



# Ponderings

Seasonal newsletter of the  
Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee  
Summer 2016 | Issue 53

advocate educate interpret participate rehabilitate revegetate

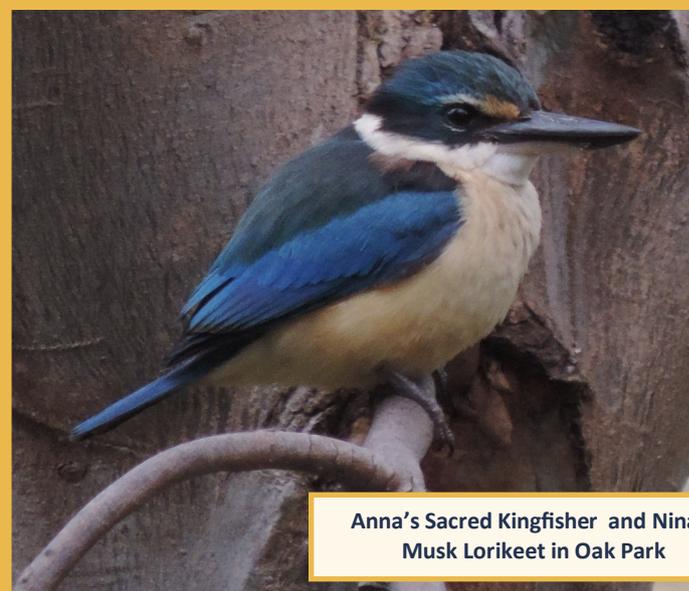
## SEASON'S GREETINGS

*Ponderings and the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek would like to thank the conservation and natural resource officers we have productively and enjoyably worked with during the year on many Creek projects. Thank you to Melbourne Water, Moreland, Hume and Moonee Valley Councils, including the Masterplan team.*

*Special thanks to the many groups and volunteers who have contributed to planting, weeding and other creek activities.*

*We would also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the Green Army who have contributed all through the year to many projects along the creek.*

*We look forward to another  
great year in 2017*

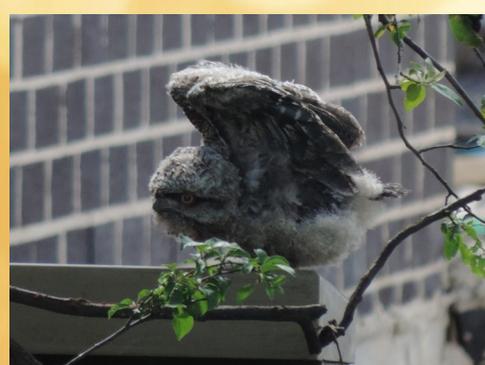
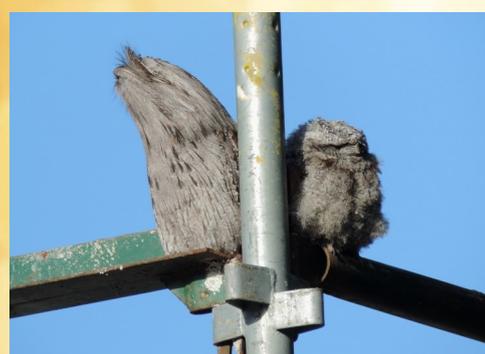


Anna's Sacred Kingfisher and Nina's  
Musk Lorikeet in Oak Park

When a Tawny Frogmouth chick was found in Austin Reserve, Pascoe Vale after a wind storm, it was no bigger than a tennis ball. The parents were still present and Wildlife Victoria suggested a replacement nest be made and placed in the tree close to the parents. Tyler and Nina built a nest from a bucket and this new nest was accepted by the chick and parents. A week later sadly, we found the mother dead at the foot of the tree, possibly killed while protecting the chick. Dad became a single parent and took over the vigil beside the nest. We nicknamed the duo Dad and Dave. When Dave fledged a little early, he landed on the neighbouring building site and became the workmen's mascot. The builders were great and were prepared to work around the duo keeping a look out for us. They were last sighted high in the gum trees, a really successful outcome.



A Tawny Tale



Thank you to  
all who  
helped rescue  
Dave!

# FROG APP LAUNCHED

## FROG CENSUS UPDATE



Moonee Ponds creek and immediate environs have been a hotspot for frog reports via Melbourne Water's new Frog Census app. We launched the Frog Census app in early September and within two months had received more reports in one season than we had received in the entire year previous! In total, 24 (and counting) reports have been made during spring along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor. You can view these reports on the map function of the Frog Census app. The following species were recorded this spring:

- ◆ Eastern Common Froglet
- ◆ Spotted Marsh Frog
- ◆ Striped Marsh Frog
- ◆ Eastern Banjo Frog
- ◆ Southern Brown Tree Frog
- ◆ Growling Grass Frog

**Growling Grass Frog found along the Moonee Ponds Creek at JP Fawkner Reserve, Oak Park by Austin from Practical Ecology**



Of particular note, Growling Grass Frogs have been recorded at locations in Strathmore, Jacana and an upper tributary in the vicinity of Oaklands Junction. This species will continue to actively call over summer, so I'd encourage you to submit any reports via the Frog Census app, available for free download at [melbournewater.com.au/getinvolved/protecttheenvironment/Pages/Frog-Census.aspx](http://melbournewater.com.au/getinvolved/protecttheenvironment/Pages/Frog-Census.aspx). As we move in to Autumn 2017 please be sure to log frog calls via the app. A few species of interest that call predominantly in Autumn include:

- ◆ Common Spadefoot Toad
- ◆ Victorian Smooth Froglet
- ◆ Bibron's Toadlet
- ◆ Southern Toadlet



You can hear a sample of their calls on your app and you can read more about them in the 'Beginners Guide to Frog Identification' found on our website [www.melbournewater.com.au/frogcensus](http://www.melbournewater.com.au/frogcensus). Be sure to get out to your sites in Autumn 2017 and see what you can find.

### What happens to your data?

The data will inform planning and decision making on our waterway health and will be added to the CSIRO's Atlas of Living Australia and Victorian Biodiversity Atlas to share biodiversity knowledge about endangered species.

I'd like to extend my thanks to Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek for their ongoing support of the Frog Census program and the high quality of the reports we receive.

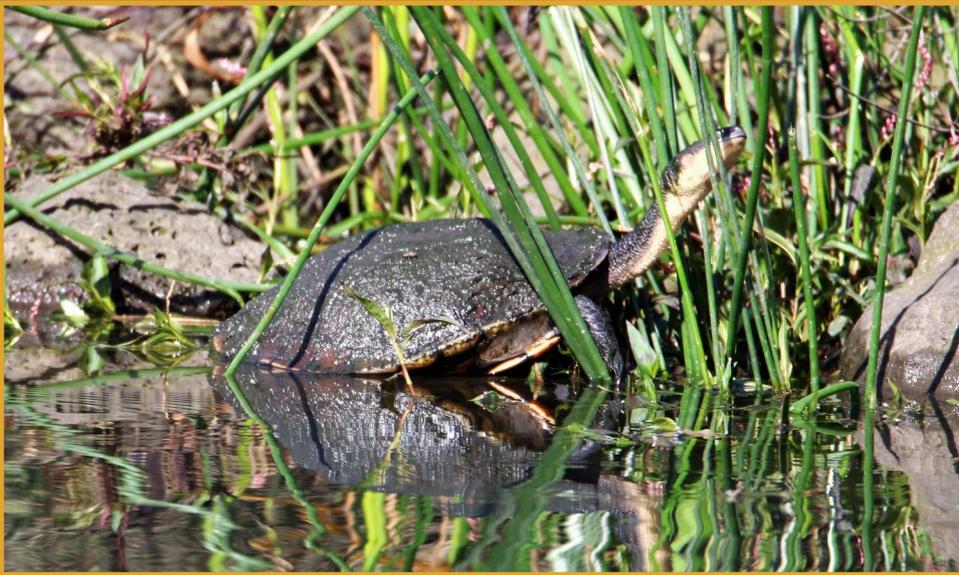
**See you in 2017!**



## STEAM TRAIN CROSSING THE CREEK ON THE HISTORIC TRESSLE BRIDGE

Crossing the Moonee Ponds Creek was a highlight of the steam train rides raising funds for the Essendon Historical Society following the devastating fire. The trips provided photo opportunities for Anna at Gowanbrae and Nina on the train.





An Eastern Long-necked Turtle sighted by Tom S at Trin Warren Tam-Boore Wetland



# Sightings



Grey Butcherbirds singing a duet to Anna L at Westbreen Creek



Shingleback Lizard spotted at Woodlands Historic Park by Anna L



A Kangaroo bathing in a sea of grass spotted by Nina at Woodlands Historic Park



Blue-tongue Lizard found sunning beside MPC by Zoe J

Contributions to Ponderings welcome.  
Please send your images and stories to  
[ponderings@mpccc.org](mailto:ponderings@mpccc.org)



## Hopetoun Ave Update

Submissions against Melbourne Water’s decision to rezone 1 Hopetoun Ave, Brunswick West from Public Park and Recreation to Residential Zone 1, closed 11 December 2016. Many thanks to the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek who took the time to send in submissions supporting the local residents.

The next step of the negotiations will be the Advisory Panel hearings to be held in February. The written submissions will be made available to the public. Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek will provide links and information at [mooneepondscreek.org.au](http://mooneepondscreek.org.au).

**This land has been public parkland for 60 years  
PLEASE LET US KEEP IT!**

## THE GREEN ARMY

### Five Miles In (from the Yarra)

In September, Moonee Valley City Council had a new Green Army team starting work on sites along Moonee Ponds Creek. The biggest project for this team was to help with the implementation of the Five Mile Creek Reserve Masterplan.

The team’s work has made a huge difference around the reserve. With just shy of 2000 plants going in over the last couple of months, hundreds of metres of mulch being spread and endless weed control efforts.

The outcome of their work will greatly increase the habitat and the aesthetics of the reserve for visitors and commuters passing on their bikes. It will also contribute to the efforts of the Friends of Five Mile and Moonee Ponds Creeks, and Council to increase the wildlife corridor linkages along Moonee Ponds Creek.



Five Mile Creekers celebrate the end of a successful year

# LOWER CREEK UPDATE BY TONY

For those who haven't visited the lower section of the Moonee Ponds Creek for a while much has changed and more is still changing along the Creek approaching the Yarra confluence at Docklands.

Most conspicuously, the Ron Barassi Snr Park features a large open field with a broad horizon city skyline view, pavilion and adventure play space almost under Bolte Bridge.

The old long wharf running back to Victoria Harbour has broken down and been closed with repairs slated to accompany new developments across the next ten years, which should reduce the perceptual gap between the Docklands community and the precious Creek-side open space. Hopefully cyclists and walkers will get a path across the restored wharf.

The confluence has become signage point 9 of 12 on a 22 km Port Trail from Williamstown to Station Pier. The conspicuous Moonee Ponds Creek marker includes a couple of paragraphs on the often overlooked history of what is now the lower Creek being created as Railway Coal Canal.

Moonee Ponds Creek was originally a series of marshy ponds draining into a lagoon located on the current site of the container storage north of Appleton and Swanson Docks and spreading back towards North Melbourne. Described in 1841 as being '...a real lake, intensely blue, nearly oval and full of the clearest salt water...', the lagoon became a dumping ground for the early city and was gradually drained and filled with silt dredged from the Yarra River during the late 19th century.

In 1889, the Melbourne Harbor Trust approved the construction of the Railway Coal Canal, which linked the channelled Moonee Ponds Creek with Coode Canal, enabling coal to be delivered to the Victorian Railway coal depot by barges. The Moonee Ponds Creek underwent further changes throughout the twentieth century to alleviate flooding. However in the last decade, work has commenced to enhance and reinstate its natural attributes, but other works have detracted from these aims.

The other reason for visiting this lower section of the Creek was to get a few more angles on the intrusion and overshadowing by Citylink and proposed multiple viaducts associated with the Western Distributor crossing the Creek between Footscray Road and just beyond Dynon Road.

Melbourne Star Observation Wheel is conspicuous from almost every point on the Creek trail back from the confluence, hardly surprising seeing it is sited within the footprint of the aforementioned intensely blue salt lake which had been the final outlet of the 'Moonee Moonee' chain of ponds before the growing city, industry and their waste trashed the neighbourhood.

North of Footscray Road, the Trail passes a planting by Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and supported by the Regional Rail Link Project 30 months earlier which is growing well, but unfortunately along with some large weeds.



## DID YOU KNOW

THAT WHITE-FACED HERONS, WHEN CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT, WILL BREED TWICE IN ONE SEASON. THIS PAIR FOUND CAVORTING ON THE ROOF BARELY HAD ONE CHICK OUT OF THE FIRST NEST WHEN THEY SET TO BUILDING A SECOND NEST. THE RESULT, TWO LOVELY SIBLINGS.



## GOWANBRAE FESTIVAL

This year's festival was held in challenging weather but still drew good crowds to the popular event.

Andre of the Gowanbrae Resident Group invited the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek to display their Creek Chronology posters.



## MELBOURNE WATER REPORT

Melbourne Water recently completed upgrade works on the Jacana Retarding Basin including the new path link along the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail. The area is now reopened for public use.

Waterways & Land Officer's recently performed an assessment for the FOMPC Community Grant application to enhance Gowenbrae Gully alongside Moonee Ponds Creek at the Jacana Retarding Basin. The grant will build on previous plantings to create a habitat link for swamp wallabies which inhabit the area. Grant recipients will be notified of their success early in the new year.

Revegetation performed through Melbourne Water's recent Capital Works Projects along Moonee Ponds Creek from Boeing Reserve to Strathmore is establishing well. Maintenance will be ongoing over the next two years. Next Autumn will see a small infill planting take place to further enhance the works to date.



## Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations

Victoria's ecosystems provide important habitat for our unique native plants and animals. A healthy environment is fundamental to the wellbeing of all Victorians.

The Victorian Government is committed to working with the community to ensure the native vegetation clearing regulations sensibly protect sensitive vegetation.



Closing date for submissions is 5 February 2017.

Go to [engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review](http://engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review)

# 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 [mooneeponds creek.org.au](http://mooneeponds creek.org.au) and complete the membership form or write to PO Box 54, Essendon VIC 3040.



## NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF MOONEE PONDS CREEK

### Happy New Year BBQ

On **20 February**, a get together BBQ will be held following an inspection of the Westmeadow's Meander (refer map below). Meet at the Meander at 5.00pm or at the BBQ at 6.00pm. All welcome, BYO everything.

### Bimonthly meetings

Held on the following dates at the Sam Merrifield Library, 762 Mt. Alexander Rd, Moonee Ponds commencing at 6.30pm:

10 April 2017

19 June 2017

2 August 2017

16 October 2017



## MOONEE VALLEY FESTIVAL

Visit the Moonee Ponds Creek stand at the Moonee Valley Festival, Queens Park on 26 February 2017.

The stand will include big and small ideas for opportunities to improve the Creek. There will also be children's activities on the day.

**We look forward to seeing you there!**

### 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](http://mooneeponds creek.org.au)  
[facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneeponds creek](https://facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneeponds creek)  
[friendsofmerricreek.org.au/](https://friendsofmerricreek.org.au/)  
[facebook.com/FriendsOfSteeleCreekInc](https://facebook.com/FriendsOfSteeleCreekInc)  
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[fmvonline.com](http://fmvonline.com)  
[bowerbird.org.au/projects/5249](http://bowerbird.org.au/projects/5249)  
[whp.altervista.org/](http://whp.altervista.org/)  
[werribeeriver.org.au](http://werribeeriver.org.au)

**Contact us if you have any other links to share**