

Hello from the new President

This is my first newsletter since being elected as DPA President and I would like to thank Past President, Ingrid Svendsen, for her enormous contribution to the parklands. She's a hard act to follow, but has kindly agreed to stay on as a committee member along with the rest of our committee: Susie Rogers, Meredith Schnapp, Peter Revill, Debra Nette, Ian McMaster, Charmaine Coonan, Peter Williams, Michael Mann, Louise Keene, and David Craven. Each brings unique skills to this talented committee. And if you can also help us out with anything from admin to weeding, please let one of us know.

I've spent the last couple of months getting to know the people, procedures and politics, and I'm gradually getting a handle on how things work. We've had some very successful park care days in recent months – thanks to Deb for organising and to all those who turned out to help revegetate Mt Puffalo. Our next is on Sunday, Sept 15th (1.00 pm) – please join us.

The park is still recovering from the floods in June, with trees uprooted, fencing destroyed, and massive amounts of rubbish dumped by the raging waters. Thanks to Pete Wiltshire and his team, along with the Thursday morning group, for their efforts in cleaning up. It highlights the need for more effective water containment strategies further up the creek.

On a positive note, we received a grant from Leader Newspapers – “Penthouses for Parrots” – to build nesting boxes for eastern rosellas, encouraging this indigenous bird back into the parklands. We are already seeing the success of this project and many thanks to Peter Revill for preparing the application and to Michael for his tireless work on the boxes.

I look forward to seeing you at our information evening – with a talk on getting started as a birdwatcher – on Tues August 27th at 8.00 pm.

Mark Creamer
DPA President

27 August information evening

Bird watching made easy!

Come along and catch up with all the DPA's news and learn how to get started as a bird-watcher with our guest speaker Sonja Ross.

The meeting starts at 8pm in the Gleeson Building at the parklands environment centre, end of Separation Street, Alphington. All welcome!

Events calendar 2013

27 August	Information evening
15 September	Park care day
11 October [tbc].....	Junior Ranger bonfire night *
26 November	Information evening

* *Junior Ranger bonfire night is only for members of the Darebin Parklands Association.*

Pete's page

News from the ranger in charge

Floods, pests and nests!

My last report was written in the first week of May so several major things have happened to the Parklands and DCMC since then.

Firstly, we have had three flood events with the worst flood occurring in the first week of June.

In my time here at the parklands (28 years) it was the most damaging flood I have seen although not the highest. The velocity of the water through the parklands was extremely fast with it scouring out all the creek vegetation and changing its morphology. For example, areas that were deep are now shallow and some shallow sections have been scoured out to be now deep.

Besides the sections of creek that have changed course due to this flood, our main concern is the loss of creek vegetation. Without it all fish and invertebrates will struggle to survive within the parklands section, and even more worrying is the fact that due to the continual urban development up stream, these flash floods will become more regular. How can the creek ever regenerate its natural vegetation when the flood events are unnatural and so regular? Retarding basins maybe the answer.



Daunting rubbish pile at Willowbank Bridge

The litter that came down in this flood was also close to the worse I've ever seen at the park. The DPA Thursday crew has done an amazing job of cleaning up sections of the parklands especially the Ivanhoe Floodplain, and I can't thank them enough for doing that.

I have been slowly working my way along the creek clearing the rubbish, but it is slow going and difficult to get motivated doing it, as you can spend a day working in one area and it looks like you haven't done a thing!

Our Indian Myna control program is moving along nicely and to date we have caught around 180 of the blighters and sent them to bird heaven. Michael Mann has been setting the traps early morning and collecting the traps at the end of the day. Michael Mann is our Myna Man, on ya Michael! We have just purchased another 10 myna traps taking our total traps to 17.



Eastern rosella

Michael and I are also working on the nest box project. To date we have put up 70 nest boxes up around the parklands. You should be able to see them in any section of the parklands. You might see numbers and a letter on the nest boxes. Let me lay out the code for you. The numbers represent the order in which the boxes have been fitted to the trees the letters are as following;

R = Rosella, Lorikeets, parrots etc.

P = Kookaburra, possums, etc.

M= Indian Myna decoy box

Peter Wiltshire

Head Ranger



JR NEWS ROUNDUP

Junior Ranger bonfire night re-scheduled *

Unfortunately chainsaws and other tools that are used to maintain the Parklands were some of the items stolen from the Darebin Enterprise Centre earlier this month. Because of this we reluctantly cancelled the bonfire night scheduled for August 16th as it was impossible to cut up the wood required. However we still want it to go ahead and have re-scheduled the bonfire night on Friday October 11th, although you should check the website nearer the date.



Junior Ranger bonfire night 2012

Remember that, for safety reasons, all Junior Rangers must be accompanied by parents or adult guardians.

Full Junior Ranger event details on our website and Facebook page.

* Junior Ranger bonfire night is only for members of the Darebin Parklands Association.

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DPA CELEBRATES 40TH IN STYLE

On Sunday May 19th we celebrated our 40th anniversary. Approximately 70 people, of all ages, attended and the focus was planting of Mt Puffalo with Kangaroo grasses. Ranger Pete provided the plants and supervised the planting –at the end of the day over 1,800 grasses had been planted. Pete ensured that the day went like clockwork. It was quite a sight to see a wave of volunteers plant at record speed as they swept up the mountain – when they finished planting they started demolishing every weed in sight.

Champagne and a magnificent cake were then provided to all and a rousing rendition of 'Happy Birthday' drowned the singing of the rosellas and kookaburras!! Special thanks to Debra Nette for her organizational and cake procurement skills not to mention the rustic headwear which made the committee look like a clan of Peter Pan.

We were honored to have some very special visitors to the parklands – the family of the late Sir Rupert (Dick) Hamer- Lady April Hamer and her daughters Sarah Brennan and Julia Hamer joined us to celebrate. Lady Hamer and her daughters planted a River Red gum [*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*] which will provide a focal point in the future and remind us about the power of community action and what a great day we had.



Sir Rupert as Premier of Victoria supported the creation of a park, even when the site was a weed infested wasteland, and helped gain the equivalent of \$1 million in funding to help make the wonderful place we enjoy today. We also welcomed Trent McCarthy Rucker Ward Councilor, from Darien Council and Anthony Carbines MP, Member for Ivanhoe who shared in our celebration of the transformation of a wasteland into a place of natural beauty – the contrast with 40 years ago is unbelievable.

Up and down the creek



News from Darebin Creek Management Committee inc.

Friends of Darebin Creek (FODC) have received funding from Darebin Council for a much-needed revamp of their website. It is looking a bit dated and isn't working so well on some browsers. Friends member Phillip Orth did a great job in applying for several grants before being successful with Darebin Community Grants.

DCMC have purchased a new nest box camera for inspecting nest boxes along the creek and in the Darebin Parklands, thanks to a Communities For Nature grant. During a survey of nest boxes along the creek, Adrian and myself recorded a sugar glider north of Northland Shopping Centre. You can view the footage of the sugar glider on the FODC Facebook page. City of Darebin Bushcrew have requested to borrow the camera to record some baby kookaburras in a nest box along the creek in Thornbury.



Sugar glider in a nest box in bushland along the Darebin Creek in Heidelberg West.

For all those interested in the foam detergent spills along the Darebin Creek that occurred in the first part of 2012, the EPA has just brought out a report on it. I noticed a link to it on the DPA Facebook page, or it can be found on the EPA website at:
<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/~media/Publications/1537.pdf>

A victory for the Cash for Containers Scheme! Northern Territory, state and federal governments worked together to reinstate the Northern Territory's successful cash for containers program, after Coca Cola, Lion and Schweppes took it to court and won last year. Apparently this may pave the way for a national approach to a container deposit scheme, which would lead to less plastic bottles and containers in our creeks – hooray! See:

<http://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/cash-for-containers/cash-media/137-victory-for-nt-over-coke-on-recycling.html>

'Friendly Events' – upcoming events from Friends of Darebin Creek

On Sunday 25 August Friends will be helping to weed and plant previously planted creek side behind Green Street, Ivanhoe. Michelle (a Friends member) and her neighbors have been working on this strip for a few years now. We will be meeting at 141 Green Street Ivanhoe, Melways 31 B6. Entrance will be via a private house to get to the working area, look for signs. Light refreshments will be provided. RSVP preferred to Phillip Orth philorth@iprimus.com.au

On Sunday 29 September Friends will be planting trees at Quarry Hills in South Morang. Thanks to City of Whittlesea Bushcrew.

Sunday 13 October is the annual Darebin Creek Bird Survey in Heidelberg West from 8 - 10.30am (note early start). Michael Cincotta, Biodiversity Officer at La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary will run through the survey method and help with identification of more difficult bird species. Meet creek side of corner of Dougharty Rd and Liberty Parade, Heidelberg West. Melways 19 E10. Bookings are preferred so if you're interested, ring me on 9499 4454 or email info@dcmc.org.au.

For further details and other upcoming Friends events go to www.friendsofdarebin creek.org.au

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