



Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation
Reserve inc.

August 2021



From the President's Desk

Wattles Galore!

I make no apologies for talking about wattles again. They are an Australian icon and are well represented in Damper Creek Reserve. There is none more iconic than our "Golden Wattle" (*Acacia pycnantha*), our national floral emblem and the inspiration for our Olympic team colours. It is dangerous to generalize about Wattles as there are nearly 1000 Australian species (and more in other countries). They range from large forest trees to tiny ground hugging shrubs. Flower colors vary from brilliant gold to pale cream, though there is a Gippsland variety of the Cinnamon wattle with red flowers.

Wattles cheer you up. In the dreary depths of winter the cheery yellow flowers suddenly brighten the bush and invite you to explore other plants which are about to bloom. One after another, the different species bloom, a cavalcade of flowers that persists for months!



Myths about Wattles

Wattles cause hay fever! Not True

Many people associate hay fever with wattles, however the reason for this misconception is that wattles often flower at the same time as grasses. Wattle pollen is obvious as it often covers the ground under the trees, but very few people are sensitive to acacia pollen and severe reactions have not been recorded. More often the culprit is grass pollen. Acacia pollen is heavy which is why it colours the ground under trees. Grass pollen is light and travels long distances. It is easily breathed in and has no obvious scent, unlike wattle pollen.

Wattles don't live long! Sometimes true

Generally, wattles are a pioneer species. They are among the first plants to emerge after a bushfire or after soil disturbance such as ploughing. Some may see wattles as weeds for this reason. However, nature has endowed wattles with two important qualities. Firstly, the seeds have a hard coating and will survive in the soil for decades before being cracked by fire or abrasion. Secondly, the roots have nitrogen fixing nodules which increase soil fertility for the next plants which emerge.

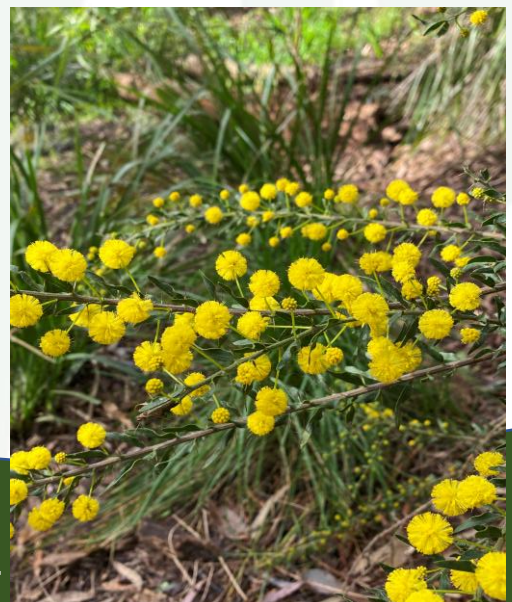
On the other hand, there are long lived acacias, the most famous is the Blackwood which can grow to a tall forest tree, not susceptible to insect attack and produces a wonderful furniture timber. Many outback species are also long lived with exceptionally hard timber which the aborigines used for tools and weapons.

So, Why plant wattles?

Wattles are an important part of the ecosystem. They improve soil fertility, provide shelter and food for birds and give a stunning flower display. A range of wattles can be selected to give some flowers at any time of the year. Some study should be undertaken before planting in the home garden. Avoid those that will grow too large too quickly (*A. decurrens*) or can become weeds (*A. baileyana*). If no other reason, show some patriotism and plant our national floral emblem (*A. pycnantha*), which combines a great flower display, reasonable size and good longevity. Besides, it is indigenous to Mount Waverley and can be found growing in Damper Creek Reserve.

Acacia paradoxa

A prickly, spreading wattle. Great habitat for protecting small birds. Great flowers and prunes easily to provide a dense habitat, otherwise it can become untidy.





Suburban Rail loop

Some of our members have received notices that the currently planned route for the Underground Rail Loop will pass beneath their homes. The route of the tunnel will, indeed, pass under Damper Creek. The section from Burwood will pass under Federal Reserve, Bengal crescent and Monomeath ave before it heads to Glen Waverley. It will be at a depth of 60 meters, far too deep to affect either homes or the creek. You can see some of the survey markers , trees marked with pink tape, near the Alice Street bridge.

Watch this space!

The remainder of the Melbourne Water grant plants have been planted along the South-Western path near the artificial waterfalls. It doesn't look much at the moment but there is plenty of time before summer for these plants to get established. This is a distinctive area and it will be easy to monitor progress. Due to COVID these were planted by the bush-crew. A mighty job!

Unused funds from the Melbourne Water Grant which were originally allocated for administration, will now be topped up with FODCCR funds to purchase an additional \$1100 worth of additional plants. The 2021/2022 growing season promises to be fantastic for Damper Creek.



New plants by the #2 waterfall



Subscription Waiver

As our activities have been severely restricted for yet another year, we are waiving subscription renewals for 2021/2022.

Stop Press

As part of the designation of Damper Creek Reserve as a “Conservation” reserve, the Friends of Damper Creek Reserve inc. has been renamed as ***the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc..*** The change has now been officially registered with the Department of Consumer Affairs as part of our status as an incorporated body.

This is a significant move as it adds weight to our group as a lobby for conservation orientated changes to the management of the reserve.

Lockdown limitations

Due to the current lockdown situation in Victoria, we are unable to programme our usual monthly meeting and working bee.

Note also that August is our normal AGM. This will be held over to a later date. (Nominations for committee positions gratefully accepted).

We will hold an August meeting via Zoom. This will allow us to have something resembling face to face contact and exchange our thoughts as well as conduct some basic business. All members are welcome to participate in the Zoom meeting.

Note that many functions of FODCCR continue during restrictions including communications with Council staff and reporting of maintenance issues within the reserve.

Messages to the secretary (secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com) and contributions to the newsletter are always welcome.



Monash Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

Now is your chance to play a part in the health and wellbeing of Monash residents. Council's draft Monash Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021 – 2025 outlines the commitment of the City of Monash to maximizing the health and wellbeing of people who live, work, study and play in the municipality.

The state-legislated plan includes public health and wellbeing priorities that are evidence-based and important to the Monash community.

The consultation is open until **Wednesday 25 August 2021**.

Please take the time to visit the link below and submit your comments to the Council.

Visit: [Shape Monash Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025](#)

Dates to remember:

All meetings and working bees are temporarily suspended due to COVID.

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

We would love to hear from you

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 dougscott3@bigpond.com or to the secretary at secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com

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