

Final Update for 2015

The DPA has been really busy over the last few months. Planting days may be over but the DPA stall at the Music from the Wetlands Festival was well attended with new members joining up and books being bought. Carina is doing a great job on facebook with page likes up 40% in the last six months.

Many people found out that the bonfire had been cancelled through facebook. It was absolutely the right decision to cancel it while there were bushfires out of control elsewhere in the state. It is only when something doesn't go ahead that you find out how much it means to people; so we're aren't alone in looking forward to next year's bonfire.

We were thrilled to learn that money has been earmarked for the Separation street entrance/gate to the Parklands. The DCMC has the money but the DPA will be consulted on the design. This has been in the DPA's action plans for at least 15 years so it will be great to see the project come to fruition.

At the recent DCMC meeting we discovered that the City of Banyule is erecting some informative signs regarding the rules for dogs. To help define different areas more clearly.

We'd like a volunteer to do a count of dogs on and off leads at the same time of the week both before and after the signs are installed. Please get in touch if you're willing to help.

E-mail: info@dpa.org.au

Vic roads invited members of the community coalition [<http://www.darebin-yarralink.org/>] to view the incomplete lower trail a few weeks ago. The third bridge is half complete since the builders cannot access the golf club side. Vic roads continue to negotiate with the golf club and City of Boroondara since the application for compulsory acquisition has been denied. We understand that some of the building works can only be done in the dry, and the 2015/16 summer has been missed. This means that the trail certainly won't be open in 2016.

Upcoming events include the Junior Ranger fishing day on November 22 and the last meeting of the year on November 24. I strongly encourage you to attend.

Thanks to all our members, the committee and especially Pete and Katy for their hard work in 2015. Have a good break.

James Garriock. President

24 November [6.00pm] Education Centre

General meeting and BBQ

Join us for our final meeting of the year, and a tour the parklands with Rangers Pete and Katy and find out about the recent sinkhole and stabilization works. Michael Mann who has spent hundreds of hours installing and monitoring nest boxes in the park will talk about the program. [See p5] After the tour stay for a free BBQ at the Centre.

The Education Centre is located at the end of Separation Street. Alphington

Events calendar 2015-16

22 November.....	Recreational Fishing day
24 November.....	General meeting and BBQ
16 February.....	General Meeting and Information Evening
6 March	Clean up Australia Day
15 May.....	Park Care Day

Pete's page

News from the ranger in charge

Another great year & lots of plans for 2016

First of all I have to apologize for the cancellation of the Bonfire night. But with the Lancefield bushfire raging out of control and being a controlled burn lit by rangers that became uncontrolled I thought it wasn't appropriate to have a community bonfire night. The Monday and Tuesday prior to the event were unseasonal mid 30's so the park had dried out more than I expected.

Katy and I lit it on a Friday morning in coolish conditions as we couldn't leave it sitting there in case someone decided to have a private bonfire. Once again-sorry. Next year let's have it before daylight savings kicks in August or September. With the help of Melbourne Polytechnic students we managed to plant out the landslip slope with native grasses and sedges. We planted several hundred trees and shrubs as well but the main aim was to secure the topsoil on the slope as quick as possible.



Unfortunately the top soil used has a lot of weed seed so Katy has been forced to spray the slope in between the plantings which is very hard work. We are hoping we can keep the weeds under control until the plantings get established. We still haven't finished the parklands works yet which we intend to start in the next month.

That includes an all-weather new service track around the back of the leachate pond so both Melbourne Water and their contractors can get to the floodplain where they have sewerage infrastructure that needs serving. It will keep them off the shared trail.

I'm meeting with a landscape designer contracted by Darebin Council to look at the redesign of the Separation Street entrance. I have no idea of what the scope of the project is at the moment but safe to say we won't have a Ponderosa style arch saying Darebin Parklands. The important things are to improve the appearance of the parklands from Separation Street and improve the amenity of the entrance and remove the choke point leading to the car park. If we are lucky and the project doesn't run out of money a new picnic shelter could be considered as well. More bluestone to move!

We will also start works in November upgrading the Leachate treatment system. First off we are going to improve the electrical power supply to the treatment ponds so we can look at using better aeration pumps. Secondary we want to increase the pipe diameter from 50mm to 100mm to reduce pipe friction and increase the efficiency of the system. We need to 223 metres of pipe from the start of the swale near the big egg to near the duck pond. We are hoping to do it with horizontal boring so we don't have to dig up the park. That's the plan anyway at this stage.

DCMC has started works on Napier Waller reserve; with our first major weed spray done earlier in October. The Friends of Darebin were delighted to take up the challenge with DCMC to restore the site into a wildflower haven. We will be having two Waller weekends next year to start preparing the site with the FODC which the DPA members will be most welcome to attend if interested.

Thanks again to Michael Mann and his many hours of volunteering not only for the nest boxing and Myna control programs, but for the mowing and other things he helps us with. To the Thursday Crew thanks for all the weeding and planting. Katy and I are lucky to have such great people come to the park. Thanks to Louise for all her work on the grants for next year. See you in the park.

Peter Wiltshire. Head Ranger

ARTIST IN THE PARK

Anne Farago

Since late April 2015 I have been Artist-In-Residence at Darebin Parklands. I try to work in the Gleeson Building at least once a week. One project I have been working on, and I have used the parklands to test out ideas for, is now on show in an exhibition titled 'A Crafted History: People and Place' at Art Space, 'Realm' Maroondah City Council, which has recently opened in Ringwood.



'Fabric Sketch' testing out ideas in Darebin Parklands.
Photo: Anna Farago

In the past few months I have helped out with a few Thursday morning weeding sessions with Darebin Parklands ranger Katy and volunteers. I have collected weeds to make dye pots from and then dyed fabrics for an art work titled 'Light'. I attached the work to trees and in the location where my childhood home used to stand in Gippsland. I have titled this photograph 'Returning to the Patch', the patchwork includes the fabric from old uniforms worn by the staff from the Darebin Parklands office. I intend to use this work for an installation of some sort in the Parklands.



'Returning to the Patch' Photo: Anna Farago

For the project I worked on a large scale quilt like work titled 'Stitching Time', which has been a collaboration with members of Maroondah Handicrafts Inc. Photos by photographer Andy Drewitt were taken for the promotion of the exhibition in the Parklands. I have also experimented with placing my 'fabric sketches' on trees



'Stitching Time' Used in an exhibition in October
Photo: Anna Farago

I am thrilled to have the space in the Gleeson Building to spread out and work on my art in amongst the parklands. I usually try and work on Fridays, feel free to pop in and have a chat if you are passing by.

Anne Farago

FROM THE ARCHIVES

"The Bungalow" above Darebin Parklands c1912



Closest house to the park at the corner of Waverley Avenue and Rockbeare Grove. The house is still standing and is heritage listed.

<http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/darebin-parklands-association>

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

Please contact: Katy Marriott:
katy@dcmc.org.au

Up and down the creek



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

Nestbox Encounters

Coordination staff recently conducted a sweep of nest boxes along the creek between the Darebin Parklands and Plenty Road. We checked to see what was in there, if any needed repair, and to clean out any myna rubbish, if present.



At Fez's Wetland next to the Darebin Creek in Thornbury, we used the nest box camera to check a nest box built for ducks. We carefully pushed the camera into the hole to see what was inside.

The resident ringtail possum got a little 'freaked out' by the intrusion and decided he was better off fleeing his home. It ran out along a nearby branch. Unfortunately a nearby kookaburra decided to swoop, causing the possum to fall into the wetland before scurrying to the safety of the reeds on the edge of the wetland. (Kookaburras pictured)

In a day of firsts for the staff, we were checking a box near Tyler Street that contained a fair amount of plastic litter among some eucalypt leaves. Any rubbish in a box is normally a sign of common mynas and we cleaned this out. Adrian went up the ladder but soon shouted with surprise when a sugar glider ran up his arm, out the top of the nest box and leapt to a nearby tree before climbing his way higher. As it climbed away though, we noticed at least one baby sugar glider on its back so we quickly left the site and hope they weren't too scared to come back down and fall asleep again!

Ride the Banyule Boundary

On Sunday 20 September a group of bike riders rode the Banyule Boundary along the Darebin Creek, in spring conditions, as part of the Spring Outdoors Program. Before the ride commenced an inspection of nest boxes around the Darebin Environment Centre showed participants a number of rainbow lorikeet chicks.

The ride was led by Adrian and Therese, taking in the views and stopping at significant places along the way including Dundas Street (Fez's) Wetlands, Northland and La Trobe Wetlands.



A range of issues were discussed along the way, including the drain labeling project, building encroachments and snakes! The 15-kilometre return ride was an easy and enjoyable ride thanks to everyone who participated.

Darebin Creek Bird Survey

The fourth annual Darebin Creek Bird Survey got underway on 18 October along the creek near Dougharty Road, West Heidelberg. Around twenty 'birders' turned up to record the bird species present in this diverse area of the creek. Our bird expert, Michael Cincotta, Biodiversity Coordinator from nearby La Trobe University Wildlife Sanctuary, ran participants through the survey method. We split up into four groups-covering bushland, grassland and wetlands. While bird diversity was down on previous years, we saw a Striated Thornbill for the first time, along with a masked lapwing. From a high of 48 different bird species in 2013, this year we recorded a total of 36 species.



Among a few other interesting things spotted was a Willie Wagtail sitting on its nest (pictured). Its nest is made out of spider web – can you imagine what a finicky job making that nest would be? Also seen was a spotted Pardalote which may have been nesting in a rocky escarpment.

Final Friends Event for 2015

The final Friends event for 2015 will be on Sunday November 29 meeting at the end of Clarendon St, Thornbury. Working with Darebin Bushcrew, Friends will be mulching, weeding and cleaning-up a couple of plots near the shared trail creek entrance.

<http://friendsofdarebin creek.org.au/events-darebin-creek/>

Peter Grenfell.DCMC Project Officer

pgrenfell@dcmc.org.au



JR NEWS ROUNDUP

Family Recreational Fishing Day

Sunday 22 November

10am to 12.30pm

Join us for a morning of fun and fishing and help get rid of some Carp- an introduced species that degrade our waterways and threaten indigenous species. Sign-up at the Education Centre at the end of Separation St Alphington (near park entrance)

Fishcare Victoria will be assisting and have a limited number of fishing rods available (so be early!). For more information on Fishcare:

www.fishcare.org.au

Fishcare Victoria & Native Fish Australia will be available to provide guidance and support on the day.

A **Free raffle** for two children's fishing rods which will be drawn at the end of the days exciting events.

Please note: **This is a DPA Members Only Event.**

(New Memberships & Renewal Memberships are available on the day). Children must be supervised by a parent or guardian at all times.

Note that you can always join up and get full details on all DPA and Junior Ranger events at: www.dpa.org.au
Please bring your own water bottle to minimise rubbish



NEST BOX PROGRAM



Peter Wiltshire and Michael Mann installing a nest box

Since the nest box program was started 144 boxes have been made and installed in the park. The aim of the program is to reduce the numbers of Indian Mynas with a trapping program and to provide nest boxes to attract the Eastern Rosellas back into the park to breed. Nest boxes have also been installed for Ducks, Possums, Kookaburras, Bats and Pardalotes.

Michael Mann has worked closely with Peter Wiltshire to establish the program. We are indebted to him for the work he has done and also for reducing the numbers of Indian Mynas in the Park. Rainbow Lorikeets regularly use the nest boxes with Eastern Rosellas and Kookaburras as occasional users.

Pete and Michael check the nest boxes every 2 weeks during the long nesting season. Michael has installed cameras in a few nest boxes as part of the program. Nest box videos can be viewed at:

www.youtube.com/user/DarebinCreekMC

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