

Damper Creek Doings

July 2020

The newsletter of
FRIENDS OF DAMPER CREEK RESERVE
INC

Reg no. A0029531G

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Editorial

In these challenging times the availability of such a great place to exercise and revive the spirits is priceless. Anyone who uses Damper Creek Reserve will have noticed the number of people using the Reserve has increased dramatically. Damper Creek Reserve is far more than just a place to exercise, it is a place to commune with nature and perhaps in passing, to connect with others, (please do not gather and also observe 1.5metres apart for social distancing, of course). That these meetings are unplanned only adds to their charm. Old friends, new friends, big dogs, small dogs, it matters not. It's a pity we cannot measure the contribution our little Reserve makes to the mental health of the community.

Damper Creek Q&A

As Editor, I invite you to submit questions relevant to the Reserve. To get started, I will propose the first question and, hopefully, answer it to the reader's satisfaction.

Question 1: *Why do weeds take over from the native vegetation which has evolved to suit local conditions?*

Answer: The native vegetation has evolved with local soil and climatic conditions. If a complete local ecosystem is present, all of the available space is taken up and weeds will have a very difficult time establishing themselves. Unfortunately, in an effort to make the land productive for agriculture and settlement, much of the native vegetation was removed, soils improved by cultivation and fertilisation and water drainage disrupted. New plants were introduced which were especially selected to grow vigorously for grazing, agriculture and gardening. The combination of cleared land and the introduction of foreign, selected varieties which were bred for their vigour and

removed from their natural pests, makes for a very difficult situation when we try to re-introduce the native vegetation. A good coverage of native vegetation is the best defence against weeds.

Was this Q&A interesting? useful? Submit any question you have to dougscott3@bigpond.com and I will do my best to answer it or I will find someone who can. Please put Damper Creek Q&A in the subject line.



Plant in profile – *Clematis microphylla*

Clematis microphylla flowers from July to December and you will notice it is looking particularly beautiful in the Reserve at the moment. However, unfortunately some walkers in the Reserve have mistaken it for a weed and have tried to remove it, particularly from the wire fencing along the walkways. PLEASE DO NOT do this as *Clematis microphylla* is a precious indigenous plant, part of the environment, with benefits for small birds as habitat, bees for pollen, etc and the flowers are a beauty to behold especially now and onwards until December. It is

a prolific climber which makes it useful as a fence and ground cover. For your own gardens it is an attractive ornamental for screening, cascading over rocks, walls and in containers. It climbs trees without causing damage. It is suitable to plant in an open, dry, well-drained position in semi-shade or sun and is frost hardy.

(Ref: www.greeningaustralia.org.au)

Take a minute to pause and look into the shape and beauty of the flowers and more broadly, its overall soft fluffy appearance.

Upgrading the Bushcrew Compound

All of the old buildings on the site have now been removed and foundations are in place for the new structures. We look forward to a new look for the Compound which will enhance the effectiveness of the Bushcrew and blend in better with the appearance of the Reserve.

All Friends of Damper Creek Reserve activities cancelled during COVID-19

Members have been notified that all meetings, guest speakers, working bees and community events and associated letterboxing have been cancelled until restrictions have been lifted. For non-members, please be aware that we often communicate by email. By becoming a member (Annual fees waived for 2020/2021) you will be automatically added to our email list. Please direct membership enquiries to the secretary c/o Post Office Box 2063, Mount Waverley 3149, or via email: secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com General information including past newsletters is available on our website www.friendsofdampercreek.org.

Committee Report *(This is a brief summary of the topics discussed during an online meeting this month. The Secretary maintains a more comprehensive record)*

On 15 July 2020, the committee held a meeting via Zoom. Here are the topics discussed:

1. Annual Subscriptions from 31/8/2020 to 31/8/2021 have been waived

Due to COVID19 our activities have been cancelled since February 2020 and not likely to resume for some time, so it was resolved that subscription renewal notices will not be sent out to the small number of members who pay by annual subscription (from 31 August 2020 until 31 August 2021). Thank you to all who have subscribed in the past including Enduring Memberships.

2. Honorary membership

The Committee agreed that Don Bladier, a long-time member of FoDCR Reserve and an occasional guest speaker at our meetings, will be granted Honorary membership in recognition of his long service with FoDCR. Congratulations and well done, Don.

3. Cat Curfew Survey

The City of Monash has postponed the introduction of a night time cat curfew pending further community consultation – to be reviewed by Council in April 2021 when annual animal registrations are due. The committee has forwarded a group response to Council on behalf of FoDCR members expressing support for the night time cat curfew. This will enhance the safety and protection of our birds, wildlife, lizards etc. and also enhance the safety of beloved cat companions protecting them from being hit by cars, protecting them from being engaged in fights with other animals, and also protecting them from the spread of disease.

All members have been notified that they may make personal submissions by 30 July 2020 using the link provided in a separate email. The cat curfew survey can be accessed via the Monash City Council website go to: www.monash.vic.gov.au – search “Further consultation on proposed cat curfew” or send an email to “mail@monash.vic.gov.au”

4. AGM and annual elections

Under Consumer Affairs Victoria rules for Incorporated Groups, FoDCR are permitted to postpone the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and annual elections ((due to be held at the (now cancelled) August 2020 meeting)) until 31 December 2020, or even (on application at that time) up to 31 March 2021. The current Committee will remain as is until elections can be held.

5. Alvie Hall closed until further notice

Alvie Hall is closed during the current COVID-19 restrictions therefore all meetings are cancelled until further notice. As all guest speakers booked for 2020 have been postponed until 2021, the Committee will stay in contact with the hope that our vibrant guest speaker program will resume next year.

6. Monash Community Grant 2020

FoDCR has been successful in obtaining a Monash Community Grant which will replace the long-established previous grant for the annual BBQ and Hall hire costs. We are pleased to report that, with thanks to the Monash City Council, the new Community grant is sufficient to cover previous allowances from the Council. Due to COVID19 restrictions, the Community Grant monies will now only be accessed when FoDCR activities can resume again.

7. Melbourne Water Grant 2020

The Council has confirmed that the 4000 plants purchased using the Melbourne Water grant monies will be planted by Council Bushcrew staff free of charge as FoDCR community working bees are not allowed within the limits of COVID19 restrictions.

8. Promotion of FoDCR

Our revised brochure has now been printed pro bono with thanks to the office of Matt Fregon MP Mt Waverley Ward and staff, and you will find copies in the holders attached to the noticeboards. The brochure can also be accessed on the FoDCR website – go to: www.friendsofdampercreek.org.au – click on “About” button, and scroll down to “Brochure” – click on “Download a pdf version”

***Help needed - There are a number of areas we could address to improve the image of FoDCR. Is there anyone out there who is willing to offer their services for:

***Design of an FoDCR poster - general graphic design for newsletter

***Website ideas and contributions

***Anything else?

Replies/suggestions/ideas to email:

secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com – thankyou

9. Diary Notes

Unfortunately, we cannot predict when our normal programme will resume. The FoDCR committee will continue to liaise with the City of Monash regarding all issues that affect the Reserve. We will also continue to seek out guest speakers and would appreciate any suggestions from members for future guest speakers in 2021. Please be assured that FoDCR continues to be active behind the scenes. In the meantime, we extend our good wishes to all to stay safe and to stay well.

If you see something in Damper Creek that you think needs attention, such as fallen trees, please contact Monash Council directly on their website and leave a report: www.monash.vic.gov.au/contact/request-a-service

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

Damper Creek is part of the Yarra catchment and is financially supported by Melbourne Water and Monash City Council