

## Editorial : Exceptional Guest Speaker

Our first guest speaker for 2011 was Trish Grant, our local Waterwatch coordinator. Trish works with our Damper Creek Waterwatch team and has spoken to our group before. She is passionate about the water quality in our streams and the vigour of her presentation reflects an obvious enthusiasm. Trish's topic for this talk was:

### Water Sensitive Urban Design.

The state of Melbourne's urban streams has historically been dictated by a need to efficiently remove water from urban areas in order to prevent flooding. In more recent years it has been realised that the nature of urban development has caused massive changes to the flow regimes of these streams and novel approaches must be adopted if the objectives of stream health, minimisation of flooding, prevention of erosion and interception of litter are to be achieved.

In a natural system water run-off requires a rainfall of 15mm, rainfall less than this being totally absorbed by the ground and vegetation. There would be between 5 and 15 days during a normal year when stream levels would rise due to rainfall. In the urban environment, however, run-off occurs from as little as 1mm of rainfall and stream levels would rise on 120 days during a normal year. This massive increase in stress on urban streams is due to **“insensitive urban design”**. The cause of this problem being the proliferation of hard surfaces, roads, roofs, footpaths and driveways. Solutions to this problem have evolved over the last half century. The most obvious being the primitive “straighten and line” approach whereby all meanders and obstructions are removed from

streams and the stream bed is lined or barrel drained. The lower reaches of Damper creek are barrel drained to the west of the golf course. This then drains into Gardiner's creek which is a concrete lined channel. The capacity of this system was inadequate to prevent flooding during the recent heavy rains resulting in flooding in numerous areas both in the city of Monash and downstream.

Luckily Damper creek, at least as far as Huntingdale Rd, escaped this fate and we are blessed with a natural looking stream which allows much of the flow during moderate rainfall to be absorbed by the soil and plants along the way. Unfortunately the high proportion of hard surfaces upstream, East of Stephenson's Rd, continues to result in flooding from comparatively minor rain events.

Solutions are many and varied, some of which are now becoming common around the suburbs, such as wetlands, biofiltration, raingardens, swales, tree pits and rainwater tanks. Technologies at the leading edge include green roofs (such as have been installed on the Monash Civic Centre) and porous paving (at the MCG carpark). In the future we may even see the development of permeable roads! As property owners, we can contribute by directing run-off from roofs and gardens so that it remains on the property and to resist the urge to cover the ground with concrete.

### Duckling Rescue at Damper Creek

I'm sure we hadn't been the first to see that poor little duckling with the white thing wrapped around its body - it looked like maybe the end of a roll of sticky tape that had got caught around its head and settled onto its body, never to come off again without some kind of intervention.

Well 11 year old Tani wasn't going to just leave him to die like that. No, Tani had to try and catch him no matter what. It didn't matter to Tani that he had no

shoes on while he waded into the water to see if he could just wrap his hands around that little duckling from behind. It didn't matter to Tani that it was already 8pm and almost dark. It didn't matter to Tani that he would get wet and had no change of clothes with him. No, that duckling had to be saved.

After about half an hour of chasing the duckling this way and that with no success and darkness setting in, we had no choice but to go home for the night.

Morning came and off we went to save the duckling. We got on the phone to the man at Wildlife Victoria. We told him that we would be able to keep the duckling within our sights until someone came. Barbara, the volunteer from Wildlife Victoria arrived, unfortunately without a net. This however did not put Tani off in the slightest and he was certainly not going to rest until that duckling was rescued.

Tani again went into the water to try and scare the duckling towards Barbara who was armed with bread as bait. But of course the duckling was always one step ahead.

Eventually they decided it was time to invest in some nets, so it was off to the Mt Waverley equivalent of a \$2 shop. With two nets we were able to corner the duckling. Barbara was then able to scoop up the hapless chick with the net to cheers of hooray from onlookers.

What a relief to all as Barbara was able to gently slip off the offending circle of plastic that had lodged itself around the poor little duckling and the it was able to be released back into its home environment without any need for veterinary care.

Thank you Tani and Barbara for a great rescue effort.



Tani with ducks and new tee shirt  
(courtesy Wildlife Victoria)

**If you need to arrange care for an injured, sick or orphaned native animal then call the 24 hour Emergency Phone Number on 13 000 WILDLIFE or 13 000 94535.**

Written by Josie Young.

### **Community Planting Day**

Our major planting day for 2011 will be held on May 29<sup>th</sup>. As a result of our grant from Melbourne Water we will have 4000 plants for the day. The very successful format from last year will be repeated with letter drops to properties in the area and a BBQ for refreshment.

**Weeders needed** The weed growth following the exceptional summer rains means that many of our working bees will

be dedicated to weeding. Any members willing to provide extra weeding effort in addition to the working bees should notify the bush crew at the next working bee.

### **Friends of Damper Creek Important dates to remember:**

<b>March</b>		<b>Notes</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>	Wed 23rd - 7:30 pm	<b>Alvie Hall</b>
<b>Working Bee</b>	Sun Mar 27th 11:00am to 2-300pm	Rear Yatama Ct near Alvie hall
<b>April</b>		
<b>Meeting:</b>	Wed April 27th 7:30 pm	<b>Alvie Hall</b>
<b>Working Bee</b>	Sun May 1st	TBA

### **Contacts**

<b>President:</b>	Helen Clements helenclme@gmail.com	<b>98075952</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Campbell Miles	<b>98037707</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Griff Young	
<b>Editor:</b>	Doug Scott Please email material for the newsletter to dougscott3@bigpond.com.	<b>417300866</b>

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***Damper Creek Bushland Reserve: part of the Yarra  
Catchment.***

Please address all mail to:  
The Secretary: PO Box 2063,  
Mount Waverley 3149

*The Newsletter of*

**FRIENDS OF  
DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.**

Reg No. A0029531G

[www.vicnet.net.au/~damper](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~damper)

P.O. Box 2063 Mount Waverley

# **DAMPER CREEK DOINGS**

**March 2011**

