

# MERRI CROWLER

The Friends of Merri Creek Newsletter

November 2013–January 2014

*Friends of Merri Creek is the proud winner of the 2011 Victorian Urban Landcare Award*

## 2013 Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 20 November, 7.15pm for 7.30pm  
Eco House at CERES, Lee St East Brunswick

Hear FoMC Life Member and flora and fauna expert, Brian Bainbridge, talk on Signs of life, featuring stunning photos showing nature's resilience along the Merri Creek and its response to human helping hands.

### AGENDA

1. President's Report - David Redfearn
2. Election of the 2014 Committee  
(Nominations invited – see below)
3. Election of six Friends' Representatives to MCMC
4. Decision whether to adopt new constitution  
(See the draft on the FoMC website: [www.vicnet.net.au/~fomc](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~fomc) – under "Membership")
5. Decision whether to join Sustainable Population Australia
6. End of year celebrations

Drinks and nibbles provided.

### All members are invited to attend the AGM

Help celebrate another successful year by joining us for refreshments at 7.15pm before the AGM at 7.30pm. Be inspired by Brian Bainbridge's presentation on nature's resilience, have your say in running the Friends group and party afterwards.

### How about joining the FoMC Committee?

All committee positions become vacant at the AGM and it's always good to have some new people. A role on the Committee would suit someone who would like to do more in the group but perhaps isn't able to attend activities. Currently the Committee holds 5 meetings a year of about 2 hours, in even months before the AGM.

If you're interested in becoming a Committee member in the future, you can see what we do by attending meetings and receiving Agendas. Or you could become a Substitute Representative to Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) in preparation to becoming a full Representative.

If you are even slightly interested in any of the above roles, please contact Ray Radford by email: [merricreek@bigpond.com](mailto:merricreek@bigpond.com) or by phone: 0422 989 166. Also contact Ray for a Nomination Form, or download it from our website under *Membership*. The forms must be received before 13th November, although nominations for any vacancy will also be welcome at the AGM. It is absolutely okay to nominate yourself and leave it open to be seconded. An election will only be held if there are more nominations than vacancies.



*This photo of Kookaburras at Tate Reserve Coburg shows that these woodland birds have adapted to living in suburbia.*

### Check Your Membership

Please note that only financial members as at Wednesday 13th November can vote at the AGM or nominate for positions. Unfortunately, we are unable to approve memberships at the AGM.

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# Secretary's Report: Friends Activities 2013

## 2013 Friends Committee

**President:** David Redfearn

**Vice-President:** Ann McGregor

**Secretary:** Ray Radford

**Treasurer:** Nicole Lowe

**Membership Sec:** Monica Williamson

**Committee members:** Nick Williams, Yasmin Kelsall.

Also on the Committee were these representatives of Sub-Committees:

**Regeneration Group:** Nicole Lowe

**Litter Group:** Paul Prentice

**Streamteam:** Irene Baker

**Newsletter:** Dean Lombard.

The Committee met bi-monthly until 30 September, which is the limit of this report.

## Friends representation on MCMC

The following members continued in their roles on the Merri Creek Management Committee: Ann McGregor, as President, Allie Dawe, as Treasurer, and Committee members Nicole Lowe and Pascale Pitot. This year's new representatives were Louise Wright and Nick Williams, who replaced our long-term representative, Paul Prentice, after Paul resigned in February.

The Friends representatives remain the most consistent members at MCMC meetings, with many also attending some of the quarterly Sub-Committee meetings.

Most of the Substitute Representatives, David Redfearn, Yasmin Kelsall, Ian Patrick and Ann Sanson, made a contribution.

## Regeneration Group Activities

Our most active group continues to take on more and more maintenance activities, with 84 people who attended these events:

Handweeding at the Friends' site near Strettle Wetland on 14/10/12 & 21/4, and at Merri Park Wetland Northcote on 14/7. Woody Weed Removals at Bababi Marning - on 9/12/12, 10/2, 24/3, 14/4, at Galada Tamboore on 17/3, and at Galgi Ngarrk (Craigieburn Grasslands) on 23/6.

Although it has again been a fairly wet season, we still somehow managed to avoid the rain at these planting events, attended by 182 people: at Kalkallo South on 5/5 (where we hammered 100 tree guards into very rocky ground); at Imaroo St Fawkner on 12/5; at Moreland's World Environment Day planting near the Edgars Creek confluence, with other local groups on 2/6 just after a major flood; at Galada Tamboore on 16/6; beside the new underpass at Blyth St on 30/6; at Egan Reserve Coburg on 7/7; at the rear of the Aboriginal Community Elders Service in Brunswick on 18/8; and a rare planting of Sheokes at Galgi Ngarrk on 25/8.

A total of 5124 plants were planted, which is similar to the 5048 that we planted in 2012. However, our planting events usually also involved lots of tree-guarding, some litter clean-ups and handweeding.

Thanks again to the MCMC Parkland Management Team for supporting most of the plantings and also supplying barbecues later. Thanks also to the Darebin Bush Crew for resourcing our site near Strettle Wetland, Thornbury which also includes the other side of the path.

*Coordinator: Nicole Lowe.*

## Litter Clean-ups

Attendance increased a little from 21 last year to 32 people, who cleaned up lots of litter monthly, except January: at Clara St East Brunswick on 7/10/12; at Broadhurst Ave Reservoir on 4/11/12; at Murray Rd Coburg on 2/12/12; at Bell St Coburg on 3/2; at Aitken Creek, Craigieburn, on 2/3; near Rushall Station, Nth Fitzroy, on 7/4; at Kalkallo South on 5/5; at Moreland's World Environment Day on 2/6; near Winifred St Northcote on 7/7; at Ngarrk-djarrang (Central Creek Grassland), Reservoir, on 4/8; at Walker St East, Northcote, on 1/9. We also held an extra big clean-up instead of a planting at Strettle Wetland Thornbury on 21/7, attended by an additional 30 people.

*Coordinator: Paul Prentice.*

## Streamteam

The regular Streamteam monitors performed monthly Waterwatch tests on the Merri Creek at St Georges Road and at Edgars Creek Waterfall. From October 2012 to September 2013, a total of 58 people attended at the Merri Creek site and 30 at the Edgars Creek site. The data from our monitoring is now available on the Waterwatch Database. The information on the database can be viewed and downloaded by anyone interested to find out more about the quality of our waterways. This year four members of the team have undergone additional training to enable the team to identify macroinvertebrates to a sufficient level to obtain water quality scores using the Agreed Level Taxonomy (ALT) identification key. The SIGNAL scores obtained using the ALT key provide a more robust indication of stream health than we have previously been able to achieve. The variations in the water



quality and macroinvertebrate abundance that we see are linked to seasonal temperature and water level changes.

*Coordinator: Irene Baker*

## Campaigns

We continued pressing for the best environmental outcome from the Urban Growth Boundary expansion, lobbying State and Federal Ministers and MPs.

## Walks Talks and Tours

33 people attended the Bat talk on 18/10/12; 20 people came along on our Bus tour to the upper Merri on 24/11/12; but only 2 people came to the Wildflower Walk at Bababi Marning on 18/11/12.

## Newsletter

Four high-quality 8-page *Merri Growler* newsletters were printed and posted in February, May, August and November, with a great layout by Dean Lombard and a smart new design since the August edition.

*Layout: Dean Lombard.*

## Merri Birdwatch

Our quarterly bird surveys continued at ten sites along the Merri and at Edwardes Lake. Thanks again to our volunteer survey leaders. Estimated total attendance is 157. Reports on each Birdwatch survey have appeared in our newsletter.

Our colour photo-guide of common Merri birds is proving to be quite popular.

*Coordinator: Ann McGregor*

## Other Activities and News

We received grants from: Melbourne Water River Health Incentive Program, Port Phillip & Westernport CMA, a Volunteer grant from Australian Government Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs, and Hume City Council for Friends of Malcolm Creek.

We participated in fauna surveys: 5 people found 11 Golden Sun Moths on 29/11/12, and 6 people found no Growing Grass Frog (or any other frog) in the former Epping quarry on 11/12/12. We again only held one stall - at the Sydney Rd Street Party on 3/3.

We continued recording people's oral histories of Merri Creek prior to 1970.

FoMC participated in a joint submission to the Federal Environment Minister by 15 environment groups on Biodiversity Conservation for the Urban Growth areas.

Overall, around 639 people attended 50 public events involving FoMC, and this doesn't include any of our sub-groups like MECCARG or Friends of Edgars Creek.

Particular thanks again to Monica Williamson for regularly staffing the office; to our web master, Simon D'Alfonso; to Ruth Shiel for updating our only sign near Roseneath St Clifton Hill; to Julie Mason for welcoming new members; and to Suzi Shaw for looking after our Facebook page.

**Ray Radford Secretary 2013**



**Another successful grant:** FoMC recently obtained a grant of \$2,500 under the Volunteer Grants program of the Australian Government, Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The grant will be used to purchase a specially modified trailer that will be stored at MCMC and will make it much easier to transport equipment to our community events. Thanks to MCMC's Parkland Management Team Coordinator, Ben North, for his invaluable assistance with this grant.

**FoMC rep's great excuse:** Louise Wright, one of FoMC's six representatives to the Merri Creek Management Committee, has the best reason ever for not being able to make it to some of this year's MCMC meetings: her son Frank was born in March. Louise, who is pictured with baby Frank and partner Mauro, has already made a good contribution after becoming a representative at the 2012 AGM, and she is hopeful of attending another MCMC meeting soon.



## Growth Locked In – Environmental Values Locked Out

*Help us to get better outcomes – Upper Merri Nature Network members required!*

Did you know that the upper Merri catchment is home to some of the last known locations of grassland, Red Gum woodlands and plains grassy wetland around Melbourne? These landscapes, formerly vast and plentiful, are home to some of the most threatened species in Australia as well as being listed as critically endangered habitats.

The entire area of the upper catchment (Craigieburn and Epping to Wallan) has been earmarked for urban growth, putting these precious areas under threat. The process for deciding which areas would be protected was called the Melbourne Strategic Assessment and was conducted under the *Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. It began in 2009. The process was agreed by the State and Federal Governments whereby the State Government would conduct all investigations and write the recommendations for the Federal Government to approve. The Friends and MCMC reviewed the studies and strategies produced along the way, wrote submissions, collaborated with other environmental groups, lobbied for better data on environmental values, and for better outcomes. We met with the State Government, with the Federal Government, we briefed and lobbied politicians, attended protest rallies and after four long years the final decisions have been made.

Essentially the final Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Melbourne Strategic Assessment was signed off by the Rudd Government just before the federal election was called, and final approval to allow urban development in three of the four proposed growth corridors was given two days before the election!

The approval applies until 2061 - which means there will be no scrutiny by the Federal Government of urban development impacts on listed threatened species and communities in the growth corridors for the next 47 years!

It is very disappointing that the Federal environment department and Minister have accepted the Victorian department's (DEPI) rebuttals and dismissed virtually all the suggestions made by 15 environment groups in their June submission. The exclusion of Hernes Swamp, southeast of Wallan, from the approval is the only concession made to our proposals.

We are very unhappy with the result and have many ongoing concerns. Namely:

- Habitat corridors that were to be established along the Merri Creek for the protection of the Growling Grass Frog have been substantially narrowed, potentially leading to local extinctions of this nationally vulnerable species.
- Large areas of grassland and plains grassy wetland will be cleared.
- Large areas of grassy woodland will be cleared and targets for their protection will not be met. Furthermore, a grassy woodland reserve that is proposed as the offset for clearing has not yet been secured.
- An independent auditor who was to have been assigned at the beginning of the process is still not in place.

We are now looking at the next steps. Whilst the first battle may be over, we need to move our focus to what is happening more locally. Precinct planning is under way and we need to begin working more closely with local government and planning authorities to ensure that the views and values of the Friends of Merri Creek are represented.

We are asking for any people who have some time to spare and a passion for the Creek to get in contact to find out more about joining with us to work as part of the Upper Merri Nature Network to help us to protect the values of the Creek.

*If you'd like to find out more, please contact Ann McGregor on 0429 386 102, or Yasmin Kelsall on 0435 282 337*



# Gnawing Away at Beavers Rd

If you have walked along the Merri Path behind CERES in East Brunswick, or crossed the Merri on the Blyth Street/Arthurton Road bridge, you will have seen the weedy, unkempt frontage on the Northcote bank of the Creek. This frontage, between Arthurton and Beavers Roads, is one of the main gaps remaining in the public open space corridor along the inner urban Merri. But it could be an attractive bushland entrance to the City of Darebin, and part of the creekside habitat corridor.

The northern section was cleared of weeds and planted with indigenous trees and shrubs by MCMC in the early 1990s, however there has been no maintenance since Darebin Council realised they did not own the

land. Council is now considering the option of taking a licence over the frontage, but acquisition would be preferable for long-term security of tenure. The frontage is undevelopable because of its steepness and protection under planning controls, so the owners (2 properties) should be willing to transfer ownership free of charge to Council, as has occurred with other frontages in recent decades. Council just needs to ask (politely)!

*If you are a Darebin resident, you can help fill this gap in the Merri parklands by contacting your local Councillors and encouraging them to acquire the frontage land, and set aside funds for its revegetation and maintenance.*

## Common (Indian) Mynas: Tackling an invasive pest

*Joint event with Yarra Indian Myna Action Group*

**11.30am, Sunday 10 November (immediately following our bird surveys)  
at CERES Van Raay Centre meeting room 2,  
off Stewart Street, East Brunswick**

Common (also known as Indian) Mynas are very aggressive, competing with native wildlife for scarce resources. They evict animals and birds from their nests, attack chicks of other species and breed in tree hollows rendering them unusable by other wildlife. They also nest in house roofs and gutters, leading to water damage to buildings. They are carriers of bird mite and other avian diseases.

Jamie McGlade of Yarra Indian Myna Action Group will talk about some of the successful campaigns against Mynas in various parts of Australia. One of YIMAG's aims is to eliminate Mynas from the Diamond Creek valley. Jamie will explain how to use a Myna trap. Traps for sale and plans to build a trap will be available.

## The Friends' Facebook page wants more friends

If you haven't already done so, check out our wonderful Facebook page, we're sure you'll 'like' it.

Just search for the *Friends of Merri Creek* page on Facebook, and click on 'Like' to get automatic updates to group activities and news.

### The Indian Myna an Introduced Pest



## Fourth Merri Birdwatch survey for 2013

Bird surveys will be held from 8.45–10.30am at ten sites along Merri Creek as listed below. Beginners welcome, 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.

*Free leaflets on Merri Birds (normally \$2) are now available for all participants*

**Surveys at the following nine sites are on 10 November 2013 & 16 February 2014**

**Bababi Djinanang (Jukes Rd Grasslands), Fawkner:** Meet on the Merri Path at the end of Jukes Road, Fawkner (Melway 18 A2).

**Egan Reserve – Harding Street – Strettle Reserve –**

**Normanby Avenue:** Meet at the bluestone steps at the end of The Grove, East Coburg (Melway 30 A3).

**Coburg Lake Reserve:** Meet near the car park, Lake Grove, Coburg (Melway 17 H10).

**Edwardes Lake:** Meet at the playground adjacent to Griffiths Street, Reservoir (Melway 18 E5).

**CERES – Moreland Road:** 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 Street, East Brunswick, at the 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 O'Herns Road 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) are on 17 November 2013 & 23 February 2014**

Meet near the Istrian Club, Cooper Street, Campbellfield (Melway 180 K10).



# Ever wondered who makes up the Friends of Merri Creek? So did we!

*The Friends of Merri Creek has recently conducted its first members' survey for many years....and of our 300 or so members we received 90 responses!*

The Friends of Merri Creek Committee commissioned this survey as part of a group review. This review has thrown up many questions such as: Who are our members? What do they like doing? Are we utilising their skills? Do we communicate effectively?

So we decided to find out:

Our members are generally older than 45 years (almost 75%). Most respondents have been members for more than 4 years (almost 70% of respondents), with almost 40% being members for more than 10 years. On the other hand, it is encouraging that we attract new members: 32% of respondents have been members for 3 years or less.

Most people join the group to participate in hands-on activities. Others join for a variety of other reasons including to learn more about the creek, to protect it or simply to support the group.

People in general have participated in the activities they intended, but usually only in part. The most common reason for non-participation is lack of time or competing interests.

Members participate to different levels. One quarter of the membership participates several times a year and another 20% at least once a month, but similar numbers participate only once a year (23%) or never (22%).

The activities that people participate in the most are tree planting, then weeding and bird watching. People also enjoy attending walks and talks and litter collection.

Some of the consistent reasons that people gave for what they enjoy about these activities were:

- Being with like-minded people
- Learning about the creek and the environment
- Feeling like they're contributing.

In response to the question of 'what could be done to improve the activities?' or 'what else could we offer?', there were a range of responses, including:

- Activities that are closer to home
- Activities that are mid-week
- Activities in summer not just winter
- Involving others outside of the members (e.g. adjacent residents, schools, other groups)
- More activities suitable for families e.g. the recent frog talk, story-telling with billy tea
- More walks/talks
- More social activities (especially family friendly)
- Cross cultural events and activities/events that focus on Aboriginal links

A couple of respondents indicated they have not felt properly welcomed at an activity or that the group was a bit 'cliquey'. This is something that we'll consider closely and seek to address.

When we asked about whether people could help us with any tasks, the greatest number of responses were for

people to help with staffing the FoMC stall at events (14), followed by writing grant applications/submissions and website updates.

When asked if people had a skill they could share with the group, there were a number of great responses, including:

- Artistic skills;
- Landscaping, urban design;
- Plant identification and natural resource management knowledge;
- Database assistance; and
- Facebook.

Again, when asked about any ideas for activities that people might like to carry out, we received some excellent responses, including:

- Investigating Aboriginal association with the creek
- Establishing greater connections with local schools
- Installing information on the birds found along the Creek
- Creating art to inspire others to spend time along the Creek.
- Guerilla gardening – spontaneous tree planting on public land.

Most people indicated that they were happy with the type and level of communication from the group, but some people suggested improvements:

- More interaction and activity via Facebook and social media
- More updates and reminders via shorter messages

Finally, when asked if there was anything else that people would like to share, we received a huge amount of positive feedback. We also received some constructive comments:

- Consider promoting the indigenous name for the creek.
- Consider direct debit to make membership renewal easier.

Thank-you to everyone who responded to our survey! The Committee will do its best to follow up on all your helpful comments and suggestions.

**Yasmin Kelsall**

## Members Survey Prize Winner!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Friends of Merri Creek Members Survey.

The winner is Susan Inglis who is a keen bird watcher. Susan is thrilled to be the owner of a set of seven beautifully illustrated booklets, *Birds of South-eastern Australia* which she will take on her many bush walks.

# Werribee to Kananook

*"The sea... dancing away, along shimmering bays... glitters with silver lights, the sea... with twinkling lights, when it's raining..." So begins Charles Trenet's song La Mer, a fond tribute to the mysterious blue world from which the sun waters the land, and with which the moon washes its shores.*

Their encounters show wondrous diversity, from beaches of various shades, bayous and mangrove swamps, mudflats and deltas to towering cliffs, jagged rocks, tranquil steep-sided fjords, and drowned valleys like Sydney Harbour. Reefs and blowholes, the Maelstrom whirlpool, huge tides in north-western Australia, calving glaciers add to the spectacle; off Iceland in 1963 a volcano formed the isle of Surtsey.

Australians like to live near the coastline, including Port Phillip's; railways and bikepaths have followed to Werribee, Frankston and Sandringham, while ferries connect the peninsulas, or picturesque St Kilda and Williamstown, or take cyclists across the Yarra.

Werribee's got the Open Range Zoo, an impressive Technology Precinct, and a stately river with paths and parks, classified by the National Trust; Altona's a hidden treasure, with beaches and barbecues, boating and biking, and the grandeur of the Kororoit Creek; Williamstown boasts the Jawbone lagoon, and a wealth of features historic and gastronomic!

Our wild friends too feast their eyes and their mouths, with on- and offshore conservation reserves, and lakes from the Borrie to the Cherry. The Truganina Swamp near the Laverton Creek was full of rubbish and weeds; now cleaned and replanted, it's naturally teeming with birdlife.

Port Melbourne has industry and commerce, the Webb Dock and Station Pier; the old Garden City, the new Beacon Cove, and one of six coastal tramlines, with a link to the Yarra Trail. Twin paths by the beach, for speedsters and strollers, are safer and pleasanter for everyone.

The pier, restored kiosk and penguins, Luna Park, Acland St and the palm-trees are part of St Kilda's charm; there are swim-only zones and public baths, marinas and yacht-clubs and launching-ramps, a touch of Europe in the Elwood Canal, and the smart little bathing-boxes.

Fine houses form an almost unending parade; Brighton Beach sees the trains bound for Sandringham. Former Minister Tom Roper sold off the land reserved for the line's extension: "the evil that men do lives after them" lamented Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*.

But so does the good – like the City Loop, and low-floor buses and trams; Steve Crabb's integration of tickets, the Gardiners Creek footway bridge. There's the Cerberus, the Ricketts Point sanctuary, the Black Rock homestead, the clock tower; war memorials, social facilities, an artistic trail, and a Teahouse.



Boats at Mordialloc Creek

(Photo by Nick V. from <http://melbournedaily.blogspot.com.au/2012/02/mordialloc.html>)

Mordialloc's got everything you'd wish for: the creek with its handsome arched footbridge, the railway, the neighbouring Moorabbin airport, much boating, the Doyle's Deck bistro. The bikepath goes on past Patterson Lakes and extensive wetlands to Seaford; quiet streets eventually lead to the mouth of the Kananook Creek in Frankston.

That's the gateway to the Mornington Peninsula, with railcars to the Western Port ferries; Cape Schanck, Arthurs Seat, Point Nepean, Red Hill, and names like Dromana, Sorrento and Rosebud to stir happy memories of childhood. It's a lovely conjunction of land and sea, human beings and the natural world.

Paul Prentice

## Help plan our 2014 planting activities

**Wednesday 4 December**  
**6.30pm, MCMC office**  
**2 Lee St,**  
**East Brunswick**

All FoMC members are welcome to help plan our planting and maintenance activities for 2014.





# Friends of Edgars Creek Focus



## A little help from friends

*For a moment, everything turns black. Flickers of light follow as electricity returns. Immediately, the entire sky whitens, filled with sheet lightning. Thunder rumbles, and rain starts to fall. Leaning on my elbows, I gaze out the window, and watch water flow down the slope of my garden. The dry soil takes in water, quenches its thirst. After a long hot summer, a gracious gift!*

Next day, I visit Edgars Creek for a leisurely walk. The water has receded, but evidence of the overnight flood is everywhere. Debris, in curved lines on the grass and pushed up into the trees, reveals how high the water rose. Wrapped around trunks and branches, it is still in alignment with the powerful current. And on the footbridges, piles of it, water having engulfed the structures. One set of railings ripped away, pieces of timber left scattered down the length of the creek, along with massive tree trunks, old tyres, various odds and ends, jammed in awkward positions, here and there. Vegetation has been damaged as well. Once gorgeous sprays of indigenous grass are now flattened, especially near the gooseneck meander and Silurian cliff, where water discarded the graceful swirling loops of the creek, and took its own course across land. Sadly, some recent plantings have been pulled out of the ground, while many more lie buried under whatever was left behind when the flood subsided.

Caught up in the flood, my custodian tree, a spindly young river red gum, is in need of a helping hand. A large clump of debris has encased the foliage, forcing the thin trunk to arc down toward the ground. Slowly and carefully, I unload the tree of its burden. I feel the pull against the grip of my hand increase, as it attempts to resume its height, well above my head. Eventually, with all the debris removed, I let go. The sprightly tree springs up, but stays at a slight tilt. It will continue to grow at an angle, never fully upright again, always leaning in the direction of floodwater flow. Located near the edge of the creek, nestled in a low lying bend, flood is a part of its life. The ground has been thoroughly soaked by this one, and

I can imagine my young tree tingling with delight as its roots ease into the sodden mud.

On subsequent visits, a little at a time, I clear away debris, or bolster up flattened plants. Others also contribute to the task of clearing. Gradually, the vegetation covered during the flood re-emerges. Mostly though, nature itself does the healing, having a phenomenal ability to recover. With rain, fresh green shoots of new growth appear in abundance. The creek, and its surrounding parkland, is in transition, a constant dynamic process, one season transforming into the next, autumn to winter. However, to flourish, it must be given a chance. So often, the impact of people upon the environment is harmful. In counter balance, there are those, like myself, who take part in Edgars Creek's evolving life. We see ourselves as guardians, caretakers, and if we look after the creek, nurture its burgeoning growth, we will pass on a vital and vigorous green conservation area for future generations to enjoy, our legacy.

**Angie Pötsch**

## Dick's Witticisms

Some more witty one-liners from FoMC  
Life Member, Dick Harcourt:

*Honk if you love peace and quiet.*

*I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.*

*When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.*

*If you line up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try and pass them.*

# November

**Saturday 2 MECCARG\* Preparation for Murnong Harvest**  
Meet at the Merri path south of Murray Rd bridge Coburg, 1-3pm. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Phone Mel 0404 043 010.

**Sunday 3 Litter Clean Up**

Clara St East Brunswick, 10am-12noon. Melway 30 A5. 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.

**Saturday 9 MECCARG\* Murnong Harvest**

Look for the flags near the Merri path south of Murray Rd bridge Coburg, 1-3pm. Join in this fantastic unique cultural event. Phone Mel 0404 043 010.

**Sunday 10 4th Merri Creek Bird Survey for 2013**

Nine sites along the Merri. See page 4 for details.

**Sunday 10 Talk on Tackling Common (Indian) Mynas**

Meeting Room 2, Ceres Van Raay Centre, off Stewart St East Brunswick, 11.30am. With the Yarra Indian Myna Action Group.

**Sunday 17 4th Merri Creek Bird Survey for 2013 at Bababi Marning**

8.45-10.30am. Meet near the Istrian Club, Cooper St, Campbellfield (Melway 180 K10).

**Sunday 17 Friends of Edgars Creek Site Maintenance**

Meet at the Silurian Cliff site – access via Ronald St and head north past the bridge, 1-3pm. Melway 18 A8. Maintenance at the Silurian Cliff site. Phone David on 0428 130 268.

**Wednesday 20 Friends of Merri Creek Annual General Meeting**

Eco House CERES, Lee St East Brunswick, 7.15 pm for refreshments before the AGM at 7.30pm. Flora and fauna expert, Brian Bainbridge, will present *Signs of Life*, illustrated with inspiring photos showing nature's response to revegetation works. Have your say in running the Friends group and party afterwards. Drinks and nibbles supplied.

**Sunday 24 Last of six Woody Weed Removals**

Bababi Marning (Cooper St Grasslands), near Istrian Club, Cooper St Campbellfield, 10am-12.30pm. Melway 180 K10. The final of six days to completely clear block A of Broom and Gorse bushes. Light refreshments provided. Phone Ray 0422 989 166.

**November to December Surveys of Golden Sun Moths and Yam Daisies**

Please register with Ben at MCMC on 9380 8199 or email: [ben@mcmc.org.au](mailto:ben@mcmc.org.au) by 22/11/13 and we will let you know ASAP as to which day will be most suitable. Funded by Communities for Nature.

# December

**Sunday 1 Litter Clean Up – North Coburg**

Merlynston Creek North Coburg, 10am-12noon. Melway 17 H9. 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.

**Wednesday 4 Help plan our 2014 planting activities**

MCMC office, 2 Lee St East Brunswick, 6.30pm. All FoMC members are welcome to help plan our planting and maintenance activities for 2014.

**Saturday, 7 MECCARG\* End of Year Celebration**

Meet at the Merri path south of Murray Rd bridge Coburg, 1-3pm. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Phone Mel 0404 043 010.

# EVENTS

# January 2014

**Early January 2014. Kangaroo Grass Seed Harvest**

Please register with Ben at MCMC on 9380 8199 or email: [ben@mcmc.org.au](mailto:ben@mcmc.org.au) by 6/12/13 and we will let you know the site and which **weekday** will be most suitable. Funded by Communities for Nature. (Please note that this activity may involve rigorous exercise in high temperatures and may not be suitable for people with a medical condition.)

**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.

# February 2014

**Saturday 1 MECCARG\* Event**

Meet at the Merri path south of Murray Rd bridge Coburg, 1-3pm. Wear sturdy footwear and gloves. Phone Mel 0404 043 010.

**Sunday 2 Litter Clean Up**

Bell St Coburg, 10am-12noon. Melway 18 A12. Phone Paul 9489 5062.

**Sunday 2 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 16 1st Merri Creek Bird Survey for 2014**

Nine sites along the Merri. See page 4 for details.

**Sunday 23 1st Merri Creek Bird Survey for 2014 at Bababi Marning**

8.45-10.30am. Meet near the Istrian Club, Cooper St, Campbellfield (Melway 180 K10).

\*MECCARG = Merri & Edgars Creek  
Confluence Area Restoration Group



**Friends of Merri Creek Inc.**

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Members' contributions are most welcome; please send to [admin@mcmc.org.au](mailto:admin@mcmc.org.au) by Friday 13 December 2013