



# FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC.

## Newsletter – April 2018

### *President's Report*

It has been an extremely dry autumn, and the effects are very visible along Scotchmans Creek, and in Valley Reserve. One of the unfortunate side-effects of an extended dry summer period is the loss of plants planted last year – the first summer is always a vulnerable time for native plants. So far, losses don't seem to be too severe, but we need more rain soon!



We participated as usual in 'Clean up Australia' Day, based at Regent Street, and twelve volunteers removed 14 garbage bags of litter from the Mount Waverley wetlands, and next to Scotchmans Creek. The area looks much cleaner now, but litter management remains a big problem right down the creek corridor.

We have had our first Positive Aging Lifestyle (PALS) walk for the year – on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March. We went for a ramble through the Valley Reserve, and

over into the Mount Waverley wetlands. We were one of the first groups to cross the newly completed refurbished bridge across Scotchmans Creek near Regent Street – it had reopened just the previous day.

We have also had our first public meeting for the year – a very large turnout filled Alvie Hall to hear Peter Uhlherr talk about fungi in Valley Reserve. Peter is a self-taught mycologist, very knowledgeable about fungi and slime moulds, and he had his audience spellbound for the duration of his talk. As Peter has much more material to share, we will try to get him back for a future talk.

We are very proud of the schools activities we undertake during the year – it is always rewarding to show young people what a special place Valley Reserve is, and to help them explore the local environment. We also work with tertiary level students helping them to understand the complexities and issues around a small urban creek like Scotchmans Creek.

Our first schools activity for 2018 will be with Avila College year 10 this April. The students will undertake soil and water analyses along the creek and examine waterbugs from the Huntingdale wetlands. We have worked with Avila regularly over the last few years - we are always happy to work with schools where we can.

In my last report, I announced that we had received in principle support from Monash Council to designate Valley Reserve as a 'conservation reserve' consistent with council's Environmental Strategy. We are talking steps to follow up with council, to discuss and agree how this designation needs to be reflected in future planning for the management of the reserve and will keep you updated on progress.

Initial informal feedback suggests that the problem of dogs off lead in Valley Reserve has improved, but we will continue to monitor the situation. If you see dogs not on lead in the reserve, please call council as soon as possible.

That's all from me, and let's hope for some good autumn rain!

Tony Walker

## ***Planting Program for 2018***

We will start our program with a Friends planting in Valley Reserve on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June. We will be planting 800 tubestock plants which we will fund from our Group's reserve funds. This will continue the planting that we have done over the last few years in an area near to the main path west of the amenities block. Please come along and enjoy a companionable morning helping to maintain and enhance Valley Reserve.

In July we will have the assistance of staff from Novotel to help us plant next to the Glen Waverley Drain downstream of Crosby Drive. This planting will use Melbourne Water grant funds to purchase 2000 tubestock plants.

Later in July students from Holmesglen Tafe will help us plant 2000 tubestock plants next to Regent Street. This planting will also use Melbourne Water grant funds.

Finally our big planting on National Tree Day, Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July, will see us and the community plant 8000 plants in Fairway Reserve. Please put that date in your diary now and bring the family along for a wonderful morning with a great sausage sizzle for the workers!

This is a great way to introduce children to getting their hands dirty putting a small plant into the ground. Once they get tired of planting they can always make long snakes of the empty tubes which also helps with collecting up the tubes.

## ***Scotchmans Creek Report***

The main issue continues to be litter: plastic and more plastic in the form of bottles, bags and plastic sheets caught in trees. Confectionary wrappers and take-away containers were also found.

Sixteen different bird species were observed along the creek reserve which shows the value of these creek corridors to the native wildlife. Even small birds need a continuous corridor of trees or large shrubs to enable them to move about safely.

## Waterwatch Results & Reports – February – March 2018

Parameter	YSC010 Site 1A Fiander arm		YSC012 Site 1B Crosby arm		YSC020 Site 2 Regent Street		YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek	
	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18
Date	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18	18/02/18	25/03/18
Air temperature °C	18	22	18	22	21.5	20.5	21.5	21
Water temperature °C	17	20	17	21	19.5	18.5	19	19
pH	6.9 E	6.7 E	6.6 E	6.6 E	6.5 E	6.4 E	6.6 E	6.5 E
Oxygen concentration mg/l	3.8 D		7.4 G			3.6 D		4.1 P
Conductivity E.C.	400 F	330 F	110 G	150 G	210 G	190 G	200 G	470 F
Turbidity F.T.U.	14 E	40 D	8 E	15 G	12 E	43 D	13 E	37 D
Phosphorus, soluble ppm	0.042 F		0.114 D			0.049 F		0.020 G
Ammonium NH <sub>4</sub> ppm	0.20 P	0.00 E	0.04 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E
Stream Flow L/s	0.6	7.4	9.8	6.3	6.9	153.1	0.1	0.3
Habitat assessment/50	24 F	24 F	24 F	24 F	24 F	24 F	28 F	28 F

E=Excellent ■ G=Good ■ F=Fair ■ P=Poor ■ D=Degraded ■ N/M= Not measured N/A= Not applicable

### February

- There has been no rain for over two weeks, resulting in a very low flow in the Fiander Arm (site 1a, Scotchmans Creek) and a trickle in Valley Creek. The Crosby Arm (site 1b, Glen Waverley Drain) has had a steady low flow for the previous 2 weeks.
- Not unexpectedly under these conditions, we measured
  - Degraded oxygen level, increased (Fair) conductivity and Poor ammonium level at site 1a
  - Degraded phosphorus level at site 1b.
- Otherwise the measurements indicated Fair to Excellent water quality
  - Surprisingly, the ammonium measurements at both downstream sites (Scotchmans Creek and Valley Creek) were 0.0 ppm.
- The macroinvertebrate counts at the two upstream sites were quite different.
  - At site 1a (Scotchmans Creek) there was no in-stream vegetation, and the sample was small and dominated by the creatures tolerant of poor water quality, and rated Poor.
  - At site 1b there was more in-stream vegetation than usual and the sample was dominated by very large numbers of Damselfly and Dragonfly larvae, which are sensitive to water quality, and was rated Fair.

### March

- A cool change brought 15 mm rainfall the afternoon before this site visit, after 7 dry weeks.
  - The Glen Waverley Drain (Site 1B, Crosby arm) flowed continuously at about 0.5 ML/day throughout the dry period, while the other tributaries slowed to a trickle or less.
  - The downstream site at Regent St (Site 2) showed signs of high flow over the banks, but had reduced by the time of our visit. The flow was still much higher than the upstream tributaries, because the wetlands were still draining.
  - Valley Creek was flowing quite slowly.
- Scotchmans Creek upstream (Site 1a) and downstream at Regent St (Site 2) was stained a dilute black, which shows as Degraded turbidity measurements.
- Oxygen levels (measured at the downstream sites) were low, rated Degraded or Poor.
- The other water quality measurements were Fair to Excellent.

- The invertebrates sample from Scotchmans Creek (at Regent St) was not as abundant as it was in January, but it did include a 7 cm Yabby and was rated Good. The sample from Valley Creek was rated Poor.

For access to the full reports, the data collected and the habitat photos, view the waterwatch page on our web site.

## ***Guest Speaker for our May meeting on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May***

Dasarath Jayasuriya is employed at the Bureau of Meteorology and will give us a presentation titled “Floods and Droughts”. He will explain how climate change and variability affect the availability of water which in turn, impact ecological sustainability. Food for thought for us all.

See the attached flyer for more information.

## ***We are now on Facebook***

Visit us at [facebook.com/fscvr](https://facebook.com/fscvr) and please “like” us.

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> April	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> May	Guest Speaker - Dasarath Jayasuriya – Floods and Droughts	Alvie Hall at 7:30 pm
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> May	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> June	Friends Planting in Valley Reserve	Amenities block from 9:30 am
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm

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