



PORT PHILLIP EcoCentre

Annual Report 2010-2011



loving life with



local nature

Local ACTION global FUTURE

Mission

To work with the community to improve and protect the natural environment and ensure good living for future generations.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide access to current technical expertise to maintain and improve the environment.
- To influence decision-making in all sectors of society to maintain and improve the environment.
- To educate our community to avoid waste of water, energy and resources by demonstrating practical examples.
- To provide an accessible community place which strengthens capacity within the wider Port Phillip region to maintain and improve the environment.
- To enable a mutually beneficial community network to maintain and improve the environment.

The Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc is a not-for-profit environment organisation that is a resource for groups, individuals and businesses in the City of Port Phillip and its wider region. The EcoCentre is located in the St Kilda Botanical Gardens on the corner of Blessington and Herbert Streets.

Authors: Andrea Eales, April Seymore, Elaine Wilkinson, Julia Muniandy, Neil Blake, Patrick Brazenor, Paula Havelberg, Tony Flude,

Design & layout: Neil Blake

Photographers: Andrew McCutcheon, April Seymore, Bill McKenzie, Neil Blake

President's Report



This year, a Sustainability Victoria grant has enabled the centre to be open on weekends, providing greater access and the ability to expand on the range of informative and enjoyable activities available, such as; regular 'enviro' workshops, the EcoMarket (set to return in spring!) and family entertainment. All of what's going on is well promoted in local publications and in the regular EcoCentre e-newsletter.

Regular garden maintenance continues all year: staff and volunteers manage the compost and renourish the garden beds. Planning and decisions are required on what to sow for the next harvest. The apples and the grape vines are pruned, the cumquats picked and preserved, weeds removed and other garden tasks taken care of by all involved.

These activities bring diverse people to share our space and make new social connections at the same time: a healthy and attractive place for the whole community. We really are blessed to have this resource in our neighbourhood.

Indoors, the house is abuzz with activity too as a small multi-tasking team plans, delivers and monitors our programs, updates the website, writes funding submissions and project reports, fields phone enquiries, and welcomes visitors with a smile. Partnerships are maintained and new networks are forged between local community groups and businesses. With limited resources, planning and prioritising is the key to keeping the venue a vital and successful community and environmental asset.

While volunteers are always welcome there's also plenty of scope for innovation and creativity as expressions of interest are invited to introduce new projects. The following successful projects provide some examples: the Soul Dolls series of workshops – craft using recycled materials, designed to guide

and inspire people to expand their imagination and develop creative methods for expression; the school holiday program also invites families to take part in a range of guided, creative activities.

Djambana, (formerly The Gathering) community choir, continues to impress the community with its melodies and harmonies reaching the hearts of the listeners and encouraging everyone to join in and keep well and connected through song.

Activities around 'fresh affordable food' have struck a chord with many and diverse community members contributing to and attending the Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network events. The 'bulk buy' organic food boxes each Saturday present healthy and convenient solutions for the community. They take the guess work out of what is seasonal at an affordable price and provide real freshness. Bread and cheese-making workshops have provided the 'know how' for healthy food preparation and the new stove takes the guesswork out of cooking!

While providing all these opportunities for people to adopt sustainable living we also play an important information and advocacy role in the community and are often called upon by local media to comment on environmental issues of the day. This responsibility is not borne lightly and many hours of research are devoted to understanding our local ecosystems, particularly though the Port Phillip Baykeeper program.

Community environment groups have also enjoyed using the space to hatch ideas and plan projects, mapping and measuring the things that really matter for overall wellbeing of the community. We've enjoyed another productive year of collaboration with the CoPP Community Pulse Project Officer, Alicia Hooper.

This time of year is an opportunity to acknowledge and thank everyone for their contributions throughout the year. The management committee keeps all eyes on the strategic goals and provides support to the team of employees and volunteers. We value and thank all partners, sponsors, members and supporters and wish to make a special thank you, to the City of Port Phillip for their ongoing support and recognition.

The sunrise is on the horizon and a new day dawns. New buds appear in the garden with the promise of spring and the beginning of a new annual cycle. On behalf of all the team, we look forward to seeing you at the Eco Centre throughout the coming year. Our house is your house!

Elaine Wilkinson

President

Financials

Treasurer's Report July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

The committee has determined that Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 6:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. as at 30 June 2010 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee.

Fiona Johnston CA
Treasurer

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF PORT PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC

Qualification

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. to maintain an effective system of internal control over receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, my audit in relation to receipts was limited to the amounts recorded.

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, subject to the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed, the financial report of Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. presents a true and fair view, in all material respects the financial position of Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. as at 30 June 2011 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

BUCKLEY & CO.
Chartered Accountants



Martin Buckley

Dated this 12th day of August 2011.

Financials

PORT PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC. Statement of Income for the year ended 30th June 2011

<u>Income</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Book & DVD Sales	5,226	3,219
Membership	1,283	1,824
Donations	5,555	4,372
Court Penalty Payment	-	40,000
Weekend Takings	2,287	-
Administer Projects	41,638	25,177
Sundry Income	2,474	199
Interest	4,027	4,313
Venue Hire	2,913	2,095
Seminar & Education – Holden Landcare Australia	15,847	25,000
Seminar & Education – Travellers' Guide to EcoCentres	-	56,250
Seminar & Education – Website Grant	-	9,000
Seminar & Education – City of Port Phillip (Tomorrows Leaders)	11,864	20,000
Seminar & Education – Depart. of Education (Strategic Partnership)	18,544	23,680
Seminar & Education – Teachers Environment Network	-	7,000
Seminar & Education – Bayside City Council	5,000	-
Seminar & Education – Other	9,079	25,299
Eco Centre Tours	525	845
Revegetation Project	10,000	-
External services	1,708	223
City of Port Phillip Administration Grant	128,304	134,898
NED program (Central Bayside Community Health Service)	36	745
Clear Comfort	594	2,216
SCP/PULSE	-	3,891
Community Gardening	15,788	10,076
Climate Communities	11,617	-
Catering	10,874	9,784
Administrative Contributions	3,787	5,757
Worm Sales	2,021	910
Beach Buddies	482	5,745
Total Income	311,473	422,518

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Financials

PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC. Statement of expenses for the year ended 30th June 2011

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Bank Charges	626	299
Catering	15,179	11,730
Computer Expenses	1,079	5,655
Books & DVD Cost Of Sales	3,050	1,100
Donations	2,750	-
Gardening	799	1,077
Audit Fees	2,500	2,500
Office Supplies	1,354	1,094
Insurance	3,540	3,879
Postage	525	397
Printing & Stationery	5,443	8,469
Professional Services	12,369	44,523
Repairs & Maintenance	715	477
Replacements	738	3,064
Staff Training	1,600	-
Seminars & Training	5,249	10,321
Storage Expenses	1,090	447
Subscriptions	1,521	1,869
Sundry Expenses	9,430	4,002
Superannuation	23,781	21,528
Travelling Costs	68	1,151
Telephone	4,376	4,250
Wages	256,039	245,523
Employee Entitlements	7,926	1,290
Materials	1,410	3,747
Cleaning	743	557
Electricity	1,567	857
Clear Comfort	-	900
Worms Cost Of Sales	841	1,118
WorkCover	<u>2,847</u>	<u>2,606</u>
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>369,155</u>	<u>354,430</u>
<u>Operating Surplus</u>	<u>(57,682)</u>	<u>38,088</u>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Financials

PORT PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC. BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

Members' Funds	2011	2010
Accumulated Surplus Brought Forward	420,585	382,497
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) For Year	(57,682)	38,088
Total Members' Funds	362,903	420,585
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank – Administration Account	863	40,303
Cash at Bank – General Account	13,877	55,841
Cash at Bank – Public Fund (1)	2,161	2,756
Cash at Bank – Public Fund (2)	345	345
Cash at Bank – ING Direct	96,427	-
Cash at Bank – Sandhurst Public Investment	21,265	4,416
Cash at Bank – Bendigo Term Deposit	-	20,000
Cash at Bank – Bendigo Term Deposit	-	40,682
Petty Cash	875	221
Trade Debtors	27,913	4,255
Prepaid Expenses	2,905	2,071
Total Current Assets	166,632	170,890
Non Current Assets		
Eco House, at cost	260,519	260,519
Plant & Equipment, at cost	22,598	22,598
Total Non Current Assets	283,117	283,117
Total Assets	449,749	454,007
Current Liabilities		
Income In Advance	58,263	6,156
Trade Creditors and Accrued Expenses	965	1,081
PAYG Payable	3,006	4,020
GST Payable	6,392	3,099
Superannuation Payable	5,456	1,886
Employee Entitlements	14,764	17,180
Total Current Liabilities	86,846	33,422
Net Assets	362,903	420,585

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Financials

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic.). The committee has determined that Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic.) and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 1031 Materiality

AASB 110 Events after the Balance Sheet Date

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are not being depreciated.

(b) Income Tax

Pursuant to the provisions of the Income Tax Assessment Act the Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc. is exempt from income tax.

(c) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period.

(d) Revenue

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed.

Revenue is recognised at the point of delivery of the goods or services as this corresponds to the transfer of significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods and services.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

(e) Goods and Services Tax

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST.

Biodiversity protection: Port Phillip Baykeeper

With existing partnerships maintained and new collaborations formed the Port Phillip Baykeeper program has continued to grow over the past year. We were delighted to play a key role in television promotion of the Coast Action Victoria 'Summer Activities' program; and delivered 16 beach walks and shoreline shell survey activities around the Bay.

In February 2011 the Baykeeper team convened a coalition of community groups and government agencies dedicated to eliminating litter on Port Phillip beaches and formed a plan to comprehensively clean up all beaches in the City of Port Phillip on Clean Up Australia Day.



Clean beaches Coalition: all hands on deck!

Groups represented included Earthcare, 2 Hands, 3184 Beach Patrol, 3206 Beach Patrol, 3207 Beach Patrol, Friends of Webb Dock Walking Trail, Coast Monkeys, Sea Shepherd Melbourne, Surfrider Foundation Melbourne, City of Port Phillip, Healthy Waterways Program (Melbourne Water), Metropolitan Waste Management Group, Coastcare Victoria, Environment Protection Authority Victoria, Port Phillip EcoCentre and Tangaroa Blue. Thanks go to Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron for providing the meeting venue.

All organisations present endorsed the concept and set about planning united clean up action. A key feature is that all litter collected will be recorded in order to identify the worst offenders. We hope our united action on Clean Up Australia Day will demonstrate the benefits of working together rather than in isolation. On Clean Up Australia Day 2011 over 150 people spent two hours collecting litter from



Keynote speaker, Heidi Taylor of Tangaroa Blue Ocean Care spoke of the need for active local partnerships to tackle the ever growing problem of plastic trash in waterways and oceans.

beaches and seawalls between Sandridge and Elwood. They collected and audited 5,558 litter items: 36% cigarette butts, 26% polystyrene pieces, 20% food wrappers, 8% drink bottles, and 6% cups/plates/cutlery.

Apart from the polystyrene, what all these items have in common is that they are made of plastic. The problem is that non-biodegradable plastics break up into small pieces in the marine environment and are often swallowed by fish and seabirds. The good news is that this data is now being used to inform waste management educators and enforcement agencies from across the wider Melbourne catchment; and community momentum to seriously tackle the marine litter problem continues to grow.



Cigarette butts on the St Kilda West Beach

Education for Sustainability: Schools program

Writing the wrap on the 2010-2011 fiscal year allows welcome time to pause and reflect. This time one year ago, the current Schools Education Team was just forming. Our task was exciting and somewhat daunting, and we were eager to carry on the great work done by Caroline Packham in recent years.

We're happy to report the following partnerships and insights of our journey to date:

- Over 100 students from 7 schools joined for celebration, reflection and a feast at the (fifth annual) 2010 Sustainable School Awards & Harvest Festival;
- Fantastic response to the Teachers' Environment Network meetings which now has over 70 members! "Seeing is believing! I can now see how [my goals] are possible!";
- Collaborating with Pat Armstrong from Tomorrow's Leaders For Sustainability to train ten teachers, teach within five Port Phillip schools, and MC a Leadership Forum for primary students in Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston;
- Developing a suite of more than 20 excursions that align with learning standards, Sustainable Schools modules, and include teacher resource packs;
- Piloting the popular Park To Bay Elwood Canal stewardship project with Elwood College Year 9 students;
- Extended network and Professional Development presence including Greening Australia's Toolbox for Environmental Change, St Kilda PS Sustainability 4 All Expo, Beth Gott's Indigenous Garden, Dept of Education & early Childhood Development Strategic Partnerships Program Network meetings, and inter-council waste and water educator networks; and
- Team accreditation as official ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic Facilitators.



The response to our model of student engagement, teacher support and community-building has been overwhelmingly positive. One Year 9 teacher emailed about the students' inspired chatter during their walk back to school. She commented, "What you have done (and are continuing to do) at the EcoCentre is impressive and it was brilliant for the girls to see ideas in action in their local community."



Two major drivers this year have been the rising strength of ResourceSmart Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Vic (RSAV) and the continued professional learning of our team, especially collaborating with Neil Blake for Baykeeper and urban biodiversity initiatives. RSAV is the Victorian implementation of the



leading national framework to create a culture of sustainability across a whole-school community.

RSAV tools were ingrained in EcoPartnerships by Caroline. However with April undergoing Assessor training, the EcoCentre is positioned to deliver RSAV as an a la carte program to a broad catchment of schools in 2012. Julia, Andrea and Bede have developed a local community fundraising strategy to enable more schools to participate.

Our professional learning has involved Education for Sustainability pedagogy and enquiry-based practice in local ecosystems (modelling the programs we teach). Connecting theory to neighbourhood examples with Neil, and appreciating the living history of Indigenous perspective with Auntie Carolyn Briggs (Boon Wurrung Elder), are personal pleasures. This special local knowledge is of great interest to teachers who are curious to learn but otherwise lacking time, tools, and learning opportunities.

Developed in conjunction with Cr Jane Touzeau, the 2010 Inaugural Elwood Poetry Prize drew over 120 entries from local students and poetic community residents, inspired by the Elwood Canal. The panel of judges included recognised poet Hugh Tolhurst and our own Pam O'Neil. Our current competition just closed, attracting hundreds of envelopes bursting at seams with poems imagining "The Garden."

Huge thanks go to our amazing volunteers, who have contributed their time, expertise and helpful insights, especially Belinda Boerkamp, Julia Olszewska, and Tammy Taylor for their invaluable assistance during the year.



Toward 2012

As some of our existing EcoPartner schools have developed in-school program capacity through partnership with the EcoCentre, we are now able to deliver the program to additional schools in 2012. The Schools Program moves toward leadership as Resource Smart Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Facilitators for the region.

Beginning with our 2011 Sustainable School Awards, we will further integrate kids teaching kids methodology with investigative learning. Environmental Resources Management has announced funding to develop a full student Audit and Action Training series at the EcoCentre, teaching students at each school to lead their peers in resource audits and developing action plans for their campus.

We're excited in both reflection and anticipation. Onward and upward!

Julia, April, and Andrea



Major Projects: Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network

The EcoCentre is funded by City of Port Phillip to coordinate the Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network. The overarching focus for the past year has been on increasing PPUFFN's profile through quarterly events, improving communications strategies and networking proactively, the latter resulting in some very beneficial relationships with other community groups.

Advice on the direction and activities during the course of the year was received from a steering group comprised of people who are active, long term members of local community gardens and community-based organizations. Members are Janet Hoare (Simply Living Community Garden), Hartmut Grieb (Dig In Community Garden), Neil Blake (EcoCentre) and Paula Havelberg (EcoCentre / PPUFFN Project Worker).

June 2010 – 'Eat Your Balcony' saw 55 guests brave the cold to attend PPUFFN's Eat Your Balcony event at the EcoCentre. The surge of interest in this event made it necessary to waitlist 20 people and led to the decision to host a follow up event. Attendance and mood indicated a huge buzz around the topic of gardening in small spaces.

The program comprised a talk/seminar by horticultural educator Elspeth Ferguson on balcony growing; an audio visual presentation on backyard intensive fruit growing by John Bench, combined with a tour of his home urban orchard in Balaclava; a presentation on container growing and international trends by Paula and Alicia plus a practical demonstration on innovative wicking container growing methods.

August 2010 – 'Eat Your Balcony 2' succeeded in living up to its totally practical agenda. Adam from Very Edible Gardens (VEG) mixed it up indoors and out by foraging for edible weeds to blend into a power-packed green smoothie. Elspeth Ferguson put paid to a few pests with her armory of organic sprays and potions; containers of various shapes and sizes got the wicking treatment by Paula and Anna Lozo; Natalie Vassilaka delved into the secret life of worms; Paul Conheady produced a sample of his home grown mushrooms and David Dawson, a.k.a "master sprout", impressed all with his collection of indoor-grown sprouts.



October 2010 – World Food Day was a major collaborative effort, involving participation in planning and delivery by community development students from Swinburne and a work placement student from CoPP, and with input from food advocacy groups such as Yaubula and MADGE (Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering).

The ambitious program included a dozen separate cooking demonstrations; four profile speakers; food sales; food tastings; competitions; information display; live music and gardening activities. Many businesses and community organizations supported the event by active participation and/or donations.



Paula shows how to build a 'wicking' balcony garden

Around 200 people attended this event, resulting in consolidation of existing contacts and networks and a promising beginning to new relationships. Speakers included: Carolyn Briggs (Boon Wurrung Elder), Mothers are demystifying genetic engineering, Second Bite, Lentil as Anything, Fair Trade Alliance and local author Angela Crocombe

Cooking demonstration hosts were: St Kilda Youth Service (Hospitality Employment & Training), Vegetarian Network Victoria, Port Phillip Community Group (Alma Road Neighbourhood House), Port Phillip EcoCentre Education Team, Port Melbourne Neighbourhood House, - Multi Faith Network (Shabi MacDonald), Lentil as Anything, Hare Krishna Society, Vegelicious Catering, Russian friendship group for women and their families, St Kilda Community Kitchen and Nicole Pravadis (local resident).

Prize & fundraising donors were: Slow Down at Harley Court, St Kilda, Simple Affair, Port Melbourne, Eurodore, Port Melbourne, Yaubula, Tesoriero and Lucas Bros., St Kilda, South Melbourne Fresh Fruit Centre.



February 2010 – 'Compost for All' was organized specifically to progress the aims of the Port Phillip Community Compost Group and to gauge real interest in getting a community composting pilot site off the ground in Elwood. It made sense for PPUFFN to lend support to a project which had emerged from Council's Local Area Planning sessions during 2010. The forum featured a detailed presentation and discussion of the community composting group's plan of action; presentation of research into community composting undertaken by the City of Moreland and a look at community composting globally.

The group's proposal received a positive response from the audience, comprised of local residents and several CoPP staff. The forum provided validation that the project was on the right track. The group subsequently obtained funding for the project from CoPP and were thrilled to launch their first composting pilot site, as per plan, in early July 2011.

April 2011 – Kitchen Symphony was a collaboration with Transition Town Port Phillip. Kitchen symphony represented the Network's first foray into community cooking, with participants invited to spend an afternoon preparing,



and then sharing, a banquet style communal lunch. Creative, yet easy to master recipes were carefully selected to reflect the theme of nutritious eating on a shoestring budget.

Considerable planning and attention to detail went into the menu design and logistics of enabling approximately twenty people to prepare and cook food side-by-side in a community facility, and to schedule. Multiple cooking stations meant participants could pick and choose what recipes they tried their hand at, including desserts, soups, pastries, raw food and bread. While attendance was much more modest than hoped for, attendees seemed to get a lot out of the event and got right into the spirit of cooking.

Major Projects: Weekend workshops

Since January, the EcoCentre has been open on weekends – with the assistance of a grant from Sustainability Victoria. This has increased attendance of local residents who find it difficult to attend events during the week.

Our weekend events have included Eco-Art workshops (including drawing, poetry, music and also sewing / weaving classes which emphasize re-use); wildlife surveys and nest-box building for families with pre-teen kids; gardening activity & classes; workshops on how to reduce their energy and water use, and better understand waste and recycling.



Rosanna Li sews up a storm!

All of the workshops have had an emphasis on different strategies for renters and owner-occupiers. Tours of the EcoCentre are offered to display the retrofitting in place in the building and a monthly Induction Course is run for new volunteers. Residents have also been encouraged to attend bike maintenance classes to learn how to fix and maintain their bicycles, with a view to re-using their old bike and riding more.



Bike recycling workshop



Glo Fitzpatrick instructs on how to build a nest box

Other weekend projects include the EcoMarket on the first Sunday of the month in summer and spring which offers suppliers of eco-products an opportunity to promote their wares in the EcoCentre setting. A 'bulk buy' organic fruit and veggie box scheme has been established with a new supplier who delivers the food, saving a trip by volunteers to collect it.

Being open has also enabled us to introduce the EcoCentre to many casual passers-by. The EcoCentre has received over 1,500 visitors on weekends in the past 6 months with many residents visiting for the first time. Many have become paid-up members and dozens have been inspired to volunteer to get involved in various projects. Promotion has been improved with posters, flyers and media releases being distributed weekly to multiple sites and media.



Bulk buy fruit and veg from Pure Organic Grocer

Part of our EcoShop has been outsourced to new online business partners who now do all the procurement and fulfilment for our lighting, insulation, shading and draught-proofing products. Discounts are offered to members and an optional installation service is also offered to customers. In support of this, the main room off the deck has been restructured to display samples of products. Orders can be placed on-line and we don't need to carry stock.

Country Connect: Caring For Country

'Country Connect' is a partnership project between Boon Wurrung Foundation and Port Phillip EcoCentre, funded by the Federal Government's 'Caring for Country' program, administered by the State Government (DSE). The project aims to trial revegetation of at least three indigenous cultural heritage sites. The sites will be selected in consultation with local land managers and with the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Box Hill Office.

Field workshops are to be held at each site with the land manager and traditional owners in order to share best information on best practices for managing cultural heritage. Through planning and implementing works on at least 3 indigenous cultural heritage sites, the project aims to develop guidelines to facilitate cost-effective protection of cultural heritage sites. At least 900 indigenous plants will be planted. The project steering group (PSG) includes



Eroding coastal midden at Gulls Way Frankston

representatives of Boon Wurrung Foundation, EcoCentre, Department of Sustainability & Environment, Mornington Peninsula Shire and Frankston City Council. The PSG has met on five occasions with the minutes of each meeting prepared and circulated.

Sites selected as case studies include a cliff-top midden (Hearn Rd / Esplanade, Mt Martha); a knapping site (Blacks' Camp Road, Somerville); and a magnificent redgum 'scar tree' (Banyan Reserve, Carrum) Planning for the first two sites above is advanced and the relevant land manager (Mornington Peninsula Shire) has allocated resources for practical works.



The Banyan Reserve tree has climbing foothold scars—perhaps used to watch a game of Marr Groom!

Each of the sites under consideration in Frankston/Seaford has unresolved questions. In relation to the midden sites: the Port Phillip Aboriginal Heritage Strategic Desktop Assessment flags the need for dedicated consultations between Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Aboriginal parties to establish criteria for prioritising coastal sites for protection. This criteria is yet to be established.

Since June the EcoCentre has hosted a horticultural training program delivered by Kangan TAFE for indigenous men. The course included an introduction to horticulture and excursions with Neil to local (St Kilda) revegetation. The group has contributed to the EcoCentre's native couch 'instant turf' project which aims to produce turf which would be a non-intrusive means of stabilising eroding cultural heritage sites. It is anticipated that the turf (if successful) would be ready to lay in Autumn 2012.



New ways to protect and connect with indigenous cultural heritage

Fellow travellers



We've been blessed with the company of great people and look forward to a positive, multicultural future.

Pictured clockwise from top left are:

Michael Lafferty (Eco Artist-in-Residence), Djambana (the Gathering), Vasili, and members of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition



Affiliate Group Reports : Friends of Westgate Park



Westgate Park, one of inner urban Melbourne's more atmospherically natural reserves, opened in the mid 1980's. The land had previously provided grazing for early Port Melbourne, and served as an airstrip during World War II before declining into a scrubby informal tip from the 1950s. Developed to mark Victoria's sesquicentennial, Westgate Park covers forty hectares, running from Todd Road, Fishermens Bend to the River Yarra.

The impressive view of its trees and lakes from eastbound lanes on Westgate Bridge, means it's the park most Victorians have registered but relatively few have visited. Many who actually do so enjoy it as a venue for passive family recreation, as do local workers during their breaks.

Initially park managers from Conservation, Forests and Lands established dense woodlands of a wide array of Australian species around the two extensive wetlands, one highly saline. Parks Victoria had taken over when Friends of Westgate Park formed over eleven years ago.



New recruits are always welcome!

The group decided all future plantings would be of species indigenous to Melbourne region, in formations reflecting natural vegetation structures and park microclimate.

This program has quietly proceeded so that now nine ecosystems from saltmarsh to red gum and grassy woodlands grace the park. The Friends of Westgate Park has transformed the park; planting around 260,000 plants so far and we are no where finished yet! This authentic vegetation – not just trees, but grasses, ground cover and understory – promotes biodiversity. For example, the bird list features some 130 species, although the monthly tallies are more like forty or so. Numerous fungi, insects and water dwellers supplement the bird populations.



Friends of Westgate Park won the National Urban Landcare Award in 2010. Its well organised volunteer program averages 1000 hours monthly, and it runs fifty staff volunteering days annually – these include safety briefings, training and meals. A long-term partnership with the EcoCentre and Central Bayside Community Health Services sees a dozen adults with disabilities work in the park one day each fortnight. In 2010-11 about ten young people received intensive training in reserve management as part of the Commonwealth Government's Green Jobs Corps scheme. A small on-site nursery supplements plants purchased from SKINC, also an EcoCentre affiliate.

Obviously this is a park with partnerships! Why not join our group; there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer. Just call Naomie Sunner 0415 941 629 or Tony Flude 0400 770 254

Affiliate Group Reports: Port Melbourne Uniting Church



SkillsFest, November 2010 (photo: J. Hoare)

The Port Melbourne congregation of South Port Uniting Church is a worshipping Christian community committed to environmental sustainability and stewardship in our inner urban community. Our Simply Living Community Garden is located in the church grounds (cnr Nott and Bridge Streets, Port Melbourne). It is available to everyone in the community to access at any time.

The church and congregation provide support and partnership with South Port UnitingCare Living Skills activities, including community kitchen and gardening programs. Highlights of 2010-11 include:

Monthly community garden working bees, including the annual tomato planting day in November. About 30 kindergarten families attended the weekly garden sessions. Watering plants, sowing seeds and catching caterpillars were favourite activities.

Open Garden, a new mid-week gardening activity program began in 2011. Open Garden provides an opportunity for gardeners of all ages, background and experience to actively learn to grow their own food, share their knowledge, potter at their own pace or just enjoy the garden over afternoon tea. A workshop on a different aspect of gardening is held each week.

The inaugural SkillsFest was held in November 2010. Local community members came to celebrate and share skills for living in the inner city. More than 200 people participated in workshops and hands on activities, sharing skills such as worm farming, knitting, ball skills, music and hand-made Christmas decorations. Plans are underway for SkillsFest 2011 to be held in November 2011.

Vegetables and herbs from the community garden were used by **Kitchen Mates**, a South Port UnitingCare community kitchen program for those who want to cook low cost, nutritious meals in a supportive atmosphere.

Jamming in the Kitchen preserving days were held about once a month throughout the year.

A number of community groups and individuals visited the garden through the year. We contributed to the City of Port Phillip consultation on community gardens and were involved in events run by the Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network. The annual Harvest Celebration

Service was held in March 2011 when the weather forced the service indoors instead of being held in the garden.

"Leaflet," the garden newsletter, was distributed every six weeks or so.

The garden continued to be a resource for the local community. Neighbours met at the compost bays or while picking herbs or just sitting and enjoying the garden. Passersby often stopped for a chat with anyone who was working in the garden.

Congregation members participated in community events, including Clean Up Australia Day, Walk Against Warming and World Environment Day.



Community garden working bee (photo: J. Hoare)

Opportunities to be involved: come along to the community working bees or Open Garden to get involved in growing food in a community atmosphere. We'd especially love to hear from anyone who would like to run a mini-workshop to teach a particular gardening skill at the Open Garden (voluntary or paid). **Skills sharing:** SkillsFest is another opportunity to share your skills by running a demonstration or workshop to show or teach a skill for more sustainable living in the city.

Community Kitchen: if you or someone you know would like to participate in the community kitchen or is interested in becoming a kitchen facilitator please get in touch.

To receive "Leaflet", the newsletter of the Simply Living Community Garden by email or to find out more about getting involved in any of the activities above, please contact Janet Hoare (details below).

Thank you to: the City of Port Phillip which provided funding to support SkillsFest. All those who made donations to the garden and community kitchen in many forms including tools and utensils, jam jars, potting mix, mulch and cash donations.

All the volunteers who help maintain the garden and our neighbours who kept a vigilant eye on the garden.

The volunteers for SkillsFest—the planning group, those who helped set up and pack up and all those who willingly shared their skills and talents with others on the day.

Janet Hoare, Project Worker ph 9650 1188
janet.hoare@southportuniting.org.au

EcoCentre team

Management Committee

Elaine Wilkinson	President
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David Giles (IT and Communications)
Julia Muniandy (Schools Program)
Neil Blake (Director)
Jill Robinson (EcoMarket Coordinator)
Paula Havelberg (PPUFFN Project Worker)
Jagoda Kurek (Accounts)

Student placements

Asunta Akeri (Swinburne Community Development)
Ava Duncan (Swinburne Community Development)
Nicole Wheatley (Swinburne Community Development)

Affiliate Groups 2010 - 2011

Allsorts Orchestra	Project Earth International
Animal Liberation Victoria	South Port Uniting Care
Bayside Climate Change Action Group	St Kilda Community Gardens Club
Djambana (the Gathering)	St Kilda Indigenous Nursery Cooperative
Earthcare St Kilda Inc	St Kilda Music & Poetry Inc
Friends of Westgate Park	St Kilda Organic Food Cooperative Inc (SKOF)
Friends of Port Melbourne Foreshore	The Otesha Project (Australia)
Locals Into Victoria's Environment (LIVE)	The Sharehood Inc
Landcare International	Transition Towns Port Phillip
Homeground Services	Veg Out Community Gardens Inc.
Melbourne Social Forum (MSF) Inc.	Web Prophets Pty Ltd
Port Phillip Community Group	



Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc.

Located in St Kilda Botanical Gardens (corner Blessington and Herbert Streets)

55A Blessington St,
St Kilda, VIC 3182

Tel: (03) 9534 0670

Fax: (03) 9525 3312

Email: info@ecocentre.com

Internet: www.ecocentre.com

ABN: 66 852 809 680

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