



FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMANS CREEK AND VALLEY RESERVE INC.

Newsletter – April 2020

President's Report

We hope that all of our members and their families are keeping well and coping with the social distancing restrictions due to COVID-19. It has certainly been a difficult and stressful period. In these times I feel even more blessed to live in an area with such beautiful reserves, suburban trees and green spaces.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our working parties and events for the time being due to the COVID-19 restrictions. We are keeping close track on developments and considering our options for winter plantings.

Despite this we had quite a busy start to the year. We are delighted that both Valley Reserve and Damper Creek Reserve were formally recognised as conservation reserves at Council's February meeting. This will help protect them for future generations. We would like to formally thank Cr Rebecca Patterson and recognise her hard work in making this possible. This will also involve updating the management plans for both reserves and we plan to keep in touch with Council to see how we may contribute.

Our "State of Valley Reserve" report is finally complete and has been well received. It summarises the social, conservation and cultural values of Valley Reserve, its history and some of the current threats/issues to its ongoing protection. The report can be downloaded from our website under Publications: <http://scotchmanscreekfriends.org.au/publications.htm>

We once again hosted our Clean Up Australia Day site and had 25 volunteers help collect 11 bags of rubbish! We also participated in a RMIT program aimed at monitoring pesticide levels in our creeks. It will be interesting to see the final results.

Please take care and feel free to get in touch if you have questions.

Kallista Sears

President, Friends of Scotchmans Creek and Valley Reserve

Dogs in Valley Reserve – Woodland Track

When new signage was put up in Valley Reserve as part of the SPARC project the Woodland Track was named and designated as a no dog area. Unfortunately the small No Dog signs were defaced and dog owners continued to take their dogs along the Woodland Track.

After much correspondence and a trial of No Dog stickers on the defaced signs, Council has recently installed the large signs that are shown in the photos below.

		
West entrance	North entrance	South entrance

Planting Program for 2020

Our planting program is on hold at the present due to the COVID-19 restrictions. We are hoping that those restrictions will ease in time for us to resume our program as the plants have been ordered and grown for us. We will keep you informed with our newsletter and by email.

Past Events

Our guest speaker for our March meeting was unable to attend due to ill health.

But we were able to conduct our March PALS event before restrictions came in force. We took a small group for a morning walk through Valley Reserve and into Fairway Reserve. This was followed by morning tea in Valley Reserve.

Waterwatch Results & Reports – February – March 2020

Parameter	YSC010 Site 1A Fiander arm		YSC012 Site 1B Crosby arm		YSC020 Site 2 Regent Street		YVA100 Site 3 Valley Creek	
Date	23/02/20	22/03/20	23/02/20	22/03/20	23/02/20	22/03/20	23/02/20	22/03/20
Air temperature °C	17	14	17	14	17	14	17	14
Water temperature °C	16	15	16.5	15	17	15	16	15
pH	7.3 G	7.1 G	7.0 E	7.0 E	7.1 G	6.9 E	6.9 E	7.1 G
Oxygen concentration mg/l	6.7 G		7.0 G			4.1 P		5.5 F
Conductivity E.C.	420 F	550 P	400 F	240 G	340 F	470 F	300 F	500 P
Turbidity F.T.U.	17 G	32 D	10 E	8 E	20 P	12 E	28 P	126 D
Phosphorus, soluble ppm	0.046 F		0.104 D					
Ammonium NH ₄ ppm	0.07 G	0.07 G	0.10 F	0.00 E	0.70 D	0.03 E	0.02 E	0.07 G
Stream Flow L/s	7.1	8.4	16.0	4.7	17.0	9.3	0.6	0.1
Habitat assessment/50	22 F	22 F	28 F	28 F	26 F	29 G	28 F	28 F

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

February

Comments :

- The chemical test results are considerably better than last month, probably benefitting from the rainstorm early in the week.
 - Most of the results are Fair to Excellent.
 - Turbidity at both downstream sites was Poor, phosphorus in the Crosby arm was Degraded, ammonium in Scotchmans Ck downstream (below the wetlands) was Degraded.
- Invertebrate results were not as good as expected (the best results usually occur at this time of the year).
 - The Fiander arm now has some overhanging vegetation in the water, this yielded an abundance of tolerant and very tolerant creatures but no sensitive creatures. Although the variety was low, the abundance achieved a Fair rating.
 - The Crosby arm has patches of in-stream vegetation despite the sandy bottom of its deep pools having shifted since our last visit. We found a few sensitive creatures including a small yabby (1 cm pincers to tail) which is shown below. However both the abundance and variety scores were below thresholds and the site rating was Poor.

March

Comments:

- Light drizzle fell just at the start of our testing, after 2 weeks without rain. This started Valley Creek flowing, rather muddily, and may have caused the muddiness of the flow from the Bogong Reserve drain just above site 1a. The water turbidity and conductivity at these sites was correspondingly high.
- We could not test for phosphate because one of the test reagents has all been used. (A replacement has been requested).
- There was much more soft vegetation growth than usual, in the water at site 2 (Scotchmans Ck) and around the pools in Valley Creek (site 3).
- Waterbug variety was not sufficient to rate either site 2 or 3 above Poor.

For access to the full reports, the data collected and the habitat photos, view the waterwatch page on our web site. Please note that our Waterwatch activities have now been cancelled by Melbourne Water due to COVID-19.

Late Autumn in Valley Reserve

We have now come into the hard time of the year when there are fewer flowers and more windy weather resulting in stressed trees losing branches. There are still flowers to be seen. The Hop Goodenia with its yellow flowers is on display throughout the year. The mauve flowers of the Kangaroo Apple are beginning to be seen. The Sheoaks are in flower.

For those that venture down to Scotchmans Creek the occasional Eastern Snake-necked Turtle may be spotted basking on a rock beside the creek.



Black Sheoak – male flowers



Eastern Snake-necked Turtle

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