

VH Coastcare – Chairman’s Report for year ending 31 March 2023

Another busy and really successful year with the most hours ever recorded for the group.

Having won the SA Landcare Award for Coastal work last year we went forward into the National Awards matching up against the other States. I attended the event in Sydney but unfortunately, we didn’t win.

On site Work Area Activities

As always we have worked in a number of different areas:

The Bluff

Work Area 1G We have had four working bees working on the removal of the suckering sheoaks (*casuarina glauca*) from the two copses on the slope behind the Whalers apartments.

The large trees, which we worked on a few years ago, in the copse higher up the slope have proved to be very difficult to kill, but a new strategy with some of the trees being felled by Council staff and then vertically drilled and filled by ourselves, seems to have been effective. We will be repeating the method on more trees in April 2023.

Killing of the smaller saplings in the copse on the lower part of the slope was completed but we have just had to do one session of follow-up.

Work Areas 1C The killing of the suckering sheoaks on the slope below the first car park, which had been dealt with last year by contractor Nick Anderson, showed signs of regrowth, so we paid for him to come back for two days of follow-up work. This area will need ongoing monitoring.

Franklin Parade

Work Area 6 The dune near Kent Reserve suffered severe erosion, so a couple of volunteers relocated some plants that had fallen off the newly created escarpment.

The Esplanade

Work Area 9 In the Inman Lagoon area, we removed some large Acacia Cyclops which were collected by Kris Katona from the Monarto Safari Park for animal feed.

On the dunes near the Inman River mouth, we planted 500 plants which had been provided by Landscape SA to replace sea wheat grass, as part of the beach restoration project for the hooded plover project. The success is dubious. Sea wheat grass is becoming prolific along the Victor Harbor coastline.

Work Areas 10 and 11 Opposite about Number 50 The Esplanade, we repeated hand-weeding of the bulblike plant *lachenalia bulbifera*. This is the fourth year that we have worked on this weed in this vicinity, and every year we think we are winning! We are getting much better at being thorough.

We had a special extra working bee to remove the tree guards that were around new plants in between the King Street roundabout and the G S Reid Reserve. We are not happy with the results of the Council trials with two new types of guard. The ones that look like cardboard get distorted when they are wet, and the ones that proudly display that they are not plastic, split in strong wind.

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. We have dealt with considerable regrowth.

The Council's new storm water management system damaged an area of dune by the car park. We did planting and then set up an irrigation system. The Council provided the main hosing from the tap to the relevant area and Bob Jeffery kindly provided joints and drippers. The system waters last year's plants as well as this year's plants. Members were rostered to run the system weekly, and the plants are growing well. However we have had problems with rabbits or rats chewing through the hose.

Many thanks to those members who were on the dripper watering roster.

Bridge Terrace

Work Area 14 We had a bee when a huge amount of the weed pigface was dug up from the dune that is between the Yacht Club car park and the beach. Then later we revegetated this site and had members rostered to water the new plants in the summer, using the Council's water cart. It was here that we first trialed the "I'm not plastic" tree guards.

Many thanks to those members who were on the water cart watering roster.

We also removed gazanias from the lawn area that is between the car park and the road.

Bridge Point

Work Area 16 We had two gardening bees for weeding and also an extra bee for spreading bark chips. Many thanks to those members who watered the garden during the summer.

Hindmarsh Estuary Area

Work Area 20 and others We had two working bees to prune the overhanging vegetation along all the tracks around the lagoon down to the beach and along to the Hayward Court steps.

Hayborough East dunes

Work Area 40 In the area beyond the end of the Investigator car park, we planted some plants that had been left over from the revegetation project at the end of the new causeway. We also did extensive hand weeding of euphorbia.

It's worth noting that while we were having morning tea the Victor Harbor Station Master came and reminded us that Steam Ranger should be advised if we were working within the 4 metres of the railway corridor, or nearby.

Tom Stephens Reserve

Work Area 39 Four members of the Friends of the Hindmarsh River joined us, helping with the weeding of gazanias and watsonia.

Once again there has been a problem with youths building camps and cutting down trees to create forts.

Viewing Platform Nakurami Kondoli at King's Beach

This area which is supposed to be looked after by the Council has been very neglected. Some volunteers did some weeding and Council did a minimal job, but the area really is not being looked after properly.

Other matters

Grant applications

We have submitted an application for a *Community Participation Grant* from the Coast and Marine Branch of DEW, for implementing *CoastSnap* which is a system for recording coastal movements by use of fixed point time lapse photographs. This has been strongly supported by Council because of the erosion occurring along the coast, and many thanks are owed to Geoff Cope for putting in many hours on this project together with Council member Bronson Symmonds.

Membership

Four new members joined during the year and our headcount is now 46 members.

We have introduced the role of *Membership Officer* into our structure. This person is responsible for registering new members and ensuring that all Council requirements for community volunteers are satisfied. Thanks to Loreto Cameron for taking on this role. It was one less duty for me as Chairman.

Publicity

Anita Leak has had great success in submitting material to The Times and Fleurieu Sun, and has also had other publicity ideas.

For one month, we had a publicity display in the window of the Council foyer next to the entrance to the library. Many thanks go to Anita and Loreto Cameron for setting this up. Anita has now also designed a new publicity 'poster' for public display using ideas that she and Loreto gained at a recent workshop..

I gave my talk *Your Dunes My Dunes* to Zonta, Victor Harbor, and at the Coastal Forum at Marion Bay.

Web site, Facebook and Instagram

Many thanks to Andrew Leak for maintaining the web site and Facebook, and to Geoff Cope for looking after Instagram.

Coastal Forum

Andrew and Anita Leak, Loreto Cameron and I attended the SA Coastal Society's *Coastal Forum* in Marion Bay. I presented my talk *Your Dunes My Dunes* which was tailored for the event, and was well received. It was a great opportunity to meet people from other groups and organisations, and to learn from their experiences. There was also an interesting field trip. It was this forum, which was also attended by Bronson Symmonds from the Council, that led to the idea of us applying for the *CoastSnap* grant.

Beach Pole Monitoring

Thanks to Geoff Cope 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 and Penguins

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. We donated \$100 for some fencing near the Yacht Club, and did dune revegetation near the mouth of the River Inman – as mentioned earlier.

Other members - Anita and Andrew Leak, and Jan Priddle and Christina Michell - are also amongst the volunteers counting penguins on Granite Island.

Seeds for Snapper

Some of our members participated in this *OzFish* project for re-establishing sea grass in deprived parts of the seabed. This is just one step in the need to control beach and dune damage caused by strong waves during storms. Seeds were collected and inserted into sand bags, which were then dropped into the sea at designated sites.

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 people participated, including three children. Nine bags of rubbish were collected including two bags of recyclables worth \$6.00. Unusual items included a sofa and a pallet. Thanks to Loreto Cameron for coordinating the event and to Derek Conroy for taking all the rubbish up to the Council collection point.

Education and Training

Our Secretary Barb Francis has kindly repeated her training session on what to do in the event of a snake bite, or serious wound. She also did some new training to deal with an asthma emergency. Thanks Barb.

Loreto Cameron went to a Trees for Life bushcare training workshop. It was gratifying that she could report back that we are following all the accepted practices for maintenance and control of plants.

Council Liaison

Many thanks to Council staff for their co-operation, especially Andrew Comas and Lee Jeffery. Bronson Symmonds has also been such a strong supporter with his interest in the CoastSnapp project and his work with Geoff Cope. Mayor Moira Jenkins, Kathy Hayter and Heather Mullan have also been strong supporters. Council have also been very co-operative in meeting us for site meetings when we see particular issues. In addition they have helped with the removal of piles of prunings, provision of the water cart and irrigation supplies, the provision of weed killer, and other advice and guidance.

Once again, we have had to report rubbish for collection on the Tom Stephens Reserve.

In response to the Council's request for community feedback, members have commented on the draft of the *Bluff Master Plan*, and attended a workshop on the *Biodiversity and Natural Assets Management Plan*. The *Bluff Master plan* had particularly strong support.

The Mark Taplin marina proposals

A new issue that we now have to address is the proposal by Mark Taplin to build a marina opposite the Whalers Apartments. This seems to be a pie in the sky proposal which includes several environmental concerns. It is fraught with danger and members must address this matter with close attention over the

coming months. It could cause serious erosion along the length of the nearby beach - a length which is already under severe stress.

Social

Loreto Cameron kindly hosted a *Volunteers Thank You* event, which was sponsored by the Council, at her house.

Barb Francis and husband Colin generously let us have a Christmas break-up party at their house. Mayor Moira Jenkins kindly attended.

Friends of the Hindmarsh River and Inman River

We have worked again with the Friends of the Hindmarsh River, weeding on the Tom Stephens Reserve. Sessions like this give us the chance to match experiences.

When an attempt was made by other volunteers from the community to start a Friends of the Inman River group, it was very disappointing that the Council declared that they did not have the resources to support a new group. By coincidence, and ironically, there was an article in the Fleurieu Sun, the very same week, claiming that the Council was looking for volunteers.

Project Monitoring

Time Sheets for the year show

	This year 2022/23	Last year 2021/22	% change	Previous year 2020/21
Off-site activities	592 hours	332 hours	+78%	312 hours
On-site activities	578 hours	540 hours	+ 7%	470 hours
Totalling	1170 hours	872 hours	+34%	782 hours
Hourly rate	\$46.62	\$43.64		\$43.64
Value	\$54,545	\$38,076	+43%	\$34,148

The figures show a marked increase on previous years. The on-site hours reflect the hands-on work which has increased by 7%. The off-site hours are large because of the time that members have spent at conferences and workshops. (Full details at end)

Thanks

So many of our members require thanks!

- Barb Francis as Secretary and also for conducting other First Aid demos.
- Andrew Leak for doing the accounts and maintaining the web site and Facebook.
- Anita Leak for publicity activities and for providing morning tea for the Wednesday bees.
- Trevor Brand for still being *Mr Trevorkill!*
- Richard Edwards for looking after the tools, watering at Bridge Point and for working on hooded plover protection. He is also a great walk-about beach monitor and sometimes identifies weeds in unexpected places.
- Eric Everitt for keeping our tools sharp and for watering at Bridge Point.
- Derek Conroy for watering at Bridge Point, and for removing all our Clean Up Australia Day rubbish.
- Sam Blight, a professional environmentalist, for her helpful information and advice.

- Geoff Cope, whose business expertise and interest has been so useful for taking on the responsibility of working on the grant application for implementing *CoastSnap*. Thank you so much Geoff. Also thanks for reading the beach poles monthly.
- David and Sue Thorn for their work on the hooded plover protection.
- A special mention for Sue Robertson and Jen Priddle, who have only joined during last year but have shown such an interest in what we do, and become such active participants.
- All members who came to working bees and who volunteered to be on the watering rosters.
- Members who don't come to any meetings but just support us by paying a sub.
- And, last but by no means least, a very special thank you to Loreto Cameron who has stepped into the breach, and taken over so many of my duties since I was diagnosed as having cancer, and having chemo once a week. Thank you so much Loreto.

And outside the group we have to thank several Council staff:

- Mayor, Moira Jenkins, for her attendance at events and being such a strong supporter.
- Kathy Hayter, for her assistance at a high level in the Council.
- Andrew Comas, for dealing with matters relating to our on-ground activities, such as advice and guidance. Also for providing plants, weed killer and watering equipment..
- Lee Jeffery, 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.
- Bronson Symmonds, for working with Geoff Cope on the *CoastSnap* project.
- Heather Mullan, for Council administration matters.

Thanks are also due to;

- Corey Jackson, our Landscape SA 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.

I have now written these reports for twenty years, so look forward to having a rest!

When combining my work with Victor Harbor Coastcare together with work I have done for the Burnside Historical Society, I have held responsible Executive positions in volunteer groups for forty years! Quo Vadis – what next!

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

Richard House, OAM
31st March 2023

Summary of hours worked for the year

	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Off site and admin				
Preparing for meetings. Work re agendas and minutes	71	37	45	58.5
Attending Victor Harbor Coastcare meetings	193	136	188	218
Attending workshops, studies, courses, presentations etc	33	7	18	158.5
Schools liaison	0		1	0
Admin, Letters, emails, reporting etc. Grant applications and follow up	69	75	54	91
Lobbying	0	11	8	0
Publicity.	87	47	19	66
Total hours	453	312	332	592
Total value	\$19,139	\$13,638	\$14,488	\$27,599
On site				
Preparing for working bees. Collecting and returning equipment, plants etc.	43	54	50	59
Weeding, pruning, bonfires etc	351.5	233	314	327
Planting	34	64	75	83
Watering	71.5	60	62	77
Planning, construction or maintenance of infrastructure	0	10	0	0
Monitoring sites and follow up work	28	31	26	22.5
Beach poles	18.5	17	14	10
Total hours	546.5	470	541	578
Total value	\$17,217	\$20,511	\$23,587	\$26,946
Year total hours	999.5	783	873	1170
Hourly rate	\$42.25	\$43.64	\$43.64	\$46.62
Year total value	\$49,229	\$34,148	\$38,076	\$54,545
No of members	45	44	44	46
Av hours per member	21.7	17.8	19.8	25.4
Av hours per month	83.3	65.3	72.7	97.5