



# Ponderings

Winter 2007

Issue 18

Seasonal newsletter of the Moonee Ponds  
Creek Co-ordination Committee Inc

advocate

educate

interpret

participate

rehabilitate

revegetate

## Sensory Rich Trails

### The Tarnuk – A Creek Dwellers Walk through Time

The Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee Inc sought community input into developing a sensory rich trail that traverses along the Upper Moonee Ponds Creek through Woodlands Historic Park and the Westmeadows Historical precinct. The project was funded through a grant from Hume City Council. Groups that have participated in the project include Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Education, Bicycle Victoria, Sunbury Community Health Centre's Walking Group "Step Up", U3A - walking group, Westmeadows Hall Committee of Management and other interested local community members.

Groups were guided along the trail and were asked to point out areas of interest and to take notes on what they saw, heard, smelt, tasted or felt. Participants were also encouraged to ask questions about the area, and share any stories they had about the area.



The majestic and ancient red gums found in Woodlands Historic Park drew the most attention from participants, with comments about the trees bark, age, tree hollows, shape, size, location, scars and health. Less expected was curiosity, particularly amongst younger participants, about animal scats and tracks left by kangaroos, horses and rabbits. With the airport nearby planes are difficult to ignore through this area, but many walkers were surprised at the serenity of the location and the Australian bush feel so close to the city. Walkers were curious about the fencing and why it was there and most commented on a lack of directional signage and information about the track. The drought's effect on the landscape, a dry creek and brown grass, the smell of smoke during the bush-fires, and then during burning off were interesting observations of seasonal changes to the landscape.



Most participants had never walked in this area and were excited about finding this hidden gem, which can include a visit to the Woodlands Homestead and 'Living Legends', where many of Australia's famous retired race horses can be seen.

Information gathered during the project will be used to develop interpretive signage for the shared pathway that wanders through the Upper Moonee Ponds Creek and Westmeadows Historic Precinct.

If you would like more information about this project, please contact Bronwyn Riddell, Education and Interpretation Officer on (03) 9333 2406

The Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee gratefully acknowledge the financial support of these Councils.





Welcome to the newsletter of the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee Inc (MPCCC). We are a not-for-profit, environmentally-based, community organisation that acts as a champion for the Moonee Ponds Creek and its tributaries. Members of the MPCCC include the Cities of Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Hume; the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek; and representatives from the community.

The Moonee Ponds Creek flows 68km from Yuroke in Melbourne's north-western suburbs past Melbourne Airport through the municipalities of Hume, Moreland, Moonee Valley and Melbourne, along the Tullamarine Freeway, through the Docklands and into the Yarra River to Port Phillip Bay. The five tributaries of the Moonee Ponds Creek are Greenvale, Attwood, Yuroke, Westbreen and Five Mile Creeks.

Our aim is to encourage an understanding and connection to the Moonee Ponds Creek and its tributaries; to highlight its values through education, interpretation and hands-on participation; and to revegetate and rehabilitate the Creek and its tributaries.

The MPCCC co-ordinates various programs. "Creating Creek Communities" invites and encourages the community to become involved in revegetation and other fun activities along the banks of the Creek. "CityLink Creek Connections" aims to engage and inform groups that don't traditionally get involved in environmental education. The Bushland Team maintain, restore and rehabilitate various revegetation and remnant sites along the Moonee Ponds Creek within the City of Moreland. The MPCCC also participates in Clean Up Australia Day and community festivals.

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*Vice President:* Bob Steadman  
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*Secretary:* Karen Wilson  
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Feedback regarding *Ponderings*, contributions for future issues, mailing list and editorial enquires are welcome anytime. Contact the Newsletter Editor on 9333 2406 or [ponderings@mpccc.org](mailto:ponderings@mpccc.org)

# Welcome

There has been a few staff changes since our last newsletter so I would like to start by saying thank you to two of our staff members who have recently left, Deb Farmer and Grant McAdam.

Deb has been with MPCCC for four years in various roles but mostly working on the bush crew and writing our newsletter. Deb was a wonderful member of the staff at MPCCC and we all wish her the very best for the future.

Grant worked on the bush crew one day per week and the rest of week with Hume City Council. He now works full time with Hume City Council and we all wish him well in his new job.

We would also like to welcome Emily Box who is our new Greening and Administration Assistant. Emily will be working on the bush crew, writing the newsletter and assisting Bronwyn, Stephanie and myself when needed. Everyone will get a chance to meet Emily over the planting season as she will also be involved in our volunteer planting days.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Sensory Rich Trails project, your input will now be used to develop the interpretive signage along the shared pathway between Woodlands Historic Homestead and Westmeadows township. I would like to say thank you to Kirsty Skilbeck who was employed to undertake this project, especially for her enthusiasm and friendship.

*Heather Holder, Co-ordinator*

**Don't forget if you would like to receive *Ponderings* via email it will save paper and money.**

**MPCCC Inc Member Newsletters and Contacts**



**City of Melbourne**

*The Green Leaflet*, available quarterly, please contact City of Melbourne on (03) 9658 9658. For environmental and sustainability queries, please contact Gabrielle Stannus, Community Sustainability Officer at [gabsta@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:gabsta@melbourne.vic.gov.au) or (03) 9658 8557.



**Moonee Valley City Council**

*Environmentally Speaking*, available quarterly, please contact Moonee Valley City Council on (03) 9243 9142. For environmental and sustainability queries please contact Moonee Valley city Council on (03) 9243 9142.



**Moreland City Council**

The Moreland City Council website offers numerous tips and information sources on environmental and sustainability issues. Please contact (03) 9240 1167 or [info@moreland.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@moreland.vic.gov.au)



**Hume City Council**

*Eco-Tracks Environment Newsletter*, available quarterly, please contact Anna Kruk, Environment Administration Officer at [annak@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:annak@hume.vic.gov.au) or (03) 9205 2473. For environmental and sustainability queries please contact Anna Kruk as above.

**Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek**

Established in 1997, the Friends contribute to the management, protection, development and use of the Moonee Ponds Creek. Contact the President, Kelvin Thomson at [Kelvin.Thomson.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Kelvin.Thomson.mp@aph.gov.au).

# Snippets

News and events happening along the Moonee Ponds Creek.  
To contribute contact the Newsletter Editor on 9333 2406 or  
ponderings@mpccc.org

## BAT COUNT



The next bat count is on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2007, starting at 5pm. The long range weather forecast is for a mild 25 deg, calm breeze from the north perfect for counting bats!

Meet at the Car Park at the Yarra Bend Park Golf Course (Melways Map 2D G7).

Everyone is welcome to join. For further information please contact Dr Rodney van der Ree, on (03) 8344 3661 or 0412 562

## Bushes, Bugs and Boomerangs by the Bridge

Celebrating our Community, Environment and Local History

### Tree Planting

**Investigate the water of Moonee Ponds Creek** (Waterwatch)  
**Children's Activities** (painting Wonguims (*boomerangs*))  
**Learn about the local history**, (Broadmeadows Historical Society)  
**Meet your neighbours** (meet other local community groups)

**Share a BBQ lunch (free) cooked by the Glenroy Lions Club**

**Saturday 16th June, 10am to 2pm**

Meet at the big trestle bridge along the Moonee Ponds Creek in Strathmore  
Melways Map 16 C3



The 2007 Planting Calendar for July, August and September is located at the back of this edition of *Ponderings*. Please note that the 2007 Planting Season will run continuously from mid-April to mid-September, with no breaks in between, due to the continuing dry conditions Melbourne is currently experiencing. If you would like more information, contact Stephanie Spathis, Greening Officer on 9333 2406 or steph@mpccc.org

# Sightings

Fauna and flora observations along the Moonee Ponds Creek.  
To contribute contact the Newsletter Editor on 9333 2406 or  
ponderings@mpccc.org

Jacana Wetlands has some new residents, a pair of black swans and their five cygnets. Also recently seen at Jacana Wetlands is Nankeen Night Heron and Australian (Richard's) Pipit.



Photo kindly provided by Graham Noble



Australia (Richard's) Pipit  
Photo kindly provided by Graham Noble

Charles Silveira recently visited Woodland Historic Park and saw a flock of at least 12 White-winged Choughs in the south-east corner of the park, near the Moonee Ponds Creek. Other birds Charles reports seeing on his last visit are a pair of adult Peregrine Falcons,

Wedge Tailed Eagle, Brown Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, many Yellow and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Golden Whistlers, Weebill, Red Capped Robin, and a White-eared honeyeater.

Barbara Wagner reported seeing a Collared Sparrowhawk along the Moonee Ponds Creek on the corner of Vanberg and Tenneyson Rd.



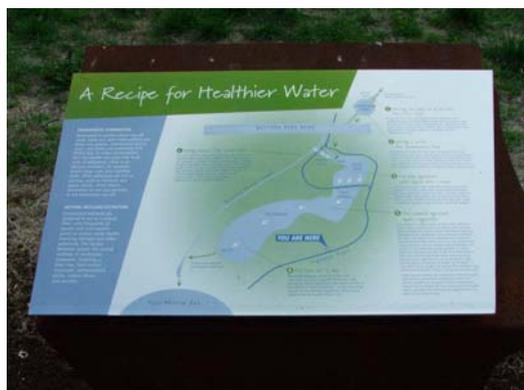
Photo sourced from www.oiseaux.net

# New Signs for Jacana Wetlands

Six new interpretive signs were installed at the southern end of Jacana Wetlands in February. The signs provide an introduction to Jacana wetlands, information about the ecology and function of wetlands, and the history of Moonee Ponds Creek. These signs were produced in partnership with Melbourne Water and Moreland City Council, with funding from the EPA.

Visitors to Jacana Wetlands can enter via Moonee Boulevard and walk in a loop around the wetlands and take in the information provided in the signs. The signs were installed as stage one of the landscape design for Jacana Wetlands with more works planned over the next 2 years, in particular revegetation works.

If you would like to become involved, please refer to our planting calendar at the back of this issue.



## Northern Nature - Creek Connections

Communities caring for the environment of the Moonee Ponds, Merri and Darebin Creeks



**What is it?** *The Northern Nature Creek Connections* is a two year project developed by Merri Creek Management Committee in partnership with Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee and Darebin Creek Management Committee. Other partners are Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology, Citylink and Delfin.

**What is the project aim?** The project will combine on ground works in high priority vegetation communities of the Volcanic Plains Bioregion (native grassland, grassy woodlands, riparian and escarpment communities), with community capacity building to enhance appreciation, understanding and involvement in biodiversity conservation projects.

**Who funds it?** The project is funded through Natural Heritage Trust. This funding is allocated through the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority.

**What projects will be happening?** A series of 4 free weeding workshops will be held at Strathnaver Grasslands in Strathmore Heights (Melways 16 E6). Learn how to protect the local environment and improve your sustainable garden techniques. For more information on the flowing Workshop dates please contact Stephanie Spathis on (03) 9333 2406

September 10th and September 24th from 5:30 to 7:30 and  
October 8th and October 29th from 6:00 to 7:30

A community planting will be held along the Moonee Ponds Creek in Gowanbrae on Sunday 19th September from 10am to 12pm. We will be replanting the area with Grassy Woodland species. Further details are provided on the attached planting calendar.

# Autumn Planting Season Highlights



So far this year our volunteers have planted over 3,700 native plants along the creek and its tributaries. Thank you to everyone who has joined us at our planting days! We hope to see you sometime in Spring.

Our Spring planting calendar is attached on the back of this edition of Ponderings.

## Travancore Residents.

8 Volunteers, 140 plants into a mulched bed.

Hard ground didn't stop this groups' enthusiasm who were rewarded with some rain at the end of the day to help water in the plants

## Friends of Westbreen Creek

21 volunteers, 390 plants

Local Wildlife Carer Ann Black gave a compelling presentation to the group . A habitat planting followed and Tess was lucky to win the Bird Field Guide raffle!!

## Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek

16 Volunteers, 150 plants staked and guarded

A break in the rain and dramatic skies welcomed the group on the site. Long time planter Jamie returned to the site after 6 years and was amazed at the growth of the trees and shrubs he had planted.

## Friends of Jacana Wetlands

24 Volunteers, 240 plants staked and guarded and planted into jute mat

What a great injection of enthusiasm the CVA team brought to the day, the whole group finished the planting in record time, finishing the day by picking up litter and removing tree guards.

## Friends of Sacred Kingfisher

8 volunteers, 300 plants into a mulch bed

The rain had become more frequent by the time we had this planting and the soil was soft, moist and easy to dig. An enjoyable and productive day for all!!

## Strath-Oak Planters

51 Volunteers, 232 plants

A huge exciting day with the community, students from Strathmore North Primary and the 1st and 2nd Strathmore scouts. Despite the tricky conditions, all plants went in the ground with enough time to spare to find a skink and investigate water bugs with Jane from Waterwatch!

## Friends of Strathmore Ponds

150 volunteers, 20 plants staked and guarded)

Our Moonee Ponds Creek regulars joined for a day of pleasant planting alongside the fast flowing rain fed creek. Many a juicy worm was found in the well decomposed mulch.



# Autumn Planting Season Highlights

## Friends of Westbreen Creek

12 volunteers, 300 plants

A special propagation demonstration was held by Judy Allen showing how to take cuttings of indigenous plants and germinate seed. A planting followed and there was some exciting investigation of lichen and moss under the microscopes.

## Brunswick South West Planters

16 Volunteers, 150 plants staked and guarded

Bearing a remarkable resemblance to Mountain Goats, the group took to the planting with gusto! Native grasses and groundcovers are now being established under the trees and shrubs that the group have tended over the last 10 years.

## Friends of Lower Moonee Ponds Creek

3 Volunteers, 200 plants

A pleasant and relaxed day for all by the creek, with the resident swan family and ducks looking on. Thanks to Kaye for planting the extras later on!

## Essendon Residents

10 volunteers, 280 plants

With the great success of last years planting in Essendon as inspiration, the group planted with great enthusiasm. As well as shrubs and groundcovers, the group established a row of the starry flowering Clematis that will climb up the surrounding fence.

## Friends of Strathnaver Grasslands

11 volunteers, 1124 plants

A beautiful Winters day and pre-dug holes meant a very productive day at the grasslands. A record number of plants in the ground!!!



# Clean Up Australia Day

A big thank you to many of our Friends Groups members and the Essendon Bushwalking Club, who also participated in Clean Up Australia day on 4th March 2007. A fantastic effort by everyone, with a lot of rubbish collected. Sites volunteers cleaned up were, Holbrook Reserve, John Pascoe Fawcner Reserve, Jacana Wetlands, Westbreen Creek near Northumberland Rd and Koala Crescent in Westmeadows.



**60 Volunteers**  
**5 sites**  
**4kms along Moonee Ponds Creek**  
**104 Bags of Rubbish**  
**And other litter including beds, lounges, tyres and a bike**



# Clean Up Australia Day



At the Flemington and North Melbourne Community Centres, Clean Up Australia Day brought together many different groups with the aim of creating a better, cleaner and more harmonious place to live. It was a wonderful way of allowing the various communities to come together to participate in a positive activity that had an immediate impact on the way their local environment looked, which contributes to changing the way they feel about their neighbourhood.

The Citylink Creek Connection Program took on the role of coordinating the Clean Up Day on behalf of the community. The original idea was to clean up along the Moonee Ponds Creek, coordinating approximately 20 SAYGO (Socially Active Youth Group Organisation) members and other youth from the area with Glen Birt (Flemington Police). This idea quickly developed and the day expanded to include an African BBQ lunch for participants and involved many other organisations including Moonee Valley City Council, Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union, Essendon Football Club, Jesuit Social Services, and Bio-clean.



**135 Registered Volunteers**  
**4kms along Moonee Ponds Creeks**  
**350 bags of Rubbish**



**And other litter including beds, shopping trolleys, tin, wood and carpet**

A great day was had by everyone who attended, and there were many people involved to make this day a success. Many of the teenagers and young children excited to meet Damien Pervill, an Essendon Football player and Ronald McDonald who both helped clean up on the day.

A very special thank you to the Somali and Sudanese women who cooked a delicious African lunch for everyone who attended.

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## Wonguims whirling high at Woodlands Historic Park

### Wonguim, what is it?

A Wonguim is a boomerang in the language of the Gunung Willam Ballak people, the traditional owners of this land. For thousand of years the local Boonewrung and Woiworung people lived on this land and moved in family groups along the Moonee Ponds Creek, which provided them with all their food, clothing and shelter.

During Harmony Week Celebrations, Bronwyn Riddell, the Citylink Creek Connections Program Education Officer and Hayden Vandenberg, Parks Victoria's Indigenous Ranger teamed up to educate 27, Years 8, 9, and 10 students from St Joseph College Melbourne to learn about local Indigenous groups and their connection both past and present to the land and creek. Students practiced their Wonguim throwing and learnt about the different ochre rocks, where it comes from and what it is used for. Students had the opportunity to crush and mix the ochre rock to make paint and paint their faces. Students also tasted different bush tucker treats such as lemon myrtle honey, rosella wild hibicus flowers in syrup, quandong fruit leather, lilli pilli jam, bush tomatoes and native pepper.

### Excerpt from Daily Journal 13/03/2007, James Scully Year 10 St Josephs College

*a ranger called Hayden and he spoke to us about the aboriginals of the Moonee Ponds Creek and about New South Wales where his 'mob' come from. While we were sitting down, he had set up many different activities that we learnt about. We got this 'red ochre' that you paint with. You get the red ochre rock and you get a sturdy rock and collide them together to get the red powder off. Add water, roughly 15 drops to make the ochre paint. Add the paint to the paper or your body. We also learnt how to throw a boomerang, you must throw it into the wind so it flies on its own.*



## Indigenous Reflections CityLink Creek Crossings

If you are walking or cycling near Talbot Rd and Wallace Cres, Moonee Valley check out the new art panels that have been erected across the bridge. The City CityLink Crossing Indigenous reflections of the Moonee Ponds Creek was an Arts partnership between CityLink and Moonee Valley City Council. Three Indigenous artists Mandy Nicholson (Wurundjeri), Treahna Hamm (Yorta Yorta) and Annette Sax (Taungurung) conducted painting workshops with the local community and schools to educate and involve the community in Indigenous stories and culture.

The "Traditional" images reflect and recognise the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation and the concepts of COUNTRY, CREATION, RELATIONSHIP and CONNECTION, as well as the PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE life of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

The connection to COUNTRY (land) is represented by the contour design surrounding the Moonee Ponds Creek, and the Bogong Moth with two larvae. The Moonee Ponds Creek and the Bogong Moth were both important to the people of the Kulin Nation as a water and food source. The concept of CREATION is captured through the image of a Wedge-tail Eagles wing. Bunjil, the Wedge-tail Eagle is the Creator Spirit of the land, the people and their language. Two Sky panels' denote RELATIONSHIP (symbolized by a cockatoo feather) and CONNECTION (symbolized by the leaf) to the community of the Moonee Ponds Creek. The two WATER images depict the PAST (spiral designs), PRESENT and FUTURE (wavy spiral designs) life of the Moonee Ponds Creek.