



Tanjenong Tales

FFDC Newsletter July 2022

Edition no. 68

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President's Report - Welcome to the 68th edition.

Planting season is well underway at present, and in partnership with a number of local community groups and both Knox and Maroondah Councils, we've conducted two very successful plantings where over 8,500 indigenous plants have been returned to the corridor in Bayswater and Croydon. Both events were well attended, with over 500 community members turning up to help in total. We've been successful in receiving three grants recently, totalling over \$70,000. The funding covers a variety of projects, including the trial of goats for revegetation works in Koomba Park, the Queens Jubilee planting and hollow log nest creation. We have a number of planting events still to occur before the end of 2022, so please keep an eye out for them, including the revegetation of the goat trial site in Koomba Park, where 4,000 indigenous plants will be returned to this location.



Goats in the enclosure in the north section of Koomba Park

In September, we will be conducting a Member's Day planting and celebration, where we are inviting all members to come along and celebrate the work of the group, and help put in a couple of boxes of plants. Keep an eye out for this event.

Annual memberships due

A reminder that annual membership fees are due. If you have joined and paid membership fees since 1 January this year there is no need to pay again, we will carry forward your membership to 30 June 2023. Your membership fees help us cover the cost of plants at our many planting events.

Please click on this link for information on [how to pay](#).

Anthony Bigelow - President



The organising team for National Tree Day at Tarralla Creek

Save Lake Knox campaign

Over 1000 objections have been received by Knox Council for the two permit applications by the State Government (Development Victoria) for the Lake Knox site. Subsequently a public online meeting will be held by Council where this matter can be discussed. If you would like to attend, please register your interest by 9am Monday 15th of August here: <https://www.knox.vic.gov.au/pcc>

National Tree Day planting event

Well done to the 300+ people who turned up on National Tree Day (31 July) at Tarralla Creek in Croydon to help, it was wonderful to see such a huge ground swell of community support. 4500 indigenous plants planted in 45 minutes. We think it's the fastest community planting we've ever been involved in. The lockdowns at this time of the year in 2020 and 2021 may have contributed to the turnout of so many people. A big thank you to our community partners Friends of Tarralla Creek, Friends of Eastfield Park, Croydon, Rotary Club of Bayswater and Bliss and Wisdom Foundation Australia. A special thank you to the Bushland team from Maroondah City Council for the site preparation and for CRISP Indigenous nursery for supplying the plants.

World Environment Day planting event

World Environment Day 2022 saw over 250+ people attend our community event with partner Rotary Club of Bayswater. This was our first planting event for 2 years due to the COVID lockdowns. Over 4000 plants were planted in just under 90 minutes, an amazing effort by the local community.

The event was started by Julie Coombes, a Wurundjeri woman, with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony.

The list of people to thank this year is very long, and includes the Bliss and Wisdom Foundation Australia, Wantirna Heights Girl Guides, Friends of Lake Knox Sanctuary, Knox Environment Society and Greening Knox.

A big thank you to Bayswater Fire Brigade-CFA for bringing along the team again and using one of their tankers to water in the plants

A special thank you to Knox City Council for providing funding for the event, and in particular to the Bushland team for all of their amazing work setting up on the day and preparing the site and placing the plants.



National Tree Day at Tarralla Creek in Croydon



World Environment Day planting event in June

Tree Hollows project

Our grant application for this project with Melbourne Water was successful. We have now moved into delivery mode with two project partners, Ironbark and Treetac, both of whom specialise in the creation of tree hollows using a technique known as “hollowhog”. The plan is to have the hollows created by early spring in Winton Wetlands in Wantirna in time for the hollow nesting season. Very exciting!

The overall project objective is to arrest the declining tree hollow nesting habitat along the creek for kookaburras, cockatoos, galahs, parrots, gang gangs, powerful owls etc. Quite a few large trees with hollows along the creek have been blown down in recent years by the increasing intensity of storms. This has led to increased competition for nesting sites for the above species and potentially less breeding in the area.

Queen's Jubilee Planting grant

We have been successful in obtaining a grant of \$17,000 from the “Planting Trees for The Queen’s Jubilee” fund, a new program to celebrate The Queen’s Jubilee in 2022. The grant money will be shared with Rowville-Lysterfield Rotary and used to plant ‘canopy’ trees along Dandenong Creek and its tributaries during 2022 and 2023. More to come.

Save our Sugar Gliders Project

During 2021 and early 2022 we had 50 glider boxes installed along the creek in Heathmont.

During our glider box census in April, we observed 37 gliders across 48 boxes stretching all the way along the creek. 2 boxes remain to be located from the original 50 installed.

We have actual glider occupancy in 13 of the 48 boxes - 27% Including boxes with obvious signs of glider occupation, we have total occupancy in 39 of the 48 boxes - a staggering 81%!!! It’s so pleasing to see that the gliders are thriving along this stretch of the creek.

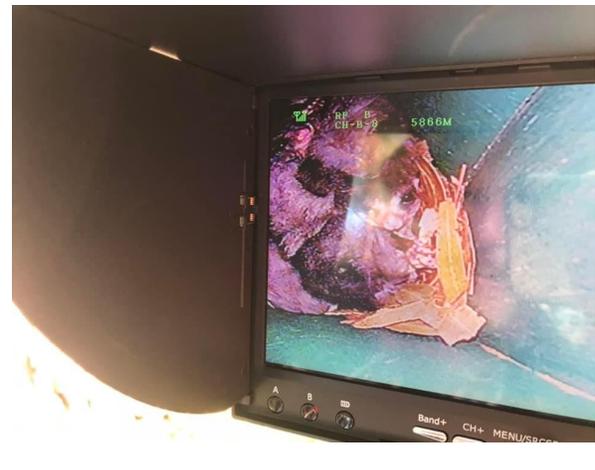
We have another 50 boxes to be installed including in gardens of some Heathmont residents who have contacted us to do so. We hope to be able to complete the installations with our project partner Abzeco, by the end of 2022.

EODC2 update

Melbourne Water has commenced work for stage 1 of a weed control program at Bungalook creek (near confluence of Dandenong Creek) in Heathmont. The initial stage will focus on the removal of blackberry and other exotic weeds, followed by the removal of large woody trees such as Desert Ash and Box elder etc.



Gang Gang Cockatoo in Heathmont - courtesy Nalini



Sugar glider in a box photographed with our census camera

Saving Our Skinks Project

The COVID restrictions has meant the project has been on hold for most of the past 2 years. We are working with Maroondah Council to create more skink habitat in Connelly Reserve in North Bayswater and will keep you updated on developments.

Drain Sock Trial

Unfortunately, the site for the drain sock trial under the railway bridge in Bayswater has not been approved by VicTrack, which is typical of that organisation, never a consideration for the environment.

We are now working with Knox Council exploring two other options in Mint Street Wetlands in Wantirna and Suffern Avenue in Bayswater. Melbourne Water has kindly allowed us to extend the term of the grant once again.

Koomba Park Weed Control project

Some good news, the joint grant application between ourselves and Friends of Dandenong Valley Parklands has been approved for \$32,500 over two years from Melbourne Water, to implement this project using goats for weed control in Koomba Park in Wanterina. More details to come.

The Friends of Dandenong Valley Parklands have grown 3000 (goat friendly as in they won't be eaten by the goats) plants in their nursery for the site, and will be aiming to plant them in late Winter and early Spring, so we can look forward to running another planting event for this year. We'll keep you posted.

City Nature Challenge - Friday 29 April to Monday May 2

Congratulations are in order for John Cull (FFDC Committee) for reaching the Top 10 iNaturalist observers for the City Nature Challenge for Greater Melbourn in 7th position. An extraordinary effort, well done John.

DNA testing in Dobsons Creek

Melbourne Water took samples for DNA testing in late March in the Dobsons Creek catchment at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges. Dobson's Creek is a tributary to Dandenong Creek. The results of the testing won't be available until August. The sampling will be testing for a range of species including platypus, so we'll get a good snapshot of what's living in this area.

The exciting news is there are reports of a recent sighting of a platypus by one of the landholders in the area. We are hoping the DNA testing can confirm this. The last reported sighting of platypus in Dobson's Creek, prior to this one, was in the early to mid 2000's.

Collaboration with Monash University

The 3rd year Bachelor of Science students have now completed their subject called Applied Ecology, which is a core unit in the Ecology and Conservation major. In doing so, they have provided FFDC with a wealth of recommendations around water ecology, weed management, habitat creation etc in the form of short videos. We greatly appreciate this important research and aim to put it to good use in the coming years.

Dates to mark on your calendar:

FFDC Annual General Meeting - Thursday 8th September 7:30 to 8:30pm via Zoom. If you would like to attend, email us at ffdc1999@gmail.com and we will send you an invite.

Spotted

Gang Gang Cockatoos in Heathmont. This is very pleasing to see as it has been reported they were badly impacted by the bushfires in 2019 and 2020, resulting in them being classified as endangered.

This newsletter is published by First Friends of Dandenong Creek Inc.

Next edition of the newsletter is in November 2022, please email us your ideas for articles or stories of interest by the end of October 2022 to: ffdc1999@gmail.com.