

DAMPER CREEK BUSHLAND RESERVE & THE FRIENDS OF DAMPER CREEK INC.



The playground entrance off Park Rd.

Damper Creek: Part of the Yarra Catchment

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You can help this important restoration work?

There are many ways in which you and your family can contribute to the continuing restoration and maintenance of this important vegetation and wildlife corridor.

Join the Friends Group - membership is \$5 per year for individuals, \$10 for families or enduring membership is \$50 - in effect, membership for life. You will receive our informative monthly newsletter, notice of meetings and invited speakers and the site of each month's working bee. You will be invited to our annual end-of-year barbecue, our annual community 'planting day and thank-you barbecue' and we participate in Clean Up Australia day in February.

Water Watch - this is a Victoria-wide initiative supervised by Melbourne Water in the case of the metropolitan areas. Members undertake water testing in Damper Creek on a monthly basis. The results are returned to Melbourne Water for collating with results from similar testing sites all over Melbourne. This monitoring over time gives important data on the health of our waterways and how the creeks are benefiting from remedial action.

Come along to our monthly working bee - the site of the working bee is in the monthly newsletter posted on the notice boards near the Stephenson Rd car park and at the Park Rd entrance. We would love to meet you even if it is just for a chat at the 11 o'clock tea break!

When you shop at Ritchies IGA at Hamilton Place or another IGA supermarkets ask for a Community Benefits card and register it to the Friends of Damper Creek. A percentage of your purchases is credited to the Friends group. The money received by us is spent on Damper Creek Reserve.



Gubina lilies in flower in Damper Creek

Damper Creek - part of the Yarra catchment

Damper Creek Reserve is a linear park and is relatively narrow. Hence, the Reserve and its inhabitants benefit if home owners sharing a boundary with the Reserve plant native trees and plants in their backyards to extend the 'plant-scape' i.e. the view of their rear garden as seen from the Reserve.

Many home owners sharing a boundary with the Reserve have removed their standard rear paling fence and either have no fence or one of several better options such as low, open mesh fencing which substantially improves the visual amenity of the park and benefits the home owners.

The closer you live to the Reserve, the more you can do to help. Weed species spread into the Reserve so planting selected native plants prevents this from happening and also extends the habitat for park fauna. Please do not plant weed species that overwhelm indigenous plantings and that add nothing to the park environment. Remember, even some native plants can be troublesome weed species.

You can help enormously by not planting Pittosporum undulatum (sweet pittosporum), ivy, bamboo, morning glory or cotoneaster. Please, please do not tip your garden prunings into the Reserve - use your green bin.

Where Does the Water Go? - All the water from street drainage and your down pipes (storm water) likely ends up in Damper Creek, or some other creek, eventually flowing into Port Phillip Bay. Do not dispose of paint or brush washings in to the storm water system - tip it down the toilet so it goes to the sewage treatment plant. Thank you.



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Damper Creek Bushland Reserve Mount Waverley

Saving Damper Creek

Do you realize that the Damper Creek bushland reserve through which you are walking was an overgrown, weed-infested strip, 25 years ago? Then it was full of blackberry, ivy and gorse with willows destroying the banks. Now it is a highly regarded example of creek restoration, teeming with wildlife, an oasis in the midst of a busy suburb.

The original plans called for the entire creek from Stephenson's Rd to Park Rd to be filled in and subdivided for housing. That this did not occur was due to strong community action. In 1968, when the then Council's plans became known, a Friends Group was established and championed the land being zoned for public space. Eventually the Victorian government agreed to re-zone the area as 'parkland' to provide enduring protection. You can see the plaque acknowledging their efforts near the Alice St bridge, attached to the rock table.

Restoring the Reserve



Restoration of the Reserve and the creek began in 1993. The original creek bed suffered serious disturbance when the sewer was built along Damper Creek valley. These are the concrete manhole covers you see as you walk along the creek. A company with restoration expertise was retained by the Council and over the ensuing five years the creek bed was reconstructed from the base up. This was achieved with large basalt rocks transported from Central Victoria - yes, all the boulders you see were trucked here! The restoration extended to the Riversdale Golf Club boundary fence.

As you can imagine, the restoration required considerable funding over the life of the project. This was provided by Melbourne Water and Monash Council - your rates at work.

Once the creek bed restoration was complete, the work of removing inappropriate trees and shrubs was commenced by the bush crew and the Friends of Damper Creek; this work continues. Constant weeding and spraying is required to keep the weed menace under control.

Vegetation restoration

The replanting continues and we invite your assistance in helping with this important work. The Friends Group has successfully applied for over \$120,000 in grants since our beginning in 1993, with the money mostly coming from Melbourne Water. We also receive support from Mt Waverley IGA in Hamilton Place by way of their community grants program.

We aim to only plant native trees, shrubs and ground covers that are indigenous to this area. These are sourced from nurseries raising plants from locally collected seed. This helps to preserve the genetic material of the area. After all, plants that have evolved here for many thousands of years are likely to be best suited to the area.



Wildlife

The effects of the restoration are all around you. It has seen a progressive return of wildlife and in increased numbers; the beautiful little sugar gliders, rainbow and musk lorikeets following the nectar, crested and bronze wing pigeons due to greater seed availability, Eastern spine bills, pardalotes, scrub wrens, currawongs and magpies, mudlarks and ducks in the wetland area, near Park Rd, where frog numbers are now abundant..

Friends of Damper Creek Inc.

The current Friends Group was established in 1993 at Council's instigation. We work closely with Monash Council and their bush crew. We advise the Council on matters pertaining to the Reserve and its maintenance. The Friends Group cares for the Reserve from Stephenson's Rd at its north-east end, to Park Rd, to High Street Rd and then along Golf Avenue to the south-west end where the creek passes into Riversdale Golf Club.

We hold regular meetings, often with a guest speaker, at Alvie Hall on the corner of High Street Rd and Alvie Rd, with details on our website and the notice boards. Meetings are on the fourth Wednesday of the month (February to November) and the working bee is held on the following Sunday from 10 am to 12.30. We have a morning tea break at 11 am. You are welcome to join us.

The working bees undertake the important tasks of both planting and weeding. Whilst some weed control can be achieved with spraying, much weed control requires careful hand weeding to avoid damage to adjacent native plants.

If you would like further information please go to our website, write to the Secretary, PO Box 2063, Mt. Waverley 3149 or email: secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com

Dogs in Damper Creek Reserve

For dogs and for dog owners, Damper Creek is a wonderful resource. Plenty for the dog to discover and off-leash as well.

But dog ownership has important responsibilities. Whilst the notices in the park advise the area is 'off-leash', the notices also insist that to be 'off-leash' the dog must be under voice or hand-signal control. Also, Council expects owners to collect their dog's droppings and place them in the bins provided. Please keep your dog out of the wetlands area, especially during the duck breeding season.