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# COASTLINE

August  
2018

Page 1	Back-to-Basics Local Skills Recording Dates to Diary
Page 2	The Highs and One Sad Low A Man Before His Time – Tony Gray
Page 3	How to Reduce Waste in Southland Creature of the Month - Grubs Herb of the Month
Page 4	August Gardening with Robert Plant of the Month Recipe of the Month Library Book Review
Page 5	Organic Gardening Estuary Care News From the Archives
Page 6	Open Orchard Project Our People & Our Community Our Committee
Page 7	Establishing Our Dream
Page 8	Readers' Patch EC Stock – Kings Seeds Contact Us Details

## Modern Tools to Teach Old Time Skills

We are planning to put on our website some educational video clips about back-to-basics skills such as, how to make soap, hand milk a cow, make bread, splice ropes etc. ...the skills that were once widely known in communities.

We have some people already willing and able to share their expertise but we would like to extend the range of skills we record. Do you have an old-time skill you would be prepared to share or do you know someone who has? Is there someone with an old bellows forge still operating in Southland?

Let's get such local expertise captured on video for the future generations to keep this knowledge going. Is there a skill you don't have that you would like us to capture?

We have the services of an excellent film maker and an editor available thanks to a grant from the Southland District Council They will prepare the videos for the web and will also make a DVD compilation to have at local schools and libraries.

For further information or to be involved in the project email:

[education@sces.org.nz](mailto:education@sces.org.nz)



### Dates to Diary This Month:

**14** SCES Committee Meeting, 7pm Environment Centre  
*Committee info pg 6*

**25** Peruvian Maca demo at 2pm *Scenes from the 2018 Maca harvest in Peru - A Visual Showcase.*

**28** Riverton Organic Gardening Group, next meeting 7pm  
*More info pg 5*

(All of these events will be held at the Environment Centre)

## Plenty of Highs and One Sad Low

Spring is in the air, evidenced by the jonquils, lambs and weeds! Especially luscious nutrient- rich chickweed saying 'harvest me'. So we have a bit of a weed focus this month. Check out page 4 – great for the next time you need to 'take a plate', healthy and economical!

Plenty of highs lately – great response to the annual heritage fruit tree sale, energetic community involvement in Open Orchard Parks pruning and two new parks being planted this spring..

The lows are few but one is major and that is the sad passing of a long time stalwart of environmental issues for Southland – Tony Gray who lived a long and colourful active life.

Tony was a member of our Society from its inception. At the opening day of the Environment Centre, June 1996, he spoke of his joy that one of his ex-students, Robyn Kennedy (now Guyton) had taken up the 'eco flag' and he presented a cheque for \$750 to the Society - a lot of money in 1996. It covered half the running costs for a year, and really did set us up to succeed.

During the recent crowd funding campaign to buy our building Tony donated \$5,000 simply for a favourite quote to be inscribed on one of the lovely rimu beams above the shop area: 'Mighty oaks from little acorns grow'? (Great things may come from small beginnings).

How wonderful to have been the recipient of Tony's generosity and encouragement; his influence will live on with us for many years to come. See more about Tony from another of his students, Robyn's brother and our guest writer this month.

**Wendy Joy**  
**Coastline Production Co-ordinator**

**The South Coast Environment Society Incorporated** is a NZ registered Charitable Trust (registration number CC41561).

The Riverton Environment Centre is one project operated by the Society. Volunteers open the Centre for the public 40 hours a week. The displays, information and resources are inspiring and enabling, incorporating a blend of traditional ways and new concepts showcased to give people more earth friendly options in their daily lives.

The Society has many other projects and is keen to welcome new volunteers and members. Contact details on back page.

## Guest Writer: A Man Before His Time

**Tony Gray, 1930 – 2018**

In my low decile secondary school in Invercargill (in the early 1970s), immigrant teacher Tony Gray had a colourful and eccentric presence. He would stumble theatrically into the classroom wearing his braces and tweed jackets and launch into lessons peppered with Goon impressions and throwing contentious topics at the class to engender passionate debate. He taught us to question established thinking and to understand the power of a knowledgeable and articulate argument.



Through him I learned the environmental damage caused by unrestrained capitalism (business was a dirty word to him) and the unnecessary use of plastics and packaging. He used to make a point of removing all the pins and packaging from a new newly bought shirt and leave them on the shop counter, explaining to the assistant that he was only interested in the shirt.

He was well ahead of his time when you think over 40 years later we are only just considering the end of single use plastic bags.

Tony had students planting riparian strips, protesting the industrial polluting of a local stream and the dumping of spent cathodes from the Tiwai smelter in Awarua Bay. He also had us staging street theatre to highlight the issues around the felling of native beech forests and the demise of refundable glass bottles.

Outside of teaching Tony was a key member of the Southland Ecology Action Group and the Southland Branch of Forest and Bird. He wrote many well researched and articulate submissions on behalf of these organisations over the years.

With other local activists he successfully campaigned to stop the Invercargill City Council from using local estuary as a tip, stopped the commercial extraction of fresh water from the middle of Fiordland and stalled a proposal for large scale extraction of the Maitara lignite to make liquid fuel.

He also lived by example, trying to live sustainably on a lifestyle block with his wife and children (similar to the Good Life TV programme).

Tony's legacy is a substantial one and he will be much missed by his family, past students, trout fishing buddies and his many environmentalist friends.

**Dave Kennedy**

## How to: Reduce Waste in Southland

It was a privilege to host Liam and Hannah in our Riverton Environment Centre in May. Despite a wintry night, we still had a good turn-out of over 25 people to hear their presentation. Their local research was impressive; thorough and informative. They have a very professional approach to their mission. Early this month they released their buying guide to being rubbish free throughout Southland. The link below is packed with places to buy in bulk, plastic free and multiuse products.



Please go to the link and share it with others:

<http://therubbishtrip.co.nz/regional-shopping-guide/zero-waste-in-southland/>

Thank you Hannah and Liam for setting an example, inspiring us to follow your lead and for making it easy for us to find and buy alternatives through your comprehensive Southland guide!

Each week swap one item for a zero waste alternative and you will be surprised how easy it is to move towards zero waste. We are looking into stocking 'keep cups' for your take away coffee. Is there anything else you would like us to stock? We do now stock menstrual cups

## Creature of the Month: Grubs in Our Soil



Gardeners presently scratching away at the soil in their gardens are reporting the presence of grubs; plump and wriggling, and asking what they might be; asking me, not the grubs though asking Google, with an example of the grub at hand, would probably work just as well.

There are many creatures that live in the soil; from predatory beetles to worms of all stripes, but it's the grubs that seems to worry gardeners the most.

Having a lawn means most people are aware of grass grubs and the harm they can cause, lifting the thatch, eating the sugar-filled roots of the living grasses and while they're most often found on site, grass grubs can also be found in cultivated soil, especially where it's close to the lawn edge.

Grass grubs are not especially attractive creatures, but much enjoyed by starlings, though for the lawn-lover, the scratching action employed by the birds is as damaging as the nibbling by the grubs.

Click beetles, and their young'uns, wireworm, are universally loathed, it seems, and can cause damage to sugar-rich crops like potatoes and sweet corn, though it's through eating the roots that their annoying work is done.

Cultivation and removal of these wriggling critters is the way to control them; patience is the most important ingredient.

Robert

**Our Longwood Loop Project:** (Intro in our July Coastline) Fits neatly into the new 'Provincial Development Fund' as it ticks all the boxes, re-localizing and rejuvenating rural communities, building on diversity, economic development and resilience. We are visioning the possibilities of what we could create together in Western Southland if we had substantial funding. For example: electric passenger and freight vehicles.....an example of a 'Reconnected carbon neutral rural community of the future'. Let us know your visioning ideas and "winning" phrases we could include. We are combining all our SCES projects into a package and we will be asking for a million dollars a year for three years, of the 1 Billion available per year ☺ it is well worth a try. If you have skills in large funding applications/marketing and want to help with the application contact [robyn@sces.org.nz](mailto:robyn@sces.org.nz)

## Herb of the Month: Anise (Pimpinella anisum), by Suzie Best, Herbalist

Commonly known now as Aniseed, it was originally used by the Romans for digestion related conditions.

**CULINARY & MEDICINAL USES:** Crush seeds when ready to use, or they lose flavour and medicinal value which includes as a digestive aid, treating colic/flatulence, relief for asthma and helping other lung congestion by drinking as a warm tea. If fennel is added, it can help to ease the whole bronchial system. Anise is believed good for nursing mothers to stimulate their milk and as an aid to ease childbirth. **WARNING:** pregnant women should not use it until last 6 weeks of gestation, due to its hormonal actions.

Its sweetness can be used to offset sugar - add crushed seeds to baking.

**GROWING & HARVESTING:** It needs a long growing season, likes average soil, not dry but hates being too moist. Requires median 21°C and full sun, but also doesn't like overheating. Seeds last up to 2 years only for germination, but longer for culinary use. It is best planted direct, but in Southland plant early with a forced heat source then carefully transfer. Harvest in autumn as the tips of fruits/seeds turn greyish-green. Cut stems off at ground, tie up and place heads down in pot or crock for a week to finish ripening. Shake out seeds and store away from light in dark coloured glass jars.

**NOTE: CULINARY or MEDICINAL ANISEED** is available in the spices section at the Environment Centre and the seeds for growing are part of the Kings Seeds range instore. © <https://www.facebook.com/gardentokitchenwithsuz>

## August Gardening with Robert

What to plant this month? Given the rain that fell overnight Saturday before I'm writing this, it might be best to keep off the garden altogether! The temperature too, has not been conducive of planting but both those elements will change over the next week so there will be opportunities to plant, for example, more garlic if you were lucky enough to get some of the rust-free cloves that were for sale here in the Centre over the past few weeks.

It's certainly not too late to plant garlic, or shallots for that matter, so long as the soil isn't so wet that it will suffer from your walking on it and working it up in readiness for planting. Garlic should be planted beneath the soil, shallots on top, though you'll need to check that the birds don't pull them up for whatever reason they have in their tiny heads for doing so.

Displaced shallots can be reset on the ground and as their roots grow so quickly, the "danger" time is not long. Both enjoy a rich soil and like to be fed as they develop; I recommend top-dressing with compost of your own making and feeding with liquid seaweed barrel brewed at the bottom of your garden.

Broad beans should either have been in the ground since autumn or about to go in as soon as the soil begins to warm a little. I put mine in two weeks ago and they've failed to sprout, it seems, despite my having soaked them overnight and had them swell in expectation of bursting into growth. Soaking them may have been their undoing as I suspect that the cold weather has caused them to sit and if they do that for too long, they'll rot. So, don't do as I did.

Peas too, should be throwing up leafy shoots from the very rich soil of my retired hen run (the run is retired, not the hens, though they have retired to a new space where they can feast on leafy greens for a few weeks; their previous run had become denuded of all vegetation and fully-top-dressed with guano, so needed a crop to draw some of that rich nutrient out; I chose peas for that purpose, soaked them and consigned them to the same fate as the broad beans! I'm still waiting for signs of life from them and won't give up just yet; a few warm days might see them right.

## Plant of the Month: Chickweed

Elbows are used by mothers to check bath-water temperature before dunking their infants.

Gardeners could do likewise with the soil, but don't have to, thanks to chickweed. This temperature-sensitive plant is a reliable indicator of soil temperature and appears as early in the spring as it possibly can, marking the start time for many of the early spring vegetables we like to plant in order to take full advantage of the entire growing season.

When chickweed appears, glossy leaved and thriving, gardeners know they can plant out seeds of early vegetables, in the secure knowledge that they haven't jumped the gun and consigned their seeds to too-cold soil and certain failure.

Chickweed is up and growing now, meaning you can get started with many of your favourite vegetables. Take care to protect them from frost which can do significant damage to newly-emerged tips.

Fresh green chickweed is a lovely addition to salads at this time of the year. It's rich in Vitamins A & C and contains lots of minerals including calcium. Chickweed is a great ground cover suppressing weeds for taller plants. And it is loved by chickens!

## Recipe of the Month: Weed Pesto

from the Book Review

Makes 1 – 2 cups

- 2-4 cloves garlic
- 2-3 tbs olive oil
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- ½ -1 tsp sea salt
- ¼ cup walnuts, pumpkin seeds, cashews or almonds



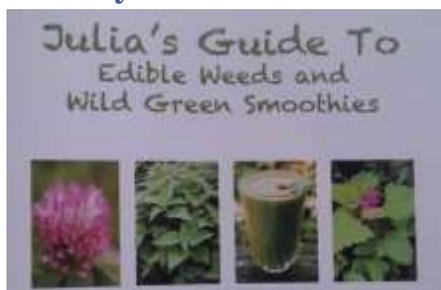
1 large double handful of mixed weeds: chickweed, cleavers, violet, dandelion, nettle, parsley, mint, puha or others.

Grind garlic in a food processor, then add nuts or seeds  
Whizz until they're crumbs.

Next add some weeds & process, add more & process again.

Pour in the lemon juice until it's a nice texture that's firm.  
Add salt to taste and hey presto, you have pesto!

## Library Book Review



by Julia Sich A woman wild about weeds! Borrow from our library or buy online - \$30 at [www.juliasedibleweeds.com](http://www.juliasedibleweeds.com)

*'I dedicate this book to Nature and her beauty richness of diversity, and her life giving plants, especially the cheeky wild edibles we call 'weeds''*

*Late winter is a time fresh greens are scarce, so it is a great time to go out and forage in your garden for edible weeds! Julia began exploring the nutritional value of weeds when she was very unwell. She believes all the diverse enzymes, vitamins, mineral and antioxidants were what she needed to cleanse and revitalize her body as well as balancing her PH.; she now keeps excellent health through her daily 'weed smoothies'.*

This book is very well laid out with excellent photos to identify weeds, to go with a very thorough physical description and their diverse and high nutritional content. Dandelion, Fat Hen, Chickweed, Cleavers, Sheep Sorrell and over 30 more are included. Be careful; after reading this book you will never look at weeds the same. Not only will you be excited to find new weeds in your garden, you will leave them there to harvest for your health!

## Riverton Organic Gardening Group:

Plenty of grubby hands and ideas sharing at our July meeting as everyone 'dissected' their soil samples and learned ways to improve their soil potential.

### **August meeting will focus on getting off to a good start with your spring garden:**

We will be sharing ideas about raising seedlings, different garden design and planting plans to have regular fresh veges all year round. Please do feel very welcome to join us – **Tuesday 28 August 7-8.30 @ the Riverton Environment Centre**

## Estuary Care News:

Galvanised by two meetings at the Centre and good turn-outs for both, the Riverton Estuary Care Society Inc has swung into action and made two site visits to Te Wai Korari Wetland Reserve in order to prepare for opening the tracks again, following years of allowing them to naturalise. Too natural those tracks became, it turns out, and barely able to be used, especially by those for whom "bush bashing" isn't an option any more.

We've taken a digger driver with us on one sojourn and he's agreed that a minidigger waved at the cocksfoot for a day will solve the inaccessibility issue quite well and a date is being negotiated. Aside from the track clearing, a small amount of gorse and broom removal will be undertaken, giving the whole project a nice nudge toward fulfilling its aim of making the area usable and useful again.

The local Community Board in association with the Southland District Council are planning to remove some of the roadside shrubs in order that folk living in the retirement village on the corner can have an unimpeded view of the estuary and at the same time the workers have proposed that they clear the track that crosses council land and leads down to the first of the 4 bridges in the reserve. Things are moving at pace, leaving the Society's chairman a little dizzy with excitement.

## From the Archives: Robyn Looks Back Reminiscing and Forward Envisioning

Last week an experienced stonemason specialising in dry stonework called into the Centre offering his services as both a tradesman and a tutor. So let us know if you would like to attend a day workshop and when enough people we will arrange a date.

His visit started me reminiscing and telling him about the stone building course Rob and I attended in summer of '93, at Patearoa, Central Otago, in a local gravel pit, during a cycling holiday on two of the old vintage bikes you see in the Environment Centre.

As lovers of heritage dry stone cottages we digressed from the course after the morning on drystone work, and, while the rest of the group learnt about veneering with stone, Rob and I built a miniature cottage 8 inches high. I took a photo of it from ground level which made it look quite large. We proudly shared the photo of our achievement to all and sundry, before telling them it was actually just a miniature. ☺

A year later we were travelling through the area again, on our Honeymoon actually, and called in to see, if by chance that little cottage still stood; remember it was a gravel pit! To our surprise it was still standing strong, and even more magical was the fact that some children had built around the cottage adding many simpler little huts, tracks and sticks for trees. The expanded model covered over a metre.

So then last week... a day or two after I had been chatting with the stonemason, I got together with the Tuatapere community to help with their annual pruning day in their very well cared for Heritage Orchard Park. I was very surprised to see the community, so proud of their Orchard Park, they too have added to it by creating a lovely little meandering trail from Main Street to the Orchard Park behind the town. Not only that, they have had special eye-catching signs made to clearly mark the trail from both ends.

I was thrilled to see this lovely development. It was very heart-warming walking along the track envisioning all the families who may wander along the trail over the next 100 years to picnic in the park and sit under and sample fruits from trees cultivated from the same stock as the early Tuatapere settlers did, many generations before them.



## Open Orchard Project News:

We have had the first four pruning working bees, at the Heritage Orchard Parks at Monowai, Tuatapere, Woodlands and Waituna. Riverton, Otautau, Invercargill, Ohai and Winton to go. Dates will be chosen soon when the weather is good. If you want to come and learn how to prune and then help us at one or more of the working bees, let us know and we will keep you in the loop.

Our fruit tree sale has gone well and the weather has been kind. We do still have a few apple trees left \$28 each. If you missed out this year contact us to be put on next year's data base. Even better, become a member for priority orders. All proceeds from the sale go back into the project.

Last week Robyn went up and visited potential Orchards sites at Kaitangata for the South Otago settler trees and Owaka for the Catlins trees. Once confirmed we will transplant those trees in early September and would really appreciate some help with that.

We are hoping to get a community site near Riversdale for Northern Southland's trees. If this can't be arranged the trees will be planted in the Invercargill Park as they are too big to wait another year.

We need a dedicated person in the Gore area to help us gather the last scions (cuttings) from trees in Eastern Southland settler orchards. This is the last area that needs to be covered and the last Orchard Park will be established in 2020. If you can help with this please contact us. [openorchard@sces.org.nz](mailto:openorchard@sces.org.nz)

## Our People, Our Community: Meeting Up With Our Flecks Hall Neighbours

I had the pleasure of meeting with two long standing members of the Flecks Hall Trust committee.

Dave Frew, well known Riverton resident, scout leader, lifetime member, past president, recipient of the prestigious Scouting Silver Tui Award (for exceptional and distinguished service, inspiring others and promoting Scouting and its values) who, along with his wife Robin, together have given 100 years of service to scouting – very impressive and both third generation scouting supporters.

And I met with Sarah Baldwin, girl guiding pippin leader and committee secretary who has been continuously involved with Riverton guiding for 15 years since migrating south to their Pourakino Valley dairy farm with her family. Her children have now moved on but still Sarah commits herself very actively to her guiding leadership role.

Flecks Hall was built in 1934 and donated by the Fleck family for scouting and guiding to have a base for fun activities, equipment storage and to involve, train and encourage skill development in the 5 to 18 year olds of Western Southland. Scouting started in NZ in 1911 and guiding soon after. The committee is very grateful for the support of the community, their leaders, and parents.

The Guides meet weekly on Mondays and Scouts weekly on Tuesdays, after school times and during school terms. The close proximity to the Riverton schools is advantageous as the students can walk to the Hall. Currently there are five guiding and six scouting volunteer leaders who have taken young people right through to Queen's Award level.

Fundraising is an ongoing challenge for the committee. The major funding sources are the Rotary garage sales and mid-winter and Christmas markets. If you attend these events in the Hall you will probably see Sarah and others behind their stall selling home baking and produce. Another income source is hall hire fees for community and private functions.

An impending exciting new use of the Hall facilities is the establishment of a Riverton Men's Shed, by the local Lions, in the main shed at the west end of the Hall. The Trust welcomes this additional community use of the Hall facilities and wishes the group well.

The SCES is grateful for being able to utilise Flecks Hall, neighbouring the Environment Centre in Palmerston Street, for various functions. If you too would like to find out more about hiring the hall, guiding or scouting you are welcome to contact Sarah on 03 2349392 or Dave on 03 2348426. It's always good to supportively work together with our neighbours within our local community.

Wendy

## Our Committee:

NB: **Committee meetings dates for the remainder of the year are Aug 14, Sept 11, Oct 8, and Nov 7 at 7 p.m. in the Riverton Environment Centre, 154 Palmerston St. New members are always welcome.**

We invited SCES member and volunteer, Natalie, to share what's happening at her piece of Invercargill city paradise.

## This is our story about establishing our dream;

Hi we are Natalie and Adam.

What we're doing – We're setting up an almost ½ acre self-sufficiency block in Invercargill raising chooks, Muscovy ducks and rabbits for eggs and meat, plus a big veg garden fruit and nut orchard. We are aiming to grow most of our own and our animal food.



Prolific Summer Veg, Herbs, & Bee Flowers



I also tinker with sub-tropicals; currently the living room, left, is home to ginger, turmeric, pineapple, passionfruit, sugar cane, tamarillo, coffee, chilies and kumara slips, plus citrus in old washing machine drums in our tunnel house.

Adam does all the building and harder labour work

Why we're doing it – We enjoy gardening, raising animals, want to know where our food comes from and what's in it (we don't use weed spray or chemical pesticides). We also wanted to reduce our food bill. I have always had a green thumb and love animals so with our own place we can do both.

When we started – 5yrs ago when we took over the property the driveway was a shady forest and weed mat covered the house gardens. Parts were overgrown up to my shoulders.

Our main challenges – mud in areas with poor drainage due to compacted gravel from previous land use. Some parts are waterlogged much of winter and clay in other parts. Improving the soil is a priority for us along with protecting animals from hawks and cats by putting netting over the chicken run and having substantial rabbit hutches.

Our main assets – owning the land gives us the freedom to do what we want. Our quality old tools, pick axe and shovels, with replaceable handles are ideally suited to the work. The animals provide us with both manure for the garden and produce.

Our achievements - our section is now open and light and becoming more productive. Where the veg garden is well worked, we've grown cabbages up to 3kg, plus apples, plums, grapes, gooseberries and black currants. We've enjoyed home grown kumara, turmeric and ginger. Any excess we take to the Environment Centre to sell or South Invercargill 'Crop Swap'.

How we're doing it – initially weed-whacking, shoveling, using our invaluable pick, digging drainage trenches, adding whatever we have for compost, taking delivery of summer lawn clippings from contractors and adding manures including saw dust and horse manure. It's tough but satisfying manual work. If necessary, we establish temporary sites, e.g. for the nut trees to get them started until the permanent site is ready.

What's been helpful – books, internet sites and talking with others at the Environment Centre. I've created a Facebook group - Invercargill Gardening and Plant Swap - it's a great way to get new plants etc.



In conclusion, do not listen to "you can't grow .....here". Do your research. I have successfully grown kumara in the plastic house.

If you are keen, enjoy good physical work, and are prepared to experience the good (great days spent outdoors, the satisfaction of growing, harvesting and knowing what's gone into your food) and the bad (a few challenging days outdoors) then we recommend you give it a go. We love it!



## Readers' Patch

### Coastline space for you to fill.

Have you got something you would like to Buy, Sell, Swap or a Service to offer?

Any burning questions? Maybe a Hint, Tip or Idea to share, or Feedback on an item in the previous issue?

*If relevant to our local community / environment / sustainability and space is available, the Publication Team will be happy to consider including your item. If Selling goods or a service and you make a sale, a donation to the SCES would be greatly appreciated.*

### Free Fresh Untreated Chainsaw Shavings

In Riverton to Give away

Give Doug a call on 0274 99 88 58

### Super Special Garlic – Riverton Co-op

Garlic cloves for planting pinky 'Kakanui Heirloom' \$28.50kg already split up ready to grow or use now. (We also have whole garlic corms \$47kg white unknown variety)

### Composting Toilets - SCES

The Environment Centre is now an agents for composting toilets. We have one on display in our window for people to look at along with Bokashi composting kits etc.

## The Environment Centre Stocks:



We stock a good range of Kings Seeds: Organic, heirloom, herbs, microgreens and sprouting seeds. We can order anything else you would like. Look on their website for their full range <https://www.kingsseeds.co.nz>

Please learn to save seeds and share them so we can start developing strains that adapt more and more to our climate zone.



**AUGUST 25<sup>th</sup>, 2pm at the Environment Centre**  
Scenes from the 2018 Maca Harvest in Peru – A visual showcase. Hosted by Seleno Health

**Please send in your Readers Patch contributions by the third Monday of each month to [coastline@sces.org.nz](mailto:coastline@sces.org.nz).**

## Support the South Coast Environment Society

*Community support enables the South Coast Environment Society to continue to operate the Riverton Environment Centre and manage several successful projects throughout Southland.*

*If you like what we do, and want to help us to do more, please consider; donating money, volunteering time, becoming a member, and / or sponsoring a project. <http://www.sces.org.nz/about/donate>*

**Ph 03 234 8717**

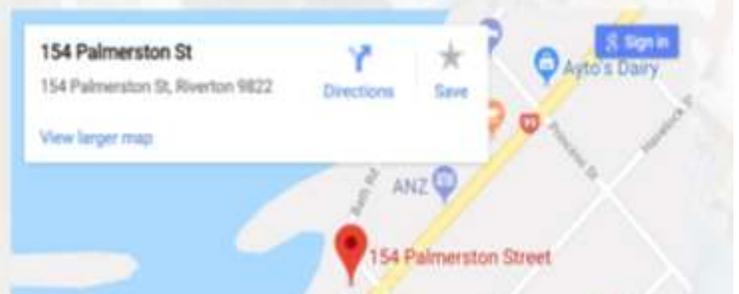
## Visit the Environment Centre

The South Coast Environment Centre is situated on the main street of Riverton on the Southern Scenic route.

Phone: 03 2348 717 Email: [office@sces.org.nz](mailto:office@sces.org.nz)

Opening hours are:

- Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 4:30pm
- Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm
- Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm



[www.sces.org.nz](http://www.sces.org.nz)



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