

Plants of the month:

Daviesia latifolia **Olearia lirata**

It's amazing how plants can go unnoticed until they flower. Often the flowering is brief and sometimes unspectacular, giving the impression that Damper creek is full of unattractive scrub. *Daviesia latifolia* does not fit this mould. It is one of many Australian plants that are described as "Egg and Bacon" (others are *Dillywynias*, *Pultanaeas*, *Viminaria*, *Bossiaeas*, *Aotus*, *Eutaxias*, *Goodia*, *Mirbelias* and *Platylobiums*. Herein lies the problem with common names, "egg and bacon" is not very helpful except as a very general description of a plant with red and yellow pea type flowers. *Daviesia latifolia* also has another common name "Hop Bitter-pea" which is scarcely of any more use to the casual observer.

When not in flower *Daviesia latifolia* is a spreading shrub to 2m high with attractive dark green foliage. When in flower it displays spectacular cascades of yellow flowers with red centres. It flowers as spectacularly as the best of the wattles but the flowers last much longer. The example I observed near Bengal Crescent was flowering well over a month ago and still looks great.

Olearia lirata is in full flower right now but



does not grab your attention the same way as *Daviesia latifolia*. This is, truly, one of the "framework" plants of the reserve. Common throughout the reserve, it also self propagates well and does a good job of out-competing weeds. The leaves are grey-green and contribute to the overall feel of the Australian forests. *Olearia lirata* flowers densely, white flowers over the whole plant brightening up darker parts of the bush in Spring. The common name "Snowy Daisy Bush" describes exactly the impression this plant conveys when in flower with the minute daisy flowers covering the bush.



Monash Seniors Festival

Damper Creek was highlighted with a special event organised as part of the city of Monash Seniors Festival. An early morning start saw a crowd of over 100 visitors come to Alvie Hall to partake in a guided walk of the reserve. As the event was held during the school holidays, many youngsters came along with parents and grandparents. Volunteer guides from FODCR included Campbell Miles, John Clements, Helen Clements and Doug Scott. They were

assisted by members of the bush crew including Chris Gittins.

The walkers were split into three large groups and they progressed through the reserve as far as the Alice Street bridge. All groups were fascinated by the history of the reserve, its rescue from development, the restoration and revegetation, plant and bird life, conservation issues and importance of the reserve as a local recreation resource.

All groups were short on time and could not complete the longer walk to Stephenson's road as they had to rush back to Alvie Hall for the talk on worm farms and the raffle of a worm farm.

Guest Speakers

22 October - Campbell Miles "The Kimberley, the Spice Islands and Komodo Dragons"

26 November - Dr Caragh Threlfall, Melbourne University, Topic: "Biodiversity in Urban Areas"

Talking Tank Project

I received the unfortunate news from Prof Tim Fletcher that the "Talking Tanks" project which he proposed for Damper Creek failed to gain the necessary funding.

The importance of controlling water flow into Damper Creek is not widely appreciated and private landowners in the vicinity of Damper Creek can help by maximising the amount of water held on their property.

FODCR will initiate a project with interested parties (including the Council, Melbourne Water and owners and occupiers of adjoining properties) to improve the management of stormwater entering the reserve, this will include water retention on properties, raingardens and swales

according to Melbourne Water's principles of "Water Sensitive Urban Design"

New Subscription Rate?

At the October meeting a vote will be taken on a change to FODCR subscriptions. Single \$5, (from \$2), Family \$10 (from \$5), Enduring membership remains at \$50 – lifetime. Annual fees are now due (at the old rate).

Gardens for Wildlife

As a follow-on from the talk by Andrew McKernan of Habitat Creations, it has been suggested that a large dead tree at the entry to the DC Compound (Norman Court) could be retained and modified to create a nesting space for the Powerful Owl.

Other tree spaces in Damper Creek were identified by Andrew as already established nesting places for Tawny Frogmouth, bats, etc. A quote has been received.

Andrew McKernan also suggested the FODCR could focus on "**Bringing back the Eastern Spinebill to Damper Creek**" & its environs.

A programme has been proposed to involve residents by offering two correas per property which will boost the nectar bearing plants in the area, providing food for honeyeaters such as the Eastern Spinebill. The programme will be launched next winter with the support of the Bushcrew. Our guest speaker programme will include a session on propagating correas.

Christmas BBQ – Sunday 30 November
Action: to be discussed at the October 2014 meeting.

Important Dates to remember:

	October	Notes
Meeting:	Wed 22 nd - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
Working Bee	Sun Oct 26th 9-00 am to 12-30pm	Tarella bridge
November		
Meeting:	Wed 26 th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
Annual BBQ	Sun Nov 30th	TBA

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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.

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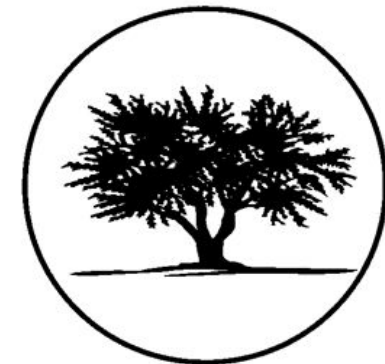
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DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.**

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DAMPER CREEK DOINGS



October 2014