



Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc.

February 2023



From the President's Desk

The tail end of 2022 concluded with the Council's press release on the decisions regarding the leash free status of Damper Creek. After much controversy the Council decided on a compromise position with portions of the reserve retaining the leash free status. There were no winners in this decision which attracted much media attention. Volumes have been written (the Community Consultation Report ran to 107 pages) with multiple meetings, newspaper articles and interviews on radio and television. Due to the diversity of opinion within the "Friends", a neutral position was adopted and media was dominated by the dog walking lobby. For those members who want further information, the Council's media release can be found here:

<https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/News/Media-Statement-Damper-Creek-dog-on-leash>

For a more comprehensive view it is necessary to read submissions to the Community Consultation which are available on the Council's website, they make interesting reading. An informative article will be found by listening to the ABC programme "The Conversation Hour" broadcast on January 31st. This programme covers the issue in several municipalities and includes several perspectives not captured by Monash's Community Consultation.

At a meeting between Council representatives and several members of the Friends of Damper Creek on January 30th we were assured that we would be consulted when decisions were made regarding the exact implementation of the new arrangements.



Guest Speaker for February Meeting

We are honored to have **Anna Mezzetti** presenting at the start of our February meeting. Please be there at 7-30 sharp and bring your smart phone. Anna is “Biodiversity Champion for the City of Monash and is coordinator of many community engagement programs such as Gardens for Wildlife, Skinklink, nature strip gardening and is also the Waste and Environment Education Officer.

Anna will be talking about aspects of her work and will introduce us to the iNaturalist phone app so we can participate in citizen science programs.

Vigilance Required #1

The January 30th meeting with Council officers highlighted a shortcoming with the Community Consultation process. “Lack of data” was cited as the reason several serious considerations were not covered in the Council’s decision making process. For instance, no data was available on injuries caused by dogs off-lead, no data on dogs injured by other dogs. However, an abundance of submissions from those wishing to continue walking dogs off lead led the Council to take the compromise solution they have adopted.

Councillors at the meeting essentially put the onus on reserve users (and by implication, the Friends of Damper Creek) to report such incidents. In principle, this sounds fine but the collection of such data can be onerous.

Any incidents within the reserve, whether caused by dog on or off lead and involving actual or potential injury to dogs or people should be reported to Council and the secretary at secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com .



Vigilance Required #2

The removal of trees, particularly in the vicinity of Damper Creek, should be a concern to all members. The loss of canopy cover is a serious problem in Monash and is of particular concern in the Damper Creek area where the canopy can provide an extension to the wildlife corridor. The preservation of trees on private land is covered by the VPO. This requires a permit for the removal of trees over 10m tall. If you see a tree being removed which is covered by the VPO, you should (a) photograph the tree, (b) report the incident to the council and (c) ask that the removal be halted until assessed by the Council.

Where a development application has been made it is possible to view the arborist's report on the Council website. If the arborist recommends removal of a tree which is covered by the VPO, you can lodge an objection to the council.

Expert talk on Native Orchids by Peter Uhlerer (part 2)

This event is organized by the Friends of Scotchmans Creek and Valley Reserve.

When: March 15th qt 7-30pm

Where: Alvie Hall

For more information go to <http://scotchmanscreekfriends.org.au>

King parrot visiting
Damper Creek





Conserving our Urban Environment grant.

We have secured a \$5000 grant under this programme.

We have allocated these funds as follows:

- 1/ \$1000 for plants to supplement Council programmes.
- 2/ \$600 for Hamilton Planters
- 3/ \$660 for weeders and weeding tubs
- 4/ \$1000 for promotional materials and neighborhood letter drop.
- 5/ \$1000 for promotional video QR linked for visitors to reserve.
- 6/ \$150 for plants for give-aways.
- 7/ \$230 for equipment to assist in water quality monitoring.
- 8/ \$360 for school promotion.

Two years progress

Making a difference! A pile of rocks and some raw landscaping have transformed the surroundings of the Bush crew compound in such a short time.





Information Briefs

CC Hua has been appointed to the Monash Council Environmental Advisory Committee.

Danny Raditis will continue at Damper Creek Reserve on Thursdays and Fridays with reduced hours.

Monash Council Amendment C169 has been approved by Council and awaits approval by the Planning Minister.

The desilting of the Damper Creek ponds awaits Council funding.

Motion to distribute agenda to all members prior to meeting to be proposed at the February meeting.

Review of unfinancial members under way.

2023 marks the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Friends of Damper Creek. This will be acknowledged by a plaque to be inserted in the notice boards. Note that the “Damper Creek Conservation and Development Group” was formed in 1968.

Suggestions sought for guest speakers for May and November meetings.





Upcoming Events

February meeting

When: February 22nd 7-30 to 9-30

Where: Alvie Hall

Guest Speaker :Anna Mezzetti

Topic: Monash Council Sustainability
Programmes

Council guidelines suggest that if social distancing cannot be maintained masks should be worn.

Masks and hand sanitizer will be available at hall.

Clean Up Australia Day

When: February 26th 10-00am to 12-30

Where: Park Road carpark

BYO

Mug, snacks, water bottle, gloves, aeroguard, sunscreen, all weather gear, solid shoes

May meeting May 23

Community Planting Day and anniversary celebration May 28th

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

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