

## AMBASSADORS TACKLE THE BIG ISSUE - LITTER!

This workshop showed the Ambassadors first-hand the effects of litter and pollution on life in our waterways.

The day started with watching the crew from the City of Casey empty the litter trap behind Endeavour Hills shopping centre. They heard from Cr Rosalie Crestani how special the area is and how much it's valued by the council, and then Andrew Clifton from Rocla explained how the litter trap worked.

The afternoon at Frog Hollow Reserve was divided between three activities – water-testing, invertebrates found in the creek and planting with Ray.

Water-testing helped Ambassadors understand the effect water health has on marine life and why it is important

to regularly survey the quality of our waterways. Using water samples from the shallows of the creek, Ambassadors then used ID sheets to distinguish a number of invertebrates found living on the water's edge including damselflies, amphipods and mayflies.

Lastly the Ambassadors planted nearly 200 native grasses, shrubs and river red gums. This is a great addition to the revegetation and a legacy for the future.

Many thanks to Adrian Verkerk and the crew for making the litter trap part happen, Cr Crestani and Andrew Clifton for generously giving their time to come along, and also Steve and Ray from the environment committee in Casey for organizing the plants and working with the students.



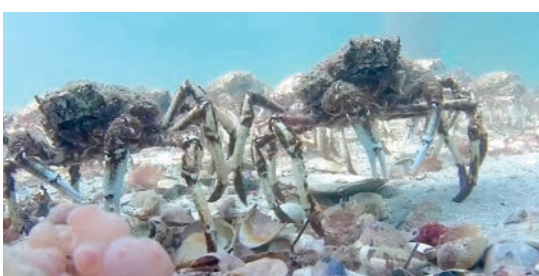
Celebrate the annual migration of some of the oceans most majestic creatures as our coastal waters play host to Humpback and Southern Right whales making their way north to their winter breeding grounds. The Island Whale Festival is an immersive three day event held during the school holidays on Phillip Island from 7 – 9 July, and heralds the arrival of these seafaring cetaceans into our marine environment.

Local community members and visitors alike have the opportunity to engage with a range of free or low cost activities that will not only entertain, but also allow you to appreciate the wildlife and natural habitats of Phillip Island and the Bass Coast region.

## BUT STILL THEY COME!! SPIDER CRABS ON THE MOVE!

Whilst the Queen's Birthday weekend is traditionally the official start of the Humpback whale watching season, another species quietly makes its annual migration into Port Phillip.

Spider crabs spend much of the year in Bass Strait, but head in shore at the start of winter, to the shallow waters around Blairgowrie and Rye, to get ready for the big moult. This is when the crabs shed their old shell to grow a new one. They are vulnerable at this time, so the crabs make themselves as flat as possible on the sandy seabed, looking rather like flattened discs. They then pump themselves full of water, increasing their size by as much as 30% before starting the process of hardening their new shell.



The event is pretty famous around the world as we don't think it happens anywhere else in such shallow and easily accessible waters for the public to view. It's a jewel in the crown of Port Phillip's story. (Even David Attenborough came to film a few years ago!)

They will hang around for a couple of weeks until their shells are fully formed and then head back out to their alternative home.

Check our facebook page for a short video of the crabs arriving on World Oceans Day! What better way to celebrate and remember why our bays are so special.

Photos: Karl Bromelow