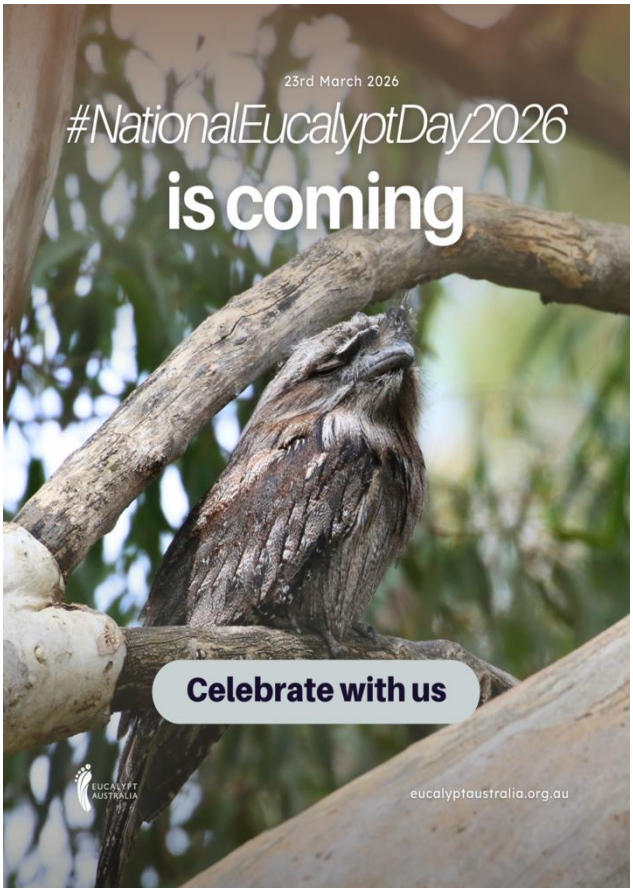
Damper Creek Doings

Newsletter of the Friends of Damper Creek Conservation Reserve inc.

March 2026

Eucalypt Homes are Unique, Irreplaceable, Treasured



Next time you are out walking in Damper Creek Reserve take the time to look up and appreciate the beautiful eucalypts that surround us. Many trees are currently flowering and are alive with parrots and pollinators.

The open grassy woodland species, predominantly Yellow box (*eucalyptus melliodora*) and Mealy Stringybark (*eucalyptus cephalocarpa*), found in Damper Creek provide homes for so many native birds, mammals, insects and support other species such as fungi and mistletoe.

These Eucalypts are also critical for our health and wellbeing.

Clean up Australia Day

Thank you to the 18 people who attended our February working bee. We collected 14 bags of rubbish and lots of building site rubble.

Environmental Volunteering morning at Jells Park

The Friends of Damper Creek along with the Friends of Scotchmans Creek Valley Reserve helped run Water Watch activities for first year Monash University - Mannix College students. We hope that some of these country students might visit our reserves and help out at future working bees.

Have your say on the draft
Monash Climate Resilience Plan 2026-2030
which will replace the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026.

The plan outlines how Monash Council will work with the community to respond to the impacts of a changing climate, protect places and spaces, and continue to reduce emissions.
View this strategy and have your say before 5pm, Sunday 5 April by completing the Shape Monash survey or attending a session (see below).

When: Tuesday 24 March 6pm-7pm
Where: Mount Waverley Library, meeting room, 41 Miller Cres, Mount Waverley

Microbats

Victoria is home to 23 species of microbats (ranging from 3 to 60 grams in size). Species recorded at **Damper Creek** include Chocolate Wattle Bat, Gould's Wattle Bat, Small Forest Bat and the White-striped Free-tailed Bat.

A microbat's diet consists of insects, including mosquitoes, moths, beetles, caterpillars and termites. Due to their insect-based diet, they are natural pest controllers and therefore play an important role in their ecosystem as well as in managing agricultural pests.

Microbats communicate via echolocation in frequencies outside of the range of human hearing. They use echolocation to help them navigate, communicate and find food.

Microbats go into torpor (similar to hibernation) by lowering their body temperature and activity levels during winter when insect populations are diminished to avoid starvation. When they are not in torpor, microbats will fly out of their roost at dusk to forage for food during the night and return at dawn.

In some species of microbats, the females can mate with males in late autumn and delay their ovulation and fertilisation until warmer weather occurs later in the year. Most species of Victorian microbats will give birth to young between October and January.

As they are nocturnal, microbats generally sleep hanging upside down in small, dark, quiet places during the day – commonly under eaves, tree hollows, folded outdoor umbrellas or caves.

(Reference: Wildlife Victoria)

General fun facts

Despite their size, microbats can eat more than half of their body weight in insects each night – for even small microbats, this could be over 1200 mosquitoes nightly!

Some species of microbats, such as the Eastern Free-tailed Bat, can travel up to 15km from their home roosts each night to forage for insects.

When preparing for their winter torpor, microbats can increase their body weight by 50% so they have enough energy reserves to survive until spring.

Protect Aussie birds from dangerous SGAR rat poisons

*A few years ago, we lost many of our Tawny Frogmouths in **Damper Creek Reserve** to suspected poisoning. It was very distressing to see these beautiful birds on the ground acting like they were drunk and disoriented and exposed to attack from dogs, cats and foxes*.

Native birds, wildlife, and even pets are at risk because of the unregulated use of Second-generation Anticoagulant Rodenticide poisons in Australia.

These poisons don't cause rodents to die instantly. They act slowly. After feeding, poisoned rodents can remain active for weeks before dying, moving through gardens, parks and bushland. During that time, they are easily caught by predators like owls and tawny frogmouths.

When a raptor eats a poisoned rat, the toxin accumulates in its liver. The bird may not die immediately. Instead, it can become weak, disoriented, and more vulnerable to secondary causes of death, including vehicle strike, starvation or infection.

Find out more by watching this recording of the BirdLife Australia Webinar with Dr. Mike Lohr - Birds Meet Rodenticides & Our Birds

After massive public pressure and a decade of campaigning by conservation groups, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has finally listened to the mounting evidence and strengthened its federal recommendation to classify SGARs as a restricted chemical, removing them from retail sale.

If approved and implemented, this would mark one of the biggest conservation wins for Australian wildlife in recent years.

To make this restriction a reality, Minister Collins and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry need to accept the reforms urgently.

If you wish to tell the decision makers why you want to see native birds protected from lethal SGAR poisons you can sign the online petition at Protect Aussie birds from lethal SGAR rat poisons - BirdLife Australia or write to the federal Minister and your local member.

What reptiles are in your neighbourhood?

Get tickets

Mon, 30 Mar, 6:30pm - 8pm AEDT
Add to calendar

Mount Waverley Community Centre
Mount Waverley VIC, Australia

Do you see lizards in your garden or around your neighbourhood or local reserve? Ever curious about what species they are and what they need to survive?
Here is your chance to learn more about the reptiles that share our neighbourhood.
David De Angelis, zoologist and ecologist, specialising in frogs and reptiles, will tell us more about what reptiles eat, some interesting facts about their behaviours and what sort of habitat they need to survive. There will be some tips on how to invite friendly reptiles into your garden and how to support them. David will fill us in on the latest local research on reptiles.

Register for this Monash Council event through this Humanitix link – What reptiles are in your neighbourhood?

Upcoming Events

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

Next Working bee - Sunday 29th March
10am – 12.30pm
Meet at the Duck Pond
Morning tea at 11am

Save the Dates

Monthly Mid-Week Nature Walk
Thursday 9th April
Meet at Alvie Hall at 10am (until 12noon)

Next Working Bee - Sunday 19th April (note: this is a week earlier due to ANZAC weekend)
Location – To be advised.

Community Planting Day & BBQ – Sunday 31st May

Next General Meeting – Wednesday 24th June
Hamish Beshara VFNC "Fungi" Group Co-ordinator

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

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