



COASTLINE

DECEMBER 2020 / JANUARY 2021

UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH

Page 1	Unprecedented Growth
Page 2	We are so lucky! Finding Beauty; Enabling Growth
Page 3	Nick's Gardening Estuary Care Society Festival Updates
Page 4	Robert's Creature/Plant Hollie's Herb of the Month
Page 5	Horse Chestnut God's Eye Dried Flower Medallion Elderflower Champagne
Page 6	Our Committee Our Community Corner
Page 7	Our People: Julie's Permaculture Farm Experience
Page 8	WE NEED YOU!! Instant Kit-Set Gardens

It seems that COVID-19 has been a wake-up call for our province. Suddenly SCES projects and services are increasingly relevant as our community strives to learn how to cope with the actual and potential consequences of major events such as COVID-19 and exceptional weather occurrences, such as flooding resulting in our province being isolated from supply chains.

SCES staff are collaborating with several other Southland agencies that share the aim of minimising the impact of unexpected major events by e.g. enhancing preparedness such as building resilient community food systems at both individual and at community levels. The work of the SCES is finally being recognised and valued across a wider spectrum of our community.

Fortunately the government is also recognising the value of organisations such as ours. Consequently the Ministry for the Environment has granted an additional \$30,000 to boost our annual operational grant, (previously only \$45k). The extra funding will be used primarily to increase capacity to enhance the delivery of all our projects, by increasing paid staff hours.

In addition, we are delighted that the Lotteries National Community committee has granted \$20,000 for the Longwood Loop infrastructure development and fingers crossed, the EECA will approve a grant this month, for the balance of the purchase cost of an electric vehicle for use around the Loop. The Community Trust of Southland has already approved a grant for half of the purchase price.

As well, the Southland District Council has granted \$2,500 for upgrading educational resources to enable our 'self-sufficiency' education programmes to be run more effectively throughout Southland to assist families to become more resilient in these uncertain times.

SCES funding sources are grants, fees for services, subscriptions, donations and volunteer hours. The SCES is a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity governed by a committee of 12. More funding applications are pending, to assist develop capacity to meet the increasing demands for the knowledge, skills and resources that the Society has been promoting now for 25 years.

DATES TO DIARY:

The Centre is closed 25 & 26 December and 1 & 2 January. Otherwise normal hours.

1st – 3rd January: **Revitalise**. An Organic Farm Festival at Blackmount www.facebook.com/revitalize.festival

4 January Forest Garden Tours will commence for the year. For inquiries please email permaculture@sces.org.nz.

WE ARE SO LUCKY!!!

Prior to retirement I was often working with international tourists, which gave me a far greater appreciation of how lucky we are in NZ. Nearly all of the tourists were 'soooo' positive about our country, many having been here (to our distant south pacific islands) several times.

If I ask myself where else in the world would I like to live, I soon eliminate most other places. We have so much to be grateful for living in NZ, especially Southland.

It's too easy to not appreciate what's on our doorstep. To some extent I think that's happened regarding the SCES. Now, as the world is changing, there is greater recognition of the importance of communities being able to fend for themselves if and when necessary. Resources of the SCES are being called upon more often; huge thanks to the volunteers and staff who strive to fulfill the requests.

As I'm editing Coastline content, invariably I learn something new; I hope you do likewise. (I'm developing a hugekulture area for a pumpkin, see Nick's October article and plan on making another of Marijke's delish kerstkrans this weekend from our Dec '19 issue). I hope you too learn something new and enjoy what we've been including throughout the year.

Thank you to all 2020 contributors and Rhi for our new Coastline design. Enjoy whatever gives you a buzz this summer, be kind to yourself and others and leave only footprints when you are out freely exploring our beautiful country.

Season's greetings and all the very best for 2021

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.

FINDING BEAUTY; ENABLING GROWTH!!

'Find beauty in the little things' is the quote on the cover of my 2021 diary. To me it is not only finding beauty; it's also enabling growth. Leave a corner of your property for wildflowers / weeds and then spend some time to see the little creatures who gratefully move in to help look after your garden. Less screen time so you can watch some sunrises and sunsets, and so it goes on.

The children who bring in a couple of dozen eggs from their well-loved hens are some of our Food Co-ops 'little things', to see the pride in their achievement and knowing they will get some pocket money for their efforts, is what we are all about.

Apparently though, NZ regulations imply the only way eggs from non MPI registered producers can be sold is directly, e.g. via farmers' markets, not third parties.

When, last week, I was advised by a South District Council officer, Michael, there has been a complaint about our indiscretion, I was shocked! 'That's mean', I said. 'I am not going to tell the children, you can tell them!'

MPI does need to regulate the big and exporting growers and producers but why do children selling a few eggs come under the same regulations?

Our discussion moved on to our Longwood Loop project, a national pilot for rolling farmers' markets to help revitalise and build resilience in rural NZ. Travel miles make it unviable for all producers to sell only at conventional farmers' markets. "There should be flexibility in NZ food regulations to enable small rural suppliers and producers to trade locally" I stated, stamping my emotional foot!

Consequently, Michael has emailed the question, and our Longwood Loop business plan, to the Ministry for Primary Industries and copied me in. We all need to know the answer!

'Food NZ' Angela De Clifford's article on this same topic serendipitously appeared on Stuff NZ last weekend so I have 'replied all' with the link: [CLICK HERE](#) and attached the 're-localising food' speech I presented at Michael Fowler Centre last year.

Maybe a can of worms has been opened.... are we rekindling the journey back to NZ food sovereignty??? We await MPI response!

In the meantime, do be sure to find the beauty in your small local growers and suppliers to help them grow!!!

Robyn Guyton

NICK'S GARDENING



Hopefully you've had your tender crops snuggled up under cover so, now they should be cranking along.

Potatoes should also be growing well - mulching them with hay, straw, grass clippings or soil will keep them nice and straight so they'll keep producing tubers up their stems.

Garlic will be fattening up, and could be harvested any time over the next couple of months - when about a third of the leaves start drying off is best: dig out carefully, brush off dirt and hang in a cool dry place.

Winter sown broad beans will be podding up - quite a treat steamed with olive oil, mmm!! Our 'Bohemian Sugar' peas

are getting quite tall (nearly two metres) and have been flowering for about a week, so will soon be producing good crops of sweet crunchy pods. These were sown in late July, illustrating how long some things take to produce (worth it!).

If you have the space, another sowing of carrots, zucchini, bush beans and basil will lengthen the harvest, and if you have indoor growing space you can probably pop in some more peppers and tomatoes too - seedlings rather than seeds, as these would take too long. Keep feeding plants with liquid fertilisers to keep them pumping along.

Start planning for winter: brussels sprouts and leeks take 120 days from seed to maturity, so if you want them to sit happily in your garden over winter you will need them to be mature by about April. That means sowing them now (you have a bit more time if buying seedlings). Cabbages and broccoli usually take about 90 days, although there are many faster-growing varieties available.

Get a seed catalogue and start planning now!

Nick

ESTUARY CARE SOCIETY

The Riverton Estuary Care Society Incorporated, established following a public meeting in the village over 25 years ago, has been granted a useful chunk of funding from the Stevenson Fund; \$13 000, for which the Society is very grateful.

The money will be put to employing a person willing and able to remove the broom and gorse from the wetland reserve, and opening up the existing overgrown tracks. As well, we'll employ a person with good management skills to further some of our other projects designed to improve the qualities of the Jacob's River estuary; the focus of our society.

Robert Guyton, Chairman



FESTIVAL UPDATES



Start planning to join us for our 13th annual Heritage Harvest Festival, on 26, 27, 28th March 2021, including garden, orchard and forest garden visits before and after the festival.

Our 2020 festival was postponed just 10 days out from the event. Fortunately, we are able to rekindle much of the planning so the programme is all but finalised and will be out soon!

The Tourism and Events team of Great South (Southland's Regional Development Agency) has offered their support. They recognise our Festival as being one of the top 9 annual events in Southland which is a real credit to all the volunteers

who get together to make the festival happen as it is run as a self-funding event.

2021 will also see the introduction of our new **Bountiful Backyards Festival** to be held in Spring annually, all going well, and again supported by Great South. The format will be the same as the Heritage Harvest Festival but with all the Spring themes, e.g. grafting apple trees, propagating plants, seed and seedling swap, starting a garden, composting etc. plus 20 workshops, displays and garden stalls.

This new festival will be held the first Weekend in October; for 2021 that's 2nd & 3rd, again with garden tours before and after of local edible produce gardens.

Enter the dates in your calendars now!!!

PLANT OF THE MONTH – CALLA LILLIES



Calla lilies aren't everyone's cup-of-tea. They survive where old gardens once flourished when all else has gone and grow in unappealing damp places.

They're not favoured by many gardeners, but I really like them, because of my association with them from my childhood when I transplanted some from a roadside creek, into the muddy drain that ran along our boundary beside the hawthorn hedge. Those lilies flowered gorgeously, I thought then and now, and held their blooms for a long period.

I've noticed this season, that they produce their flowers early in spring. I've found too, that they are especially easy to propagate from seed, collected in late autumn; I got mine from a garden in front of a church in Invercargill and sowed them straight away, out of doors, and left them to it.

They all struck and now I have scores of seedlings that I'm potting up. They'll eventually form drifts through my forest garden; they don't seem to mind the shade at all.

I feel they'll look good beside the canna lilies and the giant Himalayan lilies and the hostas I'm regularly propagating by the same method.

Robert

CREATURE OF THE MONTH - DANCING FLIES

I read that dancing flies are common throughout the world. I've seen swarms of them in my garden and no doubt you will have seen them in yours.

They're the tiny flies that dance, naturally, in a cloud that wafts and waves in mid-air, usually close-by to a tree or shrub; they are tiny and ever-moving and why they behave that way; constantly dipping and soaring, I do not know. Perhaps they are following some subtle perfume emitted by the plants, or merely riding the currents of seemingly-still air, it's impossible for me to tell, but they are fascinating.

I don't know what they eat, where they lay their eggs (I presume they must do that somewhere), how long they live or what purpose they fill in the garden, but I enjoy seeing them doing whatever it is, very much.

Robert



HERB OF THE MONTH - ELDER TREE



The elder tree is buried deep in British folklore associated with a spirit, goddess, witches and fairies. Many folk believed that one should not harm an elder tree. The trees are left standing, in the middle of paddocks, leaning into old houses, along roadsides when all others have been cut down in the name of progress, practicality and perfect lines.

The small, sweet flowers appear early summer. They must be harvested in the morning, after the dew has lifted but before the heat of the day and must be attended to quickly, and any brew bottled and enjoyed soon after. Throughout the centuries all parts of the tree have had numerous uses. In more modern times the flowers and berries are used for culinary, medicinal and skincare purposes.

You will not find bottled elderflower champagne in supermarkets, and elderflower eggnog will be found in no pub. The essence of the elderflower is too ephemeral to be held in a bottle for long. For enjoying this summer, try the bubbly champagne recipe, pg 5.

British folk brought the elder tree to southern New Zealand, and you will now find it along almost every country roadside. The elder tree is officially an invasive weed in New Zealand, but the eye of any old folk will twinkle at the mention of an elder, knowing the secret of its flowers.

Hollie



HOW TO: HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

HORSE CHESTNUT GOD'S EYE

- Horse chestnut
- Assortment of wools
- 15cm Bamboo skewers cut in half
- Drill with the right size drill bit to match your bamboo skewers.



Drill 8 holes in line around your chestnut.

Push your skewers into the holes so that they fit firmly. (You could use a little glue if you wish)

Now you're ready to start wrapping.

Tie your wool onto a skewer and start wrapping it around each individual skewer. Do the same to the next one and repeat this around and around the chestnut.



To change your wool simply tie the two strands together and carry on wrapping making sure any loose ends lie to the back. They will get hidden by the rows.

When you have reached as far out as you want the rows to go, tie the wool onto one of the skewers and leave a length for hanging.



Tanya collected her Horse Chestnut from the Otautau Arboretum in summer.

If you don't have a horse chest nut simply cross the full length skewers (or twigs for a more rustic look) over each other, holding them while you start winding the wool around. Be creative with different types and textures of wool, yarns or materials. Make it your own!

DRIED FLOWER MEDALLION

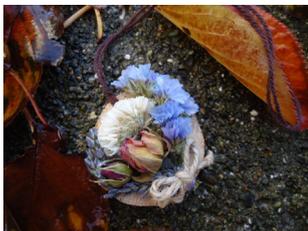
- Glue gun
- 120-150 grit sandpaper
- Dried flowers
- Drill to make hole in the top
- Wood rounds sawn from a branch
- Cotton, string, ribbon etc for hanging
- Natural string or ribbon for decoration



Drill a hole near the edge for the hanging thread.

Sand all the edges to make them nice and smooth.

Arrange the dried flowers on top. When happy with your design, take them off, remembering your design (or take a photo).



1 by 1, glue them back in place starting from the bottom & finishing with the top. (Don't glue over the hole you made). Add a bow of something if you like.

Lastly thread your hanging cord through the hole ready to hang it up.

Make it your own - shells, stones, leaves or anything else that you find on your walks, can be used in place of the flowers.

Tanya Roberts

For a little Festive cheer.....

ELDERFLOWER CHAMPAGNE



- 4 litres water
- 7 heads fresh elderflower
- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 tbs white vinegar
- 2 lemons, chopped

Boil water and pour over sugar in a large bowl or bucket. Stir well and allow to cool.

Add elderflowers, sliced lemons and vinegar, stir again.

Leave 24 hours, then strain, bottle and cap.

Do not fill bottles too full - this can be very fizzy.

Ready to drink in 1-2 weeks

Hollie



OUR COMMUNITY CORNER

Just off the northern end of Riverton's bridge lies a quartet of properties tenuously-linked by their purpose; each serves the community, but quite different in fundamental ways.

The fire-station, the runaka office, the community forest-garden and the Anglican church are essentially adjacent to each other covering about one acre. All are quite exposed to the sou'west winds that roar off the estuary, and are built on sand; the flattened remains of sand hills.

Each relies to a large part, on volunteers for their existence, an admirable state of affairs, in my opinion and all have functioned for many years providing a variety of services to benefit our community.

The church, being the oldest can often be seen in historic Riverton photos and the corrugated-iron teepee in the forest-garden is the most recently erected. The runaka office was previously the village's library, then after that, the first iteration of the environment centre, hence the community forest-garden behind the runaka.

Muriel Johnstone has just recently moved in to live in her charming homeo-botanic clinic beside the church and must be counted now in the set; I understand she is renovating both building and garden and that work will enhance this historic corner of our village nicely.

One thing that's certain about each of the locations is that, for anyone relaxing at any of them, the raising of a fire alarm will certainly not go unnoticed!

Robert

MOON CALENDARS SOARING

Since the promotion of the **Moon Calendars for Gardeners** 30th birthday, Rhi has been busy posting out over 100 calendars a week! The Environment Centre is buzzing!!

OUR COMMITTEE

The 2020 SCES Annual General Meeting was held 15 December. There was only one change to office bearer positions and that is co-appointees to the Deputy Chair position - Tanya Roberts and Pleasance Hansen.

Otherwise Hollie Guyton remains as Chairperson, Karla Evans as Secretary and Russell Duthie as Treasurer.

Malcolm McKenzie remains as Patron; special thanks to Malcolm for his many years of guidance and support.

Annual subscriptions rates remain unchanged; Individual \$20, Family \$25 and Group \$30.

In her Annual Report, Hollie made reference to the commitment of all volunteers during what had been a challenging year, and especially to Robyn Guyton who spent many hours at the Environment Centre during the lockdown period, to ensure supplies got out wherever possible and produce for care boxes were gathered, sorted and distributed to families in need.

UPDATING DOCUMENTS



Our SCES Profile Document has been updated and Five Year Strategic Plan 2021-25 is well underway. Nick, our education and project facilitator, has been busy compiling these documents with input from the committee, outlining the depth and breadth of the Society's amazing achievements over the past 24 years and what is planned for the next five years.

The living documents will be shared widely throughout our networks and with funders as we strive to build capacity. They will be available as soon as possible, via the SCES website; be sure to check them out and to think of ways you can become involved and share in the exciting future of the SCES.

OUR PEOPLE

Julie, our newest committee member, shares a little about herself and her life learnings.

PERMACULTURE FARM EXPERIENCE



My early years were formed by life on a Southland sheep and grain farm at Northope/Lochiel. My family lineage has generations of farmers. Many years ago, I completed a permaculture certificate which gave me a base knowledge about the resilience of natural ecosystems. It was my love of travelling, however, that was my biggest teacher.

In 2014/2015 I backpacked around Europe for 18 months, on my way home to New Zealand, after three years living in London. I was volunteer working and discovered time banking, community supported agriculture and repair stations. I read books like 'Cradle to Cradle - Remaking the Way We Make Things' by William McDonough, Michael Braungart and 'When the Rivers Run Dry (Water) – the defining crisis of the 21st Century by Fred Pearce and finally Soil not Oil – Climate Change, Peak Oil and Food Security by Vandana Shiva.

A life changing experience for me was the seven weeks I spent working on a teaching permaculture farm in Belgium (www.hetvoedselbos.be), located in a small village called Nokere surrounded by castles owned by wealthy families with old industrial money. I witnessed the wealthy 'waking up' to understand that collaborating with the 'local village hippies who wore weird clothing' was vital to the success of the food systems in their country. Money could bring many opportunities, including buying material things. However, it was no guarantee for the wellbeing of oneself and future generations.

The wealthy families donated land and offered money in return for requests for food forests to be developed. The requests were declined, with counter requests being made, "please come and spend time with us on our permaculture farm to understand our work, before we can consider accepting your kind offers". The work is based on earth care, fair share and people care. One vibrant woman's request was accepted. She regularly visits the farm and is now on the Board of Trustees.

Teaching was onsite to mainly professionals who wanted to work part-time and also buy and build farms together. Teaching of children occurred through collaboration with local schools. In this particular area, local government was supportive of building community resilience. The global shift to look after this flying spaceship called Earth, was stirring.

My travel experiences and passion for resilient communities for future generations allowed me to recognise the importance of the Guyton's resilience vision, while attending the NZ Permaculture hui in Riverton 2019.

I was working for SBS Bank as a Chartered Accountant at the time. My curiosity took me to a work-related Fintech start-up boot camp that culminated in discussions around my desire to elevate this vision for Western Southland. I became a member of the team formed to design the Longwood Resilience Loop software, led by Robyn Guyton. This is a rural marketplace and technological infrastructure to enable communities to trade locally sourced produce and products to rejuvenate and reconnect rural communities - essentially a virtual village platform and part of the food security solution for Aotearoa to withstand Global shocks.

In summary, like my travelling did for me personally, 2020 has led us to ask many questions of ourselves, systems and relationships. Accordingly I invite you to read one of the books (that I have listed above) this summer, pop in to the South Coast Environment Centre to meet the team or visit the food forest in the coming year to understand some of the work being undertaken already, here in Southland.

Julie Moynihan



NEW SCES WEBSITE UNDERWAY

We are about to launch a new look, easy to use website that Rhi, our Graphic Designer has been working on. A fresh new look but still as informative as ever, the new website will have an online shop, events and bookings pages as well as easy search functions so you can quickly and easily find answers to your questions.



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.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR PLANTS,

we have got lots!

A selection of herbs, vegetables, trees and shrubs awaits you at the Environment Centre.

PRICED TO SELL FROM \$2 TO \$10.

Come in and have a look!

INSTANT KIT-SET GARDENS

Available from the Riverton Environment Centre.

Simple to assemble.

All you need to do is;

1. Lock the boards together by knocking the supplied and pre-set nails into the pre-drilled holes
2. Decide on your site, considering sun hours and wind protection.
3. Place a layer of cardboard or thick newspaper as a base if you wish.
4. Position assembled frame.
5. Fill with bought or home-made compost.
6. Plant seedlings or seeds, keep watered as necessary and await your bounty!



\$35
for a square metre
\$52.50
for 2 x 1 square metre
30%
off with a Community
Service Card

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

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.

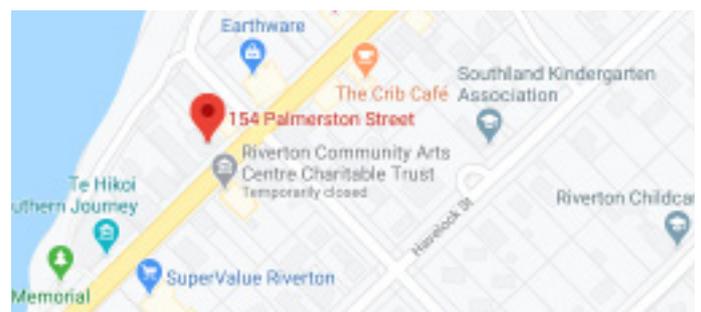
Phone: 03 234 8717, **Email:** office@sces.org.nz

Opening hours are:

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

Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm

Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm



www.sces.org.nz



find us on facebook