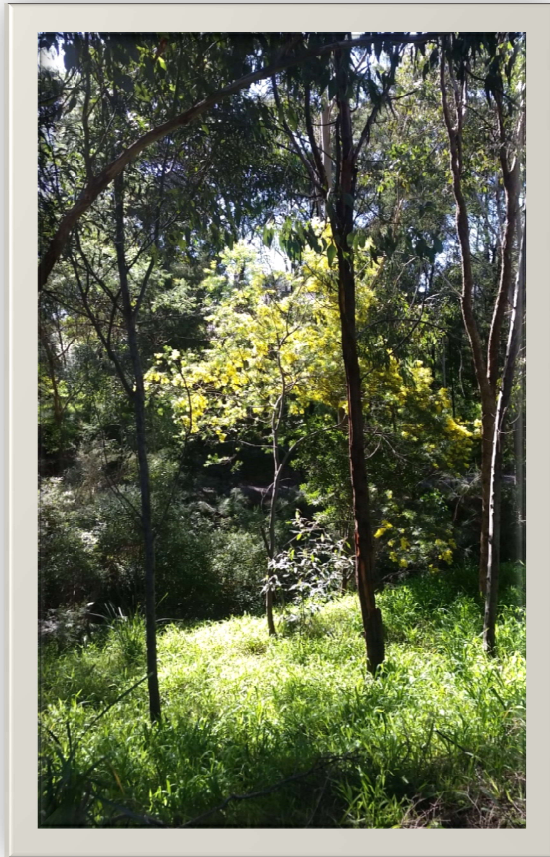


SCOTCHMANS CREEK REPORT AUGUST 27 & 29, 2020

Prepared by Rex and Rosemary Dusting



SECTION 1: WAVERLEY ROAD to CROSBY DRIVE

Start is at Waverley Road near Holmesglen TAFE following the Crosby arm, diverging to include the Fiander reach of Scotchman's Creek, and then continuing to Crosby drive.

SECTION 2: CROSBY DRIVE to BLACKBURN ROAD

SECTION 3: BLACKBURN ROAD to WAVERLEY ROAD

Downstream via the Melbourne Water retarding basin and wetland, continuing to Waverley road near Regent Street intersection.

SECTION 4: WAVERLEY ROAD – FORSTER ROAD

Along path adjacent to the Blue Cross private land to Forster Road.

SECTION 5: FORSTER ROAD to STEPHENSONS ROAD OVERPASS

SECTION 6: STEPHENSONS ROAD OVERPASS to STANLEY AVENUE

SECTIONS 1-4: August 29 2020, 10.30 -11.30 am Weather: 15° C Fine, light breeze.

We walked Sections 1-4 of Scotchman's Creek on the morning of August 29, 2020. This description covers the walk downstream:

It was a busy day in the park. People noted using the margins of the path for social distancing purposes.



General observations:


- Early Spring budding and/or flowering of many species means very attractive in places
- Due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions on movement, the whole reserve was in heavy use with cyclists, joggers and walkers exercising locally
- Paths have 0.5 m incursions each side due to people moving out there to maintain social distancing – impact on vegetation in places, which has been broken or lost
- Evidence of increased mountain bike use on the north side (unformed) path, with construction of some earth jumps
- Disappointing to see two large and beautiful eucalypts with recently scratched graffiti on trunks and limbs
- Heartening to observe several bank areas recently cleared and new plantings, and thriving rushes.
- Creek had low-medium water levels and flow rate, with mostly clear water.
- Plastic waste and litter in upstream sections more evident near Crosby drive than in the downstream sections but overall perhaps not as bad as other times – recently flushed down by rain
- Invasive weed growth – seasonal change in variety. Noted fumitory, arum lilies, ivy, nasturtiums, wandering jew, panic veldt, and mirror plants (and others unknown to us)

		
 <p>Clockwise: A sample of weeds at various points on the walk: Arum lilies, smoke weed, wandering jew, veldt (competing with lomandra), ivy, mirror plant in creek</p>		

SECTION 1: WAVERLEY ROAD to CROSBY DRIVE

Photo-point 1 Crosby Arm entering from under Waverley Road.

Creek entering from under Waverley Road was clear. Verges and banks are covered in prolific weed growth but in places evidence of slashing and planting. Arum lilies appear to be increasing along this section along the banks.

AUGUST 2019	AUGUST 2020
	

Clematis well established on both sides of creek.



Beautiful large rush





Trampled and broken plants at path edge – increased usage?



Healthy, weed-free areas a delight

Creek water varying in turbidity and flow long this section. At time of this walk only a very few water birds using this section.



Noted damage to trunk of large eucalypt (*E. Camaldulensis*?) on north side of creek.



Photo-point 2: Scotchmans Creek at Crosby Drive

Water immediately adjacent to Crosby Drive reasonably clear, (right) but the turbidity was variable along this section. Compare with January photo left.



This section always seem to have a lot of plastic litter caught in the vegetation along the banks.

SECTION 2: CROSBY DRIVE to BLACKBURN ROAD



Exmample of re-vegetation area – this one is near Crosby Drive

2A: SCOTCHMAN'S CREEK: Fiander Arm upstream from junction with Crosby Arm.

This is not an exhaustive list of species coming into flower, but we noted olearias, hakeas, wattles and hardenbergias flowering.



Photo-point 3 –Fiander Arm from bitumen pedestrian bridge

Creek less turbidity flowing downstream (upstream views top row, downstream view bottom row). . Clear enough to see the creek floor. Last August particularly poor – perhaps less building work upstream now?

Poor vegetation management in this area. As before, noted banks copiously covered in ivy, wandering jew, nasturtiums, and other weeds

<u>AUGUST 2019</u>	<u>JANUARY 2020</u>	<u>AUGUST 2020</u>
		
		

2B: DOWNSTREAM OF JUNCTION of FIANDER ARM and CROSBY ARM

Photo-point 4 towards Blackburn Road (upstream side)

August photos (Below left 2020, below right 2019) both show high turbidity of creek in this section. Different colouration. We did not notice significant changes to the undercut erosion.

Creek approaches litter trap and diversion in this area – perhaps more sluggish flow explains the turbidity?



Litter trap clean. Boom not in use – lately have noticed it seems to be usually out of use and lying on bank?



BIRDS IN SECTION 2

Currawongs ,Kookaburras, Noisy miners (dipping in and out of creek)

SECTION 3: BLACKBURN ROAD to WAVERLEY ROAD

BIRDS IN THIS SECTION: Not very many water birds in evidence. A few pacific black ducks,a white-faced heron, magpies, and perhaps a hardhead. Others heard were currawongs, magpies, wattlebirds (bathing), noisy miners, rainbow lorikeets.

Noted heavy use of path and foot traffic widening of the pathway. Very popular section of the reserve.



Photo-point 5 – Looking towards Blackburn Rd over sediment pool (downstream side)

Water in large sediment retarding pool opaque light green colour. As seems usually to be the case, this larger pool is supporting some water bird life, but only 1-2 black ducks and wood ducks observed foraging at edge. Two white-faced herons. Very few in open wetland area. We have lately observed many purple swamp hens and other birds at the Herriot Drive wetland reserve. Preferred habitat?







AUGUST 2019	JANUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020
		
		

Photo-point 6 – Upstream from pipetrack causeway

AUGUST 2019	JANUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020
		

Photo-point 7 - Lawrence Road pedestrian bridge up and downstream

Looking upstream (below top row) and downstream (below bottom row). Frog calls noted – pobblebonks and other common calls

JANUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020
	
	

North side of wetland near Blackburn road still has many invasive sweet pittosporum trees and a lot of ivy, with bracken amongst other weeds. This area is being used by bike riders who have built jumps.



Noted damage to the beautiful salmon gum that is growing on south side beside the concrete path. It is scratched on the trunk and also up inside the tree.



In January we noted melaleucas, casuarinas and eucalypts on south side of wetlands path under attack from ivy.

One of the casuarinas lost a large limb in the storm of August 27, 2020 with ivy still attached.



Photo-point 8: Regent street playground pedestrian bridge up and downstream




Frog calls could be heard from bridge (pobblebunks). Water reasonably clear with underwater aquatic plants visible from bridge. Several black ducks and a pair of wood ducks here.

Upstream views (below top row) and downstream views (below bottom row).

AUGUST 2019	JANUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020
		
		

Photo-point 9: Valley Creek in-flow

Valley Creek in-flow point was not clear but flowing with run-off

AUGUST 2019	JANUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020
		



Work has been carried out on the bank. New plants in evidence. No plastic litter observed.

Re-vegetated bushland (shrubs and trees) in the area either side of creek close to Waverley road/ Regent Street intersection continues to do well (see photos below).



January 2020



August 2020 – (not exactly the same view)

SECTION 4: WAVERLEY ROAD – FORSTER ROAD

Private land currently up for sale. Very busy and popular section of the track. Many cyclists and walkers taking advantage of the fine day under stage 4 lock-down. An invaluable community resource.



Drain entry point from under Waverley road fairly clean. Water flowing - appeared clear.

This section never seems to have plastic litter. Presumably it is kept clean as it flows through private land.



Photo point 10: Elbow bend near Aged care residence up and downstream

Creek in this stretch looked picturesque with clear running water. Looking upstream



In this section, there are several places where rocks aid the health of the creek. See photo below - upstream turbid, downstream clear.



SECTIONS 5-6: August 27, 2020, 10 -11.30 am Weather: 14° C Fine, breezy.

We walked on both sides of the creek. Evidence as elsewhere of heavy use of the paths by walkers, recreational cyclists, joggers and dog-owners This was a Thursday morning but there were noticeably more people out exercising than usual, due to lock-down stay-at-home order and this park obviously being within many residents' 5 kilometre zone.

Photographs illustrating the changing nature of the creek environment as it varies throughout Sections 5 & 6.



Many native species coming into flower in Sections 5 & 6.



SECTION 5:FORSTER ROAD to STEPHENSONS ROAD overpass



At the entry point on Forster Road the creek was flowing, with no aroma (as was noted in December) and not a great deal of litter.

The un-made path on the south side of the creek is very popular with walkers. It affords lovely views of the creek from the higher banks. Unfortunately there is evidence that this side is popular with mountain and motor bike riders who have caused some damage by creating new tracks and riding through tracks through recently planted areas. Council notified via Snap Send Solve 27 August 2020.



Photo taken between Stephenson's Rd and Stanley Ave.



Photo taken near Forster Rd entrance

Noted the large banks here in Section 5 are very green, mostly with weedy growth.

An opportunity for rehabilitation with native vegetation??

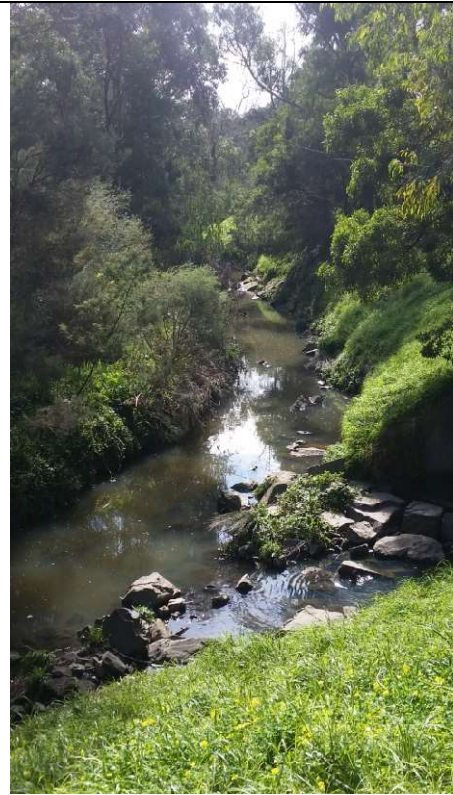


Photo point 11:– ‘telegraph pole’ pipe crossing

Path side vegetation good. Weeds on creek banks. Creek turbid here with low flow.

AUGUST 2019	DECMEBER 2019	AUGUST 2020
		

Vegetation along the concrete path near Forster Road was noticeably better than last report (summer). Competition with weeds in places



BIRDS IN SECTION 5: Currawongs, magpies and noisy miners

SECTION 6: STEPHENSON'S ROAD OVERPASS to STANLEY AVENUE

AS noted previously, this section has lots of maturing trees and mid-storey growth, which appears to provide good avian habitat, despite loud freeway noise.



At the picnic table there was an unsightly disturbance to the path margins (due to improvement works?) as well as evidence of vegetation trampling and loss at the creek verge. The area is now very open. Perhaps ease of access has invited people in to enjoy the view of the creek.



On the north side near Stanley Avenue there are two or three un-made tracks. Parts of this area have been recently used by recreational cyclists (and a motorcyclist?) with the results shown below.

