

Friends of Merri Creek



NEWSLETTER
August – October 2010

Electricity terminal station campaign

On Wednesday 23 June, over 200 local residents turned up to the Moreland Council Urban Planning Committee meeting to object to the proposed expansion of the Brunswick Terminal Station (BTS). After several compelling presentations by objectors, Council unanimously agreed to reject the application for a permit from SP Ausnet.

It is not yet known what SP Ausnet will do next, but undoubtedly the BTS will be upgraded in some form, and the community needs to ensure their views are properly considered. You can keep up to date with this campaign on the website: <http://powergridsolutions.blogspot.com>

The residents thank those who have already shown their support for this campaign, the Moreland City Councillors who listened to residents, and both Darebin and Yarra Councils for responding so quickly.

Move to put powerlines underground

Now the campaign, fully supported by FoMC, is extending to put the high voltage powerlines underground from Thomastown to the BTS. If you want to get actively involved in this campaign, register your interest by sending an email to Francesco Castello on fcastello@optusnet.com.au or by phone on 9486 6359.



Photo: <http://powergridsolutions.blogspot.com>

EDGARS CREEK PARKLAND WIN

On 2 July the parkland along Edgars Creek Coburg, which was under threat of residential development by its owner VicRoads, was gifted as public open space to be managed by Moreland City Council.

This is a fantastic win for the community and for the environment! The long-standing impasse was resolved following the report of the Edgars Creek Taskforce, which conducted a thorough investigation of the most appropriate use of the site and found there was overwhelming support for the retention of parkland and open space.

Congratulations to all those who worked to achieve this goal, particularly Christine Campbell, the Member for Pascoe Vale, the Merri and Edgars Creek Parklands Group and the Friends of Edgars Creek.

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Creek Clippings

Revegetation plant losses: A Melbourne Water planting in May last year along Merri Creek from Murray Rd to Bell St has suffered a 70% death rate. Melbourne Water has been told of our concerns by FoMC's representative on this project, Pascale Pitot, and Dave Crawford of MECCARG, both of whom live nearby.

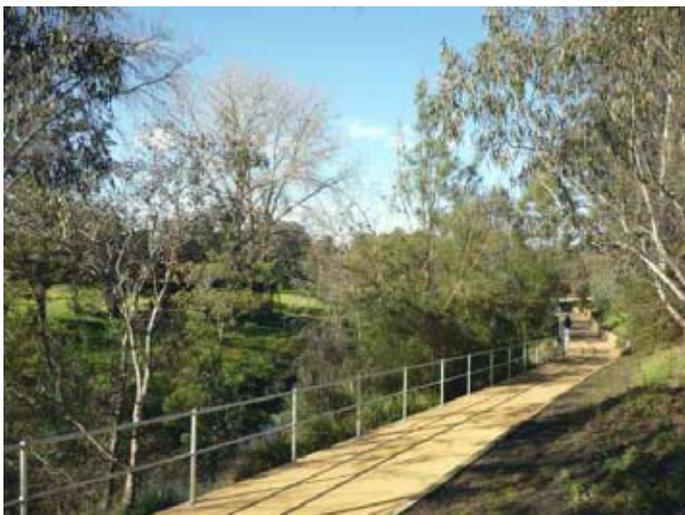
The high death rate seems to be due in part to poor preparation and insufficient maintenance by Melbourne Water, and was made worse with indiscriminate slashing by Moreland Council. Melbourne Water is looking into the problem, and we hope for a better long term outcome of this worthwhile project, benefiting the creek and the local community while also assisting fauna movement.

On FoMC's behalf, Pascale and Dave asked for:

- ☞ An immediate and substantial guarding of the surviving plants near the mown area;
- ☞ A compensatory infill planting this season, with better staking and visual protection;
- ☞ An extension of the two year maintenance period;
- ☞ Better communication between Melbourne Water and Moreland Council regarding the unfortunate impact of the Council's slashing program on a Melbourne Water project.

Revegetation in Donnybrook: Melbourne Water will be doing weed control and revegetation works along the west bank of Merri Creek at Donnybrook in July. The works involve a 2.1 km section of the creek and will involve controlling Gorse, Hawthorn, Desert Ash, Blackberry and Sweet Briar, followed by planting 1,200 indigenous plants.

Merri Path realigned in Moreland: Re-alignment of the Merri Creek shared path has been completed in the sections south of Moreland Road, behind the Brunswick Velodrome,



from Albion St to CERES in Brunswick and from the arched footbridge to Alister St Nth Fitzroy. Still to be done is the part from Albert St Brunswick to the footbridge.

Update on new wetlands: In breaking news, the Mayor of Darebin City Council, Cr Vince Fontana, told us that he has managed to squeeze \$15,000 into the 2010-11 budget to re-

design Strettle Wetland in Thornbury for treating stormwater. Thanks to Cr Fontana for supporting this worthwhile project.

By December, Moreland City Council hopes to complete Aboriginal cultural heritage surveys for two proposed wetland locations. The most likely site is at Lawson St Fawkner and the other site is the current golf driving range at Edgars Creek parklands. Moreland has an agreement with Melbourne Water's Living Rivers Program which provides opportunities regarding construction of wetlands. We thank Moreland's Natural Resource Management Officer, Sam Niedra, who supervised this project until he left for a new career in Albury.

Galada Tamboore trail underway: Parks Victoria is working to complete the Merri Creek Trail at Galada Tamboore by late this year. The new cycling and walking path will run from



Photo: Parks Victoria

Somerset Rd in Campbellfield across a new bridge over Merri Creek through to the City of Whittlesea Public Gardens in Thomastown and will link into the existing cycling and walking path which runs alongside the Craigieburn Bypass.

Latest on Urban Growth Boundary: After some previous delays, the controversial Growth Areas Infrastructure Contributions tax was slightly modified and the Victorian Parliament has now passed it. At the time of writing, Parliament is expected to soon reconsider the proposed expanded Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). If the legislation is passed it would also ratify a planning scheme amendment that identifies areas to be zoned Urban Growth Zone and well as Special Use and Rural Conservation Zones within the new UGB. Commonwealth approval has already been given for the Strategic Impact Assessment which specifies the prescriptions about required protection and allowed destruction of EPBC listed communities and species.

Meeting with Parks Victoria: FoMC Committee members, David Redfearn, Ann McGregor and Ray Radford, recently met with officers of DSE and Parks Victoria regarding the need for Public Acquisition Overlays (PAO) to keep up with rapid development along the middle/upper Merri Creek. In particular, the new Merri Creek Parklands (*Marran Baba*) needs PAOs to ensure that an adequate width of public open space along the Creek frontage is set aside in conjunction with adjacent industrial and commercial development.

An array of raptors

Our quarterly bird surveys were carried out on 16 May at nine sites along the Merri and Edwardes Lake, and a week later at Bababi Marning (Cooper St Grasslands) and Kalkallo Common.

A highlight was the seven species of birds of prey (raptors) across four sites: Brown Goshawk, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Falcon, Australian Hobby, Peregrine Falcon and two impressive additions to the survey list: Wedge-tailed Eagle and Little Eagle. (Not to mention a Collared Sparrowhawk that landed in trees beside the CERES café where several of us were taking post-survey refreshments!) The two Wedge-tailed Eagles were sighted at Bababi Marning, where they were circling together in what looked like a courtship display. The Little Eagle was observed on the Egan-Strettle Reserves survey, being mobbed by Little Ravens as it soared.

Mistletoebird was another addition to the survey list, with one seen at Bababi Marning. These small, active and vocal birds feed on fruits of the parasitic mistletoes. The male is intensely coloured, with glossy blue-black on the back, and scarlet on the upper breast and under-tail coverts.

The group at Hall Reserve in Clifton Hill enjoyed seeing a flock of 14 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, and hearing their 'primeval' cries. The cockatoos alighted among the wattles by the Creek and proceeded to demolish them with great ferocity.

About 70 Skylarks (an introduced species) were recorded in Galgi Ngarrk (Craigieburn Grasslands). They were particularly active, possibly setting up for breeding.

Many eucalypts were flowering, attracting a good number of honeyeaters and Rainbow Lorikeets. Currawongs were back for winter, with Pied at two sites and Grey at one. The Eastern Spinebill (four sites) is also a winter visitor along the creek. Flame Robins, which move out of the highlands for winter,



Wedge-tailed Eagle by Ann McGregor

were recorded at Bababi Djinanang (Jukes Rd Grasslands) and Galada Tamboore.

In comparison with the May 2009 surveys (and excluding the results from Kalkallo Common, which was not surveyed last year), we recorded more species this year – 77 compared with 70, and more birds – an estimated 2334 compared with 2139. The site with the highest species diversity was Egan-Strettle Reserves, with 34 species. Rock Dove (feral pigeon) took out the 'most numerous' award, but Red Wattlebird and Rainbow Lorikeet weren't far behind.

Ann McGregor Merri Birdwatch Coordinator

MORE MERRI BIRDWATCH SURVEYS

The next bird surveys at eleven sites along Merri Creek, now including Kalkallo Common near Kalkallo Creek (a Merri tributary), are listed below. All surveys will be from 8.45-10.30am. BYO binoculars if possible, but no dogs please, as they reduce the number and variety of birds to be seen. The contact for all Birdwatch events is Ann McGregor 0429 386 102.

Surveys at the following nine sites on 5 September & 14 November

- 🦅 **Bababi Djinanang (Jukes Rd Grasslands), Fawkner:** Meet on Merri Path at end of Jukes Rd, Fawkner (Melway 18 A2).
- 🦅 **Egan Reserve – Harding St – Strettle Reserve – Normanby Ave:** Meet at bluestone steps at end of The Grove, East Coburg (Melway 30 A3).
- 🦅 **Coburg Lake Reserve:** Meet near the car park, Lake Grove Coburg (17 H10).
- 🦅 **Edwardes Lake:** Meet at the playground adjacent to Griffiths St, Reservoir (Melway 18 E5).
- 🦅 **CERES – Moreland Rd:** Meet at the seats on the path at rear of CERES, East Brunswick (Melway 30 B7).
- 🦅 **Merri Park, Phillips Reserve:** Meet at the end of Victoria St, East Brunswick, at BBQ shelter (Melway 30 B8).
- 🦅 **Hall Reserve – Yarra Bend Park:** Meet at the Rotunda, Hall Reserve, Clifton Hill (Melway 2D D1).
- 🦅 **Galgi Ngaark (Craigieburn Grasslands)*:** Meet at the O'Herns Rd gate off Hume Highway, Somerton (Melway 180 E6).
- 🦅 **Galada Tamboore*:** Meet at the end of Hatty Court, Campbellfield (Melway 7 K6).

Surveys at **Bababi Marning** (Cooper St Grasslands)* and **Kalkallo Common*** are on 29 August & 21 November.

Bababi Marning*— meet near the Istrian Club, Cooper St, Campbellfield (Melway 180 K10).

Kalkallo Common*— Malcolm St Kalkallo, turn off the Hume Highway at the Kalkallo Hotel (Melway 367 F2).

* For sites with an asterisk, car pool outside the MCMC office, 2 Lee St East Brunswick, leaving at 8.15am.

Growling Grass Frog research findings

Geoff Heard summarises his ground-breaking six-year PhD research on the habitat of Growling Grass Frogs

Background

I still recall the first Merri Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria raniformis*, or GGF) that I encountered, back in the spring of 2001. He was a small male, found just downstream of O'Herns Rd, Somerton. I caught him, took some photos, and then dutifully moved him 300m downstream. Why? Well, unfortunately, his chosen section of the creek was just about to have a trench dug through it, for the laying of a new gas pipeline.

This was a sad time for the Merri, but it also led to the establishment of the GGF Trust, which began with \$100,000 from Australian Gas Limited. The Trust was part of an offset package for the pipeline, as negotiated with Friends of Merri Creek (FoMC) and others. The Trust, administered by FoMC, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Trust for Nature, is dedicated to the protection, enhancement, and/or creation of wetlands for the GGF in the Merri.

The Trustees need to decide how to spend the funds, which is more difficult than it sounds. To manage a species' habitat, one must know that species' habitat requirements and ensure that the initiatives pursued are efficient and reliable. This is where I come in. After working on GGF in the Merri between 2001-03, I returned in 2004 to begin a PhD on the species' conservation in urbanising landscapes (through La Trobe University). I wanted to know what factors influenced the population dynamics of GGF, and how we might manage those factors to preserve populations into the future. As my research was in line with the Trust's objectives, it helped fund the fieldwork components of my PhD.

Life-history

GGFs can get to impressive sizes. I recall being stunned when I saw a female GGF on the Merri north of O'Herns Rd which was 97 mm in length and 60 grams in weight. But they get even bigger – the largest female I captured during my PhD was 102 mm in length, and the heaviest 85 grams.

Given these large sizes, I first thought that GGFs were a long-lived beast, with correspondingly high probabilities of survival. However, my research showed quite the opposite. GGFs, we now know, grow at extraordinary rates. For example, after metamorphosing in January or February, males can reach the threshold size for sexual maturity (53 mm) in less than 50 days! Likewise, I found that one female doubled her body length and increased her mass 9-fold within only 100 days of being marked as a metamorphling. How they achieve these growth rates we don't quite know, but the fact that they have a high protein diet (i.e. other frogs) probably has something to do with it. These incredibly fast growth rates mean a short life-span. My mark-recapture work showed that GGFs have



a very small chance of surviving their first breeding season (approximately 1% for both sexes).

When combined with the fact that GGF lay huge clutches of eggs (at least 4563), their rapid growth and low survival rates suggest that they have an interesting approach to dealing with their changeable environment. Rather than having high adult survival, so that populations can 'ride out' bad times (like a wetland drying out), GGFs have big clutches and rapid growth, which facilitate population re-establishment. So, individual populations are sensitive to busts, but these losses are offset by the ability of the species to rapidly re-establish populations when conditions become suitable again.

Metapopulation dynamics

In ecology, the above scenario, in which individual populations are susceptible to extinction but may be re-established following migration, is known as '*metapopulation dynamics*'.

I was keen to test whether GGF do indeed display these dynamics for two reasons. Firstly, it would tell us much about how these frogs persist across the landscape. Secondly, it is of considerable use for habitat management, because identification of the habitat factors which influence extinction and recolonisation would allow us to enhance those which minimise extinction rates and maximise recolonisation rates. To do this, I used my mark-recapture and wetland occupancy data to test for three key characteristics that metapopulations display: (i) populations are clustered in space; (ii) dispersal between populations occurs, but relatively infrequently, and; (iii) population distribution is dynamic. The data provided strong evidence for each of these characteristics. Populations were strongly clustered, with sites in close proximity to occupied sites having a much greater chance of being occupied. Dispersal between populations was observed, but only 14% of those marked were recorded to do so. Lastly, numerous population disappearances and appearances (or re-appearances) were noted. In fact, over the six years for which

data were available, changes in occupancy were observed at 39 wetlands (23% of the total monitored).

With such a large number of observed extinction and colonisation events, my research proved very useful for examining relationships between wetlands characteristics and the chances of population turnover. As a first step in this process, I examined relationships between wetland occupancy in a single year and wetland characteristics that I thought might influence GGF extinction and colonisation dynamics. As expected, the permanence of a wetland was positively related to occupancy, as was aquatic vegetation cover and connectivity. The latter is a measure of the density of surrounding populations within a kilometre radius. The presence of predatory fish in the wetland, and the extent of urban development within 150m of the water-line were negatively related to occupancy, as is often found for amphibians. I then tested relationships between each of these variables and the probabilities of population extinction and colonisation. I found that populations inhabiting permanent wetlands, with lots of aquatic vegetation, and located close to other populations had a much lower chance of extinction, whilst wetlands with many surrounding populations were much more likely to be colonised.

Status

Data collected prior to and during my PhD indicate that GGFs are in fairly sharp decline across northern Melbourne. Within the 167 sites which were monitored between the 2001/2002 and 2006/2007 breeding seasons, the number of occupied wetlands declined from 62 (37%) to 51 (30%). Re-survey of the historical sites in 2006/2007 also told a worrying story. Of the 39 sites, only 10 continued to support populations of GGF. Amongst the remainder, five had been destroyed for urban development, and 24 were no longer occupied by the frog.

Conservation implications

The occupancy trends described above are worrying in their own right, but they become even more concerning when one considers that numerous populations of GGF present in 2006/2007 have been impacted by urban or industrial expansion in recent years, or will be so in the next few. Populations in quarry wetlands near Cooper St are suffering from wetland filling and draining, and isolation resulting from the Craigieburn Bypass and Edgars Rd extension. The same goes for populations in the Wollert Landfill site, and there are grave concerns for the large population in the former Austral Bricks quarry in Campbellfield. Two key sites in Donnybrook have also been severely impacted by the new Donnybrook Rd Interchange. When you add extension to the Urban Growth Boundary to this list, and the prospect of continued poor rainfall, there is plenty to worry about when it comes to the future of the Merri's GGFs.

However, GGF is a species which we can still realistically hope to conserve. We now know the crucial factors for survival and these factors are quite manageable. Permanence of a wetland can be enhanced, as shown by the recent reinstatement

of pumping at the Epping Tip quarry hole. Aquatic vegetation is also easy to improve – it might simply require the right grazing regime, or reducing shading (eg: by removing willows and other exotic streamside vegetation). Maintaining adequate connectivity is harder to achieve politically, but from a practical point of view it just means protecting existing wetlands, enhancing others, and creating new wetlands to offset losses.

As well as identifying the key drivers of extinction and colonisation for GGF, this research will provide specific guidance to the GGF Trust. Already, I have produced guidelines for GGF habitat management in urbanising landscapes which can be used to identify combinations of wetland permanence, aquatic vegetation cover and connectivity needed to obtain a desired chance of population persistence. Secondly, my analysis identifies the optimal habitat management action for several GGF populations in the Merri, which will help the Trust decide how the funds should best be used to conserve those populations.

The next step

Funding has been obtained to extend this research work for another three years. The project, being run out of the University of Melbourne, will develop a computer model of GGF extinction and colonisation dynamics; and also develop a formal monitoring protocol for the species. It's an exciting next step for the research, and will offer clear guidance to future conservation strategies.

Conclusion and acknowledgements

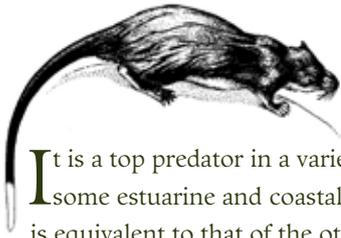
It has been a great privilege to work on the Merri's GGF over the last nine years, and in the Merri environs in general. There has been some heartbreak along the way, like seeing good GGF habitat destroyed, but I remain hopeful that we can get some significant wins for GGF conservation in the Merri over coming years.

Thanks to David Redfearn and Ray Radford, who represent FoMC on the GGF Trust and provided wonderful support. Thanks also to MCMC's Luisa Macmillan and Brian Bainbridge, who are steadfast advocates for the species, and to FoMC members Brendan Casey and Wendy Moore, both of whom divulged historical records and secret froggy places, and spent many hours with me in the field.

Geoff Heard



Rakali (or water-rat) — our native “Otter”



The Australian water-rat *Hydromys chrysogaster*, now called Rakali, was a natural part of our environment long before its notorious Eurasian cousins arrived on the ships of the early colonists.

It is a top predator in a variety of aquatic habitats, including some estuarine and coastal areas. This ecological role is equivalent to that of the otter on every other inhabited continent. It also has many otter-like features including a thick coat of soft fur; densely bewhiskered, blunt muzzle; broad, partly webbed hind feet; and a furry, tapering tail.

Rakali can be identified by its conspicuous white tail tip and is most often glimpsed swimming on the surface of lakes or rivers, especially in the early morning or evening. They can grow to about half a metre in length with various colouring from shades of brown or grey to nearly black, with belly fur yellow, fawn or cream. Their teeth are formidable and can be used to kill and eat fish, frogs, tortoises, crabs, yabbies and even water birds up to the size of ducks. Their presence is often detected by the remains of yabbies, fish or mussel shells, usually left at favourite feeding “tables”. They have a fairly short natural lifespan (in most cases living no more than 3-4 years).



LET'S RE-NAME THE NEWSLETTER

The FoMC Committee is after suggestions for a new name for the newsletter. Ideally, it would be good to have something catchy, which reflects something fundamental about the Merri while also conveying the idea of spreading the news. For instance the Australian Platypus Conservancy has Ripples, the Moonee Ponds Creek Coordinating Committee has Ponderings, the Friends of Edars Creek has Meanders Quarterly and of course MCMC has Merri News. So put your thinking cap on and send your ideas to merricreek@bigpond.com by 20 August, so the Committee can make a judgement. The winner and best selections will appear in the next newsletter.

RAKALI RECONNAISSANCE WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

Join us in looking for elusive native water-rats in Merri Creek at Coburg Lake Reserve. Meet outside the Harry Atkinson Centre, Lake Grove Coburg at 6pm. Melway 17 H10. Bring a torch and binoculars if you can. Phone Ray 0422 989 166.

Although Rakali is widely distributed in Australia, the animals appear to be relatively uncommon along many waterways and their numbers seem to have declined in some areas in recent years. Water-rats are warm-blooded carnivores which require a lot of food to fuel their active and energetic lifestyle, so their main problem is likely to be habitat degradation.



The easiest way to distinguish Rakali from a platypus is its white tail tip, but it also makes a relatively narrow trailing wake of ripples compared to platypus and is less likely to be seen floating in one place for many consecutive seconds.

Rakali is fully protected by law but is often killed as a result of human activities such as yabbing. They drown in “opera house” nets

and similar enclosed traps (along with other aquatic species including platypus and turtles). We really need legislation to establish uniform restrictions across Australia on the



use of “opera house” traps. In the meantime, you can help by controlling dogs and cats, removing opera house traps if possible, and spreading the word that the only safe way to catch yabbies is to use hoop-style lift nets or an old-fashioned baited string and dip net.

If you walk regularly along Merri Creek, you could assist the Australian Platypus Conservancy's monitoring programs by visiting www.platypus.asn.au.
Article, photos and illustrations courtesy of the Australian Platypus Conservancy.



Getting to know you

“Isn’t this a beautiful world God has given us!” spontaneously exclaimed one of two Muslim family men I encountered in the Coburg Lake Reserve (courteously using my word not his for the Deity), and I heartily agreed.

Galada Tamboore, the great “Creek Waterhole” in Campbellfield/Thomastown, is another scenic spot beside the Merri – so spectacular that it featured on a real-estate hoarding way down in Zoe Circuit Northcote...

And we’ve been planting there for a long time: I recall struggling across the grasslands with my mountain bike (far too rough to ride) from Main St Thomastown, obviously years before the Craigieburn Bypass was built. It’s a reminder that a planned route for the latter was to cross the creek three times, which would surely have ruined Galada Tamboore if we hadn’t managed to get it shifted further east.

Speaking of planting, it’s fascinating to think that the escarpments are so precipitous that MCMC staff had to abseil down to reach some places – what a marvellous lot of OH&S that must have involved. The grand Yellow Box Gully towards the south, which I came across during a bird survey, is also perilously steep.

From these heights there are panoramic views of the broad floodplain on the east bank; however there won’t be a dam creating a lake as in Coburg, since this would interfere with the movement of fish. Nevertheless the lakes that we do have, in Broadmeadows, Reservoir etc., are much frequented by the birdlife.

The delicate task of improving access without spoiling the area is now being undertaken, with footways linking the Thomastown and Campbellfield sections of Barry Rd, and from the latter down the west side of the creek to Somerset Rd – the continuation to Fawkner will be more difficult. The east-west route will pass by Upfield and the new Coolaroo station (opened on 6 June), and reach the Broadmeadows Valley Park on the Yuroke Creek.

All along the Merri and its tributaries, it’s essential to give people the opportunity to get to know their part of the catchment and feel a sense of pride and ownership; and as a bonus, to keep fit with walking, running, cycling, scooting or whatever. Seats, signposts, interpretive displays develop familiarity and fondness.

And some imaginative folk have added to people’s enjoyment with the visual stimulation of outdoor artworks. There are some in the City of Whittlesea Public Gardens, and the “Battlestar Galactica” or “Ned Kelly” footbridge over the freeway; several more down to the Labyrinth and the Earth Heron in Clifton Hill, plus historic relics such as the stone-carrying flying-fox near CERES, the Dights Falls flour-mill, and the Oldis Gardens munitions tunnel.

Near the Hatty Court entrance to Galada Tamboore there’s a fine Aboriginal-themed mural on a garage wall; and I was



Photo: Parks Victoria

delighted to see more of the same reappearing at the rail bridge over Merri Parade. They represent an ages-old spiritual connection with the land, in whose care we recently-arrived guests have the privilege of joining.

Residents seem glad to be living near Central Creek Grassland and its kangaroos, Malcolm Creek Craigieburn with its ancient River Red Gums, the idyllic Merri/Edgars confluence, the rich Hall Reserve/Quarries Park/Yarra Bend/Dights Falls precinct; and what valuable resources they are to help kids grow up strong in body, mind and spirit.

The lagoon in Williamstown’s Jawbone Reserve, the Organ Pipes, the Darebin Parklands in Alphington; the Dandenong Ranges National Park, the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands, our own Galada Tamboore – just a few of the many treasures that inspire people to cherish this planet as much as the Old Australians, the Friends and my new friends do.

Paul Prentice

DICK’S WITTICISMS

Here are some more witty one-liners from FoMC Life Member and active Regeneration Group participant, Dick Harcourt:

Birthdays are good for you – the more you have, the longer you live.

Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?

Reading while sunbathing makes you well-red.

A plateau is a high form of flattery.

Events...

AUGUST

Sunday 1 Litter Clean-Up—North Fitzroy

Near Rushall station North Fitzroy, 10am-12 noon. Melway 30 D11. Phone Paul 9489 5062.

Sunday 1 Streamteam Water Quality Testing

Upstream of St Georges Rd bridge, enter from Miller St, Nth Fitzroy, 2-3.30pm. Melway 30 C10. Phone 9354 9885.

Sunday 1 FoEC[†] National Tree Day Planting & BBQ

Meet at Notice Board adjacent to Ronald St, North Coburg, 10am-1pm. Melway 18 A9. Funded by Moreland City Council. Phone Fiona McKinnon (Moreland CC) 0417 803 471.

Sunday 1 Yarra City Council National Tree Day Planting & BBQ

Byrne St Nth Fitzroy, 10am-12pm. Melway 30 C11. Phone Ben at MCMC 9380 8199.



Saturday 7 MECCARG* Planting & Basket Weaving Workshop

Just south of Murray Rd bridge, Coburg, 1pm-3pm. Melway 18 A11. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Bring a digging tool and a bucket if you can. Phone Dave and Nic 9354 9664.

Sunday 8 Landcare Australia/Ausnet planting & BBQ

Phillips Reserve, cnr Weigall & Primrose Sts East Brunswick, 10am-12noon. Melway 30 B7. Funded by Landcare Australia/SP AusNet.

Sunday 15 Planting & BBQ—Fawkner

Bababi Djinanang (Jukes Rd Grassland), 10am-12noon. Melway 18 A2. Funded by the Federal Government's Caring for Country Program. Phone Ben at MCMC 9380 8199.

Sunday 22 Wetland Weeding—Merri Park

Merri Park Wetlands, near cnr of Sumner Ave & Winifred St Northcote, 10am-12noon. Melway 30 C8. Funded by City of Darebin. Phone Ben at MCMC 9380 8199.

Sunday 29 Third Bird survey at Bababi Marning & Kalkallo Common

8.45-10.30am, see page 3 for details.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 4 MECCARG* Planting & Basket Weaving Workshop

Just south of Murray Rd bridge, Coburg, 1pm-3pm. Melway 18 A11. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Bring a digging tool and a bucket if you can. Phone Dave and Nic 9354 9664.

Sunday 5 Litter Clean-Up—East Coburg

Harding St East Coburg, 10am-12 noon. Melway 30 A1. Phone Paul 9489 5062.

Sunday 5 Streamteam Water Quality Testing

Upstream of St Georges Rd bridge, enter from Miller St, Nth Fitzroy, 2-3.30pm. Melway 30 C10. Phone 9354 9885.

Sunday 5 Third Bird Survey for 2010

8.45-10.30am at nine sites along the creek. See page 3 for details.

Sunday 12 FoMC Handweeding - Strettle Wetland

FoMC site near Strettle wetland, Thornbury, 10am-12noon. Melway 30 B3. Help look after the site managed by the Friends with the support of the Darebin Bush Crew. Light refreshments afterwards. Funded by the City of Darebin. Phone Ray 0422 989 166.

Sunday 19 FoEC[†] Planting along 'goose-neck' meander

Meet at Notice Board adjacent to Ronald St, North Coburg, 1-3pm. Melway 18 A9. Help restore riparian habitat and enjoy some special singing by *The Rogues* choir. Planting funded by Melbourne Water Community Grants Program. Phone Sylvia 9470 3805.

Wednesday 29 Rakali Reconnaissance

Meet outside the Harry Atkinson Centre, Lake Grove Coburg at 6pm. Melway 17 H10. Look for elusive native Water Rats in the Merri Creek at Coburg Lake Reserve with the Friends of Merri Creek, the Friends of Edgars Creek and MECCARG. We intend to go to the nearest footbridge. Bring a torch and binoculars if you can. Phone Ray 0422 989 166.



OCTOBER

Saturday 2 MECCARG* Planting & Weeding

Just south of Murray Rd bridge, Coburg, 1pm-3pm. Melway 18 A11. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Bring a digging tool and a bucket if you can. Phone Dave and Nic 9354 9664.

Sunday 3 Litter Clean-Up—Northcote

Arthurlon Rd Northcote, 10am-12 noon. Melway 30 B7. Phone Paul 9489 5062.

Sunday 3 Streamteam Water Quality Testing

Upstream of St Georges Rd bridge, enter from Miller St, Nth Fitzroy, 2-3.30pm. Melway 30 C10. Phone 9354 9885.

Sunday 17 Wetland Weeding – Merri Park

Merri Park Wetlands, near cnr of Sumner Ave & Winifred St Northcote, 10am-12noon. Melway 30 C8. Funded by Darebin City Council. Phone Ben at MCMC 9380 8199.

NOVEMBER

Saturday 6 MECCARG* Murnong Harvest & Cook-up

Just south of Murray Rd bridge, Coburg, 1pm-3pm. Melway 18 A11. Don't miss this fantastic event featuring a Welcome to Country and traditional dancers. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Phone Dave and Nic 9354 9664.

Sunday 7 Litter Clean-Up - Northcote

Walker St East, Northcote, 10am-12 noon. Melway 30 F12. Phone Paul 9489 5062.

Sunday 7 Streamteam Water Quality Testing

Upstream of St Georges Rd bridge, enter from Miller St, Nth Fitzroy, 2-3.30pm. Melway 30 C10. Phone 9354 9885.

Sunday 14 Fourth Bird Survey for 2010

8.45-10.30am at nine sites along the creek. See page 3 for details.

* MECCARG = Merri & Edgars Creek Confluence Area Restoration Group
† FoEC = Friends of Edgars Creek