

Ponderings

SEASONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MOONEE PONDS CREEK

SPRING 2024 | ISSUE 84

advocate

educate

interpret

participate

rehabilitate

revegetate

Pascoe Vale - creek clean-up

Year 9 and 11 students from Pascoe Vale Girls College and Years 1 and 2 from Westbreen Primary School have been busy removing litter from the shopping strip and Westbreen Creek.

The reason the Pascoe Vale shopping strip was targeted is because of the ongoing issue with large amounts of litter in the car park, in front of the shops and then along the local streets stemming from the shopping strip. If left unchecked, this litter will find its way down in the storm water drains and then into Westbreen Creek where animals including local frogs, birds, possums and fish will feed on plastic and other waste that will ultimately mean they can't live there.

In one day in late March, twenty seven students from Pascoe Vale Girls College removed 867 pieces of rubbish, totalling

32.5 kg of rubbish in six large bags. An amazing effort in just over an hour of litter clean up. This litter was removed from the Pascoe Vale shopping strip and Lake Avenue towards the school.

Main items collected were:

Soft plastic pieces (including food packets): 179 400 Cigarette butts - a whopping: Plastic straws: 44 Plastic drink bottles: 50 Aluminium cans: 40 Disposable coffee cups or coffee cup lids: > 30

continued next page >





In the same week, six classes of Years 1 and 2 students from Westbreen Primary School made their way to the K W Joyce Reserve, along the Westbreen Creek and from the creek and the riparian zone, collected 416 pieces, three large bags weighing a total of 5 kg.

Main items collected were:

Soft plastic pieces

(including food packets):	189
Plastic bags:	40
Plastic bottles:	22
Coffee cups:	14
Aluminium cans:	24

This "litter data" has been uploaded onto the *Litterwatch Victoria* portal.

It is very disappointing that our young people need to spend so much time and effort making this area healthier for not just humans, but the plants and animals that call the Westbreen Creek home.





Special thanks to teachers Anthony Freeman and Olivia Villani who both worked hard to organise and help deliver these important sessions with their students.

Thanks to the City of Merri-bek for continuing to fund MCMC's Merri and Moonee Ponds community creek clean ups, which supports schools and community groups to take action on creek litter.

Further information click on the link:

https://www.mcmc.org.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/help-remove-litter-from-merri-creek?fbclid=lwY2xjawFCOJNleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHVwRq2gdrfKh6yDmm6qSmPfFmvBBUjzqIEJKe474gF05TMKoixllvO2lmw_aem_xlo0zOxvarP6XsRN4AKtBg

Julia Cirillo, Water Waste and Litter Clean-up Coordinator

CHELMSFORD STREET OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN

In 2021, the Melbourne City Council purchased a former warehouse at 70-90 Chelmsford Street, Kensington with plans to convert it to open space. After consultations, a final concept plan has been prepared to be approved by the Council at a Future Melbourne Committee meeting on Aug 20th.

The site is adjacent to the Moonee Ponds Creek/Kensington Embankment that the FoMPC has been re-vegetating since 2003 – so the Chelmsford Street Open Space will be a welcome addition not only to the local community but to the Creek corridor and its natural values.

The plan for the 3600 sqm site comprises garden beds, gathering places, open lawn area, BBQ/picnic area, children's nature play with water feature, basket/netball hoop, toilet. (A copy of the concept plan is shown below).

The FoMPC welcomes the finalised plan with some provisos. Welcomed are the physical, social and environmental aspects, including the landscape layout and use of indigenous and native vegetation.

We have suggested that retention of the section of wall facing Chelmsford Street will prevent long views along Bent Street into what will be a green open space ... so the section of wall should be removed. We very much support a large mural being painted on the eastern end wall – suggesting that it be a collaboration between the Wurundjeri traditional custodians



and mural artist, Tom Civil (cf Debney's Park CityLink pylon murals) – perhaps depicting the original chain of ponds that were located in the adjacent Moonee Ponds Creek watercourse?

We also call on the Melbourne City Council to work with VicTrack (landholder) and Melbourne Water on a safe access link between the Chelmsford Street Open Space and the adjoining Moonee Ponds Creek/Kensington Embankment.

Construction is anticipated to commence in late 2025.

Kaye Oddie



MOONEE PONDS CREEK CORRIDOR TO GAIN LAND

The Moonee Ponds Creek corridor stands to formally gain a 1972 sq m section of land adjacent to the Creek in Strathmore Heights.

This is part of a proposal by VicTrack to dispose of surplus land, part of its holding south of the Trestle Bridge, and to rezone, subdivide and sell land at the rear of Caravelle Crescent, Strathmore Heights. The proposal is in the form of an amendment to the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme (AmC212moon).

The map shows the subdivision sites at the rear of no's 45-55 Caravelle Crescent which would be rezoned to General Residential GRZ and offered to the residents to purchase. As part of the Amendment, the section of land adjacent to the Creek, which contains the shared use trail and is zoned PPRZ (Public Park and Recreation Zone) would be transferred in ownership to the Moonee Valley City Council. The remainder of the VicTrack land holding would remain as Transport Zone TRZ1.

The Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek welcomes the transfer of land ownership to the Council, formally expanding its jurisdiction over the Creek corridor's open space.



In the FoMPC's submission to the Government's Department of Transport and Planning, concern was expressed that the stand of established native trees, planted around 20 years ago (shown on the map by the green area with dark green border) would be retained. Assurance has been received from Moonee Valley's Senior Strategic Projects Planner that the trees will be retained and VicTrack has included this commitment in its submission to the Minister for Planning.

Kaye Oddie

Handy websites and Facebook links

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Facebook:

www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneepondscreek/

Friends of Merri Creek:

friendsofmerricreek.org.au/

Friends of Edgars Creek:

foec.org.au

Friends of Steele Creek Facebook:

facebook.com/FriendsOfSteeleCreekInc

Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley:

fmvonline.com

Woodlands Historic Park:

whp.altervista.org/

Victorian Indigenous Plants Co-op (VINC):

https://www.vinc.net.au

Contact us if you have any other links to share

GUARDIAN STORAGE

Call 9374 1500

Get a quote

LOOKING FOR STORAGE?

Guardian Storage Essendon offers everything from boxes and packaging to business storage and household storage solutions. Want to know what our self storage costs? Call us to find out more about our full range of storage spaces for rent to see which of our storage options suit your storage rental needs.

Household storage



Need to declutter, moving house or renovating? Self storage is the perfect solution. From furniture to clothes our secure lock-up storage units ensure your items will be safe and sound.

Business storage



Guardian Storage Essendon provides flexible business and document storage solutions for storing your commercial stock and business records. Client files or excess and seasonal stock, we have a suitable storage solution to streamline your business and free up space.

Location / Trading hours

Guardian storage Essendon is located on Pascoe Vale Road, behind PETstock and Good Life Health Club.

Weekdays: 8:00am - 5:30pm Weekends: 9:00am - 4:00pm

DISAPPOINTING VCAT DECISION ON RYMAN HEALTH PROPOSAL



It is with great disappointment that I report that VCAT have recently released their decision in relation to Ryman Health's planning application for 1-3 Moreland and 262-270 Pascoe Vale Road, Essendon.

The decision totals 37 pages but the essence of the decision is

that Ryman Health have been given approval for 163 independent living units, 110 special care assisted living units and 263 car parking. This massive development will take the built form of 4 – 6 storeys.

The only substantive condition is that the buildings on the northern boundary must be setback a minimum of 5 metres.

The only substantive condition is that the buildings on the northern boundary must be setback a minimum of 5 metres.

This is a major disappointment for the Friends of the Moonee Ponds Creek. We have worked diligently for almost two years to defeat this application with objection submissions, letterboxing local residents, attending Council planning meetings, lobbying Moonee Valley Councillors, working with Merri-bek Councillors (who kindly objected to the proposal) and financially supporting the VCAT appeal.

Special mention to Peter Vasil and Darryn Hartnett who

spent three days arguing strongly and eloquently for the refusal, against an army of planning consultants representing Ryman Health.

Five Mile Creek and Moonee

Ponds Creek are both only metres from the site boundary and we remain steadfast in our belief that this is a terrible outcome for this precious natural environment.

John Kavanagh (President FOMPC)

CHAIN OF PONDS CHANGES LOCATION

After four years of hosting by Greater Western Water (GWW), the *Chain of Ponds* is moving to Hume City Council. We're super thankful to GWW for their rock-solid support since August 2020 and for being there for us, in all aspects, to support the work we do on the ground and behind the scenes! We're delighted to move to our northern catchment partners Hume City Council and we can't wait to get to know all the special places and people in the Hume catchment over the next 4 years.

The coming months will see the Governance Group reviewing the last 3 years, seeing how we've tracked against our Prospectus, and helping set us up to develop our next Prospectus in the new year. We're also hiring a new Litter Lead and working on 'Geoff' — phase 2, a co-designed litter trap for the lower catchment that will better manage the enormous quantities of litter that makes its way down the creek!

HUME COUNCIL

Update

For people living or working in Hume City, you can apply to have a free, one-hour garden visit by our volunteer Garden Guides and receive advice on wildlife-friendly habitat gardens.

Round 4 is now well underway with spaces available for more applications and visits through Spring.

Previous participants are now looking at their gardens with new perspectives on how to help native wildlife. People who have a garden visit, receive a small gift, detailed report, and become eligible to get some free indigenous seedlings.

To apply, please visit the Hume Council grants website: https://hume.smartygrants.com.au/G4W2024_R4.

This application process usually takes about 15-20mins.

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer Garden Guide?

Hume City Council encourages people of all backgrounds and ethnicities to become Garden Guides so that we can more effectively spread the wildlife gardening message to the culturally diverse communities that add to the City's rich social character.

Volunteer Garden Guide application, induction, and training occurs throughout the year.

For more information and to express your interest, click on the link:

gardensforwildlife@hume.vic.gov.au

For people living in other local government areas, check out the *Gardens for Wildlife Victoria* network affiliates page by visiting: gardensforwildlifevictoria.com to see if there is a program running near you. You can also contact your local government representatives to encourage them to get involved.



gardens

wildlife

Volunteers and members of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek group are being alerted to this talk that Moonee Valley Sustainability (MVS) is putting together on the topic of dominant birds in the local environment. This subject is of great concern to many, so MVS has decided to put together an online workshop to ensure that everybody can be accommodated in the discussion. Early *Bully Bird* tickets

will be available until 2 weeks prior to the event.

Further details and registration click on the links below:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/e7agss6QbizFBatr/

Humanitix: https://events.humanitix.com/why-bully-birds-reign

Teresa Day, Volunteer, Moonee Valley Sustainability

JOHN STREET COMMUNITY PLANTING DAY

Saturday 10th August

A Great Day!

Over 60 local residents and friends joined in planting 850 indigenous plants in the new open space reserve at the bottom of John Street, Oak Park.

A Great Story!

In 2011, local resident Carolyn Layton approached Moreland (now Merri-bek) Council's Natural Resources Management Officer, Lori Arthur, to turn the cul-de-sac end of John Street from a weedy wasteland used for ad-hoc car parking into a small nature reserve with native plants and rocks around the signature gum tree. A path led to newly formed steps down to the Moonee Ponds Creek embankment and the informal track along the creek. More community plantings were undertaken in 2014 and 2016 in the reserve and along the Creek embankment, enhancing biodiversity, habitat and amenity.

A Great Opportunity occurred when the adjoining house block at 2A John Street came up for auction in 2021... and the Council purchased it! Saturday's community event was the culmination of the conversion of the site to a neighbourhood open space reserve – with beds of native plants, an open grassy area, labyrinth, informal seating and a path linking to the Creek embankment.



The John Street project is truly a 'Good News' story and could not have happened without the foresight of local resident, Carolyn Layton, joined by fellow resident Vince Aitkin, and facilitated by Merri-bek's Lori Arthur, Vince Andreana, Alex English and Charlotte Napper. The Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek has been a happy collaborator and participant throughout the project.

[To read the article about the John Street story, go to *Ponderings* newsletters (2021/22): https://mooneepondscreek.org.au/ponderings then find Issue 73, and go to page 19]

Kaye Oddie







MERRI-BEK COUNCIL

Update

2A John Street

A big thank you to everyone who came out to plant at John Friends and locals were there to plant over 800 indigenous space. Landscape works include improved creek access, revegetation areas, drink fountain, informal seating and a bluestone labyrinth providing a beautiful and restful location to spend time in along the creek.

The final design for the park upgrade at Esslemont Reserve in viewed online at:

conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/esslemont-reserve

Esslemont Reserve

These works will include a new sealed path connection from







NEW PROJECT LAUNCHED

Consultation is underway on the Conversations Merri-bek website relating to Open Space and parks, Sports and

Cole Reserve North Sportsfield Upgrade

The Council are upgrading the nothern sportsfield at Cole Reserve in Pascoe Vale.

Learn more about the project: conversations.merri-bek.vic. gov.au/cole-reserve-north-sportsfield-upgrade



Development along the lower Moonee Ponds Creek.

Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C417



The State Government has finally, after a delay of three years, released a planning scheme amendment for development in the 'urban renewal areas' of Kensington and North Melbourne (see map above). The amendment C417 is the outcome of the 2021 Macaulay Structure Plan.

The amendment sets out preferred maximum building heights, preferred street wall heights and preferred upper storey setbacks. [Note the terminology 'preferred', i.e. not mandatory.]

Mandatory site setbacks are applied supposedly to limit overshadowing of the Creek corridor, however, complicating the planning provisions is use of mandatory Floor Area Ratios for developments – which would allow higher buildings if only part of the site is built on.

The Moonee Ponds Creek will be affected by three defined precincts: Boundary, Stubbs and Chelmsford. 'Preferred' building heights along the Creek corridor, vary from 15 storeys on the eastern side/North Melbourne side of the Creek (Boundary precinct) to 4 or 6 storeys on the western side/Kensington side (Stubbs precinct) or 6 storeys (Chelmsford precinct). 'Preferred' street wall heights would be 8 storeys,

4-6 storeys and 6 storeys for the respective precincts. It is hard to see how these provisions will not see buildings dominate the Moonee Ponds Creek's open space corridor.

Unfortunately (or deliberately?) the State Government's delay in putting forward the Macaulay C417 Amendment, has meant its planning provisions are now irrelevant in relation to the Stubbs precinct as permits have already been granted, buildings constructed/under construction that exceed the built form provisions for height, street wall height, setbacks and floor area ratios. The western side of Stubbs Street has been dubbed "The Great Wall of Stubbs Street"!

AmC417 documentation may be inspected online and submissions made via:

www.participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/amendment-C417 or by email to: planningpolicy@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Closing date for submission is 6 Sept 2024.

Kaye Oddie

SUPERB CITY WRENS

An ongoing Citizen-Science project by City of Melbourne

Look out for the Superb Fairy-wren this spring!

As part of a biodiversity study, this Citizen-Science project asks locals to try and spot the Superb Fairy-wren.

Why not add some excitement to your walks in Princes Park, Royal Park, Melbourne Cemetery and along the Moonee Ponds Creek by keeping an eye out for the native Superb Fairy-wren. City of Melbourne has partnered with BirdLife Australia, RMIT, and the University of Melbourne to track these birds and their movements and collect data on their health and habitat.

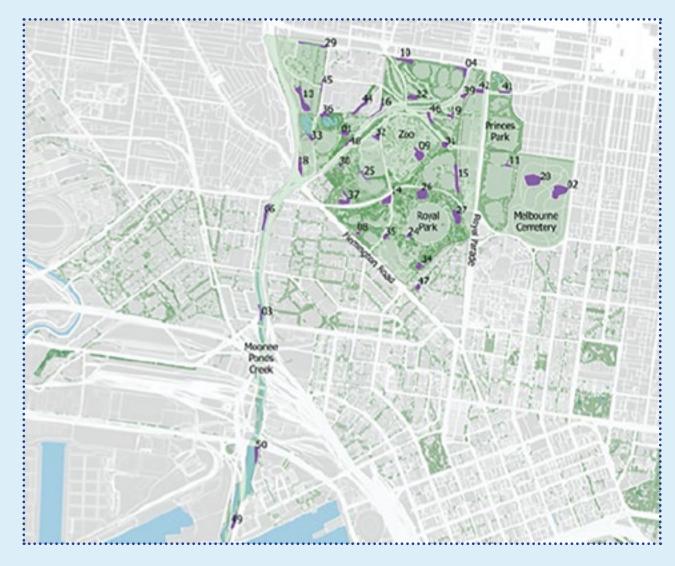
These tiny birds have a round body and long upright tail. Adult breeding males have bright blue and black plumage. Non-breeding adult males and females have greyish brown plumage.

The aim is to learn about how the Superb Fairy-wrens use urban habitats and respond to restoration works. The project contributes data to the Atlas of Living Australia. More detail on the restoration works, collecting data and reporting can be found at: https://superbcitywrens.com/

Where to look for Superb Fairy-wrens:

- 01 White's Skink Habitat
- 02 Cemetery East
- 03 Moonee Ponds Creek Arden Street
- 04 Park St Trainline
- 06 Moonee Ponds Creek Flemington Road
- 08 Flemington Oval West
- 09 Melbourne Zoo 1
- 10 Park St Tamline
- 11 Princes Park Tennis Club
- 13 Bunjil Way 1
- 14 Elliot Ave Trainline
- 15 The Avenue South
- 16 McPherson Field
- 18 Moonee Ponds Creek Trail, City link
- 19 Golf Course House
- 22 Golf Course Station
- 24 Grass Circle SW
- 25 Netball Centre South
- 26 Grass Circle North

- 27 Grass Circle East
- 28 Cemetery North Avenue
- 29 Park St Linear Park
- 30 Urban Camp
- 31 Elliot Ave Zoo
- 32 Netball Centre North
- 33 Storage Wetland 1
- 34 Nature Play NE
- 35 Royal Children's North
- 36 Trin Warren
 - Tam-Boore Wetland
- 39 Poplar Oval
- 41 Princes Park Rail Trail
- 42 Inner Circle Linear Park
- 44 Creekline by Orygen
- 45 Oak Street
- 46 Upfield Park
- 47 Levers Reserve
- 49 Moonee Ponds Creek
- 50 Moonee Ponds Creek



Sightings

around the creek

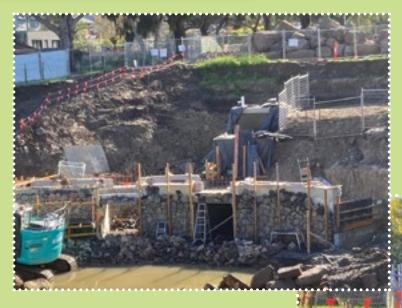


Photos taken by **Maurice Austin** and reproduced with permission





News



RE-IMAGINING MOONEE PONDS CREEK PROJECT

By Eleanor (Melbourne Water)

Works are progressing well with continued work on the pond terrace area and culvert retaining walls, the staircase at the end of Main Street and footpath between Margaret Street and Oak Park Reserve.

Upcoming works:

- Continued works on the pond terrace area and stone cladding of terrace
- Completion of staircase at the end of Main Street
- Delivery of bridge sections in early September and installation during school holiday period
- Construction of footpath and board walk between Margaret Street and Oak Park Reserve scheduled for late September and early October.

Access around our works zones

Detours and signage will be in place during the bridge, footpath and board walk constructions.

- Temporary road closures for short durations during delivery and unloading of bridge sections on 9 September
- Odin Street and Brosnan Crescent intersection will be temporarily closed on 24 September during the new bridge being installed
- Pedestrian detours will be in place from Margaret Street through the Oak Park Reserve and via Main Street on the Merri-Bek side.

As a precaution in the best interests of public safety, the existing bridge will be temporarily closed on 24 September during the installation of the new bridge. The new bridge is scheduled to open to the public from 4 October, weather permitting.

For more information: https://www.melbournewater.com.au/services/projects/reimagining-moonee-ponds-creek

'NO' TO FENCE AT BOEING RESERVE

by Nina Franceschi

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek are disappointed with Moonee Valley's recent decision to install a 515 metre long x 1.2 metre high fence beside the new proposed shared path along the Moonee Ponds Creek at Boeing Reserve.

Council have advised that all new shared paths within 5 metres of steep embankments, must have safety fences ensuring compliance with the Austroads - Guide to Road Design Part 6A and the Supplement to AGRD Part 6A, which form the basis for Melbourne Water's requirements.

Previously, Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek (FoMPC) had negotiated with Council to reduce the visual impact of fencing along the creek after an unsightly fence was built at Shelley Hillock beside Holbrook Reserve, Moonee Ponds, across from the Union Street Escarpment. (Refer photo). No attempt was made by Council to relocate the shared path away from the embankment. It seems this unwelcome option was the easiest. There was no community consultation and therefore Council avoided valuable input and suggestions from people who know this area best... the locals and users of the shared paths.

Had a community consultation taken place with share path users, locals and community groups, Council would have understood the significance of this site and the visual impact a high fence would have on shared path users.

At the last FoMPC meeting, all attendees were as one in recognising that Council's priority is to ensure safety along the shared path. However, they felt that this project requires proactive Councillor intervention.

The following are possible outcomes that need to be explored:

- 1. Route the main shared path on the eastern Merri-bek side of the creek.
- 2. Where space permits realigning the path away from creek, thereby eliminating the need for the fence. This would require earthworks, but costs would be offset by eliminating the need for a fence.
- 3. Install a tree and plant barrier such as exists between the path and creek, south of the bridge over to Devereaux Street.
- 4. A combination of 2 and 3.



Spotted at the Kensington embankment Photos taken by Kaye Oddie and reproduced with permission





Date/Time	What	Where
Sunday 22 September 8:30am	Moonee Ponds Bird Watching	End of Wright Street, Westmeadows.
Monday 14 October 6.30pm	Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek General meeting Annual General Meeting	Sam Merrifield Library, 762 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds.
Monday 9 December 6:30pm	Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek General meeting	Sam Merrifield Library, 762 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds.
Thursday 19 September 6:00 - 7:00pm	A talk on: History of Moonee Ponds Creek and its Friends by Kelvin Thomson	Sam Merrifield Library, 762 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds.

FOR ALL SCHEDULED PLANTING DAYS, PLEASE BRING GLOVES AND DRINKING WATER, WEAR APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR.

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

The Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek supports child safe environments for its activities.

Last minute cancellations and changes will be posted to our Facebook: facebook.com/groups/friendsofmooneepondscreek/

HUME AND MOONEE VALLEY COUNCILS HAVE PLACED THESE PLANTING days ON THEIR WEBSITE. THEY MAY PREFER YOU TO REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE TO ASSIST WITH RESOURCING AND CATERING.

MOONEE PONDS CREEK BIRD WATCHING

Are you interested in doing some birdwatching along the Moonee Ponds Creek?

Then come and join Kelvin Thomson for an hour or two on **Sunday 22 September**. Kelvin will be meeting anyone interested at 8.30 am at the end of Wright Street, Westmeadows. See you there!

Join the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek for \$20 per year

Help protect and enhance 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 1092, Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039.**