



FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC.

Newsletter – February 2026

FSCVR acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we work in, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways.

President's Report

2026 – Begins with drought

As I write, it's almost the end of January, and there has been virtually no rain this year! Everything is looking very dry and parched, reminiscent of 2009. Let's hope that last year's plantings survive – the first summer after planting for native plants is always the hardest, as their roots are not yet as deep as they need to be. Monash council will do what watering they can, but I fear we'll have some replanting to do come winter.

Melbourne's climate has always been a pattern of wetter and dryer years driven by complex systems in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. We are still learning more every year about what drives our weather, even as we are busy changing it by our actions.

Let's hope we get some wetter weather in February – we need it!



Annual Get Together

We have decided to go back to a Barbecue in Valley Reserve this year, on Saturday 14 February, and I'd like to invite all our members not only to come along, but to bring a friend or neighbour as well – it's a great way to catch up and meet people. Details are on the flyer accompanying this newsletter.

Acacia seeds with a black Scotchmans Creek in background - possibly debris from recent fires

What's coming in 2026

It looks like being a busy year with schools, scouts and tertiary students all keen to participate and learn about our local environment. If you'd like to be involved in this area, please contact us at info@scotchmanscreekfriends.org.au – we'd love to talk to you and see where you can help.

It's a lot of fun, and a great way to learn about the local environment and pass on that knowledge to young students. (Note: you'll need a current Working with Children Card.)

We'll have our usual weeding sessions every month, starting in February. Again, we need more people to help us make a difference and to care for our beautiful reserve.

Our waterwatch program for 2026 has already started as you can see from the report in this newsletter. We've been carrying out this program since 2005 – over 20 years (with a break forced by Covid!).

As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, the water management works needed in Valley Reserve will begin soon. This will be a multi-stage project, which hopefully will reduce the amount of erosion all too visible in the upper part of the reserve. By reducing erosion, the project should also reduce the large amount of silt/sand being deposited in the lower part of Valley Creek – especially visible around the lower bridge.

Clean Up Australia Day

Don't forget Clean Up Australia Day on 1st March. We'd love to see as many of you as possible. The work our volunteers do on that day makes a real difference to the Scotchmans Creek corridor.

Tony Walker

President, Friends of Scotchmans Creek and Valley Reserve

Friends Get Together BBQ Saturday February 14th

Come with a friend to our BBQ for FSCVR Friends members on Saturday 14 February 2026 – there will be sausages, veggie burgers, salads... Please RSVP by 11th Feb. More Information on our website and flyer.

Work party

Our first work party for the year is on Saturday 28th February. Meet at the Valley Conservation Reserve amenities block for weeding at 1:20 pm. Please bring gardening gloves and a trowel.

Clean up Australia Day Sunday March 1st

Our group will meet at the Regent Street Playground from 9:30am on Sunday 1st March for Clean Up Australia Day 2026 - more details on our website and notice board flyers.

Presentation at our March Meeting Wednesday March 18th

We plan to have Geoff Lay come to our March meeting to talk to us about the very important Fungi. Meeting starts at 7:30pm. Please bring a cup if you would like tea/coffee. See flyer for more information.

Waverley Road Wetlands Spillway Construction Update

For further information about the project or any disruptions, the project team at Melbourne Water can be contacted via email at: Waverley.Spillway@melbournewater.com.au

Waterwatch Results & Reports – January 2026

Parameter	YS010 Site 1A Fiander arm	YS012 Site 1B Crosby arm	YS020 Site 2 Regent Street	YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek
Date	25/01/26	25/01/26	25/01/26	25/01/26
Air temperature °C	17	17	20	20
Water temperature °C	18.5	19.5	18	18
pH	7.1 G	6.8 E	6.9 E	6.9 E
Oxygen concentration mg/l			1.8 D	4.7 P
Conductivity E.C.	577 P	459 F	647 P	406 F
Turbidity F.T.U.	20 P	17 G	41 D	36 D
Phosphorus, soluble ppm			0.088 P	0.042 F
Ammonium NH ₄ ppm	0.00 E	0.15 F	0.40 D	0.00 E
Stream Flow L/s	2.0	26.3	14.1	0.67 (estimated)

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

Macro Invertebrates Results

		YSC020 Site 2 Regent St	YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek
	Bug score	Number found	Number found
Very Sensitive			
Caddisfly larvae	7	1	0
Sensitive			
Damselfly larvae	6	7	30
Dragonfly larvae	6	2	1
Freshwater mussel	5	1	0
Freshwater yabbies/crayfish	5	0	1
Water Mites	5	3	0
Tolerant			
Beetles/Dytiscid beetles, Whirligig beetles	3	1	0
Leeches	3	12	11
Snails (freshwater)	3	30	30
Flatworms	3	3	5
Very Tolerant			
Mosquito larvae	2	0	20
Fly larvae	2	3	2
Freshwater segmented worms	1	10	5
Blood worms	1	30	5
Total Number Found		103	110
Total Bug Score		45	32
Stream Condition		Good	Poor



Dytiscid beetle



Fly larvae



Freshwater Yabby

Comments:

- The water looked black, we think due to ash from bushfires in Victoria.
- Chemical results typical of the low flow conditions were: Low flow, high turbidity and high conductivity. The sample from site 2 (YSC020, Regent St) had high conductivity, not seen since July 2023 (660 µS/cm).
- We sample the invertebrates rather often, about 6 times a year at each site, including visits by school and TAFE classes. We used a less aggressive netting method to reduce the possible damage to the aquatic vegetation.
- The invertebrates samples rating is Good for site 2; the last time it rated Good was back in March 2024.

For access to the full reports, the data collected and the habitat photos, view the Waterwatch page on our website. Contact Fred or May if you wish to join in – Email: info@scotchmanscreekfriends.org.au

Summer in Valley Conservation Reserve & Scotchmans Creek Corridors

January/February is Wurundjeri Season Biderap, Dry Season. Many insects can be seen during this season feeding on pollen, breeding and during Waterwatch sessions we find them in the water as larvae/nymphs and on the riverbanks and verge having emerged.

March is Wurundjeri season Luk, eel season. During this season eels in the Birrarung (Yarra river) migrate downstream. Eel can live for around 100 years not breeding until later in life – a good reason for keeping our waterways clean, free of pollution and rubbish to give indigenous aquatic life the best chance in reaching maturity.



Wallaby Grass on Scotchmans Creek & Valley Creek verge

While now is a good time to remove weeds it is very important to wear gardening gloves, for many reasons. Some plants may cause skin irritations caused by tiny hairs on leaves like the plant pictured.

Hope to see you at our work parties and events where you can help give back to the environment.

Not a member? Join up – your contribution will be greatly appreciated.



You can contact Monash council on Ph. 9518 3555 for any issues, report an overfull bin, information on dog off-leash park locations and hints on preventing strays – particularly important for protecting wildlife.

Sustainability team can also be contacted at sustainable@monash.vic.gov.au

For injured or vulnerable wildlife, Wildlife Victoria can be contacted on ph. 8400 7300

Dates to Remember	Event	Notes
Saturday 14 th February	Friends get together BBQ	Near the playground 11:30 am
Saturday 28 th February	Work party in Valley Conservation Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Wednesday 18 th March	Meeting with speaker	Alvie Hall at 7:30 pm
Saturday 28 th March	Work party in Valley Conservation Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm
Saturday 18 th April	Work party in Valley Conservation Reserve	Amenities block at 1:20 pm

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