

... about the Estuary



Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc.

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DECEMBER 2010

SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF SERAG INC.

The Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc. was officially launched at a special gathering of over thirty members and friends on the evening of Monday 25th October 2010.

SERAG Inc.'s principal objective is to advance the well-being of the three small A-Class Reserves set aside by the community for the benefit of its wildlife: *Alfred Cove* in Melville, *Milyu* along the Como foreshore and *Pelican Point* in Crawley.

Guest speaker, Dr Mike Bamford spoke of the steady loss over time of the salt marsh, sedge banks and fringing forests that once provided habitat for birds in the Swan Estuary, as housing areas have expanded and freeway infrastructure built.

Dr Bamford described some of the bird life which depends on the Swan Estuary, including the internationally important migratory wading birds, some of

which travel annually to the Estuary from as far away as their breeding areas in Arctic Siberia. He saw an urgent need for the conservation of the remaining areas of habitat, congratulating SERAG Inc. on its formation.

A Committee was then elected; and Professor Robert Harvey proposed a toast to the future success of the organisation, thanking all who attended for their on-going support.



Professor Robert Harvey proposes a toast to the success of SERAG Inc.

RIVERBANKS GRANT FOR ALFED COVE

The Department of Environment and Conservation has received Swan River Trust *Riverbanks* funding to continue restoration of a severely degraded section of the Alfred Cove A-Class Reserve, west of Tompkins Park.

Over-run by huge banks of *kikuyu* and *Typha orientalis* (bullrushes), with pampas grass, Japanese pepper and other weeds spreading rapidly throughout, native habitat has been virtually destroyed.

Riverbank funding will allow for the weeds to be chemically sprayed with *Roundup Biactive* and the biomass removed by contractors. Teams of community volunteers will then work to restore habitat by planting a variety of sedges, shrubs and trees indigenous to the site.

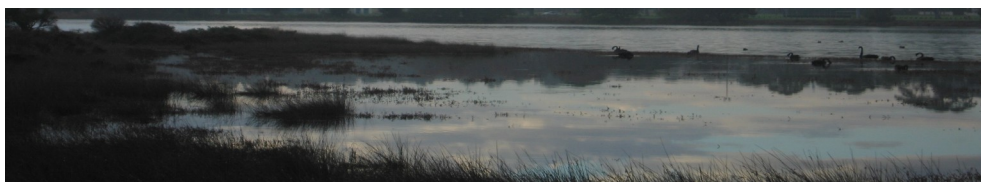
Throughout the restoration process, care must be taken to minimize soil disturbance as acid sulphate soil conditions are of great concern.

Spraying will commence in December, with planting scheduled for the late Autumn and early Winter months.

We are promoting the Project within the community through public information strategies, and have commenced mobilizing volunteer assistance. Already, significant Corporate Sponsorship has been promised.

SERAG Inc is pleased to support this important DEC initiative.

An informative display relating to the A-class Reserves will be set up first in the AE Bracks Library, Melville, between the 5th & 18th January 2011, and then in the Nedlands Library, with other libraries to follow.



Twilight at Alfred Cove A-Class Reserve

MONITORING OF WATERBIRDS

As part of a joint initiative of the City of South Perth, the City of Melville and the Department of Environment and Conservation, SERAG Inc. will be applying for funding to support a program of monitoring waterbird populations in the Swan River Estuary.

While at times we may see an abundance of birds such as swans, cormorants and pelicans, concern has been expressed about declining numbers of other species of waterbirds using the Estuary, and this needs to be examined carefully.

Possible contributing factors, including a decline in water

quality, disturbance from various human activities, and the effects of even a slight rise in sea level, have been mentioned; while the impacts of positive initiatives such as the installation of a cyclone fence along the Attadale Foreshore have not been studied.

It is envisaged that *Bamford Consulting Ecologists*, with the assistance of volunteers from such groups as *Birds Australia WA*, will lead the longer-term study which will involve both surveying bird numbers and banding of some species. Four separate bird counts are planned to take place

between September and April each year, and banding conducted by a small team of licensed experts within strictly specified guidelines, and with proper authority. The key monitoring sites will be the three A-Class Reserves: *Pelican Point, Milyu* and *Alfred Cove*.

The information gathered will then be compared with data going back to 1981 and hopefully facilitate positive action to reverse any negative trends observed in the populations of these very special species.

We will keep you informed.

"The Swan River Estuary is recognised as being of importance for waterbirds, including migratory shorebirds, being listed as of international importance for the Red-necked Stint, a species that breeds in far northern Siberia."
M Bamford



NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

While we are delighted to already have a strong membership base of around forty people, SERAG Inc. would like to double this figure in the forthcoming months, and would be extremely grateful if you would encourage others to join.

To become a member, a person must support the Group's two Objectives:

- Enhance the long-term ecological health of the Swan River Estuary A-Class Reserves and adjacent river parks for the benefit of its native fauna and for the enjoyment of current and future generations of the Perth Community.
- Support the managing authorities and those organisations involved in the restoration of the natural environment of the Swan River Estuary.

Joining SERAG does not necessarily involve any commitment of time. Participation in our various projects and activities is always warmly welcomed, but entirely voluntary.

By becoming a member, a person is expressing support for our objectives, and thereby strengthening our capacity to attract vital funding for restoration work. ***This alone is a great reason to join!***

SERAG INC. COMMITTEE 2011

CHAIRPERSON:	Catherine O'Neill
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON:	Robert Harvey
SECRETARY:	Jane Leahy-Kane
TREASURER:	Colin Heinzman
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:	Margaret Matassa



Season's Greetings to all our members and friends.



Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc.

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