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# COASTLINE OCT 2019

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## My Visit North, by Robyn Guyton

I can usually talk to groups confidently but last week, in the Michael Fowler Centre Wellington, it was nerve racking.

Firstly the venue there was a 'sea' of 300 influential finance and technology Wellingtonians gathered for the FinTech Demo Day presentations. And secondly I needed to memorise 700 words to tell our Longwood Loop project story including the development of the software needed to create the 'virtual' village to make it happen, and I needed to do so convincingly, all within 5 minutes!

I faltered on the first line trying to remember the word *disadvantaged*.....there was that nightmare moment....have I forgotten it all! But fortunately I was able to recover quickly, present the rest word for word, not too quickly, and with so much passion that we were apparently rated in the top 2 of the 13 presenters.

Already we have so many of the audience resonating with the concept and finding ways to help us! So it was worth making the effort and getting the message out there, Soon after, I caught a bus to Hawkes Bay to meet with people from the apple research station. I was taken on a grand tour and then had pre-organised meetings with their top scientists.

Our Open Orchard Project has done more fact-finding than they ever imagined thus we are now collaborating. We will be given access to their apple DNA information to enable us to match more of our apples with international research and identify more names; and the Research Station will utilise our leaf material to do further testing of characteristics and genes they need to blend into future commercial apple production.

We will jointly apply for funding. A win-win and all round a very worthwhile trip!

### Dates to Diary:

26th October	Organic Gardening 101, 1pm, see Pg 6 for details
12th November	SCES Committee Meeting: all welcome 7pm at the Enviro Centre
19th November	SCES AGM: all welcome 7pm at the Enviro Centre see Pg 6 for details

## Big Thanks To Our Contributors!!

On 8 October, history was made when talk of one of our South Coast Environment Society projects reverberated around the Wellington Town Hall. Big Thanks to Robyn Guyton for concluding the 3 month Kiwi FinTech Accelerator programme with a presentation to over 300 industry boffins; Well Done Robyn! Read Robyn's comments on pg 1 and speech on page 7.

As we all know, the input of each of our volunteers is vital to the operation and success of the SCES. We are delighted to have another of our newish team members contribute a couple of articles this month; see beside and pg 6. Big thanks Michele.

And it's great to have our Sept guest writer and volunteer, Marine Biologist, Jean Win writing our Creature of the Month article this month on pg 4; naturally a marine creature to enhance our knowledge of potential local beach finds. Thank you Jean!

Hollie and Rebecca are both regularly involved with the Centre and Coastline contributors sharing their experiences, knowledge and information. Robert continues his regular slots; thank you to each of you.

We know there is loads of expertise and valuable comment within our community. Please come forward to share in our Coastline or shoulder-tap someone to do so. Or share names with us and we'll do the shoulder tapping - gently of course!

**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.

## The Challenges of Starting Out by Michele Horwood, SCES Volunteer

When my family and I moved to an old farm house on the outskirts of Riverton just under two years ago, I knew nothing about trees, apart from the fact that I loved them.

When submerged in leafy woodlands I felt truly myself. If a twisting canopy sprawled above me, life made sense. The ambition was simple. Our family would take five acres of grassland and plant a food forest. We were armed, you understand, with nothing more than truck-loads of enthusiasm and the kind of magical naivety that makes things happen.

It turns out that planting trees on the shelter-less Southland plains, is tough. Firstly there are the epic southwesterly winds to contend with. Never mind the trees, I'm amazed I don't walk around with a permanent lean to the north east.

Then there's the hares. These robust intelligent creatures are quite fond of their grassy territory and don't take kindly to young trees appearing overnight. We've lost plenty of our saplings to their fury jaws.

Finally, but by no means least, there is the downright dirty competition with the grass. Seriously, it's a jungle out there. Grass does not wish to be shaded out by the likes of a tree, and it's going to call on all its underground intelligence to smother the tender trunks and leaves to death.

With all these elements against us, my husband and I are constantly planting, mowing and building little wind and hare fortresses for our precious miniature forest babies.

Some days when we tumble into bed exhausted and aching, we ask ourselves, what on earth were we thinking, planting a forest? The truth is, I wouldn't have it any other way. As a family we're doing this together, learning from both success and failure and showing our daughters how to grow something from nothing. You could say it's a life of purpose. Not only immensely rich, rewarding and joyful, but choosing such a life also means leaving something of value behind. Michele

## October Gardening with Robert



It's the blossoms I'm most concerned with this week. Whether they are plum, peach, nectarine or pear (apples are still on their way), they are all at threat when hail falls from the sky. I've been watching closely to see how the pollinators; bees, flies and birds, are managing during the colder weather, and have been happy to see that they have been as busy as, well, you know!

Once bees have done their work, in return for nectar, it doesn't matter if the petals of the blossoms get shredded by hail, the process of fruit-formation is already underway. The worry then is that late-late hail might bruise the fruits as they begin to swell, but that's a concern for another day!

In the garden, I'm weeding. Locating and releasing plants I set out throughout the forest garden last autumn is an important task for this time of the year; the great threat to those small trees and shrubs, is that they'll be overwhelmed by grasses or annual understorey "weeds". While making the garden look lush early in the springtime, such growth can shield just-started plants from the light, shading and in some cases, smothering them until they give up the ghost. I use a sharp spade to chip away at the fast-growing annuals and open up the space for the more patient plants that will one day be towering over my head.

Herbaceous annuals grow apace at this time of the year, so keep an eye on them!

## Moon Calendars Update

People from around New Zealand, and even other parts of the world, are emailing requests to purchase our moon calendars! In September we mailed out 127! Some to individuals - many people are excited to give them as gifts over the holidays - and some to other organic shops.



Moon calendars are an amazing tool to use to help guide timing for gardening activities. You line up the moon phases with the correct dates of each month, and the inner circle describes the best practices for that time. For instance, on our calendar, transplanting is best to do outside of the "most prolific period," which is the ascending period which is when plant energy moves upward, so it is a good time to plant seeds so that they can grow upward with good strength.

During the descending period plant energy goes downward, toward the centre of the earth, and so transplanting is good to do in this time because when we transplant we want the roots to go down in the earth!

The Moon Calendars are available from the Riverton Environment Centre for just \$5 each.

Rebecca

## Education Update

Two SIT groups have visited the Environment Centre in recent weeks to hear and see what we have to offer in the fields of environmental management and holistic health.

With the first cluster, 25 students, I outlined the range of activities undertaken by the Centre from managing the Community Forest Garden to the Open Orchard project, promoting, as energetically as I could, the practices that differentiate us from the mainstream, the rejection of synthetic sprays, for example, and the adoption of traditional garden management practices such as composting and integrated pest management through plants.

The students engaged in a very lively manner, especially when I was promoting the use of gorse as a nurse crop for restoring native forests!

The second group was similarly-sized but further advanced in their studies: post-grad and masters of Health and Humanities. Our discussions delved quite deeply into such esoteric fields as plant communication and archaic spiritual practices and all seemed quite at home with those ideas. Climate change was covered too, until the discussions became heated, with one young Russian student finding himself swimming against a very strong tide!

Such visits are of great value all round I believe. On top of the sharing of knowledge always comes a vigorous buy-up of chocolate, chia seeds, FairTrade coffee, etc from the Centre shelves! Good for our Food Co-op sales. Robert

## Plant of the Month Hosta

My hostas have appeared. I planted them under the trees of our forest garden and now they have poked their furled first-leaves through the leaf-litter and are rapidly putting on height.

As well the dozens of young hosta I pricked out into pots in the autumn, after raising them from seed in a tray, have likewise, shown their first-curved leaf to the light. As those potted babies put on some weight, I am planting them out in drifts amongst the trees and shrubs of the garden where they will form colonies and spread far and wide, I hope.

Hosta are plain enough plants; no spectacularly -coloured foliage or flamboyant flowers, but their leaf is well-sculpted and appealing, making them a great foil for other more showy plants.



They're edible too; some gardeners complain of their chewed-appearance, but that's only when there are snails around and we have none of those, so our hosta leaves are always sound and un-eaten by molluscs.

I'm mixing my hosta with hydrangea and fuchsia in the forest understory. All tolerate and perhaps enjoy, dappled light and so coexist happily together and in the dominant environment here.

I've another, quite exotic plant that I plan to establish under the canopy, but I'll write about that next time.  
Robert

## Creature of the Month: Marine Creature - Elephant Fish Finds (*Callorhynchus milii*) by Jean Win

Strolling along Riverton beaches I've come across large shiny black egg casings with a central dome and cascading outward ridges resembling kelp or some fantastic marine set of armour. Each casing was broken at one end where its occupant had been born into the sea.

Many different fish with cartilaginous skeletons lay eggs, including sharks and stingrays, but these cases belong to the species - Elephant Fish. They are a relative of sharks but, as their name suggests, they have an odd shaped protruding nose. They are small (~1 meter long) and lack teeth, instead using bony plates to crush their prey (mainly shellfish).

In New Zealand they are typically found around the South Island in deep sea areas at 200 to 500 meters, but females make migrations to shallow inshore waters to lay their eggs for a short time in spring. They can lay one pair of eggs every four days for up to a month. The eggs may take as long as 8 months to hatch! These fish are also favoured for eating as their firm white flesh is comparable to grouper.

So next time you see one of these casings, you can imagine the funny-nosed fish that has escaped from inside!

## Herb of the Month

### Alexanders

### *Smyrniolus Olusatrum*

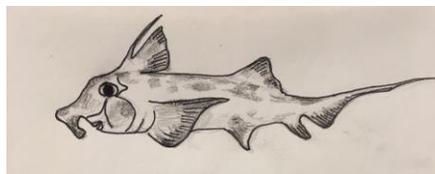


Alexanders is the herb of the month in our garden. It grows wild under fruit trees and in open patches of ground, the pale yellow flowers blending in with their green stems. It really is a lovely herb.

The insects that brave the cold spring days enjoy their flowers, as do gardeners. The flowers offer a gentle reminder that the spring blossoms are on their way.

A week ago, I learned that alexanders has long been treasured as a wonderful culinary herb! My brother placed a plate of stems, fried in butter, on our dining table and asked us to try them and guess what they were. We all guessed some kind of asparagus. He revealed that they were alexanders, to our delighted surprise, and that they were once one of the most commonly eaten vegetables in Britain. He proclaimed that it was alexanders that fed the Roman armies. I wondered if they were named after Alexander the Great! They certainly are great!

You can eat the flowers in salads, the seeds can be ground and used like pepper, the stems braised like asparagus, the roots boiled like parsnip and the young leaves eaten fresh! My research revealed that alexanders is also useful for keeping away scurvy. I'm looking forward to trying all of these this year! Hollie



## Seasonal Recipe:

### Create Your Own Salad

If currently you don't have a lot of anything specific in your garden for a salad, just use what you have in your pantry, fridge and garden. Be spontaneous and create your own. Recipes are just a guide.

Select a pantry grain, e.g. rice - wholegrain for more taste and texture, quinoa (I like the red variety - looks too), or bulgar wheat for a quick no-cook option. You can soak it while you gather up the other ingredients.

Check out the fridge or veg bin - bound to be some suitable ingredients. Think creatively - mushrooms, cheeses, feta, a crunchy veg, salami, olives??

What's still in your garden from last season - perhaps a carrot to grate? There will be some new season herbs appearing - thyme, mint, parsley, chives.



Even chickweed, so nutritious

Back to the pantry for some seeds and/or nuts - my favourites include sunflower and walnuts. Crunchy and so many health benefits. Possibly a tin of drained beans or lentils.

Top off with a simple dressing - a wholesome oil and vinegar mix or perhaps creamy using a bought mayonnaise toned down with sour cream or yoghurt then enhance with e.g. fresh herbs or crushed garlic.

Keep it Simple and colourful; maximum of about 4 main ingredients; a protein grain, a bit of crunch, flavour and texture contrast then a complimentary dressing. Feast the eyes as well as the tastebuds. Enjoy! Wendy

## How To Raise Seeds



It's spring and while it is still a bit cold and blustery outside, it's the perfect weather to bundle up inside your green house with a cup of tea and raise your own spring seedlings!

My first step for seeding is to take a look at the Everlasting Moon Calendar available from the Environment Centre, to check which days will be best for getting started. In November the best days for seeding all that produces above the ground is from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>.

I like to use Daltons organic seed raising mix, (also available from the EC) filling  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a plastic or wooden seeding tray. Sprinkle or space out your seed, then lightly cover with more seed raising mix or fine compost, and press down firmly. Give your tray a light water, being careful not to water too heavily causing small seeds to be washed away!

Each time you water after this, poke your finger into the soil to check it is dry below the surface; this way you won't over water.

Wait until the seedlings have their true leaves, to plant them out! Best to do that on a rainy day so that they don't lose water, and give them a wee water with seaweed tea to help them recover from the shock of being planted out into the big world! Happy seeding! Hollie

## From Our Library:

### The Art of the Natural Home by Rebecca Sullivan

This book is A1!! I'm so grateful Robyn suggested I review it for the Coastline. It's new to our Environment Centre library thus it made sense for someone to share a few comments about it. Only problem is, now I want to keep it!



The multi-talented author, Rebecca Sullivan, re-settled in Australia after a decade studying and working overseas during which time she gained a Masters in International Rural Development and Sustainable Agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College in Gloucestershire, UK. She also worked in Italy, Uganda, the USA and UK always with a focus on sustainable food practises. Back in Australia, she launched The Granny Skills Movement with the aim of protecting the skills, heritage and traditions of our elders.

Sullivan, was inspired by material she gleaned from her late great-grandmother, her own studies, including in herbal medicine, along with recipes and methods she's trialed and perfected. Open this beautifully presented book and you see simple clear photos and text, spaciouly displayed in soft colours in an easy to refer to format. The descriptive chapters and comprehensive index list a collation of home and personal care natural and practical ideas, recipes and informative snippets.

If I ever manage to part with this book, be sure to call into the Centre, sit down and relax a while and be inspired to adopt even just a few of the ideas. If an SCES member, you can borrow it. I think I'll be buying my own copy!! Wendy<sup>5</sup>

## Our People **SCES is Pleased to Introduce Committed Volunteer, Michele**

'My name is Michele Horwood, I live on the outskirts of Riverton and I am the proud owner of a budding food forest. After watching the wonderful Happen Films documentary about the Guyton's food forest, my husband, two girls and I moved here from Jersey, a channel island in the English Channel, a year and a half ago.

I love volunteering at the Environment Centre. I always feel I receive more than I give, learning interesting things about plants, animals and the environment. I love connecting with locals and travellers alike and listening to their wonderful, inspiring and sometimes moving stories.

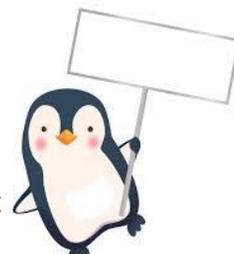
When not at the Centre you'll find me teaching yoga, hanging upside down on a pole, hoop or some other circus apparatus, working the land, or perhaps writing music and stories about far off enchanted lands. I absolutely love the rugged beauty of Southland and the wonderful community that is Riverton'

Michele.

Thank you Michele. So good to have you as a member of our valuable volunteer team enabling the Riverton Environment Centre to open to the public daily. 😊

## Our Community **Invercargill Climate Change March**

Hail and rain threatened, but didn't eventuate. Low-turn-out was a worry for the organisers too, but that too didn't happen; plenty of students, supportive adults and young children gathered at the start-point of the march, listened to advice on safe-marching, and set off.



The single-officer police-presence was friendly and useful when it came to traffic-lights and crossing without upsetting drivers. There were placards of all sorts and no chanting that I could hear.

At the destination; the steps of the Civic Theatre, students and willing adults spoke about climate change and how we all might respond. I encouraged tree-planting. Tim Shadbolt reminded the crowd of past protests.

The weather stayed calm; in fact, it improved as the march progressed and the coats we wore and umbrellas we carried were not needed. Greta Thunberg's name was heard occasionally and nobody had a cross word to say about her. The Invercargill march was nowhere near the size of those in the main centres, but was a good response nonetheless, given Southlander's reluctance to complain.

Robert

## Workshops coming up: **Organic Gardening & Food Forest Tours**

We have a great range of workshops available so do let us know what you would like to learn with a few weeks advance notice so enable we can build the workshop around your needs.

This month we have a couple of people requesting workshops and they are coming down to Southland especially for them.



Organic gardening 101: Includes planning what to plant and when, the various garden styles and which would suit you and all the ways to make your garden thrive; making compost, liquid fertilizers, green crops and more.

\$20 for 2 hours of jam packed inspiration plus free info sheets!

Saturday 26th October 1pm- details will be up on our website, Monday 21st October.

Forest Garden Tours are back in season, there are three tours each week - details on our website., Monday as above.

## South Coast Environment Society **AGM: Tuesday 19th November 7pm**

This is a great opportunity to hear of our many amazing achievements over the last 12 months as well as hearing our exciting plans for the next year. We are an incredibly proactive team. We welcome more people to join us building a better future for Southlanders, while inspiring the world.

Supper provided. All welcome. Held in the Environment Centre, Palmerston Street, Riverton.

# Robyn's Speech - FinTech Demo Day, Michael Fowler Centre

## loop.local Rejuvenating Rural Communities, One Loop At A Time

Rural NZ is socially isolated, economically disadvantaged; the future looks bleak. Southlanders know, that when the transport link from Christchurch goes down, there are only 3 days of food in our supermarkets. Our country is so dependent on global food supplies that we no longer have sovereignty over the food we eat. How did this happen?

My great grandparents joined many thousand European settlers who came to New Zealand from the 1860's. Over the next two generations Southlanders built over 100 economically and socially connected communities producing 80% of their goods and services. Our future was secure.

But from the 1980's supermarkets, centralisation, then globalisation tore apart the social and economic fabric of rural NZ. Schools and businesses closed, family farms were snapped up by corporates. In southland we have 550,000 dairy cows,. All their milk is powdered for export and the milk we can buy comes through Christchurch. Southland is less than 20% self sufficient for food; our countrysides no longer feed our cities. This is a world wide predicament and sourcing our goods and services locally again is the solution. Re-localising is socially, economically environmentally and ethically responsible and will mitigate the effects of any future man made or natural disasters. It also addresses 10 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Surveying Western Southlanders our assumptions were strongly validated. There is little localised trading, 90% of shops are closed. Where once they shared 12 banks in an area of 7000 sq km, now they share 1 ATM. Local residents want real food; sourced locally to lessen their carbon footprint. They want food security and stronger community connections. Local producers need larger and predictable markets with less transport costs.. They want financial security and a purpose. Reconnecting and re-localising is deeply desired, but there are many barriers and it is going to take decades.

Bring in loop.local; our team is developing the solution! Our 'virtual village' software is the catalyst to reactivate communities.....it links small townships through trading hubs and connects them to their wider community with: inbuilt trading, payment and transport logistics, along with market forecasting. When a community's 'virtual village' appears in the *Cloud* everyone can connect instantly: the baker fills the shelves of the virtual bakery shop and trading can begin the next day. Virtual notice-boards and 'over the fence' chatting build real connections on the ground.

The social and economic fabric will re-weave in an immediately-tangible way. The baker will soon have enough customers to open a physical bakery and the market gardener knows ahead how much to plant...so there is less waste and he can be in full production. This progress will continue; before 2025 Southlanders will produce 80% of their own food once more!.

Our initial market is rural New Zealand where we estimate there are 70 trading loops. Recruiting just 20% of local households into each loop, and diverting just 20% of their current food spending into their own trading loop would result in a trading turnover of 1.5 million dollars each week and that money stays in those rural communities.

loop.local is a social enterprise. Monthly subscriptions will enable our business to maintain and enhance the product as we expand around New Zealand supporting communities who are working toward food security. A percentage of transactions will fund the operating costs for the trading loops on the ground.

Our prototype is being trialled online now in Western Southland and trading has begun! We aim to expand to 3 loops while we are developing our Minimum Viable Product, and 8 loops while we complete our MVP by the end of 2020.

We have communities ready and waiting for our software in Southland, South Otago, and Raglan.

From 2021 onwards we can scale though out NZ while continuing to enhance the virtual Village platform.

Our software platform will then be scaled world wide reconnecting communities quickly and effectively. Belonging and contributing to a localised, vibrant, resilient community will become the new normal

'In the 19th Century the biggest impact on the world was Industrialisation...In the 20th Century, internet enabled Globalisation. In the 21st Century the biggest impact will be internet enabled Relocalisation, beginning in NZ in 2019 with loop.local Virtual Village software?

Our loop.local team is committed to this project, honouring our ancestors and for a future for our descendants. We welcome you to come on this journey with us and help make this relocalisation a reality.

Spread the word wide and far and start sourcing your food locally.... the era of relocalisation has begun!!

07 October 2019



## Readers' Patch

*This space is for you to comment, advertise or connect - share a tip, idea or advertise an item or service. If relevant to our local community / environment / sustainability and space is available, we will happily include your item. If you successfully sell an item or service, a donation to the SCES would be greatly appreciated.*

### HORTUS VITAE

Organic Gardening and Biologically Rich  
Landscape Design.  
Text/phone: 021 117 8003  
Or email: [burtish@gmail.com](mailto:burtish@gmail.com)

## Competition

**An Invitation For Wildness** YouTube video about the Guyton's forest garden is about to reach 1,000,000 views in less that 3 years!

Send in the date that it reaches a million and be in the draw to win a free Forest and Bird Calendar!

**August Competition Result:** No winner!  
The list was of ingredients in mock cream in a supermarket baking item.

## Environment Centre Stocks



**These Forest & Bird Calendars are always beautiful and make great gifts.**

**Each month captures a stunning shot of NZ fauna and flora, natural landscapes and more. They come with an envelope for easy posting.**

**Only \$17.50 each**

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

## Support the South Coast Environment Society

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

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

**Ph 03 234 8717**

### Visit the Environment Centre

The South Coast Environment Centre is situated on the main street of Riverton on the Southern Scenic route.  
Phone: 03 2348 717 Email: [office@sces.org.nz](mailto:office@sces.org.nz)  
Opening hours are:

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



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



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