VOLUNTEERING ON PHILLIP ISLAND

The Phillip Island Nature Parks is a not-for-profit environmental management agency managed by a Committee of Management, the PINP Board of Management. It is responsible for managing most of the Crown Land on Phillip Island, including nearly all of the remnant vegetation; significant populations of Little Penguins, Hooded Plovers and Short-tailed Shearwaters, and the Ramsar listed Rhyll Inlet. The Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre and Churchill Island are world class ecotourism destinations providing quality wildlife experiences which are also managed by the Park. We do not receive any ongoing funding from the state or federal Government and must generate our own income to ensure the Park remains viable. Therefore any volunteer assistance in managing the Park is most appreciated.

Volunteering with Phillip Island Nature Parks

Volunteer programs directly with the Nature Park are mainly directed at students at a tertiary level and other volunteers over 18 years of age. Placements are generally for a two week period.

Some opportunities are available for secondary students but you must apply through the PINP Education Department to ensure Victorian Education Department protocols are followed.

General Operations

This program involves volunteers assisting Nature Park Rangers to complete the below projects. In order to work more efficiently and complete major projects we organise volunteers to work in 1-2 week blocks. These blocks usually occur in university/TAFE holiday periods in early February, around Easter school holidays, June – July mid-semester break, and September school holidays. However we can negotiate for a regular day of volunteer work if that is more suitable.

Weed control – removing environmental weeds that are threatening habitat, native plants and biodiversity. This activity is conducted throughout the year.

Revegetation – this involves planting native species indigenous to Phillip Island in natural areas that have been degraded in the past or infested with weeds. Winter to spring is the best times of the year for this activity. Volunteers can also help in our plant nursery by collecting seed, sowing seed, prickling out seedlings and propagating cuttings. These activities are primarily from summer to spring.

Habitat rehabilitation – involves both of the above activities along with the construction and installation of penguin boxes. Basically the program consists of returning degraded land back to useful habitat for Little Penguins. Available in the penguin’s non-breeding months of autumn and winter.

Vermin control – assisting Rangers in controlling introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats. Most often involves the setting and checking of cage-like cat traps. Usually conducted in the winter months when Short-tailed Shearwaters have migrated to the Bering Strait thus eliminating a major food source for feral cats.

Previous participants have included:
International Student Volunteers
Tertiary Students on individual programs
Deakin University work placement program
TAFE Students
RMIT students
Conservation Volunteers Australia – in association with Landcare
Corporate volunteers, Toyota, National Australia Bank.

PINP contact is info@penguins.org.au
**Koala Conservation Centre**
The Koala Conservation Centre houses a protected population of koalas in a natural setting that is readily visible from elevated boardwalks. The Centre also provides valuable habitat for other species such as birds, possums, bats, wallabies and other woodland wildlife. Volunteer opportunities exist at this Centre; however, they are normally in association with general operation programs on an as-needed basis. There is also a Friends of the Koalas volunteer group that help monitor the koalas and care for their habitat (see above).

PINP contact is [info@penguins.org.au](mailto:info@penguins.org.au)

**Churchill Island**
Churchill Island is an historical precinct that was the site of the first crop planted in Victoria and the first building erected. Restored buildings that date back to the 1860’s and old-time farming are still on the island, along with important vegetation communities and habitat. Volunteer opportunities exist on the island; however, they are also normally in association with General Operation programs on an as-needed basis. There is also a Friends of the Churchill Island volunteer group that helps care for the island and its historical areas – see above.

PINP contact is [info@penguins.org.au](mailto:info@penguins.org.au)

**Hooded Plover Watch**
This program is a voluntary, community-based initiative. As a volunteer, you will assist research and PINP and BCSC ranger staff manage this threatened species on Phillip Island. Hooded Plover typically nest on surf beaches during the busy summer months; they are prone to disturbance and have low breeding success. Volunteers help monitor nest sites and educate the public about the importance of keeping themselves and dogs away from nesting areas. This program is conducted from late spring to early autumn. You must be able to make a commitment of participation for a breeding season to participate in this program. We will provide training at the beginning of the season for all volunteers. Most suitable for people with local accommodation. Must have own transport. Email contact and mobile phone also desirable.

PINP contact is [info@penguins.org.au](mailto:info@penguins.org.au)

**Rescue/Transport Volunteers – Wildlife Hospital**
For the over 25 years, Phillip Island Nature Park has maintained the only Wildlife Hospital on Phillip Island which cares for approximately 500 sick and injured animals each year.

In October 2007, the Nature Park brought together a group of local volunteers to form the Transport & Rescue Group. Volunteers help with the rescue and transport of injured native animals across Phillip Island. Ideally we need a large enough pool of volunteers to fill in when people are away or otherwise unavailable. If you would like to volunteer to help our wildlife in this practical way you need to own a reliable vehicle, hold a current driver’s licence & have a little time to donate.

The Group also needs volunteer Call Managers. These volunteers are not asked to rescue wildlife but manage the after-hours wildlife calls and contact members of the Transport & Rescue Group to co-ordinate on the ground rescues. To assist as a volunteer Call Manager you need to have a mobile phone and email access and be prepared to take calls at any time of the night.

If you are interested in either of these ways of helping injured wildlife on Phillip Island, please call Phillip Island Nature Park Wildlife Rehabilitation Officers on 03 5951 2800 between 8a.m. and 3.30p.m. or email [info@penguins.org.au](mailto:info@penguins.org.au)
Other volunteering opportunities on Phillip Island

Volunteers can help the Phillip Island Nature Park by participating in local conservation groups that support the park.

Volunteer groups working to improve natural values on Phillip Island include:

NOTE: Up-to-date contacts for these groups can be found on the Bass Coast Shire web page under the Community Directory or the organizations web site.

Barbara Martin Bush Bank
Phillip Island Tourist Road, Koala Conservation Centre, COWES, 3922
The Barb Martin Bushbank facilitates the collection and storage of local indigenous plant seed and co-ordinates the propagation of plants from this seed for use in community tree planting projects and gardens on Phillip Island. Open Wednesday mornings and the first Saturday morning of each month or sales by appointment.

Contact: Ms Jenny Toy, Coordinator
Tel: 0407 348 807
Email: bushbank@penguins.org.au

Cape Woolamai Coast Action Group
Contact: David Luscombe,
5 Cleeland Road, Cape Woolamai 3925
Tel: 5956 6363
Email: david@islaw.com.au

Cowes Coast Action Group
Preserving and maintaining Cowes foreshore. Meets 4 times a year. New members welcome.
Contact: Steve Davie,
PO Box 129, Cowes 3922
Tel: 5952 2555

Friends of Churchill Island
New members welcome. Come visit our beautiful Island & Heritage Farm.

email: secretary@friendsofchurchillisland.org.au
website: http://www.friendsofchurchillisland.org.au

Friends of the Koalas
Conservation group dedicated to the preservation of koalas and their habitat. Also preservation of indigenous vegetation. Monthly habitat days and koala counts.

Contact: Friends of the Koalas Inc. PO Box 231, Cowes Vic 3922
website: http://www.vicnet.net.au/~koalas/

Friends of Silverleaves Foreshore
Contact: Bruce McHenry, PO Box 297, Cowes 3922
Tel: 5952 5083

Newhaven Coast Action Group
Contact: Alison Oats
Tel: 03 5956 6741

Phillip Island Conservation Society
Practical work. Red Rocks Coast Action.

Contact: Margaret Hancock,
Tel: 03 5952 2557
Web page: http://home.vicnet.net.au/~piconsoc/
Rhyll Coast Action Group
Liaise and advise Council regarding weed management and replanting on Rhyll coastline. Planting days. Propagation of local indigenous plants. New members welcome.

Contact: John Swarbrick,
37 Reid Street, Rhyll 3923
Tel: 5956 9582

Silverleaves Conservation Association
Aim is to maintain area in natural vegetative condition, eliminate introduced environmental pests and help maintain a sense of community. To advocate and collaborate towards these aims.

Address
PO Box 316
Cowes VIC 3922

Contact: Ms Ethel Temby,
Honorary Secretary
Tel: 03 5952 5083

Smiths Beachcomber Association
Residents Group encouraging the orderly management, maintenance, supervision, protection & development of the natural, cultural, civic, wild life, environmental & recreational resources of Smiths Beach.

Contacts:
President: Ian Shand – Tel: 03 9898 4871
Secretary: Noel Halford – Tel: 03 98368183

Web site:
http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sbassocn/

Surf Beach-Sunderland Bay Coastcare Group
We meet on the 3rd Sunday of each month at Surfies Point car park at 10.30am. New members welcome.

Contact: Rob Scalzo
Tel: 03 5956 7372
Email: robscalzo@hotmail.com

Ventnor West Coast Action Group
Contact: Melbourne Mob: 0418 558 990

Ventnor Coast Care Association Inc.
Our area of concern is the coast and foreshore between Salt Water Creek to Grossard Point. We undertake planting, weeding, etc. under the supervision of BCSC.

Contacts:
President: John Wright; 5956 8174.
johnw@waterfront.net.au

Secretary: Janet Owens; 03 9244 6478
janet.owens@deakin.edu.au

YCW Coast Action
03 5952 1689
RMB 5070
Cowes. Vic. 3922.