

Editorial : *Did you notice?*

From an article in The Age July 13th: “Hardware retailer Bunnings has been fined \$15,000 after it was caught selling a noxious weed in its Victorian stores.”

The plant in question is Mexican Feather Grass and may be labelled as *Stipa capillata* or *Stipa lessingiana*.

The sale of any exotic species is always problematic. The majority of gardens would not exist without exotic plants which have (mostly) been imported legally or have been propagated from stock imported before the devastating effects of weedy exotics were realised. Thankfully, the majority of these imports are easy to control and will not spread beyond the boundaries of the domestic or municipal garden. However, we suffer a dreadful legacy from plants that seemed like a good idea at the time.

A recent trend towards “Drought Proof Gardens” has seen the importation of a new range of drought tolerant plants, many of which have the potential to escape into the environment. Hence the pretty plumed grass that promises to form the framework of your maintenance free garden may contain the seeds (literally) of an environmental disaster.

So, be careful what you buy and plant. If you must plant exotics, stick to tried and true favourites, (but check first to see if your local council lists them as weeds, even common plants such as *Cotoneaster*, *Agapanthus* and broom are serious weeds) or, better still, try to source plants which are indigenous to your area.

Sources of Indigenous Plants

If you are serious about planting indigenous plants, you will have to steer clear of most commercial nurseries. There are a number of specialist nurseries in the Eastern suburbs which specialise in indigenous plants, mostly staffed by volunteers and have limited opening hours. This month I will focus on “**Greenlink**” in Box Hill.

Address: 41 Wimmera St Box Hill

Melways 47 F6

Opening Hours: 9:00 to 12:00

Sat Aug 21st

Sat Sept 18th

Sat Oct 23rd

Volunteers : each Tuesday morning.

Greenlink has a comprehensive range of indigenous plants in 2” tubes suited to mass plantings in the manner of a revegetation project. **Greenlink** supplies plants for the City of Whitehorse and their plants have been used in revegetation projects such as along the Eastern Freeway bicycle path.

Do you have email?

The most effective way of distributing this newsletter is by 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. An additional benefit is our ability to notify you of any relevant issues immediately they arise.

Guest Speaker August Meeting

Dr Mardie Townsend of the “Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and the Behavioural Sciences, will be talking on the subject of: “**Healthy Parks, Healthy People**”

Big and Beautiful Birds at Damper Creek

In late autumn we’ve been lucky enough to have a resident family of eight yellow-tailed black cockatoos a continual presence. (Their favourite spot seemed the area of remnant bush land across the creek from the fern gully.) But one day in late May one young one appeared over my head as I descended the path to creek level at the end of the Ranger’s Reserve – and chased off his young brother, who was biting through a thickish branch on a small tea tree beside the path. I stopped beside it and he seemed to be smiling as he looked at me with one big round eye. I could have touched him...chased him off, rather. I felt a bit guilty – but needn’t have worried. For a day or two later, I found all three tea trees lining that stretch had been washed down the bank by wind and heavy rain.

A few days later (June 1) I crossed Middle Bridge (to the west side) to see a very strange sight. A number of currawong were chasing away assorted birds from the small gums and tea tree that line the creek there. All in complete silence! I saw Rainbow lorikeets, Eastern Rosellas, Noisy Miners – each with a currawong on its tail. (Awesome – when Noisy Miners don’t say a word!) Then I looked up into the branches of a small gum to see young currawong sitting patiently. (One with soft brown feathers was only half grown.) Our resident currawong pair near Middle Bridge must be glad to have their winter guests back again.

Your Committee:

A number of interesting and important matters are tackled by the committee in the "quiet" times between the monthly meetings and the working bees. This "behind the scenes" work includes:

1. Working with City of Monash on park development, reporting of damage and inappropriate development adjacent to the reserve.
2. Applying for grants and follow-through on effective expenditure of grant moneys.
3. Organising guest speakers, social events and co-ordinating with authorities on major community events.
4. Administration of the group's affairs, finances, correspondence, membership, waterwatch, satisfying regulatory requirements.
5. Maintaining contact with allied organisations such as the Friends of Scotchman's Creek and Valley Reserve.
6. Publishing this newsletter and maintaining the notice boards.

By joining the committee, members will gain a new perspective, not only on our "Friends" group but on the operation of other community groups, the council and other civil authorities such as Melbourne Water.

You can join the committee by nominating for the position of President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary. Our constitution limits the service in these positions to two years. In addition there are committee positions which may be tailored to the needs or talents of the individual. These positions are an ideal way to get a feeling for the

operation of the committee and to participate in its operation.

Friends of Damper Creek Important dates to remember:

	July	Notes
Meeting:	Wed 28th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun Aug 1st 10-00am to 12-30pm	Middle Bridge
	August	
Meeting:	Wed 25th 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun Aug 29th 10-00am to 12-30 pm	Middle Bridge

ADDRESSES & TELEPHONE NUMBERS

President:	Helen Clements helencleme@gmail.com	98075952
Secretary:	Campbell Miles	98037707
Treasurer:	Frank Carder	98334383
Editor:	Doug Scott Please email material for the newsletter to dougscott3@bigpond.com.	417300866

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supported by the City of Monash and Melbourne
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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.***

Please address all mail to:
The Secretary
PO Box 2063
Mount Waverley 3149

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

July 2010

