2015 is looking good for the park

A happy new year to all DPA members and friends and we hope you take the opportunity to participate in events in the park during 2015. Several major projects are planned for the park and its environs over the coming few months, with the bike track extension, earthworks, and new toilets to name but a few. Pete’s report covers them all in detail.

A busy year is also planned for the DPA, with three general meetings and an AGM, five park care days plus Clean Up Australia Day, the Community Bonfire, fishing day, and much more. The dates for these events are on the website.

Our indigenous fauna program – encouraging rosellas and other native birds back to the parklands and fighting off those pesky mynah birds and other intruders – is reaping great results and will continue this year.

We will continue our archiving project, making old photos and artifacts available on line through the Museum Victoria site. We will continue documenting and advertising the best walks in the park, hopefully with a mobile “app” to support them.

And, of course, we will continue the administrative work of running a small volunteer community organisation. If you’d like to help out, do get in touch. Don’t forget to renew your membership for 2015. I look forward to seeing you in the park.

Mark Creamer
DPA President

Juvenile Tawny Frogmouths.
Photo: Peter Wiltshire in ‘Escaping the Claws of the Machine’

February 24 Information evening
General meeting and Information evening
A general meeting followed by a talk from Ranger Katy on indigenous plants will be held at the Education Centre on Tuesday February 24th. The meeting will start at 7.30pm followed by Katy’s talk. The Education Centre is at the end of Separation Street. See p3 for more detail.

Events calendar 2015
24 February……………General Meeting
1 March…………………Clean Up Australia Day
17 May…………………Park Care Day
26 May………………….Annual General Meeting
21 June………………….Park Care Day
19 July…………………..Park Care Day
16 August………………Park Care Day
Pete’s page

News from the ranger in charge

Important projects due this year

It has been a dry but cool summer in the Park. The only advantage to the dry conditions is that we have been able to get most weeds species under control. Major projects and events due early this year are listed below.

1. The shared trail extension from Sparks reserve to Napier Waller has already begun and expected to be completed over the next 6 months. This is a major link of the trail that has taken many years to get approved and includes 3 bridges across the Darebin Creek. The first from Sparks reserve to the Grammar school side, then a bridge from the Grammar school side to Napier Waller and thirdly from Napier Waller to the Golf Course site.

2. The Rockbeare Grove cliff project with Woods Environmental Contracting is due to begin in mid. Feb. This project aims to remove succulent and woody weeds from the Rockbeare cliff to prevent their spread into the parklands. It should also expose the wonderful Sandstone outcrop which is currently hidden.

Cost $50,000. [Approx]

3. Darebin Council funded an investigation into the current leachate treatment system by E2 Lab Design, a leading Australian water treatment consultancy. They found the current system was adequate but in need of some updating and improvements in treatment and capacity related issues. Council is evaluating the report from E2 and DCMC awaits their decision on that report.

4. The DEC Landslip/sinkhole project was expected to start in January but has been delayed until mid-March. We plan to terrace the DEC slope near the Hurstbridge railway by removing around 2500m3 of fill and placing it along the southern tip site track creating a permanent all weather road.

DCMC will revegetate the site during winter. During this project the shared trail will be closed to enable trucks to transport the fill. The trail will be closed from Heidelberg rd up to the wetland 1 and wetland 2.

See map below. Cost Approx. $500,000

PTO for more from Ranger Pete
5. DCMC [Darebin Creek Management Committee] has emptied out its equipment from the old toilet block in preparation for its demolition. We still have three bush kinders storing their equipment there so I’m currently looking to buy a 10’ shipping container and place it in the DCMC car park enabling them to store their gear in a central location. The new toilets are expected to be constructed in the next three months.

6. Katie Roberts our Artist in Residence is due to finish her residency here on 15th April. Katie will be holding an exhibition of her work from March 26th to 12th April in the Gleeson Centre at the Parklands. If you get the chance please pop in and say hello to Katie and check out her art. She will also be selling her work from the exhibition if you are interested.

Both ranger Katy and I have been interviewing other artists that have applied for our 12 month residency programme which has been an interesting process – as you know, we are so up on our art! But we do have an artist that has impressed us and looks like a suitable candidate.

7. The Parklands will be hosting another Spiritual Healing Trail day along with Darebin Council on 22nd of March. These days have proven so popular that we are planning to run them every six months. The next Spiritual Healing day event after March will be on 25th October.

Finally, Darebin Parklands will once again be holding a Clean-up Australia Day event from 10am to 12.30pm on the Sunday 1st of March. Registration will be in our visitor centre (Rangers office) so come along even if you just want to say gidday.

So I thank the DPA in advance who always have shown up in numbers to the clean-up day and make such a difference. Katy and I will look forward to seeing you there.

See you in the park.
Peter Wiltshire. Head Ranger

WHAT PLANT IS THAT?
February 24. Information evening
Join us for the first general meeting and talk for 2015 on February 24, featuring Katy Marriott, Park Ranger.

Katy joined the DCMC in July 2014, having spent the last two years working as a Regional Landcare Facilitator in the Wimmera. She has a degree in Agricultural Science from Melbourne University.

Growing up in the bush has instilled a love of native flora and fauna. Katy will help us identify plants that are indigenous to our local area, with particular emphasis on those we can see in our parklands. She will also talk about the impact of introduced species and what we are doing to improve the natural environment and habitat in the parklands.

VOLUNTEER WITH THE DPA
We are seeking volunteers to help with weeding and planting in the parklands. A weekly group works under the guidance of Katy Marriott, Ranger, who teaches weed and plant identification. Work commences in autumn and usually lasts 2-3 hours on a particular day, usually Thursday morning from 9-11am. A gourmet cup of morning tea is always provided.

Poa labillardieri

Poa sp. are ideal to plant along the creek as they can control erosion, grow quickly, inhibit weed growth and provide habitat for native fauna. The Thursday volunteer group planted a large number of these downstream from Clifton Bridge on the Ivanhoe side.

Other projects included planting wildflowers and grasses on Mt Puffalo, clearing weeds from the Snake Grass Area.

We are looking forward to another productive year. If interested in volunteering please contact:

Katy Marriott: katy@dcmc.org.au
Up and down the creek

News from the Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC) Coordination Division.

Just a short one this time as things are pretty quiet at the start of the year.

DCMC Education Program

With school starting back we are currently taking bookings from teachers for the Darebin Creek Education Program. In addition to the normal activities, we are offering Litter Audit sessions this year, which is basically a creek side clean up where students record in detail what they pick up. With this data we can investigate what rubbish is getting into the creek and look at strategies to reduce the amount of rubbish making its way to the ocean.

Friends of Darebin Creek AGM. By the time you are reading this, Friends of Darebin Creek will have had their AGM on the 18th February. For this year’s AGM, we have invited Neil Blake, Baykeeper and Coordinator of Port Phillip EcoCentre, to screen and discuss a short documentary called “Baykeepers.” Neil will speak about current efforts to collect and analyse litter in the bay, rivers and creeks – especially micro plastics, and how people can get involved.

Other upcoming Friends events include:

March 1st Clean Up Australia Day, which looks like will be heading south from the Southern Road Wetlands area in Heidelberg West. The Clean Up will be run by the Banyule Bushcrew.

(Note: This will be a separate Clean Up activity to the one in the parklands).

Check Friends website for further details http://friendsofdarebin creek.org.au/events-darebin-creek/

Peter Grenfell
DCMC Project Officer
pgrenfell@dcmc.org.au

FROM THE ARCHIVES

B&W photograph of the area which was to become the Darebin Parklands.

Shows toilet and other buildings which were probably part of old bluestone quarry operation. The tree at right is still standing (at 2014). The path behind is the extension of Separation Street.

For more great photos go to the DPA section of the Victorian Collections website:

http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/darebin-parklands-association
JR NEWS ROUNDUP

Junior Rangers Fishing Day November 23

A bumper crowd of JRs and their families took part in this year’s fishing day. 40 potential big game fishermen took part and even though the fish weren’t biting they all had a great day and enjoyed the BBQ. As many of us know, not catching fish is an integral part of the fishing experience.

Thanks to Fish Care Victoria and Native Fish Australia for helping make this day so much fun.

Clean up the Creek and Camp out in the Parklands: October 9th 2015 (after the bonfire)

The Junior Ranger camp-out with the ranger in the Parklands will be held on the night of the community bonfire (October 9th). To be eligible you must help on Clean-up Australia Day at the creek on March 1st and give us your name. We will select 6 lucky families at random for the camp-out. More information will be available at the DPA table on the Clean-up Day. The campout in 2014 was a great success and the first time the event coincided with the community bonfire.

Junior Ranger Events 2015

Sunday 29th March - Easter Games - Easter Egg & Spoon race etc.

Friday 8th May [Evening] – Spotlighting with Ranger Pete – see the animals at dusk.

July School Holidays - Activity to be confirmed.

Sunday 30th August – Treasure hunt around the Parklands.

Friday 9th October – Join everyone at the community bonfire.

November - end of year activity to be arranged.

Remember that, for safety reasons, all Junior Rangers must be accompanied by parents or adult guardians. Further details will be posted on our website nearer the dates. www.dpa.org.au

‘IMAGES OF THE PARKLANDS’

Local photographer Katrina Watson has taken some wonderful pictures of the Parklands and made these available to us in the form of blank greeting cards with envelopes. These are perfect for birthdays, thank you cards, Easter and other occasions or to send to friends overseas or interstate. Selections of these cards are shown below but there are many more designs. Cards are $2.50 each or 5 for $10 and can be purchased at any of our events or meetings this year.

Action shots from the fishing day. Photos by Maree Trentin.