



The friends of Darebin Creek was formed in 1995 to protect, restore and conserve the Darebin Creek and its adjacent parklands as a natural environment for the enjoyment of the community.

## Upcoming events

- February 21: Annual General Meeting, Darebin Parklands Environment Centre, 7pm
- February more to come. More events to be emailed in the New Year or stay tuned on Facebook.

## Friends of Darebin Creek in 2017

We come to the end of another year of helping to make a difference along the creek. Many thanks to all those volunteers that helped at our events throughout 2017.

We planted at the Banyule Northern Grasslands and Southern Road wetlands, West Heidelberg a couple of times this year and the progress is evident. The Thornbury Bush Plots are coming along nicely, making a great entrance to the Darebin Creek Shared-trail.

We continued our woody weeding at the Cherry Street Grassland Reserve, allowing the indigenous grass species to regenerate and we were treated to a spectacular show of wildflowers in the spring. The residents of Green Street, Ivanhoe really appreciate our help each year to tackle weed species along the creek and assist with some planting.

A few of our members attended the plantings at Conservation Reserves in Doreen and Epping North. Selected areas were planted at Napier Waller Reserve, Ivanhoe as well. We also built nest boxes, enjoyed a night walk at the Darebin Parklands and did a Bird survey in Heidelberg. The Darebin Creek sweepers have continued to clean up areas along the creek each month making a big difference too.

## Waller Weekend

**Napier Waller Reserve Ivanhoe, Sunday 17 September, 2017**

On a sunny September morning over 23 people came along to plant out the Napier Waller Reserve in Ivanhoe. At last year's Waller Weekend we planted mainly small trees and shrubs, this year we planted mainly lower storey native grasses. The soil there is soft and rich, so planting into it was a breeze. We planted Weeping grass (*Microlaena stipoides*), common Tussock-grass (*Poa labillardieri*) as well as some Spiny-headed Mat-rush (*Lomandra longifolia*), Hop goodenia (*Goodenia ovata*) and Bidgee-widgee (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*).



After we finished planting, we had a chat and helped ourselves to Dave's yummy homemade bikkies and a cuppa. Peter Wiltshire from DCMC did a sterling effort providing all the plants and tools. There was a lot of interest in the path from walkers and cyclists, from which a couple of families joined in the planting. Sheryl and I chatted with a number of passers-by, making sure to mention Friends. A pair of Gang-gang cockatoos swooped in to check out all the fuss.

This will be a busy area once the path goes through to the Yarra River, which is due to be completed by the end of the year. So this was a good chance to enjoy the relative quiet of this forgotten stretch of the Darebin Creek.

**Peter Grenfell**



## Bush Plots Maintenance Run

### Clarendon St Thornbury, Sunday 24 September 2017

It was a great morning at the Clarendon St shared-trail entrance tending to the weeds and rubbish in the area. The wind and forecasted rain were not enough to dishearten the 11 volunteers and 2 bushcrew staff from cleaning up the bush plots and having a laugh while doing so. It was great to see some familiar faces and quite a few new ones also. The morning ran smoothly and everyone



was happy to get stuck into the weeding and removal of the rubbish that had blown in. By the end of the morning we had filled a small trailer and assisted the bushcrew greatly with their future management of the site. After we finished, we were treated to a walk and talk from ranger Bobby about a nearby rocky outcrop full of indigenous grasses and wildflowers. It was a beautiful location to finish off with some coffee and cake as we reflected on what a wonderful year it had been and all the progress we had achieved along the creek. A BIG THANK YOU to all the volunteers and bushcrew team for their efforts transforming the weedy entrance and area, making it more inviting again. If you are interested in helping along the creek, we will be running more volunteer days there next year, as we strive to improve the entrance and add to the diversity of the area.

### Todd Hunter



## Water bugs workshop and October meeting

### Darebin Parklands and Environment Centre, Wednesday 18 October, 2017

Before our October meeting began, Friends met down at the creek to have a go at catching and identifying some waterbugs. Dave and Laura donned the gumboots and wielded the pole nets to catch some waterbugs to look at.



We poured the waterbugs into trays, caught waterbugs using spoons and identified them using ID charts. We found quite a few different types, including a mayfly larva, a very sensitive waterbug which is pretty picky about the water it breeds in. We also found and identified damselfly and caddisfly larvae.

As well as being bio indicators of water quality, waterbugs are platypus food and an important part of the aquatic food chain, so it was good for Friends to get a close-up look at our watery mates.

Dave is a regular Waterwatch volunteer, testing the creek water near Southern Road and at Edwardes Lake. There is also regular testing at the Darebin Parklands (Fridays, once a month) so if anyone is interested, contact Peter at [info@dcmc.org.au](mailto:info@dcmc.org.au).

We followed this with our bimonthly meeting, where Margaret mentioned an idea of a top to bottom tour of the Darebin Creek, possibly by bike. It is at idea stage but it sounds like a great idea and lots of fun. More to come...

### Peter Grenfell



## Darebin Creek bird survey

### Heidelberg West, Sunday 29 October 2017

A small but enthusiastic group turned out for the annual Darebin Creek Bird Survey on Sunday 29 October, held in the regular location in Heidelberg West.

Our bird expert from La Trobe University Wildlife Reserve, Graham Harkom led a short discussion on bird survey techniques. We then broke into three groups, each heading to different areas. Graham pointed out that we had never spotted a tawny frogmouth in past surveys, and despite craning our necks into surrounding eucalypts, we failed to spot one again this year.



Some of the interesting bird species spotted included a dusky woodswallow, a black-faced cuckoo-shrike and a yellow thornbill. The dusky woodswallow was the only bird not spotted previously in the six years we have been running the bird survey. Ten year old Liam did an excellent job in scribing the results for the group that reached the La Trobe Wetlands. Our total of 35 species spotted was up from last year's 29 species, but still well below our 2013 record of 48.

When our time was up there was a well-earned cup of tea and snacks, followed by a peak into some surrounding nesting boxes with a nestbox pole camera.



**Peter Grenfell**

## AGM February 2018

**Darebin Creek Environment Centre, Wednesday 21 February, 2018**

All welcome to come along.

Guest speaker will be Adam Grubb from [eatthatweed.com](http://eatthatweed.com) speaking about edible weeds.

If anyone is considering joining the committee just email me (see below). Positions are general committee, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Assistant Secretary (emailing upcoming events), full support and assistance will be available if anyone would like to take on a position.

Thanks again to the committee and volunteers for another great year.

Kind regards,

**Sheryl Sibbison**

[friendsofdarebincreek@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdarebincreek@gmail.com)

## Contacts

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Adrian Hotchin: President/Events          | 0409 133 049 |
| Sheryl Sibbison: Secretary/Memberships    | 9467 1370    |
| Darebin Creek Management Committee        | 9499 4454    |
| Water Pollution (quote drain sign number) | 9695 2777    |
| Shopping Trolley Hotline                  | 1800 245 022 |
| Wildlife Rescue                           | 0500 540 000 |
| Victoria Police Motorcycle Squad          | 9380 7283    |
| EPA                                       | 1300 372 842 |

### Contact Friends of Darebin Creek

Email: [friendsofdarebincreek@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdarebincreek@gmail.com)

Website: <http://www.friendsofdarebincreek.org.au>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofdarebincreek>