



FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC.

Newsletter – April 2019

President's Report

Well, we are now into Autumn, and at last we've had some rain! We need a lot more – the creek has been running very low, and Valley Reserve is looking as dry and parched as I have seen it since the end of the millennium drought.

I have been talking about our 'State of the River' report for a few months now, and at last it is complete - you can view or download it from our web site (Publications page). Carlie Dann, our River Officer has been the lead author of the report, and I am very pleased with the quality and scope of what she and her co-workers have been able to achieve. We have already had very positive feedback on the report, and Melbourne Water is interested in showing it to other Friends groups as an example of what a Friends Group can do.

The report gives a really good snapshot of the Scotchmans Creek corridor, its environmental value, the water quality, and the urban bushland along the creek. It looks at some of the creatures we find along the creek and that live in the creek. It also looks at the problems urban creeks like Scotchmans Creek face from litter, pollution and erosion.



We have made a number of recommendations for future action by Monash Council, Melbourne Water and the State Government aimed at improving the amenity and conservation values of our creek. In compiling the report, we were constantly reminded of the high value that the Monash community puts on our local creeks, and the need for everyone to play a part in looking after them.

The old bridge over the creek at Regent Street

Copies of the report have gone to Monash Council, Melbourne Water, other Monash Friends Groups, and Yarra Riverkeepers. A copy has also gone to our state Lower House member of parliament, Matt Fregon (who is an FSCVR member).

Carlie Dann will be away, so I will present the report in her place, to our members and everyone interested, at our public meeting in May.

I urge all members to take a look at the report and tell us what you think. I hope that we can repeat the report in a few years, and that we'll be able to see how our creek corridor has improved.

Tony Walker
President, Friends of Scotchmans Creek and Valley Reserve

PALS Event in March – Explore Scotchmans Creek with FSCVR

Nine members of the community came along for a walk through Valley Reserve followed by a simple morning tea with members of the committee. The weather was ideal and although there were not many flowers to show those that came enjoyed themselves.

Guest Speaker for our March meeting

By popular demand, we invited Peter Uhlherr back to continue his excellent presentation on fungi and this time to talk about the interesting world of the slime-mould. The excellent turn out of members and other Friends were not disappointed by the many superb photos and the information presented.

Planting Program for 2019

We have been speaking to the companies that help us with our smaller plantings and have arranged dates with them. We have also decided that we will continue our Friends planting in Valley Reserve and hope to hold this on Sunday 16th June.

Our big planting for the year will again be on National Tree Day which will be on Sunday 28 July. This year we will be planting on the south side of the creek in Fairway Reserve.

Please put these two dates in your diary so that you can come along and help us plant.

The recent rain, although not enough, has helped to dampen the soil and prepare the ground for planting.

Waterwatch Results & Reports – February – March 2019

Parameter	YSC010 Site 1A Fiander arm		YSC012 Site 1B Crosby arm		YSC020 Site 2 Regent Street		YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek	
	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19
Date	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19	17/02/19	24/03/19
Air temperature °C	19.5	25	20	25	23.5	19.5	24	20
Water temperature °C	17.5	20	19	21	20	18	18.5	18
pH	6.9 E	7.2 G	6.8 E	6.7 E	6.6 E	6.8 E	7.0 E	6.7 E
Oxygen concentration mg/l	4.1 P		2.9 D			2.7 D		3.9 D
Conductivity E.C.	230 G	1080 D	180 G	210 G	380 F	270 F	280 F	320 F
Turbidity F.T.U.	102 D	90 D	14 E	29 P	90 D	24 P	120 D	37 D
Phosphorus, soluble ppm	0.010 G		0.300 D			0.049 F		0.020 G
Ammonium NH ₄ ppm	0.02 E	0.07 G	0.02 E	0.40 D	0.10 F	0.40 D	0.00 E	0.00 E
Stream Flow L/s	0.5	0.9	20	6.1	23.5	19.0	0.1	0.03
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

- Scotchmans Ck, upstream (site 1a), was at very low flow and was very muddy.
 - The turbidity rating was Degraded and the oxygen level rated Poor, other phys/chem indicators were Good or Excellent.
 - The aquatic vegetation was sparse and hard to see, so not unexpectedly the waterbug count was disappointing, rated Poor.
- The Glen Waverley Drain (site 1b) was flowing well and was clear, with good aquatic vegetation in the pools.
 - However the oxygen level was very low, rated Degraded, and the phosphorus level was very high, also rated Degraded.
 - The waterbug sample was interesting, with an abundance of damselfly larvae and dragonfly larvae (which are rated Sensitive to water quality). But the total number of waterbugs was low, and the variety a bit low (see the Total Bug Score), resulting in a stream rating of Poor.
- Scotchmans Ck, downstream at Regent St (site 2), was also muddy as expected, but had noticeably higher conductivity and ammonium level than the upstream sites.
- Valley Ck (site 3) was down to a trickle and rather muddy, but apart from that the basic phys/chem results were Fair to Excellent.

March

There has been very little rain for the last month, causing unusually low creek flows. A 2 mm rain event the day before this site visit improved the flows slightly.

There have also been 2 occurrences of a fluorescent green contamination from the Glen Waverley Drain to Regent St, seen by us on 23rd Feb and 9th March. The colouration persisted for some days because of low creek flows. The incidents may be pranks performed with excessive quantities of a tracer dye.

Despite these possibly adverse circumstances, the creeks yielded the usual summer test results:-

- Scotchmans Ck, upstream at site 1a, was flowing very slowly and was very cloudy (presumably from a pipe burst, or site runoff), and also tested with a very high conductivity.
- Glen Waverley Drain (site 1b) was clear, with normal summer flow, but had a high ammonium level.

- Downstream, Scotchmans Ck at site 2 was far less cloudy than upstream, but also had a high ammonium level, and a very low oxygen level.
- Valley Ck (site 3) was just a trickle between its pools, showing Fair to Excellent chemistry except for Degraded oxygen level and turbidity.
- The invertebrates survey at site 2 had a good variety including some sensitive species. The good variety achieved a Good rating, despite low abundances.
- The Valley Creek sample had only Tolerant and Very Tolerant species, in some abundance, but the sample was rated Poor.

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

Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 3rd March

Each year the mix of different types of litter is slightly different but the ever present plastic drink bottle is still a problem. I had hope that the removal of plastic shopping bags from supermarkets would help the environment but there were still several to be cleaned up. Confectionary wrappers, take-away packaging and single use sauce bottles were still to be found.

Speaker for our May meeting on Wednesday 15th May

Our President, Tony Walker, will present the Friends’ ‘Scotchmans Creek - State of the River’ report which is now complete. Tony will explain what we have learned over the years about the creek; how the creek is changing; and how we can support the creek.

See the attached flyer for more information.

Dates to Remember	Event	Notes
Saturday 27 th April	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Wednesday 15 th May	Presentation by Tony Walker - State of the River Report	Alvie Hall at 7:30 pm
Saturday 25 th May	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm

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