NEWS FROM FRIENDS OF DAREBIN CREEK

THE OFFICIAL FRIENDS OF DAREBIN CREEK NEWSLETTER

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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

- May 19th: Green Street Ivanhoe Planting & Weeding - 10am
- May 26th: Planting at Banyule Northern Grassland Reserve - 10am
- June 23rd: Southern Road Wetland Planting - 10am
- June 30th: Tree Planting in Resivour East - 10am

Friends of Darebin Creek Acknowledges and values the Wurundjeri people of the Greater Kulin Nation as the first people of this land. It commits to assisting to promote, protect and preserve their identity and culture.

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2019 Friends of Darebin Creek Activities

Reservoir area development of activities -You will read in the body of this newsletter about our meeting with potential and existing members in the Reservoir area where we are planning to increase our work and activity. Watch the website and occasional emails for further information about activities.

Water Testing- Once a month a few of us members engage in water testing as apart of the the citizen scientist program and we gather data that goes into a Melbourne Water data collection, we are going to start pulling our own data this year to check and think about water improvements.

Our regular planting days will continue . We are part way through a big project with the Banyule bushcrew revegetating the Northern grasslands and over the next 6 months Samantha and Tom tell us we will be planting approx. 1000 plants (!), work that they would never be able to achieve only being 2 in the bushcrew.

Darebin Bushcrew- We spent a pleasant morning mulching an area that we have weeded last year and we will continue to work with the bushcrew to maintain and enhance this area.

Surprise Grant- We received a $1.500 grant from Metro Trains via the quick and generous thinking of one of our members Neal Masters. apparently Metro Trains are wanting to support community environment activity. We are thinking about the ways we will use this grant and one idea is to offer a workshop for interested members on how to improve your skills taking photos with your smart phone cameras. I am arranging this workshop at the moment. Let me know if your interested. Of course the idea is that you will then take photos of the creek and creekside areas that we can put on our social media pages.

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A Big Thank You

To Carly Altree-Williams, who donated $160 to the Friends of Darebin Creek, along with a similar donation to the Darebin Parklands Association.
The funds were raised from the sale of her 2019 calendar, which featured her artwork of native flora and fauna found along the creek, including a Blue Banded Bee and a Superb Fairywren.
Her calendars easily sold out. To see more of her great artwork, go to carlyaltreewilliams.com, which also has links to her Facebook and Instagram pages.

2019 Membership Renewals

It's not too late to renew your 2019 membership! Thank you to those who have already done so – we look forward to another great year down at the creek, for full details of upcoming events check out www.friendsofdarebincreek.org.au/calendar, and on Facebook and Instagram.
Thank you to everyone who renewed their membership and this year we would like to welcome six new members to the group, one life member and two renewed as corporate members. You can still renew your membership by going to our website www.friendsofdarebincreek.org.au/get-involved.
Thanks for all your support!

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Bird Survey

Sunday 21 October

I went on my first bird survey which was along the Darebin Creek in Heidelberg West. While I'd always had an interest in birds, I was only really familiar with some of the more common ones. There were around 16 people in attendance, fortunate enough to have some experienced twitchers among us, including Candice from the Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC), and Michael from the Nearby Latrobe Wildlife Sanctuary who has clocked up decades of twitching. We divided ourselves into groups and headed off in three different directions.

On the outward journey we strolled along the pedestrian/cycle path which took us along the eastern side of the Sullivan Memorial Park sportsgrounds, then further along we encountered open grasslands with pockets of native trees and shrubs- gums, wattles and so on. On our return journey we took the "low road" alongside the creek where we encountered Wetland and Bushland bird species.Around the sportsgrounds there were plenty of Seagulls, Magpies, Magpie Larks, Common Blackbirds, Spotted Doves and Crested Pigeons, as well as the inevitable native Noisy Miners and the introduced Indian Myna birds. We had to be quiet and more alert on our return journey as we were now searching for those birds favouring bushlands and wetlands, and often they were smaller and harder to spot as they were camouflaged by the denser vegetation lining the creek.

As a novice twitcher I learned there are different techniques for identifying birds as trying to follow them with binoculars as they fly about can be a bit tricky. Experienced bird spotters will identify bird species not only from their shape, size, and colour, but also from the sounds they make, the types of vegetation they favour and flight pattern. Just to complicate things a bit more, with some species the male birds are a different colour to the females.

The wetland and bushlands birds we encountered included the Wood Duck and the Pacific Duck, Superb Fairy-wrens, Red-Rumped Rosellas, Willie Wagtails, Pied Currawongs, Straited Thornbill, White-faced Heron, Butcher Birds, and Red Wattlebirds.

The good news is that our team identified 39 different species during our one hour bird spotting survey, four more than last year. The data has been added to eBird Australia, an online bird data program.

The survey was organised by DCMC, which also provided refreshments (thanks Peter).

Wendy Miller, Amateur Twitcher.

The next Bird Survey will be on October 20th and the details will be emailed to Friends of Darebin

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Spotlight Night Walk

Friday 20th November

It was a great turnout by the local community last Friday for our Spotlight Night Walk in Heidelberg West. Using torches covered with red cellophane so as to not disturb the nocturnal creatures too much, we quietly walked a loop of Heidelberg Park in search of the revered sugar glider or any other dwellers of the night. As such a large group of people it was slightly difficult to be silent which may have impacted the number of critters we were able to spot.
We were, however, fortunate enough to see 4 ringtail possums, 1 brushtail possum, 1 tawny frogmouth, 1 fruit bat and 2 sleeping magpies.
It was incredibly peaceful and quiet in the Parkland and interesting to observe the goings of animals at a time which one normally wouldn't visit a park.

Thank you everyone for coming along and a special thanks to Ranger Tom and the Banyule Council for running the evening.

The next Spotlight Night walk will be in October 2019 and details will be emailed to Friends of Darebin Creek closer to the date.

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Reach 4 Walk and Talk

Sunday `17th February

On Sunday 17 February, Friends of Darebin Creek met with local residents at the Kingsbury Bowls Club to discuss Reach 4 of the Darebin Creek Management Plan. This is the section of the creek from the Metropolitan Ring Road in the north to Plenty Road in the south. There was a good turnout for the discussion, which was followed by a guided walk led by Todd Hunter, a member of the Darebin Bushcrew. It is hoped the discussion can lead to further local interest and action in making improvements to this section of the creek.

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 20th February

At the Annual General Meeting it was sadly announced that Sheryl and Todd will not be continuing on the Friends of Darebin Creek Committee for 2019. After 7 years and over 1000 hours spent working on Facebook, Instagram, committee meetings and running events Todd will be passing on the social media side of FODC to 4 new committee members.
We would like to heartily thank Todd for all his hard work and wish him all the best for the future.

Sheryl attender her fist FODC committee meeting 19 years ago and has been the Secretary of the committee for 17 years, working tirelessly organising events, doing secretarial work and recruiting members along with countless tasks and has finally decided it is time for a change.
We would like to earnestly thank Sheryl for her dedication and efforts over the years and wish her all the best for the future.

We would like to welcome 4 new members to the committee:
Alisha - General Committee Member
Ryan - General Committee Member
Ruth- General Committee Member
& Victoria - Social Media Coordinator
We wish them the very best of luck with all of their endeavours with Friends of Darebin Creek.

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Nest Box Building

Sunday 24th February

About 25 people attended the annual nest box building workshop, run by City of Banyule.
Our dexterous volunteers constructed over a dozen nest boxes for sugar gliders, kookaburras and ducks.
The nest boxes have already been installed along the creek by Tom and Sam and are hopefully being used for habitat and a respite from the heat.
Well done to all involved!

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Clean up Day

Sunday 3rd March

At the clean Up Australia Day we had 23 people attend and collected 300 kgs of rubbish. This photo has story to it because it is a safe that has had the door removed, Samantha, the Banyule Senior ranger told us that they found a discarded safe at the clean up last year as well so she has deduced that there may be thieves who dump the safes once they have removed the contents. The remarkable thing however about this Clean Up Australia Day is that it was about 37 degrees but still they came to clean up.

Bush Plot Mulching

Sunday 31st March

13 Friends attended to mulch the Gooch entrance to the Darebin Creek Reserve, last October we weeded it being careful of the soft and lovely native grasses that are part of the plants at this entrance. We had the usual inquiries of passers by who took brochures and gave us compliments about the work we were doing.

Spot Light Walk

Friday 12th April

Samantha and Tom, rangers with the Banyule Council invited the Friends of Darebin Creek to come on a spotlight walk in the hope we would see some sugar gliders, (we some last year) however they were shy or playing hard to get because we did not see any. The 5 in attendance were in unison however about how fresh and delightful it was to be walking in the night near the creek which seemed more gurgling more audibley in the night. thanks to Samantha and Tom for giving u their Firday evening, They have invited us to do this again probably in the early Spring.

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Two Hour Walks Along Darebin Creek

These walks emphasise locations in which there is the potential of the personal experience of solitude, in the beauty of an urban natural environment. **-John Burke**

1. Darebin Parklands to the Yarra Trail and return

This walk covers the lower Darebin Creek to its confluence with the Yarra River. It is largely on shared trails.

Start at the Environment Centre in the parklands, corner Smith and Separation Streets. Follow the shared trail downhill, with the amphitheatre on the left-hand side. Continue on this trail through the parkland and beyond, underneath the railway line and Heidelberg Road where the recently opened section begins. Follow this trail to the confluence with the Yarra River, alongside the Latrobe Golf Club.

Continue on to cross the river. After this bridge, there is a walking track closer to the river than the shared trail which goes through a reserve to meet up with the Yarra Trail. Turn left (east), and then north to pick up the shared trail again and return by the same route.

2. Dundas Street to Darebin Parklands and return

A good introduction to the creek and to the regeneration of the parklands, substantially on dirt paths.

Start at the end of Dundas Street. Walk-through on south side a few metres to the shared trail. Walk to the left (north) to the bridge, then follow the creek downstream, walking on the right-hand side (west). After a kilometre or so, this will rejoin the shared trail; continue downstream on this, underneath Darebin Road to the Smith Street entrance to the Darebin Parklands.

At this entrance there is a display with brochures for the Spiritual Healing Trail within the parklands. Take one of these to guide you, noting there are five sites identified, with recommendations to read text and reflect at each site.

Proceed on the trail parallel to the creek. The first site is not readily apparent, it is reached through a track on the left, approximately 100 metres along the trail, just past the Grasslands display. Each site has a marker. Pause at the marker to conduct the reflection suggested in the Guide.

Carefully climb down towards the creek and continue downstream. Shortly after a fence line there is a circle where Aboriginal guides taking people on this Spiritual Healing Trail pause for various activities.

Continue along the creek and follow the map in the Trail Guide. At the fourth site there is a creek crossing requiring some balance or possible assistance.

After the fifth site walk across the open space to the north to the Environment Centre, then spend more time in the parklands or directly walk along Smith Street to the point of initial entry to the parklands and retrace steps to Dundas Street. Shortly after the underpass at Darebin Road, there is the possibility of crossing the Creek on rocks and walking on the east side – a matter of judgement of water level and personal balance.

Walks 3-8 available in brochure soon...

Acknowledgements

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A special thank you to all the Friends of Darebin Creek members and volunteers, locals, Park Rangers and Council Bushcrew workers, families and friends and anyone who contributed to the Friends throughout the year. We would not be able to do it without your support and we sincerely thank you.

Photo Credits:
1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,18,22,25- Tom Crawshaw
7- Wendy Miller
19- Margaret De Kam
20- Unknown, Thank you
5,21- Todd Hunter

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Contacts

President : Margaret de Kam : 0439 375 787

Social Media : Victoria, FODC Instsagram or Facebook

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

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

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