

Dune carers' efforts 'avoided more devastation'

Shoreline at Fingal ravaged

By PATRICK QUINN

IT could take anywhere up to two years before Mother Nature puts back what it took away during a fierce storm at South Fingal last weekend.

What the storm took was about 20 feet of shoreline and local conservationists say it could have been twice as much if it wasn't for their efforts.

"The drop from where the sand has been taken away is quite spectacular," according to local Fran Rabbitts.

"Before the storm hit there was just a gentle slope but now there's something like a 10 to 12-foot drop.

"I wouldn't like to go walking along there at night and fall off," she said.

Husband, Ian "Bunny" Rabbitts, who is also a member of the Fingal Heads Dune Care and Re-afforestation Group, said if it wasn't for their

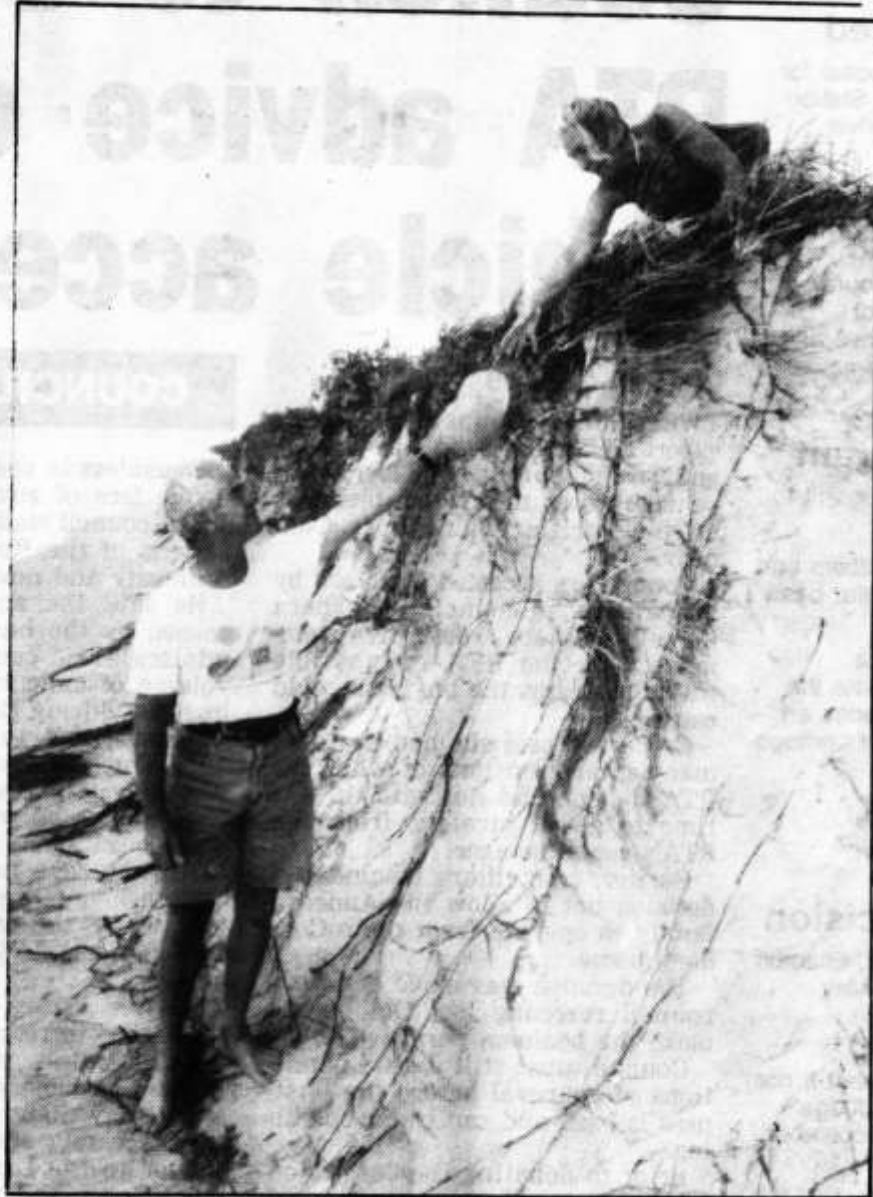
work the storm could have taken away twice as much shoreline.

With shoreline degradation listed as one of our major environmental woes, the efforts of people at Fingal have actually seen the shoreline extend itself at certain points over the years.

Introducing stabilising sand dunes is one of the keys in the fight against shoreline erosion and is carried out by planting Australian flora such as Banksias into the sand dunes. Over time the area is eventually turned into a little coastal rainforest.

The dune care group is also responsible for the eradication of a noxious weed from four kilometres of the Fingal Peninsula and volunteers have planted between 6000 to 8000 trees.

For people wanting to find out more about dune care they can call Kate on 5524 2165.



□ FINGAL residents Bunny and Fran Rabbitts point out the extent of erosion at Fingal that has occurred along the fore-shore during fierce storms last week.