



DMP & MUENSA PROVIDE HANDS-ON SUPPORT

Using funds provided by a Department of Environment and Conservation *Environmental Communities* Grant to purchase plants, and with the hands-on support of volunteers from the wider community, SERAG Inc. has continued its efforts to re-vegetate degraded parts of Alfred Cove A-Class Reserve.

Foreshore vegetation is a critical part of the River's ecosystem as it provides foreshore stability and habitat for wildlife, including both water and bush birds. It also helps to prevent nutrients and contaminants leaching into the waterway and causing problems for fauna such as native fish and dolphin.

A healthy habitat requires a diversity of species and a balance of ground level, middle storey and canopy vegetation. Generally, for places such as Alfred Cove, a ratio of 500:50:5 is recommended; so, with this in mind, we have recently planted over three thousands sedges and a few herbs and low shrubs as ground level plantings, a mix of twenty *Melaleuca viminea*, *rhaphiophylla* and *cuticularis* for the middle storey and eight *Eucalyptus rudis* to provide a canopy in areas once either barren or heavily degraded with kikuyu and black wattle and castor-oil trees.

Over the four days of the project, two organizations have provided much needed assistance to SERAG Inc.. One day we had twenty-five volunteers from the Department of Mines and Petroleum working on the foreshore in front of Troy Park playing fields; and, on another, about half a dozen members of MUEnSA (environmental studies students from Murdoch University) helped at a site a little further to the west. Each day was very successful, participants enjoying superb autumn weather and spectacular river views, with local birdlife - including swans, cormorants, mountain ducks and osprey - adding grace to the landscape.

Thank you to all involved.

(Photos courtesy: Edwina Wilson & Jane Leahy-Kane)



DMP volunteers hard at work



Robert Harvey (SERAG) & Richard Sellers (Director General of DMP)



MUEnSA members join with SERAG Inc

SALVINIA ALERT!

The Department of Food & Agriculture has urged the public to be on the look out for *Salvinia molesta*, a highly invasive aquatic weed that has the capacity to destroy our waterways. Regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia, it is registered as a *Weed of National Significance* for its economic and environmental impacts.

Originating in Brazil, salvinia is an aquatic weed that can choke waterways. It floats on still or slow-moving water and can grow rapidly to cover the entire water surface with a thick mat of vegetation. This shades out any submerged plant life and impedes oxygen exchange, making the water unsuitable for fish and other animals.

Unlike duckweed, salvinia always has a somewhat fuzzy appearance when viewed closely, because its surface is covered in small hairs. It is also bright green and has two comparatively large "wings".

Salvinia infestations reduce the natural beauty and biodiversity of wetlands. Recently, it has been found in a small lake near Marmion Street in Melville; so please check your backyard pond carefully!



Salvinia molesta - one of the worst weeds in Australia

AOIFE SIGNS UP

Aoife Kane-Thomas - who was holidaying a long way from her home in Avoca, Ireland - was one of a number of community volunteers to sign up for February's *Clean Up Australia* litter collection activity organized by SERAG Inc. along the Attadale foreshore.

In the cool of early morning, with water birds commencing their day's foraging, the activity was not only very enjoyable, but it was also very successful.

Six enormous bags of rubbish were collected. Plastic water bottles were the most numerous items found, with beer bottles and aluminium cans a close second, and an odd rubber thong or two adding to the mix.

Aoife has since become one of our international members.



Aoife Kane-Thomas
(Photo courtesy: J Leahy-Kane)

DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN... & PETER & ALEX & JO

SERAG Inc. is a little desperate for help!

As we have around 2000 seedlings to plant, help is needed on both Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th June, between 8.30am – 2.30pm at Milyu A-Class Reserve in South Perth.

If you are able to come along - even for just a couple of hours - it will be appreciated.

Park in the vicinity of intersection of Comer or Gardner Street and Melville Parade in Como, cross footbridge over Kwinana Freeway, and walk north along bike path to the southern end of Milyu A-Class Reserve.

Please let us know if you can attend. As always, morning tea will be provided; but you will need to bring your own lunch.

THE PIED OYSTERCATCHER

The Pied Oystercatcher (*Haematopus longirostris*) is a wading bird native to Australia where it frequents sandy shorelines and mudflats, including the Swan River Estuary foreshore.

Pied Oystercatchers feed mainly on bivalve molluscs, which are prized apart with its specially adapted bill. They nest in shallow scrapes of sand and shell in open areas just above the high-water mark and generally produce two or three well-camouflaged eggs between October and January. Because it is very difficult to see their nests and eggs, they are easily inadvertently destroyed by people walking along the foreshore.

Unfortunately, the numbers of these beautiful birds are declining and they are rapidly moving towards inclusion on the *vulnerable species* list.



A Pied Oystercatcher at Milyu
(Photo courtesy: AH Kane)

REPLACEMENT TREES PLANTED AT PELICAN POINT

With a large area of Victorian tea-tree removed from the north-eastern corner of Pelican Point A-Class Reserve, a dozen mature Melaleucas have been planted to hasten the replacement of habitat for bush birds, including the Variegated Fairy-wren *Malurus lamberti* (race *assimilis*) - habitat specialists with a reduced distribution on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Thanks to the efforts of Mario and Margaret Matassa, a watering system has been installed, to ensure the trees' survival over their first summer months; and some additional signage has been ordered to raise public awareness about the need to minimize disturbance of birdlife in the Reserve.



FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

- 5 June: World Environment Day
- 5 - 6 June: Planting at Milyu A-Class Reserve

Please refer to the calendar on our website for further information and contact us for details if you would like to participate in any event.



Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc.

PO Box 73 North Fremantle WA

Phone: 08 9339 2439

Email: oneillc@westnet.com.au

Website: www.swanestuaryreserves.org.au