



### A helping hand for Mother Nature

Parklands ranger Rohen Davis will share her vegetation management vision for the parklands and help us to learn more about facilitated natural regeneration of bushland at our next information evening, on Tuesday 30 November. Find out what happens when we give Mother Nature a helping hand, and then let her do the rest of the work. The meeting starts at 8pm, in the parklands environment centre, Separation Street, Alphington. All welcome.

### That's it from us – almost

The last few months have been huge in the parklands, with two bonfires, an information evening, Catch a Carp Day and the award ceremony for the DPA photographic competition. Hopefully members had the chance to participate in some (or all!) of these events.

As this is the last newsletter for 2010 it's time to thank those people who have contributed to the DPA's activities this year. First and foremost, you our members, who come along to our park care days and events. Your contribution to the parklands is invaluable. Secondly, the parklands' fantastic rangers, Pete and Rohen, whose support and practical assistance allows us to undertake projects and events. And also the hardworking DPA committee, a group of dedicated local people who work alongside our members and the park staff to make it all happen.

At this time of year we also remind members that their subscriptions are due in the new year. If you would like to get in early and re-join the DPA, please fill out and return the form in this newsletter. You can also take

advantage of the 2011 DPA calendar special membership offer if you like. See page 4 for details.

We hope to see you at our final events for 2010 – the information evening on 30 November, featuring guest speaker, ranger Rohen Davis, and the park care day on 5 December, when we will be planting seeds to grow grasses and trees as part of the plant nursery project.

After that we will wish everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

Our newsletter is getting a makeover during the holidays, so we will return next year with a whole new look.

**Ingrid Svendsen**  
President

### DPA events 2010/2011

**November 30 2010** Information evening

**December 5 2010** Park care day

**February 11 2011** Junior Ranger camp out<sup>#</sup>

**February 19 2011** JR water pollution action

**February 22 2011** Information evening

**March 20 2011** Darebin Parklands Picnic Races

**May 6 2011** Junior Ranger wildlife spotlighting\*

**May 15 2011** Park care day

**May 31 2011** Information evening

**June 5 2011** Park care day

**July 17 2011** Park care day

**August 19 2011** Junior Ranger bonfire night\*

**August 30 2011** Information evening

**October 23 2011** Kids' Catch a Carp Day\*

**November 29 2011** Information evening

**December 4 2011** Park care day

# Invitation only event for prize winners

\* Members' event (guests/non members can join on the day)





## Dealing with snakes and the grass

G'day members

Well, the high rainfall over the past few months has kept the parklands green in November for the first time in recent memory. We are doing our best to keep up with the mowing but the grass grows so quickly that we really do struggle at times to keep on top of it. It doesn't help that as the weather picks up so do our school bookings so we find ourselves very busy at this time of year.

The Northcote floodplain project is now complete with over 24,000 riparian indigenous species planted. The rainfall we have been getting lately has been a blessing, allowing the plants to prosper. We certainly picked the right year to take such an important project.

Rohen devotes a lot of time managing the project site and, along with the Snake Grass area, you can see the quality of her work.

The DCMC held its annual community bonfire night on the 22 October, which was a success. We had a few hundred people turn up and it was such a relief to finally light it, as I was a worried vandals would beat me to it.

If you have been in the park recently you would most likely have noticed a building has been placed on the old tip site near our offices. It is our new classroom that we are hoping to set in position next to our existing offices in mid-November. As a result of an EPA prosecution we received \$25,000 grant to purchase a building to enable us to provide a larger indoor area for visiting groups and schools. During the summer we will go to work setting it up for the next school year. The building will also be available for community groups and the DPA meetings will be held in it as of next year.

The Catch a Carp Day proved popular again. Although only three fish were caught the day highlights how interesting events capture the public's imagination, with us fielding enquiries from a large slice of the northern suburbs. I'm sure the event could be expanded along the whole Darebin Creek in the future with the

assistance of council staff. Though the carp are elusive and tricky to catch, any removed from the creek is a positive thing.

Snakes (tiger snakes) are out and about now and once again can be found anywhere around the parklands, especially near the wetlands areas and the creek, so be extra watchful. I have encountered several this year already while working near the creek and have a resident snake living in the leachate compound near my pump wells.

Remember if you do see a snake the key is not to take your eyes off it and remain still if it's a close encounter. You'll find most snakes retreat if given the chance, especially if it's warm. If it doesn't retreat then, keeping your eyes locked on it, take a step away to reduce the threat to the snake. You will find that the snake, while still being wary of you, will try to get away. In cooler conditions snakes are more likely to hold their ground as getting away is harder for them as they are cold blooded and need heat from the sun to be able to move quickly.

Just enjoy them as another piece of wildlife in the park and if you're lucky enough to come across one that you can observe without it feeling threatened then you're in for an amazing experience.

See you in the park.

**Peter Wiltshire**  
**Ranger in charge**

### December park care day

The DPA's last park care day for the year will be held on Sunday 5 December, from 1-3 pm, at the parklands environment centre, Separation Street, Alphington. We will be sowing native seeds into tubes as part of the community plant nursery project.

DPA members can take a box or two of tubes home and watch the seeds sprout over summer. The plants will then be used in the park, or we will donate them to schools and farmers for land restoration projects along the creek.

Equipment and afternoon tea are supplied.  
Info: Peter Revill. 94996325/0418151722.





# The Junior Ranger Page!

## Catch a Carp Day score: kids 2, fish 0

Congratulations to Catch a Carp Day winners Cadien M and Jasper R, who landed these whoppers at the event last month. Cadien and Jasper were among 50 Junior Rangers who turned out for the event and enjoyed fishing, WaterWatch activities and a sausage sizzle lunch. Thanks to everyone who came, and to Julia Vanderoord from North East Melbourne Waterwatch and head ranger Peter Wiltshire for helping to run the day.



Picture: Meredith Schaap

## JR news and events

**Water pollution action** After two postponements due to rainy weather the Junior Ranger water pollution action day, with drain stencilling and other activities, will now be held on Saturday 19 February next year. Full details in the next newsletter.

**JR Camp Out winners** Six lucky Junior Rangers will be off to the Junior Ranger Camp Out early next year, after winning this great prize at the draw at Catch a Carp Day. Winners Lucy J, Georgia L, Gabriel J, Max J, Lily M and Minette R will enjoy a fantastic night in the park, with a personal spotlight tour and a campfire dinner. All financial Junior Rangers can go into the prize draw, which is held at the end of each year. Make sure your membership is paid up so you can enter.

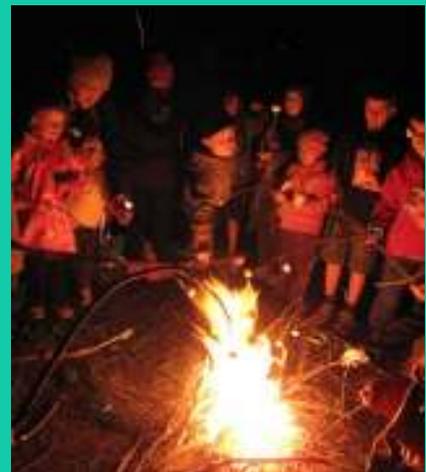
## Marshmallows in hot demand at bonfire night

Toasted marshmallows were the order of the day when the Junior Rangers gathered for bonfire night in August. The surrounding area was scavenged for exactly the right sort of toasting sticks and good spots around the marshmallow fire were in hot demand.

The bonfire was held at the Horseshoe Mound, near the Smith Street, Alphington, entrance, which is a lovely secret spot in the parklands.

JR bonfire night is one the ways we say thanks to our junior members for their efforts throughout the year. If you missed out on this year's event, there will be another chance next year.

A big thanks to head ranger Peter Wiltshire for putting on this fantastic evening.





## Calendar showcases photo winners

Congratulations to the winners of this year's DPA photography competition:

**Jemima S** (Junior Ranger, Parklands Environment)

**Eilidh R** (Junior Ranger, People in the Park)

**Michael Mann** (Adult, Parklands Environment)

**Darren Streader** (Adult, People in the Park).

Yet again the judges faced a hard choice, with a high standard of photography.

Thanks to judges Terry Murphy and Josie Hayden and also to everyone who entered.

The entries are featured in this year's limited edition DPA calendar. To purchase a calendar (just \$16 if you renew your membership at the same time), simply fill out and return the order form on our website, or collect a copy from the environment centre or at any DPA event.

## Looking forward to our history

Work on the DPA's history publication is proceeding apace. Historian and author Sarah Mirams, who started researching and writing the manuscript in January, continues to unearth some fascinating history about the parklands. Back in the 1920s there were plans to build roads on either side of the creek as a boulevard for motorists. Later on there were plans to build the Alphington to Northcote railway line! You'll have to wait to the book comes out next year to get the full story.

Sarah is due to complete the manuscript in December. The next stage will involve finding and organising photos, maps and other images to use in the book. The DPA has applied to Melbourne Water for a new grant to assist with this work. If anyone has any photos or images that they would like to contribute, please contact me at [info@dpa.org.au](mailto:info@dpa.org.au).

## Wonderful weeds

Author Doris Pozzi was the guest speaker at our August information evening, talking about edible weeds. Doris was inspired by the foraging habits of her Italian parents and by her study of permaculture. She has researched and experimented with eating the plants that grow most easily – weeds!

To buy a copy of Doris' excellent book, *Edible Weeds and Garden Plants of Melbourne*, email [doris.pozzi@dorianwelles.com.au](mailto:doris.pozzi@dorianwelles.com.au).

Doris's talk inspired DPA member Jennie Ramage, who sent us this recipe (originally from *Community Gardens: A Celebration of the People, Recipes & Plants* by Penny Woodward and Pam Vardy).

### Spanakopita (Greek Greens & Cheese Pie)

1kg mixed leafy greens (from fennel leaves, spinach, parsley, silver beet, nettles, dandelion, plantain, sorrel) & fresh oregano, basil when in season

7 eggs

125g feta cheese

125g ricotta cheese (or more)

1 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, crushed

Olive oil

Pepper (don't need salt – plenty in the feta!)

60g butter

500g filo pastry

Wash leafy greens, dry and place in large bowl.

Tear into small pieces, spin dry in salad spinner.

Beat eggs in separate bowl. Crumble in the feta and add the ricotta.

Gently fry onion and garlic in a little olive oil until translucent. Let cool a little, add to egg/cheese mixture. Combine well, season with pepper. Add to the greens.

Butter a large, deep baking dish (23cm x 33cm approx). Melt remaining butter in small saucepan. Place 1 sheet of filo in dish and brush with melted butter. Repeat with each layer of filo, turning each sheet so that it is not all piled directly on top of each other, brushing each layer with butter and letting the filo hang over the sides of the dish. Continue until three sheets of filo are left.

Place the filling into the filo and fold the pastry edges in over the top. Place remaining sheets on top, brushing each with melted butter. Make two or three slits with a knife in the top layers of filo down to the filling to act as steam vents. Bake at 190°C for 50 mins. Cut into squares and serve with Greek salad.





## Darebin Parklands Association - 20\_\_ Membership Application

Junior Ranger Members	Parents and Other Members
Family Name: _____	Family Name: _____
First Name(s): _____	First Name(s): _____
_____	_____

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive DPA news and updates by email (please print clearly)

Membership Type	Cost	Qty	Total
<b>Junior</b> For all kids who want to have fun and contribute to the park	\$2		
<b>Concession</b> Unwaged, seniors and students	\$10		
<b>Individual</b> One person	\$15		
<b>Family</b> One or more adults plus Junior Rangers, from the same household or family	\$20		
<b>Corporate</b>	\$50		
<b>Donations</b> Donations of \$20 or more are tax deductible. Make your cheque out to our partner Landcare Australia Ltd and you will receive a tax receipt.			
Return this form and payment to: The Treasurer, DPA, PO Box 3, Ivanhoe 3079 Please make cheques payable to: Darebin Parklands Association Inc. Or pay us directly (add your name as a reference): <b>BSB 633108 Acc 116325457</b>			

<b>My interests are:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Urban parks <input type="checkbox"/> Plants <input type="checkbox"/> Animals/birds <input type="checkbox"/> Geology <input type="checkbox"/> Other...	<b>I can help out with:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Planting/horticulture <input type="checkbox"/> Event organising <input type="checkbox"/> Development projects <input type="checkbox"/> Grants/fundraising <input type="checkbox"/> Other...	<b>Office use only</b> Date: Payment received by: Payment by cheque / cash / direct credit Database: new / renew
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