

Mandurah Environment and Heritage Group Annual Report

Presented at the AGM on 26 October 2021

Welcome, and thank you for attending our 2021 Annual General Meeting. You may already be aware that Barry Small, our longstanding chairman and co-founder of MEHG, has retired after many years of passionate service. We are very grateful for all that he has done to protect and enhance the local environment. He will be greatly missed. We are pleased that he is able to continue coordinating the Friends of Sapphire Cove for the time being. Please see a full tribute to Barry on our website.

We have had a busy but rewarding year. We started off in full campaign mode to try and protect the Peel-Harvey Estuary from the serious dredging of a 2.5km channel to a proposed marina at Point Grey. We have also voiced support for DBCA officers in Mandurah, an Elder in Residence, and Greening Mandurah with Native Trees.

Our popular mascot Dudley Dolphin has made countless appearances and walkabouts at festivals, clean-ups, fishing clinics and Dolphin Watch events. Subject to the availability of our volunteers, we've also had stalls at some of these events with free all-ability family-friendly activities.

The Falcon Lions Kids Fishing Competition, World Wetlands Day events and the Wetlands Weekender have now become annual fixtures in our diary, as well as many City of Mandurah events.

Just in the last month, Dudley Dolphin and co have participated in the Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) Biennial National Conference (Mandjoogoordap: Changing Tides), the Wetlands Weekender, Coastal Waste Warriors events including Luca's Legacy, and the Camping, Caravan, 4WD & Boat Show with Seabird Rescue.

Thanks to a Restart Mandurah Grant from the City of Mandurah, we have an ongoing program of free activities which are listed at <https://mehg.org.au/free-activity-calendar> We have been running these activities throughout the year, and we have some fabulous events coming up, so keep an eye on our website for some great opportunities. We were not granted the insurance element of our program, but thanks to Bonnie-Beal Richardson, we can apply to be covered by MEVA insurance on an event-by-event basis.

In March we renamed and extended "Clean Up Peel Waterways" to "Clean Up the Peel". This is a joint collaboration with Colin Elton of Friends of Rivers, Peel (FOR Peel) and the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council. 256 participants collected 138 full bags of rubbish weighing over 1400kg.

Also in March we partnered with Mayor Rhys Williams, Deputy Mayor Caroline Knight, Nannas for Native Forests and WA Forest Alliance to present a special community screening of Jane Hammond's award-winning documentary, *Cry of the Forests* at the Quarry Park Amphitheatre.

In May we were delighted that Lyn Beazley agreed to become MEHG's ambassador. Lyn cannot attend this AGM as she is chairing a meeting of the Northwest Shelf Turtle Conservation Program Advisory Committee, but she sends her best wishes

As well as being passionate about the environment, we are also keen to promote and enhance Mandurah's local heritage. To this end, we have strengthened our relationship with Mandurah Museum, and enjoy partnering with them. Unfortunately, the Arbor Day activities planned for June had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

The Friends of Sapphire Cove continue to meet at least monthly to maintain and enhance this A Class nature reserve, focusing on revegetation, weed control, mulching and watering. Peel-Harvey Catchment Council continues to support the Friends, and have recently installed six nest boxes of various dimensions to attract different species. Five volunteers monitor the boxes on a weekly basis and record any activity. The paver art by Bushrangers from John Tonkin College has also been extended. Future activities at the cove include an All Abilities Discovery Day on 28th November 2021.

The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah and Pinjarra have been successful in their advocacy work with the City of Mandurah, who have budgeted to establish an All Abilities Canoe Launch site at Riverside Gardens. They also continue to monitor the river systems for rubbish and water hyacinth, and to inform the local authorities.

The Mandurah Tree Advocates have been less active this year due to low numbers of volunteers. We would like to change this by inviting members to join the committee, and help us advocate for more native trees in Mandurah.

We are lucky to have committee members of the calibre of: our secretary Linda Thorpe who was recently described as our "backbone" and recognised by the City of Mandurah as a "Local Legend"; Barbara Sing our treasurer is a "Three Rivers, One Estuary Champion" and is leading the Black Bream Stock Enhancement Project in partnership with Murdoch University; Merrilee Baker has been an active "Nanna for Native Forests" in the fight to save our ancient woodlands; and Sally Warner manages to bring valued causes. Sadly, our vice-chairman Robyn Devenish OAM (and "STEM Hero 2020") has resigned to take up a twelve-month Australian International Volunteer post at ANGAU hospital laboratory in Lae, Papua New Guinea.

We are very grateful to our members, volunteers, supporters and funders. Without them we would not exist.

Thank you.