



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## FRIENDS OF THE HOODED PLOVER NEWS

Issue Number 26

Our Hooded Plovers might be bunkered down for winter but some of our hardier FoHP volunteers have been visiting the ocean beaches keeping an eye on where the birds are. Despite the terrible winter weather and rough seas removing much sand from the ocean beaches, reports indicate some of our birds have decided not to leave their territory this winter while others are flocking at St Andrews, Moana and Franklin Rd. The BirdLife Hooded Plover 'winter count' on 15 July will give us even more information on who is where. Thankyou to all the volunteers who offered to help on the day.

Our big news over the last weeks is FoHP was successful in obtaining a Coastcare Grant. The grant project title was "*Citizen science to the rescue: finding out more about beach-nesters on Western Port beaches*".

The BirdLife Beach-nesting Birds team are pleased FoHP will now be able to start monitoring the Red-capped Plover (RCP) on the Western Port beaches on the Mornington Peninsula. The grant will provide signs, equipment for RCP nests and chicks and training for new volunteers.

After the enthusiasm shown last year by local rangers and the public interest in these small beach-nesting birds it was decided to extend our reach and start including other beach-nesting birds in our scope of activity.

Next season the BirdLife data portal will include provision for logging sightings for Red-capped Plovers and Oystercatchers.

A RCP workshop is planned for mid September at Balnarring. Once BirdLife has confirmed a suitable date I will send out an invite to all members. Special thanks goes to Andrew Browne and Mark Lethlean for helping to organise this workshop and liaising with local Rangers.

A Hooded Plover workshop will be offered in Sorrento the following day.

If you would like to register your interest in attending either workshop feel free to email me - [hploversmornpen@gmail.com](mailto:hploversmornpen@gmail.com).

Parks Victoria has entered a team in the Melbourne Coastrek Challenge this year. An invitation was extended to one member of FoHP to join the PV team for the 30km challenge. I am pleased Chris Willocks has accepted on our behalf. The event is on Friday 18 November and we will be there to cheer her on.

Our educational program in schools continues to be of local interest, Dromana College will be making chick shelters for us this month in readiness for next season.

Bunnings Rosebud has once again come to our aid and given us a large donation towards the purchase of stakes for temporary fencing. With the help of PV rangers Renae and Stephen, all fencing equipment, signs and shelters have been collected, checked and redistributed to the ticket boxes in readiness for September. That's a fantastic job to get out of the way.

Cheers to all from wet cold Queensland.

**Diane Lewis**



Jo, Elizabeth, Lois and Jenny braving the weather at Beach 16.  
Photo by John Franklin

## DOG BAN & FAUNA MONITORING PROJECT

### Dog Ban

Minister Lisa Neville recently announced that dogs will be prohibited in Mornington Peninsula National Park.

Dogs are currently permitted along 14.5km out of 45 km of the coastline including:

- Portsea Surf Beach (visitor precinct in front of Surf Lifesaving Club)
- Between Sorrento Back Beach and Brewsters Road, Rye (Orr Point)
- Rye Ocean Beach (east of car park)
- St Andrews Beach (west of carpark)
- Flinders Ocean Beach (King Street to West Head)

After many years of lobbying by environmental groups the ban will come into effect after the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016. This will mean that previous regulations where dogs were permitted on leash between sunrise and 9am will no longer be allowed.

Parks Victoria have erected signage at all known walking track entrances notifying park visitors of the changes to regulations which can now be seen throughout the park.

If you notice that any of the confluence change to regulation signage have been



Ranger setting up remote camera in Mornington Peninsula National Park. Photo by Mark Pinney

removed, please contact Parks Victoria so that they can be replaced on 131963.

With the introduction of new regulations, a considerable amount of regulatory signage including coastal risk signs and totems will be replaced throughout the park which will be coupled with a compliance program to deter potential offenders.

### Fauna Monitoring Project

Another major undertaking that has been

occurring across Mornington Peninsula National Park and Point Nepean National Park is remote camera monitoring. This is the second time this project has been run with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the animals that we have in the park.

One hundred and forty cameras have been deployed in the field at randomised locations to record video in short ten second bursts, enough time to determine what the animal is. Each camera has a lure placed approximately one metre from the lens that is made up of a mix of honey, oats and peanut butter. The cameras are left in situ for two weeks and then retrieved and the video is analysed.

Species that have been recorded so far of interest are Swamp Wallaby, Bassian Thrush, Agile Antechinus, Eastern Yellow Robin, Echidna, White Footed Dunnart, Dusky antechinus, Superb Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrubwren and Grey Shrike-thrush.

**Mark Pinney**, Team Leader – Southern Peninsula, Parks Victoria

## Information

### Changes to dog regulations in Mornington Peninsula National Park

Mornington Peninsula National Park



From 1 November 2016, dogs will be prohibited from the entire Mornington Peninsula National Park at all times.

**Parks** VICTORIA  
Healthy Parks  
Healthy People

Park Information 13 1963  
[www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

Sign found at all walking track entrances notifying visitors of change to dog regulations.

## FRIENDS OF THE HOODED PLOVER (MORNINGTON PENINSULA) INC

Incorporation number: A0054904

**COMMITTEE President:** Diane Lewis **Vice President:** Mark Lethlean **Secretary:** Lois Greene  
**Treasurer:** Jo Hansen **General members:** Chris Willocks, Jenny Griffiths, Sandy Brewer, Hannah Lethlean

**BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS** BSB: 063 891 Account No: 10127668

**CONTACTING FoHP** 0419 320 205 or 5986 7660, PO Box 36 Rye 3941, [hploversmornpen@gmail.com](mailto:hploversmornpen@gmail.com)

**NEWSLETTER Contributions:** Thank you for all the great articles, notes & photos. Please keep sharing your Hooded Plover experiences.

**Send to:** Val Ford, 5981 1445, [fordandreid@gmail.com](mailto:fordandreid@gmail.com)

**Deadline for next newsletter: Friday 21 October 2016**

## ON THE BEACH

### Bride on horseback and destroyed sign

I had a magnificent walk up from Alison Ave to Rye Carpark this morning, 31 May. No birds at Alison Ave and only about fifteen surfers there. At Gunida I saw JA and unbanded foraging on the rocks. At Big Rock I saw LC and AK foraging together on rocks. Further up at Rye Carpark west RX alone on rocks.

My husband, Bill continued along the beach up to Boags and witnessed this bride on horseback having wedding photos taken! Not sure if she had ever been on a horse before!

On a disappointing note, I saw that the newly erected wooden sign at Alison Ave has been destroyed again, will notify Parks.

### Elizabeth Grierson

### Peninsula Peoples Liberation Front signs

When Lois Greene and I walked this morning, 25 May, from St Johns Wood Road to Dimmicks beach, we found two of these signs in prominent places on the path. They feature a cartoon signed by Jeff Hook, complete with hook.

They are very sophisticated, galvanised steel attached with fancy drilled in bolts etc.

### Jo Hansen

### Beach erosion and off leash dogs

We checked Koonya on 12 June and Portsea beaches on 13 June. There is so much beach erosion with no upper beach left and lots of the fencing at Franklin Rd is destroyed. At least fifty people walking at Portsea and three off leash dogs at London Bridge.

### Chris Willocks

### Wallaby and steep dunes

Yesterday, 9 July, I walked Farnsworth Track, Portsea back beach then home. On Portsea beach, near Franklin Rd access, I saw three Hooded Plovers one of which was an immature bird. Further down near Sphinx Rock end of the



Photos by Elizabeth Grierson

beach I saw three Hooded Plovers on the rocks and three on the sand, two of which were immature.

Not far from this spot I saw a small dead Wallaby on the beach. It had no signs of injury but I did note fox prints around the animal. I think it must have drowned. A long part of the beach had water marks right to the base of the dunes and these were so steep an animal or human would not be able to climb up them to escape incoming water.

### Sue Dunball



Cliffs on Rye ocean beach 26 June 2016.



Peninsula Peoples Liberation Front sign. Photos by Jo Hansen

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## FLOCKING AT FRANKLIN

On 30 May Rosalba, Jo, Lois, Elizabeth and I headed to Franklin Road to spot some Hoodies. What a gorgeous way to spend the afternoon, with crystalline waves gently rolling onto the shore under an azure sky in brilliant sunshine. We headed east from the access track and started to collect rubbish as we scoured the sand for the birds. Sadly we found much more rubbish (a bagful) than we did birds.

There were lots of Hoodie prints on the beach (along with what looked like fox paw prints trotting along the high tide mark) and soon eagle eyed Elizabeth spotted a lone bird at the water's edge that looked like a flagged juvenile. After some photo opportunities for Lois, our little friend flew off. Closer to Sphinx Rock we spotted another group of five which could have included the same juvenile. Again, these birds flew to the west after we'd sat and watched them for a while. One appeared to have a limpy leg.

A squadron of glorious Gannets flew past, skimming across the surface of the water, picture perfect.

As we headed back to the access track with our bulging bag of rubbish we came across a flock of eight Hoodies sitting mid beach and our group of five were probably amongst them. It's difficult to keep track of the cheeky little blighters.

On the access track/dune we saw some huge and unusual paw prints - at least 2/3 human hand sized - our trusty photographer took a snap. We also noted how much erosion there has been to the dune faces - very dramatic in some areas.

It was a beautiful day and I couldn't have asked for a nicer way to spend an hour or so.

**Karen Wootton**



Huge paw print - big feral cat? Photo by Lois Greene

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## NUMBER 16 AND FRANKLIN ROAD HOODED PLOVERS

After another frustrating attempt to ID the Hooded Plover newcomers at Number 16 beach, we gave up. We had the telescope, we had five sets of eyes with binos, the morning light wise just perfect but to no avail could we come up with a single letter! John and I will be happy when the breeding season starts and they head back to their own patch!

Jo, Elizabeth and I then had a fun time trying to ID the hoodies at Franklin Road. Our time there started off with still gorgeous weather, although the wind was picking up. We had a two metre drop to the beach from the path. The recent big surf, yet again, has gouged out a cliff of up to three metres high. Any hoodies trying to breed will need to go into the dunes at this rate.

So we headed towards the rocks and quickly spotted four hoodies on the rocks feeding. I recall it was eagle eye Elizabeth who saw them first. However despite much attention and various attempts to spot bands, we only succeeded in reading SZ. The other band was unreadable as was the leucistic and the juvenile was unbanded. The unreasonable wee birds kept turning into the wind and making band reading impossible. I don't know why they didn't want the wind blowing up their feathers?

We followed them down the beach until they were fed up with us and chased off by a wave to the rocks close to Sphinx rocks. Still couldn't read and gave up.

So we headed back. We collected a vast amount of plastic waste again, drink bottle tops, chuppa chup sticks etc. Then we needed to hunt for Elizabeth's sunglasses as she had added them to the waste, fortunately found.



Mystery birds at Number 16 and Franklin Road. Photos by Lois Greene

Then in front of us was another group of four birds. CU, an upper R, an upper L and an unbanded, all adults.

Gave up trying to read bands as the wind had really picked up so headed home.

The other very good news is the wallaby and kangaroo tracks we saw crossing the path. Another good reason for the dog ban, currently being ignored by all, as attested by the footprints.

**Lois Greene**

## HOODED PLOVER WINTER COUNT

Weather is not always on our side when monitoring hoodies. Especially during the Winter Count! Needing to postpone the original date due to gale force and damaging wind warnings, we were able to undertake the survey on Friday 15 July - a bit chilly, but at least the sun was out, the wind wasn't damaging, and the hoodies were able to walk around, enabling us to get some great leg flag sightings!!

A team of fourteen people, volunteers, BirdLife staff, Parks Victoria staff and Deakin research students surveyed from Flinders, all the way into Point Nepean, primarily for leg flag readings, seeing which birds were flocking together, and for a general tally of birds on the peninsula for that day. Results aren't in yet, but general conversation on the day hinted that the usual nesting pairs were hanging around their territories, with a few extra birds in flocks - with St Andrews Beach/Boags Rocks having a flock of eleven, and Portsea Sphinx Rocks having a flock of seven.

Preliminary flag sightings have shown that CT was observed, which was banded in Oct 2014 on the Surf Coast, Green on Left & Green/Orange on Right was also spotted, which was



Three of the Hooded Plovers recorded. Photos by Dan Lees

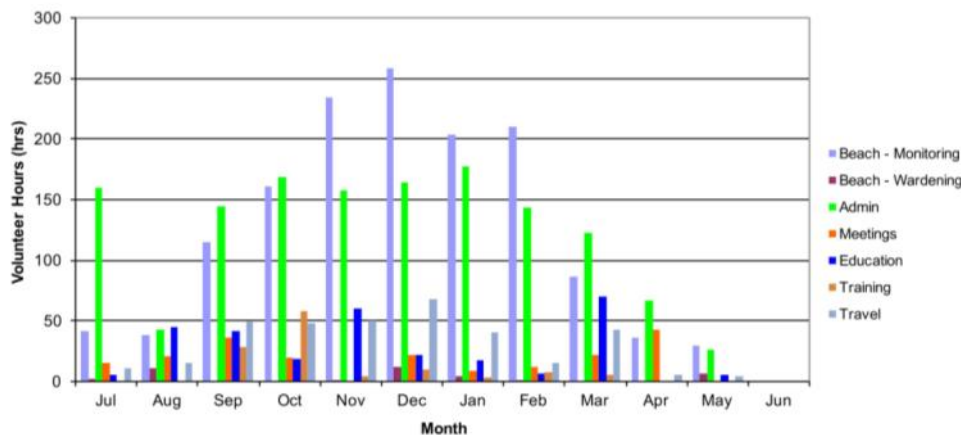
banded as a juvenile in 2012 from Phillip Island - so getting some really interesting movements. We look forward to receiving all the data from Mornington Peninsula, and across the state and getting some more interesting results (surveys

have also been done at key flocking sites on the Bass Coast, Far West Victoria, Bellarine and Otways).

**Renée Mead**, Beach-nesting Birds Project Officer BirdLife Australia

## FOHP VOLUNTEER HOURS

Friends of the Hooded Plover Mornington Peninsula 2015-2016



John Franklin 10 July 2016

## MEMBERSHIP FEE RENEWAL

### Renewal of Annual Membership Fees 2016/2017

Fee: \$10 per person; \$20 per Family

Payment: To the Treasurer by one of the following methods:

1. Cheque: Payable to Friends of the Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc.

2. Internet banking:

Account Name: Friends of Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc.

BSB No. 063 891 Account No. 10127668

Please identify the payer, and also notify the Treasurer, by emailing [hploversmornpen@gmail.com](mailto:hploversmornpen@gmail.com) of the transaction.

## BELLARINE/BREAMLEA HOODIE NEWS

### Hoodie Program Recognition

The City of Greater Geelong's Hooded Plover Program has received a 'Highly Commended' certificate at the 'Keep Victoria Beautiful Sustainable Cities Awards' on the 15th July. This was awarded under the hotly-contested 'Environmental Sustainability' category. It recognised the partnerships involved to protect the Hoodie, including Birdlife Australia, Coastal Managers, Friends of the Hooded Plover, Bellarine and Breamlea, Community Groups and Government agencies. The program is driving local collaboration and integrated management of Hooded Plovers through a wide range of protection works and engagement with the local communities through local media and community events.



Volunteers John, Andrea and Jennie enjoy the award celebrations, 15 July 2016.  
Photo by Rebecca Kootstra

A great achievement by the CoGG team, Jeanette Spittle, Steve Smithyman and Rebecca Kootstra to raise the profile of our Hoodies at a State level. Volunteers Andrea Dennett, John Murray and Jennie Turner were pleased to be able to celebrate with them on the night at the State Library of Victoria.

### Mid Winter Count

Bellarine/Breamlea Mid-Winter Count:

The weather during the week of the count was simply diabolical, with wild winds and tide/storm surges. However, we were all determined to do the job.

Bellarine Coordinator, Andrea Dennett, Brett Diehm from Barwon Coast and volunteer, John Murray had success counting Hoodies along the Bellarine. Julie Riley and Jennie Turner also accompanied Andrea to Lake Murtnaghurt behind 13th Beach but the Hoodies previously sighted there had moved on, most likely due to increased water levels in the lake.



Lake Murtnaghurt. Photo by Andrea Dennett

On the 14th July, Andrea counted a total of 13 Hoodies at 13th Beach (29W and 42W) but due to poor weather she was



Julie Riley with telescope at Lake Murtnaghurt.  
Photo by Andrea Dennett

going to return the next day to do the stretch of beach in between. However, on the 15th July, Brett very obligingly checked the whole stretch and counted a total of 18 - (8 x banded, 2 x unbanded and 8 x juveniles)!

They had both spotted the local pairs, CR and SN from 29W, XU and NK from 40W and Brett also sighted PC and EH from 42W, still in the company of their now eight month old offspring.

Still hanging around our side of the bay were the two Phillip Island adults, YLF15 and YLF21. Of the 8 juveniles along this stretch, one included a sub-adult with its 'salt and pepper' head. Andrea would like to think that the two juvs in the photo provided are the local 'twins' of AD and unbanded from 6W Ocean Grove/Collendina.

John Murray did the stretch from Point Lonsdale to Ocean Grove: and observed 10 Hoodies at 'Turtle Rock': (Point Lonsdale) - 8 adults and 2 juveniles -but due to the flightiness of the flock, no flags were able to be read. At Ocean Grove, NZ and unbanded partner were observed on territory. This brought the total birds sighted to 12 Hoodies (10 x adults, 2 x juveniles).

Julie Riley and Jennie Turner saw all the usual suspects on territory at Bancoora/Breamlea Beaches - a total of 7 adults (3 x banded; 4 x unbanded).

Overall, the combined total of the Bellarine/Breamlea Mid-Winter Count was 37 Hoodies.

### Winter Wader Hoodie Count

Geoff Gates reported the following sightings of Hoodies from the Winter Wader Count, conducted on 3rd July by the Geelong Field Naturalists Group:

Lake Victoria (near Point Lonsdale): No Hoodies. Water levels were far too high. In fact it was really hard to find the 5 x Red-capped Plovers that were finally spotted.

Freshwater Lake (near Point Lonsdale): 15 x Hoodies (10 adults and 5 juveniles), though no flags were observed. There were also 60+ Red-capped Plovers and 60+ Double-banded Plovers.

Lake Murtnaghurt (13th Beach): 7 Hoodies sighted.

In total, 22 Hoodies were sighted at the lakes.



Juveniles at 13th Beach. Photo by Andrea Dennett



Sub-adult at 13th Beach. Photo by Andrea Dennett

**Andrea Dennett**, Friends of the Hooded Plover, Bellarine  
**Julie Riley and Jennie Turner**, Friends of the Hooded Plover, Breamlea

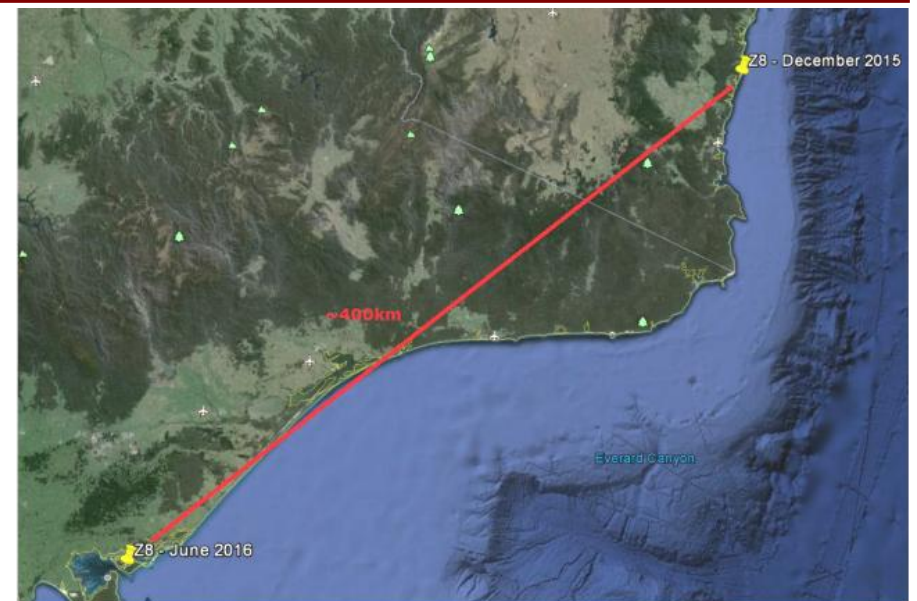
## HOODIE ON HOLIDAY

Jodie Dunn, Shorebird Recovery Coordinator for the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service banded and flagged a pair of Hooded Plovers on the 11th of February 2014 at the Murrah River estuary (South of Barragga Bay on the NSW South coast). The pair was flagged Z8 (female) and R5 (male).

It appeared Z8 and R5 were not to be as Z8 was paired with X1 for the start of the 2015/16 breeding season. It seems R5 had found new love too and was spotted nesting with a new partner. Throughout the 2015/16 breeding season Z8 and X1 had two unsuccessful breeding attempts, the last sighting of Z8 was in late December, North of the Wapengo Lagoon.

On the 3rd of June 2016 Jonathon Stevenson observed and reported a flock of 10 Hooded Plovers on Snake Island. The flock consisted of three adults (including orange flag UH), two sub-adults, two juveniles and the adventurous Z8! She had moved a distance of ~400km as the crow flies, and ~450km as the Hooded Plover flies (presumably along the coast), which is a really exciting discovery for a NSW flagged bird to be found so far west.

**Daniel Lees, Jodie Dunn, Amy Harris, and Jono Stevenson**, Word about the Hood, June 2016



## BEACH-NESTING HOODIES

It's always been difficult for Hooded Plovers to raise their tiny families; they've always had to deal with king tides, weather extremes and predation from gulls, ravens and snakes but now they have the added dangers of foxes, cats, vehicles and dogs.

Late last month I got a call from volunteer-hoodie-protector Sue to say that the first chicks had hatched. As soon as I could I was driving towards their beach. I arrived just when the sun was getting low and Sue and I spent the next few hours watching and waiting. The images are not as sharp as I prefer to share but I'm always mindful that the birds' well-being is far more important than any photograph. I kept my distance, and the heavy cropping, along with the heat haze played havoc with the image quality – but this post is about more than image quality.

Did you notice how many legs the adult bird has in the image below?

These chicks are 3 or 4 days old, it's hard to know exactly when they hatched. They remind me of cotton wool balls with matchstick legs; they are adorable. They are remarkable little hatchlings that foraged for themselves from day one, darting around looking for insects and sandhoppers amongst the seaweed and rock pools while their watchful parents scanned the beach for signs of danger.

The image was taken the following morning. One of my favourite things (apart from 'brown paper packages tied up with strings' and 'wild geese that fly with the moon on their wings') is to be at the beach before sunrise. There is something magical about watching the first rays of sunlight creep across the sea and the sand delivering sparkles of warmth.

I had hoped to revisit these chicks and make a record of their little lives. I had hoped to see them get bigger and stronger as their feathers grew and they practised flying in ever-increasing circles across the water. I had hoped that they'd be banded and I'd hear of their adventures but sadly my hurried trip to their tiny patch of coastline was the only time I saw them. Two chicks didn't survive a storm that raged around them when they were 6 days old and the third was lost at two-and-a-half weeks when another storm battered the beach.



Parent with chicks



Four day old chick



Three day old chicks

This post comes with a plea for bird-lovers to encourage beach-goers to be mindful of our beach-nesting birds when holidaying by the ocean this summer. These little birds don't ask for much and we can help by not walking our dogs near them, by staying close to the water's edge, by carefully following the instructions on signage boards and by being willing to change our habits just a little.

Last year a pair of hoodies successfully raised a family, for better quality images and a happier ending you might enjoy *The hoodies have flown!*

**Kim Wormald**, lirrallirra blog, at <http://www.lirrallirra.com/> November 2014



## BE A GOOD EGG

The goal of our "Be a Good Egg" outreach program is to increase the awareness of and reduce threats to beach nesting birds by encouraging beachgoers to pledge to "share the shore" with Piping Plovers and other beach nesting bird species.

During our "on the beach" outreach days, we set up a tent and table at the entrance to busy Long Island beaches and talk to as many beachgoers as possible about beach nesting birds. We provide visitors with pamphlets and brochures about beach nesting bird biology, our conservation work, and information on how to reduce disturbances to birds. Then, we ask visitors to sign our "Be a Good Egg" pledge and therefore agree to stay out

of fenced off nesting areas, keep trash off the beach, and to follow rules on bringing dogs to the beach.

If you like spending time on the beach and talking to people, then this event is for you! Prior to these outreach events, we'll ask new volunteers to complete a brief online training webinar. We welcome volunteers to participate in either half or full day shifts. This year, we will host six outreach days on Long Island.

**Text and photos from Be a Good Egg Facebook pages:**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/218499581848700/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GoodEggNJNY/>





## Application for Membership

I, ..... (Print full name)

Of ..... (Address)

Phone: ..... Mobile: ..... (Occupation) .....

apply to become a member of Friends of the Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc.

I attach my payment of \$10/ person or \$20/ family (select one) for my initial Annual Subscription Fee. I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association as from time to time in force, if I am admitted as a member. If my application is rejected the money is to be refunded to my postal address above.

For the purpose of any Notices under the rules or otherwise, I request these be sent to me either by:

- (a) post to my above address (b) email to .....  
I request the Association to adopt any one of the above alternatives at its complete discretion.

I would like to assist in some of these activities: (please select one or more by placing **X** in the front of the statement)

Preferred activities:

Hooded plover biennial count	Monitoring breeding birds	Writing media articles
Helping locate new nests	Distributing information brochures	Helping put up fences/signs
Wardening busy sites	Activities to raise community awareness	Constructing chick shelters

Previous experience:

Observing birds/animals	Bird/animal population surveys	Bird Identification
Monitoring nests	Data collection	Public education
	Finding nests	

(Optional) DONATION: I would like to donate to the Association and attach my cheque, or have used internet banking, for: \$.....

Signature of Applicant: ..... Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Please send completed form to Friends of the Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc. PO Box 36, Rye 3941

Payment Options:

- Cheque, made payable to Friends of the Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc, posted to PO Box 36, Rye 3941
- Internet banking - Account Name: Friends of Hooded Plover (Mornington Peninsula) Inc BSB No. 063 891 Account No. 10127668 (Please identify the payer, and also notify the Treasurer, by emailing [hbloversmornpen@gmail.com](mailto:hbloversmornpen@gmail.com) of the transaction).

*Official use only:*

I, ..... (Print name), a member of the Association, nominate the applicant, who is personally known to me, for membership of the Association.

Signature of Proposer: ..... dated: ..... / ..... / .....

Signature of Seconder: ..... dated: ..... / ..... / .....