

President's Report

I'm writing this on one of the coldest days Melbourne has seen for some years – cold and dry! In fact, Ranger Pete has described this as the driest he has seen the Parklands.

Considering these dry conditions, instead of planting on our final Park Care Day for 2019, we joined the Darebin Creek Sweepers – read on for photos of the haul! And look out for more of this type of opportunity into next year, as we reduce large-scale planting activities – we'll also be putting more time into smaller scale planting and hand weeding.

Our changing climate is also the backdrop for development of the new Parklands Management Plan, co-funded by Darebin and Banyule Councils. DPA will be playing a key role in its development, both as a connection with the community and as a member of Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC), who we hope will be in the driver's seat. We're anticipating a consultative planning process and we'll share more information about this as it comes to hand.

On 27 August, I'd encourage you to get along to hear DPA member John Bradford and Tom May from the Royal Botanic Gardens talk about their work to save the scented Sunshine Diuris orchid.

Events calendar 2019

27 August..... General Meeting/Info Night

20 September...Bonfire Night

26 November.... End of year BBQ

We will start with drinks at the Clifton Bridge to celebrate its 40th anniversary, then a walk through the park and a BBQ tea



Photo:
Sunshine
Diuris orchid

This once-abundant orchid is close to extinction – John and Tom will discuss their efforts to halt its decline and role played by fungus, often overlooked in bush management and regeneration.

Look out for other upcoming events, including the Community Bonfire on 20 September – read on for Ranger Pete's comments, which will explain why we're going to keep it local this year with limited publicity.

In DPA Committee news, our recent AGM saw two new members join the Committee – John Bradford and James Macdonald, both with expertise in ecology and active in the Parklands – while we bid farewell to James Garriock. James remains a strong advocate for the Parklands and the whole creek corridor in his role on the DCMC Board. Our Exec is unchanged, comprising Jenny van Woerkom as Vice-President, Alice Bennet as our Secretary and Peter Williams as Treasurer and Membership Officer

See you in the park – and enjoy the wattle!
Sofie

Pete's page

News from the ranger in charge

Hello Members

I was begging for rain last report and it finally came with May and June providing above average rainfall although July let the team down by a day's rain. The park has green up and the weeds exploding in life everywhere, but we prefer it to the arid conditions we saw just 6 months ago.

Month	May	June	July	To 14 th August
Melb Average mm	55.5	49.5	47.5	50
2019 Parklands	69	61.4	39	33

Interestingly the leachate system still has not recovered from the summer dry and our generation rate is still so low I'm still unable to operate the system, so if you have noticed the Duck Pond looking a little low, this is the reason why.

The landscaping of the trail extension along Yarana Rd is nearing completion and as I write, the contractors are installing the final rails in the post and rail fence to finish off the works. A small portion of the old tip fence has been retained along with the land slump showing the old quarry wall edge with an explanation sign as a tribute to the Parklands past.

Darebin Council and DCMC held a community planting day on the 30 June with around 400 indigenous plants planted with Council landscapers adding several advanced Eucalypts along Yarana Road. I have requested the Council remove the unused mulch left over in the parklands as DCMC rarely uses mulch in its works.

We have had three great park care days this season with the first at Zeroland grassland, the next at the Rock Circle along the creek and the last day on the south side of Puffalo. day) and planted out the sites so beautifully. those sites.

Several thousand plants have been planted at. A massive thanks to you all who came and braved the weather (particularly the rock circle

It's at this point I want to tell you about a gang of vandals who have been pulling out our plants!



Exhibit A: The Gang at 50%

Yes, that's them above, or at least half of them! These clowns have pulled out all the grasses planted (around 800) on Puffalo five times after the park care day. We have replanted 4 times; even getting the vastly experienced Thursday Crew to help out but our magpies have won this battle. We will direct seed the grasses next season.

These magpies are our depot buddies who hang around our shed and they know that rangers drilling holes can make getting worms easier.

We love them because they keep the Mynas away and they are all cheeky characters, so a few grasses get pulled out is okay. Arrgh!

DCMC has secured funding from both Councils to update the Parklands management plan which is well overdue. The change to the local areas and the opening of the Yarra Darebin Trail has changed how the park is used and how people get to it. Graeme is working to get the process underway and I expect we'll start moving on it in the next 6 months. The DPA is a vital part of this process so I will keep you all up to date with this project



PTO

Pete's page [continued]

The annual community bonfire night is on Friday September 20th. The bonfire has been tricky to organise as changes to DCMC and Councils event management means any event that has 500 people or more triggers the Darebin Council event calendar. To cut a long story short; - portable toilet, traffic & parking management, St John ambulance etc.

The bonfire will be lit after the sun goes down. I have met with Council and after some extra work for DCMC we will have the bonfire this year at the same usual site on the floodplain near the bridge.

Thanks to the awesome Thursday crew for their devotion and help, and Mary Anne and Maree for their help on the Spotlight night.

Insect of the month. Sawfly larvae or Spitfires



There are many different sawflies around but these are the ones we see most often at Darebin Parklands as they feed on our river red gums. They are Steel-Blue Sawfly larvae or what most kids call spitfires.

They're called sawflies because of the saw-like body part the adult uses to cut a slit into a leaf as it lays its eggs. Anyway, they don't spit but rather dribble a eucalyptus oil mix out their mouths that tastes foul so predators like birds leave them alone.

They can be very destructive to young gum trees around the park. They don't sting or bite and I milk them when I have a cold as its cheaper the Vicks!



See you in the Park

Peter Wiltshire



PARK CARE DAYS

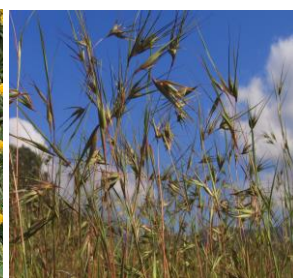
Many thanks to all those members and volunteers who attended Park Care Days this year. Without your contribution the continued revegetation of the park would have been a slow process

Planting at Zeroland. May 26th

Volunteers completed planting from previous years with saltbush, daisies, lilies and kangaroo and poa grasses.



Chrysocephalum sp.
Clustered everlasting



The media Triandra
Kangaroo grass

From the Rock Circle along the path next to the creek. June 23th

Shrubs and groundcovers were planted on a very cold day. This planting completes the connection between Snake grass and the creek. In the other direction native grasslands have almost linked with Zero land. A fantastic legacy of Park Care days over many years

Mt Puffalo -Southside July 21st

The rangers were keen to get the wild flowers established so they were planted before the poas and wallaby grasses. The maggies had a field day pulling out the wallaby and kangaroo grasses out of the ground to expose their snacks. [See Pete's report.

With this planting Mt Puffalo is nearly covered in grasses and wildflowers. Ranger Pete's vision of a hill shimmering with grasses in the wind is a reality.



Mt Puffalo. Park Care Day July 2019



PARK CARE DAYS

**August Park Care Day. Glenn Park Bundoora.
August 18th**

DPA teamed up with Darebin Creek Sweepers to help clean up the Glenn Park. This is what they collected:

2 shopping trolleys, 2 bikes, 1 stroller, a car battery, assorted other big junk and over 20 sacks of rubbish. A great effort



Photo by James McDonald

This joint activity reflects a change in focus in planting of the park, initiated by the rangers, with greater focus in the future on smaller plantings and maintaining existing vegetation. We are also keen to participate in other activities in partnership with other groups such as Friends of Darebin Creek.



'The clean up crew'



'COMBATING WASTE FOR CLEANER CREEKS'

DPA has joined over thirty organisations from the north and west of Melbourne to put pressure on waste management practices by forming the Anti-Toxic Waste Alliance.

The Alliance presented a submission to Parliament at a Public Hearing July 2019. Watch their 2-minute visual submission [here](#).



A-TWA founding Chair Sue Vittori (in red) alongside Alliance members and supporters from Broadmeadows Progress Association, Friends of Stony Creek, Friends of Merri Creek and Friends of Maribyrnong Valley outside Parliament House.

We began with our March General Meeting, when we invited Jesse Barrett from Melbourne Water to speak about pollution of waterways by fires in toxic-waste storage facilities. Friends of Merri Creek got in touch and we discussed putting together a submission to a Vic Govt inquiry into waste management.

At the same time, Sue Vittori from Friends of Cruikshank Park was putting together an Alliance with a much more ambitious plan. Sue is a phenomenal organiser and community advocate, which means that the new Anti-Toxic Waste Alliance is going from strength to strength.

Melbourne's current recycling crisis, plus a host of government inquiries into waste management, make this community action very timely.

We will bring you news and opportunities to participate as they arise – if you would like to be more active, please get in touch via info@dpa.org.au.

You can find out more about the work of the Alliance at their [Facebook Page](#) and check out the [Age newspaper article from June](#) – featuring DPA!

Sofie Anselmi, President DPA

NEWS FROM THE DCMC COORDINATION DIVISION

Up and down the creek

Platypus found dead

Recently we heard the sad news that a platypus had been found along the Darebin Creek upstream from Northland Shopping Centre, entangled in litter. It had a rubber band and a packing strap around its neck, as well as fishing line that prevented it from feeding. Any litter that is round and has a diameter of eight centimetres or more is a hazard to platypus. It is recommended that rubber bands and hair ties or any round litter are cut before disposal in the bin.

Gums Along the Creek

We are well into planting the 1,000 trees along the creek banks north of McKimmies Road, Bundoora. The aim is to plant trees up to Findon Road along the Darebin, Findon and Hendersons Creeks. The recent wet weather will no doubt help the trees survive. The project has been funded with a grant from Melbourne Water.

Friends of Darebin Creek

The recent "Welcome to Darebin Creek" event at the Kingsbury Bowls Club was well attended by about 40 people. The event featured a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony from Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Dave Wandin. It was very interesting to hear a Wurunderi perspective of local creek bushland "sick country". There was a presentation of the Reach 4 section of the Darebin Creek Management Plan by DCMC Executive Officer Graeme Hamilton. This was followed by water testing and waterbug identification activities down at the creek. These sessions were run by myself and Waterwatch Coordinator Alisa Fisher.

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Smoking Ceremony from Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Dave Wandin at Kingsbury Bowls Club

Darebin Creek Education Program

I recently ran Waterwatch training for first year Conservation and Land Management Students at Melbourne Polytechnic, Epping campus. It was a great opportunity to have a first-hand look at the health of the Findon Creek – currently an inactive Waterwatch site. Two of the students expressed interest in monitoring the site. This would be a great outcome as we currently only have two active Waterwatch sites in the Darebin Creek catchment – at the Darebin Parklands and next to Southern Road.

Peter Grenfell
DCMC Education Officer





Junior Ranger events

Once again Maree Trentin has done a fantastic job as coordinator of the programs.

Spotlighting Night. July 31

On a cold winters night 20 Junior Rangers went spotlighting. They were hoping to see Sugar Gliders. Possums and other critters of the night

Head Ranger Peter Wiltshire was their guide and he was ably assisted by Maree Trentin and Maryanne Newton from the DPA committee. Many thanks for their participation. The highlight was spotting ringtail and bushy tail possums



Community Bonfire Night Friday September 20th

Where: In the lower part of the dog off-leash area, accessible via the bluestone steps or the grassed slope. You can also reach this area from Rockbank Blvd via the main track and Clifton Bridge.

When: Dusk - around 6pm

We'll have a small fire for marshmallow toasting as well as the big bonfire.

Please bring a torch and sturdy shoes, as it will be dark, and the ground may be muddy. Bring a picnic dinner, but no alcohol please.

Children need to be supervised by an adult at all times, especially when they are toasting marshmallows.

Dogs are welcome but need to be kept on a leash throughout the event.

Bonfire Night has become a very popular over the last few years - see Ranger Pete's comments on p3. We will be trying to keep this year's event smaller and local, so you won't see anything on social media. If you have questions in the lead up, please get in touch with DCMC and DPA via email.



Darebin Parklands Association Membership

Families (or individuals) can join the DPA through our website at www.dpa.org.au

Fill in a membership form and pay online, or post a cheque to DPA, PO Box 3, Ivanhoe 3079.

JR Events for 2019

Keep an eye out on our website www.dpa.org.au for upcoming JR events.

