Area 5 We did some weed control opposite the end of Tabernacle Road with the spraying of gazanias.

The Esplanade

Work Areas 10 and 11 Near the caravan park we had a successful session in August 2021 hand-weeding the bulblike plant *lachenalia bulbifera*. This is the third year that we have worked on this weed in this vicinity, but we think we are winning! This will need follow-up in about August 2022. The poisoning trial started last year seems to have been successful and that type of action may be continued.

In the stretch between King Street and the steps opposite the Hotel Victor, we had several working bees during the hotter months continuing with tamarisk control. There has been quite a lot of regrowth since last year so we are now adopting a more severe strategy on this shrub but once again we know that we are

winning. Currently we have slight concern about storm water management issues which will affect the dunes adjacent to the car park.

In the winter we did some revegetation in the area that had been cleared the previous year and then we watered those plants during the warmer months. Thanks to those members who were on the watering roster. We have also revitalized the dripper system that runs through those dunes from a tap near the market lawn. This has been used when the watering bee volunteers have been working near Bus Stop 3.

Bridge Terrace

Work Area 14 We cut down a large acacia cyclops near the Sea Rescue Squadron mast and the prunings were collected by a staff member of the Monarto Safari Park for animal feed. We also did gazania control in the same vicinity.

Bridge Point

Work Area 16 Many thanks to those members who watered the garden during the summer.

Hindmarsh Estuary Area

Work Area 20 Bus Stop 3. We did hand weeding amongst the natives that we planted near the steps in July 2020 and are pleased to see that they are coming along well. We also did watering of those plants during the summer. Many thanks to all members who were on the watering roster.

Work Area 21 Lagoon Embankment. We did work along the railway line east along from Bus Stop 3, controlling African daisy, polygala and olives. We also hand-weeded the sea statice along the lagoon trail.

Hayborough East dunes

Work Area 40 We planted about 250 plants, which were provided by Landscape SA (Corey Jackson) in the dunes at the end of the Investigator car park, and also did a lot of hand-weeding of euphorbia.

Tom Stephens Reserve

Work Area 39 We worked with the Friends of the Hindmarsh River, helping plant melaleuca helmaturorums (swamp paperbarks) and also in weeding gazanias.

Viewing Platform Nakurami Kondoli at King's Beach

We weeded amongst the native plants which are coming along well alongside the viewing platform.

Other matters

Grant applications

We received two really useful grants during the year.

One was for a *Coastal Community Participation* grant of \$5,000 from the *Coast Protection Board* for support work from a contractor to do control work on the casuarina glaucas on the Bluff.

The other was for \$600 from *Victor Harbor Rotary* which enabled us to buy electric drills and tools for two more full size poisoning kits. These have made life much easier when groups of members are

working in different locations at the same time, on such projects as the casuarina glauca on The Bluff and the tamarisk along The Esplanade.

The South *Coast Environment Centre* also very kindly covered the cost of a pruning saw, and a thermos flask for our morning teas.

Council Liaison

Many thanks to Council staff for their co-operation, especially Kathy Hayter and Heather Mullan whom we welcomed to our meetings for their first times, and also Andrew Comas and Lee Jeffery. All have attended different monthly meetings and helped us with our work. (Ben Cunningham was also very useful but is no longer with the Council.) Site meetings have been held with Council staff to review projects and identify new projects. Council have also been very co-operative with the removal of piles of prunings, and the provision of weed killer.

We have also had several dealings with the Council regarding rubbish, especially on the Tom Stephens Reserve, graffiti in the Hindmarsh Estuary, and shopping trolleys dumped in the River Inman.

In response to the Council's request for community feedback about the Encounter Bikeway we submitted a strong response favouring Option 1 adjacent to the railway, and strongly opposing any plans for putting the bikeway through the Hindmarsh lagoon area and dunes towards Port Elliot. We consider this stretch to be an area of natural environment that should not be spoiled by such intrusions as a bikeway.

We also provided a response to the draft of the Council's Coastal Adaptation Strategy.

Covid-19

During the year the Council adopted a Covid-19 Policy which has made it necessary for us to distinguish between *workers* and *supporters*. Everyone who wants to do hands-on work has to be a *worker* and advise their Covid vaccination status to the Council. In spite of constant chasing, six members still haven't stated their category.

Membership

Regrettably one member resigned during the year because of his objections to the Council's Covid-19 Policy. Our headcount is 43 members.

Web site

Many thanks to Andrew Leak for maintaining this site which can be seen on www.vhcoastcare.org.au.

Publicity

Thanks to Anita Leak for submitting material to The Times, and to Andrew who has maintained the web site and Facebook pages.

Outings

We had two outings during the year.

One was to the Eucalyptus Arboretum at Currency Creek, and the other to the Scrub Savers Openlight bushcare site at Cooina (the old Toc H site) kindly organized by members Gayle Males. Both were educational and enjoyable occasions.

Beach Pole Monitoring

Thanks to Andrew Leak for doing the monthly beach pole readings and sending the figures to the *Coast and Marine Branch of DEW* for use by the *Coast Protection Board*. We have done this job, which started as a weekly reading, since inception in 2002.

Hooded Plovers

Richard Edwards, and David and Sue Thorn must again be commended for their ongoing commitment to the preservation of the hooded plovers and the work they do with fencing, signage and recording when there are eggs in the dunes.

Project Monitoring

Time Sheets for the year show

	This year 2021/22	Last year 2020/21	% change	Previous year 2021/22
Off-site activities	332 hours	312 hours	+1%	453 hours
On-site activities	540 hours	470 hours	+14%	546 hours
Totaling	872 hours	782 hours	+ 11%	999 hours
Hourly rate	\$43.64	\$43.64		\$43.64
Value	\$38,076	\$34,148	+ 11%	\$42,229

Last year had shown quite a reduction in hours due to the Covid restrictions causing the cancellation of meetings and working bees. This year has brought the hours up to the figure two years ago but there has been less off-site time. (Full details at end)

Clean up Australia Day

We participated in this activity again and worked through the same stretch as last year between the River Hindmarsh and the River Inman. Twenty one people participated, including five non-members. Ten bags of rubbish were collected including three bags of recyclables worth \$5.50. Thanks to Nigel Ibbotson for taking it all away.

Education and Training

Our Secretary Barb Francis has kindly given us training sessions on what to do in the event of a snake bite. They provide us with education and amusement.

Social

At the end of the year the Council cancelled the annual thank you event for volunteers, because of the head count limitations imposed by the covid rulings, but instead offered us some money to hold a private function. Loreto Cameron has kindly offered to host an event in May.

Friends of the Hindmarsh River

We have worked twice with the Friends of the Hindmarsh River at working bees on the Tom Stephens Reserve, doing planting and weeding. Sessions like this give a good opportunity for cross pollination between the two groups.

Thanks

So many of our group require thanks!

- Barb Francis as Secretary and for conducting another snake bite bandaging demo.
- Andrew Leak for doing the accounts and maintaining the web site and Facebook. Also for reading the beach poles monthly.
- Anita Leak for publicity activities and for providing morning tea for the Wednesday bees.
- Trevor for still being *Mr Trevorkill!*
- Richard Edwards for looking after the tools, watering at Bridge Point and for working on hooded plover protection.
- Eric Everitt for keeping our tools sharp and for watering at Bridge Point.
- Nigel Ibbotson for his work with his chain saw. Also for the use of his trailer to remove rubbish after the Clean Up Australia Day working bee.
- Derek Conroy for watering at Bridge Point.
- Sam Blight, a professional environmentalist, for her helpful information and advice, and for preparing the grant application.
- All members who came to working bees and who volunteered to be on the watering roster.
- David and Sue Thorn for their work on the hooded plover protection.
- We now have a total of 44 members. Thanks also to members who don't come to any meetings but just support us by paying a sub.

And outside the group we have to thank

- Kathy Hayter for her assistance at a high level in the Council.
- Andrew Comas from the Council for dealing with matters relating to our on-ground activities, such as advice and guidance. Also for providing plants and weed killer.
- Lee Jeffery from the Council for her help with general environmental assistance, and especially for making the submission that was so brilliantly written that we won the SA Landcare Award for Coastal work.
- Heather Mullan for Council administration matters.
- Corey Jackson our Landscape SA (formerly NRM) Coast, Estuarine and Marine Officer for the Fleurieu Peninsula, for providing plants and technical support.

Conclusion

Once again I thank all members of the group for their support and involvement. All our work is based on the team working together and I am grateful to everyone for their participation.

And remember '*If you don't start somewhere, you will never get anywhere*'

Richard House, OAM
31st March 2022

Summary of hours worked for the year

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Off site and admin				
Preparing for meetings. Work re agendas and minutes	49	71	37	45
Attending Victor Harbor Coastcare meetings	164	193	136	188
Attending workshops, studies, courses, presentations etc	53	33	7	18
Schools liaison	0	0		1
Admin, Letters, emails, reporting etc. Grant applications and follow up	51	69	75	54
Lobbying	0	0	11	8
Publicity.	26	87	47	19
Total hours	343	453	312	332
Total value	\$14,470	\$19,139	\$13,638	\$14,488
On site				
Preparing for working bees. Collecting and returning equipment, plants etc.	19	43	54	50
Weeding, pruning, bonfires etc	288	351.5	233	314
Planting	43	34	64	75
Watering	14	71.5	60	62
Planning, construction or maintenance of infrastructure	2	0	10	0
Monitoring sites and follow up work	22	28	31	26
Beach poles	20	18.5	17	14
Total hours	408	546.5	470	541
Total value	\$17,235	\$17,217	\$20,511	\$23,587
Year total hours	750	999.5	783	873
Hourly rate	\$42.25	\$42.25	\$43.64	\$43.64
Year total value	\$31,688	\$49,229	\$34,148	\$38,076
No of members	41	45	44	44
Av hours per member	18.29	21.7	17.8	19.8
Av hours per month	62.5	83.3	65.3	72.7