

Annual General Meeting Reports

**Before June 8th, remember to answer the [Darebin City Council survey](#).
If you need technical assistance,
please ring 0497172757**

Acting President's report

Ian McMaster noted that the Committee had been preoccupied in 2024 by events surrounding the Council reviews of funding and management of the Parklands and Creek, and a decision had again been delayed. He thanked the Committee for many hours of effort in this regard.

He also noted other significant events in 2024:

- Change of name – completed 2 July
- Plan to reduce the formality of general meetings
- Archive moved from Dropbox to Google Drive
- Speakers: Carolyn Lunt, Lawrence Pope, Yuqian Lin
- Park care days (one washed out)
- Park user survey in October
- Meeting with Friends of Darebin Creek
- Calendar – good for promotion but not a money-maker
- Treaty Celebration in November
- End of year social event in November
- Clean Up Australia event on 2 March 2025.

Treasurer's report

There were 159 members (with voting rights) at 31 December 2024. Peter Williams tabled the financial report for the year ended December 2024. Total YTD income and expenditure were \$5,927.00 and \$5,771.23 respectively. Total cash assets were \$11,763.56 compared to \$11,607.79 on 1 January 2024.

Election of office holders

President: There were no nominations for President and the office was declared vacant. Vice-President: Ian McMaster, Secretary: Graeme Vernon, Treasurer: Peter Williams were all re-elected unopposed.

Ordinary Committee members Jeanie Adams, Belinda Hill, Dane Perry Svendsen and Duncan Pitt were duly re-elected.

General business

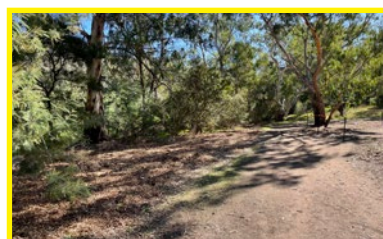
Council reviews of Parklands and Creek catchment ([see page 2](#)).

Format for general meetings: future general meetings will be less formal and more focussed on information and discussion.

Discussions continue about moving the end of year social event to a weekend afternoon (versus a weekday evening) with Friday evening being a better option than Tuesday.

Membership fees ([see page 11](#)).

Guest speaker ([see page 4](#))



Ivanhoe floodplains

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Advocacy Action Report

It seems to be a long time since October 2023, when Banyule City Council proposed to stop funding the DCMC Rangers, and the community protested vigorously.

But not much has really happened. Banyule Council officers conducted a community consultation late last year, meeting with key stakeholders including DCMC and FDP, and an online community 'survey'. After that, another round of meetings took place recently, to report to those stakeholders on the survey.

In their survey answers, the community response prioritised biodiversity and water quality (poorly defined), and was overwhelmingly in support of the rangers and current management of the parklands by DCMC.

Council officers acknowledge this, and they appear to have learned a lot. They demonstrate improved understanding of the Creek, Parklands, and Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC). They recognized that DCMC has addressed their concerns raised in 2023.

But officers are still not keen to divulge their plans on how to allocate their finances. Council continues to describe the situation as "complex" 18 months into the review.

So members and friends need to be alert and ready to let councillors know in clear terms what we think.



AGM

Belinda noted that FDP's focus in 2024 had been on advocacy in response to the Council reviews, however it is important now to offer more constructive programs.

An example is the native bee workshop held on 4 May 2025 ([see page 9](#)) and there are other programs planned for 2025.

Belinda acknowledged the work of volunteers who supported the campaign in response to the Council reviews and noted the expenditure incurred for printed materials. This letterboxing may have contributed to the response to Banyule's on-line community consultation with around 600 contributions.

The Darebin consultation process is about to commence with their recommendations due in August 2025. Consequently Banyule's recommendations are now expected in September 2025, with an opportunity for community input before then.

Overall, it seemed that some form of testing the market would be applied.

Ian thanked Belinda for her considerable efforts in advocacy.

Have Your Say on Darebin Council's Review into DCMC

Darebin Council is currently reviewing how the Darebin Parklands and Darebin Creek catchment are managed – and, importantly, who will manage them in the future.

If you value the care and community connection that the Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC) brings, now is the time to speak up. Let's ensure this vital work isn't handed over to private contractors.

What you can do:

Complete the online survey between 12 May – 8 June

Tell Darebin Council what matters to you

Help protect and enhance this important green space, healthy creek and thriving wildlife

Ensure it remains a place for everyone in the community.

Our vision is simple: A natural, thriving Darebin Creek where people and nature are deeply connected.

Take the survey now at: <https://yoursay.darebin.vic.gov.au/FutureDarebinCreek>

Your voice makes a difference.

Report from the Rangers

Rangers' AGM report

Peter Wiltshire described recent changes in the management of leachate at the Park-lands. Darebin City Council had taken on a greater level of responsibility including reporting to the Environment Protection Authority.

Peter would hand over DCMC's role to Kim as he approached his anticipated retirement in February 2027.

Kim described how the recent lack of rainfall had changed management, including watering of recent plantings. Four park care days would be held with the first in the Ivanhoe wetlands and the last around Mount Puffalo.

Nest box monitoring had revealed decreased breeding due to the warm weather. However, audio records of a powerful owl had been made.

The plant nursery operation was expanding with a recent grant from Bendigo Bank for purchase of equipment. Production of 10,000 plants was anticipated (compared to 5,000 last year).

New Igloo



Emma, Robert and Judy at work.

The Igloo is located in our depot, which you can access either from the park or from Wingrove St, east of the Alphington Farmers Market.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Saturday nursery team has started up on Saturdays 9 am-11am. Email me if you'd like to get involved to help grow plants – kim@dcmc.org.au

What's involved?

- Seed collecting & sowing
- Growing from cuttings
- Picking out germinated seeds into tubestock
- Watering

Nestbox Life

We're finally able to start getting volunteers involved in nest box monitoring. Apologies for the delay with this but thank you for being so patient!

What's involved: There is a lot of walking on and off track, on uneven surfaces around the park. A group of 3 is needed each month. One person operates the camera which is inserted into each box, one person operates the screen to be able to see and identify what's in the box and one person writes down the data. These duties can be shared.

I expect there to be a lot of people interested in this so there'll be a roster system and I'll be training volunteers on how to monitor nest boxes. Ideally, it would be great to have regular volunteers so you get to know where the boxes are and develop your I.D skills!

Ranger Kim Davis



DCMC Catchment and Engagement Update

Catchment & Engagement Team

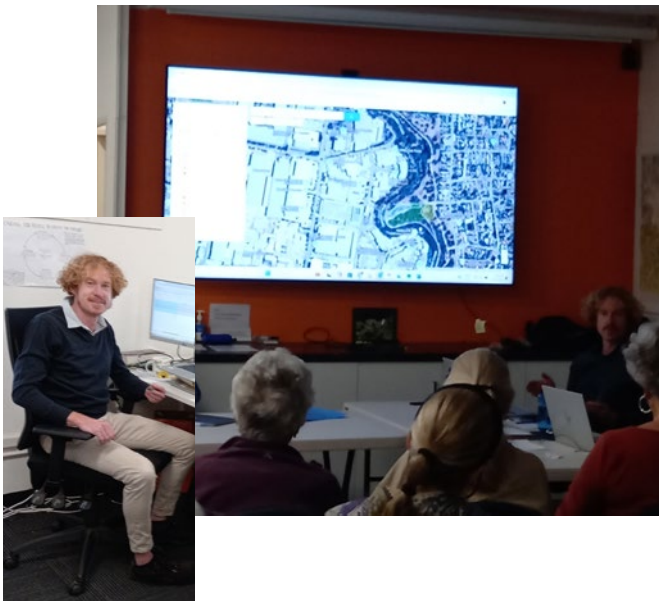
The planting season is underway. With close to 10,000 plants ready to go in the ground, we've scheduled a range of community planting events—and we'd love your help to bring them to life. It's a great chance to connect with others, enjoy some winter sunshine, and play a part in vital environmental efforts to restore the health of Darebin Creek.

Catchment and Engagement community planting dates:

- Sunday 1 June – Bundoora
- Sunday 15 June – Bundoora
- Sunday 6 July – Bundoora
- Saturday 12 July – Bundoora
- Sunday 27 July – Reservoir
- Sunday 3 August – Bundoora

For details and the latest updates on all our events, visit our events calendar. New events will be added regularly. <https://dcmc.org.au/plan/whats-on/#calendar>

Talia Sawers



Education Program



Unfortunately Pete has been off work unwell this week but here he is, spotted one morning collecting water bugs to show to a school or kindy group.

AGM Guest Speaker

Danny Reddan, Manager, Catchment and Engagement, Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC) was the guest speaker. Danny outlined current and planned projects to enhance the ecology of Darebin Creek north of the Parklands.

The work was based on a Catchment plan and guided by the National Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration in Australia. This provides a broader measure of biodiversity and engagement compared to counts of trees planted and people engaged.

DCMC works with the Narap Team from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. Significant grants have recently been made by Ozfish/ Microsoft and the Australian Government.



Save the Gang-gangs of the Darebin Creek

DCMC EOFY Fundraiser

The Gang-gang Cockatoo, a distinctive and cherished bird species, was listed as endangered under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 in March 2022. Their populations have declined in recent decades due to habitat loss, which was exacerbated by the devastating 2019/2020 Black Summer bushfires.

Why Darebin Creek Matters

The Darebin Creek region, encompassing areas like the Darebin Parklands, has become a crucial refuge for Gang-gang Cockatoos, especially during the winter months when they migrate to lower altitudes. Recent observations have noted small flocks visiting these areas, underscoring the importance of preserving and enhancing their habitat here.



Our Mission

Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC) is dedicated to safeguarding and restoring the natural environment along the Darebin Creek. Our initiatives focus on creating and conserving habitats that support local fauna, including the endangered Gang-gang Cockatoo. However, to continue and expand these vital efforts, we need your support.

How You Can Make a Difference

Your donation can directly contribute to:

Habitat Restoration: Funding the planting of native vegetation that provides essential food and habitat sites for the Gang-gang Cockatoo.

Community Engagement: Educating and involving the community in conservation efforts, fostering a collective responsibility towards protecting this unique species.

How to Donate

Donations to DCMC are tax-deductible and can be made securely through our GiveNow page. Your contribution, no matter the size, plays a crucial role in preserving the habitat of the Gang-gang Cockatoo along the Darebin Creek.

Donate Now

Habitat, Conservation & Management Course

For over 40 years, the Habitat Conservation and Management Course (HCMC) has been informing, inspiring and connecting Melbourne's conservation and land management community. HCMC is for everyone, from new conservation volunteers, to experienced land management practitioners looking to refresh and extend their knowledge and networks.

Participants will learn in-person about key ecosystem features including plants, soil, fungi and fire then explore techniques for habitat improvement. 16 Wednesday evening classes from August 6 to November 19 and 9 Saturday field trips with some of Melbourne's leading ecologists and land managers including Randall Robinson, Gidja Walker, Uncle Dave Wandin and George Paras.

A number of councils have grant opportunities to support volunteer participation in the course including [Banyule City Councils Green Training Fund](#). If you are a conservation volunteer, you may like to check what opportunities there are with your local council. The Robertson family also generously support a limited number of volunteers through application to the [Ryan Robertson Scholarship](#).



To find out more <https://events.humanitix.com/habitat-conservation-and-management-course-2025>

Therese Grinter, Project Officer, DCMC

Volunteer Profile:

This is the fourth of a series of brief profiles of Thursday Crew volunteers. Graeme Vernon (photographer) and Duncan Pitt (interviewer).

Introducing Richard Shapcott (alias Shappers)

who has recently arrived after life in Brisbane.

Richard, do you live locally ? Yes Fairfield

How did you become involved? I saw the crew working and asked how to get involved.

What do you like most about volunteering for the Thursday crew? The nasty instant coffee and Arnotts assorted bikkies.

Are you otherwise involved with Darebin Parklands? Only as a user/ dogwalker.

Which weed do you dislike the most? The ones that don't look like weeds!

Do you have a favourite area in Darebin Parklands? Well my dog likes the rock pool and the off lead area so I spend most time there, but otherwise I like sitting by the top pond or riding along the creek.

Do you have other environmental interests? Yes!

Any other comments or suggestions? Love the crew and love the place, it's an amazing sanctuary for human and wildlife alike.



Thursday Crew & Park Care Day

Thursday Crew weeds:

Please note: no volunteers were harmed in the making of this photo!



Park Care Day on Sunday 18th had around 40 people, who helped plant 700 plants within an hour! That left time to stand around the refreshments table and chat in the pleasant weather.

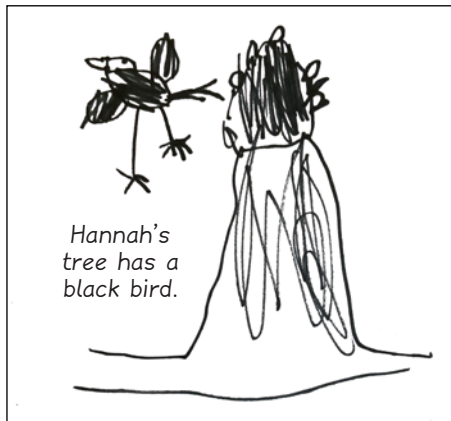
Next Park Care Day Sunday 22 June 1-3pm



Bush Kinders

Every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, there are Bush Kinder groups from six different Kindergartens on four different sites around the Darebin Parklands. Tuesdays are child-free to allow the staff to safely conduct maintenance tasks around the place.

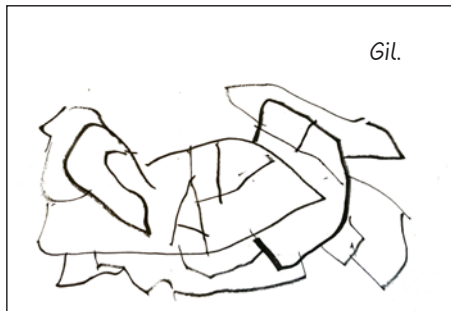
Jeanie met one group of three-to-five-year-olds from Thornbury Kindergarten with teacher Kate Goodridge at Site One and they drew pictures for us. Interesting to see the place through their small eyes!



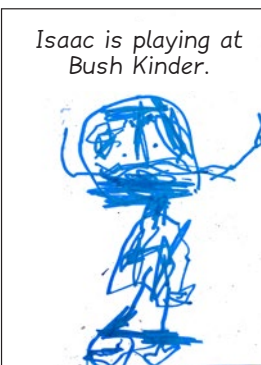
Hannah's tree has a black bird.



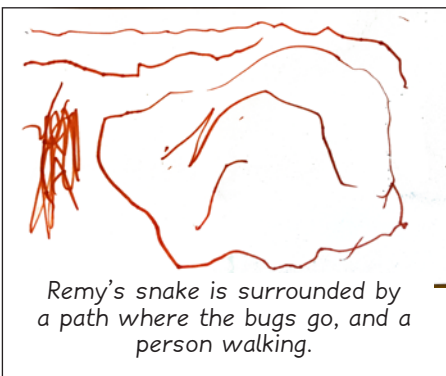
This monster tree has silly hair.



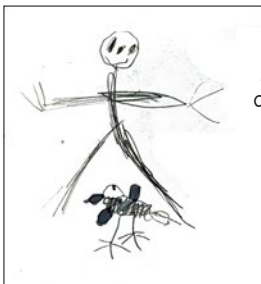
Gil.



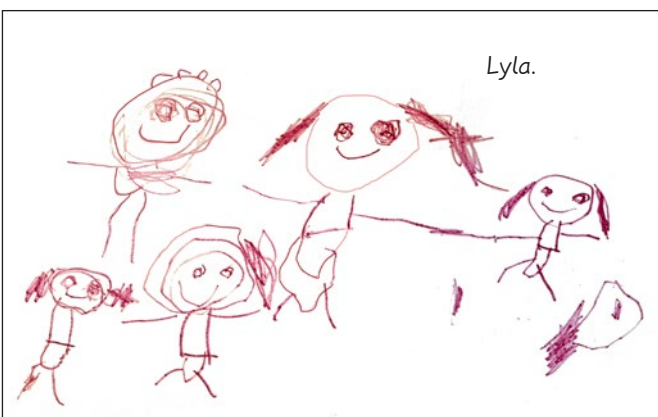
Isaac is playing at Bush Kinder.



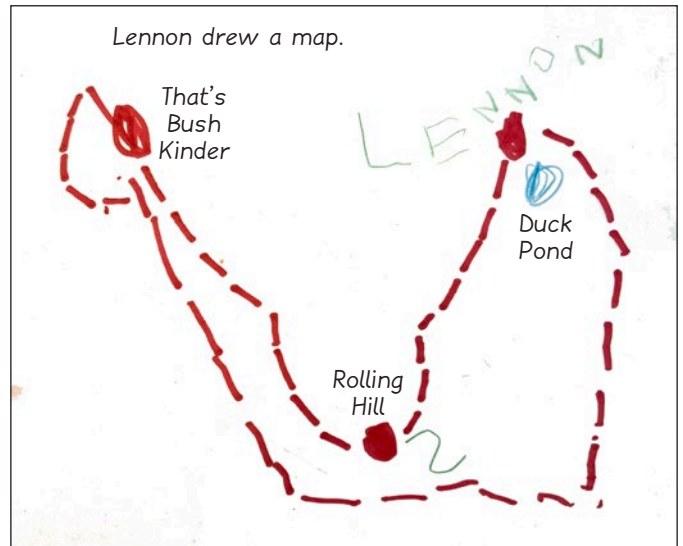
Remy's snake is surrounded by a path where the bugs go, and a person walking.



Jude's magpie is down near her.



Lyla.



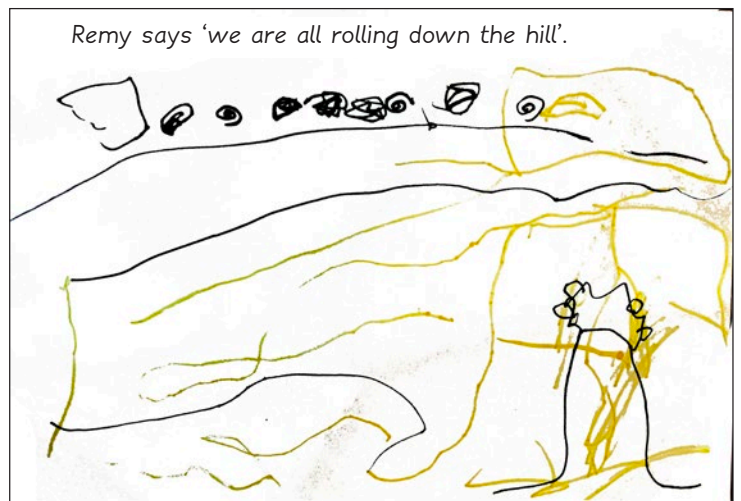
Lennon drew a map.



Harrison and Jack drew huge bullants and small people.



Remy says 'we are all rolling down the hill'.



Parkland Artists

Our application to exhibit at Bundoora Homestead Art Centre was unsuccessful.

But local artists can still do things that are more closely related to the Parklands. A small group of artists is building, with potential to interact with the parklands and the community.

We might find another venue, where we have more control. We are thinking about a modest program of artist workshops exploring a variety of media.

If you have ideas or skills to offer, please get in touch.

Alphington Open Studios

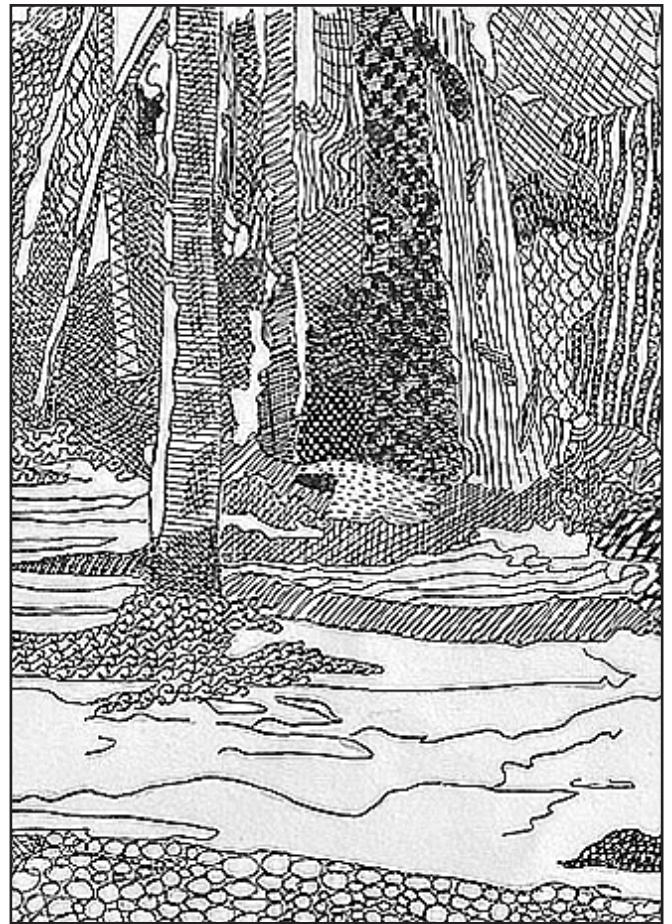
Every year a group of artists open their studios to the public over two weekends in November. This year we are a part of that program. The Gleeson Centre will hold a small group exhibition on November 22–23 and be publicised with the Alphington Open Studios.

Would you like to be one of that group? Both 2D and 3D work will be shown, a few pieces by each participant. Please contact me 0497172757
jeanie.adams@bigpond.com

Stay with us, if you have time. I will continue to arrange occasional meetings in the Gleeson Centre.

It's good to encourage each other!

Jeanie Adams



This parkland sketch is by Mary McArdle, a member who also uses embroidery and tapestry weaving.

Digital Storytelling Platform

Yuqian Lin, a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, is exploring how digital and physical collective storytelling can help uncover the often-unseen layers of Urban Riparian Post-Quarry-Landfill (URPOL) landscapes along Merri Creek and Darebin Creek. Her research focuses on how stories, memories, and everyday interactions with these landscapes can contribute to more socio-ecologically resilient and inclusive design and planning.

Yuki was our guest speaker at the FDP meeting on Tuesday, 4 March, and encouraged participation!

For more information or to participate, contact Yuki at yuqlin3@student.unimelb.edu.au & the digital platform prototype -

<https://www.yuqianportfolio.com>.

Yuki is looking for your images and memories of Darebin Parklands, as well as CERES and the Wallert Quarry site.



Native Bees with Clancy Lester

On Sunday 4th of May, 40 people joined us to hear Clancy Lester share his passion and knowledge about Australia's diverse native bees including those that live in our region, their habitats and their unique homes.

After the talk we learnt how to make a variety of bee 'hotels'. One of these was left for the DCMC rangers to include in the Parklands.

There are 2,000 known species of native bee, of which only 11 make honey - and none of those live in Victoria.

Expect to see more from Clancy in the coming months. He is one of the ABC's 2025 Heywire Trailblazers - a program to support inspiring young leaders looking to make a positive impact in regional Australia.

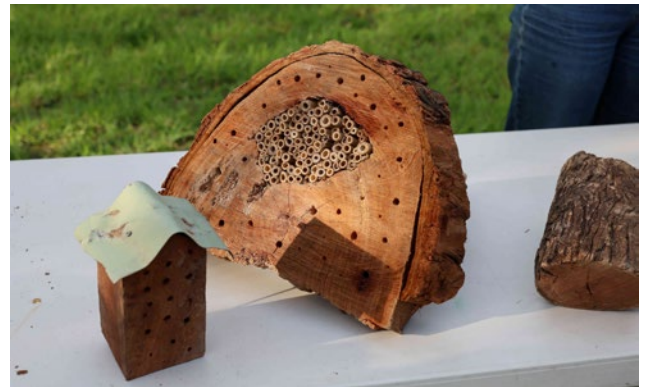
If you weren't able to make it and would like to learn more about native bees or how to make your own bee hotels you can check out Clancy at:

nativebeehotels.com

Instagram: [@beesandblossoms.aus](https://www.instagram.com/beesandblossoms.aus)

Word of warning: many of the bee hotels you can purchase commercially at places like Bunnings are often not designed for Australia's native bees and are unlikely to attract them.

Belinda Hill



Native bee poster seen at Bee Sustainable.

Trip to the source

Friends of Darebin Creek and Friends of Darebin Parklands are planning a tour – an educative experience for the creek and parkland network to share knowledge of the history, geology, geography, drainage and human experience of the creek.

25% of the creek is outside the urban boundaries, some in private land, and there are creek tributaries to add to the complex picture of this waterway. Graeme Hamilton and Margaret de Kam are building up our knowledge.

On a recent cloudy April Saturday, members of both committees took an investigative trip to the various areas along the creek.

Below are some images from the day, which began at the very start of the creek. The nearby ridge is where the Darebin, Merri and Plenty catchments viewed from Merriang Road. We walked through a property recently purchased by the Victorian Government (DEECA), where friendly horses graze while resting from their job hauling tourists.

Lunch (with a taste of the local produce) was enjoyed at Five Vineyard. The Vella family gifted 60 ha to Council for Quarry Hills park.

There is much more to learn. Keep the date of October 5th free for the public event being planned – probably a bus trip.



- 1, 2, Graeme Hamilton points out the source.
- 3, Between housing and bushland park in Wollert.
- 4, 5, 6, The horses, the Darebin Creek and looking towards the stoney rises.
- 7, From the old bluestone bridge, no longer in use.
- 8, Five Vineyard overlooking the creek.



Darebin Creek Catch-up

In the May Monthly newsletter

- Save the Gang Gangs
- Gaetano Greco
- Wollert Waste Safari & Open Day
- Woodland Bird Byway Planting Event
- Banyule's Biodiversity Strategy
- Rat poisons are killing our birds
- National Volunteer Week
- Planting season is here!
- National Reconciliation Week

To subscribe: info@dcmc.org.au



Join the Friends of Darebin Parklands

www.fdp.org.au/become-a-member/

New Membership options

These membership categories and fees were approved at the AGM in May 2025.

Type	1 year	3 years	Includes
Individual	\$25	\$60	One membership (15 yrs+)
Family	\$30	\$75	One or two memberships (15 yrs+) requires a name & email address for each member *
Organisation	\$50	\$120	Name & email for one member representative required. Show membership certificate on request.

* Junior Ranger memberships included – no limit on number and names not required. A current family membership will be needed at events.

Membership fees

Graeme tabled a revised membership structure and fee proposal to apply from 1 July 2025. This included a small increase in fees, removal of concessional rates and revision of the family rate to include any two members with unlimited access to children for junior ranger activities.

He noted that fees had been stable for many years and that the concessional rate was difficult to define and validate. He also noted legal advice that organisations could be members but only a nominated member representative could vote.

Belinda supported the revised fees and noted the amount of work required to manage the membership records. Graeme added that the website would need to be revised for the new structure.

Events calendar 2025

June 5 Ranger Pete's 40 years 10 am
 June 17 Committee meeting 6.30 pm
 June 19 Water monitoring
 June 22 Park Care Day
 June 24 Information night & general meeting 7.30 pm Guest speaker TBA
 July 17 Water monitoring
 July 20 Park Care Day
 July 22 Committee meeting
 Mid August Newsletter
 August 17 Park Care Day
 August 26 Information night & general meeting, Guest speaker: Indigenous Nature Strip Meadows Jake @bushieintheburbs
 September Star gaze Astronomy Vic.

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Updates regarding the Gleeson Centre.

We're moving to an online booking system via our website hopefully before the end of the year. This will streamline the process and save staff time — keep an eye out for updates!

For the moment please use the online booking form and make sure you include both phone and email contact points.

<https://dcmc.org.au/learn/gleeson-centre/>

We're working to raise the profile of the Gleeson Centre and would really appreciate if you could take a moment to leave a Google review here:

The Gleeson Centre Reviews - Google Search

If you have any photos of the room in use that we may be able to use on our social media and or Newsletter please send them through.

Therese Grinter



Lisa Hui's red-rump photo



A Moment in History

20 – THE AGE, Wednesday 22 July 1981

Battle to retain park

ENVIRONS

By ANDREW BOLT

THE Darebin Creek wriggles through the Darebin Parklands, forming the natural focal point for a landscape only now recovering from rampant urbanisation. It attracts most visitors to the park, including a Labrador which was snuffling around the creek's edge.

"The creeks and waterways have the best potential for urban parks in Melbourne," said the Darebin Parks ranger, Mr Chris Barry, as the Labrador flew past, leaving a wiff of doggy damp behind it.

"They give you a great chance of building up an ecosystem around them but they are prime targets for freeway reservations," he said. If the 23-year-old agricultural science graduate sounded a little bitter it was because the Darebin Creek, which flows from Epping to the Yarra on the outskirts of Heidelberg, has once more fallen in the sights of the Board of Works.

The board last month released its report on a master plan for Melbourne which proposed new major roads through the eastern suburbs. One of the proposals was a revival of an earlier plan to construct the F6 freeway along a route which took in the Darebin Creek valley from Reservoir to Ivanhoe.

The route takes it right through the middle of the Darebin Parklands, tucked into the valley of the creek, about 2.6 kilometres from the Yarra.

The 25-hectare area was originally the site for a quarry and later a rubbish tip on the Alphington bank and a riding school on the Ivanhoe side. The area also was a freeway reservation until 1976, when the Government dropped the idea of the F6 because of its high environmental and sociological impact.

When Board of Works workers started bulldozing trees in the area in 1973, the residents had had enough and formed the Rockbeare Park Conservation Group (named after the park leased by the riding school). The group drew up plans for the area and started clearing weeds and planting trees on the Ivanhoe side of the creek, which was owned by the Heidelberg Council.

The group successfully lobbied the Federal Government for funds to allow the Northcote Council to buy the quarry site and derelict floodplain. The rest of the site was bought with the help of a \$1 for \$1 subsidy from the Victorian Government.

The park is now run by a committee of management with representatives of the Heidelberg and Northcote councils and residents from both sides of the river. Each council puts in \$7500 towards developing and maintaining the park, an amount which includes the salary of Mr Barry.

Much has been done to the park—including the clearing of



Darebin Parks ranger Mr Chris Barry admires the creek running through a section of the park.

hectares of noxious weeds and the planting of about 9000 shrubs and trees. But much remains to be done.

Most of the work has been done by volunteer labor, with about 2800 volunteer hours being clocked up in the past 14 months. Local schools often have chipped in as well.

According to Mr Barry, the concept of the park would be destroyed if it were to be split in

half by the freeway, which has been nominated as a key long-term option by the Board of Works. Plans to exploit a natural amphitheatre on the Northcote side would have to be scrapped.

A member of the executive of the conservation group, Ms Sue Course, said the park was one of the few real parks in the eastern suburbs and had distinctive features. The park contained one of the few examples in the State

of basalt tessellated paving and showed a range of indigenous as well as introduced trees.

The conservation group intends to fight the Board of Works proposal and, in the meantime, continue to develop the park. As the 150 members of the group consider, the area is worth preserving — if only as an example of what can be done with an area which looks like a wilderness.

Part 7 of Peter Wiltshire's Powerpoints Presentation

Coot



Eastern Spinebill



Dusky Moorhen



Gang Gang Cockatoo*



Crimson Rosella*



Tawny Frogmouth



Willy Wagtail



Yellow Tail Cockatoo*



Ewings Tree Frog



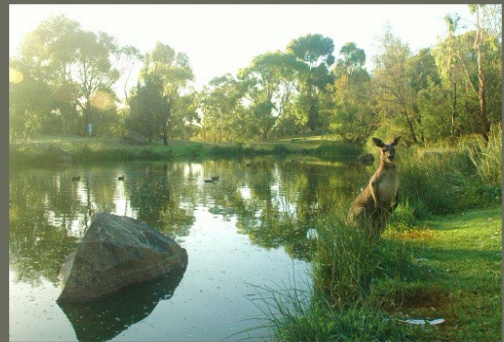
Pobblebonk Frog



Long Necked Turtle



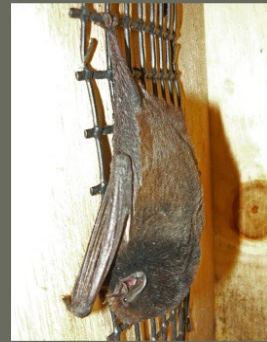
Eastern Grey Kangaroo*



Grey Head Flying Fox



Gould's Wattle Bat



Ringtail Possum



Rakali

