



Tjuringa

Frankston City's Environment News
Autumn Edition 2004

FIRE...Seaford Wetlands

"The ground was hot; we were covered in ash, exhausted and our shoes were almost melting," said Andrea Collins, assistant Park Ranger of her experience fighting the fire at Seaford Wetlands in January.

The fire, suspected to have been started by youths playing with fireworks began mid afternoon, Monday, 5 January. Smoke enclosed neighbouring houses and flames licked the sky. At 10:30pm the fire was contained.

It had taken up to one hundred people, mostly from the Country Fire Authority (CFA), numerous fire trucks and an Eriksson air crane, to get the fire under control.

The helicopter, capable of dumping 1500 litres of water per bucket load was cheered by the crowd of onlookers as it arrived. Its great flushes of water coupled with the earth break pushed up by a Frankston City Council grader assisted the workers in putting out the fire.



Days later the fire continued to smoulder deep in the peat, intermittently flaring up.

The CFA, Melbourne Water and Council staff worked on through the following days and nights hosing down hot areas, digging and raking

areas and using infrared cameras to detect hot spots.

Thankyou to all the staff and volunteers, who put in such a terrific effort to control this persistent fire at Seaford Wetlands.

The fire forged a great working partnership between Council and the CFA!

It was observed by park staff that the fire had actually improved the park.

Usually, Frankston City Council undertakes a controlled burning every three years to clear the park of weeds. However this year the fire took care of this; so controlled burning will not be necessary for another three years now.



'Make Frankston City Shine'

On Sunday, 7 March 2004, Australians from all walks of life will be making our country shine by removing rubbish.

Clean ups are being held by many volunteers at our parks and beaches in Frankston City this year. It would be fantastic to see you there. Make sure you bring gloves, hat and sunscreen on the day.

If you would like to volunteer to help on the day, contact Alison Winn, Frankston City Council's Environment Education Officer on 9784 1768.

Environmental Seminar Series

Bookings essential on 9784 1888.



Creating Frog Habitat

Date: Saturday, 20 March
Time: 10:00am-11:30am
Venue: McClelland Gallery, McClelland Drive, Langwarrin

Join the Amphibian Research Centre in learning how to set up a backyard frog habitat and identify frog calls, local to your area.



Know Your Native Trees

Date: Saturday, 3 April
Time: 9:30am-4:00pm
Venue: Langwarrin Community Centre, 2 Lang Rd, Langwarrin, then selected field locations

Learn how to use various geographical features to help you identify tree species.



Waste and Recycling in the Home

Date: Wednesday, 12 May
Time: 6:30pm-8:30pm
Venue: Seaford Community Hall, corner Station and Broughton Streets, Seaford

Learn how to shop environmentally, compost, worm farm and save money on waste in the home.

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Greywater Use

Frankston City Council recently hosted an environmental seminar on Greywater Use. Presented by Wendy van Dok, a well known landscape designer, this important seminar explored the issues of household greywater use.

What is greywater?

Greywater is treated or untreated domestic wastewater that consists of all non-toilet wastewater. It includes wastewater from showers, baths, spas, hand basins, washing machines, laundry troughs, dishwashers and kitchen sinks.

Why use greywater?

During times of drought and water restrictions, many people are looking for more innovative ways to reduce their water use and become more water efficient. In addition, a number of products are now on the market that enable access

to greywater from domestic plumbing situations. Many of these products are designed for immediate greywater use.

Can I divert my household greywater to my garden?

Residents wanting to directly divert untreated greywater for irrigation of their garden are able to do so, provided that a number of requirements are addressed prior to use. These requirements can be obtained through EPA Victoria (in particular, EPA Publication 812) by phoning 9695 2722 or visiting EPA's Web site at www.epa.vic.gov.au

Can I store my household greywater for later use?

In some cases, residents may wish to store greywater for later use. In this case, treatment is required.

Any household wastewater system that treats household waste is classified as a septic tank system and needs approval from EPA, and the issue of a Frankston City Council septic tank permit prior to installation.

A list of EPA approved greywater treatment systems can also be viewed on EPA's Web site.

What are my responsibilities?

Management of health and environmental risks as well as legal liabilities to the householder are described in EPA Publication 812. Frankston City Council urges residents to read this document prior to using their greywater.

For further information on greywater use and your responsibilities, contact Frankston City Council's Environmental Health Unit on 9784 1888 or visit the Web site www.frankston.vic.gov.au

War on Weeds

Mirror Bush is a multi-stemmed shrub or small tree that grows up to 8m in height and produces a large quantity of seeds. It is characterised by glossy dark green leaves and masses of orange-red berries. Mirror bush tends to germinate in disturbed areas of light shade.

The seeds of the Mirror Bush are delicious to birds, and this assists the spread of the plant into our bushland reserves. Therefore the most effective way of controlling this plant is to remove it completely from your backyard gardens.

Mirror Bush *Coprosma repens*

Once removed, replace the plant with a hardy Australian shrub like *Myoporum insulare* - *Boobialla*.

Control methods

Hand-pulling: Small plants can be hand removed.

Cut and paste: Cut the stem of the plant as close to the ground as possible and apply an appropriate herbicide with an applicator. You have 10 seconds to apply the herbicide after you have cut the stump. If the plant resprouts, repeat the treatment. Large specimens of Mirror Bush are hard to kill.

(Please contact your local nursery for appropriate herbicide and safety directions).

For more information on identifying and controlling weeds on your property, contact Frankston City Council's Coastal and Vegetation Officer on 9784 1882.



Subscriptions/Further Information

If you would like more information on an article, or would like to include an article, promote an event, or subscribe to *Tjuringa*, Frankston City Council's Environment News please contact: Frankston City Council, Environment Team, PO Box 490, Frankston Vic 3199 environment@frankston.vic.gov.au

Ph: 03 9784 1888 Fax: 03 9781 3117 Contributions for the Winter Edition of *Tjuringa* must be received by Friday, 23 April 2004.

The newsletter is also available on Council's Web site in PDF format. Visit www.frankston.vic.gov.au for more information.

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Open Day at Frankston City's Community Nursery

Get your free indigenous plant!

When: Saturday, 22 May

Time: 10:00am-3:00pm

Where: Frankston City's Community Nursery, Council Depot (enter through McCulloch Ave, Seaford).

Come along and visit Frankston City's Community Nursery which is well supported by volunteers. It showcases a vast collection of affordable indigenous plant species; many of which have been grown from local seeds. Peruse the tank fed watering system. Learn about local weeds and water saving plants.

Don't miss out on the indigenous plant give aways and welcome BBQ.



Plastic Bags – No thanks!

Reducing plastic bag litter has long been on the environmental agenda.

In March 2002, the Irish Government led the way by placing a 15 eurocent (25c) levy on all plastic check-out bags. Consequently plastic bags used across the country dropped by 90 per cent. Australian companies such as IKEA and Bunnings have followed suit by placing 10 cent levies on their plastic bags or completely switching from plastic bags to paper bags.

Coles Bay in Tasmania has banned plastic check-out bags all together. In April, 2003 all retail outlets, including supermarkets, agreed to stop selling plastic bags, and instead offered customers paper bag (25c) and calico bag (\$2) alternatives.

This plastic bag free campaign which was initially led by the local baker and Planet Ark has had a fantastic effect on the already popular tourist town, boosting business and community spirit.

Coles Bay challenges the rest of Australia to take such a stand.

Do you think a shopping precinct in Frankston City could become plastic bag free?

If you have an opinion on this, write to Alison Winn, Council's newly appointed Environmental Education Officer at Alison.Winn@frankston.vic.gov.au



Frankston Sea Festival on the Bay

Saturday 17 to Sunday 18 January 2004

A great time was had by all at Frankston's Sea Festival on the Bay. Hundreds of people visited our environmental marquee.

After they were lured in by Fish Care's pretty sea horse tanks, the Gould League kept interest up with touch tanks featuring live displays of jellyfish, lungfish and crayfish. And you could really touch them all!

Mark Rodrigue of Parks Victoria spoke on the rich diversity of Victoria's marine ecology. Alex Edward of Coast Action shared scary fish stories with hordes of children who joined him and his volunteers in the beach cubby.

The kayaking adventures up Kananook Creek with the Frankston City Council's environment team were so



Frankston City Council's new Environment Education Officer, Alison Winn kayaks up Kananook Creek with a local resident.

popular that many people had to be turned away.

Thankyou to all the volunteers who helped on the weekend. Frankston Environmental Friends Network was well represented by Glenn Firth, Kathleen Hassell, Sheree Kras, Francis Garner, Virginia Brook and Olwen Bawden who all did a fantastic job assisting in the environmental marquee. Councillor Barry

Priestley and Helen Priestley also lent a hand.

"Bluey", the Butt Outs character (nearly killed me wearing that suit) won the hearts of many children, and smokers flocked to the marquee to collect their free personal ashtrays.

It was a great weekend, blessed with good food and wine, and a perfect venue by the sea.

Clean Beach Challenge

Frankston City Council has registered with Victoria's Clean Beach Challenge.



The Clean Beach Challenge is a fun, competitive awards program to help keep Victoria's beaches litter free, and to encourage local government and their communities to work together.

There are awards for everyone; including the Friendly Beach Award, the Litter Prevention Award and the Young Legends Award.

The more awards our municipality wins the greater chance we have for the overriding award, which is Victoria's Cleanest Beach award.

Application kits have been sent to all friends groups, life saving clubs, yacht clubs and schools in Frankston City. Local businesses can also apply.

We encourage everyone to get involved. Council will cover your entry fee if your group lies within Frankston City.

Make sure you get your application in by mid June.

Remember, the awards are mostly about communities working together and don't have to be primarily about beach conservation.

For more information on the award scheme visit www.keeppaustraliabeautiful.org.au or contact Alison Winn on 9784 1768.



It is estimated that up to 350,000 cigarette butts per day end up in Port Phillip Bay.

Cigarette butts are like toxic capsules; they contain chemicals such as cyanide, a deadly poison and naphthalene, an ingredient in mothballs.

Marine creatures mistake them for food and they can block the digestive canals of fish, birds and whales.

The problem has become so serious that Frankston City Council recently joined with Queenscliff, Geelong, Bayside, Kingston and Mornington Peninsula Councils to launch a major campaign called "Bin it or Swim in it".

This was all about reducing cigarette litter on our beaches and focused on an interesting butt shaped personal ashtray.

The campaign was a huge success and gained wide scale media coverage.

At Frankston's Sea Festival on the Bay, smokers flocked to the environmental marquee to pick up their free personal ashtray. Personal ashtrays were also distributed through our youth resource centres, the Frankston Life Saving Club, retail centres in the CAD and at all Council customer service centres.

The campaign encourages positive behavioural change in people who litter and the response by local smokers has been excellent!

Friends Group

Time/Date/Place

Contact

Action Sweetwater Creek	10:00am, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.	Warwick Exton 9783 7735
Baden Powell Park Project	9:30am-1:30am, Tuesdays, from 2 March; 2:00pm to 4:00pm, second Sunday from 14 March; revegetation work at Baden Powell Park.	Anne Scholes 9787 7228
Frankston Beach Association	10:00am-12:30pm, Wednesdays, Frankston foreshore kiosk.	Kathleen Hassell 9783 1391
Frankston Indigenous Nursery	10:00am-12 noon, Thursdays, plant propagation, Community Nursery.	Kaye Proudley 9580 3341
Friends of Belvedere Bushland Reserve	9:30am-11:30am, second Sunday of each month.	Dianne Durrant 9785 1762
Friends of Edithvale Seaford Wetlands	10:00am-12 noon, first Sunday of each month.	Barry Ross 9786 6687
Friends of Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve	1:00pm, first Sunday of each month, main entrance, Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve.	Leon Costermans 9783 5015
Friends of Seaford Foreshore	10:00am, third Sunday of each month, pier carpark.	Glenn Firth 9773 5555
Kananook Creek Association Inc.	9:00am, first Sunday of each month, working bee. 9:00am, Wednesdays, 10:00am-12 noon Mondays, plant propagation, Community Nursery.	Minio Rossetto 9783 994

Get Active and Have Fun



Get active and have fun by joining one of Frankston City Council's Environmental Friends groups. Just come along to a working bee in a reserve near you.

Choose a group from the list above or contact Jenny Hall, Council's Coastal and Vegetation Officer on 9784 1882 for more information.

Environmental Events Calendar

March

- 2 Clean Up Business Day
- 5 Schools Clean Up Day
- 7 Clean Up Australia Day*
- 20 Creating Frog Habitat seminar*

April

- 3 Know your native trees seminar*

May

- 12 Waste and recycling in the home seminar*

June

- 5 World Environment Day
- 10 How to save on your energy bills*
- Clean Beach Challenge applications due*



* Indicates a Frankston City Council community event or planned activity on the day.

