



# Tanjenong Tales

## FFDC Newsletter November 2019

Edition no. 60

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### President's Report

Welcome to the 60th edition of Tanjenong Tales. It's never a dull time at FFDC these days, and after a very productive year, 2020 is shaping up to be an exceptional year for the group.

With a full contingent of 12 committee members, Charlie Miller and I have effectively "swapped" positions within the group, with Charlie taking on the Vice President's role. We welcome Georgie Christopher, Robert Lee and Hannah Skipworth as new Committee members and we look forward to their contributions over the coming years. Robert is also a member of the Bliss and Wisdom Society, who have been actively supporting FFDC for many years.

I wish to extend on behalf of the committee a heartfelt thanks to Charlie Miller, who has provided inspirational leadership of FFDC for the last 10 years, and continue to look forward to his amazing contribution. We say farewell to Jude Dwight and thank her for her enormous contribution to FFDC.

The success of the group is always hard to measure against a standard benchmark, however this year's achievements include 14,000 indigenous plants being returned to the Creek corridor, where more than 600 community members turned up to help plant them. We have received over \$63,000 worth of grants, and have embarked on a second Skink survey season in search of the Swamp and Glossy Grass Skinks. Two new projects will be starting in 2020, titled 'Save our Sugar Gliders' and 'Creek CrimeStoppers'. The SoSG project aims to provide a 10 year management plan for our remaining sugar glider populations. Creek CrimeStoppers aims to continue our work in pollution monitoring, and will be another first for a community group in Australia once enacted. Stay tuned.

Wishing everyone a safe and Merry Christmas and all the best from everyone here at FFDC for 2020.

**Andrew Bigelow - President**



Sugar Glider



Tongue orchids out along the creek in Spring

**Update on Pollution Monitoring**

The second report from Bio2labs (with funding from the Lord Mayors Charitable Association) was released in July. This report continues on the great work done by Dave Sharley and Steve Marshall at Bio2labs, on analysing both soil and water samples taken along the creek, and highlights the significant high levels of pollution from a number of different locations; especially from Old Joes Creek, which feeds in from the Bayswater Industrial Estate and Heatherdale Creek in Vermont. We've sent copies of the report to representatives at both Knox and Maroondah Councils, the EPA and Melbourne Water and look forward to feedback from them.

We are also very pleased to announce that FFDC has been successful in receiving a Federal grant to the value of \$19,816. This grant will be used to deploy Real Time monitoring sensors that Bio2labs will install for the group along the creek between Vermont and Bayswater. We believe this is the first type of deployment by a community group anywhere in Australia of this technology.

A big thank you to Dave and Steve from Bio2Labs for helping to devise the project, and a special shout out to Jude Dwight who came up with the concept.

**Knox Small Grant**

FFDC successfully applied for a small grant of \$2,380 from Knox City Council to cover the cost of banding facilities for our events. The items include a 3 sided marquee, 3 teardrop flags and a banner all with FFDC branding. We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of Knox City Council.

**How can I help heat-stressed animals this summer?**

You can help native wildlife cope with extreme heat in summer by placing bowls of water out around your garden to help keep them cool and hydrated. Use the garden hose to spray mist into trees and shrubs to create cooler niches that they can use to escape the heat.

For small wildlife such as possums or birds that appear lethargic, non-responsive or sick, using protecting gloves, pick the animal up using a towel or cloth and place it in a well-ventilated, cool container on a damp towel. Provide a small bowl of water for it to drink.

You can also gently spray the animal with room temperature water to cool it down. If you think it necessary contact your local vet for further advice.



Pollution monitoring equipment installed in stormwater drains



Eastern Long-Necked turtle along the creek

**Colchester Reserve planting**

On Saturday 17 August 100 volunteers turned up to plant close to 3000 plants using Hamilton diggers.

A big thank you to everyone including Jackson Taylor MP and Marcia Timmers-Leitch - Councillor for Collier Ward at Knox City Council. With thanks to the Bushland crew at Knox for site prep and our friends at KES Knox Environment Society, Greening Knox, Healthy Rivers Healthy Bay and the Bliss and Wisdom Society. We've now hit 14,000 plants replanted along Dandenong Creek over 4 events in one calendar year. An amazing effort.

**New FFDC bank account**

We have moved our bank account to the Bendigo Bank as they are more aligned with our aims and are far more supportive of community group such as ours.

The new account details are:

BSB: 633000

Account No: 168912657

Account name: First Friends of Dandenong Creek

**Annual General Meeting**

The FFDC 2019 AGM was held on Thu 12 September at Maroondah Federation Estate in Ringwood. We are pleased to announce that we have a full contingent of 12 committee members for 2019/20 with Anthony Bigelow taking over as President of the group from Charlie Miller who is now Vice President. We welcome Georgie Christopher, Hannah Skipworth and Robert Lee as new Committee members and we look forward to their contributions over the coming years.

We say farewell to Jude Dwight and thank her for her enormous contribution to FFDC.

The committee for 2019/20 is:

Anthony Bigelow - President

Charlie Miller - Vice President

Lex Edmond - Secretary

Chris Macfarlane - Treasurer

Barbara Richards - Membership Secretary

General Committee:

Bill Jones, Matt McCabe, Bruna Iotti, Jesse Oehm, Hannah Skipworth, Georgie Christopher and Robert Lee.



Colchester Reserve planting event in August



Winton Wetlands in late Spring



**Saving Our Skinks Project**

To date, we have found 136 skinks (and 42 frogs) under concrete roof tiles at four locations along the creek on seven different occasions. Unfortunately none of the skinks are those that are rare in the Eastern suburbs: The Glossy Grass Skink and The Swamp Skink. Therefore, we will try three different locations in the current round of Skink Surveys that is expected to start on November 30. We also have been down to the Mornington Peninsula in October hoping (without success) to identify some of the Skinks. If you'd like to be involved with the next survey/s, send me an email(ffdc1999@gmail.com) and I should be able to include you! Lex Edmond.

**EODC 2 - Update**

Due to the success of Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek (EODC) Program 1 Melbourne Water is now transitioning into the next five-year program which is in the early consultation and planning phases.

The main themes for EODC2 are:

1. Pollution reduction - Estimated \$5M program featuring: Monitoring and citizen science, enforcement and compliance, and pollution treatment.
2. Biodiversity and habitat - Estimated \$7M program featuring Billabongs, wetlands, parks and floodplain improvements to rehabilitate habitat for native and threatened flora and fauna species.

**Queensland Container Deposit Scheme**

More than \$100 million has been paid out to schools, charities and households throughout Queensland as the container fund scheme celebrates its first birthday.

One billion containers have been deposited since the container refund scheme began on 1 November last year, with more than 330 designated container refund points (CRP) rolled out throughout the state.

Container Exchange (CoEx) manager Adam Nicholson said the scheme had been fully embraced by the public. "We knew it was going to be popular, but we didn't think it would be to this level to reach one billion

"In Brisbane alone, we just crept over the 400 million mark, so we're amazed with that figure." He said people of all ages have been drawn to the scheme.

"For children it's all about saving and building up their money and when they come to the exchange they can see through the window to see how the bottles are sorted," Mr Nicholson said.

Just more compelling evidence that container deposit schemes are hugely successful in Australia. It beggars belief that the Victorian Government still refuses to introduce one.

**Dates to mark on your calendar**

**FFDC Community Workshop - Saturday 4 April**  
Maroondah Federation Estate - details to be confirmed

**World Environment Day planting - Saturday 6 June**  
Site and details to be confirmed

**National Tree Day planting - Sunday 2 August**  
Site and details to be confirmed

**Stop Press!**

We're thrilled to announce we've been successful in obtaining two Federal Government grants under the Communities Environment Program to the value of \$38,000. The projects titled 'Creek Crimestoppers' and 'Save Our Sugar Gliders' will be rolled out in 2020. We have also received a support grant of \$1,000.

**Spotted**

Several Eastern Long-necked turtles along the creek near Wantirna.

This newsletter is published by First Friends of Dandenong Creek Inc. We acknowledge the support of Maroondah Council for providing the printed copies.

Next edition of the newsletter is in March 2020, please email us your ideas for articles or stories of interest by the end of February 2020 to: [ffdc1999@gmail.com](mailto:ffdc1999@gmail.com).