



August information evening

Vincent Ryan, manager of strategic and economic development at Banyule Council and a former DPA president will speak on the wildlife corridor program at our next **information evening**, at 8 pm, on **Tuesday, August 30** in the rangers' office. Hear all the latest news, then join us for supper. All welcome.

Our future in focus

The trees aren't the only thing growing in Darebin Parklands – the DPA is also getting bigger and better. With almost 260 financial members, the DPA is now one of Victoria's biggest park "friends" organisations. (Read more about our membership on page 3).

An **action plan**, which sets out our medium- and long-term goals, has guided our progress over the last three years. With your help, we've ticked off all of the projects set out in the plan. These include establishing a fabulously successful **plant nursery**, now growing thousands of plants for the park and other sites along the creek; a **responsible cat ownership program**, that has been taken up by the Banyule and Darebin councils; helping to complete the unique **Spiritual Healing Trail**, and revegetating the park as part of our long-term aim of reinstating habitat for platypus and other wildlife.

Now it's time to develop our next three year plan, and we hope members will help us to come up with an equally inspiring batch of projects. Find out how you can help on page 3.

Our **new website** at www.dpa.org.au is now up and running. I'd like to thank DPA secretary Anthony Jones for all of his hard work on this project.

Our **June Park Care Day**, which saw a visit from the Melbourne Water interactive catchment education model, was fascinating, demonstrating how spilt industrial chemicals, your dog's poo and street rubbish all gets washed into creeks and the bay through the storm water system. Our Junior Rangers followed up the demonstration by installing the first of our **pollution signs** (details page 2).

On July 15, around 50 Junior Rangers warmed up with a crackling **bonfire**. We'll be hosting another one, for members young and old, on Friday, October 14.

– **Graeme Martin, president**

DPA events 2005

August 30 DPA information evening

Sept 11 Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm

October 14 Bonfire night

October 28 Junior Ranger spotlighting

Nov 27 Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm

Nov 29 DPA information evening





Plants grow, budget shrinks

Hello members

We have had a very busy couple of months at the park with the Westpac/DPA project moving along nicely. As you might have seen, it is really taking shape along the Hidden Valley path. We plan to be finished the project in the next two months.

Finally, after I bragged about it three years ago, Melbourne Water has redirected the creek, five metres east down stream of the Clifton Bridge. This allowed us to consolidate the creek bank and to re-open the walking track below the olive slope.

We held the Junior Ranger bonfire night in mid-July and once again we picked a great night to have it. The next major bonfire night is planned for Friday, October 14, and I plan rid the park of the masses of bushfire fuel.

On a more critical point the parklands division of the Darebin Creek Management Committee has been under funded by approximately \$40,000, making this year a very difficult one for us. The councils have funded us as usual but haven't financed our increasing insurance premium for public liability and wages rises in line with the award. Both councils have been very supportive of Darebin Parklands for many years and I feel that once these issues are brought to their attention they will be rectified quickly. If not, I will approach our ward councillors and the DPA for additional support.

Thanks for your support once more.

Peter Wiltshire
Ranger

Polluters on notice

After a lot of planning, meetings and persistence, our pollution sign project, a joint project with Friends of Darebin Creek, is just about complete. We have already had some great publicity for with stories in three local papers.



Junior Rangers help Adrian Infanti install a pollution sign at the June Park Care Day

Signs are being installed at the outlets of major stormwater entry points into the Darebin Creek. They encourage people to report any pollution to the Environment Protection Authority.

Thanks to the hard work of Darebin Creek coordinator Adrian Infanti, we now have the locations for the signs agreed with the EPA, councils and Melbourne Water, and the series of signs printed and ready to install.

If you can help to install the remaining signs further up the creek, please come along to the ranger's office on Saturday, August 27, at 1 pm. It's pretty easy and a good way to see parts of the creek you probably have not seen before.

Please bring gloves and vehicle to share between two.





Ready for action

What would you like the DPA to tackle over the next three years?

As many members will know, the objectives of the DPA are to improve the environmental and passive recreational amenity of the Darebin Parklands and to promote community awareness of the park's natural values. The long-term goal is to reinstate native animal habitat so that animals, including platypus, return to live in the Darebin Creek and its environs.

For the last three years, an action plan has guided our activities and helped make sure we have met our long-term objectives. We are now about to kick-off creation of our next three year plan, and we need your input.

At our next information evening on Tuesday, August 30, we will be asking members to contribute their ideas for the action plan. These ideas will be incorporated into a survey to ask members to confirm their ranking of importance of the ideas so we can clearly identify the areas that we should pursue in the coming three years.

This is a pretty unique process as there are very few community groups who undertake this level of planning and consultation with members. Please make the most of the opportunity by either coming to the meeting and contributing ideas or by responding to the survey which we will circulate later this year.

If you can't attend the meeting but have ideas to put forward, please speak to a committee member or email us at darebinparklandsassociation@yahoo.com

– Graeme Martin

Boom times for DPA

Many members would be surprised to know that the DPA is now one of Victoria's biggest park "friends" organisations.

The introduction of the Junior Rangers club, and an ever growing calendar of community events including bonfire night and the Picnic Races, is underpinning the DPA's revival.

With almost 260 financial 2005 members, the DPA is now an even stronger voice for the protection of our park and our creek. And a fresh injection of enthusiasm means we are getting more done in the park.

The huge growth in membership is no accident. For the last three years the DPA committee has worked to raise the profile of the organisation and broaden its membership and appeal.

We have improved our communication with members by adopting a new logo, redesigning our newsletter and using email to stay in touch. We are about to launch our new and improved website.

The biggest membership success story has been the introduction of Junior Rangers two years ago. Junior Rangers, who range in age from pre-schoolers to teens, now account for 111 of our 260 financial members.

As well as being enthusiastic helpers at Park Care Days, Junior Rangers enjoy their own calendar of "kids only" events, including Catch-a-Carp Day and bonfire night.

Around 80 per cent of 2004 members have renewed this year. We believe that's a vote of confidence in the organisation.

– Ingrid Svendsen





Junior Ranger news

Around 50 Junior Rangers chased away the winter chill at the Junior Ranger **bonfire night** on July 15. The bonfire is our way of saying thank you to all of our junior members who do such a fantastic job in helping out at Park Care Days.

The DPA would also like to thank rangers Peter Wiltshire and Rhys Collins for helping organise the bonfire.

Our next Junior Ranger event will be a **spotlighting walk** on Friday, October 28 – more details soon. The hugely popular **Catch-a-Carp day** will also return in late November, so dust off those fishing rods.

Don't forget to bring along your Junior Ranger card get it stamped when you come to events. You can use it to enter the prize draw at Park Care Days, and also to go into the running for the fantastic end of year prize – entry to the **Junior Ranger Camp Out**.

Entry to the Camp Out prize draw is open to all financial Junior Rangers who have attended at least one event in the park in 2005. That means your card must have at least one stamp on it.

The prize will be drawn at the last Park Care Day of 2005, on November 27, so make sure you (and your card) are there!

September Park Care Day

Our next Park Care Day is on **Sunday, September 11**, from 1 pm to 3 pm. We'll be working at our latest project site, near the new bike path along the creek, where we have created a scenic spot with flourishing grasses and shrubs. Join us afterwards for afternoon tea. BYO gloves.

Check out www.dpa.org.au

Look out for the new DPA website at www.dpa.org.au in the next few months. Connect to it now and you'll see some basic details on the DPA, the Darebin Parklands, as well as some recent news.

Over the next few months we will be building a bigger and better site for you to enjoy and to get the latest news and events.

If you have any suggestions or requests for content on the new site you can email us at darebinparklandsassociation@yahoo.com

– **Anthony Jones**

Mailbag

Dear DPA,

Thank your for creating the picnic race day. It was fantastic to see people have so much enjoyment without all the usual hype. I know my niece really enjoyed herself.

I look forward to participating in the DPA.

Thanks for your efforts.

Paula Henderson

Ivanhoe

Thanks, Paula, for being one of the many volunteers who helped on the day. The Darebin Parklands Picnic Races is now a permanent fixture on the DPA's calendar. Next year's event will be even better, with more races and games to take part in.

Contact the DPA

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