

## **Editorial :**

### **A Tale of Two Elections**

The August meeting for the Friends of Damper Creek Reserve will be our annual general meeting. My experience in voluntary organisations has been that this meeting is invariably greeted with a sense of dread. Indeed, this is the meeting that members endeavour to stay away from, lest they be press ganged into accepting an unwanted position. Now, I know we have all been subjected to an excessive amount of political spin over the last few weeks, but please bear with me as "I put my spin on the AGM and the position of committee members for FODCR.

Firstly, our AGM is a great experience, being opened by a guest speaker of great eminence (of whom, more will be said later). Secondly, the AGM is a brief, non stressful, election of the office-bearers for the next year. There will be no press gang as the majority of positions will willingly be resumed by the incumbents. That is, unless nominations are received to contest these positions. I cannot see why these positions are not hotly contested as a position on the committee allows the member to make a real difference to the management of Damper creek in the company of a group of convivial and committed individuals.

Nominations have already been received for all positions except that of treasurer. (The present treasurer must step down as dictated by the constitution.) If you feel you have, or would like to develop, the skills to act as treasurer, do not hesitate to submit a nomination for this position. If you have other skills you feel would be appropriate to

the management of FODCR, you may nominate for an "open" position on the committee. Nomination forms may be downloaded from the website or completed on the night of the AGM.

As for that "other" election, I will not presume to sway you from your own assessments of the various candidates. I would expect that members of FODC would be concerned by Issues of the environment and economic management and a willingness to act in difficult times will be the criteria for choice on election day.

### **Guest Speaker August Meeting**

Dr Mardie Townsend will be talking on the subject of "Healthy Parks, Healthy People"

Di Carra has provided this insight into the work of Dr Townsend and others.

In April I was lucky enough to attend some sessions of the inaugural Healthy Parks Healthy People International Conference. There were many inspiring speakers, including Dr Mardie Townsend (who some of you may remember interviewed our Friends as part of research into the Health Benefits of Volunteering in Natural Settings). Research presented at the Conference from around the world shows that connecting with nature / green spaces improves both your mental and physical health (hence the Friends of Damper Creek are very healthy people because not only do you have contact with your natural environment you are also making social connections!). Western Australia promotes being "mentally healthy" through ABC. ACT; BELONG; COMMIT - which should be the motto of the Friends of Damper Creek! If you feel blue then act green - take a walk through our beautiful

reserve and listen to the birds. Dr William Bird from the UK came up with the Green Gym in the late 1990's. The Green Gym is about replacing indoor exercise with outdoor work and activity. We are so lucky that we have the Damper Creek Green Gym at our backdoors - maybe Monash Council should be looking to further promote the health benefits of our green gym by promoting it for weekly walking groups and further support for our regular "weeding" volunteers. Steve Coleman from Washington Parks spoke about how people can save and recreate parks (Damper Creek was saved from development by local residents) and in doing this are also "building memories and creating dreams" for our children. Richard Louv (US) also spoke about the importance of natural unstructured play spaces for children and the importance of these for developing independence, imagination and learning how to assess risk. Unfortunately too many children have no contact with nature or the exploration of their world beyond the safety of their homes, hence the title of his book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving our children from Nature Deficit Disorder". As we have seen at our working bees, children love playing in our natural playground (and all of us remember our own special wild places from our childhoods!) The Friends have assisted local schools in seeing the importance of outdoor classrooms with excursions to both Damper Creek and Valley Reserve over recent years. Damper Creek is indeed a very important and special place and is so valuable to the health of our community (and our children).

Dianne Carra, Strategy Officer, Parks Victoria

## Sources of Indigenous Plants

Continuing the series on local nurseries:

This month the :

### Knox Environment Society nursery

**Location:** next to the Ferntree Gully Library on Burwood Highway between Glenfern Road and Brenock Park Drive. The entrance road is opposite the Aldi supermarket. Melways Map 74A5

**Opening Hours:** Sundays and Thursdays between 10am to 4pm

**Volunteering with KES.** Help is needed in the nursery during opening days. KES members are also involved in numerous re vegetation projects, details of which will be found on their website [www.kes.org.au](http://www.kes.org.au).

The nursery stock list includes over 180 species, mostly in 2" tubes but many are also available in 6" pots. Plants available range from ground covers through the full range of shrubs to large trees and include a wide range of aquatic plants and many quite rare. As this is an indigenous nursery plants are specific to the Knox area and the foothills of the Dandenongs.

**Do you have email?** If you have an email account please pass it to our treasurer and you can be assured of receiving the newsletter in a timely fashion.

### August working Bee

Due to the inclement weather the July working bee was cancelled. This leaves a backlog of planting to be completed to satisfy the Melbourne Water grant. Accordingly, the August working bee will commence at 9-00am. Please come whenever you can and note that there are non planting roles for those who are not so inclined to physical labour.

## Friends of Damper Creek

### Important dates to remember:

	August	Notes
Meeting:	Wed 25th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun Aug 29th 9-00am to 12-30pm	Middle Bridge
	September	
Meeting:	Wed 22nd 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun Sept 26th 10-00am to 12-30 pm	Middle Bridge

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Printed by courtesy of the City of Monash  
as a community service.  
Responsibility for editorial content  
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The Friends of Damper Creek Reserve Inc. is supported by the City of Monash and Melbourne 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.***

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Mount Waverley 3149

## The Newsletter of

**FRIENDS OF  
DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.**

Reg No. A0029531G

[www.vicnet.net.au/~damper](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~damper)

P.O. Box 2063 Mount Waverley

# DAMPER CREEK DOINGS

August 2010

