



# COASTLINE

**AUGUST 2020**

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## NETWORKING FOR RESILIENCE

The South Coast Environment Society has always had a focus on the self-sufficiency of the Southland community and individuals, including developing an extensive education programme and gathering resources needed for our local communities to work together on re-localising our goods and services.

Over the years we have applied unsuccessfully to different funders to support this focus but we were 'ahead of the times' and our visions rarely fitted neatly into any funding criteria.

Recent events of summer flooding blocking off Southland from the rest of NZ, the COVID 19 isolation and global instability, have brought about a change resulting in greater recognition of the value of our programmes and resources.

Funding agencies are broadening their criteria, and new funds are being created, that will enable us to attract funding to fully realise more of our projects.

Over the last few weeks we have met with representatives from organisations such as Agencies in Schools, Public Health South and Healthy Families to build partnerships with the aim of working collaboratively to make Southland families and communities more resilient.

We are working on our 2020-25 Strategic plan which will reflect this change. It will be uploaded on our website as soon as possible.

We look forward to being part of Southlands' future development; leading the way in N.Z. for a secure, sustainable and connected province.

## DATES TO DIARY:

23 -31 August	Pruning workshops/working bees at Heritage Orchard parks though out Southland: come and learn and help 2 hours daily. Email <a href="mailto:openorchard@sces.org.nz">openorchard@sces.org.nz</a> for timetable of when and where.
25th August	Seed raising and garden planning Riverton Organic Growers 7pm @ Enviro Centre
11th September	SCES committee meeting 7pm Enviro Centre, all welcome

## CHANGE IS ALL AROUND US

To calmly cope with day-to-day life we need to be comfortable with change happening all around us, in one way or the other on a regular basis, both in nature and man-made.

Front page we outline a change the SCES personnel are experiencing regarding services being sought by community groups. Our guest writer and SCES staff member, Nick discusses changes that happen when lawns are allowed to transform naturally. Robert highlights that it's now time to sow, sow, sow and the beautiful changes we see as seeds germinate. New volunteers, staff and training opportunities bring new skills and passions which result in changes for the Environment Centre.

We have decided to change to 2 monthly regular production of the full version of the Coastline newsletter with a one or two page 'Coastline Brief', the alternate months. This will enable us to ensure we communicate critical time bound information out to all in a timely manner.

Robyn and I welcome Rhi to our Coastline production team. You will see changes in the formatting this month, thanks to Rhi's expertise which has made our work much simpler. Thank you to Rhi.

Thank you too, to you for being part of the SCES community team. We welcome your input and feedback

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



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.

## WHERE DOES NATURE HAPPEN?

**Nick Kiddey**

Science has proven that nature is essential to human wellbeing. Nature can help mitigate ADHD, high blood pressure, depression and much more, not to mention of course the clean air, fresh water and healthy food that a healthy natural environment provides. But what is nature? And where does it happen?

In short, nature happens everywhere, to a greater or lesser extent. Nature occupies a spectrum, and if we want to get the health benefits it can offer, we need to make sure that it can be as rich and complex as possible.

Take a lawn for example. A short lawn contains one or two plant species (probably grasses). Correspondingly, there will only be a couple of species of insect - probably worms in the soil. This is nature, but at the extremely limited end of the spectrum. If some of the lawn grows longer, so-called 'weed' species (like clovers and dandelion) establish, increasing plant and insect diversity - now flying creatures will be attracted by the flowers and soil organisms will come for the more diverse root profile. More bugs means that insect-eating birds start visiting. Increasing grass height creates more shelter and habitat for creatures like beetles and skinks.

If we include some shrubs, like Hebe, Corokia, rosemary or lavender, we encourage pollinators. An appropriately-sized Phormium brings nectar feeders. And now why not add a small tree or two? Manuka could be a good choice, or lilac for a sweet-smelling deciduous option...

This landscape now increasingly contains what is called 'structural complexity', meaning that there is a diversity of plant size, shape, colour and height. Research clearly shows that the more complex this is, the more beneficial it is to human wellbeing. There can still be some lawn in there, but it can be smaller, and we can feel more relaxed knowing that we don't have to spend so much time looking after it. In fact, now it can spend some time looking after us (oh, and all the many other species that can now live there)!

And we haven't even mentioned the increased sequestration of carbon in the soil, increased production of oxygen, reduction of noise and particulate pollution, filtering of stormwater runoff, saving of money... and if we did it on a District-wide scale... hmm, maybe another time!



## EARLY SPRING GARDENING WITH ROBERT

Soak seeds straightaway! Now's the time to sow, sow, sow! It's not quite warm enough to sow out of doors, unless it's broad beans or garlic, but windowsills are beckoning, along with coffee tables beside the ranch-sliders and any other warm spot in the house where you can get away with setting out pottles and trays with your tomato, pepper, pumpkin and cucumber seeds, pre-soaked and pampered, where they'll keep warm and get a little filtered sunlight if they need it.

Careful early-sowers know the importance of moving trays of sensitive seeds away from windows overnight, as temperatures close to the glass can plummet and many seeds don't handle shock at all well; close attention to detail is the key to successful start-of-the-season seed sowing!

Some seeds need dark conditions in which to get swelling and shooting; check those out online, while others like light to get them started. All like warmth and moisture, but not sogginess. Fungi will take up residence if things are too wet and seeds can rot as a result.

Don't seal seeds in, allow some movement of air and the chances of success will be high. Newly emerged seedlings don't need to be fed; wait till they are in the soil outside before giving them a tonic of that sort.

## ANNUAL HERITAGE FRUIT TREE SALE

Once again our annual August sale was very popular with 90 preorders.

If you missed out on your first choices at the weekend, make sure you are entered on our data base for receiving the 2021 Fruit Tree list, or even better, become a member of SCES, which will enable you to preorder first.

The weekend of the sale was lovely weather, so it was a very pleasant time, wrapping up trees for new and returning families; many of whom now have over 20 fruit trees in their home orchards.

We thank all of our loyal returning customers and look forward to meeting more new customers in 2021.



## TEAM ACTION

It is great to have a committed team of people working collaboratively on our seasonal projects. It is so much easier to meet deadlines. The fruit tree list and the seed savers list were both out with our July Coastline Brief, and we got a funding application sent away in the same week!

We have gathered the scion wood of apple trees for grafting, for sharing nationwide and for next year's fruit tree sale.

We have redesigned our business cards, modernised our four educational brochures and created a new logo for our seed saving group and vege seed packs.

Updating of our profile document is underway and we are working with the committee to complete our 2020-25 Strategic Plan.

Having a great mix of complementary skills within our team of four helps streamline production. We are looking forward to organising some spring activities and workshops throughout Southland.

## EDUCATION & SUPPORT

During the last two months we have had a big demand for our advisory services and resources not only from individuals but also schools and communities.

It is great that we can easily share the valuable information that we have gained over the years and that others need, e.g. Riverton Kindergarten - worm farming, Menzies College - fruit and native trees for their school, Bluff 2024 group - sustainable community food projects, Te Anau Community - setting up a community garden and orchard, Aparima College - seed saving.

Providing Education is one of the key roles of the SCES.

## FRENCH SORREL



At this point in time, French sorrel is a plant that's attracting my attention. The leaves of the edible and attractive French sorrel are at their best in very-early spring and taste delightful, straight from the plant or mixed into a fresh salad, their lemony-tang adding something special to an otherwise mild mix.

French sorrel can be, and is being at my place, divided with a sharp spade and spread around to other locations in the garden. I file my little spade sharp before I begin and make my slices surgical. It seems to enjoy growing anywhere at all, providing there is sunshine for it to bask in.

Plants will make seed and new plants can be grown from those after they are collected in the autumn but at this time of the year, division is the method of multiplication.

## WAXEYES

At this moment, waxeyes are the creature that captures the most attention in gardens here in the South. They're everywhere there's something for them to eat or drink and if you're the kind of person who likes birds in the wintery garden and have put out wrinkled apples or jars of jammy-water for the waxeyes to peck and drink from, you'll have seen them aplenty, flitting about, enjoying sustenance over the time when there's precious little on the trees for them to eat.

They do continue to clean the bark and underneath of leaves of mites and other tiny insects, but those are slim pickings and a banquet of fruit, sweet juices and seed-laden lard is much appreciated by the active little birds, I'm pretty certain. At least they seem very happy to partake of those offerings, even to the point of risking attracting the attention of cats who also enjoy a fresh wintery feast.

Waxeyes are super-alert little creatures and seem to have a friendly nature, by comparison with the haughty tui who also enjoy the delights of fruit and juice and will quickly and roughly drive off the tiny waxeyes in order to dine first. It doesn't take long though, for the little birds to flock back in to dine, once the tui are gorged!



## HERB OF THE MONTH



Lemon Balm is the herb of the season, as it is the time now that this lovely herb can be very useful, and the time that we can propagate it to ensure we have a good fresh supply for the year ahead.

Lemon balm is a soft, sweet leafed herb that grows well in Southland, especially enjoying well-draining and sandy soil, with full sun or partial shade.

Lemon balm is well known for its ability to lift the spirits and ease the minds and stomachs of those who steep the fresh leaves in hot water and drink this tea. This is a particularly special drink, as it requires that a lemon balm be grown in one's garden, as the leaves of lemon balm cannot be dried for tea, they must be used fresh.

Having this happy little herb growing near a back door would certainly support the tea's work of relieving anxiety and depression, and it is said that bees too like to have a lemon balm growing nearby their hives.

Lemon balm can be propagated in early spring by root division or cuttings taken from the growing tips.

Hollie

## HOW TO PRUNE FRUIT TREES



Plums are pruned in summer to reduce too much growth in one direction. If you cut back that big ungainly branch in winter, you will get 20 branches growing in that direction!

August is the best month to prune apple and pear trees while they are still dormant and this will encourage growth in the direction you would like.

1. First, identify the short, stumpy, fine or downward growing branches; don't cut them off as they are your fruiting branches.
2. Cut any damaged branches back to the next branch intersection.
3. Cut any strong, inward, upward branches back to the base always leaving a couple of the 'base rings' intact to heal over.

*For 1. & 2. Paste with clay, wax, etc. if the cut is bigger than a 10c piece.*

4. On all the strong outward growing branches cut back last year's growth to a couple of outward facing buds.

For a Fact sheet, go to: [www.sces.org.nz/store/doc/Pruning-information-sheet-2.pdf](http://www.sces.org.nz/store/doc/Pruning-information-sheet-2.pdf)

Robyn has made a short You Tube video, that you can watch here to clarify these tips [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMlrthbYudJsg-R9oXd\\_\\_yQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMlrthbYudJsg-R9oXd__yQ)

## WELCOME NEW NEIGHBOURS



It has been a dream for many of us to have an organic café in Riverton so it is exciting that the Jacob's River Bakehouse opened its doors mid-July and only 2 doors along from our Centre!

They source their produce locally as much as possible and organically.

There are also many other new and longtime businesses to check out in Riverton, so click on our new Love Local Facebook page [www.facebook.com/loveriverton](http://www.facebook.com/loveriverton)

## SEASONAL RECIPE LENTIL AND VEGE CURRY



**Easy & great for using whatever seasonal veges you have available.**

INGREDIENTS	
1 ½ cups red or brown lentils	1 tsp turmeric
2-3cups water	1 tsp cumin
2 bay leaves	1 tsp ginger
2tbs oil or butter	2-3cups chopped seasonal veges
2 onions	1 tsp salt
2 clvs garlic	1 cup hot water/stock
	½ cup coconut cream

### METHOD

1. Cook lentils in water with bay leaves, until tender – red 20-30 mins, brown 40 mins.
2. Heat oil, add onion, garlic and spices and cook 5 mins.
3. Cut veges into even cubes, add to pan plus salt and water/stock.
4. Cook until barely tender.
5. Add lentils and coconut cream.
6. Thicken if necessary and serve on rice.

## OUR PEOPLE



Kia ora koutou, my name is Gemma McGrath; my son and I moved to Colac Bay three years ago. It is an honour to join the Environment Centre team. I am excited about what we are developing - projects and education programmes that benefit our natural environment, enhance biodiversity and are highly beneficial for our community too.

I have just finished my Masters in Science Communication, on the history of Hector's and Māui dolphins. Some of these findings were featured in the 'For the Love of Dolphins' exhibition at Te Hiko museum.

I am passionate about all things cetacean and am often trying to spot dolphins and whales from one of our many beautiful beaches. It has been a great privilege to be close to some exquisite species in Southland waters including the rare Spectacled Porpoise, Hourglass Dolphin, and in mid-August - a Southern Right Whale and her calf.

We will be looking for more volunteers who are keen to help with estuary restoration, wetland creation, planting of native trees, dolphin spotting and more. We will be developing cool tracks and getting stuck into citizen science, monitoring the health of our waterways, and other amazing projects from the mountains to the sea. I look forward to working with our community as we develop and build these new programmes.

Gemma

## OUR COMMUNITY

We are very grateful for the support received from our north-side neighbours, the Menzshed.

In true community spirit, the members refurbished our wooden toys in preparation for future use at family oriented festivals. The toys have been very popular with young festival goers over the years but were definitely showing signs of wear and tear. Now they have been beautifully restored ready once again to experience the challenges of childhood play for several more years to come.

In addition the Menzshed members have helped us with some tool maintenance and we are exploring the possibility of creating some raised garden beds for beginner gardeners.

A BIG Thank You to the Menzshed members!

## OUR COMMITTEE

The Committee was keen for someone to attend the nationally recognised Healthy Homes training in order to be able to offer this supportive service within our community. Anna did so, and has this to report;

Last month I had the pleasure of completing Level 1 of the Home Performance Advisor Training programme in Auckland. Good home performance is all about being warm, dry and healthy. The course introduces principles of smart energy use in our homes - savings in energy use reduce household costs, freeing money to be spent on a healthier home, as well as reducing the impact on the planet.

At a most basic level, our homes shelter us from the elements and should support our health and wellbeing. How well a home performs is the result of two elements;

1. The actual house - how it was built (e.g. weathertightness, keeping heat in, orientation to the sun etc) and what it has (e.g. heaters, extractor fans etc.)
2. The people who live there - how they run their home. This is influenced by how much they know, their habits and expectations, and their financial capability.

These elements are inter-related - one element can impact another. As a result it's not always easy to achieve a healthy home. Hence the course was developed to provide New Zealanders with high quality, independent advice to enjoy warmer, drier, healthier more affordable homes. Everything learnt is based on good science and best practice.

On completion of Level 2 certification next month, I look forward to offering Healthy Homes advice to Southlanders.  
Anna Robertson

## SPROUTING SEEDS

Sprouting seeds is a great way to have fresh, nutritious produce year round. They are easy to grow in your own kitchen, within 2-7 days, depending on which variety of seed. Sprouts are tasty and children love them. They are full of the vitamins and minerals that keep us healthy.

### What you'll need

- Wide-mouthed jars; you can use preserving jars or reuse other jars you have, making sure they've been cleaned well in hot soapy water.
- Mesh or cheesecloth and something to secure it to the jar (as in, a rubber band). If you use a preserving jar, you can place the mesh on top and use a preserving ring lid.
- Seeds.

### Selecting the seeds

Alfalfa, mungradish, lentils, mustard, beets, bluepeas, chickpeas, broccoli, sunflower, and more! The important thing is that you purchase natural seeds. Buy them in larger bags from an organic or health shop or 'Kings Seeds' has a good range, labelled as sprouting seeds. Some supermarket seeds have been heated or treated therefore they won't sprout at all!

### And ... Sprout!

- Place one or two tablespoons of seeds in the jar (make sure they don't take up more than a quarter of the jar as they will expand a great deal) and 2/3 fill the jar with water, then secure the mesh or cheesecloth over the top. Let the seeds soak for about 12 hours at room temperature.
- Drain the seeds, rinse them, and then drain again. Find an area out of direct sunlight and place the jars upside-down, but at an angle to allow drainage and air-circulation through the mesh, e.g. use a dish rack or just a bowl.
- Rinse & drain the seeds twice a day, making sure that they do not completely dry out.
- As soon as they have swelled much larger and you start seeing the little plant sprout growing. This generally takes from two to seven days depending on the seeds. Sprouts are at their best when they're still relatively small and just starting to turn green. Eat one to test if soft, sweet and tasty.
- Leaving the seeds sprouting for too long will result in long spouts that become bitter; they are then past their best.
- Give the sprouts a final rinse and allow them to drain very well in a colander or sieve, removing any un-sprouted seeds. Store them in a covered bowl and use within a week.



All sprouts can be eaten raw, and all but the most delicate (like alfalfa) can be gently cooked as well. Use in sandwiches,



# WE NEED YOU!

**Volunteer Vacancies:** Suitable for adults of all ages, high school students, an adult with a primary aged helper.

Want to get work experience, meet new people and/or learn new skills? Come and join the friendly team at the Environment Centre. Flexible hours, and can be once a week, fortnightly or monthly.

You can help behind the scenes bagging up etc. and / or staffing the front counter. We provide training and support and, after you have been with us for a while, we can provide a reference for a job.

So don't be stuck at home with nothing to do, we need you!

Text Robyn 0273683831 or phone or call into the Centre during opening hours.



*Specializing in*  
**Fruit Trees  
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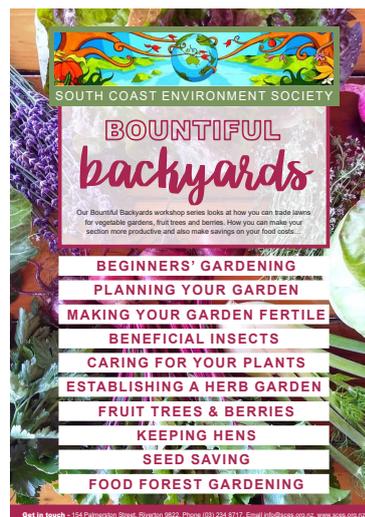
## YOUR SPRING GARDEN SUPPLIER

Want to start a vegetable garden this year?

The Riverton Environment Centre has all you need to get you started – seed raising mix, compost, seeds, tools, information sheets, charts and a free advisory service by in-house experienced home gardeners! Instant garden bed frames and punnets of vege seedlings available soon.

We will also be running our Bountiful Backyard courses in September if you want a hands on start to gardening.

Please email us to put your name down to receive the course dates and times as soon as these are finalised.



Please send in your Readers Patch contributions by the first Monday of each month to:  
**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. [www.sces.org.nz/about/donate](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.

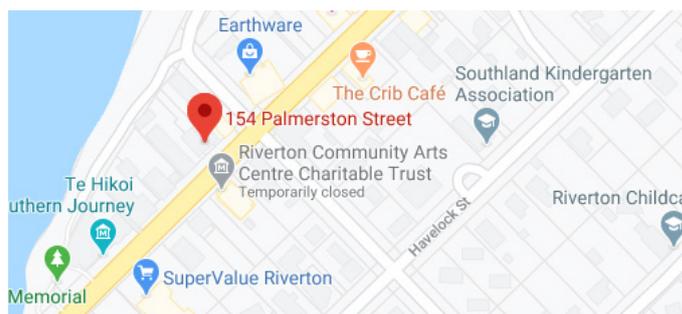
**Phone:** 03 234 8717, **Email:** [office@sces.org.nz](mailto:office@sces.org.nz)

### 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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