

Hawksbury Lagoon update February 2019

I want to begin this year saying thank you to dog owners who have responsibly disposed of dog poo. While cutting back the long grass on the causeways, I found not one deposit and most dog walkers I saw had their pet/s on a leash. It was so good to see. I also picked up only one aluminium drink can in my travels and saw no other rubbish at all. The one sour note is the increasing number of horse related deposits on the track.

There have been other changes noticed this summer; overall fewer birds seem to be around, as several people have commented to me, although we do seem to have an influx of Canadian Geese. The nesting season seems to have been an extended one as only last week I noticed a clutch of nine new mallard ducklings. There are a few Spoonbills and some Shags/Herons, mainly on Post Office Creek, probably due to the number of shoals of small fish (bullies, sprats?). Such shoals will no doubt be a result of the outlet remaining open for nearly three months (since the beginning of November), the longest time I can ever remember it being continuously open. The main body of the lagoon has generally been quite low over the summer, mostly because we are unable to close off the culvert and hold back a minimum level of water. Progress towards a replacement culvert cover (the previous one having been vandalised) is slow, but indications are it is going to cost approximately \$10,000 and requires a funding grant. Which means we won't know if we are successful until at least July, the result of this delay means we will again be unable to control high water levels during the winter. If anyone wishes to contribute towards the cost, we would be most appreciative (our bank account number is 03 1737 0020799 00).

I would like to end with a thank you to the committee members who have carried out maintenance work in various areas of the lagoon environment over the summer. There are increasing numbers of visitors and locals walking the lagoon tracks who express their appreciation of the work carried out, the wildlife spectacle and the (mostly) pleasing environment.

Shirley McKewen
Chairperson