



Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc.

May 2026



National 18-24 MAY 2026
Volunteer
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER **Week**



Thank you to all the volunteers and supporters of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve.

A special shout out to the committee and helpers for all the behind the scene work – Di, Tracey, Doug, Campbell, Helen, Ray, Philip, Jill, Wayne, Frank, John, Chris and Jenny.

The Fifth Kingdom: An Introduction to Fungi for Curious People



Hamish Beshara is a naturalist, photographer, and fungi fanatic. He is the coordinator of the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria Fungi Special Interest Group and leads forays around Victoria throughout the fungi season. Hamish is the artist behind Waxcap Photography, capturing fungal portraits and images of our natural world. Hamish's presentation 'The Fifth Kingdom' explores the beautiful morphologies fungi produce, their role in our environment, and where to meet them.

**Join us at the next
General Meeting on
Wednesday 24th June**
at Alvie Hall at 7.30pm to
hear and see this
fascinating presentation
from Hamish Beshara
(supper to follow)



Image Credit: H Beshara – Waxcap Photography





Committee News and Updates

April Working Bee (by Helen Clements)

An excellent turn out with 14 people including two children and a dog. Toro was filled with weeds. Many thanks to Adam from the Monash Bushcrew.

Waterwatch Results (by Frank Carder)

Water was tested on April 9th and there was a surprisingly good flow in both branches of the creek. This was surprising because late summer was very dry and it was over a week since the first Autumn showers. Water quality was generally quite good and results were in line with expectations for this time of year.

Note: Numbers for the May 14th testing will also be on Melbourne Water's database soon.

May Monthly Nature Walk

A small group enjoyed this lovely walk, including a volunteer from the Deakin environmental group called "Urban Guerillas". We enjoyed seeing many of the visiting Autumn birds including the King Parrots and Gang Gang Cockatoos.



Recent sightings near Damper Creek by J. Carra
Left image : Rufous Net-casting Spider & Right image: Emerald Moth.



GOOD NEWS

The single female (or juvenile male) Bowerbird that was mentioned in the April news has been sighted again near Warren Court. We believe that this individual might be co-habiting and migrating with another seasonal species of bird.

(Image Credit - Helen Jones)



The Fungi have enjoyed the recent rain and have begun erupting.

Come and learn more about this 5th Kingdom at our June Guestspeaker meeting.

The Bushcrew have been doing a power of work in the Reserve including spraying, slashing, hand weeding and planting replacement canopy trees at the playground (see image below).

Also welcome to Peter who has joined Bill in the Damper Bushcrew team.





Belated April News - Did you know?

Did you know that at Damper Creek area was the home of a cordial factory?

By the early 1900s a number of farmers in the Waverley district had developed some citrus groves with mixtures of lemon, lime and orange trees. The Meyer lemon tree, now recognised as most suitable for the Melbourne area, was possibly developed from these early trees. These citrus trees were found to be hardy with minimal maintenance and irregular irrigation while the farmers concentrated on cultivating cabbages and cauliflowers which were sold at Oakleigh and Victoria markets.

Messrs Lirpa and Loof recognised the attraction of citrus fruit drinks in the local rural areas where residents relied in tank water. The cordial factory operated intermittently and was ideal for accepting lemons and limes throughout the year. The factory was located high up on the west bank of Damper Creek at the top of what is now Park Rd. It was a grand building of rough bricks with a flagstone floor. It had a high chimney for the stove and boiling vats. The fruit was stored in wooden tubs and then usually cut into segments which were loaded into a hand operated crusher/juicer. The resulting juice was stored in large earthenware containers of about one gallon with a cork stopper. The juice plus zest (shaved skin) was boiled with a small amount sugar added to taste and then strained through coarse muslin. The resultant hot concentrated syrup was poured into sterilised glass bottles. All steps were performed by hand using a team of part time workers. The old citrus peels needed to be further shredded before composting.

Bottles were a problem as there was insufficient volume to justify a custom made bottle with the moulded name *Waverley Best Cordial* and so range of simple bottles with a metal screw top were bought in and used with hand applied printed labels in the three vibrant colours, yellow, green and orange.

The factory operated until about 1920 when competition from similar mass produced products made it uneconomic to continue. There is no evidence left of the building. The Waverley Historic Society has a number of old bottles but none can be clearly associated with this local cordial factory.

From the *The First April* Files of the Waverley Historical Society (Thanks to Philip Johnstone for sharing).

Disappointing News

There has been much dumping of rubbish in the Reserve car parks and near the rubbish bins over recent months, including Nangs (nitrous oxide canisters) .

The trailer loads of garden and building waste are not only is this unsightly and potentially contaminated (not to mention possible risk of spread of weeds) – it is also extremely costly to Monash Council ratepayers who ultimately have to foot the bill for the clean up and disposal.

If you see any suspicious activity, please report it.



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



Kooyong Koot Alliance Update

(Extract from KKA President Rex Dusting – also a member of Friends of Scotchmans Creek Valley Reserve)



KKA was established to provide a whole of catchment approach to support community efforts to improve the waterways and streamside vegetation in the Gardiners Creek catchment whilst also recognizing downstream impacts on the Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay. With a membership of over thirty Friends Groups, KKA works with the five Councils, state government, other authorities, educational institutions and businesses in the catchment and other similar waterways across the Melbourne area to provide a community voice in policy, regulatory and project decisions.

KKA shares information and expertise and provides support to new and existing friends' groups, as well as delivering its own projects. Recent and upcoming items of interest are:

- ❖ Last year KKA ran two successful clean waterways events – at Blackburn Lake and another on the banks of the Gardiners Creek at Glen Iris. These events aimed not only committed parties but at passing foot and bike traffic, promoted activities to improve our local environment. There were presentations from local Waterwatch communities, Melbourne Water and the EPA, as well as local friends groups. KKA are planning to run further possibly one at a location in our portion of the catchment. TBA.
- ❖ A high-level Strategic Plan for the catchment has been under development by the Gardiners Creek Regional Collaboration (which consists of the Councils, Melbourne Water, KKA and other stakeholders). This draft Plan, which had strong KKA participation, is scheduled to be released for public comment soon. TBA.
- ❖ KKA are working a trial project in the Blackburn area with the Whitehorse Council and local business sponsorship to reduce litter by identifying sources and having targeted education and enforcement campaigns. An earlier study has shown that there are several “hotspot” sources of litter in the upper reaches of Scotchmans Creek and depending on the results of this trial the FSCVR committee plan to implement something similar. (Scotchmans Creek covers over 25% of the Gardiners Creek catchment).

Note: Friends of Damper Creek have also been members since KKA foundation in 2021. You can look at other KKA activities on its website - www.kka.org.au

Upcoming Events



Working Bees are held on the last Sunday each month unless otherwise notified

Community Planting Day & Free Community BBQ

Sunday 31 May 2026

10am to 1pm

**Meet at the Swayfield Road entrance to Damper Creek Conservation Reserve,
Mt Waverley**

Wear sturdy footwear and weather appropriate clothing and gardening gloves
Tube stock funded by Monash Council and a Melbourne Water Project Grant to revegetate
Damper Creek between "Fern Gully" and the middle bridge.

Supported by the Monash City Council Bushcrew
BBQ provided by Lions Club Ashwood-Mt Waverley
BYO cups/mugs, plates, picnic rugs, chairs

No RSVP required

Save the Dates

Monthly Mid-Week Nature Walk

Thursday 11th June

with members of the University Third Age (U3A)

Meet at Alvie Hall at 10am (until 12noon)

Next General Meeting – Wednesday 24th June

"The Fifth Kingdom: An Introduction to Fungi for Curious People"

Hamish Beshara VFNC "Fungi" Group Co-ordinator

Meet at Alvie Hall at 7.30pm (supper to follow)

Next Working Bee – Sunday 28th June

10am to 12.30pm

Meeting point – TBC

*The content of this newsletter reflects the opinions of the editor for the
Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve news. Content is always welcome
and should be emailed to secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com*