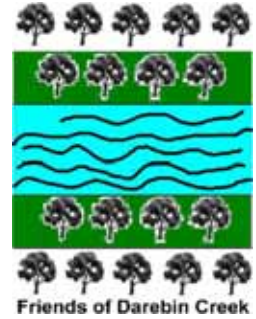


# Darebin Creek News

Friends of Darebin Creek

June 2006



## *Upcoming events*

<b>Saturday 8 July</b>	WeedWatch Training (details page 11)
<b>Sunday 9 July</b>	Community Winter Planting Day (details below)
<b>Sunday 9 July</b>	Water Watch Training (details page 10)
<b>Wednesday 12 July</b>	FODC General Meeting (details below)
<b>Sunday 30 July</b>	National Tree Day planting (details below)

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## Community Winter Planting Day

**When: Sunday 9 July 2006 10.00am – 12noon**

**Where: Corner of Pacific Drive and Liberty Pde, Heidelberg West (Mel 19 D11)**

The Friends of Darebin Creek would like to invite you to participate in our **community winter planting day**. Bring gardening gloves and good footwear. Morning tea provided for volunteers.

Right on the shared trail, the planted area shows up spectacularly in spring and summer with wildflowers such as Running postman and Clustered everlasting. Come and help us extend and improve this marvellous location. This event is suitable for families with young children.

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## FODC General Meeting

**When: Wednesday 12th July 2006, 7:30pm.**

**Where: Darebin Environment Centre, East end of Separation St, Alphington.**

Our guest speaker is David Ferry from Melbourne Water, who will be speaking about the major restoration works along the Darebin Creek south of Childs Rd, Mill Park. All welcome, bring finger food to share, tea/coffee provided.

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## National Tree Day Planting

**When: Sunday 30th July at 10.30am - 12.30noon.**

**Where: Beenak Wetland, Reservoir (Mel 19 B4).**

National Tree Day tree planting - Tools and gloves provided and BBQ lunch supplied.

*Chris Cobern, Team Leader, Darebin Creek Bushland Management*

# Environmental Events Report

## Many Hands Make Light Work

Fifteen adults and 3 children, including some new faces, turned out for our first weeding day at Electric Spur, on 8 April. This was a fantastic turnout especially considering the cold weather – beanies definitely required – and that the Heidelberg Leader hadn't covered our press release. However, Sean's signs on lampposts in the local area and Adrian's notice in a school newsletter, along with the FODC newsletter, seem to have worked a treat.



*A large moth we discovered whilst weeding.*

The task was to clear one small part of the remnant of Cape Broom. The problem was that it looks so similar to, and grows right next to, the indigenous *Bursaria* we want to protect. Therese Grinter of the DCMC had brought along some training materials and soon we were all feeling like experts and had pulled out enough Cape Broom to clear the area and fill the back of Omni's truck.

Sean, as usual, put in that little bit extra and organised some games with ribbons for the kids who had a wonderful time and got to take the ribbons home with them. By morning teatime, I think it true to say that we all felt a great deal of satisfaction in noticing how different and great our little area looked.

Thanks to all those who helped on the day, including the Friends of Plenty River (Alice and Kevin) who had come all the way from Lower Plenty.

Sean and I revisited the site 4 weeks later and are very pleased to report that the area is still almost free of the Cape Broom. What next? Stay posted and do come and join us for the next lot of weeding fun – good physical work and aesthetic pleasure guaranteed!

*Fiona McLachlan, Weeding Coordinator*

## Henderson's Creek Wetland

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May the Friends joined with the City of Whittlesea to help plant out some of Quarry Hills Bushland Park, especially one of the wetland areas known to the local WaterWatch crew as Henderson's Creek Wetland.

This event was well attended considering the forecast of cool weather and showers. Five FODC people were there (Wendy, Chris, Tony, Sean and Adrian), along with Therese Grinter (DCMC), Whittlesea staff and some interested local residents.

We planted in two areas, firstly around the wetland (near The Lakes Boulevard), and then on a flat grassland underneath the huge powerlines that bisect the area. We planted mainly shrubs such as Burgan, Hemp-bush, Cassinia, and Wattles, which will create a nice thicket – good habitat for birds. We saw some waterbirds on the lake, including a white-faced heron.

Thanks to Roger and Linda for putting on a great lunch and generally looking out for the needs of volunteers on the day, and thanks to Therese for helping us with transport.



*(Anti-clockwise from bottom left: DCMC's Therese Grinter tucking in a tree; FODC members Sean, Adrian and Chris with Whittlesea staff; and teamwork from local residents Peter and Erin Roberts on the 'holer'. Photos W Miller)*

## Recent Wildlife Sightings

From *Chris Cobern, Team Leader, Darebin Creek Bushland Management*:

At this time of the year many birds are moving down from the mountains to the low lying areas of Melbourne such as the Darebin Creek valley. We quite often see flocks made up of different species moving through the trees and shrubs. Each species has its own niche but they stay loosely together. The White-browed Scrub Wrens feed mainly in the lower parts of the understorey while the Superb Blue Wrens find their food on the ground. Golden Whistlers seem to prefer the tops of the trees and tall shrubs while the Grey Fantails move through the mid-storey. Little and Striated Thornbills feed on insects gleaned from the outer foliage of trees and Eastern Shrike Tits search for spiders and insects under the bark on the tree trunks and branches.

Other birds that sometimes join these 'winter flocks' include the Grey Shrike Thrush, Scarlet Robins, Silvereys and Willy Wagtails.

A flock of up to twenty Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo's are also moving along the Darebin Creek at the moment and can be seen in the Silver Wattles tearing open the wood to get at the grubs in the trees. Eastern Spinebills and New Holland Honeyeaters are also readily seen feeding on the nectar in the flowering Correas south of Murray Road and a Peregrine Falcon was observed feeding on a domestic pigeon on a rock near the Latrobe footbridge.



*Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. Image from: John Gould, The birds of Australia 1840-48. 7 vols. 600 plates Artists: J. Gould and E. Gould; Lithographer: E. Gould*

## Help us distribute the FODC Brochure

There are still copies of the new Friends of Darebin creek membership brochures, complete with map and information in seven languages. Call Sean (see back page for number) for copies to be sent to you to distribute to neighbours, at schools, libraries, and other relevant community centres.

## Waterway Rehabilitation works along Darebin Creek

Melbourne Water is about to commence works to rehabilitate a section of Darebin Creek downstream of Childs Road, Mill Park. These works, costing \$600,000 will improve the stability of the banks and create a more natural looking watercourse by introducing a series of pools and riffles (small rapids). Works are expected to take four months, weather depending.

The works are being done because the *Darebin Creek Waterway Activity Plan* identified an opportunity to rehabilitate this section of Darebin Creek and alleviate some of the effects of urbanisation of the upstream catchment. There will be no removal of native vegetation along the creek as a result of these works.

The proposed pools (5) will be excavated beginning at the downstream end of the works near the existing footbridge. All material excavated will be taken off site for disposal. Rock will then be placed at the upstream and downstream end of each pool.

The second stage of this project involves revegetation along the banks of this section of creek. This will most likely occur next spring or autumn when planting conditions are more favourable. Another community bulletin will be prepared to advise when these revegetation works will begin.

Below is an aerial photograph indicating the extent of the works.



For more information, come along to the next FODC meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> July, or contact the project manager at Melbourne Water (David Ferry) on 92352250.

*Source: Melbourne Water's June 2006 Community Information Bulletin*

## And more wildlife sightings

*From Sean Walsh, President,  
FODC:*

Recently I was able to photograph a flock of red-browed finches having morning tea just south of Murray Rd. These beautiful birds have bright red patches on their brow and rump. I also spotted a grey fantail flitting about in a tree near the bridge just west of Latrobe Uni Sportsfield Lake.



On the 11<sup>th</sup> May I observed a flock of six Gang-gang cockatoos in the Cherry St grassland/Mont Park area (near my work) – they were in this area for a couple of weeks.

Major news - on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May at 9:30am, I saw two Pink-eared Ducks, *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*, swimming on the Sportsfield Lake, and managed to get a photo of them (and confirmed the pink ears by zooming in on a colour screen).



These amazing ducks have a long curved ('fluted') beak that is quite distinctive. I went up to the waters edge to get a closer view... a number of Eurasian coots came over hoping for food, but the pair of Pink-eared ducks kept well away from me in the middle of the lake. They were following each other's movements quite closely, turning together and facing the same direction. Let's hope they come to visit again.

***Please contact me if you see interesting creatures. The more we keep notes the more we can demonstrate the value of the Darebin Creek. Sean Walsh, President, FODC.***

## News from the Bush Crews

We did have a burnt out van on the grasslands and we have had a few sightings of Black-shoulder Kites there also.

We have organised a planting day to be held at the end of Bond St where the new townhouses have been built. The planting will be performed by St Bernadette's grades 4/5 students on July 27.

*Damien Karney, Senior Ranger, Bushland Management, Banyule City Council*



*Damien Karney using a flame torch to kill weeds along the Darebin Creek (photos: Sean Walsh)*



## Darebin Creek Management Committee Update

- The first stage of the new Darebin Creek Management Plan will be available for comment shortly. Anyone interested in reviewing this draft issues paper should contact me.
- Stage 2 of the shared trail is still progressing with a few minor obstacles being finalised. Banyule City Council will shortly tender for the project and construction expected to start in August.
- Rhys Collins from the DCMC Parklands Division is leaving and his position will be filled shortly.
- The creek is running well with very few pollution or sediment occurrences in recent months
- Melbourne Water is undertaking a large project between Sycamore Reserve and Childs Rd in Mill Park and will include bank stabilisation and battering, revegetation, pool and riffle creation and associated works. They are also in the initial planning stages for a similar project south of Sycamore Reserve. These are major capital works projects and have been designed with input from DCMC. They will achieve significant environmental benefits including better creek and channel form, more natural topography, changed hydrology and excellent long-term revegetation and improved creek health.
- DSE has given the DCMC funding to review the ESO (Environmental Significance Overlay) and current planning guidelines for the Darebin Creek and work on this project will start in late 2006.
- The DCMC has copies of its NEW brochure and these will be available through local councils and other outlets.

For further information on any of these issues, please contact me on 9499 4454.

*Adrian Infanti, Co-ordinator, Darebin Creek Management Committee.*

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## Creek Watch

- Darebin Creek made the news again this month with an article in the Preston Leader - “**Creek Funding Plea**” on 30 May 2006. The article quotes Northcote Greens candidate Alex Bathal as saying that the condition of the Darebin Creek is “appalling” and that “...the Government needs to fund a major restoration of the creek”. Ms Bathal is photographed inspecting the Creek with Senator Bob Brown.
- In June the Darebin City Council rejected a proposal for a nighttime **cat curfew** in response to community opposition to the plan. “...Council has also dropped plans to fine residents whose cats were found to be wandering off their owner’s property during the day.” According to Council amenity and enforcement manager Michael Kennedy the council already has adequate laws in place to manage cats in the municipality. They include “...cat traps on environmentally sensitive council land in a bid to stop attacks on native animals. Under the proposed new laws registered cats caught in the traps would be returned to their owners. Owners would then be fined \$152 if their cat was caught in a trap again.” The draft strategy which is available for public comment until 18 July, also proposes fining dog owners who fail to clean up their **pets’ poo** in public places. *Preston Leader 13 June 2006.*

- On Sunday 25th June Fiona, Arabella, Adrian and Sean started the first in a series of informal weeding efforts at Electric Spur near Cnr Gona st and Liberty Pde, Heidelberg West (more details in the next newsletter). FODC have been given freedom to work on the south side of the path as well - quite a large and interesting area. The focus for now is on Broom (preventing it from generating more seed in spring) and Fleabane (seeding now). Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to be involved. *Sean Walsh*
- And congratulations to Darebin Parklands Association members who won the **United Nations Association of Australia (Victoria) World Environment Day award**. The Association jointly won the best community-based environment project or initiative category. The award recognized the Association's activities over the past 35 years in transforming Darebin Parklands from a barren and neglected wasteland to one of Melbourne's best examples of an urban bushland park. *Wendy Miller*



*Darebin Parklands (photo: W Miller)*

## Catching on to the Darebin Creek

*“Welcome to the Darebin Creek Catchment”* is the Darebin Creek Management Committee's new information brochure and catchment map now available to schools, community groups and the general public. It features an attractive poster with a map of the Darebin Creek Catchment by local artist Garry Bartlett.

The brochure contains information on the local plants and animals of the creek and ways to get involved in restoring the Darebin Creek. It also contains information on threats to the Darebin Creek including litter and development. The brochure



showcases the role and work of the Darebin Creek Management Committee and associated Friends Groups.

The idea of this brochure is to capture people's imagination about the Darebin Creek, to raise awareness, inspire and educate about the Darebin Creek.

*Illustration from the DCMC Community Planting brochure*

“We want people to understand and view the Catchment as a whole and that it is a living system that needs our protection and that there are already people out there making a difference” Darebin Creek representative Therese Grinter said.

“The brochure invites people to join a local friends group and get involved in regular activities that happen along the Darebin Creek including planting days, WaterWatch, frog nights and night tours as well as targeting key groups such as schools and private landholders” Ms Grinter said.



The City of Whittlesea and the Australian Government Envirofund provided funding for the brochure which showcases the role and work of the Darebin Creek Management Committee, Friends of the Darebin Creek and the Darebin Parklands Association.

For copies of the brochure contact Banyule, Darebin and Whittlesea Council offices and libraries, and the Darebin Creek Environment Centre at the eastern end of Separation Street in Alphington or by calling the Committee on 94994454.

*Therese Grinter, Assistant Co-ordinator*

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## **WaterWatch Training**

Interested in learning what's really going on in your local creek, wetlands or river? Can frogs, platypus or even native fish survive in your waterway?

Melbourne WaterWatch run FREE Advanced Training sessions for teachers, community groups and individuals wishing to help improve their river health monitoring skills by regularly testing the water. You will learn the different sampling techniques, including aquatic macroinvertebrate sampling and identification, how the data you collect is used and how to develop a strategic monitoring plan. It's fun, free and very easy to do! All equipment is provided. BYO lunch. Morning and afternoon tea included.

**Date: Saturday 8 July, 9:30-4:30pm at Darebin Parklands Environment Centre.**

**Bookings essential:** Contact Julia Vanderoord on 9457 9885 or [julia.vanderoord@banyule.vic.gov.au](mailto:julia.vanderoord@banyule.vic.gov.au)

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## WeedWatch Training

For those of you wanting to learn more about weeds and how to get rid of them, the City of Yarra and the South Alphington and Fairfield Civic Association are running two free sessions on spotting and controlling weeds on Sunday 9 July 2006. Each session lasts for two hours. The training will be conducted in Alphington. Contact Craig McGrath, ph: 9205 5726 or email [mcgrathc@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:mcgrathc@yarracity.vic.gov.au) for more information or to book your place.

“Weed control is critical to the success of our efforts at restoring the Darebin Creek catchment ecosystems” says Sean Walsh, President FODC.

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## Walking Darebin Project

The Walking Darebin aims to promote walking as part of people's daily lives. Project Partners the City of Darebin and VicHealth wish to encourage walking for all sectors of the community. Activities include auditing walking trails, developing new walking groups, training walking group leaders, publicising information about walking, and developing resources such as maps.

Some of the groups walking in the Darebin catchment include:

- **Toolangi Walking Group** meets each Saturday at 10.30am. People with an intellectual disability take a gentle walk. Contact Peter on 94801728 for further details.
- **Greek Women's Elderly & Friendly Club Walking Group** meets each Thursday at 8.00am at the front entrance of the Darebin Community Health Centre, corner of Blake and Crevelli streets, East Preston. Contact Penny Z 9484 7623.

And two indoor walking groups over the winter period are:

- **Darebin International Sports Centre (DISC)** walking group meets Tuesday evenings 7pm – 8pm at the entrance, John Cain Memorial Park, 281 Darebin Road, Thornbury. Contact Jo on 0400 842 928.
- **Northland Shopping Centre Walking Group** (Mel 19,12C) walks each Wednesday morning from 7.45am. Meet at the entrance near DC's café. Contact Ivy 9478 2340.

For information about the Walking Darebin Project contact Helen Matters 8470 8305 [helen.matters@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:helen.matters@darebin.vic.gov.au) or visit [www.darebin.org/walkinggroups](http://www.darebin.org/walkinggroups).

**Got anything to say?** Contributions to the FODC newsletter always welcome. Please forward these to [cheshirecatdioz@optusnet.com.au](mailto:cheshirecatdioz@optusnet.com.au) by 15 September 2006.

## *Contact Numbers*

President	Sean Walsh	9457 6626 (h)
Secretary	Jamie Chancellor	9457 4040 (h)
Communications/Media	Helen Walker-Cook	9457 7487 (h)
Newsletter Coordinator	Wendy Miller	<a href="mailto:Cheshirecatdioz@optusnet.com.au">Cheshirecatdioz@optusnet.com.au</a>

<b><i>Water Pollution? Call EPA</i></b> ( <i>quote drain sign's number if known</i> )	<b>9695 2777</b>
<b><i>Darebin Creek Management Committee</i></b>	<b>9499 4454</b>
<b><i>Melb. Wildlife Sanctuary &amp; Indigenous Nursery</i></b>	<b>9479 1206</b>
<b><i>Shopping Trolley Hotline</i></b>	<b>1800 245 022</b>
<b><i>Litter Report Hotline</i></b>	<b>1800 352 555</b>
<b><i>Wildlife Rescue Hotline</i></b>	<b>0500 540 000</b>
<b><i>Vic Police Motorcycle Squad</i></b>	<b>93807283</b>

## *Darebin Creek Diary Dates*

<b>Saturday 8 July</b>	WaterWatch Training
<b>Sunday 9 July</b>	Community Winter Planting Day, 10.00am-12noon, Cnr Pacific Drive and Liberty Pde, Heidelberg West (Mel 19 D11). Bring gloves and good footwear. Morning tea provided.
<b>Sunday 9 July</b>	WeedWatch Training
<b>Wednesday 12 July</b>	FODC General Meeting, 7.30pm at Darebin Environment Centre (east end of Separation Street, Alphington).
<b>Sunday 30 July</b>	National Tree Day tree planting at Beenak Wetland (Beenak Reserve), Reservoir (Darebin) plus BBQ lunch.
<b>Sunday 10 September</b>	Weeding at Electric Spur (Banyule)
<b>Saturday 14 October</b>	Weedbusters Day (Darebin)
<b>Sunday 15 October</b>	Wildlife Walk (Banyule)
<b>Saturday 21 October</b>	Sunrise Twitch and Tramp (Whittlesea)
<b>Sunday 12 November</b>	Wildflower Walk Bundoora Park (Darebin)
<b>Sunday 3 December</b>	Walk at Norris Banks Reserve

**For further details contact Adrian: 0409133049 or [adrian.hotchin@boroondara.vic.gov.au](mailto:adrian.hotchin@boroondara.vic.gov.au)**