

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on 25th August 2010, the **Guest speaker Associate Professor Mardie Townsend from Deakin University** spoke on the subject of "Healthy Parks, Healthy People". Prof. Townsend has conducted research into this area in Australia (including FODC members) and in the United Kingdom. The human health benefits of connection with bushland through environmental volunteering are significant. Groups such as ours derive satisfaction from restoring and connecting with the environment, improved mental health, through an increase in time spent outdoors and a sense of belonging through interaction with the local community. The physical benefits are gained through additional physical activity in the bushland environment.

Prof. Townsend is also associated with "Feel Blue Touch Green" (FBTG), a nature based intervention for people suffering anxiety and depression. Participants were involved in various activities including weeding, planting, plant propagation and identification, and wildlife watching. The studies showed an improvement in emotional, mental and physical health.

A message to our readers, if only for a short while, come and join us for a working bee, get in touch with nature, have a cuppa, and benefit your health.

The AGM elected the new FODC committee for 2010 – 2011:

Helen Clements, President; Frank Carder, Vice President; Campbell Miles, Secretary; Griff Young, Treasurer; together with Judy Borg, Noticeboards, Doug Scott, Editor, Romy Orfanelli, Public Officer, John Clements, Kevin Ryland, Ian Nicholls, and Robert Yates

The meeting thanked the outgoing Treasurer Frank Carder, and Ian Nicholls as Deputy President, Chris Nicholls and Roy Thatcher for their excellent work over the years. A warm welcome was extended to Griff Young and Robert Yates. Thanks go to Graham Lawrence for presiding over the AGM as Public Officer in Romy's absence and also for his continued support of the Friends, as he boils the billy and serves tea & coffee at each working bee.

The President's report at the AGM extended a big thank you to the committee and the Friends of Damper Creek for making 2009 - 2010 such a successful and productive year. Highlights included an excellent guest speaker program at alternate monthly meetings, Clean Up Australia Day (March), a Good Neighbour Community Planting Day (May), and the Christmas BBQ to be held on Sunday 28th November.

In 2011 the guest speaker program will continue with presentations being planned for the meetings of February, April, June, August and October. Another Community Planting day is planned for 2011 following the huge success of this year's event. Melbourne Water Grant monies will

purchase 3,000 indigenous tube stock for the day.

The President also thanked the Monash Bushcrew Michael Grant, Chris Gittens, Mark, Roger, Danny and other bushcrew members together with the Executive staff members of the Monash City Council, for their ongoing hard work and excellent support of the Friends of Damper Creek.

August Working Bee

At the August working bee, 24 people planted 3000 plants in 3 hours. The plants being the balance of Melbourne Water grant allocation for this year. **A great effort.**

WATER BIRDS AT DAMPER CREEK

From Judy Borg

The heavy August rains have brought down clay that has sealed the bottom of the wetland ponds and brought back the wood duck pair and a frequently visiting pair of chestnut teal.

Recently I added a poster of Australian Water Birds to the back Park Rd. board. How many different water birds have you seen at Damper Creek? Since I started observing about four years ago I've seen eight altogether, including a spoonbill and a heron. And how many people remember the shrieks of our one and only purple swamp hen, who built a nest on the reed bed, but had no partner? There was another bird too – not included in the poster – that came at a time of heavy rain and sat on a branch over the rushing creek, just up from the fern gully. It was like a Walt Disney "Baddie": soot grey with

a long, twisted neck and sharp beak – and surrounded on both sides by a kookaburra and a magpie, who tried to make it move on. [It was an Eastern Reef Egret (Grey morph), I later learnt from my Field Guide.] The magpie flew off after a time and left the egret to be persuaded by the kookaburra who, water feeding, had more to lose.

For the meeting of members on Wednesday 27 October we have been fortunate to secure a presentation from Dr Tim Fletcher from Monash University. Tim spoke to us several years ago about the role of rain gardens in the cleaning of storm water flowing into Damper Creek. This time he will address a major research project he is undertaking on Stringbark Creek. The title of his lecture is 'Testing of economic incentives for encouraging stormwater harvesting and retention at a catchment-wide scale; the Little Stringybark Creek Project'.

Dr Fletcher has suggested that we may check wish to check some of the work at the following website:
www.urbanstreams.unimelb.edu.au
before the night.

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at Alvie Hall (corner Alvie Road & High Street Road) and start promptly at 7:30pm
Working Bees are held on the following Sunday from 10am to 12:30pm (morning tea at 11am)
Any late changes to the working bee location will be posted on the Alice St. bridge.

September		
Meeting:	Wed 22nd - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun 26th - 10am	Middle bridge
October		
Meeting:	Wed 27th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun 31st ^h - 10 am	Middle bridge

ADDRESSES & TELEPHONE NUMBERS		
President:	Helen Clements	0401 813 502
Secretary:	Campbell Miles`	9803 7707
Treasurer:	Griff Young	
Editor:	Doug Scott	9803 8143
	Please email material for printing to dougscott@optusnet.com.au	

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Water.

Damper Creek Reserve Inc is a member of
'Landcare' and 'Land for Wildlife' Volunteer Nature
Conservation.

***Damper Creek Bushland Reserve: part of the
Yarra Catchment.***

***The Newsletter of
FRIENDS OF
DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.***

Reg No. A0029531G
www.vicnet.net.au/~damper
P.O. Box 2063 Mount Waverley

DAMPER CREEK DOINGS

SEPTEMBER 2010

