



NESTING SEASON AT ALFRED COVE

Margaret Matassa thought you would be as pleased as she was to see that our totem bird, the Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), which was seen nesting in the samphire at Alfred Cove, appears to have been successful.

The young Black-winged Stilt (on the left) is happily feeding alongside a trans-equatorial Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*). You might be able to pick up the grey on the stilt's head and the dark eye patch, which signifies an immature bird. The photo also shows a nesting Black-winged Stilt nearby on the extreme right. Is this the same mother being opportunistic with the wetter November?

Margaret also found the nest of the Buff-banded Rail, which we had been carefully observing, now empty - so we hope she was successful too.



Wading birds on the samphire flats at Alfred Cove
Photo: courtesy Margaret Matassa.

NEW WEBSITE

Thanks to the creative efforts of Murdoch University student, Bernard Yahuda, SERAG Inc. has a wonderful new website: www.swanestuaryreserves.org.au.

It is well-designed and easy to navigate; so we hope the site will prove both informative and useful to our membership and the wider community.

Thank you Bernard for your patience and many hours of hard work.



Bernard Yahuda

GLYDE-IN PRESENTATION

Mudflats and Musk Ducks proved a popular morning's *Out 'n About* course at the Glyde-In Community Learning Centre's spring program. Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed listening to Professor Robert Harvey's personal observations about the Estuary: its colourful character, its vegetation and wildlife, a little of its history, and how local people are now involved in caring for it.

Following Robert's talk, participants travelled to the foreshore where a delicious morning tea was served under the trees and guided tour of Alfred Cove A-Class Reserve conducted. Restoration efforts were illustrated and future plans outlined - including the plan to install a small viewing platform to replace a park bench - made possible by a *Coastwest* Grant.

The support provided to SERAG Inc. by all grant providers, its membership and other community groups and volunteers was gratefully acknowledged.

GROVE LIBRARY DISPLAY

For the last couple of weeks of November, our travelling display was hosted by the new Grove Library in Cottesloe.

The display aims to raise the awareness of the wider community to the importance of the three A-Class Reserves in the Swan River, the challenges they face and the efforts of SERAG Inc. (in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Conservation) to restore their ecological integrity.



SERAG Inc. display at the Grove Library
Photo: courtesy Jane Leahy-Kane

In total, five public libraries and one shopping centre have been used as venues this year.

SKY-SHOW AT MILYU

Often when we have been engrossed in restoration efforts at Milyu A-Class Reserve, we have been delighted by spectacular shows of acrobatic strength and agility by the local Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*).

Pandion is the name of a mythical king of Athens and grandfather of Theseus, who was transformed into an eagle.

Osprey are medium-sized fish-eating raptors. A principal habitat requirement is the presence of good supplies of live fish - which they do not swallow whole, but rip apart to eat - obtainable near the surface of clear, unpolluted waterways.

Usually mating for life, Osprey generally stay in one location, returning to the same nest year after year. Nests are found high places - rocky outcrops, in forks of old trees, on telephone poles - and are made from sticks or driftwood lined with seaweed.

Unfortunately, Osprey face a number of threats: they may become entangled in discarded fishing tackle and drown; their prey may be contaminated by pesticides, and the removal of large trees near the river and increased disturbance disrupts their breeding.



Osprey with cobbler
Photo: courtesy Tyron Miley

A GOOD SEASON FOR WEEDS TOO!



Volunteers weeding
Photo: courtesy Margaret Matassa

The return of good winter and spring rains has not only been beneficial for the thousands of seedlings we have planted in the course of the year across the three Reserves, but unfortunately it has also been a terrific boost to weeds!

Volunteers have hand-weeded extensive areas of foreshore, removing hundreds of bags of weeds - as indicated on this photo taken along Burke Drive.

The weeds targeted have been many and varied, and have included castor oil seedlings, thistle, wild radish, flea-bane, fennel, asparagus fern and fumaria.

Many thanks to all who have assisted.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A well-attended Annual General Meeting provided an opportunity to review the outcomes of a very busy year, to acknowledge the wonderful work done by our members and friends in 2011 and to discuss plans for the future.

A motion was passed to adjust SERAG Inc.'s membership fee structure, allowing for three- and five-year memberships as well as the yearly one. By becoming a member, a person is expressing support for our objectives, and thereby strengthening our capacity to attract vital funding for restoration work at Milyu, Pelican Point and Alfred Cove A-Class Reserves - so your continued membership in the years to come will be greatly appreciated. Joining SERAG Inc. does not necessarily involve any commitment of time - participation in our various projects and activities is always warmly welcomed, but entirely voluntary.

SERAG Inc.'s Management Committee was re-elected for 2012, and at the first committee meeting after the AGM it was decided that the roles allocated to each committee member will also remain the same:

Chairperson: Catherine O'Neill; **Deputy Chairperson:** Robert Harvey; **Secretary:** Jane Leahy-Kane; **Treasurer:** Colin Heinzman, and **Volunteer Coordinator:** Margaret Matassa.



FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

- **Wednesday 7th December**—Planting at Alfred Cove
 - **Friday 9th December**—Planting at Alfred Cove
 - **Saturday 10th December**—Planting at Alfred Cove
- (Please contact us for details if you would like to participate.)
- **January 2011**—Membership Fees due!



The SERAG Inc. Committee extends
warm *Season's Greetings* to all.



Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc.

PO Box 73 North Fremantle WA 6159

Phone: 08 9339 2439

Email: oneillc@westnet.com.au