

Wildcare Tasmania  
Friends of Freycinet

Schouten Shenanigans  
Volunteer Information  
2024



Freycinet  
NATIONAL PARK  
TASMANIA

*Schouten Passage from Morey's Hut*

We acknowledge and pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners and continuing custodians of this land and acknowledge Elders past and present.





## Schouten Island working bee dates

This year we propose that the 2024 Schouten Island working bee will run from 25 November to 10 December. Volunteers are to select from the following options. These options may vary depending on conditions and numbers applying.

**Option One** will be from 25 November to 3 December. Volunteers will be asked to meet for a briefing on Monday 25 November and transfer to the island on Tuesday 26 November, returning on 3 December.

**Option Two** will be from 2 December to 10 December. Volunteers will be asked to meet for a briefing on Monday 2 December and transfer to the island on Tuesday 3 December, returning on 10 December.

**Option Three** is that you stay on the island for the whole period ie 25 November to 10 December.

## What will I be doing?

Volunteers may be involved in some or all of the following tasks:

- Conduct all duties and activities consistent with the principles of the Tasmanian State Service Code of Conduct and the policies and procedures of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas).
- Uphold the Workplace Health and Safety and Wellbeing values of NRE Tas.
- Establish the Volunteer Campground Hosts site at Morey's Hut for the new season including cartage of gear from beach to hut, set-up of tent and other infrastructure.
- Undertake weed control, monitoring and mapping. The weeds are mostly:
  - *Ulex europaeus* (Gorse) on the interior of the island;
  - *Vinca major* (Periwinkle) on the interior of the island;
  - *Euphorbia paralias* (Sea Spurge) along sandy beaches.
- Undertake the cleaning of toilets at Morey's Hut as well as the two public toilets north and south of the camping area at Crocketts Bay.
- Undertake rubbish pick-ups around Schouten Island sites including beaches, walking tracks and campgrounds.
- Undertake minor maintenance on infrastructure as required.
- Keep Morey's Hut free of food scraps and other rubbish which may attract rodents/vermin.
- Report to the supervising Ranger any work health and safety issues, park management issues, infrastructure damage or faults.

## How do I get there?

Schouten Island is only accessible by boat. Volunteers leave from the Coles Bay jetty and transport is provided by Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) on board the PWS vessel. The trip takes approximately 35 minutes.

There is no dock at Schouten Island and loading / unloading is by beach landing and wading through water that is sometimes waist high.

Transport to the island is only provided at the start and completion of the working bee.

**Delays may occur at the start or end of the working bee due to weather conditions. Parks and Wildlife Service will not compromise the safety of its volunteers or staff by travelling by boat under rough conditions.**

It is very important for volunteers to have some flexibility with their travel itineraries for the days that fall both before and after.

There is no re-supply during the time on the island so volunteers need to ensure they have sufficient food supplies and personal medications to last for the entire duration of the working bee.

Volunteers are required to pay their own costs in getting to and from the staging point at Coles Bay, and for their food and personal items. All Volunteers need to have a valid Tasmanian Parks pass; need to have registered as volunteers with NRE Tas and be members of Wildcare Tasmania. Volunteers are asked to be at Freycinet Field Centre the day before their scheduled departure, so that they can undertake a compulsory induction so that an early start can be made the next morning. Camping will be provided at Richardson's Beach before heading to the island.

## What is provided?

Parks and Wildlife Service and Wildcare Friends of Freycinet (FOF) provide:

- transport to and from the island
- emergency communications (satellite tracker)
- first aid kit, insect repellent, sunscreen
- insect-shield coveralls
- tools and equipment necessary for the required work
- cooking equipment and utensils

## Volunteers will need to bring with them

- all food, and clothing for the duration plus an extra 1 to 2 days food, in the event of delays to departure due to poor weather;
- all personal medications, toiletries and related items;
- camping equipment (tent, sleeping bags, camp mattresses etc);
- cup, plates, torch and camp chair;
- sturdy walking boots
- weatherproof and warm clothing (including hat and gloves). These are essential even in summer as the weather is highly variable.
- gaiters
- personal mobile phone (note mobile reception is limited)
- personal reading material

Supplies bought to the island should be inside spray-proof sealable tubs so that supplies don't get wet when transported, plus there are pygmy possums on the island that will get inside anything they can and chew. **Volunteers are to make sure that any supplies or items that they chose to take with them on board the vessel are limited to an individual weight of 10 kilograms or less per unit.** That means any bag, box, or crate that you carry your gear in does not weigh more than 10kg.

## Where will I be staying?

The night before each scheduled embarkation volunteers will camp at Richardsons Beach camping area within Freycinet National Park.

Volunteers need to provide their own tents and camping equipment. On Schouten Island Morey's Hut is not to be used for sleeping.

The two front rooms of the main hut are used as a Visitor Information Centre. This hut also has two rooms available for Volunteers use - the kitchen and pantry. Parks Wildlife Service promote the huts as emergency shelters only and campers are to be discouraged from "camping" inside the hut. Access for the general public to the huts is to be maintained.

## What facilities are there?

Only basic facilities are provided; there is an external toilet and an external bush/camping shower.

Water is available from the Morey's Hut tanks and a refillable kitchen water container is provided. Fresh (tank) water should be treated prior to consumption with either water purifying tablets or boiling and be used sparingly. Kitchen equipment (pots, pans, plates, crockery) and washing up equipment are provided.

A generator and solar panel are provided to charge a battery which runs a camp eski (for refrigeration), mobile phone charger and camp lights. Battery powered lanterns are also provided.

Note refrigeration on the island is limited and is shared by all participants.

## What happens in an emergency?

Evacuation procedures exist in the event of a bushfire, or serious injury / illness to the Volunteers requiring medivac; the cost of this is covered by Parks and Wildlife Service.

## Work, Health and Safety and Wellbeing (WHS&WB)

In accordance with Section 28 of the *Work, Health and Safety Act 2012* ('the Act'), while at work a volunteer as a worker must:

- a) *take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety;*
- b) *take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons;*
- c) *comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Department to allow NRE Tas to comply with the Act; and*
- d) *cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure, relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers*

Individual volunteers are required to be registered as volunteers with NRE Tas, including providing the Department with advice on any condition that may impair their individual, or others safety. Volunteers must immediately report any hazards or incidents as they occur to the relevant

Department Supervisor who will ensure compliance with the Department's Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy and procedures. All volunteer work tasks are subject to appropriate WHS&WB risk assessments prior to any activity commencing. Volunteer participants must attend a safety briefing and wear any personal protective equipment as identified within the Job or Activity Risk Assessments. During an activity, if there are any reasonable concerns that a worker may be exposed to a serious risk to their health and safety, work should cease immediately, and a report made without delay to the relevant NRE Tas Supervisor.

In past years there have been cases of Flinders Island Spotted Fever (FISF) amongst volunteers on Schouten Island. Flinders Island Spotted Fever (FISF) is an illness caused by bacteria known as *Rickettsia honei*. FISF is spread to humans by a bite from a tick infected with the bacteria. The tick that carries the FISF bacteria is thought to most commonly be found on reptiles. In Tasmania, infections have been acquired on Flinders Island, Schouten Island, and the eastern coast area. Infections can occur throughout the year, but the risk increases during spring and summer months when ticks are most active and when camping and other outdoor activities are more common. Infections occur in people of all ages.

Volunteers will be supplied with insect-shield coveralls. For more information on FISF the Department of Health has produced a fact sheet.

<https://www.health.tas.gov.au/publications/flinders-island-spotted-fever-fact-sheet>

All NRE Tas volunteer programs must comply with the NRE Tas COVID-19 Safe Plan, including ensuring appropriate control measures are in place.

Individuals participating in an approved volunteer program, and who have registered as an NRE Tas volunteer, volunteer insurance cover is provided by NRE Tas.

## Personal Information

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) require all volunteers to complete and submit a Volunteer Registration form. <https://nre.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/volunteering/volunteer-registrations>

Your personal information will be used for the primary purpose for which it is collected and, may be disclosed to contractors and agents of NRE Tas, law enforcement agencies, courts and organisations authorised to collect it.

Your basic personal information may be disclosed to other public sector bodies where necessary for the efficient storage and use of the information. Personal information will be managed in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act 2004 and may be accessed by the individual to whom it relates on request to the NRE Tas. You may be charged a fee for this service.

## Contact

Friends of Freycinet Co-ordinator: Jenny Baulis [friendsoffreycinet@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffreycinet@gmail.com)

Parks & Wildlife Service, Freycinet: Nick Graham [Nicholas.Graham@parks.tas.gov.au](mailto:Nicholas.Graham@parks.tas.gov.au)





removing stores from the beach



weeding gorse



setting up the Caretakers tent



relaxing outside Morey's Hut

collecting rubbish



heading home - packing the boat