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COASTLINE

Feb & March 2020

National and International Visitors

We're increasingly busy; this summer is exceptional!

There is such a buzz in the Centre this Summer with so many visitors from all over NZ, and the world. Many say that their main reason for travelling to Southland is to visit the Riverton Environment Centre and / or the Guyton's forest garden. Some overseas visitors say they have actually travelled to NZ to visit the Riverton "Eco Projects", inspired by what they have read on the internet.

We can all be proud that as a small rural community we are held in high regard and we are influencing, in a good way, people and projects all over the world.

Comments often heard include: "I know all about you guys"...."have been following SCES for years"...."this is on my bucket list"...."you inspired us".... "wish we had a Centre like this in our region", etc.

The travellers are not disappointed and are so thankful to have visited Riverton and very grateful that we spend time sharing our experiences. Many New Zealanders are coming back again for the Harvest Festival or the fruit tree sale in Spring; some even plan to shift to Riverton to join our community. Many overseas visitors say "We'll be back!"

There are also the travellers who wander into the Environment Centre as they explore Riverton not knowing anything about us. They get charmed with the welcoming atmosphere, the smells, the amazing displays and information, or the 'energy' of the Centre. They browse for sometime, gratefully stock up on organic products, then thank the volunteer on duty 'for their unique and amazing shop!'. "You are welcome", the volunteers say with a smile, knowing they are part of something special.

Dates to Diary:

Heritage Harvest Festival: 27th - 29th March, Aparima College Hall

SCES Committee Meetings; Tuesdays 16th Mar & 14th Apr 7pm

Longwood Loop Information Meetings Coming Up:

Otautau: 7pm Monday 9th March	S.D.C. Meeting Room
Riverton: 7pm Tuesday 10th March	Environment Centre
Fairfax: 1pm Wednesday 11th March	Fairfax Hall
Tuatapere: 7pm Thursday 12th March	Last Light Lodge

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Your Support Is Vital

Like our 2019 - 2020 summer todate, we have a mixed bag for you in this two-month Coastline.

We hope you enjoy checking it out and follow-up by doing something practical like creating a wicking bed (pg 5), diversifying your salads (pgs 4 & 5), supporting our Treasurer's family (pg 6), enrolling for felting in preparation for creating woollens for winter (pg 6), and/or entering the Harvest Festival dates into your calendars right now (pgs 4, 7, 8).

Our other message is that SCES needs more person-power and funding to effectively provide quality services to the increasing number of customers, visitors, and people seeking the variety of valued services.

While many businesses would be rubbing their hands together with such an increasing customer base, for the SCES it is a real challenge with the very limited personnel and funding. The great majority of person-hours are given on a voluntary basis and services provided at no charge, e.g. hours of advice per week to drop-in visitors, responding to online requests, talking to groups and access to this Coastline newsletter.

Please consider how you can support the Society as per the list of options to the right. At a minimum, please become a member for just \$20 p.a. Both your membership fee and extra number count. The number of members is critical when applying for some funding.

The work of the SCES is an established and integral part of the diversity of our community.

Please actively demonstrate your support.

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

Help Build Our Capacity

We are working to advance our projects, and at the same time ease the pressure for our many volunteers and limited paid staff. We are three times busier than we were three years ago which is great for the environment and the community, but not sustainable with the funding and staffing levels we have currently.

You can do any of these to help make a difference:

- become a member of our Society / \$20 a year
- volunteer, help organise, or join the working bees, for a favourite project
- offer your skills or expertise for a project
- 'give a little' to a project you want to see grow
- ask a business you think may sponsor a project or write us a letter of support
- volunteer in the Centre; can be front-of-house or behind the scenes; once a week or month

There are limited funds available to us locally. Invercargill Licensing Trust funding is not an option as our base is outside their boundaries. National funding is even harder. Being based in a small rural community means we are struggling to show how valuable our work is, and we are not always a neat fit for funding criteria.

When we applied to the Government's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (E.E.C.A.) for the other 50% of funding for the electric delivery van for our rural re-localising and resilience project, it was declined, as it was not deemed value for money! We can re-apply which we are considering, but it seems we don't fit the criteria despite being eligible to apply?

That E.C.C.A. Funding Round 7 seemed to have focused on cities and tourism. Almost all the money went to the North Island, primarily to businesses e.g. rental car companies, chain stores, supermarkets and accommodation providers; big profit making businesses that could surely fund their own cars or charging stations.

We do so much 'on the smell of an oily rag' and lots of goodwill... just imagine our potential if we do get more financial support!

So to help:

please email Robyn: robyn@sces.org.nz

or join the SCES: [membership](#) or [give a little](#)

THANK YOU for supporting us and giving us a boost :)

February Gardening with Robert

While flooding has inundated much of the province, fortunately for me, my own garden was unaffected, as I live on a hillside. No matter how hard the rain falls, it is quickly absorbed by the naturally-occurring tree mulch; I've long argued that forest gardens are the most resilient and can withstand incoming adverse conditions better than any other "style" of growing and this recent test has strengthened that belief.



Though, when Mother Nature seriously flexes her muscles, there's little we mortals can do except hunker down and plan the recovery. At least, we're not losing plants to a drought!

I've 6 very large plum trees; Omega, George Wilson Early, Victoria and three others unnamed. All have been shading their neighbours, causing reduced fruit production, so I've been busy with my pruning-saw. I use the "what I feel is right" approach to pruning and rely on my sense of aesthetics to produce a good looking and healthy tree.

I don't like to make unnecessary work, so I leave the fallen branches, twigs and leaves where they fall, calling on visitors who wish to both help and learn, to reduce the prunings to small pieces with loppers, in order to speed-up the breakdown process and get that woody material sequestered in the soil through the action of fungi, primarily, but other soil creatures too.

Creating carbon-rich soils, made from lignin is the best way to contribute to the saving of the planet as well, so I count that as another reason to tend to my trees in the way I do.



Longwood Loop Meetings in March

Reminder: Only Three Days of Food in Our Supermarkets

Over the last couple of months we have been reminded how isolated we can be in Southland. When the main transport routes are disrupted for more than a couple of days we are very vulnerable as almost all our food supplies come from Dunedin or Christchurch. It was very disheartening that we were declined the EECA Government funding as not value for money (see page 2). We are running a 'Give a Little' campaign as well as continuing to apply for funds.

The electric freight vehicle we are raising funds for will serve half of Southland. Once we have the Longwood Loop up and running efficiently we can then scale, hopefully by the end of this year! Wreys Bush is a natural meeting point linking Central, Northern and Western Southland. Eventually, once the three separate Loops have been established traded with their own Loop, excess can be shared with the other two Loops. We hope to share seafood with the inland loops in return for grains, rolled oats etc. Once a week we will be able to link with Fiordland and when there is excess we can have a rural surplus stall at the Sunday Invercargill Farmers Market. Come along to one of the meetings (See Page 1).

If you live within these Loop areas, start thinking about what you can trade or would like to source locally. We have a separate account under our Environment Society presently for donations and these will be passed on to the Western Southland Resilience Trust that we are setting up to manage and enhance the trading Loop.

Networking with the West Coast

Mutually Fruitful Visit



Tessa, a part-time health promoter for the West Coast Community and Public Health, was financially supported by her managers to spend two days in Riverton with Robyn, inspired by what she had read about what all our Society is doing. She came to learn as much as she could from the Open Orchard Project and to visit some of our School and Heritage Orchard Parks.

After reading about our Open Orchard Project, Tessa got joint funding from the Canterbury District Health Board and Food Resiliency Network to gift two apple trees to every school on the West Coast and has asked the students to hunt out the early settler trees of the West Coast to add to the school orchards.

Building food resiliency within the small West Coast communities has been identified as a priority by the communities, as food security is extremely tenuous. Like Southland weather events have a huge impact on their communities often isolating them due to road closures/bridge washouts etc.

Tessa has a great passion for improving the West Coast; she is absolutely sure that if Southland and the West Coast can work together on the vision of re-localising we will not only succeed but will have a profound benefit for both our regions. Tessa is spreading the word through her National networks which are wider than ours, so it was a very fruitful visit!

Plant of the Month

Pasture by Robert Guyton



This month I want to recognise our vital rural sector. Over the years our local farming pastures and practices have been changing. This year the SCES wants to recognise that at the Heritage Harvest Festival therefore has expanded the range of topics being addressed to include a panel of 3 'regenerative' farmers discussing their 'new way' of farming in the Speakers Tent.

This will be a great opportunity for anyone to keep up with pasture management changes, i.e. hands-on farmers, local community members and interested visitors.

The 3 farmers will describe their innovative approaches to farming, be that sheep, beef or dairy, depending upon their own farms, talking about the new pasture species and mixes they are using, their management practices and results gained as well as something of the reception they've got from their farming peers.

I am facilitating the discussion, and members of the audience will be invited to share their reactions and suggestions with these 'new breed' of farmers.

The regenerative approach to land and animal management is a bold step in the right direction for farming, in my opinion and I highly recommend that you come and listen to the farmer's stories.

They'll be in the Speakers Tent on the lawn beside the main festival hall, Aparima College, at 11:00 am on Sunday 29 March.

Creature of the Month: Dragonflies

by Robert Guyton

The dragonflies are back!

Every year, 1, 2 or sometimes 3 dragonflies, come and perform in front of my house, for reasons known only to themselves. They flit, hover, dance and dart a metre or so in front of where I sit on the veranda in order to survey the garden between the house and our neighbours place. I wonder if they might be hunting; dragonflies are insectivore, eating other insects; flying insects that must be caught on the wing, hence the darting about but I have to say, they are too quick for me and I've not seen them catch anything.

They're especially handsome beasts in their halcyon-blue livery, challenged costume-wise only by the damselflies who also fly in that airspace, only more cautiously than the dragonflies, perhaps in fear of being caught and eaten.

I'm guessing they are also here to lay their eggs, in some water body somewhere. We've some little ponds and I'll check them out soon to see if they have dragonfly larvae swimming about in them. They're ugly creatures when they are living through that stage, but knowing what they turn into, I'll be as careful with them as I am with the adults.

Herb of the Month

Edible Flowers

by Hollie Guyton



Edible flowers are lovely bursts of colour that can be used in all sorts of ways to brighten a meal.

Suitable flowers are very easy to grow; we have violas, dianthus, snap dragons, coriander, cornflowers, calendula, marigolds, borage, dill, chives and nasturtiums, that we add to our salads and decorate our cakes with.

Many edible flowers have health, as well as taste benefits! Star-shaped and blue, borage is a favourite of ours (and the bees!) to brighten mood and help with depression. We use them to decorate cakes (they look just like stars), add to salads and jugs of water or cordial. They taste a little like cucumber and are very pleasant to eat if you make sure the fuzzy back of the flower is removed.

I like to make lavender lemon cookies, press flowers (and herb leaves) into fresh homemade pasta sheets, and press violas into the top of shortbread and biscuits before they go into the oven.

Our family kids nibble edible flowers in the garden, or pick them out of salad bowls. Wee Mae Guyton would eat a whole salad of violas if she could!

Pick the flowers early morning, to ensure they are full of taste and energy that they can store until you wish to eat them. It also helps to avoid disturbing the bees that will hopefully come visiting the flowers as the day warms up.



Seasonal Recipe:

Pico de Gallo (Mexican Salad)

Mexican Woofers happily shared this refreshing simple salsa-like salad recipe with us

INGREDIENTS

- 4 to 5 tomatoes
- ½ a Red Onion
- 1 Bunch of Coriander
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- ½ a Lemon
- 1 Tsp each Salt & Pepper
- Jalapenos to taste, optional



PREPARATION

- ~ Finely chop the tomatoes, red onion, & coriander. The smaller the pieces the better; put into salad bowl.
- ~ Squeeze the lemon juice over top and add all the remaining ingredients
- ~Give a good stir and Enjoy, Provecho! (Bon Appetit)



Felt Making Craft Nights in Riverton

3rd Monday of every month at 7pm at Enviro Centre. If you would like to attend and enjoy learning from our local craft felter, Tanya, then contact Tamsin at s.malinky@gmail.com

Raw Milk in Riverton surely how milk should be produced?

Jacqui Anderson

Logan and Melissa care for a small herd of happy cows in Woodlands, operating a friendly efficient service that I have only recently found out about. They farm with sustainable, organic principles, bottle their milk in glass like the old days and deliver it to your gate - even in Riverton.

I originally ordered it hoping it would help my grand-daughter's eczema as I had heard that many people find their allergies improve on raw milk. There is certainly considerable research to show that raw milk is easier to digest because it still contains the enzymes and beneficial bacteria designed to assist this, plus it has more nutritional value in the form of vitamins and minerals for general health.

We are still unsure if the eczema is improving, but we are certainly enjoying the experiment. I will continue to order it simply because I like it and want to support a small family business dedicated to sound ethics.

The big plus is that the milk is delicious, with the cream rising to the top to pour onto your porridge or pudding. Yum!

'Farm Fresh' is keen to increase their customer base to make deliveries more economical. I urge you to give it a try - I guarantee you'll be hooked! More info on their website- www.farmfreshsouth.nz

P.S. I haven't been asked to write this as an advertisement, I just really want everyone to know about a good thing when I find it!

How To:

Build a Wicking Bed

Wicking beds are effective and water efficient in tunnel houses or in hot dry conditions, because you water the soil underneath and the moisture wicks up to the plants.

1. Plan a raised bed & firstly install a waterproof liner. (Or find a waterproof container)
2. Install the PVC watering system (see diagram)
3. Add 20cm of scoria / gravel
4. Install an overflow tube
5. Test for leaks
6. Line gravel with jute landscaping cloth or similar
7. Add soil and you are ready to plant.



<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/building-a-wicking-bed/9435452>



Our People

Nick Kiddey

My background in organic gardening, waste minimisation, environmental science and teaching is ideal for my new role as Recycling Manager at SCES.

Initially I have focused on re-invigorating the well-set up worm farm out the back of the Centre and keeping the 'waste' buckets emptied and cleaned on a regular basis.

The main challenge with managing any recycling system is the people who use it; thankfully all the volunteers and staff at the Centre are pretty sharp about what goes where, but no matter how simple you think it might be, there always pitfalls, such as: So-called 'compostable' packaging (such as PLA plastic) - much of this is only actually compostable in a commercial facility! We are now fortunately seeing a surge in 'home compostable' packaging, which we are assured will break down in our backyard bins.

It would be great if we could look at supporting other local businesses to manage their waste systems more sustainably, while producing valuable resources for the community

It is impressive just how little actual landfill waste is produced at such a busy Environment Centre. The wheelie bin would likely only go out a few times a year - how many other organisations could say that?



Our Community - For Spray Free Playgrounds

Contact Your Local Community Board or Council



'Taramea playground, opposite the dairy at Taramea Bay, has been well managed for the last 2 years by a group of caring parents, without any cost to Council ratepayers (*as had been formally arranged*). It was Southland's only pesticide-free playground, until, with no communication from Council, it was sprayed again.

Councils need to manage its playground vegetation using a healthy and cautious approach, but the bottom line is: does it celebrate life? Can kids play naturally in the environment without having exposure to poisons? There are many wonderful examples from around the world of playgrounds which acceptably incorporate healthier, safer, wilder ideas into their designs.

These are two excerpts from Nick and Trish Kiddey's letter to the Council.

'...It true that at least children's playgrounds should be spray free.

I would go further and ask sprays to be minimised and only used when necessary. A wildflower or ground cover would be so beautiful. This summer two separate European couples travelling in NZ came and asked why we were tolerating excessive roadside spraying. I said we are not heard by Transit NZ and the councils. However if more tourists wrote to the media , it may have some effect. At least one of them did, Christian from Switzerland see ODT 23/1/2020 '

Our Committee

Please 'Give a Little' to our Treasurer's Family

Russell, our Treasurer has been dividing his time between Auckland and home for 4 months now as he supports his wife and son, Wills who is in Starship Hospital undergoing life saving treatment; a situation not easy for any family. If you would like to assist the family then here is the link to do so. The family will greatly appreciate your support:

<https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/wills-fight-against-aplastic-anemia>

Strategic Planning

Our Committee will hold our biennial Strategic Planning meeting in April, soon after the Harvest Festival. We hope to get an online survey out to gather your thoughts - or please email or drop in any ideas you have for the future focus and priorities of the SCES. We aim to build a five year plan, for the work of the SCES recognising that priorities can change within that time frame in response to local, national and international activities.

The 12th Annual

Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival 2020

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Saturday 28th March

- 10.00am: Workshop Session 1
Festival Hall & Market Opens
- 11.30am: Open Talk – *Gardening Q&A*
- 12.30pm: Workshop Session 2
- 12.45pm: Champion of the Harvest
- 2.30pm: Open Talk – *Ecosystems by the Square Metre*
- 3.00pm: Workshop Session 3
- 4.00pm: Festival Hall Closes both days
- 7.00pm: Harvest Ceilidh Evening

Sunday 29th March

- 10.00am: Workshop Session 1
- 10.00am: Festival Hall & Market Opens
- 10.00am: Thanksgiving Service at
Riverton Union Church
- 11.30am: Open Talk – Regenerative
Farming Panel
- 12.30pm: Workshop Session 2
- 12.45pm: Champion of the Harvest
- 2.30pm: Open Talk – Relocalising Southland
- 3.00pm: Workshop Session 3
- 5.00pm: Forest Garden Tour

OPEN TALKS

Saturday 28th March 11.30am

Gardening Q&A session with some of our favourite local gardeners including Wendy De Boer, Carla De Boer from Basil and Baylys, Bart Acres from Ōtepoti Urban Organics, and Anna & Casey Lora River Farms. Come along with all your gardening questions!

Saturday 28th March 2.30pm

Ecosystems by the Square Metre – Nick Kiddey
Learn how the environmental nightmare that is the verge can be transformed into a thriving ecosystem that supports the needs of Council's roading infrastructure while providing widespread benefits to homeowners, neighbours and nature.

Sunday 29th March 11.30am

Regenerative Agriculture Panel - Hamish Bielski, Peter McDonald, and Guillermo

Regenerative farming is the 'new kid on the block' in the farming world and looks to be the way of the future. The regenerative practices are inspiring, sensible, and challenging conventional agriculture in an encouraging way. Our three regenerative farming practitioners: Hamish, Peter and Guillermo will describe their "changes of heart" and approaches to farming in a panel discussion. (See page 4)

Sunday 29th March 2.30pm

Relocalising Southland – Robyn Guyton

In the next 10 years the most important thing for us to do is re-localise our basic needs, things that we can grow and produce locally. This will not only enable us to be more resilient to any natural or man-made disaster, but will have a dramatic and positive effect within our communities. Robyn and the South Coast Environment Society have many projects addressing this like the Open Orchard Project, sustainability workshops and the Longwood Loop. What is your passion? How can you contribute? It is time for action!

WORKSHOP LIST & BOOKINGS

[Trybooking.co.nz/DKE](http://trybooking.co.nz/DKE)

\$12.50 per workshop

Early bird price of \$11.25 until 19
March.

10% discount
when you book 4 or more.

Harvest Ceilidh Evening - 7pm, Flecks Hall Riverton

Come along and kick your heels up for an evening of live music, singing, dancing & good company all in celebration of the harvest! Suitable for all ages especially yours! Come dancing or if you're a sitter, bring a cushion and just enjoy the music. Gary Elford will call the dances, so no experience needed! Filtered water will be available; bring a friend and a bottle of your favourite cheer if you wish!

Ticket cost: \$10 adults, \$5 Children



Competitions for Adults and Kids! Champion of the Harvest!

<http://www.sces.org.nz/events>

Readers' Patch

Wanted: honey containers and lids from our Co-op to be reused for the worm products; see article (right).

Tree Cosy Yurts demo yurt set up in Riverton. This 4.6m size yurt is ideal for glamping, a yoga or meditation space, a spare room for family, visitors or an Air B & B. Adding insulation and liner makes them cosy all year round. Ring Robert 03 234 8249 to view

<https://www.facebook.com/treecosyyurts/>

Poplar and Willow Chipping for sale ideal for mulch Ph Wendy 027 242 0888



Our Centre Stocks

**Worm Vermicast / Compost
Tiger Worms and Worm "Pee"**



Thanks to Nick, our Recycling Manager, we can now offer these organic products:

Vermicast / Worm Compost Mix \$2.50 per k.g. - it's a fantastic soil enricher

Tiger Worms \$5 / 500g starter batch in worm compost

Worm Pee (leachate from the worm farm) \$2 / 2 litre, dilute 1/10 to fertilize the soil around plants

If you want to start your own worm farm, check out our Fact Sheet available for sale for 30c.

Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival 27th-29th March 2020

Our Annual Celebration of Southland's Home Harvest

**Displays Workshops Talks Competitions Activities
for all the family**

For full details, see our website: www.sces.org.nz

Please send in your Readers Patch contributions by the third 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. <http://www.sces.org.nz/about/donate>

Ph 03 234 8717

Visit the Environment Centre

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

Phone: 03 2348 717 Email: office@sces.org.nz

Opening hours are:

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



www.sces.org.nz



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