



FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC.

Newsletter – April 2021

President's Report

It has been wonderful getting back to a new COVID-normal and seeing so many of you at our work parties, Water Watch sessions and our recent afternoon tea in the Valley Reserve! At our Clean up Australia Day site we had ~26 volunteers and collected ~11 bags of rubbish (very similar to last year). We will have a presentation at our May meeting, "A walk down Scotchmans Creek", by our Vice-President, Rex. It would be lovely to see you there. (More details below)

Over the past few months, the committee has been working on a *Vision and Statement of Purpose* for Valley Conservation Reserve. We've included these in the Newsletter below. Please let us know if you have any feedback. They seem to have been well-received by Council and we hope they will be useful for Council's development of an Integrated Site Plan and Management strategy for Valley Reserve, both currently underway.

Monash's Sustainability group is also running some nature walks, including a night walk, in Valley Reserve as part of the City Nature Challenge. The link below gives more information if you're interested.

<https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Leisure/Upcoming-Events/City-Nature-Challenge>

Finally, congratulations to our committee members, Tony and Sally Walker, who received a certificate of high commendation in the sustainability category at the recent 2020 Sir John Monash Awards. Their enthusiastic and dedicated service on the FSCVR committee for over 20 years has made a visible difference to our reserves, and it is wonderful to see this recognised.

All the best.

Kallista Sears, President

Establishment of the KooyongKoot Catchment Alliance

Gardiner's Creek – originally named KooyongKoot by the local indigenous people – rises north of Blackburn and flows through a number of council areas before it joins the Yarra River. A number of enthusiastic community groups have begun working together to advocate that the accountable

authorities for the creek work together with relevant community groups, to develop a well-funded, long-term management strategy for the whole of Creek and catchment.

The Alliance is working closely with and has the active assistance of executives of the River Keepers Association. To date discussions have been held with the Mayors of Councils and local state and federal members. All have offered in principle support for the concept. Next steps are the development of a vision for the catchment and associated plan to get a strategy development underway.

Scotchman's Creek is the largest tributary to Gardiners Creek, draining ~40% of the total catchment area. Hence the FSCVR committee is taking an active interest, attending meetings and agrees, in principle, that a consistent clear strategy for the whole catchment is desirable.

Vision and Statement of Purpose for Valley Conservation Reserve

FSCVR Strategic Vision

We envisage Valley Conservation Reserve as a thriving, high-quality bushland reserve with outstanding remnant areas, healthy waterways and a rich diversity of local indigenous flora and fauna. It is treasured by the community, providing a peaceful refuge from suburbia, opportunities for passive recreation, and a focus on activities which educate and instil a connection with nature.

FSCVR Statement of Purpose

Valley Reserve exists primarily as a conservation bushland reserve with a focus on preserving and enhancing its remnant vegetation, of which there are few examples left in the City of Monash. It is utilised for conservation education, and to provide opportunities for schools and the community to experience bushland, and participate in passive recreational activities which encourage an appreciation of our natural environment and history.

Guiding management principles:

- All proposed developments for the reserve are respectful of, and consistent with Valley Conservation Reserve's Statement of Purpose and Vision Statement.
- Priority is given to preserving and enhancing the reserve's conservation values.
- It is managed as a bushland area with natural pathways (no hard surfaces) and no lighting.
- Its remnant areas are well protected.
- Its conservation and biodiversity values are monitored and continuously improved.
- The ecological condition of its waterways (Valley Creek, wetlands and marshes) is improved (e.g., through Water Sensitive Urban Design principles and restoration of a more natural flow regime)
- Passive recreational activities, and events which educate or instil an appreciation of the natural environment are encouraged.

- Active recreational activities, such as organised sports, adult exercise stations, and skate parks are not permitted.
- The reserve is not utilised beyond its carrying capacity.
- The reserve is protected against inappropriate development, both adjacent to and within Valley Reserve.
- A broad spectrum of the community is engaged through a range of forums (e.g. interpretive signage, flyers, activities and events) to promote greater awareness of our natural environment, native flora and fauna.
- Appropriate management of dogs and cats.

References:

Monash Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026 (Monash Council)

Monash Open Space Strategy October 2018 (Monash Council)

Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2018-2028 (Monash Council)

Flora of Melbourne

State of Valley Reserve (FSCVR, 2019) -

[http://scotchmancreekfriends.org.au/newsletters/State%20of%20Valley%20Reserve%20February%202020%20\(FSCVR\).pdf](http://scotchmancreekfriends.org.au/newsletters/State%20of%20Valley%20Reserve%20February%202020%20(FSCVR).pdf)

Scotchmans Creek – State of the River Presentation

Wednesday 19th May

Over the past four years, in addition to our regular water watch sampling and monitoring of water quality, the Committee has systematically inspected and recorded observations of physical condition of the creek and immediate environs. Each year we intend to produce an updated “State of the River” report.

At the May Friends Meeting Rex Dusting, our vice-president, will give an illustrated presentation on the state of Scotchmans Creek.

We will discuss his latest “State of the River” report. This provides insight into improvements over the years through a “Walk Down the Creek” presentation.

This will be our first meeting with a speaker for several months. Please come along on Wednesday 19th May to find out what we have been doing in lock-down.

We expect to be able to provide some refreshments, but it would be helpful if you could bring along your own cup for tea or coffee.

Please see the attached flyer for more details

Waterwatch Results & Reports – February – March 2021

Parameter	YSC010 Site 1A Fiander arm		YSC012 Site 1B Crosby arm		YSC020 Site 2 Regent Street		YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek	
	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21
Date	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21	21/02/21	21/03/21
Air temperature °C	19.5	17	19.5	17	19.5	19	19.5	19
Water temperature °C	19.5	17.5	19	17	19.5	17	19	17.5
pH	6.8 E	7.0 E	6.7 E	6.7 E	6.8 E	6.8 E	7.0 E	6.7 E
Oxygen concentration mg/l	5.9 F		4.7 P			3.2 D		4.8 P
Conductivity E.C.	440 F	600 P	200 G	200 G	490 F	440 F	200 G	210 G
Turbidity F.T.U.	10 E	18 F	10 E	10 E	10 E	15 G	37 D	22 P
Phosphorus, soluble ppm								
Ammonium NH ₄ ppm								
Stream Flow L/s	5.6	70.0	8.8	42.0	4.2	105.0	0.0	0.5

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

February

Comments:

- The chemical test reagents have not been replenished recently, because of the interruption to the 2020 program. Consequently, we didn't do phosphate tests because one reagent has run out, and we didn't report the ammonium test results (all 0) because the reagents are over-date and suspected of becoming unresponsive.
- The chemical test results we did obtain are typical of summer testing at these sites.
- The waterbug sample from site 1a was disappointing, with an overabundance of creatures tolerant or very tolerant of poor water quality. This result is probably due to a lack of in-stream vegetation for their habitat.
- The waterbug sample from site 1b was better and more interesting, with numerous sensitive creatures, and some which we rarely see (3 freshwater mussels and a beetle larva). However, we didn't find enough to rate the site better than Poor.

March

Comments:

The weather was fairly dry for the month since our previous site visits, until 23 mm rainfall 8 days before this visit, and light showers during at the time.

Our waterbug survey ratings are usually highest in late summer, and this time were Fair for Scotchmans Ck and Very Good for Valley Ck.

- Oxygen concentrations were low (typical of summer), Degraded in Scotchmans Ck and Poor in Valley Ck.
- Conductivity was high in Scotchmans Ck, both upstream and downstream, as often happens in summer (rating Poor to Fair).
- Turbidity was high in Valley Ck, which was flowing very slowly.
- Phosphorus and ammonium measurements are not reported because of problems with the reagents.
- Otherwise, the chemical measurements were Fair to Excellent.

- The waterbug samples at both downstream sites contained large numbers of Tolerant and Very Tolerant creatures, and a variety of Sensitive creatures, resulting in Fair and Very Good ratings.
- We note that our water flow estimates are just that, very approximate estimates made with floating twigs and tape measures (and sometimes just by looking), and intended as stream health descriptions, not runoff data. Our first estimate of flow at site 2, at a wide slow flowing channel, was 10 times the report from the automatic gauge just upstream. After remeasuring the width and depth more carefully (under similar flow conditions) we have reduced the discrepancy, but it is still large.

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

Past Events – Friends Afternoon Tea on Saturday 20th March

We had a lovely afternoon for our annual get together which due to Covid-19 was not a barbecue but an afternoon tea held at the Education Hub in Valley Reserve.

25 members and their friends came together for the first time in many months as we had no barbecue at the end of last year. There was so much to catch up on and we could all look forward to the rest of this year and a more normal program of events.

The Education Hub proved very convenient for us all to spread ourselves out without other people crowding round us.

Dates to Remember	Event	Notes
Saturday 24 th April 2021	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Wednesday 19 th May 2021	Meeting with a speaker	Alvie Hall 7.30 pm
Saturday 29 th May	Work Party in Valley Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Sunday 20 th June	Friends planting in Valley Reserve	

FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC

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