



Ponderings

Seasonal newsletter of the
Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee
Winter 2016 | Issue 51

advocate educate interpret participate rehabilitate revegetate

BRUCE THE 'WATER CHASER' SAVING PRECIOUS WATER FROM GOING DOWN THE DRAIN

You may have seen Bruce around the local area, Yarra Valley Water's star 'water chaser', otherwise known as a Water Optimisation Engineer. Like most water companies, the largest water retailer in Melbourne does not like to see water go to waste.

The amount of water being lost through leaking pipes and drains can account for millions of litres of water being wasted each year. Yarra Valley Water has a number of ways to try and reduce as many leaks as possible across its network.

Talking about his work tracking down leaks Bruce said that one successful method to detect leaks over the last 10 years has been monitoring the drainage system.

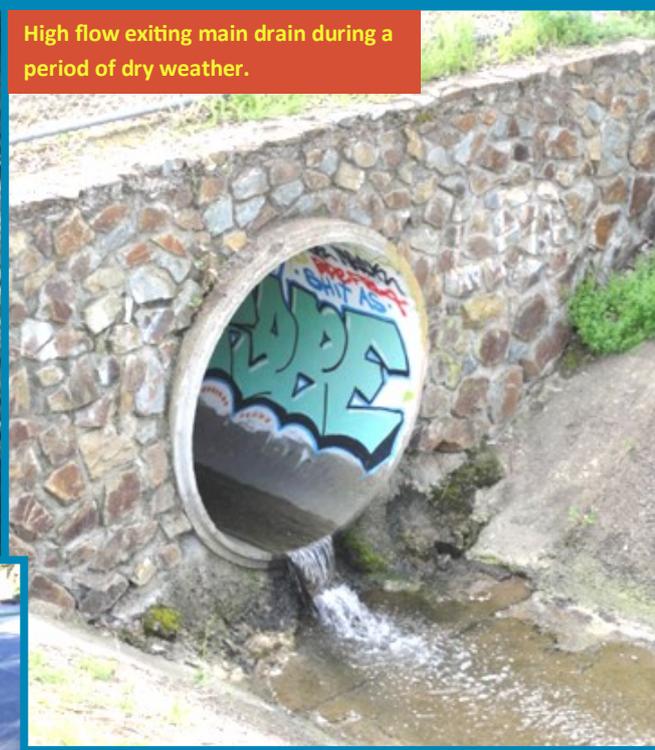


"Monitoring the drainage system allows us to identify leaks which have not surfaced above ground, and have found their way directly into the underground drainage system from places such as under a driveway, large tree or a roadway. We save almost 2,500 million litres of water annually detecting these kinds of leaks.

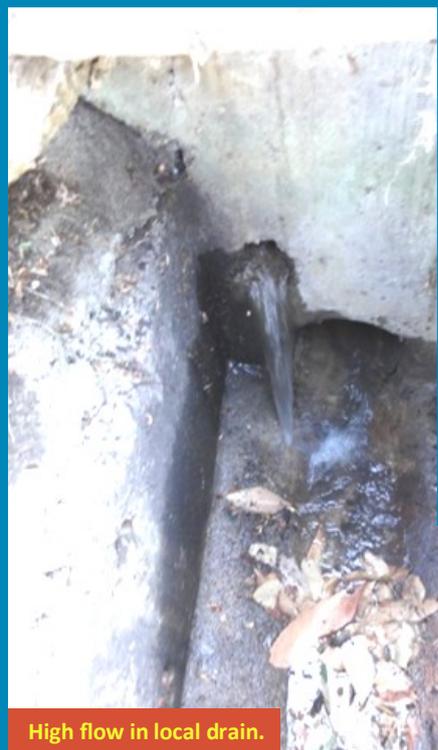
"Drainage monitoring is quite simple, the 'water chaser' has around 450 monitoring points within the Yarra Valley Water network, which are all prioritised and given a grade determining how often they are monitored. The grade is based on a number of factors, such as local ground conditions, age of pipes, quality of pipe material and the frequency of past leaks.



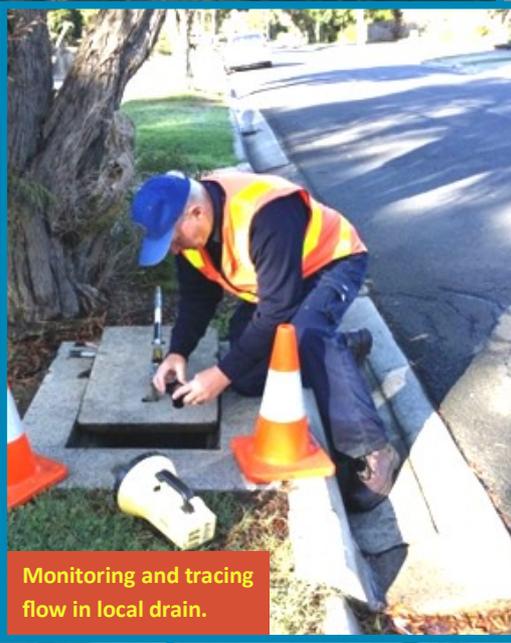
Monitoring of main drain.



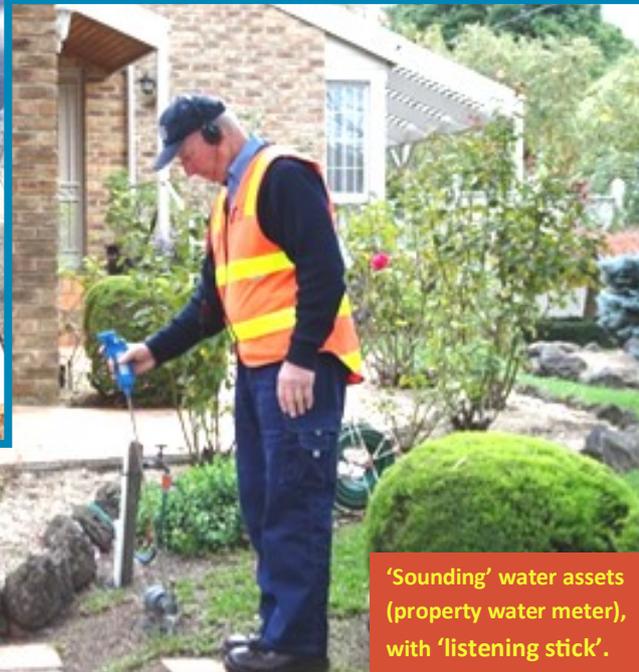
High flow exiting main drain during a period of dry weather.



High flow in local drain.



Monitoring and tracing flow in local drain.



'Sounding' water assets (property water meter), with 'listening stick'.

“Many of the monitoring points are located at the outlets of main or large stormwater drains managed by either the local council or Melbourne Water. The drains exit into the streams, creeks and rivers. If an unusually high flow is observed at the monitoring point, particularly in periods of dry weather, the flow is traced upstream via inspection manholes in the drainage system. The ‘chaser’ is armed with detailed plans of the water and drainage systems for each location.

“We trace the leak until the flow stops, and then ‘sound’ the water assets (valves, hydrants and property water meters) using a sensitive device called a ‘listening stick’, at this location to find the leak. In many cases this method is sufficient to locate the leak and carry out repairs. If the chaser is unable to locate the leak within a few metres, another specialist crew are called, using more sophisticated equipment, to correlate and pin-point the leak’s location. Detecting leaks is an important part of minimising water losses and costs to our customers,” added Bruce.

The ‘chaser’ is also able to identify pollution of the waterways, in order to help protect rivers, creeks and streams within our area. If the flow observed exiting the main drain is discoloured or has a pungent odour, the ‘chaser’ will contact the EPA for further investigations to take place to identify the cause of the pollution. Similarly if the EPA identifies an unusually high ‘clean’ flow in their investigations they will contact the relevant water authority.

Bruce has made strong relationships with many customers, staff and other authorities who all provide information such as reports of high flows or noise of flow in drains, which help leaks to be identified and repaired. **If you see or hear a leak within the Yarra Valley Water area, you can contact the faults and emergency line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 13 27 62.**



Elaine's home in Margaret St looking up to the Essendon Airport perimeter.

CONGRATULATIONS
TO ELAINE OF
STRATHMORE
WINNER OF THE
MY STORIES
COMPETITION!

Our Moonee Ponds Creek



The year is 1946. I am 4 years old and my parents have put their first payment down on a 3 small roomed weatherboard house on a 1/4 acre piece of land with the title on one side ending in the creek. Some years later, the paddock out the front of the house became Margaret Street, Oak Park.

Our mail was delivered to the Post Office at the bottom of Gaffney Street across from the Pascoe Vale Station and our suburb had several name changes - Essendon North, Happy Valley and finally Oak Park. We had our own chickens, a cow, vegie garden and fruit trees. Our water supply came from two huge tanks and a spring on the bank of the creek on our land which is now covered in cement.

The natural Farmer's Market we topped up from was found in and around the Moonee Ponds Creek. There were eels, yabbies and rabbits, and once a year mushrooms galore.

Dad would chop a pathway through the boxthorn hedges and wild aniseed plants to the base of the creek, and then roll stones to make a crossing to the other side. This was replaced after every flood that would run a banker and finish at our own doorstep. The widening of the creek and the footbridge that was built when Strathmore North State School opened made life easier.

Sadly to me, the covering of smooth cement with its harsh never changing appearance was like Botox on a face that loses its movement. As a small child, my family and our visitors enjoyed the freedom and adventures around this untamed country creek, but as the years rolled on a hardworking group joined as 'Friends of the Creek' to deliver a growing green wardrobe that brings colour and wildlife back into my little corner of the world.



Residents and friends gathered for a successful Clean Up Australia Day at Gowanbrae





PLEASE CONTINUE TO SEND US YOUR SIGHTINGS FOR FUTURE PONDERINGS. PHOTOS FROM ALL SECTIONS OF THE CREEK WELCOME.



A Superb Fairywren (above) and a Red Wattlebird (below) sighted by Andre in Strathmore Heights and Gowanbrae.

Andre spotted a White-plumed Honeyeater (above) and New Holland Honeyeater (below) in Gowanbrae.



A Magpie Lark (above), a Sulphur Crested Cockatoo (right) and a Black-faced Cuckooshrike (below) photographed by Anna in Strathmore.

Anna found a Nankeen Night Heron (below) perched in a tree above the creek in Westmeadows.



Laughing Kookaburras (right) have been seen along the creek over the past few months, this one spotted by Anna at Westbreen Creek



MELBOURNE WATER REPORT



Jacana Retarding Basin Upgrade Project

Melbourne Water's work to upgrade the Jacana Retarding Basin, Glenroy, is continuing and scheduled for completion in August 2016.

On behalf of Melbourne Water, CPB Black and Veatch Joint Venture has so far:

- Built a new concrete spillway.
- Completed work around the sewerage and storm water pipes in the vicinity of Moonee Boulevard.
- Installed a new sand filter along the top of the embankment.
- Stripped the top soil off the embankment, in preparation for the next stage of the works.

There is still some work to come including:

- Installation of a new sand filter layer along the side of the embankment.
- Landscaping of the embankment with grass.
- Building the new path to link the Gowanbrae Estate and Moonee Ponds Creek Trail.
- Removing the cyclone fence to the south, to be replaced with more user friendly fencing.
- Removal of the site sheds at the end of Primula Boulevard and landscaping of the area.

The Moonee Ponds Creek Trail from Moonee Boulevard to Valley Crescent remains closed for the duration of the works.



ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDS OF MOONEE VALLEY GROUP DIRECTORY

The Environmental Friends of Moonee Valley Directory was produced by Judy Ingram (Friends of Maribyrnong Valley) as a MVCC Community Grant project. Judy is hoping that funding to prepare hard copies will follow.

The directory is available online at www.mvcc.vic.gov.au/plantingdays. The link is directly above the calendar.

Hume City Council, in partnership with the Craigieburn Camera Club and local bird watchers, has created a glorious Birds of Hume field guide. It features over 145 different species found around Hume, including raptors, parrots, and honeyeaters, as well as those birds commonly found in woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and urban areas.

The photos were kindly donated by several keen bird photographers, whose ultimate challenge is to get the perfect bird photo, which then made it a real challenge to select the photos to include. The bird field guide also contains tips for attracting birds to your place, and lists some of the best bird watching locations around Hume.

Moonee Ponds Creek in particular, provides very important habitat for birds, from its head waters in Woodlands Historic Park to the Jacana Wetlands.

The official launch of the bird field guide will occur on **Sunday July 17 from 2.00 to 4.00pm** at the Living Legends Homestead, off Oaklands Road. After some brief formalities, there will be a Devonshire afternoon tea provided and free copies of the guide to take home. Andrew Haysom, a very talented photographer, will then share his love of bird watching and if the weather permits we will go for a walk into Woodlands Historic Park. **To book in, or to request a free copy of the field guide, please contact Council's Urban Biodiversity Officer, Melissa Doherty on 9205 2466 or email melissado@hume.vic.gov.au**



Join the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek for \$10 per year

Help preserve and improve the Moonee Ponds Creek's natural environment. For information and to join, go to mooneepondscreek.org.au and complete the membership form or write to PO Box 54, Essendon VIC 3040.



A GRAFFITI SUGGESTION GETS RECOGNITION IN THE "OUR MOONEE PONDS CREEK" COMPETITION

Nina from Strathmore entered the competition with a solution to the graffiti problem along the Moonee Ponds Creek. So often property fences and walls are a blank canvas that become vandalised with boring tags and unpleasant images.

Nina's suggestion that planting dense indigenous shrubs along these areas would not only deter the graffiti vandals but provide welcome habitat for the smaller birds that inhabit the creek such as Superb Fairywrens, White-browed Scrubwrens, Thornbills and Pardalotes.

In a letter, the Mayor Cr Andrea Surace stated: "Your ideas for graffiti prevention was inspiring and a practical solution to an existing problem within the creek surrounds. Although your piece was not chosen as the winning entry, we would like to present you with the enclosed two Gold Class movie vouchers in recognition for your submission. Thank you for your submission and contribution to the master plan process".





The Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek would like to extend congratulations to our President Kelvin Thomson at the end of his successful career in Parliament, and thank Kelvin's office for hosting our meetings for a number of years.

We are using this transition to investigate another venue for our meetings. Please check for details on our Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Facebook page.



Friends of Westbreen Creek gather at the end of a successful planting day. Alex English from Moreland City Council who took this photograph entertained the group with a great story on trying to find how the creek came to be named. Watch this space as Alex is preparing a story for our next Ponderings.

WATER, BIODIVERSITY AND NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARANCES

The State Government recently released discussion papers on **Water-for-Victoria, Native Vegetation Clearance Regulations and Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity**. Members of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek participated in workshops and information forums and made written submissions. It is hoped that strengthened policies that will better protect and enhance our natural environments, waterways, native vegetation and biodiversity will be the outcome of these reviews.



SEARCHING for an ICON

Landscape architect Chris Sawyer is seeking an image that could be an emblem of the return of biodiversity along the creek. The Masterplan commissioned by the City of Moonee Valley has completed its consultation process and a report is being prepared. Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek joined Council representatives for a presentation by the Masterplan developers outlining the challenges the creek will face in view of climate change and increased urban density.

Suggestions for a favourite bird, plant or animal that could symbolise a return of the creek to a more natural state. **Please send your suggestions to Anna at ponderings@mpccc.org.**

Sites of Biodiversity Significance, Jacana Wetlands

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek has cause for celebration with the Jacana Wetlands being named one of Melbourne Water's sites of Biodiversity significance. Central to this accolade is the presence of the endangered Growling Grass Frog.

GO FROGGIES!

Sites of Biodiversity Significance are Melbourne Water managed areas of land or water containing rare or threatened flora, fauna or vegetation communities. Melbourne Water manages these sites under the guidance of management plans which aim to protect and improve conditions for biodiversity.

The real victory for the Jacana Wetlands is in remembering that they are a man made feature that replaced a weed infested paddock adjacent to the Moonee Ponds Creek. From the beginning of their construction, Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek have joined with the cities of Moreland and Hume to create a diverse environment that is now home to a wonderful population of native wildlife.



NOTICE Moonee Ponds Reliever Sewer Rehabilitation Project

Melbourne Water will be undertaking works over the next few months to reline a number of sewer manholes along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor. These include near Strathmore Secondary College, Five Mile Creek Reserve and the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail. For further information, contact Liz Iser, Engagement Advisor-Major Program Delivery at Melbourne Water on 9679 6972.

MORELAND NEWS

Works have commenced on the upgrade to the Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve playground and shared trail link in Glenroy. This includes a great nature play space including wood carvings of some of the native animals you may find along the creek starring a gorgeous family of Tawny Frogmouths. Works are scheduled to finish at the end of June. Tree plantings along the new trail link will also form part of the works but will be completed in the new financial year.

Council has been successful in obtaining funding from Melbourne Water for some exciting projects along the creek in the Oak Park area through their Corridors of Green and Living Rivers Programs. Preparation works have already commenced for habitat plantings at Herbert Street Reserve in July this year with the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and Oak Park Primary School.

Over the next few months, Council will be scoping and designing a unique project also at Herbert Street Reserve which will daylight the stormwater channel and convert it to a vegetated swale. It is anticipated that construction will take place between January and June 2017. The combination of these projects will add greatly to both the amenity and biodiversity values along this section of the creek. Planting season is again upon us and there are a number of plantings along the Moonee Ponds and Westbreen Creeks which we would love for you to attend.

Kingsford Ulm Reserve playground in the making.



Beautiful stick houses found at JP Fawkner Reserve during a routine visit. A great example of nature play/art in action.



MOONEE VALLEY NEWS

Thanks to Strathmore residents for negotiating with Council to commence the reclaiming of the Nursery bend site to open space. The 1800m² on the south eastern side of the Nursery property was surplus to the Leasees' needs and has now been returned to open space.

In 18 months' time, the site will be vacated and Council will undertake a Master Plan and encourage the community to contribute their ideas to the site's future development as open space.

The hydroseeding was recently completed. The material that has been sprayed on the ground is a mixture of seed and fibre which will bind the soil, stopping it from being blown away so that the grass seed has more chance of germinating. There is a dye included which just helps the guys applying the seed to know where they have been.

Prior to the seeding, the site was cleaned up to remove weeds and leaf litter to make the site easier to mow. The existing trees were also pruned to remove hazards and the dead eucalypt was 'habitat pruned' (left standing but limbs were reduced to provide habitat for birds to roost on or hollows for nesting).

PLANTINGS

When	Where	Group/Contact Information
Sat 18 Jun 10.00am-12.00noon	Lawson Street Reserve, Moonee Ponds (Melway 29 A5), entry via laneway adjacent to 16 Lawson Street, Moonee Ponds	Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and Moonee Valley City Council. Kaye - 9329 0635
Sat 2 Jul 10.00am-12.00noon	Lawson Street Reserve, Moonee Ponds (Melway 29 A5), entry via laneway adjacent to 16 Lawson Street, Moonee Ponds	Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and Moonee Valley City Council. Kaye - 9329 0635
Sun 3 Jul 2.00-4.00pm	5 Mile Creek Reserve (Melway 28 J2) End of Government Road, Essendon	Friends of 5 Mile Creek. Conservation Officer Moonee Valley City Council 8325 1888.
Sun 17 Jul 10.00am-12.30pm	Broadmeadows Deviation Road Westmeadows (Melway 6 B7)	Friends of Sacred Kingfisher. Urban Biodiversity Office City of Hume 9205 2466.
Sun 17 Jul 10.00-12.30noon	Herbert Street Reserve, Pascoe Vale. Access can also be from Strathmore side of the Creek, across the footbridge. (Melway 16 H8)	Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and Moreland City Council. Kaye - 9329 0635
Sun 7 Aug 2.00-4.00pm	5 Mile Creek Reserve (Melway 28 J2) End of Government Road, Essendon	Friends of 5 Mile Creek. Conservation Officer Moonee Valley City Council 8325 1888
Sun 14 Aug 12.30-3.00pm	The Tarnuk, enter via Koala Crescent, Westmeadows (Melway 5 J6)	Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek. Urban Biodiversity Office City of Hume 9205 2466.
Sun 28 Aug 10.00am-12.00noon	Gowanbrae Community Centre Marigold Crescent, Gowanbrae	Gowanbrae Residents Group Andre 0439 033 736

Last minute cancellations and changes will be posted to the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Facebook page. facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneeponds creek/

DID YOU KNOW? THAT ANXIETY OVER THE STATE OF THE MOONEE PONDS CREEK IS NOTHING NEW. READ ON

THE ADVERTISER "INDEPENDENT." SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 1887

"WE ARE NOT GOING TO INFLICT ANOTHER ARTICLE ON THE MOONEE PONDS CREEK UPON OUR READERS, BUT THINK IT ONLY JUST TO COMPLIMENT BOTH THE WESTERN WARD VIGILANCE COMMITTEE, AND THE TOWN COUNCIL ON THEIR UNITED ACTION WITH REGARD TO THIS NUISANCE, AND ALSO TO SHOW APPRECIATION OF THE STEP TAKEN BY THE LATTER IN PASSING A RESOLUTION INVITING THE NEIGHBOURING MUNICIPAL BODIES TO A CONFERENCE ON THE ALL IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF BRINGING THE FILTHY STATE OF THE CREEK UNDER THE COGNIZANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT. IT MUST BE PATENT TO EVERYONE THAT THIS QUESTION IS BEYOND THE SPHERE OF MUNICIPAL POLITICS, AND AS THE COST OF CLEANSING THE MOONEE PONDS CREEK IS FAR TOO GREAT TO BE BORNE LOCALLY, THE GOVERNMENT MAY BE FAIRLY ASKED TO PLACE A SUM ON THE ESTIMATES FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE WORK."

CREEK WATCH

Rapid change of water levels or discolouration of problems along the creek that need to be reported:

- ◇ High water flows coming out of drains during a period of no rain could indicate a leaking water main or underground burst pipe. To report this, contact **Yarra Valley Water** for the east side of the bank and **City West Water** for the west side of the bank.
- ◇ If the creek water is yellow or white or otherwise discoloured, this could indicate trade waste being dumped into the creek. This needs to be **urgently reported to the EPA.**

CREEKY LINKS

mooneeponds creek.org.au
 facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneeponds creek
 friendsofmerricreek.org.au/
 facebook.com/FriendsOfSteeleCreekInc
 facebook.com/groups/1541338476087146
 fmvonline.com
 bowerbird.org.au/projects/5249
 whp.altervista.org/
 werribeeriver.org.au

Contact us if you have any other links to share