



moonee ponds creek
co-ordination committee

Ponderings

Spring 2007

Issue 19



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

advocate

educate

interpret

participate

rehabilitate

revegetate

Would you like to learn new skills? Come to our series of Grassland plant identification workshops!

Would you like to learn some new skills in plant identification? Perhaps you have some questions about the best time to tackle some of those tricky weed species? Join in at the Strathnaver Grasslands in Strathmore for a series of 4 weed workshops aimed to empower and skill the community in their involvement with biodiversity and conservation. Each workshop will focus on different species and will be run by a representative from the Merri Creek Management Committee.

- Learn how to identify between native grassland plants and weeds
- Discover the best time to tackle various weed species
- Learn about different methods in weed control
- Try out your new skills in an environment where you can ask questions and discuss ideas.
- Gain further knowledge to tackle weed species in your own garden.

Workshops will be held at the Strathnaver Grasslands, Strathmore, Melways Map 16 E6. Limited parking available at the Essendon Athletics Club. The Strathnaver Grassland is adjacent to the Moonee Ponds Creek shared pathway. Follow the coloured flags to the meeting point. Please bring gloves and a small weeding tool.

Contact MPCCC Greening Officer Stephanie Spathis on (03) 9333 2406 or steph@mpccc.org for further information

September

Monday 10th– 5:30pm to 7pm

Monday 24th– 5:30pm to 7pm

October

Monday 8th– 6pm to 7:30 pm

Monday 29th– 6pm to 7:30pm



These workshops are funded through *The Northern Nature Creek Connections*

project developed by Merri Creek Management Committee in partnership with Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee and Darebin Creek Management Committee.

Northern Nature - Creek Connections
Communities caring for the environment of the Moonee Ponds, Merri and Darebin Creeks



Join us at our September planting days...

Sat 1	Boeing Reserve Troopers	10am-12noon	Boeing Reserve, Strathmore Heights. Meet at the trestle bridge at the end of Boeing Reserve.	16 C3
Sun 9	Strath-Oak Planters	10am-12noon	Margaret Street, Oak Park. Meet at the end of Margaret Street at the footbridge	16G7
Sun 9	The Hume Multi-Cultural Planting Day	10am - 3pm	Jack Roper Reserve, Camp Road, Broadmeadows. Enter from Ophir st	7 A10
Sun 23	Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek	1.30pm-3.30pm	Wright Street, Westmeadows. Meet at the end of Wright Street. Follow the signs to the planting site.	5 G6

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.

Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee Inc

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Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee Inc Members

President: Kelvin Thomson
Vice President: Bob Steadman
Vice President: Cr. Gary Jungwirth
Secretary: Karen Wilson
Treasurer: Joe Ficarra
Public Officer: Karen Wilson
Members: Judy Maddigan, Alex Smart, Julie Law, Judy Allen, Rob Moore, Catherine Kiss, Nigel Higgins, Cr Ben Opie, Cr Kathleen Matthews-Ward, Eamonn Fennessy & Terry Mundy.

This newsletter is proudly printed on 100% Recycled paper, manufactured using a chlorine-free process

Kindly printed at the electorate office of Maria Vamvakinou MP, Member for Calwell.

Feedback regarding *Ponderings*, contributions for future issues, mailing list and editorial enquires are welcome anytime. Contact Emily Box on (03) 9333 2406 or ponderings@mpccc.org

Welcome

THANK YOU to all our Volunteers whose efforts make the planting program a success. We are now halfway through the planting season and it has been fantastic to see so many people helping revegetate and clean up the Moonee Ponds Creek. I would also like to say thank you to Michael Cincotta and Elissa Simmons who help us with the planting days.

I have been MPCCC's Coordinator for 10 months now and have spent time enhancing the way MPCCC is administered. With the majority of this now done we are about to start focusing on strategic planning for MPCCC's future projects. We are still in the planning phase with this process but we are going to talk to as many people as we can to include everyone's ideas and opinions.

Qantas provided funding to redesign and reprint MPCCC's catchment brochure, about who we are and what we do. We are hoping to complete this within the next two months.....
"so look out for our shiny new brochure."

MPCCC is updating our website. Work will be commencing within the next 2 weeks and I am hoping it will be completed by the end of October. At the moment we are experiencing severe hacking of our website, so it is functioning intermittently. If you have any suggestions about the sort of information you would like to see included on the website please send me an email at coordinator@mpccc.org.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Maria Vamvakinou, MP for allowing MPCCC to photocopy our newsletter at her office.

Heather Holder, Co-ordinator

Please let us know if you would like to receive *Ponderings* via email as it will save paper, money and energy.

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 or (03) 9658 8557.



Moonee Valley City Council

Valley View available every six weeks, please contact Moonee Valley City Council on (03) 9243 8888. 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



Hume City Council

Eco-Tracks Environment Newsletter, available quarterly, please contact Anna Kruk, Environment Administration Officer at 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.

Presidents Report

Autumn and winter plantings have been wonderfully successful, with Stephanie in particular doing great work with the Volunteers who've been fronting up on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The weather has been helpful, with plenty of rain before and after our plantings, but not too much to disrupt us while we work.

I have participated in plantings at Oak Park, Strathmore North Primary School, Strathmore Grasslands, Hopetoun Avenue Brunswick, and Gowanbrae.

I particularly enjoyed the Gowanbrae Planting Festival on June 16th, where Heather, Bronwyn and others contributed displays, and local groups such as Neighbourhood Watch and Glenroy Lions joined in the fun. Youngsters were taught boomerang throwing. To the best of my knowledge no creek wildlife was harmed in the process.

See you down the creek.

Kelvin Thomson, President
Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee Inc

Snippets

News and events happening along the Moonee Ponds Creek. To contribute contact Emily Box on (03) 9333 2406 or ponderings@mpccc.org

Do you like to recycle? Help the Glenroy Lions Club by donating the following items to be recycled.

Eye-glasses: Recycle for Sight Program is part of the Lions Club International Worldwide Eyeglass Recycling Programme. Eyeglasses and sunglasses, undamaged plastic or metal frames with both arms attached, prescription and non-prescription, with intact lenses that are not broken or missing lenses are accepted. The glasses are donated to developing countries.

Mobile Phones: Phones are donated to elderly community members to use in emergency situations in their homes. Must have charger, do not require sim card.

Used Stamps: For stamp collectors overseas.

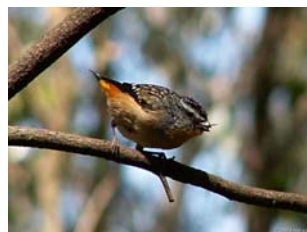
To arrange collection of your donated items contact Roger Exell on (03) 9370 6436.

Sightings

Fauna observations along the Moonee Ponds Creek. If you see anything interesting contact Emily Box on (03) 9333 2406 or ponderings@mpccc.org



Stephen Williams recently sighted a Native Water Rat near the nursery at Strathmore. Contact the Australian Platypus Conservancy with water rat sightings at platypus@vicnet.net.au. The Conservancy records sightings in an effort to conserve the native water rat.



At the Bushes, Bugs and Boomerangs festival, on 26th July, Stephanie Spathis sighted a Spotted Pardalote and a Black Shouldered Kite



Kelvin Thomson heard and then sighted a Grey Butcher Bird at the Strathnaver Grasslands on the 5th August.



Judy Allen has for the first time sighted an Eastern Spinebill in her garden. A pair was also sighted at the Friends of Strathmore Ponds planting on June 26th.



BAT COUNT 3111
This is the lowest number of bats roosting in Melbourne since 2000! If you are interested in attending further bat counts contact
Dr Rodney VanDer Ree
on (03) 8344 3661 or
0412 562 429

Penola Planting and Weaving Day

Thank you to the Students and Teachers who participated in planting and Indigenous weaving activities along the Moonee Ponds Creek on Monday 25th June.

Six Year 9 classes from Penola Catholic College participated in planting 540 plants along the Moonee Ponds Creek in West Melbourne as part of their Source to Sea program. This is the fourth year Penola Catholic College students have been involved, with a total of 4,000 plants being planted over this time. The ground was rocky and tough but the students continued to dig and plant having a good time and a few laughs along the way!

Through MPCCC's Citylink Creek Connections Program, students also learnt about the Indigenous history of the area and participated in traditional weaving activities to create bracelets.

Revegetation and learning about Indigenous history are two components of Penola's Source to Sea program with students participating in other activities such as using the Moonee Ponds Creek shared pathway to investigate the Moonee Ponds Creek and how it changes from the upper reaches all the way down to Docklands where it drains into the Yarra River.

If you have a chance stop and admire the planting between Dynon and Footscray Roads, you will get a sense of how much students from Penola Catholic College have achieved over the past four years.

Special Thanks to Glen Le Rossignol from Victrack for his support over the last four years



Bendigo Bank Community Grant

Strathmore Community Bank Branch opened in July 2001. As an integral part of the local community the Branch has conducted a community grants program twice a year for the past two years. The Community Enterprise Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Bendigo Bank working closely with communities across Australia, has partnered up with Strathmore Community Bank Branch to establish a community grant program to fund projects in the area to meet specific community needs such as environmental projects.

MPCCC has been successful in receiving a Community Grant to help revegetate the Moonee Ponds Creek. Over the next year this work will be carried out with the Boeing Reserve Troopers, Strath-Oak Planters, Friends of Strathnaver Grassland & Friends of Strathmore Ponds.

Please refer to the planting calendar on the front page for details about when these groups will be holding planting days. We would love to see you there.

Thank you to the Staff of the Strathmore Branch, we look forward to working with you to ensure these events are a great success.

**Community Enterprise
Foundation**
AN INITIATIVE OF THE BENDIGO BANK GROUP

Strathmore
Community Bank[®] Branch Bendigo Bank



Winter Planting Season Highlights



Thank you to everyone who has joined us on our planting days so far. You have contributed to planting over **8,300** native plants along the creek and its tributaries this year! We hope to see you again sometime at our September planting days.

Check out our September planting days on the front cover.

Friends of Strathmore Ponds

10 Volunteers, 150 plants

A pair of Eastern Spinebills were sighted in the shrubs planted by Volunteers last year. Jane Bevelander came to explore the water at the creek, finding Side Swimmers, Back Swimmers, Caddis Fly larvae, Gambusia & pond snails

Friends of Strathnaver Grasslands

10 Volunteers, 445 plants

Volunteers began to extend the edge of the grassland with Kangaroo Grass. This will blend with the existing grassland and in a few years there will be no visible difference between the revegetated and natural grassland sites. Volunteers also enjoyed a grassland discovery tour lead by Judy Allen.

Friends of Westbreen Creek

21 Volunteers, 1000 plants

On Emily's first planting day she was greeted with beautiful weather and an enthusiastic CVA team who raced through the plants despite the tough muddy ground which made digging hard. Volunteers finished the day with a walk lead by Judy Allen.

Travancore Residents Group

7 Volunteers, 190 plants

It was a very misty, cold morning and 7 brave souls ventured out to help plant under the mosaic mural in Delhi Reserve. Roger Excell commented on the improved soil condition due to the mulch breaking down and the many worms that were found. Welcome new Volunteers, Bumble, Celeine and Jackson to their first planting!!

Essendon Residents

14 Volunteers, 275 plants

There were many new faces fueled by the warm sun on their faces. Everyone worked hard to plant ground cover species to increase diversity of plants species at this site. Welcome new comers Bill, Aaron, Sophie, Joanne & Liz!!

Friends of Strathnaver Grasslands

10 Volunteers, 786 plants

Planting went smoothly and was easy going with all holes being pre-dug. One hundred and fifty Small Leaf Eutaxia were planted on the day. These plants were grown from seed harvested from this remnant site.



Water Watch



Have you considered taking part in Waterwatch? Well, spring is a great time to start...

As the air and water temperature starts to warm up, an abundance of aquatic macro-invertebrates or "bugs" come to life. Diving Beetles start feeding on tadpoles; Mayfly adults emerge for a few hours to several days, mate and then die; young backswimmers start emerging, and more! (And it's usually the nicest weather to be out on the creek!)

The type and quantity of bugs found in the creek enables us to determine the quality of water for all species living in it. For example, the presence of Mayfly nymphs, who are very sensitive to water pollution, would indicate that the water is relatively clean or free from pollution.

In addition to sampling bugs, we also test for salinity, pH, phosphates, dissolved oxygen levels, temperature, turbidity, streamflow and litter.

Volunteer...

We head out to the creek on the second Sunday of the month on a quarterly basis (January, April, July, October). Our next monitoring sessions will be held on **Sunday 14 October 2007** between 9.45am - 3pm, covering three sites:

- Downstream of Jacana Wetlands (off Valley Cres) (9.45am - 11.30am)
- Mitchell Parade Escarpment, Strathmore (12pm - 1.30pm)
- Holbrook Reserve, Brunswick West (2pm - 3pm)

Come to one site or all! New volunteers are always welcome. Please wear sturdy shoes, hat, long sleeves and pants, and bring drinking water and your lunch. All other equipment is provided, along with the guidance of experienced volunteers.

To get involved in or for more information on Waterwatch on the Moonee Ponds Creek, please contact Nonie Shepherd on 93809764 or email shepherd.nonie.nj@edumail.vic.gov.au



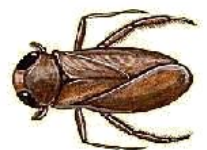
This Year...

The Moonee Ponds Creek Water Monitoring Group conducted 3 sampling sessions in January, May and July. The results have shown the same seasonal fluctuations as in previous years, with numbers of bugs being higher in summer and dropping off in winter. Generally the range of bugs are the same at Jacana, Mitchell Parade and Holbrook Reserve. The range and species of bugs are an indication of the water quality with all sites having bugs ranging from those that can live in degraded conditions through to bugs that can only live in medium– high quality water. At Mitchell Parade fish and Yabbies can be found indicating a more natural system which can support larger aquatic animals.

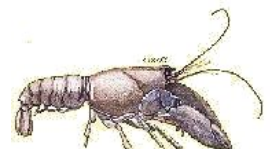
Jacana and Mitchell Parade had much lower numbers of bugs, compared with previous summers. This could possibly be due to very high levels of phosphates found at both these sites. Mitchell Parade consistently has the highest numbers of bugs being found. For example in January, 19 species were found at Mitchell Parade compared with 14 species at Jacana and 8 at Holbrook.

Holbrook Reserve has the least favorable environment with both the lowest number of species represented and the lowest number of total specimens found. The pH here is consistently higher than at the other two sites, although other chemical measures are similar at all sites.

(invertebrate photos from Timelines Australia Project)



Water boatman



Yabbie



Back Swimmer

Bushes Bugs & Boomerangs



On Saturday 16th June 2007 103 volunteers attended the *Bushes Bugs and Boomerangs by the Bridge* festival celebrating our environment, community and local history along the Moonee Ponds Creek. It was a great day! Participants met under the impressive trestle train bridge in Gowanbrae and signed in to take part in the day's activities....



Volunteers lent a hand creating habitat and improving air and water quality by planting more than 600 local native trees and shrubs with 2 resident friends groups; the Boeing Reserve Troopers and Gowanbrae Residents Groups. Each had a planting bed on either side of the creek.



Volunteers investigated the waters of the Moonee Ponds Creek and its invertebrate inhabitants at the Waterwatch trailer with Dr Greg Woodward, the Merri and Moonee Ponds Creek Waterwatch Co-ordinator. Some Fresh Water Shrimp as well as some Damselfly larvae were discovered to name a few!



We had lots of children who attended on the day taking part in Citylink Creek Connection activities. They had a great time trying out traditional Aboriginal weaving techniques and painting a Wonguim (the traditional name for boomerang in the Kulin Nation language). They were inspired by the many Aboriginal tools and artifacts on display for people to look at and touch.



Local community and environment groups including the Gowanbrae Action Group, Neighbourhood Watch, Moreland Energy Foundation and Sustainability Street provided informative and interesting displays for all involved.



The Glenroy Lions Club cooked a free lunch as a thank you to all Volunteers keeping their bellies full and happy! Everyone had a chance to stop and have a chat and meet new and old friends.

Many thanks to Coates Prestige who supplied us with a toilet on the day for no charge!!



National Tree

On Sunday July 29th, 65 Volunteers took part in the annual National Tree Day at the Tarnuk in West Meadows. Volunteers included members from the Glenroy Lions Club, local Scout Joey's, Cubs and their Grandpas and the Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek. Thanks to the staff of Hume City Council and Waterwatch who attended.



Thank you to all the Volunteers who helped plant a total of 715 Indigenous plants around the drainage line near Wright Street, at the Tarnuk.



110 of the 715 plants planted were staked and guarded. Pre-dug holes were appreciated by many with the ground still dry and tough, regardless of the recent rain.



Scout groups enjoyed the day, taking part in planting and learning about the Indigenous culture of the area through Bronwyn Riddell's display of artifacts as part of the Citylink Creek Connections Program.



Everyone enjoyed looking at insects, fungi and anything interesting they found through the microscopes. Reece Collins attended with the Waterwatch trailer and a collection of aquatic creatures found along the Moonee Ponds Creek which people could examine.



Everyone flew through the plants in record time so we were able to finish with an early lunch. Thank you to all the Volunteers who took part in the day and to Hume City Council for supplying the barbeque lunch.

A Special thank you to Coates Prestige for supplying a toilet free of charge!

