



Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc.

April 2022



From the President's Desk

Lessons to be learned

The zoom meeting for our March meeting allowed Dr. Alan Lane to share experiences with Pope's Glen Creek with us. Stories about a successful bushland rehabilitation within an urban area are always inspiring. Similarities and differences abound and there are important lessons to be taken away from Dr. Lane's presentation.

Lesson 1 involves the creation of **small bird habitat**. This has long been a concern to many of our members, exacerbated by the invasion of the reserve by Noisy Miners and Indian Mynahs. The conventional approach has been to create a dense environment of prickly shrubs. Plants such as Bursaria, Melychitus, Hakea and the Acacia species Prickly Moses and Hedge wattle are the standard response to this approach. The problem with this approach is the amount of time it takes for these plant communities to establish. At Pope's Glen Creek, a casual observation showed that there is a much faster way of creating small bird habitat. Small birds were observed to inhabit a pile of decaying willow branches which formed an ideal protection from larger predators. The practice in Damper Creek has been to clear light fallen branches as they are seen to be a fire hazard and attract complaints from the public due to their untidy appearance. Rather than removing this material, it could be re-located to an unobtrusive location and perform a useful function while rotting down to enrich the soil. The folk at Pope's Glen Creek also conduct an annual bird survey to monitor their changing environment, an element in environmental monitoring that is lacking at Damper Creek.



Lesson 2

Both Damper Creek and Pope's Glen Creek suffer from the wildly fluctuating water flows that result from rapid runoff from hard surfaces in a developed urban environment. The high peak flows carry sediment and exacerbate erosion. At Pope's Glen Creek the solution to this problem has been to divert high water flows to a wetland area where sediment settles and is eventually removed without clogging the creek. The sediment is a valuable resource but, potentially, hides pollutants shed from the roadways. Analysis shows that this is not the case and the sediment can be relocated to a suitable site.

At Damper Creek it is difficult to identify a suitable location for such a wetland but the "Duck Pond" fulfils this function, being periodically excavated and the sediment suitably deployed. The last time this was done, the excavated material was spread on the grassy area behind the Warren Court/ Park Road houses. Due to the high organic content and permeability this area remains green in all but the most severe droughts.

I'm sure there are many other lessons to be learned from the experience of the folks at Pope's Glen Creek. Please check out the following video and, more comprehensively, the online publication of the group's work and achievements. If you see other lessons we can apply, please send them to me and I will publish them in subsequent issues of Damper Creek Doings.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=610sas330EQ>

Download the book FREE showing the digital photo history "Wasteland to Wetland – The Full Story" <https://dl.bookfunnel.com/ebgais2pxn>



Backyard observations



Observations of wildlife by members are always welcome. When photographs are provided that is even better. These two photos were provided by our vice president Di Carra. To the left is probably female bowerbird that has been sighted 3 times in their garden.

The other is of a sugar glider sighted near the middle bridge (west side). Three gliders were spotted that night.

Later, a different bird was heard near their house - it was up in the canopy so a photo was not possible, but we think it may have been a blackfaced cuckoo shrike.

As the habitat of Damper Creek and its surroundings improve you may encounter birds not seen before. Often the birdsong is the only way the presence of a bird can be detected. If you hear an unfamiliar call check out the following website:

www.birdsinbackyards.net/birds/featured/Top-40-Bird-Songs



Visitor to Blackburn Creeklands

Ably photographed recently by a member of Blackburn Creeklands, the Wedge-tailed Eagle had not been seen in the area since records began in the 1970's. Keep your eyes open, who knows what you might see in Damper Creek Reserve.

Suburban Rail Loop Update

Drilling for geotechnical surveys is proceeding with boreholes being sunk along the projected alignment of the SRL. The latest activity is within the grounds of Mount Waverley Secondary College. A number of boreholes have been sunk in the vicinity of Damper Creek. This process seems to have been conducted rapidly with minimal disturbance to the surrounds. One borehole was sunk near the Bengal crescent entrance to Damper Creek Reserve, leaving little evidence. The submission from the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve will be presented to Advisory Committee on April 29th at 10-15 am. This will be a Zoom session and members can join by going to engage.vic.gov.au and select "Suburban Rail Loop East: Inquiry and Advisory Committee" and click to join room 1.

Note that full details of the Committee's schedule are available on engage.vic.gov.au.

Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve: Member survey

As part of a Deakin University honours project and in partnership with the Friends of Scotchman's Creek and Valley Reserve, a survey is planned to investigate the reasons members are inspired to join our organization. We hope this will allow us to better target our activities to our members' needs. We expect this survey to be available later this year and look forward to gaining a greater insight into our membership.

Alvie Hall meetings:

Apologies to members who were looking forward to meeting in person at Alvie Hall. For a variety of reasons, we will not be meeting at Alvie Hall this month and will be having our meeting via Zoom. Resumption of Alvie Hall meetings will be discussed at the Zoom meeting on April 27th.



Dates to remember:

Wednesday April 27th at 7:30 pm
Monthly Meeting on Zoom

Sunday May 1st

Working Bee

Meet at the Alice Street Bridge

Starts at 10-00am

Concludes 12-30pm

Wednesday May at 7-30 pm
General Meeting at Alvie Hall

Sunday May 29th

Working Bee / Community Planting Day

10-00am to 12-30pm

Meet at the Park Road carpark

BBQ provided courtesy Mount Waverley Lions Club

Report it!

Have you seen something along Damper Creek that you think needs attention?

Please contact Monash Council and leave a report. You can contact them the

following ways.:

www.monash.vic.gov.au/contact/request-a-service

Phone(03) 9518 3555 or download the App – Snap, Send, Solve

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Damper-Creek-133557736847306/>

The content of this newsletter reflects the opinions of the editor and the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve. Content is welcome and should be emailed to dougscott3@bigpond.com or to the secretary at secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com

PO Box 2063 Mount Waverley 3149

www.friendsofdampercreek.org.au