



## Locals caring for their local environment

This Newsletter happily reports that MEA is recovering from lockdown in positive ways.

- Face to face monthly meetings have resumed and we welcome all members. Contact secretary Ann Robb for details.
- Friends Groups are up and running again.
- Two MEA Friends Groups, Beleura Cliff Path and Tanti Creek are currently working through Coastcare grants. The grants enable MEA to pay for a nominated contractor, (Naturelinks) to do hard vegetation removal, and for the groups to weed, plant and educate people along the Mornington foreshores. Such work enables everyone (living and visiting here) to enjoy the wonderful coastal environment.
- Peter Nicholson, (Vice-President) has chaired meetings and liaised for President Margaret who has several health challenges at the moment. On 24th of March Peter and seven MEA representatives attended an informal meeting with the new Mayor of Mornington Shire Despi O'Connor. She is up to date on the range of interests and works undertaken by our organisation.
- All members send Margaret their thoughts and good wishes for a successful recovery.



**Margaret Howden**  
President



### What's happening in the water...

As usual, MEA watches and reacts to various reports involving our Bay, Westernport and the sea in general.

**Congratulations Victoria! The Westernport Bay natural environment has been saved from a future gas platform!** Victorian Planning Minister (Richard Wynne) concluded in Parliament on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 that "FSRU's marine discharge will cause an ongoing impact to the environment" and that because this part of the project is unacceptable the whole project is unacceptable."

A lobbying campaign began three years ago by environmentalists and local residents. The opposing case was strongly presented and was reported as being factual, comprehensive and transparent. Thank you to all who helped to expose the damaging affects of large quantities of chlorine water being discharged daily by an AGL gas platform if the project had gone ahead.

**Water quality** is regularly measured by Water Watch volunteers in Tanti Creek and by the EPA at Mothers Beach, Mills Beach and at Shire Hall Beach (near the SE Water outflow pipe). This summer saw no major changes except after a downpour, when dirty polluted water streamed into the Bay through Tanti creek. It created a dark plume which could be seen from Red Bluff and Beleura Hill. The Shire is currently printing posters for the pavements to remind people to pick up road rubbish and place in bins and to be aware that gutters flow into the Bay and so anything dropped along the streets or near rubbish bins will end up in our waters. **Please encourage your family to help minimise this damaging problem!**

**The Beleura Cliff Path Facebook page** often has mention of interesting sightings. Recent sightings in the Bay include a juvenile humpback whale entering the Heads in early March; a shark, one and a half metres long, seen off Dromana; and a dead whale washed up in Westernport. Pods of common dolphins are being sighted more often off Beleura Hill and can often be observed if you look for birds flocking overhead.

**Watch out for jellyfish and sea stars** We continue to see large jellyfish (bluish, non-harmful to humans) being jumped on and thrown around onto the sand - they are there as part of the bay marine biosphere. The 11-armed sea stars are also supposed to be on our local beaches, but continue to be destroyed. It is the feral Northern Pacific Sea star (prettier and coloured yellow to purple) which is NOT welcome. It eats shellfish which normally keep the local fish and birds fed and it reproduces far too easily. It should be placed into rubbish bins.



## Great Season for Tanti Fish!

Numerous native fish can currently be observed in Tanti Creek. Populations of Common Galaxias in the central part around Stones Crossing are the highest in a number of years. This is most likely due to the good rains experienced over the last year. Periodic flooding is very important both for spawning and for enabling juvenile fish to negotiate in-stream barriers as they migrate upstream from the bay.

Martin Lenard



Eastern Gambusia – Mosquito Fish



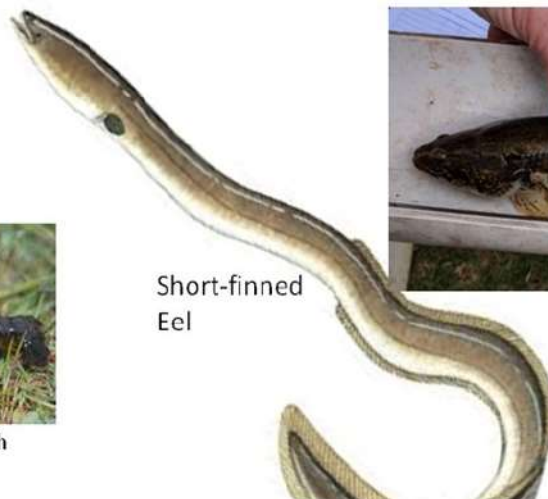
Common Galaxia



Spotted Galaxia



Fresh water burrowing crayfish



Short-finned Eel



Tupong

## What's happening on the land....

MEA continues to organise Friends Groups along the foreshores - these working bees actively care for the land environment. Even if you feel less active, you can still contribute by assembling shields for new plants, or watering with cans or propagating plants at various times. So do join in – we need you!

We also continue to monitor planning issues - watch for those planning signs and let us know if you are concerned. We are still working on getting suitable street trees for Main Street in Mornington so the plane trees, with their dangerous seed pods, allergy-promoting pollen and in Autumn large wet leaves covering the pathways can be replaced. Have your say!

### FRIENDS GROUPS

Fishies Friends Group have been concentrating on removing woody weeds (mostly polygala) from the north side of Linley Point, ready for further re-planting in Autumn. It's been a relief to see the wall of woody weeds falling under our secateurs and saws - it's been an ugly vista for what seems forever! Last year's plantings on the south of the Point have generally been very successful, but we've done some watering, just to be on the safe (south) side.

There's lots more to be done, of course. Royal Beach deserves a good workover, for example. Join up, if you can! We meet at 9am on the last Thursday of the month. Peter Deerson

Mills Beach Friends was lucky to be offered native seedlings free of charge. The photo right, shows the friends group planting grasses along the edge of Tanti Cheek to help stabilise the estuary bank. Brian Burrows



Peter getting ready for a busy day



Mills Beach Friends - planting

## Friends Groups Continued ....

**Beleura Cliff Path Friends** have been implementing works surrounding the path in line with requirements of the Grant. Extensive photos are available on the Beleura Cliff Path Facebook site. Many new members have joined this group. It has been necessary to set limits for volunteers at these working bees in order to manage the induction program and help productivity for those in the group. Peter Nicholson

**Tanti Creek Friends** Eleven dedicated Friends removed weeds and fallen branches from the path between our Creek Rd and Hospital sites. 21 bags of weeds were collected! We are also working on the Litter Source Reduction Project with Melbourne Water and planning additional plantings at Strattons Lane.



Hand weeding by Tanti Creek Friends

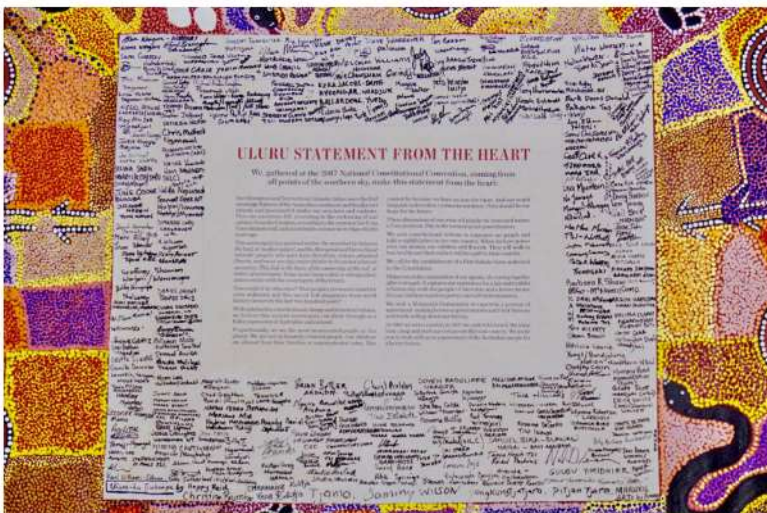
## The Cute Apple Berry

This little climber is called Apple Berry, or if you want to sound knowledgeable, call it *Billardiera scandens* with a capital B for *Billardiera* and small s for *scandens*.

It has cute little green oblong berries, nearly all year round, which were apparently a useful snack for the Bunurong people. However I think they were for when you were pretty hungry, because they're a bit tasteless. You would eat them when they turn a pale white. If anyone has a good recipe for Apple-berry pie, let us know. They have really pretty delicate little pale yellow flowers.

They are an official coastal headland scrub plant (EVC 161), which means indigenous to coastal headland areas. They are hardy, but slow to get going. They don't mind the salt air, but they're not totally as tough as some of the cliff plants you see on the cliff path. They are a great garden plant, to climb up a trellis, or as a pot plant on your porch if you like alliteration. I have four biggish ones in the ground. They grow eventually to two or three metres. They like a little bit of water and lots of sun. It so happens that the

Beleura Cliff Path Friends Group Greenhouse Subcommittee (Cath Warters, Jenelle Curtain and Sally Madsen) planted some seeds from the berries in trays, and just when we were about to throw them on the compost heap, they all came up .... dozens and dozens of them. So we picked them out and put them in tubes, and we have at least 150. If you want a free one, email the MEA ([morningtonea@gmail.com](mailto:morningtonea@gmail.com)) and you can pick one up. Peter Nicholson



MEA members voted at the last meeting to support the Uluru Statement From The Heart.



All Australians can show support by positive action. YOU can promote the voice of the First Nation's People.

Access the supporter kit.

go to <https://www.ulurustatement.org/supporter-kit>

## 2021 Clean Up Australia Day



Registration Desk



Family on the job



Counting and securing the rubbish collection.

This National Annual Clean Up Day at Mills Beach was coordinated by MEA on 7th March 2021. Twenty eight adults and more than eight children volunteered their time, with ages from 4 years to 83. Of the adults there were 13 males and 15 females.

The older age brackets predominated, but there was a good spread among younger people. Three children were between 11 to 16 which was especially encouraging, as they were probably there of their own volition, not just taken along by parents. A number of families came too and hopefully it will inspire them to join us again next year, opening their children to the idea of good community care habits.

A large area was covered: Mills Beach and foreshore (around the beach houses, down the paths and along the Esplanade), Red Bluff, Shire Hall Beach, Tanti Creek, and Hunter's Crossing (near Yuilles Road).

Between us all we collected 14 bags of general rubbish and 7 bags of recyclables, along with a number of wooden posts, a council sign-post, various council covid signs, a couple of old tents, an electric bike and a fire extinguisher. (The bike has been taken to the Police, and I will return the extinguisher to its owner - the address was on the base).

A number of people showed interest in the work of MEA and took a membership brochure. Hopefully this will lead to more members, and especially Working Bee volunteers! Many thanks to all the volunteers!

Brian Burrows

MEA appreciated the thorough job by Brian. He considers that there has been a reduction in general rubbish lying around and also reduced numbers of cigarette butts (though these are not counted!) We didn't pick up any syringes this year either, but unfortunately, disposable masks are now part of the rubbish stream.



## Local Events of Interest - Save the Date! Details and registration available from Eventbrite

1. **Annual Friends Group Network event 2021** Date: Saturday 22 May Time: Morning tea for northern groups, afternoon tea for southern groups. Location: TBC
2. **Nest box monitoring** Date: Thursday 13 April Time: 9:30-11:30am Location: Peninsula Gardens Bushland Reserve. Meeting at the main entrance off Jetty Road, Rosebud. The gate will be open, please drive in and park. Register: Email Hannah at Hannah.
3. **Frog Census Walk and Talk** Date: Tuesday 20th April Time: 6pm Location: Trumans Road Recreation Reserve

### Glyphosate YES or NO?

MEA meetings has recently included discussion on the use and /or misuse of Glyphosate broad spectrum herbicide. The notes below are from the APMVA website.

*In 2016, following an International Agency for research on Cancer assessment , the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Authority (APMVA) considered this pesticide and found no grounds to place it under formal review. All glyphosate products for use in Australia have been through a robust chemical assessment. There are around 500 products (including Roundup) containing glyphosate registered for use in Australia. The safe use of the product is annually monitored by the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) which evaluates pesticide residues in food.*

Guidelines say the user **MUST follow all the label directions to the letter**, including wearing any necessary protection and not spraying on a windy day. If you have any relevant scientific data or you have witnessed specific effects of Glyphosate, MEA would be interested to hear from you by email.

#### Contact Us:

- [www.morningtonenviro.org.au](http://www.morningtonenviro.org.au)
- [morningtonea@gmail.com](mailto:morningtonea@gmail.com)
- PO Box 580 Mornington 3931
- Monthly meetings

7:00PM 1st Thursdays Feb. – Dec.

#### President:

Margaret Howden 0414 641 999

#### Secretary:

Ann Robb [morningtonea@gmail.com](mailto:morningtonea@gmail.com)

#### Treasurer :

Martin Lenard 0427 888 712

#### Tanti Creek Friends:

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#### Mills Beach Friends:

Brian Burrows  
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#### Fisherman's Beach:

Peter Deerson 0401 584 792  
[pdeerson@netscape.net](mailto:pdeerson@netscape.net)

#### Beleura Cliff Path Friends:

Peter Nicholson 0400 326 306  
[beleuracliffpath@gmail.com](mailto:beleuracliffpath@gmail.com)

#### You too can be involved

If you would like to join us, membership forms are available on the web site. Fees are: Family \$15; Single \$10

**Email—** [morningtonea@gmail.com](mailto:morningtonea@gmail.com)

Please include name, address, phone and email address.

Working bee volunteers are contacted by email or phone.

### WORKING BEES

Volunteers meet to work and care for the following areas: see left side of this page for contacts details:

**Tanti Creek** - Last Tuesdays of the month

9:30—11:30 contact Martin

**Mills Beach** - 3rd Sunday or Monday of the month

9:30—11:30 contact Brian

**Beleura Cliff Path** varied sessions

9:30—11:30 contact Peter N

**Fishermen's Beach** last Thursdays of the month

9:00—11:00 contact Peter D

