



Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc
PO Box 7356
Beaumaris 3193
Incorporated Registered Charity A0043690H
ABN 58 898 180 989
www.marinecare.org.au
www.facebook.com/MarineCareRickettsPoint

MARINE CARE RICKETTS POINT INC

ANNUAL REPORT – 2022

PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

27 APRIL 2023

Marine Care Ricketts Point (MCRP) is the organisation which protects and educates about the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary at Beaumaris. We formed in January 2003, two months after the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary came into effect. Our inaugural President, Bob Whiteway, OAM, was largely responsible for the Victorian Government declaring the area a Marine Park.

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Our Organisation

Membership

We now have 425 individual members, 294 are existing members and we welcome 131 new members.

In January 2022 MCRP had 244 registered memberships. We reviewed our membership subscriptions and sent an individual letter to everyone who had not renewed their membership for more than two years. We asked them to respond if they wanted to be removed, and we took a no-response to mean they agreed to be removed from our mailing list. We sadly removed 152 non-financial members.

We currently have 256 registered memberships due to a large number of new membership applications for 2023. Our members continue to use “Try-Booking” (35% of bookings) and direct Bank Transfer (65% of bookings). We stopped accepting cheques and cash, which has made it easier to track membership payments.

Since Sept 2022 – March 2023 we have received 164 memberships applications and renewals.

This is an indication of how well-known MCRP is becoming around the Bay (and further afield!)

Many thanks to Ali Horton for her outstanding role in this area.

Finance

Our Treasurer, Fiona Dick, took over in 2019 and has continued to do an outstanding job, despite running a very busy business full-time, and looking after two small children, including a baby.

We continue to have well-managed, prudent financial policies. A copy of the certified 2022 financial statement is at Annex C. We sincerely thank the auditor, Mr Iaan Dick, who provided his services pro bono.

While our fees cover the very basic costs of running our organization, we continue to rely on grants from our partner organisations, such as Coastcare, Parks Victoria, and Bayside City Council, to undertake all necessary training (eg snorkel leader training) supply of goods (eg for Beach Patrol 3193) and special events (such as the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary in November 2022). This entails much work both applying for and acquitting the grants.

Facebook and Instagram 2022 -23

MCRP – current followers, mainly within Melbourne, are 1797 (68.6% women, 31.4% men). Our posts have reached 24,938 people.

3193 Beach Patrol has 574 followers with our posts reaching 1541 people.

Ricketts Point Sanctuary Supporters – has 200 followers and had 25 posts during the year.

Grants

20 Year Celebration of Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary

We were very grateful to receive two grants from Bayside Council – one to hold the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the formation of the Sanctuary (and our own MCRP organisation) and the other to hold a special smoking ceremony by a wonderful Indigenous Elder to welcome people to county.

We are very grateful to Bayside Council for this fantastic support, without which it would not have been possible to stage such a wonderful event.

Marine Urchin Cull Grant

We worked closely with Parks Victoria and Coastcare throughout 2022 to arrange snorkel culls of urchins in the Sanctuary. We've still to complete the 5 commercial culls to be undertaken in the Sanctuary, which we hope will stop the march north of the over-abundant urchins, which are devastating the south of the Sanctuary. The grant concludes in May 2023.

While being a great way to engage our local community in this problem through snorkel culls, the grant has demonstrated that the most effective way to deal with urchin overabundance is by using commercial culling. Parks Victoria have obtained a grant to continue to map, cull by commercial cullers, and replant seaweeds and other algae in devastated area in 2023 and 2024.

Special Event – 20th Anniversary Celebration

The highlight of our year was when we staged a wonderful 2022 anniversary of the Sanctuary coming into effect, and our own MCRP anniversary on 12 November 2022. Approx. 500 members of the public and our own members helped us celebrate.

A sub-committee of Jing, Joel, Liz, Ali, Beth, Andrew, Alexis, Flynn and Craig organised a wonderful event. Thanks also to the Beaumaris Life Saving Club for their generous support, and to the EcoCentre. We also launched the posthumous book of by Bob Whiteway, edited by his daughter Jane, entitled Teacher Down Under. Another great feature was a smoking ceremony conducted with grace and enormous information by local Elder Willy Pepper.

It was a perfect sunny day for a wonderful event. We raised so much awareness of the importance of the Sanctuary to Bayside, and we are still getting fantastic feedback from the community.







Our Programs

Snorkelling Program 2022-2023

The Saturday morning summer snorkelling season was due to commence as usual in November 2022 and finish on April 1 2023. The start of the season was delayed because of heavy rainfall in the Melbourne area during October and November. Some suburbs such as Maribyrnong had extensive flooding. The Yarra River was carrying a lot of water and debris, which then ended up in the bay and along the foreshore from Port Melbourne to Ricketts Point. The EPA were issuing guidelines saying not to go swimming, and the water was a murky brown colour.

The first two snorkels were cancelled, and the first snorkel didn't take place until December 3. The water was a bit murky, but the barbecue provided by Jinty and Gayle afterwards was delicious. The water quality improved in December and we had many excellent mornings in the water. As usual, some snorkels were cancelled due to unsuitable windy weather and choppy conditions.



Heading out on a beautiful summer morning in January

Our snorkelling program is a major attraction to new members and contributes to a better understanding and knowledge of the Marine Sanctuary. The more people who get to see and appreciate the underwater world, the better the Sanctuary will be protected both now and into the future. We have at least 25 attendees at most snorkelling days and on some days we had up to 35.



Photos from a snorkel at Teahouse Reef this season

MCRP purchased two underwater cameras in 2021, and long-term member Chris Forbes has been taking some beautiful photos on the Saturday snorkels and posting them onto the MCRP Facebook page, along with photos from David Reinhart and others. Many thanks to all who contributed.

David Langmead has now retired as coordinator of the programme and Ian O'Loughlin has taken on the role for the 2022/2023 season. Many thanks to David for his years spent as coordinator!

Mick Morley has continued providing and monitoring our roster of snorkel leaders, which is a great help for us all. We thank Mick, David, Ian and all the other leaders for their work and support. Also many thanks to the 'on-shore crew' who have helped fill in Buddy sheets, made sure everyone has returned safely, and helped with our floats, first-aid kit and folders.

Qualified leaders

For safety reasons, we try to have 1 snorkel leader for every 10-11 snorkellers. So we need at least two snorkel leaders at each event, based on the number of people attending. The Saturday snorkels are increasing in popularity (over 20 people at many snorkels, often over 30 – our largest was 40 people in January), so it is becoming more important to have several experienced, qualified people present. The leader has a lot to do – checking the forecasts and deciding where to snorkel, sending out notices, picking up equipment, making sure everyone is ready on the day, giving a brief about where we are going and weather conditions so it is better if a second or third leader arrives punctually to assist with forms, floats, questions, etc.

To share the workload around, we ask all snorkel leaders to commit to leading at least 6 sessions per season, or being the back up for the leader. This way the same people don't end up doing the work and getting burnt out.

We now officially have 11 snorkel leaders, though not all of them are available to take snorkels due to work and other commitments. We will need to train up more leaders, and will need to get grant money to do so, as our fees do not cover these costs.

Great Victorian Fish Count

Our participation in the annual Great Victorian Fish Count (GVFC) is organised by Gayle Kiteley, and was held on December 10th 2022. A second Fish Count was held at Bird Rock in Mount Martha on February 18th. Thanks to Gayle for her work.

We had an excellent turnout and counted many fish species.

The GVFC is run annually by the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) to collect important data on the distribution and relative abundance of Victoria's fish life. This year the T-shirts featured the Spotted Carpet Shark.

This excellent State-wide citizen science project asks all volunteers around the state to input their data into one standard data base. It provides an important longitudinal fish data base. We are the only group to have contributed to the Great Victorian Fish Count since its inception 17 years ago.

Teaching Newish Snorkelers

In past years, we have held a learning session in a warm pool for snorkelers wanting to learn or upgrade their snorkelling skills. Unfortunately this event was cancelled in 2021 due to Covid restrictions, but was able to resume in October 2022 at the Tulip Street pool in Sandringham. Mick Morley and Terry Valentine were the excellent teachers, and we thank them for organising it, and helping people feel more comfortable in the water. They taught people how to check their snorkel gear, how to duck-dive properly,

use a weight belt, clear a snorkel, etc. The session was fun and informative, plus a great way to prepare for the upcoming snorkel season.



Mick teaching snorkelling skills Oct 2022 Tulip St Pool

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Published Snorkelling Information

We provide detailed information and tips on snorkelling in Port Phillip Bay and at Ricketts Point on our MCRP website. It reflects both our commitment to safety and to fulfilling our role of educating and informing the public about the Sanctuary.

The information is the best freely-accessed information we've seen on snorkelling in Port Phillip Bay.

We also email members each week (usually Wednesday night) advising of the snorkel location and likely conditions for the following Saturday, with links to tide, wind and other information. Updates are sent on Fridays, and, sometimes, on Saturday mornings, if conditions change.

We maintain our Standard Briefing Notes for snorkelers participating in our activities. This provides comprehensive information about snorkelling, including safety information. The Notes are posted on our website and emailed each week with the notice of the forthcoming weekly snorkel during the season. In 2020 MCRP decided to publish a comprehensive snorkel leader guide for MCRP snorkel leaders, given the number of new leaders we have, to assist them in feeling confident in the role.

Insurance

MCRP has our own public liability insurance, for leaders and financial members. All our snorkelers are required to sign an Activity Participation Form once at the beginning of each season acknowledging that personal injury insurance is their own responsibility, and also acknowledging that participants have the required standard of competence in the water.

Summary

Snorkelling provides fitness, time spent in the outdoors, an entry point into the amazing underwater world, relaxation, camaraderie, and education. The 2022/2023 season introduced many newcomers to snorkelling, and allowed seasoned participants to reconnect over a coffee at the Ricketts Point café. Altogether, we had 76 people signed up to participate this season.

Ian O'Loughlin (Snorkel co-ordinator MCRP)

Summer By the Sea

In January 2023 Coastcare decided to reduce the number of volunteer groups participating in Summer By the Sea, as it focused on more events on-line and run by commercial enterprises. Thus we did not run SBTS events in January 2023.

3193 Ricketts Point Beach Patrol

2022 proved to be a very successful year once again for Beach Patrol 3193.

Many people have come back to our beach cleans since covid lockdowns stopped in 2023.

A massive thank you to JZ, Ali, and Scott and Michelle who, with Beth, turn up every month to advertise, run and record the data from our snorkelling events. We couldn't do it without you!

Thankfully, since Bayside Council banned cigarette smoking on the beach foreshore and carparks in Bayside, we see much reduced cigarette waste.



Members' Speaker Evenings

If you have ideas for future speakers, have heard an interesting speaker or want to present yourself, please let the committee know!

Once again, Zoom proved to be an effective and convenient way of holding meetings, with the spread of Covid still an issue for many people. All except one of our four speaker events were held over Zoom. Many thanks once again to Ali Horton for organising the Zoom meetings, often in quite demanding circumstances. Although it's nice to catch up over Zoom, the general feeling was that speaker evenings are better when they are in person because it gives us all a chance to catch up, and possibly share something to eat and drink. The other issues with Zoom are that everyone is becoming a bit 'Zoomed out', and also there are many excellent Zoom presentations being put on by various organisations which can be attended by anyone. For example the St Kilda Ecocentre ran an evening on marine pest identification, hosted by marine biologist Fam Charko, with fish expert Andrew Christie and another expert from a university all on the one evening. Fortunately Covid seems to be less of an issue now, and we can get back to meeting and catching up in person in 2023.

Our speaker events for 2022 were:

1. Victorian Fisheries Authority: via Zoom (March)

Topic: 'Fishing, shellfish gathering, poaching, regulations...' Two officers from VFA, Will and Rebecca, gave a fascinating account of their work in patrolling, regulations, enforcement and education. The main message was to call 13FISH if you see anything illegal taking place.

Biography: Will Jennens has been with VFA for 7 years and Rebecca Chen for 1 year. Both are highly qualified with relevant university degrees.



2. Bob Tammik: In person (April)

Topic: 'Rakali, the indigenous Water Rat' Bob spoke about the behaviour, diet and habitat of the reclusive Rakali, which live in and around Port Phillip, and are much more common than is commonly thought.

Biography: Bob has studied Rakali informally with various groups, and has also participated in formal surveys and monitoring.



A large female Rakali



Chilling out

3. David Lennon: via Zoom (July)

Topic: 'Artificial Reefs' David knows a lot about artificial reefs! He explained their construction, materials,

benefits, coral restoration, fish habitat and more.

Biography: David owns a consultancy business called Sustainable Oceans International and has worked in locations around the globe. He began his career as a commercial diver, and later obtained an MSc in Environmental Management.



David and friend



Reef building in Port Phillip Bay

4. Elley Thomas from Bayside Council: via Zoom (October)

Topic: 'Foreshore Planning' Elley gave a detailed account of the groups who have an interest the foreshore and water, coastal infrastructure, and the council's plans for the future.

Biography: Elley is currently Bayside's foreshore and planning officer.



Bayside foreshore on a sunny afternoon

Summary:

MCRP was able to present a wide variety of interesting speakers over the past year, despite the caution still existing around Covid. Hopefully we will be able to meet in person from now on, and be able to catch up socially while learning about Ricketts Point and all things marine at the same time.

A big 'Thank You' to everyone who set up the hall, made tea and coffee, ran Zoom meetings, etc. Ian O'Loughlin (speaker organiser MCRP)

Social Events

We hold two social events for all members each year – our December Christmas/ end of year celebration, and our end of snorkelling season BBQ – usually at the end of March.

These events would not be possible without the hard work of both Gayle and Jinty, who have run them each year with such great organisational skills and careful expenditure of them both. They are a central part of the success of MCRP.

Enjoy the photographs below of our 2022 events.



March 2022 BBQ – Ian, Rosie, Jing and Liz



Various members at the sunny March 2022 BBQ



Beth with Park Vic rangers Emily and Ellie at the December 2022 BBQ



Steve, his daughter Maya, and David at the Dec 2022 and Jinty relaxing after her magnificent solo effort at the Dec 2022 BBQ

Our Policy actions

Building relationships with stakeholders

In the last few years we have made a conscious decision to be very active on the policy front, and in extending our relationships with key stakeholders, both at government and non-government levels.

We are always seeking feedback from members on our advocacy role, as it's important that we reflect members' views. There has been a discernible shift over the last couple of years in members wanting our organisation to advocate to government on several wider issues including waste, plastics, and climate change matters generally. This has been borne out by consistent member feedback, including at our regular Members Speaker Forums.

We provide members with information about relevant public forums, and of campaigns asking you to support matters we see as core issues (such as banning single-use plastics).

We are members of the following umbrella not-for profit organisations:

- Bayside Emergency Climate Action Network (BECAN)
- Port Phillip EcoCentre, St Kilda
- Protectors of Public Lands Victoria Inc (PPLV)
- Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA)

With other organisations, we have continued to advocate for the restriction and banning of jet skis in the Sanctuary and elsewhere in the Bay. This has been an on-going campaign for the last few years. Our local

State Member of Parliament, Brad Rowsell, has said he would agree with a ban of jet skis in the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary. David Hall has been our MCRP member on the alliance working on this issue.

Threats to the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary

Since Covid, we've seen a large increase in people discovering our local Bayside attractions, especially the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary. This includes both land and water visitors.

Fisheries have continued to patrol the waters for poachers, both by boat and by drone. Please remember, it is really important that you report all illegal fishing to Fisheries *on 13FISH – phone in 24/7*.

Thank you all

Firstly, many thanks to all, Committee members and others, who contributed to this report.

The 2022 Committee of MCRP has worked co-operatively and very effectively in bringing you, we hope, the wide range of experiences that you all enjoy. I don't know of any other purely-volunteer organisation of our size which provides so many activities for its members, on such a small budget. It has been a privilege to work with people with so many talents, and who are dedicated to the good of members and the environment.

I thank them for all their work and support.

Finally, many thanks to all members for your volunteering and active participation in our organisation. Please keep your ideas and comments coming. We do take them seriously.

Elizabeth Jensen

President

March 2023

Marine Care - Ricketts Point Inc

Statement of Purposes

1. To foster species diversity conservation of the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary through:
 - a) the regeneration of the once abundant plant and animal life of the sanctuary,
 - b) the protection and preservation of the natural environment of the sanctuary, its features and its indigenous flora and fauna,
 - c) the educating and informing of the community about the role and values of the sanctuary,
 - d) community involvement in and enjoyment of the sanctuary in accordance with the above aims,
 - e) the advancement of knowledge of marine life and its environment.
2. To establish and maintain a public fund to be named *Marine Care Fund*, for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of the Association.

MCRP Committee of Management – 2022

President Elizabeth Jensen
(email elizabethjensen@outlook.com; m 0419 354 998)

Treasurer Fiona Dick

Secretary Anna Daniels
(email anna.daniels16@gmail.com; m 0402 209 497)

Membership Officer Alison Horton email ali.horton62@gmail.com

Other committee members:

Greg Mier
Ian O'Loughlin
Val Royale
Jing Yang

Marine Care Rickett's Point
2022 Financial Statements
Statement of Financial Performance

	2022	2021
Income		
Subscriptions/Member donations	\$ 4,155.99	\$ 2,821.12
Donations Other	\$ 200.00	\$ -
Grants	\$ 8,995.00	\$ 25,160.00
Interest	\$ 1.65	\$ 6.56
Total	\$ 13,352.64	\$ 27,987.68
 Expenses		
Liability Insurance	\$ 665.00	\$ 630.00
PO Box	\$ 139.00	\$ 136.00
Eco Group memberships	\$ 193.80	\$ 323.80
Website	\$ 199.77	\$ 208.90
Donation	\$ -	\$ 200.00
Training	\$ 201.00	\$ 341.34
Printing Posters / T Shirts / Booklets	\$ 52.13	\$ 751.28
Beach clean-up	\$ -	\$ 188.58
Event Catering	\$ 475.52	\$ 232.63
Speakers Nights	\$ -	\$ 462.54
Urchin Cull Grant Expenses	\$ 11,341.00	\$ 18,443.58
Float	\$ -	\$ 5.00
20th Anniversary Expenses	\$ 5,429.31	\$ -
Total	\$ 18,696.53	\$ 21,923.65
 Surplus / Deficit	 -\$ 5,343.89	 \$ 6,064.03

Marine Care Rickett's Point
2022 Financial Statements
Statement of Financial Position

	2022	2021
Cash at Bank		
Working Account	\$ 40,326.43	\$ 33,957.36
Public Fund Account	\$ 5,511.53	\$ 5,511.53
MEC Facilities	\$ -	\$ 584.95
Investment Term Deposit	\$ 3,295.87	\$ 3,294.22
Total Assets	\$ 49,133.83	\$ 43,348.06
 Liabilities		
Creditors	\$ 27,500.00	\$ 16,500.00
 Net Assets	\$ 21,633.83	\$ 26,848.06
 Equity		
Net surplus carried forward	\$ 26,977.72	\$ 20,913.69
surplus current year	-\$ 5,343.89	\$ 6,064.03
 Closing Equity	\$ 21,633.83	\$ 26,977.72

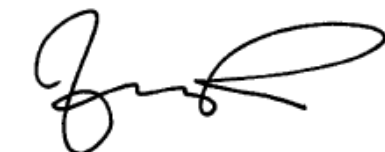
Certification

To the Members of Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc.

We hereby certify that the above report is a true and accurate record of the financial position and performance of Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc. Appropriate records have been maintained and proper due diligence has been performed on the accounting records and reports of the association for the period ending 31st of December 2022

Signed

23rd of March 2023



Fiona Dick
Treasurer



Elizabeth Jensen
President



Iaan Dick
Auditor