

March 2021

## President's Report

Firstly, a huge congratulations to the 'Mother of the Park' Sue Course!

Sue has been honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia for tireless work to establish the Darebin Parklands. Read on for a personal message from Ranger Pete, who has worked alongside Sue for more than 35 years.

As the DPA nears our 50th birthday, this is a timely reminder that the Parklands is the result of many years of advocacy and care by community members, working alongside dedicated rangers, built on the incredible vision of Sue and her co-founders.

Many of you know that DPA is a member-based organisation, where our members play an important role. Your support lends force to our advocacy, supplies effort and energy to care for the park, and gives the volunteer Management Committee a boost.

During last year's lockdown, the Parklands were a hive of activity - and many people also joined DPA for the first time. We are delighted to see this growth in our membership - stay tuned for some new initiatives to connect with us, including a new website!

If you are wondering how you can get involved, please join us at our first get-together of the year - a members-only evening, including a walk with Ranger Pete and a BBQ dinner. Details below.

If you are keen to get your hands dirty straight away, join our regular planting group - the Thursday Crew meet every Thursday morning to hand weed and plant under the guidance of Ranger Kate. This week, the group will be planting Yam daisies grown by one of the long-time group members.

And if you have been waiting to see the draft Darebin Parklands Management Plan, I'm afraid to say that it's been delayed further - but we hope to have something to share quite soon.

Lastly, we are delighted to see the Parklands featured in an exhibition from artist Nicole van Dijk. Read on for more info on Nicole's work to reflect on the role of Parklands during the 2020 lockdown - when public, open, natural space was the saviour of so many people.

See you in the park,  
Sofie



### Events 2021

#### Park Care Days. 1-3pm

- Sunday 16 May - Puffalo south
- Sunday 6 June - Zero Land north
- Sunday 25 July - Puffalo east

#### General meeting dates

- Tuesday 30 March - [6.30 pm meeting, with a BBQ dinner to follow]
- Tuesday 25 May - Annual General Meeting
- Tuesday 31 August
- Tuesday 30 November

### BBQ & Walk in the park

**Tuesday March 30. 6.30pm**

**Members-only event.**

**Meet at the Gleeson Centre**

Join us for a walk through the park with Ranger Pete, then enjoy a BBQ and bubbles.

Not a member? You can join up on the night!

**Please RSVP** [info@dpa.org.au](mailto:info@dpa.org.au) to help us manage numbers for catering and social distancing requirements.

# Pete's page

## News from the ranger in charge

### Hello DPA Members,

In these weird times it's nice to know that several aspects of the natural parklands proceed as normal. Our nestbox programme demonstrated that the arboreal critters of the parklands continued to thrive with a new generation of various animals and birds being successfully reared in the past few months. Critters successfully found breeding up in our boxes include, Eastern Rosellas, Kookaburras, Sugar Gliders, Red Rumped Parrots, Ringtail and brushtails possums, and Rainbow lorikeets.

Weeds have enjoyed the lockdown period more than us that is for sure, and some of our old favourites are getting a foothold in the parklands once more including Blackberry, Chilean needle grass, Cruel Vine and Panic veldt grass and Madeira Vine to name just a few.



**Alligators Weed**

Upsetting was the discovery of the State prohibited 'Alligator Weed' which was discovered in the parklands and reported to the Department of Agriculture for treatment and removal. It must have come into the park via the last flood event or earlier during the lockdown and gone unnoticed as our Education Officer Peter Grenfell only discovered it last week. Only appointed Dept of Ag contractors allowed to deal with State prohibited weeds. Kate and I are not permitted to deal with the alligator weed so we will watch the control of this weed with great interest



**Madeira Vine**

Madeira Vine has become a major issue for us and we have Robert from the Thursday Crew assisting us in locating and reporting outbreaks of in in the parklands and along the lower Darebin Creek. Thanks Robert.

**The draft of the Parklands Bio-diversity plan** has finally been received by DCMC after a year of on and offs. I am currently going through the 145-page report with Graeme as part of the parkland's future management plan. I will report more on the plan and its recommendations in the coming months. We are hopeful the Bio-diversity plan steers the future of Darebin Parklands and the lower Darebin Creek valley into a refuge for native flora and fauna while retaining and recognising space for other passive recreational uses.

Darebin Parklands (DPA & DCMC) has hosted a **Clean-up day** every year since its inception in 1989 in the parklands and along the creek. But this year we will not be a clean-up site as the Melbourne Water Blitz crew have been cleaning along the creek every two weeks in the parklands and with it the being the labour day long weekend in Victoria, we usually get a poor turn out. We recommend you visit the Clean-up Australia website for other local sites participating on the day.

<https://www.cleanupaustaliaday.org.au/>  
**Sue Course** is a very deserving winner of her Australia Day award and I was very proud to know and have worked with her over the last 35 years. Sue has always been an inspiration to me and it has been my honour to develop this wonderful Parklands that she envisioned and protected.

# Pete's page

[continued]

## Insect of the Month

### Honey Brown Beetle *Ecnolagria grandis*



This little fella might be on you or at least flying into you if you have visited the parklands in the last two weeks.

Let me introduce you to the Honey Brown Beetle of which there are thousands clumsily flying around the park presently.

They feed on decaying plant and fungi and these adults are currently flying around and laying eggs on gum leaves around the park

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## Volunteer with the DPA

Join our 'Thursday Crew' who meet every Thursday from 9-11 under the guidance of Ranger Kate. We weed, plant and enjoy the serenity?

If interested please contact:

**Ranger Kate:** [kate@dcmc.org.au](mailto:kate@dcmc.org.au)



Volunteers at Park Care days and the Thursday group play a key role in weed control and revegetation in the Park

# Art from the Park

## 'Saviour'

Gleeson Centre 29/5-30/5.-10-4pm

A series of paintings and prints by **Nicole van Dijk** reflecting on the role of Darebin Parklands during the 2020 lockdown. Public, open, natural space was the saviour of most people during this time. People who were weekly visitors to Darebin Parklands became daily visitors. This exhibition captures these intimate, yet shared moments; children discovering Darebin Parklands as a nature playground, silver and golden wattle lighting up the park in the darkness of winter, musicians offering songs of hope on the banks of the Darebin Creek. Gleeson Centre, Darebin Parklands

All artworks for sale, with 10% of sales given to Darebin Parklands Association. Saturday 29 May 10am-4pm Sunday 30 May 10am-4pm Enquiries: [hello@nicolevandijk.com.au](mailto:hello@nicolevandijk.com.au) Nicole 0411 574 174



**NB Nicole will be donating \$1000 to DPA rather than donating 10% of her sales. Many thanks Nicole. A very generous donation.**



# Junior Rangers



Unfortunately, the fantastic activities planned by Maree Trentin this year have been postponed because of Covid-19. Keep an eye out on our website and facebook page for updates in 2021 :

<https://www.dpa.org.au/>

## From the archives

Just a few random photos to remind us how far our park has come



Photo taken in the early 1970s showing tip site



Photo showing the initial works of Clifton Bridge -1974

The building of Clifton Bridge was a symbol of the achievements of early volunteers



Swimming in the creek at the back of 16 Rockbeare Grove 1914? Date not clear



Looking up to Mulberry Spur. Brad Haler Aug '85

For more photos go to:

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



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# Up and down the creek

*Report of the Darebin Creek Management Committee by Danny Reddan Coordinator*

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## 2021 Project delivery

2021 is shaping up as an exciting year including the initiation of Nangak Tamboree and the development of a new Darebin Creek Valley plan. Project planning is underway including a significant increase in engagement of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Council in both land management through their Narrap Unit and Cultural engagement and education aligning with our implementation of a DCMC Reconciliation Action Plan.

## Community Environment Program

The **Nestboxes** for Wildlife project engaged Melbourne Waterway Blitz members in nest box construction and DCMC staff undertook ladder training to ensure the safe roll out of the program. Banyule and Darebin Bush crews have engaged in the nestbox planning and will assist in their instalment.

Peter Grenfell and Trevor Hausler have been busy establishing citizen scientists in the **Waterbug monitoring** program. There are currently six wetland sites being monitored for waterbugs, with results being uploaded to the National Waterbug Blitz database.

Management planning for **Maserati Park** is underway with input from the Narrap team, Whittlesea and an ecological consultant. This collective wisdom will be developed into a management plan with a strong focus on community engagement and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Culture. A revegetation and engagement day is being planned for August.

The Narrap Unit also joined an onsite steering committee meeting at **Nangak Tamboree** focused on the establishment of project monitoring. We have now established vegetation monitoring plots to record change in response to cultural burning and weed control and an LTU student will monitor Carbid beetles as an indicator of native vegetation health. The Melbourne Water Working for Victoria crew started work on the weed control, cutting and painting woody weeds dominated by gorse and broom. A project launch being planned by LTU will be held soon (date tbd).

DCMC are continuing to provide support for FoDC projects, **Weed Watch** and the **Reach 4 Connectivity project**.

**Darebin Creek Education Program** has resumed in earnest, with face-to-face sessions making a welcome return after a year of online sessions due to COVID restrictions. We recently worked with Year 5s from Northside Christian College Bundoora, conducting water quality testing (2018 session pictured).



Student results found the creek water to be saltier than recorded in over ten years.

We have planned four creekside sessions with St Pius X Bush School in Heidelberg West. In term one we are also working with Thornbury High School, Fitzroy High School, Alphington Grammar, Ivanhoe Girls Grammar, St Bernadette's Primary in Ivanhoe and St John's Primary in Thomastown.

**Danny Reddan Coordinator. DCMC**