

COASTLINE

Pg 1	Just Days Away to On Now
Pg 2	Circles of Life
Pg 3	Nick's Gardening: Hōtoke (winter) Southland Seed Savers Network Korean educational TV programme
Pg 4	Food Secure Communities NZ-wide Petition
Pg 5	Climate Change – Please Act Now! Simple Act Now Ideas
Pg 6	Bountiful Backyards Biochar Workshops Workshops and Activities
Pg 7	Special People, Special Plants Pruning time for pip fruit Organic Gardeners Meetings
Pg 8	Come Join Us From the Chair
Pg 9	Strategic Review Day How To Keep Your Home Warm
Pg 10	Seasonal Herbs with Hollie Robert's Plant Family Our Fungi Family
Pg 11	Regenerative Soil Management
Pg 12	Henry Harrington's, Words of Wisdom, Part 5 Plastic Free July

WINTER 2023

2023 FRUIT TREE SALE ON NOW

Our annual Open Orchard fundraiser, the Fruit Tree Sale, is back for another year. [Order online now](#) and pick-up 4th, 5th, 6th August. Online ordering is definitely advisable and our preference. Last year stocks were very low by the selling weekend.

As with every year, we have a huge range of special heritage apples (more than 60 different varieties!), grafted right here in Southland by Robin Blake of Plants South in Invercargill. We have also made an effort to get a bigger range of other types of fruit trees this year: apricots (three varieties), peaches (three varieties), pears (five varieties), quinces, cherries, nashi and eleven varieties of plums!

For the second year now we are pleased to have local Riverton nursery, Hortus vitae – Gardens for Life, supplying plants; this year hazelnuts, raspberries and gooseberries.

We are very proud of this annual event. Not only does it raise much-needed financial support for our Open Orchard project (more info below), but it also encourages the growth of small local nurseries and helps people to access a diversity of fruit trees to support their own food and our community food resilience aspirations.

The goal of the Open Orchard project is to get a diverse range of old varieties of healthy heritage fruit trees back into our Southland communities. This is important for the following reasons:

- Preservation of genetic diversity;
- Preservation of skills, such as pruning and grafting;
- Preservation of our cultural heritage;
- Access to healthy locally-grown food.

Your support of the Fruit Tree Sale helps us achieve this goal - ngā mihi nui, thank you! Remember that paid up members of the South Coast Environment Society receive the Fruit Tree List by email, one week before public access to the list, giving them priority ordering (along with other worthwhile benefits) – you can join here: www.sces.org.nz/membership



4th, 5th & 6th August	Annual Fruit Tree Sale Pick-up times, 10 to 3pm Riverton Environment Centre. Order online now.
10 August	SCES Committee meeting 7pm Riverton Environment Centre, All Welcome
31 August	Organic Gardeners Meeting - Planning your vege garden 7pm Riverton Environment Centre
31 August	Organic Gardeners Meeting - Planning your vege garden 7pm Riverton Environment Centre

CIRCLES OF LIFE

The calendar tells us it's winter though the temperatures when working out in the sun would have us believe otherwise. Aren't we so very lucky. I still can't think of anywhere better to be living!

Plastic-free July has brought the re-introduction of the brown paper bags into supermarkets. I grew up in a house with a 'window seat' filled with brown paper bags we frequently reused, which gave way to plastic bags. I now live in a same era house complete with window seat which I'm about to start using for brown paper bag storage.

So many of the recommended reduce, reuse, repair and recycle actions we hear about are consistent with what our parents and grandparents routinely did, as we read from Henry Harrington's Words of Wisdom, on the back page. How life does go round in circles!

Robert shares his thoughts about the importance of us all doing our bit now to contribute to minimising climate change and I share some practical easy steps we can readily take. Bryan introduces us to Regenerative Soil Management, which is a new topic for us. Thanks Bryan.

It's critical garden planning and preparation time. Dark evenings and frosty mornings are great times for reading those books you have on the shelf or researching online. Whatever takes your fancy in terms of making the most of the space you have available. And check out Nick's ideas on pg 3.

It's pruning time. Helpers are needed for the Orchard Parks working bees which double as learning opportunities for newbie participants. Plus workshops are planned. One way or the other, be part of the action to both share and learn; good for us all round!

Plus there's more to inspire, inform and enhance your knowledge base so please read on and enjoy our Winter 2023 Coastline.

Wendy Joy, Editor



Corn salad (Valerianella locusta) growing well with perennial bunching onions.



Mizuna is a hardy winter green.



This cavolo nero kale has been growing well in a bathtub.



Cavolo nero kale is beautiful as well as delicious! The Calendula in the background will continue flowering all winter.

The South Coast Environment Society Incorporated (SCES or the Society) is a NZ registered Charitable Trust (Registration Number CC41561).

The Society vision is of a sustainable, resilient community of good leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support people to adopt sustainable lifestyles and care for and about our environment.

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

NICK'S GARDENING: HŌTOKE (WINTER)

“Matariki ahunga nui” - “Matariki provider of plentiful food”



Hopefully you have some tasty greens in your garden that you can pop into a salad - kale, corn salad (lamb's lettuce or mâche), mizuna, rocket and miners lettuce are lovely at this time of year. Pop in some garlic now, and remember to get some green manure seeds in the ground - lupins, peas and broad beans will grow (slowly) even when it's cold (as long as your soil isn't completely saturated!).

At the end of autumn my wife harvested all our carrots and parsnips (plus the odd swede - exciting!) and stored them in crates, covered with dry soil on our back porch; we have our potatoes stored in sacks out of the rain and leeks (with roots still attached) in buckets. This enabled us to get new crops in the empty beds straight away, before winter slowed new growth, plus it's so easy to grab some dinner ingredients without having to tromp around in the cold! You may want to consider this for next winter. It is easier for us to manage our garden this way, rather than having beds that are partly full and being emptied little bit by bit. Plus I think it saves our precious root crops from being munched by hungry critters (like grass grubs or wireworm) during winter.

As we celebrate Matariki it's a great time to think about our backyards and how we can make them more bountiful - not just with kai for us to eat, but in a way that supports more life and makes the world a more beautiful place. Check out the Bountiful Backyards weekend coming up in October for lots of great ideas!

PROJECT UPDATE:

Southland Seed Savers Network



This is a very important and very technically challenging project! Over the years we have collated a collection of some special Southland seeds, as well as many seeds which are not necessarily unique from a heritage perspective, but potentially valuable for local food security.

The requirements for growing and saving seeds vary significantly between plant families and vegetable types, with some (e.g. tomatoes, lettuces, peas and beans) being very easy and others (e.g. broccoli, corn and pumpkins) being very challenging. The key things that make it hard to save good seeds from tricky varieties include needing a large number of plants to ensure sufficient genetic diversity, making sure they are grown well (with any not-so-good plants removed), and ensuring that pollen from different varieties doesn't mingle, causing cross-pollination and possible loss of desirable characteristics.

Fortunately Janice Purchase from Clinton and Rex McGregor from Gore have been injecting some fresh enthusiasm (not to mention horticultural expertise!) into this project, seeing the enormous potential for maintaining and enhancing the cultural value and the economic potential of our seed collection. Janice has been doing an inventory of the collection and we will soon be producing a list of varieties with sufficient quantities to make available to the public, as well as a list of more special varieties which will be the focus of a coordinated growing and saving programme. If you are a good grower and would like to be involved in some upskilling around seed saving, we would love to hear from you!

You can find out more about the Southland Seed Savers Network here: www.sces.org.nz/southland-seed-savers

Link to the Korean educational TV programme, filmed earlier this year, about the Guyton's forest garden, a bit about the Environment Centre and the Longwood Loop. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHMulm_xtFs

It's interesting to note the different types of things the film crew focused on. To date there is no translation available for what they are saying in Korean.

Realising Food Secure Communities in Murihiku Southland



The significance of food systems mahi in Southland, led by community groups such as the Murihiku Kai Collective ('MKC') and South Coast Environment Society, has been highlighted by a national report.

The Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective's desktop research project Realising Food Secure Communities in Aotearoa was published in May.

Healthy Families Invercargill's social research project "The Good Food Initiative" was included in the report. That project led to the establishment of the MKC and has informed other local kai initiatives.

Healthy Families Invercargill affirms Kore Hiakai's report underlines that community involvement is essential to strengthening food security and demonstrates that the MKC is on the right track.



"This report identifies 12 key enablers to create food secure communities, of which the MKC is targeting most."

These enablers include:

- National and local government food strategies – a Murihiku Southland Good Food Road Map is being created to inform responses at local authority level
- Food Security networks to support collaboration and positive changes in local food systems – the Murihiku Kai Collective is a prime example of this
- Cultivating care for the environment and recognising the importance of protecting the source of our kai – a range of initiatives are underway, including the mahi of Para Kore, recent community composting hui, composting workshops organised by a range of organisations and the installation of a CarbonCycle composting system at Aurora College.
- Upholding mātauranga Māori, supporting the restoration and revival of ancestral knowledge, practices, and places – the community and market garden planned for Aurora College will incorporate mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori approaches.

"We feel encouraged and confident that the work being done in Murihiku Southland is leading us towards a more food secure community. We know we have more work to do, but by working together, we will achieve great outcomes," Rochelle said.

[Realising food secure communities — Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective](#) to read the report.

Rochelle Francis

A NZ-wide Petition You May Like to Check Out

Our food system is cooked.

The 'Fix our Food System National Campaign & Petition' currently underway includes support from some in the south. Though not directly including the SCES, we include it here for your awareness of some of what's going on nationally to strengthen food security in Aotearoa

In the face of food insecurity, a cost of living crisis, a climate emergency, growing geopolitical instability and some of the worst food-related health burdens in the developed world... a domestic food system that feeds New Zealanders well is more important than ever.

A group of NZ organisations is running a parliamentary petition to tell policy makers that we demand action for New Zealand's eaters, farmers and growers, processors and manufacturers,

fishers, public health advocates, farmed animals, food waste campaigners, social support agencies, logistics and distribution folk, environmentalists, the hospo and beverage industry, retailers, industry bodies and kai sovereignty champions.

Help them tell the people with the power that we demand action to create better food future for our people, our farmers, growers, fishers, food producers and future generations of New Zealanders. For more information, Visit www.fixourfoodsystem.com

Climate Change – Please Act Now!



How are we getting on locally, with stopping climate change, or at least preparing for the effects of what we are too late to change?

Do you know of any actions being taken, aside from your own (I'm assuming you're treating the issue seriously and not just "watching and waiting"), especially by those we've chosen to represent us as ratepayers or industry groups (Federated Farmers etc.)?

It looks as though governance groups are unable to settle on meaningful actions that will have effect soon enough, so it's back to the individual; you and I, to take realistic actions in preparation for challenging times ahead; of course, it's not "ahead" for those in the north, hammered by Cyclone Gabriel recently, nor Canadians struggling to find fresh air to breathe as the result of the swathe of forest-fires across their country, to name just 2 of many climate-related challenges already causing significant difficulty here and abroad.



I believe it's simply irresponsible to claim that you, your neighbourhood, your region or your country is "too small" to make any

difference to the human-caused climate disruption that's building in strength with every passing day. At the same time, it's very hard to know what you can do, given the need to live a practical life: you may understand that your car adds to the greenhouse gas load every time you use it, or your job does the same thing, but abandoning either immediately is not a reasonable action.

The first meaningful thing to do, for any individual, seems to be to look the problem squarely in the eye (of the storm). Hiding away from what's clearly coming won't help for long. Small actions, while difficult to defend from a naysayer/denier, are the way forward for each and every one of us, in my opinion. You'll already have heard many suggestions of how to reduce your contribution to the warming atmosphere. Do some of them.

Keep a lookout for other doable actions and add those to your new way of living. Keep an eye out too, for people in positions of authority talking meaningfully about climate change and support them however you can; they face pressure from industry and other invested agencies, to keep things as they are.

Change is inevitable. Early-adaptors do best in changing conditions.

Robert

Simple Act Now Ideas

Shop locally, create a list during the week or fortnight to minimise your number of trips to the shop. (Also good for budgeting) Plan meals around seasonal availability and to avoid waste.



Double skinned metal reusable water bottles are readily available – no more buying plastic bottles. Water stays cooler and is protected from the sun. (Also way better for the budget!)

Reduce, reuse, repair and recycle. When shopping ask yourself do I really need to buy that? (Again better for the budget). Are you composting any food waste – visit the Learning Hub on our website for all you need to know to compost successfully.

Ask yourself, do we need the heating up that high? Do I need to travel that quickly? (Again maybe better for the budget!)

When exploring purchasing options check out where items were manufactured to possibly reduce travel miles. I noted today, 2 comparable tubes of basic body cream I had – 1 was made in NZ; the other in India!

If packaging is non-recyclable, check the back for customer service contact details and call or email to say you like their product but not their packaging!



By now, are all your light bulbs LEDs? If you are renting, and cost is a concern, swap out non LED bulbs and store them to swap back if you move. Over time thinking along these lines will become your 'norm' making it easy to do your bit and to be Acting Now!!!

Wendy



Bountiful Backyards

Educational Weekend Coming Up - 7th & 8th October

Keep this date free for a weekend of workshops for all the family to help make your backyard more bountiful.

This spring season addition to our much loved Harvest Festival is a must for anyone who wants to grow your own food and learn other skills to make whatever space you have at home more productive!

There will be over 20 one and a half hour workshops over the weekend, e.g.

- Beginner Gardening
- Raising your own vegetables from seed
- Making your garden fertile
- Grafting apple trees
- Designing your garden
- Children's simple gardening workshops and more!

You will come away with the knowledge to start growing plus some seeds, plants and other resources to get you started, including free giveaways at some workshops and on-site stalls with local growers selling seedlings etc.

The finalised programme will be advertised late August. Keep watch on the front page of our website and subscribe to our mailing list to be kept up to date.



Biochar Workshops

Biochar is produced by heating biomass in an oxygen-free or air-limited environment. This is technically called pyrolysis. If used as a soil amendment it will have biology added to it before application. Yes, it is similar to charcoal, but not quite the same. Biochar has the potential to store large quantities of carbon in the soil on a long-term basis and to contribute to food resilience by encouraging healthy soil life.



Photos: Left: The burn, Right: Finished charcoal.

Dylan Graves is an experienced permaculturist and keen promoter of the benefits of biochar (check him out at www.passionateperemies.wordpress.com). He ran a biochar workshop at the Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival.

Our Administration superstar Elizabeth Simonka attended and shares her experience here;

Dylan's first workshop at the Heritage Harvest Festival was a good introduction to the concepts and reasoning behind biochar. He had a great manner and the interactive nature of the workshop made it very engaging. Because we couldn't fit in an actual burn at the Festival it left everyone keen for a follow-up, more hands-on session.

Sometime later, community member Bryan kindly hosted us at his property for further learning, to do an actual burn session. Dylan had a couple of different set ups: a 200 litre metal barrel and a smaller paint tin 'retort'. One particularly interesting aspect was the Top Lit Updraft (TLUD) approach, which enabled a really clean burn, with hardly any smoke generated. The workshops were a great learning experience. Thank you Dylan and Bryan.

Elizabeth

Home DIY Fermentation for Health - workshop series with Evita at The Batch cafe in Invercargill Starts Friday 21st July

More information and bookings here!

Bountiful Backyards Festival, Sat 8 Oct & Sun 9 Oct

Join us in Riverton for a packed weekend of workshops to support your spring gardening!

Topics include:

- Basic beginner organic gardening
- Seed sowing and plant propagation
- Managing garden soil fertility
- Keeping poultry
- Grafting apples
- Making biochar
- Growing sprouts and microgreens
- And more!

Plus stalls selling seeds, seedlings and other garden items!

Follow our Facebook page or sign up to our email list to keep up to date.

Right now you will see that team member Evita is running a series of 'Home Fermentation for Health' workshops in Invercargill every second Friday at The Batch Café, during August & September. You will be able to learn about Lacto-Fermented Vegetables, making kimchi, kombucha and much more! Check out the website for details!

www.sces.org.nz/workshops-and-activities

OUR PEOPLE

Special People, Special Plants

I was recently chatting with Ann Hopcroft at the Environment Centre about seeds and plants and gardening (as I do quite often!) and she mentioned a special story.

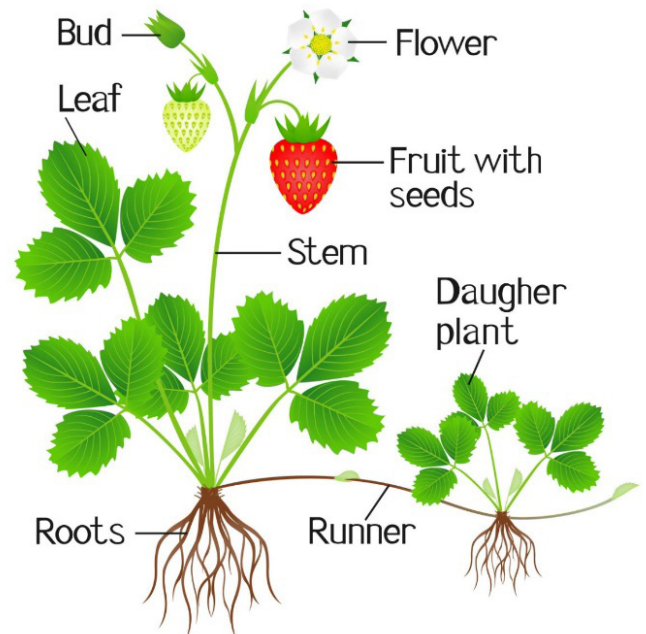
Ann's father (Don McPherson) was a very enthusiastic and capable gardener, as many people were back in the day, and one of her special memories is of the wonderful strawberries he grew. Ann grew up, moved away and got on with life, eventually settling in Riverton, where she has a great garden. It turned out that the people who bought the family farm from Ann's parents (Ian and Joanne Anderson, great gardeners as well) also recently moved to Riverton, and Ann inquired whether they knew the fate of the strawberries her dad used to grow so well. Actually, they informed her, we looked after them for many years and brought them to Riverton with us - would you like some runners?

As you can imagine, Ann was thrilled with the idea of having this connection with her family and childhood back in her life. The really amazing thing about this story (I think) is that as strawberries are propagated vegetatively (from 'runners', not from seed), the plants that Ann has in her garden now are actually genetically identical to the ones she ate from as a child - in effect, they are the exact same plant! Ann also has a rhubarb plant that her father gave her, pieces of which he grew wherever he settled throughout his life. This too is genetically identical to the original plant.

Our Open Orchard project is partly based on this notion of having a tangible link to our cultural heritage – the apple variety we have, grown from cuttings rescued from Captain Howell's original orchard, is actually exactly the same tree that he picked fruit from himself all those many decades ago!

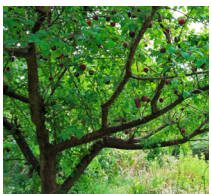
Do you have a special story like this to share? I'd love to hear it! Having a relationship like this to plants is such a special thing. Unfortunately many people these days do not have the opportunity to make such a connection to plants... My Dad has boxes of photos and documents from his family history, but what excites me the most is the white lilac he got from his Mother's garden - I must remember to get a cutting!

Nick



<https://strawberryplants.org/genetics-of-strawberry-plants>

JULY/AUG IS PRUNING TIME FOR PIP FRUIT!



Come along to one of our orchard park working bees to learn and to help! You get a free workshop on how to prune apples & pear trees then practice on the ones in the park with one of our experienced tutors support.

Let us know which park/s you would like us to let you know the working bee / workshop date by emailing openorchard@sces.org.nz. Choose from: Winton, Monowai, Riverton, Tuatapere, Ohai, Nightcaps, Woodlands, Owaka, Kaitangata, Balfour, Riversdale, Waikaia, Otautau, Mokotua, or request a pruning workshop in your town!

Monthly Riverton Organic Gardeners Meetings

Riverton Environment Centre
7pm last Thursday each month

31st August - Planning your veg garden
29th September - Planting and care of seeds and seedlings
26th October - Visiting 3 styles of established veg gardens

For more information or to get a reminder email; education@sces.org.nz

OUR ORGANISATION

Come Join Us

The Environment Centre Team warmly invites you to come and be part of our wonderful team of caring volunteers!

These quotes are from some of our current volunteers:

“It’s a friendly and encouraging place to be.”

“I always feel appreciated.”

“It’s such a vital service to the community, I feel it is a privilege to help out.”

“The obvious passion of everyone there for what they do is energising and inspiring.”

“Great opportunity to meet new and like-minded people.”

“Great way to learn about growing my own garden.”

“I enjoy working with my fellow volunteers who create such an interesting community of thoughtful considerate people. The Centre is a marketplace for people looking for ways to nurture themselves and their families.”

“If you have an interest in old fashioned holistic living’ you can guarantee you’ll either find answers to your projects in the Centre itself or from one of the customers you serve while volunteering there.

We operate a weekly roster. You can put your name down for 1-3 hours for whenever you are free; you can help out weekly, fortnightly or monthly, whatever suits you best.

Volunteers get a discount on any organic food purchases, relative to the monthly hours volunteered.

Out of town volunteers, get a koha towards petrol costs.

If volunteers are looking for paid work, our Team may be able to provide a reference for your CV.

Call into the Riverton Environment Centre to find out more or give us a call 03 234 8717 to make a time to join us.

Robyn, Centre Manager

From the Chair

It’s been a productive time for our SCES committee & staff, even with the arrival of winter winds & cold, and the winter illnesses that come along with them! We are looking forward to our annual Open Orchard Project Fruit Tree Sale in August, and hope for some of our lovely Riverton sunny, clear, (if a little cold) winter days.

We have been having some really exciting meetings with Weave Together, a Dunedin-based not-for-profit charity that specialises in financial administration, business systems, and providing services and guidance for other charities. Following our discussions with Weave Together, we have put a hold on appointing a financial manager, until we know what Weave Together can offer SCES. We are very appreciate of the wonderful applicants who responded to our job listing - and we are looking forward to moving forward with some strong financial systems in place.

We are also looking forward too, to spring and our Bountiful Backyards weekend. This will be a great chance for aspiring & experienced home gardeners to get together, learn some new growing skills, share ideas and plans for their gardens, and take home some seedlings & seeds to launch into a season of growing! We are lucky to have plenty of local gardening experts who will be coming along to share their knowledge and offer support to growers big & small.

Our Committee is looking forward to spending a day together getting more acquainted with our SCES Strategic Plan, and sharing ideas for our projects over the next year. We haven’t had an opportunity to gather all together like this since before Covid, so I am excited for all of the rich conversations and good food that are sure to accompany this day!

Hollie



Left A very old apple tree, one of five that survived many years in the historic Howells orchard in Southland. Right This tree was freshly grafted and now survives for future generations in the Riverton Heritage Orchard Park.

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.

www.sces.org.nz/about/donate

Ph 03 234 8717

Strategic Review Day

This was a very productive day lead by expert strategist James Pearson, who volunteered his services on the day as well as all his preparatory and wrap-up work! (He usually works with national and international businesses and organisations so we felt very privileged to have James working with us!)

It became evident from discussion regarding our mission and vision statements, goals, and projects, that requests for our services outstrip what we can offer primarily due to financial constraints. Historically we have seen our Society as having a support and educative role without a strong focus on generating financial returns. To continue providing such important community services and to be able to grow the reach of our services, we now need to focus on growing our financial capability, plus expand and diversify our income streams to generate greater financial returns and security.

We concluded the day by determining immediate realistic action points for each of our 6 major projects;

- Open Orchards – our 15 Community Heritage Orchard Parks around Southland Organise winter Pruning Working Bees immediately, followed by educative workshops to be planned and scions gathered from old orchards in preparation for scion sales and future heritage fruits identification.
- Seed-Savers - Undertake a feasibility study regarding the possibility of supporting the Seed Savers project with a seed producing enterprise
- Grow Local – Buy Local - Primarily the Longwood Loop which we need to continue to grow in terms of local awareness and number and diversity of suppliers. Increase promotion of the Loop through signage on the van used for the pick-up and delivery runs.
- Children's Education - Organise and promote Kid's Workshops as part of the Bountiful Backyards Festival planned for October.
- Forest Garden – located behind the Fire Station Enhance public awareness and understanding with greater promotion and feedback by way of utilising local media, PR opportunities, surveys, on-site guest book.
- Heritage Harvest Festival – recognised by Great South as one of Southland's Unmissable Events Secure funding for a manager to proactively plan and organise this growing annual festival.

Timeframes and team members were assigned to each with follow-up to be at monthly meetings prior to a follow-up strategic review session within the next 8 months.

It was a practical, constructive, goal directed day with all participants committed to the future growth of our Society.

Hollie

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME WARM

Heating is expensive. Save money by keeping the cold air out and the warm air in.

- Draw curtains at sunset - to keep the day's heat in. The best curtains are thick and lined and well-fitted, covering the whole window and preferably reaching the floor.
- Consider DIY window-film kits from a hardware store - to cut heat loss through windows by up to a half and are a fraction of the cost of double-glazing.
- Stop draughts - make sure your windows and doors fit their frames. Use draught stopping tape around windows and doors and 'snakes' along the bottom of doors
- Cooking, showering and washing - all introduce moisture to your home. The best way to get rid of this moisture is with externally vented extraction fans and vents. If you don't have these, open windows during and/or after cooking, showering and washing up.
- Put lids on pots and turn the heat down as soon as the pot begins to boil and open a window or turn on the extractor fan when you cook as steam turns into cold air
- Dry clothes outside or in a vented clothes dryer - try not to use indoors airing racks. The moisture in the clothes will end up in your home and make it damper and feel cold.
- Air your home - open windows and doors at the same time once or twice a day to air the house and let moisture escape, even in winter.
- Ventilate your bedroom - sleeping with your bedroom windows open a crack lets out at least some of the moisture that naturally builds up during the night or open them up for a while when you get up in the morning.
- Air your bedding - especially in winter. Duvets, pillows, and other heavy bedding absorbs moisture over time, so air them outdoors when it's sunny.

Outside

- Fix any broken or leaking pipes, and clear and fix gutters - leaky pipes and blocked guttering can cause moisture inside your home, which can lead to mould growth.
- Lay down a ground vapour barrier - this is basically, a giant piece of black plastic sheet that sits on the dirt under your house, keeping dampness away
- Clear vents - check the outside of the house to make sure all underfloor vents are clear of plants or other blockages. This helps to move damp air out from under your house.

Awarua Synergy; awaruasynergy.co.nz is a local trust that offers a free home energy assessment and maybe able to help with discounted rates for insulating and heating your home.

SEASONAL HERBS WITH HOLLIE – HAWTHORN



Hawthorn in Autumn: have big, red, bright berries that can be harvested to use fresh or stored to use dried. Hawthorn berries are high in antioxidants, and are good for the heart, arteries and

for all kinds of healing. A hawthorn syrup can be a lovely way to enjoy hawthorn daily - a "Hedgerow Syrup" with blackberries, elderberries and hawthorns is something I make every autumn.

Throughout Winter I especially enjoy the syrup. It can be used in drinks or on desserts, either hot or cold. You can also dry hawthorn berries to keep over the winter, and these can be nibbled as a dried fruit or made into a warming tea.

In Spring, you will notice that Southland is filled with Hawthorn bushes. Along the roadside their dainty white flowers sit like snow on the small clover-like leaves and twisty branches. Hawthorn will often grow where soil is poor, and is often found on the forest edge, hill country pasture, or in disturbed forests. Their branches are adorned with many long spikes, and care must be taken when getting close to them.

The hawthorn comes from Europe, and has a place in many traditional stories & rituals, particularly featuring in spring with its flowery boughs being central to the May Queen ceremonies. In Ireland the hawthorn is also associated with fairy people, and places where hawthorn pop up are sometimes thought to be special locations and locals are encouraged not to cut down hawthorn trees where they appear, to ensure that their fairy neighbours are kept happy. Lovely!

ROBERT'S PLANT FAMILY



Pepino is a plant in the nightshade family as is tamarillo. Both bear fruit that look like over-sized poroporo fruits and you'll not be surprised to learn that the native is also in the

Solanaceae, or nightshade family. Black, woolly, woody and deadly nightshades are also in the family, as is obvious from the common names.

I received a bunch of pepino cuttings in the mail recently, sent to me from an Auckland gardener. The mother-plant from which the cuttings were taken, has provided yellow striped with purple fruits for her family for over 50 years. She advised me that any individual plant only remains productive for 3 to 4 years, then has to be re-started from cuttings. I hope my new cuttings represent the start of a 50+ run of pepinos for my family. They like it warmer than it usually is in Riverton, but mine will grow in the tunnel house and do well, I expect. I've never tasted a pepino, but hope to next year.

OUR FUNGI FAMILY



Seems plants and animals, flora and fauna, both sprang from fungi, back, back, back in the day, making mushrooms our mother, I guess. Fungi are still here, after all those years, keeping an eye on her children, perhaps and continuing to provide nourishment to them, one way or another, "another" being the vital support they give forests

in making the oxygen we breath; without that, we'd be going nowhere. More and more research and

thinking about fungi is uncovering just how extraordinary (or maybe, ordinary) fungi are. They connect individual plants with the wood-wide web; in fact, they are the web. Fungi live everywhere imaginable, including inside of our bodies. I shudder when I think of fungicides being applied here and there and everywhere. That seems to me an act of self-destruction, given we need fungi for our very existence.

Robert

INTRO TO REGENERATIVE SOIL MANAGEMENT

Riverton community member Bryan Clearwater has a long history of organic farming and land management. Here, he outlines the Principles of Regenerative Soil Management.

The foundations for what has become known as Regenerative Farming, as I am outlining below, are defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a small part of the United States Department of Agriculture, in association with the American Rodale Institute, a non-profit organisation that supports research into organic farming.

Sadly the term Regenerative is increasingly used around all sorts of subjects, especially by those adept at 'greenwashing' their business practices.

Simply put, the 5 Regenerative principles involve:

1. Keeping the soil covered with living plants all the time
2. Enhancing diversity
3. Avoiding synthetic inputs
4. Using ruminant animals (not easy in the average garden)
5. Minimising cultivation.

1) Having permanent pasture to keep soil covered is easy in New Zealand, especially with species diversity of different root depths, some of which, via photosynthesis, delivers carbon to an ever increasing depth.

Cover crops do the same job and should be selected for different purposes like breaking up plough pans, adding Nitrogen, organic matter. All are dependent on the timeframe available before the next crop needs to be sown.

Whatever the choice, cover crops need to be terminated to enable direct drilling or planting. At scale farmers can use a crimper roller on the tractor front while a direct drill is pulled behind. For the home gardener, use the black side up of silage plastic, secured by water or weights of any description.

2) Enhancing diversity includes but is not limited to: the business entity and product mix, the variety of soil types available, aspect and microclimates available, the use of seaweed, kelp, and other natural fertilisers (that do not require fossil fuels to make them water soluble and polluting). It includes agroforestry, our native bush, peat domes and natural habitats.

All of the principles enhance diverse soil microbiology. The biology is the bridge between what plants need to grow and the nutrition available.

3) Avoiding synthetic inputs includes the chemical warfare arsenal, with all the associated risks that farmers use for convenience and short term efficiency.

Glyphosate is just one of several hundred 'tools of convenience' often used. It is the active ingredient of Roundup, available in about 40 branded products. It is closely associated with a variety of cancers, and was registered by Monsanto in 2008 as an antibiotic. Killing soil bacteria is like killing plankton in the ocean, not a good idea.

4) Using ruminant animals like sheep, cows, goats, pigs, and deer contributes to a healthy soil ecosystem. Described by some as mobile fermentation mechanisms, they turn otherwise indigestible plant material into natural fertiliser loaded with bacteria and fungi conducive to rapid decomposition, feeding the soil food web.

Management for the home gardener could be challenging but not impossible.

5) Minimising cultivation does not mean 'No Till' as the Roundup sales teams would have us believe. It is an attempt to prevent deep ploughing, the loss of soil carbon, and soil structure.

It is an attempt to protect the mycorrhizal fungi and their associated 'wood wide web', that underground internet connecting 70 to 80% of all plant species, enabling plant 'conversations' and exchanges of nutrients, water and biochemical things with long names.

All of these Soil Management Principles involve elements of biomimicry [essentially copying natural processes]. They are not prescriptive like most of the Organic Certification Standards. They offer forward-thinking farmers and gardeners a variety of tools to sequester carbon out of our overloaded atmosphere and into our soils at depth, i.e. mitigate global warming, prevent the pollution of our catchments, estuaries and oceans, produce foods free of synthetic chemicals, foods with a high Brix level and nutrient density, and when combined with Organic Certification standards provide food quality and quantity second to none.

Bryan

HENRY HARRINGTON'S, WORDS OF WISDOM, PART 5 (with Abridged Intro)

Henry was a dedicated seed-saver long-time seed-saving master who retired to Ohai. Before Henry passed away in 2010 he recorded his experiences of living through the Depression Years, when recycling was simply the way of life. We are sharing sections of his writings over several Coastline issues. Thank you Henry Harrington. (Full Intro in June/July Coastline).

The elder women of the district had good knowledge of anything from home remedies to when you needed to get to a doctor and the freely passed it down through the generations so their skills were kept available to the whole district. Whenever they learned something new they passed it on to others so it could be made good use of when needed. After there had been illness in the family or a death in the house they fumigated the whole house by burning flowers or sulphur. A few burning coals were collected from the kitchen stove on a fire shovel and with all windows shut walked through every room putting a little sulphur on the embers on the fire shovel. As the fumes permeated all through the building, the doors were shut and they would go out for a walk. Later in the day the windows and doors were opened up to air the house out again.

District gatherings were a talking time for all this knowledge, as well as giving fresh seed and plants to others and collecting some new ones to bring home.

These were the days when there weren't any tar seal roads. All formed roads were loose shingle, no reflectors on corners, and few motor vehicles. The main way of going anywhere was to walk, ride a horse or go in a horse and cart. Pack horses were used to bring in supplies and anything to be packed in on horse came by horse and sledge.

A lot of people were concerned about fire danger. The copper was often setup out in the yard away from the buildings. This meant you picked your days to do the washing. If you were lucky water was piped to the area and if not you carried it from the nearest creek in buckets. First, all the linens and cottons were boiled up in the copper before being transferred into the wash tub with a round smooth stick; it always amazed me how they could pick up a double sheet with a stick and get it into the wash tub. When the cottons and linens were done they let the fire under the copper die down and used the hot soapy water to wash the woolens and silks. When they were done it was time for the heavy work trousers and shirts. The copper was stoked up again for these. When the washing was dry there was the job of ironing and they ironed everything. The iron was heated on the cool range and at times the garment was too dry for ironing so they dipped a hand in water and sprinkled the drift onto the garment to be ironed. In the hot kitchen it was a hot job.

See our Spring Issue for part 6 of Henry's Words of Wisdom..

PLASTIC FREE JULY GIVE-AWAY REUSABLE CLOTH BAGS

Our wonderful volunteer Jude has been very busy sewing up a bunch of large and small shopping bags and produce bags for our July shoppers.

Grab one free with any purchase from our Centre during July.

A HUGE Thank you to Jude for your massive effort to support our Environment Centre and Plastic Free shopping!

VISIT THE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

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

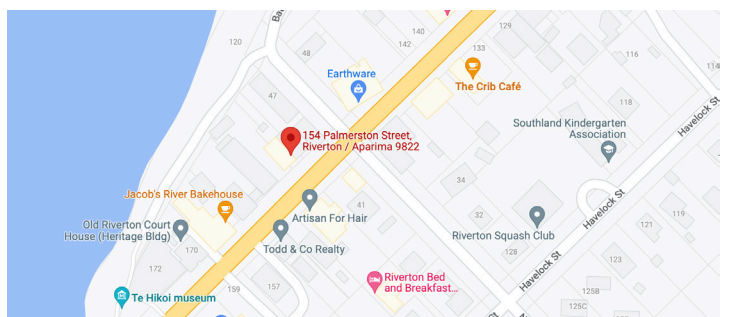
Phone: 03 234 8717, **Email:** office@sces.org.nz

Opening hours are:

Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 4:30pm

Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm

Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm



www.sces.org.nz



@rivertonenvironmentcentre