

# **SCOTCHMANS CREEK REPORT FEBRUARY 15, 2021**

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## **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 1-6: February 15, 12-2pm Weather fine 22 deg, still.**

This description covers the walk downstream starting at Waverley Road near Holmesglen. Authors are happy to accept advice regarding plant identifications!

General observations:

- Late summer after good rainfalls (La Nina year) means the reserves look green and healthy overall.
- The whole length of the trail was busy with locals exercising, it being Day 3 of the third Melbourne lockdown with 5 km limits and 2 hour exercise windows. Cyclists of all types, walkers, joggers and families with prams and scooters.
- Paths still have 0.5 m incursions each side due to social distancing but some recovery
- Creek generally had low-medium water levels and flow rate, mostly clear in appearance.
- Plastic waste and litter in upstream sections again more evident near Crosby drive than in the downstream sections
- No noticeable deterioration in creek bank at erosion hot spots
- In-creek, lower and upper bank-sides have prolific weed growth in some places Noted: ivy, fumitory, sticky cleavers, nasturtiums, tradescantia, panic veldt, and another with huge triangular leaves (name unknown to us). Arum lilies not flowering, so not so obvious this time. Some sweet pittosporum. Not necessarily a complete list!



The creek as we don't like seeing it!



## **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. In some places weeds in the creek itself were choking the flow. Generally level was low and flow very slow although creek was reasonably clear. Plastic litter in creek evident the length of this section.





BIRDS: At time of this walk no water birds using this section but mudlarks, noisy miners, magpies and butcherbirds in evidence in bordering bushes and trees.

FLOWERING: *Brachyscome*, *Cassinia*, *Goodenia ovata*, large eucalypts)





### Photo-point 2: Scotchmans Creek at Crosby Drive

Water immediately adjacent to and upstream of Crosby Drive was reasonably clear. The turbidity was far less along this section compared with other occasions.

 A photograph of a small, clear stream flowing through a grassy area. The water is dark and still, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The banks are covered in tall grass and some small plants.	 A photograph of a stream flowing through a wooded area. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding trees and foliage. The banks are covered in grass and some small plants.
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### SECTION 2: CROSBY DRIVE to BLACKBURN ROAD



Some new plantings (near Crosby Dve) - a bit thirsty.

Gravel track along Crosby Arm is bordered by lots of clematis, hakeas, bursarias, poas and lomandras. Weeds down on lower banks are far worse than in the verge. Creek clarity similar to Section 1, with some plastic litter and weeds.



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

**Photo-point 3 –Fiander Arm from bitumen pedestrian bridge**

Upstream views top row, downstream view bottom row. . Clear enough to see the creek floor. Poor vegetation management in this area. As before, noted banks copiously covered in ivy, tradescantia, nasturtiums, and other weeds

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Fiander Arm – creek similar, low flow but clear. Creek bed rocks visible. Some native(?) aquatic plants growing near pedestrian bridge. See below.



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

### **Photo-point 4 towards Blackburn Road (upstream side)**

Unable to photograph at this point due to path closure caused by Melbourne Water safety works at Blackburn Road litter trap. Preservation of some trees noted.





### **SECTION 3: BLACKBURN ROAD to WAVERLEY ROAD**







Very popular section of the reserve, as usual, and in heavy use. Stand of lillipillies at overpass at Blackburn road appears very healthy. Trees on verge near hospital have some ivy growing up trunks and threatening their health.



**BIRDS IN THIS SECTION:** Dusky moorhens, Darter in water and some noisy miners, magpies and pigeons near path.

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

Sediment pool just downstream of Blackburn road has significantly more growth of aquatic plants than noted previously with much reduced free water surface. Water was dark colour. The pool is supporting some water bird life, noted 2-3 dusky moorhens and a darter. Frog calls here.

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Large salmon gum seems to show some signs of bark healing after graffiti attack as noted in last report.



**Photo-point 6 – Upstream from pipetrack causeway**

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

Noted healthy riparian growth of natives – persicaria and juncus spp. Very quiet – no water birds or frogs observed.




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

Upstream views (top row) and downstream views (bottom row). Very quiet. Several black ducks. Creek was turbid and greenish in colour. Almost no flow.

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**Photo-point 9: Valley Creek in-flow**

Valley Creek in-flow point very low flow and was barely visible through growth. Copious aquatic plants visible at surface, especially near Valley Creek in-flow – see below (Is this the invasive parrot feather weed?) No plastic litter observed.



Weeding work was being carried out on the bank by Melbourne Water personnel supervising 6-7 people in the 'Work for Victoria' program. One member identified this plant (using an app) as square-stalked willow herb. Tiny mauve flowers.





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). There has been noticeable growth with good December and January rain.



Jan 2020



August 2020



Feb 2021



#### **SECTION 4: WAVERLEY ROAD – FORSTER ROAD**

This section is private land recently sold to a developer, apart from 10 metre strip next to creek retained by Monash Council. We noted the pegs in place for the future bike/walking track.

Creek was quite clear and flowing as it exited the tunnel under Waverley road.



We are concerned for the fate of some lovely eucalypts on the land purchased by the developer. See below.

Mysteriously near the creek, in the vicinity of the future bike path, some eucalypts have letters marked in white paint D, E, F. Purpose unknown.





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

Creek in this stretch had fairly clear slowly flowing water.

Photos looking upstream. A large eucalypt branch had fallen in the creek.

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Downstream from here, where this section narrows the land is owned by council. The nice bushland planting just prior to reaching Forster Road was healthy (by and large) and makes a pleasant section to walk in. Mixed planting of goodenias, poas, tea-trees, eucalypts, rushes.





## **SECTION 5: FORSTER ROAD to STEPHENSONS ROAD overpass**

We walked the concrete path side (north side). Busy with cyclists and walkers .Creek entry under Forster road is unsightly. Water was clear – low volume and flow. From there on the track-side environs are pleasant although various weeds are problematic in different places. Some verge sections are very attractive with clematis, bidgee-widgee, poas and lomandras. Creek lower banks are weedy and often unsightly.

BIRDS IN SECTION 5: Currawongs, magpies and noisy miners.



Last August we noted mountain bike damage on the south side of the creek in recently planted areas. Although trails are now dry and perhaps less jarring than when seen cutting through mud, there appears to be some activity still continuing.





**Photo point 11:– ‘telegraph pole’ pipe crossing** Path side vegetation good. Weeds on creek banks. Creek clear with low volume and slow flow.

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FLOWERING: Eucalypts, olearia? and a pale lemon wattle.





## **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 the creek was still clear and dark in colour. (There are lots of tea-trees upstream from this). No water birds observed. The path-side verges are unsightly here and would benefit from re-planting, as they are yet to recover from the works disturbances noted last report.



The concrete drain section was very shallow flow –apparently an ideal spot for currawongs to bathe!

The remaining section up to Stanley Ave makes for a pleasant walk, especially on the bark track separate to the cycle path.





