



Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc.

May 2022



From the President's Desk

Visitors to Damper Creek.

Each year at about this time Damper Creek is visited by a flock of 6 or so Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos. Their distinctive call lures me out to see these majestic birds flying slowly across the sky. They are large birds, with a body length up to 65cm (and an even greater wingspan). I watch in awe as they descend into a patch of wattles, seeking out insect infested branches. Some birds seem to be sentries while others are fully engaged in ripping apart branches to extract grubs. The sentries are not bothered by my presence: "mostly harmless" is their assessment of me, I am able to approach within range of my mobile phone camera. I cannot imagine any other bird challenging these powerful birds, even Noisy Miners leave them alone.



I watch as their powerful beaks rip quite large branches apart in search of their prey. I have encountered branches that look as if they have been attacked with an axe! The damage is part of the balance of nature. They remove the grubs which attack the tree but simultaneously open the timber to further damage. These wattles are short lived and will eventually die and enrich the soil for another generation.



April working bee

A well attended working bee is a joy to behold and April's working bee was no exception. Aply supported by bush-crew member Bill, the team cleared invasive weeds (mainly Panic veldt from the area around the Alice Street bridge. This is a great location, the intersection between the East-West crossing of the reserve and the two North-South paths that parallel the creek. It is also the location of the famed "Mushroom Rock" with the plaque reminding us of the origin of our group and the rescue of the land from development in 1968.

Working bees are about so much more than "work". Yes, a great deal was accomplished with weed removal, (one ute load was not enough to take away all the weeds we had removed) but the greater value comes from the social interaction. With our monthly meetings (so far) being confined to Zoom, the benefits of seeing people face-to-face, participating in conversations and observing the conversations of others, cannot be overstated.

Have you avoided working bees? Hard work is not how most of us want to spend a Sunday morning! There are other roles that do not involve bending down for hours, helping with the morning cuppa for instance, looking after the attendance sheet, performing a "meet and greet" for passers-by with a gentle suggestion that membership of the "Friends" might be a good idea. Everyone is welcome, even if you just come for a chat at morning tea time. Just remember that we would like you to bring your own cup.

Our Annual Community Planting Event Sunday 29 May 2022

"See details below under Dates to Remember".

The next working bee will be our "annual Community Planting Event". Because of Covid, it is now three years since we have held this event.

This is not a normal working bee. It is a publicly advertised event with a free sausage sizzle provided by the Lions Club of Ashwood-Mount Waverley.

Everyone loves a planting day. Please come along, bring you family, friends and neighbours and do your bit for the reserve, the environment and the community. Just remember to bring your own cup for drinks.



Tree loss

The “Friends” always have and always will advocate for the preservation of trees. The unnecessary removal of trees causes us grief because, even with the best justification, the replacement of a lost tree takes decades. That is, assuming that a tree is replaced with another. Too often, a block is cleared and a new dwelling is erected which does not allow sufficient space for significant vegetation and the developer wants to avoid the appearance of a property which requires a lot of garden maintenance.

Why get upset at the removal of suburban trees? After all there are vast swathes of Australia with plenty of trees to suck up Carbon Dioxide and replenish the world’s oxygen! The answer lies in the effects of the urban environment. Urban centres suffer from the “Heat Island” effect. Not only do cities generate their own heat but they also absorb and store heat in the materials used for buildings, roads and paving. As climate change increases temperatures overall, cities are affected disproportionately. The industrial solution is to increase air conditioning which elevates ambient temperature; a positive feedback loop! The city of Melbourne has an “Urban Forest Strategy” which aspires to a 40% canopy cover for the city by 2040. The City of Monash adopted a similar strategy in 2018 with an objective of 30% cover for 2030. So what has happened since then?

The council has control over planting in nature strips and reserves. Monash also has a “Vegetation Protection Overlay” which aims to prevent loss of canopy on private properties. Generally the canopy cover in reserves and nature strips has increased but this is more than offset by development of suburban blocks.

Whenever a house is removed, the garden area is (almost) inevitably reduced, trees and shrubs removed and ground paved, reducing soil moisture necessary for tree growth. Mature trees are often removed with spurious arborist reports, false claims of problems or the developer simply defies regulations and pays the fine for non compliance. Turning a blind eye to these practices makes a mockery of the council’s strategy. Members should report any instances of unjustified tree removal for the benefit of the environment and (incidentally) relieve the council of some of the burden of compensating for the questionable practices on private properties.

3 Dennyse Court

The above article was prompted by the removal of two mature trees on the above property. An arborist’s report was commissioned stating that the trees were diseased. Once they were removed there was no evidence of any disease or rot in the trunks or branches. The matter was reported to the council. The response was that their hands were tied as the arborist’s report recommended the removal of the trees.



Suburban Rail Loop Update

Notification has been received from the Authority that drilling will take place in the vicinity of the Alice Street bridge. The City of Monash is working closely with the Authority to ensure that environmental damage is minimized during this process. As the proposed location has limited accessibility it is likely that a different location will be selected.

Alvie Hall meetings:

The resumption of meetings in Alvie Hall is under constant review. At this stage we will have the May and June meetings on Zoom.





Dates to remember:

Wednesday May 25th at 7:30 pm
Monthly Meeting on Zoom (Link below)

• <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82361750677?pwd=t2vm4FHRvnAMAvYVU58Om1fb236G8E.1>

Sunday May 29th
Community Planting Day
Free Sausage Sizzle
(Starts 11-45am, Please BYO cups)
BBQ provided courtesy Mount Waverley Lions Club
Register at the Park Road notice board
Starts at 10-00am
Concludes 12-30pm

Wednesday June 22nd at 7-30 pm
General Meeting
Monthly Meeting on Zoom (Link below)

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88937979522?pwd=xS_tZWdTZ4M4MFZb50qFw2cbtlc8DR.1

Sunday June 26th
Working Bee Meet at the Park Road carpark

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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