



Ponderings

Summer 2006-07

Issue 16

Seasonal newsletter of the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee

educate * rehabilitate * community * revegetate * interpret * policy

Return Of The Growling Grass Frog Festival

To read more about the MPCCC Return of the Growling Grass Frog Festival and for many more wonderful photo highlights, turn to page 4.



PHOTO: Stephanie Spathis

Two Tawnies In A Tree.....



PHOTO: Peter Lukaszewski

A pair of Tawny Frogmouths successfully hatched and raised two grey fluffy chicks, right next to the MPCCC office this spring.

This large bird roosts during the day, imitating the branch that they rest upon, and actively feed at dusk.

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR FABULOUS CHRISTMAS PARTY! TURN TO PAGE 9 FOR THE DETAILS.



The Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee and *Ponderings* gratefully acknowledge the financial support of these councils.



Inside

2
Welcome

3
Clippings

4
Return of the Growling Grass Frog Festival

5
CityLink
"Creating Creek Communities"

Thank you Tony

Grant Success

6-8
Spring Planting Season Wrap-up

9
Christmas Party

Waterwatch Update

10
Seasonal sightings

Out And About



Welcome to the newsletter of the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee (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 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 participate in Clean Up Australia Day and community festivals.

Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee
PO Box 2170, Greenvale 3059
Phone: 9333 2406
Fax: 9333 2413
coordinator@mpccc.org
www.mpccc.org



Co-ordinator: Heather Holder
Education & Interpretation Officer: Bronwyn Riddell
Greening Officer: Stephanie Spathis
Ponderings Editor: Debbie Farmer
Bushland Team Member: Grant McAdam
Planting Supervisors: Elissa Simmons, Michael Cincotta and Triona Allen
Accounts Payable: Ruth Rankin

The Purple Swamphen is our logo. They love to call the dense, reedy creek edges and wetlands their home. Their long red legs and feet carry them across golf-courses and ovals, whilst constantly flicking their tail. With their scarlet red bills and deep-blue feathers, the waterhen is quite a sight.

This newsletter is proudly printed on M.Real Evolve 100% Recycled paper. Made from 100% recovered paper (post consumer waste), de-inked and bleached (chlorine-free process). Go to www.evolve-papers.com.

Kindly printed at the electorate office of Kelvin Thomson MP, Member for Wills.

Feedback regarding *Ponderings*, contributions for future issues, mailing list and editorial enquires are welcome anytime. Please contact *Ponderings* editor Debbie Farmer on 9333 2406 or ponderings@mpccc.org.

welcome

As everyone is now aware, I started in late October as the new Co-ordinator for the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee. I have recently returned from working in Russia for seven months and have nine years of experience working with Landcare and Environmental groups in Newcastle, NSW and the Eurora and Benalla districts in Victoria.

I would like to thank everyone for their warm welcome, especially the Staff and Committee members who have spent a lot of time informing me of current projects and helping to get me up to date with everything that is going on.

I am excited to be working along the Moonee Ponds Creek and look forward to working with everyone to develop interesting projects to educate and involve the community.

The Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee will be holding their Christmas Party on Friday 15th December and I look forward to meeting everyone there.



Heather Holder, MPCCC Co-ordinator

MPCCC Member Newsletters and Contacts



City of Melbourne

The Green Leaflet, available quarterly via post or email. Mailing list: City of Melbourne on 9658 9658. Environmental and sustainability queries: Gabrielle Stannus, Community Sustainability Officer at gabsta@melbourne.vic.gov.au or 9658 8557.



Moonee Valley City Council

Environmentally Speaking, available quarterly via post or email. Mailing list: Damien Connell, Environment Co-ordinator at dconnell@mvcc.vic.gov.au or 9243 9142. Environmental and sustainability queries: as above.



Moreland City Council

The Moreland City Council website offers numerous tips and information sources on environmental and sustainability issues. Contact 9240 1167 or info@moreland.vic.gov.au



Hume City Council

Eco-Tracks Environment Newsletter, available quarterly via post or email. Mailing list: Anna Kruk, Environment Administration Officer at annak@hume.vic.gov.au or 9205 2473. Environmental and sustainability queries: Carol Jadrage, Environment Co-ordinator at carolj@hume.vic.gov.au or 9205 2466.

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Association

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

Your guide to news, events, happenings, information, etc. Contributions are warmly welcomed anytime. Write to MPCCC or ponderings@mpccc.org

clippings

AUSTRALIAN WATER-RAT AT THE WETLANDS!

Andre was lucky enough to see a Water-rat (or "rakali") at the southern end of Jacana Wetlands during July. The attractive and intelligent mammal was preening itself in the sun on the edge of the reeds. Looking more like a small otter than the introduced rat, they consume a wide variety of aquatic prey and may also catch mice. Thanks Andre.



VALE STEVE IRWIN

Essendon-born Steve Irwin died on the 4 September, 2006 after being struck by a stingray barb in the heart while he was filming off the Barrier Reef. Irwin, born February 22, 1962, attended grades 2 and 3 at Essendon Primary School before his family moved to Queensland and opened the Beerwah Reptile Park, later known as Australia Zoo. A keen Bombers fan, Irwin visited Windy Hill two years ago to meet his beloved Essendon footballers.

Cynthia Ryan, the convener of Essendon Primary's 150th anniversary in 2000, said the young Irwin developed his love of wildlife playing in the Moonee Ponds Creek. "He did spend a lot of time there catching tadpoles and chasing lizards. He said he had very happy memories of Essendon because his mum was still alive when he was here and she died after they left."

SOURCE: Moonee Valley Community News, 5 September 2006

FOUND AT GROWLING GRASS FROG FESTIVAL.
One White Cotton Adult Sun Hat.
Is it yours?
Contact MPCCC on 9333 2406.



AUTUMN 2005 FROG CENSUS RESULTS ARE IN!

Are you a frog fan? Go to www.melbournewater.com.au/frogs to check the map and see what frogs were found in your suburb and council area.



Clean Up Australia Day

is to be held on Sunday 4 March, 2007. If you have a site you would like to nominate, visit www.cleanup.com.au or contact Stephanie Spathis, Greening Officer on 9333 2406 or steph@mpccc.org. Don't forget Business and Schools Clean Up Days.

MELBOURNE ZOO WATER CONSERVATION INITIATIVE HELPS THE MOONEE PONDS CREEK

The Melbourne Zoo has recently opened their latest water conservation initiative. The Victorian Government-funded \$5 million Water Recycling Plant will treat stormwater collected from roofs and paved paths, and effluent from animal enclosures. Until now, all effluent has been treated and discharged via stormwater drains to the Moonee Ponds Creek. When the recycling system comes fully on line, the Zoo expects to halve its water consumption, conserving 95 million litres of Melbourne's drinking water a year. Melbourne Water's "Water Discovery Trail", which complements the recycling project, guides visitors and students around the Zoo, explaining how water recycling works and why it is so important.

SOURCE: Melbourne Water "The Source", Issue 39, September 2006.

Return Of The Growling Grass Frog Festival



Stephanie's brother, Christopher, kindly volunteered to wear the frog costume. Thanks Christopher!

100 Happy volunteers.
1000 Indigenous plants in the ground.
Numerous hamburgers cooked and consumed.
One extraordinary giant Growling Grass Frog!



Volunteers investigate the Waterwatch trailer

Well, wasn't the weather just incredible! Sunshine, wind, rain, biting hail and then sunshine again! Very Melbourne.

The volunteers and community groups celebrated the Growling Grass Frogs return to the Wetlands, as this was not just another planting day. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to learn about and make contact with other environmental and local groups.

The Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria reniformis*) was once widespread, but it has disappeared from most of its former range across Vic, now only existing in isolated populations in water bodies such as Jacana Wetlands.



Thank You!

MPCCC wishes to thank the volunteers who arrived full of enthusiasm and assisted in the task of planting along the wetland edge to create habitat for local frogs and fauna.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the many supporters of the festival (listed below).

A special thank you goes to Coates Hire. They kindly provided the PortaLoo, including delivery and pick-up, absolutely free of charge. MPCCC greatly appreciates this act of generosity.

Last but not least, thank you to the Lions Club for cooking and serving the delicious barbeque lunch, and maintaining good humour throughout some extremely difficult (although typical) Melbourne weather.



Smile for the camera!. Andy is a happy planter indeed.



Susie and Johnny love to plant together.

This event was supported by the following groups

Friends of Jacana Wetlands



What has Bronwyn been up to lately?

Busy, busy as a bee! I have been busy connecting the community with their environment through the CityLink Creek Connections Program. Read on to find out more.



Hi Bronwyn,
Its Karen. Year 5/6 had a great time on Thursday. We thought that making animals using natural resources was a great idea. I heard that they turned out really well. I learnt a lot from what you told us about water. I had a lot of fun.
Karen.

Hey. My name is Vily. I'm the girl who kept burning herself with the hot-glue-gun. I really enjoyed your activity making the creek animals using natural resources. The animals turned out really well. I admire your work for the Moonee Ponds Creek Conservation Centre. I hear that our animals are being displayed in the East Melbourne Library. Thank you for the great session you have provided for the class. I had heaps of fun.
Vily.



Waterwatch activities during Water Week at the East Melbourne Library were lots of fun. These letters were written by two of the girls who attended. Thank you!



The Walking Group from the Flemington Community Centre accompanied me on a wander through Royal Park, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Woodlands Historic Park.



The students from Penola College wove Cumbungi and planted indigenous plants at Docklands.

Dr Greg Woodward, otherwise known as the "Fish Doctor", and I developed and implemented an early childhood program to four kindergartens within the City Of Melbourne. The children marbled "Life cycle of a frog" posters and learnt about how litter effects our creek.

The P-12 Victorian Koorie School spent a day with me and the Rangers at Woodlands Historic Park.

thank you



As you have read in the "Welcome" column on page 2, the MPCCC committee members have officially appointed a new Co-ordinator, Heather Holder.

On this note, the staff at MPCCC - Stephanie, Bronwyn, Debbie, Elissa, Grant, Michael and Triona - would like to thank Tony Faithfull for the exemplary job that he has done as Acting Co-ordinator over the last 6 months. Thank you so much Tony, where would we have been without you!

We know that you will all join us in wishing Heather Holder much success in her new position.

Sensory Mapping Project

The Westmeadows and upper Moonee Ponds Creek community will have the opportunity to become involved in an exciting process called "Sensory Mapping".

Thanks to a successful grant application, the new shared pathway at Woodlands Historic Park will be evaluated. The main aim of this stage of the project is to raise community awareness and appreciation for this unique but little known district.

"We want to inspire, challenge and stimulate people to recognise and understand the significance."

Sensory Mapping assesses what a particular place has to offer to the five senses and records the feelings that the space evokes. "Sensory hits" are recorded, resulting in a picture of the place in relation to its areas of sensory value. Seating, planting, design and access can be planned and prioritised.

Would you like to join the Sensory Mapping Project?

Contact Bronwyn Riddell on 9333 2406 or bronwyn@mpccc.org

Spring Planting Season Wrap-up

We have had wonderful outcomes and fun along the creek this spring, as you can see from our Spring Wrap-up. One of the highlights was the inaugural Return of the Growling Grass Frog Festival, held at Jacana Wetlands (turn to page 4). MPCCC received an overwhelming response and a wealth of encouragement for this event. We hope to make it an annual event.

Through community support and participation in 2006, we have achieved the following:

- * 730 volunteers participated in
- * 39 friends group events,
- * 7,902 plants were put in the ground,
- * 8m³ of weeds were removed,
- * 115m³ of rubbish was collected.

Thank you for your fantastic efforts and enthusiasm! I hope to see you by the creek in 2007!

Stephanie Spathis, MPCCC Greening Officer.

Strath-Oak Planters

5 August

The August planting was abounding with youthful energy and enthusiasm, provided by the Oak Park Girl Guides and the 1st Strathmore Scouts. This was the first tree-planting experience for a number of the Guides, with one young lass happening upon a worm, whom she promptly named "Wormadilla". The Scouts proved very helpful in rolling up plant bundles, as well as planting lots of plants into the ground. They soon discovered that the Oak Park hill was perfect for "running up and rolling down" games. 86 plants were staked and guarded by 29 volunteers.

2 September

A warm steamy day was enjoyed by the 12 volunteers who attended the September planting day. The volunteers staked, guarded and jute-matted 65 plants. A skink was spotted by Elissa, who was no doubt enjoying the warmth of the day.



Isabella, Hayden and Alec enjoyed getting their hands dirty.



Moreland City Council

Friends of Westbreen Creek



Moreland City Council

6 August

On the 6th August, Judy Allen brought her wonderful creation – a Friends of Westbreen Creek Notice Board. The board lists the flora and fauna that you may see along the creek, and also has information about the creek, the Friends group and photos of previous volunteer events. The 12 volunteers all had a great day on site.

27 August

On the 27 August, six volunteers added 130 grassland species to the existing bed under the River Red Gums. They also hand-weeded six bags of weeds from around the existing plants.



Watch my fingers Mum!



Moreland City Council

Friends of Jacana Wetlands

12 August

The ever-present Black-shouldered Kite hovered above the 11 volunteers at Jacana Wetlands on the August planting day. The beautiful sunny weather was ideal for the planting out of the fabulous total of 260 trees and shrubs. We extend a welcome to Tim, a local resident who attended for the first time.



16 September

Blue sunny skies and Black-shouldered Kites once again set the scene for the September planting. Little Pied and Black-faced Cormorants entertained the 14 volunteers by flying back and forth between the wetlands. The very sweet Australasian Grebes floated upon the waters surface, which is their preferred feeding area, along with the shallow edges. 200 plants went into the same area as the previous planting. Carmen summed up the day perfectly. "I enjoyed it because I got to go to the creek". As did Joshua. "I enjoyed it because we were able to help the environment."



Lilian, Elissa and Carmen

Friends of Sacred Kingfisher

13 August



Many different tasks were undertaken by the 13 volunteers who arrived on this lovely sunny morning. 200 plants and 100 Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) in small cells went into the mulched revegetation bed. The Weeping Grass was planted around the existing Short-stem Sedge (*Carex breviculmis*). These speedy volunteers got through the planting activities so quickly, that there was 30 minutes left until lunch, so the entire group pitched in and cleaned up the area and hand-weeded around the *Carex*. Cameron collected lots of building rubble! Thanks Cameron.



Planting out Weeping Grass amongst the Short-Stem Sedge.

Gowanbrae Residents

20 August



Brothers Mario and Patrick both heartily declared that this August planting was just so easy! And that it was, on such a sunny day, although the Gowanbrae valley winds were lustily blowing. The 10 volunteers planted 200 plants into the existing revegetation beds on either side of the bridge. The growth rate of previous plantings is outstanding, and the August plantings will complement them beautifully. Andre shared with the group his lucky sighting whilst visiting Jacana Wetlands. A Water-rat! See Clippings on page 2 for further details.



Patrick and Mario carefully plant another *Lomandra* next to the Gowanbrae footbridge.

Brunswick South-West Planters

26 August

You may remember in the last edition of *Ponderings* I mentioned that the Brunswick South-West Planters had been nominated for a Regional Landcare Award and applied for a Volunteer Small Equipment Grant. Unfortunately the group missed out on the Landcare Award (the category they were nominated for was won by the Darebin Parklands Association), but we will keep our fingers crossed for the Grant. Once again, we will keep you posted.

An impromptu botanical lesson, along with planting, staking and guarding 100 plants was enjoyed by the 14 volunteers. Different species of Acacia were closely investigated to see which was flowering. The Silver and Hedge Wattles were in flower, along with Gold Dust Wattle. The Rounded Moon-flower (*Disphyma crassifolium*) flower buds were just forming, spectacular pink blooms will erupt soon. Some hand-weeding



The Brunswick South West Planters are a happy bunch.

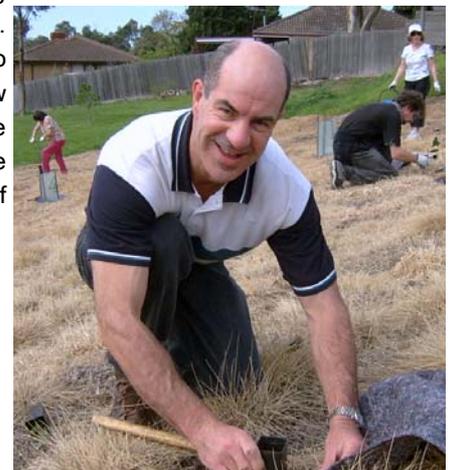
was also done, with 15 bags being the tally at the end of the day.



Boeing Reserve Troopers

17 September

Good on you Doug for coming to the planting after your 60th birthday! And a very warm day it was, with the fantastic turn-out of 24 volunteers all feeling parched and in need of a cool drink. Kira was helpful in this department, bringing the hard workers cups of water! She also found a beautiful baby dragonfly. 169 plants were planted, staked and (almost!) guarded at this new site funded by a grant from VicTrack. Doug and Steph have vowed to return to finish off guarding the new plants. New faces arrived on the day, thanks to Doug's encouraging welcome sign. Many thanks to Stephen Gow who grew the trees with the help of TreeProject.



Kelvin Thomson lends a hand.



Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek

26 August



The days planting was centred around an existing planting from way back in 2003 that was admired by all. The group reminisced about the day that Hugh's son planted the *Acacia paradoxa's* amongst the prickly weed Boxthorn. Apparently he was adamant that this was the best spot for them. The 10 volunteers (and Buster the dog) planted, staked and guarded 150 trees, shrubs and the lovely creeping *Clematis microphylla*.

Over a cuppa and a home-baked scone (thanks Julie and Kim!), the group fondly remembered Jane Koetsveld, who sadly, has recently passed away. Jane was one of the original Moonee Ponds Creek guardians, attending planting days as far back as 1994 with the then Broadmeadows council, and sharing her joy and laughter at the first Clean Up Australia Day event in Westmeadows. She will be missed by all and our thoughts go out to Ian and the girls.



Buster the dog is a regular at the plantings.



The Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek pose with a glorious Gold Dust Wattle. This is a lovely example of what a volunteer group can achieve: revegetation, satisfaction and friendship.

Friends of Lower Moonee Ponds Creek

23 September



The Friends of Lower Moonee Ponds Creek had another agenda for this day - weeding! The wonderful 8 volunteers who arrived on the incredibly windy Saturday afternoon collected a record amount of the vigorous intruders that have sprung up everywhere since the weather has begun to warm up. After this marathon hand-weeding session, 180 strappy, lime-green *Lomandra longifolias* were planted into the existing revegetation bed.

Thank you to Kaye Oddie for collecting those fantastic durable plastic buckets from the Queen Victoria Market. They are very sturdy and useful as watering and weeding buckets.



Our volunteers love to fill those bags with pesky weeds.



Friends of Strathmore Ponds

7 October



The resident Pacific Black Duck pair and their brood of ducklings oversaw, as is their usual way, the mornings planting. The weather was sunny and kind, which was a great advantage for the 12 volunteers who happily planted 150 plants at Strathmore Ponds. The Oak Park Girl Guides once again joined in, and they worked very hard. This was evident by lunchtime, as with ravenous appetites the Girl Guides stampeded the lunch table, causing Elissa (MPCCC Planting Supervisor) to duck for cover!

A point worthy of note was the amount of worms, ladybirds and centipedes on site, which all delighted the Guides.

Thank you to Bob and Sandra, who watered the plants in on the day. Thank you to Vince and Bob for returning to continue watering the plants. And thank you to our regulars, Lee and Andre, for their hard work too.



Stephanie and Bob. Bob and his water-pump help out at many MPCCC plantings.



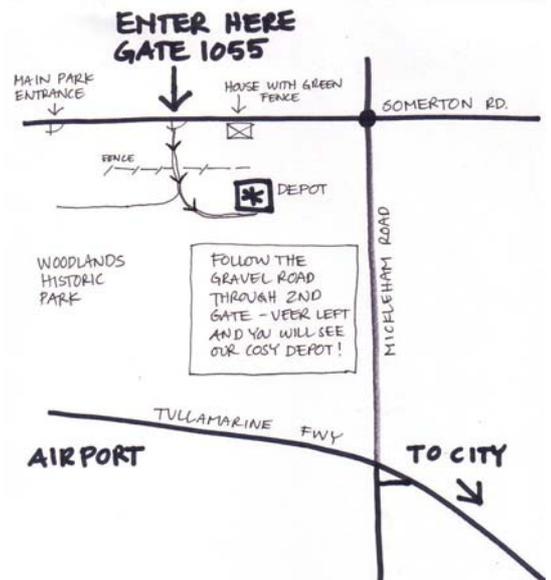
MPCCC CHRISTMAS PARTY

The staff and committee members of the MPCCC invite you to our annual Christmas Party.

Meet our new Co-ordinator, Heather Holder, and allow us to thank you for your fantastic voluntary efforts along the Moonee Ponds Creek for 2006.

We are looking forward to a fun and joyful Christmas celebration!

Friday 15 December
4.30pm onwards
@ Woodlands Historic Park
Parks Victoria Depot
1055 Somerton Road, Greenvale
Melways: 178 C6
RSVP by Friday 8 Dec to 9333 2406
or coordinator@mpccc.org



a dry spring



The Moonee Ponds Creek Water Monitoring Group returned to the creek to conduct our annual water monitoring for spring. Our results have highlighted just how dry this year has been. The water level was lower than in previous years, and the concreted sections had a large amount of algal growth. This is indicative of hot shallow water, the sort of conditions we might expect to find over summer, not spring. The flow rate was also one of the lowest we have recorded. Compared to previous October samples, the salinity (EC) was much higher due to the creek not being flushed with fresh rainfall, thus the salts become concentrated in the water.

Along with the differences in the physical and chemical aspects, we also found a big drop in the variety of bugs that we would normally expect to see at this time of year. Spring is generally the most exciting time of year for bugs, with large numbers and a wide variety, the result of an increased food supply. However this year we were restricted to the more tolerant species such as aquatic worms, snails, leeches, and Bloodworms (*Chironomus*). It will be interesting to see what state the creek is in when we sample in January 2007.

I will be taking some time off from the Moonee Ponds Creek Water Monitoring Group in 2007. Nonie Shepherd, one of our long-time reliable monitors, will be taking over the organisational role. Thanks to Nonie for helping out, and thanks to all the other water monitors who regularly attend: Gabrielle, Zack, Carolyn, Patricia and Jenny. The Water Monitoring Group meet on the second Sunday of the middle month of each season.

-Helen Suter

Helen Suter updates the Waterwatch results for Spring. Thank you Helen for co-ordinating the Waterwatch group, and doing such a wonderful job.

Would you like to join the Moonee Ponds Creek Water Monitoring Group?

Contact Nonie Shepherd at shepherd.nonie.nj@edumail.vic.gov.au

or MPCCC at coordinator@mpccc.org or 9333 2406.

seasonal sightings

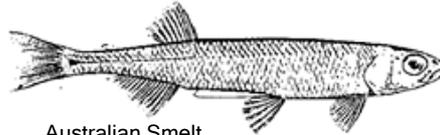
We welcome all of your interesting faunal and floral observations, be they big or small. If you would like to contribute a sighting, please direct to *Ponderings* Editor, Debbie Farmer, on 9333 2406 or ponderings@mpccc.org.

Bev Lambourne was delighted to see a pair of Grey Fantails in September. She hasn't seen this bird species in her area for quite some time, since 1971 in fact. Thanks Bev.

Whilst riding along Capital City Trail, Christine Matthews saw an Eastern Rosella and a Noisy Miner. And a walk through Royal Park was rewarded by 13 Rainbow Lorikeets. More unusual though, was Fred's sighting of a Spotted Pardalote. Thanks Christine.

Two large eels, 1m in length, have been spotted by Mark White directly beneath the sound tube next to Flemington Bridge station. The eels were in very shallow water, one swam into a shopping trolley and the other was hiding in weeds close to the creek bank with its tail sticking out. Mark has also seen large schools of Australian Smelt in the same area, as well as further

downstream towards Macaulay station. The introduced Mosquito Fish appear to be far outnumbered by Australian Smelt. Thanks Mark. www.nativefish.asn.au/smelt.html.



Australian Smelt

Carolyn Murphy has sent us in a list of her fauna sightings along the Oak Park section of the creek over the last 3 years. Some sightings include: a Water Rat and a lone Australian White Ibis at Nursery Corner Reserve, and flocks over around 100 Ibis sp. at the Oak Park Football Club. Thanks Carolyn.

Whilst walking at Jacana Wetlands, Wendy and Andrea kindly shared their sightings with us, a selection of which includes:

Clamorous Reed-Warbler, Golden-headed Cisticola, Martin sp., Grey Fantail, Richard's Pipit, Yellow or Buff-rumped Thornbill, Black-winged Stilt, Whiskered Terns, Egret sp., a wonderful chorus of Growling Grass Frogs basking in the sunshine, and a Brown Falcon being pursued by Magpies and Ravens. Thanks Wendy.

Whilst wanderings down at Jacana Wetlands, Ian Pritchard has seen some very interesting birds, some that are a little uncommon. Three Yellow-billed Spoonbills, one Royal Spoonbill and one Australasian Shoveler. The Australasian Shoveler is an interesting duck with a massive, spoon-tipped, dark-coloured bill that breeds from August to November. Thanks Ian.



Grey Fantail "fanning his tail"!

out and about

Brunswick Community History Group
"A Study of Merri Creek"
by Hilary Howes
Saturday 2 December
1.30pm

Also see a display of the Sydney Road excursion by the students of Princes Hill Primary School.

The Brunswick Community History Group meet on the first Saturday of each month.

@ Mayor's Room, former Brunswick Council Chambers, corner of Sydney Rd and Dawson St, Brunswick. Entrance is via the Counihan Gallery on Sydney Rd.

Francesca Folk-Scolaro
9387 1194

FREE

Endangered Golden Sun Moth Survey
Craigieburn Grasslands
Sunday 3 December
10.30am-12.30pm

Help map the distribution and habitat of these rare and amazing moths. Meet on site at 10.30am or carpool outside the MCMC office at 2 Lee St, Brunswick East at 10.00am.

Please register your intention to come by Thursday 30/11 and the on-site meeting place will be provided. For children and people who are less mobile, there will also be seed collection and processing of the moths food plant.

Brian Bainbridge
9380 8199
admin@mcmc.org.au
FREE

CERES
"Sculpting in Ferro-Cement with Paul Jesse"
Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 December

Who ever thought cement could look so good?

An introduction to the techniques and practices of sculpting in ferro-cement as utilised in the CERES Mosaic Gateway project.

There will be a strong emphasis on the basic technical knowledge.

@ CERES
The Gong House
8 Lee St
Brunswick East

9387 2609
reception@ceres.org.au

\$180/\$160 CERES

Solar House and Permaculture Garden Tour
Sunday 17 December
10.00am & 2.00pm

Tour the home of David Holmgren with Su who will explain how the house stays warm in winter and cool in summer.

Explore the gardens, orchards, animal and water systems with David Holmgren, co-ordinator of the permaculture concept.

@ Melliodora (Hepburn Permaculture Gardens)
16 Fourteenth St
Hepburn

www.holmgren.com.au
info@holmgren.com.au
03 5348 3636

\$25 for each session

Seymour Alternative Farming Expo
16, 17 & 18 Feb 2007
9.00am-5.00pm

Feel like a day out in the country? Even though the 650 exhibitors are presenting the world's best agricultural technology, this alternative expo still has plenty to offer to city-slickers.

Looking for a water tank or grey water system? Or are you interested in alternative building? You will find this information here, along with enormous tractors and cute kelpies.

@ King's Park
Tallarook St, Seymour

www.seymour-expo.com
03 5799 1211

\$14 adults/\$8 children