



# COASTLINE

## AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2022

### ONLINE SUCCESS!!!

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The August 2022 Annual Heritage Fruit Tree sale was over in a flash!!!

Demand was high, buyers were searching and ordering early and the stock was out the door as soon as it arrived in. The event was a great example of cohesive team work – Big Thank You to All Involved!!

In previous years the fruit tree sale has been a major logistical event requiring lots of staff and volunteer hours to co-ordinate all aspects of the weekend sale, i.e. pre-planning, collating orders/payments/despatch/Centre sales during the busy weekend and afterwards tidying up loose ends, payments and remaining stock.

This year the big difference was that the actual selling was all pre-done online with the number of sales way exceeding expectations. In fact an 80% increase in pre-sales! The whole process was more streamlined, easier to manage and overall efficient.

The event wasn't without incident though! A communication glitch meant many of the trees were not going to reach the Centre on time! Staff member Elizabeth got into action and called Bruce Shields at Ocean Shell who generously agreed to supply a truck and trailer. Consequently, with super-human effort, and the help of volunteer Reagan the trees arrived and were being sorted for despatch as buyers were arriving to collect their pre-purchased orders.

As well as being a critical fund-raiser for the South Coast Environment Society, the Heritage Fruit Tree Sale also helps to raise awareness about food resilience, increase local community food production, and it supports several local suppliers thereby generating more money back into our community.

There were approximately 50 types of heritage apples on offer this year, along with pears, plums, apricots, nectarines, prunes, hazelnuts, almonds and some berry fruits; a great diversity.

If you would like to know more about fruit tree selection and care then check out: [www.sces.org.nz/fruit-tree-selection-and-care](http://www.sces.org.nz/fruit-tree-selection-and-care)

### DATES TO DIARY:

25th September to 10th October	Apple grafting workshops are coming up, email <a href="mailto:openorchard@sces.org.nz">openorchard@sces.org.nz</a> for details
October	Beginner gardening workshops and garden visits commencing, for details email: <a href="mailto:education@sces.org.nz">education@sces.org.nz</a>
Tuesday 11th October	South Coast Environment Society AGM at 7pm. All welcome.

## WELCOME SPRING!!



I grew up believing Spring started 1 August; the first bold daffodils appeared and it was the start of lambing. Dad organised that to coincide with then August school holidays for the free labour! Gradually I accepted 1 September was start date but after spending the last couple of days outside in glorious warmth and seeing the new growth changes, I'm settling for a compromise – mid August! It feels so Springy now – I love it!!

A change you too may have noted of late, if you have driven through Riverton township, is the Environment Centre standing proudly alone as it awaits it's new neighbour. There were a couple of days of uncertainty and unplanned disruption as the big machines went to work but our building has withstood the upheaval well and when all strengthening is completed, it will be stronger than ever.

We have a packed Coastline for you again, from pg 1 sharing local fruit tree sale success to pg 7 outlining national planning for Climate Change. In between we're celebrating the 1st Birthday for the Longwood Loop, excitedly awaiting the arrival of 40 new special baby pear trees, introducing our volunteers and sharing what's happening in our community, to mention just some of the content. We hope you find plenty to inform, educate and entice you to take action, be it cooking up a new spiced veg soup or getting started sowing your hardier crops. Go to it and please, become involved – we have a welcoming team.

### Wendy Joy, Coastline 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.

## MANAGING THROUGH DISRUPTIONS

It has been a challenging couple of years with Covid's rise and fall and no month being the same as the last along with volunteers and staff having turns at being sick or isolating with their families. Our team has needed to adapt on a daily basis and has done well.

It has been great how everyone has done a bit extra or taken up new tasks to cover shortfalls when they could. When we could be open for business, we have been able to do so 7 days a week, for our usual 42 hours a week and to provide all the services we usually provide.

Fortunately, some of us have managed to avoid Covid so far which has been good for our staffing. Unfortunately, some of our supply chains have been disrupted resulting, at times, in gaps on our shelves.

From time-to-time our volunteers move on new opportunities. We are thrilled that long term volunteer Shaun is going to be shifting to Invercargill to live and study, and a couple of other volunteers have found paid work (we provide references for volunteers).

On the downside, such good fortune for our team members leaves us needing to look for more volunteers to boost our numbers to help cover the gaps and to allow those people who have been doing more than their share, to have a bit more time at home in their gardens this year.

### Come and Join Us!!

Weekly, fortnight or monthly volunteer options are available for 2-3 hours at a time.

"The Only Constant in Life Is Change."- Heraclitus, Greek Philosopher.

Our 'strong eco community' will continue to adapt to any new changes and challenges for the good of all; come and join us!

### Robyn, Manager Riverton Environment Centre



## GARDENING WITH NICK

### Here-Turi-Kōkā (August and September)

The huarere (weather) has been pretty nice of late here in Murihiku Southland, with warm days and gentle breezes, but remember that Hōtoke (winter) always surprises us keen gardeners, even when we think we know what's going on!



It's always best to focus on sowing only the hardier food plants at this time of year, including peas, broad beans and brassicas. Starting some tomatoes and peppers inside can get a good start on Kōanga (spring), but Cucurbitaceae family plants (cucumber, zucchini, pumpkin) do better when started much later, so temper your enthusiasm!

If you have been caring for the oneone (soil) by growing a winter green crop, now is a good time to chop it down - hedge clippers are good, as you can chop it quite fine.

A sharp spade can then be used to incorporate it into the surface of the soil - don't 'dig it in' or 'turn it over' - it only needs to be slightly mixed within the top 5cm of soil (where most of the bacterial activity takes place). You can cover it with straw and then leave it to break down for six weeks or so, then plant a hungry crop such as pumpkins or tomatoes which will appreciate the lovely rich oneone, full of moroiti (microorganisms).

Hopefully you have also been making some good wairākau (compost) over winter and might find that the lower parts of your heap or bin are nicely broken down and ready to use. This is a great way to stimulate soil life and is especially good when planting new crops. If added to the soil now (again, only on the surface, and lightly 'tickled in'), it will provide a slow-release source of nutrients to plants and soil organisms through the coming months.

**Nick**

## PROJECT UPDATES:

### Happy 1st Birthday, Longwood Loop!



Seems like only yesterday, the 'Loop' was born - conceived after nights of imagining and planning, then delivered as a result of a lot of hard work along with the Crowd & Community Trust South funded electric van and the co-operation of growers and producers throughout

Western Southland. The Longwood Loop, our mobile, online farmers' market, then took its first steps, or rather covered its first kilometres, one year ago and hasn't missed a week since!

Volunteer drivers and their navigators have driven the goods-packed van through the towns of Otautau, Tuatapere, Ohai, Nightcaps, Orepuki, Wairio, and Riverton, diverting to Scott's Gap, Gladfield and other off-centre locations, to uplift and deliver honey, mushrooms, nuts, vegetables and fruits and meet with customers and producers along the way.

The Longwood Loop has been and continues to be, a great success. More producers are preparing to join the Loop. Customers numbers are growing.

This project has attracted attention from all over NZ and even the world, for being a solution for the future of food distribution, plus connecting small and emerging producers with local buyers. Check it out: [www.longwoodloop.co.nz](http://www.longwoodloop.co.nz)

### Open Orchard Project

With a lot of weather challenges and staffing shortages, I have not yet got out much to do the planting and pruning of the orchard parks, but will hopefully do so very soon. Thank you to everyone who has offered to help; I'll let you know when and where I'll be in the next two weeks. Please contact me if you're keen to be part of this project: many hands make light work and anything you learn about caring for fruit trees, you can apply to your own trees.

Any day now, we are about to get back 40 of our heritage pear scions (cuttings), that we sent to the Motueka Pear Research facility, as grafted pear trees. We will plant them in the Heritage Orchard Parks near to where the scions were taken from. It's very exciting for us. We are so grateful for the work of the Motueka team. They have succeeded where we couldn't. Grafting pears is considerably more complicated than grafting apples. The Motueka Team has the expertise to do this specialist work and did so at no cost to us in exchange for keeping a copy of each of our different trees, to expand their research pool – a win-win that we are very happy with!!!

It's great to know we are now saving heritage pears along with heritage apples. If you think you have a heritage pear tree (100+ years old) do get in touch with us so that we can set about saving your tree too, for the health and enjoyment of future generations for another 100+ years.

**Thanks Robyn**

## MY INTERESTING PLANTS



Aren't they all though? Familiarity, they say, breeds contempt and it's certainly true with plants; most people seemed unmoved by plants, unless that is, they've banged into the trunk of a tree or brushed against stinging nettle.

Plant-blindness is a real thing, I've read, and it afflicts much of the civilized population who don't even see plants as they go about their civilized business. I see them though, plants, and do enjoy finding new ones, especially those that might flourish in my garden, were I to transfer them there.

I've written about my fascination with canna lilies, **calla lilies**, banana, ginger and a raft of other sub-tropicals gathered in the autumn and planted in my big tunnel house in preparation for and expectation of the warm temperatures of spring.

Well, that season is nearly here and there are signs of "green sprouts" in the general vicinity of where I planted each of them, but the frost has not passed over Riverton without visiting and those plants have been frost-kissed at least and at most, frost-munched.

I do hope and expect, however, a full recovery and accelerated growth from those delicate plants that poked their heads up too soon. I look forward to nurturing them to full growth, and enjoying their bounty, hopefully!

**Robert**

## IS IT A SHARK? IS IT AN OTTER? NO, IT'S A .....

I've written already about the shark I saw thrashing about in the estuary, on the end of the line of a local fisherman. That was an exciting and unexpected sight; surely sharks don't swim up rivers and into the brackish, mostly fresh water of estuaries, do they, I'd always wondered.

Well, yes, they do though I imagine they are just visiting when they do, not settling in to raise a family and feed on people paddling in the warmer, less-salty water.

I'd heard stories of seven-gilled sharks from days gone by, but not seen one in the flesh, till then. I'd heard also, of otter-sightings from way back in the early days of settlement but always regarded them with a jaundiced eye.

Recently though, I saw what looked like one, cavorting in the middle of a channel exposed by the outgoing tide. The sleek creature was gallivanting about, slipping and sliding through the currents and looking ottery; but it was a small seal. It seemed delightfully relaxed, probably enjoying a trout or three, caught in the narrow channel and eaten on the spot, or rather, while the seal lay on its back. A flock of expectant gulls wheeled overhead, hoping, I imagine, for scraps of fish-flesh.

No otter-sighting, it's true, but nevertheless lovely to watch, so close to home.



**Robert**

## FLOWERING CURRANT

In spring, you will notice the sweet and delighting smell of the flowering currant before you see it. While it is not exactly a herb, I feel that the fragrance of the flowering currant is so wonderful and singular that it should have an honorary membership in the herb family.

If you are rambling along roadsides, rivers and creeks in spring you will find this herb, with the familiar leaves of the currant family, and clusters of small flowers hanging down like lovely pink pine cones.

In autumn you will spy the dark purple berries, covered in wee hairs like the gooseberries that the flowering currant is most closely related to. The berries have been used to make jams, pies and syrups, and can be eaten fresh or dried, and the flowers can be used to infuse spring drinks.

As I write this, in early August, the flowering currants in Southland are just beginning to unfurl their flowers, making them one of the first spring flowers to appear in the wintery world, calling us out of our houses with their sweet spring smells.

**Hollie**



## PLANNING FOR A DRY SUMMER

We can hope that this summer will provide a perfect balance of weather conditions, including plenty of sun and well-spaced periods of gentle, steady rainfall, but let's face it - it's probably not going to happen. If it does, well we can breathe a sigh of relief and appreciate the heck out of it, but if it doesn't, well at least we can say we were prepared by...



- Collecting rainwater now - in whatever we can get hold of - food-grade 1000 litre IBC tanks are pretty cheap and easy to come by;
- Using good compost and mulch on the soil to improve water retention and minimise evaporation;

- Minimising cultivation to allow fungal mycelium to spread throughout the soil, improving water storage;
- Providing shelter from wind, reducing evapotranspiration
- Planting the right things: If you know it's going to be a hot dry season;
  - reduce your plantings of water-hungry crops (e.g. pumpkins)
  - plant perennials now, so they can establish a good root system before summer kicks in
  - put summer green crops in empty garden beds: buckwheat, phacelia, crimson clover will all do well in hot, dry conditions if established in spring.

So start your planning now.

**Nick**

## SEASONAL RECIPE

Vanya, Environment Centre Volunteer, shares her

### Spring Vegetable Soup

- 
- 4 cups of mixed veges (carrots, pumpkin, silver beet etc)
  - 6 cups water
  - 1 tsp cumin seeds
  - 6 black peppercorns
  - 1 cm piece of cinnamon stick
  - 10 cloves
  - 10 cardamom pods
  - 2 tbs oil or ghee
  - 1/2tsp salt

1. Wash and cut vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
2. Put in large pot with the water. Cook till tender.
3. Drain water into bowl, put vegetables in a second bowl.
4. Using a mortar and pestle or electric coffee grinder reduce the spices to a fine powder.
5. Using the same pot, warm the oil or ghee, add the spices.
6. Sauté on low briefly then add the drained vegetables and enough of the water for a soupy texture.
7. Add the salt

**ENJOY! (4 servings)**

## OUR COMMUNITY

### Village Agrarians

Village Agrarians is a newly registered NZ charity, established here in Southland, by a community of passionate advocates for equitable land access, with a specific focus on the agroecological use of land for food production. Through garden-visits, workshops, working bees, barn-raising, land-based internships, online resources, hands-in-the-dirt, and pot luck dinners, we seek to support existing growers and provide entry points into community focused food production for aspiring growers.

We recognise that there are significant barriers for small-scale and community-focused growers, producers and farmers to overcome in both rural and urban environments in Aotearoa to become successful. Our mission is to provide resources, advocacy, and training to link arms with our food producers as we surpass and challenge barriers to land access, affordable training in agroecological methods,

accessing mentorship and community, and providing food to their communities.

This winter Village Agrarians has collaborated with the South Coast Environment Centre to run a five month market garden collaborative training supporting new growers around the Longwood Loop.

In the spring Village Agrarians is developing a Land Access Guide to support those with land who want to make their land available for community food production, and to support those who want to become community food producers to find land to grow on.

In summer this year, Village Agrarians will run a pilot hands-on internship programme based in Otago. We are excited to continue to build our community and offerings!

Check out our website and sign-up for our newsletter; [www.villageagrarians.org](http://www.villageagrarians.org)

**Hollie**

## MARKET GARDENING

### Training Course



In collaboration with Village Agrarians, SCES has been delivering a winter market garden training course since the beginning of May.

The course has taken participants, all based in Western Southland, through a cycle of online based Zoom classes, and hands-on workshops accompanied by further resources and assignments. We have covered topics such as soil biology, succession planning, market garden systems and set up, and compost making. With further topics like marketing, bed making and seeding, and the “business of growing” coming up.

The goal of this course is many-fold. We hope to equip our participants with the fundamentals of gardening such as seeding and composting, but also with the knowledge needed to bring a garden to a commercial scope. For this reason the course covers aspects of market gardening that take place outside of the garden: marketing and selling produce, planning crops and everything else that comes with growing food and getting it into communities.

The course seeks to acknowledge that to be a small market gardener there is more than growing a big garden and selling some produce. You have to consider how you might provide

product such as carrots year round, you have to consider who you are selling to and what they will buy, how much, and what they can pay for it.

In August, our in person workshop was a trip up to Otepoti Dunedin to visit three established small scale growers there. Our interests were in seeing their different production styles as well as learning about their diverse market base.

Pleasant River Produce is just north of Waikouaiti and there John grows primarily for an organic shop as well as Dunedin restaurants and cafes.



We then went to Waewae Permaculture where Fiona and Lian sell vegetable boxes online through Open Food Network and at the Dunedin Farmers Market.

We finished up by visiting Jed and Skye at Vern Paddock Produce whose product can be found at local supermarkets and in cafes around Dunedin.

It was exciting to visit successful growers with such a diverse array of produce and markets, with the bonus of a delicious catered lunch from Brit of Gather In Health.

We are looking forward to seeing all of the exciting food growing projects that our group is working on, start to bear fruit this spring!

**Rebecca Perez**

## VALUED NEW WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS



We are Evita and Dylan. We live Permaculture and are always learning and striving to share with others. We bought a little house in Tuatapere to renovate and sell with our dream to buy some acres to homestead on again.

The mountains and coastline are beautiful and worth some time enjoying. We shifted to New Zealand recently after 8 years of homesteading in Australia at Sugarloaf Permaculture.

## OUR PEOPLE

**My name is Sheena and I volunteer on the Longwood Loop as an IT administrator.**

What exactly does that mean?

I helped build the website for the Longwood Loop ([www.longwoodloop.co.nz](http://www.longwoodloop.co.nz)) and keep it updated - it's the main place people can go to learn about what the Longwood Loop is, how it works, and how they can get involved.

I also help new producers get onboarded to our Longwood Loop shop on Open Food Network ([openfoodnetwork.org.nz](http://openfoodnetwork.org.nz)), and make sure they get notified each week of the upcoming shop dates so that they can add or remove inventory.

Most recently, I've been creating a detailed guide about how the Longwood Loop IT bits work, including details for producers and our Longwood Loop administrative team. The guide has step-by-step instructions and videos to show new producers how to add their products, and the section for our admin team explains how to send out emails for orders each week.

My goal in working on the Longwood Loop has been to set up processes that are clear and well-documented so that as other people want to get involved, they know how everything works.

If you're interested in helping out, come join us and help us rebuild the local food economy here in Western Southland!

## NZ/AOTEAROA'S 1ST NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE IN OUR COUNTRY.



The recent publication of NZ's threatened coastlines has startled many of us into realising climate change threats are coming faster than we thought. At the same time, as extreme weather events continue, it's become even more apparent that we need to act.

Here in NZ, we have just launched National Adaptation Plan (3rd August 2022) showing how we as a country intend to deal with these climate challenges, while also making the most of the opportunities available to us, while we still can.

This is the first of its kind, required under the ground-breaking Zero Carbon Act, from 2019.

Now a National Adaptation Plan has to be produced every six years, through to 2050, as part of showing how our country is responding to climate challenges.



The good news is that every political party has agreed to NZ's Climate Change Goals, which gives us a solid foundation to work from. We also have an independent Climate Change Commission which is required to report to government every two years on the progress that has been made.

But what kind of difference will this National Adaptation Plan make?

Essentially, after the Local Body Elections - from November 2022 onwards, all local councils will have to take this Plan into

account in their planning. They will be resourced to do so, from Central Government, with expectations that local and regional planning will proactively consider actions such as managed retreats, where they are required, and other actions such as freshwater programmes for healthier waterways, and biosecurity measures to protect eco-systems from invasive species.



What can we expect to see in the future?

At the national level, all large financial institutions will be held accountable for what they're doing to manage climate risks, while new Kainga Ora public housing will be built to be more climate resilient. There will also be a Maori Climate Platform to support hapu, iwi and Maori to develop strategies for climate mitigation.

At the local level, a reasonable expectation is that long term community plans will have been developed for local communities and that more appropriate climate-change ready regulations will be put in place, like minimum floor levels in new builds, to reduce exposure to flooding.

As a country, we're used to planning for earthquakes in our 'shaky isles'. Now, we'll be taking the same approach, to limit the severity of future climate impacts. This Plan shows how we as a country will step up and face these issues together. (For further reading go to <https://environment.govt.nz/>)

**Pleasance Hansen**

## WORDS OF WISDOM FROM HENRY HARRINGTON - PART 2

*Henry was a dedicated 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)*

Everyone grew a vegetable garden and if they had excess of some vegetables they took them to their country neighbours as they went out to town for their monthly shopping. Most times the neighbours had something in their garden that they were happy to swap for what was given to them. This was then collected on the way back home and very much appreciated. Gardening was essential in those days. If you didn't grow a garden you had no chance of vegetables or fruits which were the staple diet. They made their own pickles, jams, sauce, out of the fruits and vegetables they grew and

when they were in their bottles a paper top was pasted over them and another piece of paper pasted on lower down to record contents.

They harvested pears and apples, which were packed in straw in wooden boxes for use later in the year and they usually kept well though winter. Potatoes, yams, carrots, parsnips, were stored in pits in the ground until required and kept well until spring. Also everyone had their own varieties of vegetables which they treasured very much and saved seed from them regularly. (Continued next issue).



## LITTLE SHAGGERY FARM JUICES & VINEGARS

*Made from their own big heritage orchard  
in Motueka.*

Their divine juices include: apple, apple & feijoa,  
apple & blackcurrant, Nashi pear and ginger.

Their vinegars are: feijoa, plum, quince and  
apple cider – already they've won an award!

**In stock now!!**



## SEEDS GALORE

We now stock NZ grown  
**SETHA'S SEEDS**

As well as having the largest collection of  
Kings heritage and/or organic seeds!

*It's time for Planning your Planting!!*

## 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**

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

## VISIT THE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

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

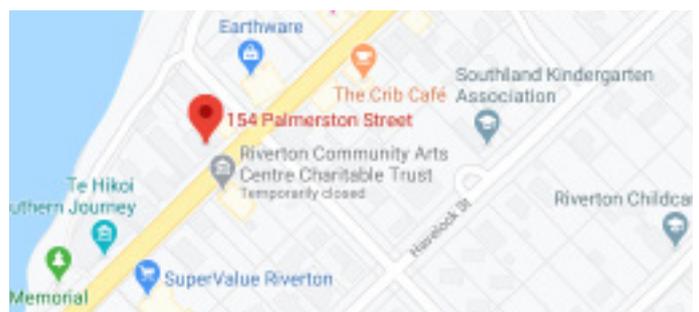
**Phone:** 03 234 8717, **Email:** [office@sces.org.nz](mailto:office@sces.org.nz)

### 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)



@rivertonenvironmentcentre