

Merri e-News MARCH 2015

Newsletter of the Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC)
2 Lee Street Brunswick East Victoria 3057

Annual Report Highlights

In 2013-14 we achieved:

- Over 400 community and educational events
- 14,550 plants in the ground.
- Golden Sun Moth and Plains Yam Daisy surveys and vegetation monitoring.
- Working alongside Wurundjeri Elders and the Wurundjeri Narrap team on land management.
- Tackling pollution hotspots in Thomastown

Read about these activities and more in our latest [Annual Report](#). Details on our finances are available in the 2013-14 [Auditor's Report](#).

Parkland Projects and Flora & Fauna 2013-14

Our Parkland Management staff were involved in focal species projects, vegetation management in rail reserves, ecological burns, plant salvage and more. Read about project highlights in 2013-14 [here](#) (pdf 1.5MB).

The maturation of woodland plantings in urban stretches of the Merri from the late 1980s- 90s is reflected in visits from significant bird species. See our 2013-14 [Flora and Fauna report](#) (pdf 128KB)

Grants successes - 2015

Close to \$60,000 is available for **new** bushland restoration and community plantings in Northcote, Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir.

Addressing threats to urban habitat on Merri Creek: This \$20,000 Melbourne Water Community Grant will establish low growing vegetation along the Merri Creek, between Normanby Ave Thornbury and Kendall St Preston. It also aims to encourage responsible dog-walking. In places, trampling by dogs is preventing natural regeneration. Unrestrained dogs are also entering habitat of wallabies and ground feeding and ground nesting Night Herons and Banded Rails.

Koonda Lat Is Where It's At: Congratulations to the Friends of Merri Creek for their \$20,000 Melbourne Water Community Grant. The project will control weeds, restore habitat and connect with new apartment residents near the Koonda Lat bridge on the Merri Shared Path in Northcote. This is just downstream of St Georges Rd. MCMC will work with the Friends to help deliver this project.

'Like' [Friends of Merri Creek's Facebook page](#), sign up for suburb specific email notifications via admin@mcmc.org.au, or check [MCMC's calendar](#) for details about the Preston and Northcote Planting events in August.

RRR: Community Restores Resilience at Ngarri-djarrang Native Grassland, Reservoir: A \$19,993 National Landcare Program 25th anniversary grant will enable us to conduct ecological burns and revegetate a weedy area in this nationally significant native grassland next to Central Creek in Reservoir. It's not far from Central Creek's confluence with Merri Creek. See our [Ngarri-djarrang Information Note](#) (pdf) for interesting information about the restoration and management of this urban grassland.

Join us for the Ngarri-djarrang planting on Sunday 13 June, 10am-12.30pm. Davidson St, Reservoir Melway Map 8B12.

Wurundjeri Partnership – Sunbury Rings

We are delighted that the Wurundjeri Tribe Council has gained funding to do much needed revegetation work at the Sunbury Rings, a site of immense cultural significance to the Traditional Landowners. Weed invasion, erosion and rabbits threaten this important site. MCMC worked closely with the Wurundjeri Council to develop the application to the National Landcare Program 25th anniversary grants. We are honoured to now have a mentoring partnership role in the implementation of the grant. Although the site is not in the Merri Catchment (it's nearby in the Maribyrnong River catchment) the project is a very important demonstration of the growing partnership between MCMC and the Wurundjeri Council and our commitment to Traditional Owners.

Join in at the Sunbury Rings Planting on Saturday 27 June, 10 am-12.30pm Enter via Wirilda Crt (parking off Hopbush Ave) Sunbury. Melway Map 362 F12.

Planting Up the Gap in Fawkner

Last year our Special Appeal raised \$6,840 in donations to the Merri Creek Environment Fund. The first project to benefit from these funds is the *Planting the Gap project* on Merri Creek in Fawkner. Large stretches of Merri Creek in Fawkner are a mass of unattractive weeds - similar to Merri Creek 30 years ago in Brunswick, Northcote, Fitzroy and Clifton Hill. This is especially so around Lorne St, Fawkner where native shrubs and trees are being planted on a steep escarpment. Beautiful native grasses will be planted at the top of the slope and in time, seed from these maturing grasses will generate a ground storey of native grasses down the escarpment.

A Mother's Day Planting & BBQ will be held on Sunday 10 May, 10am-12.30pm Enter from eastern end of Lorne St Fawkner, Melway 18 A5.

Magical opening to *Sumner Loving* at Merri Park Northcote

The fabulous *Merri Magical Morning* opened the 2015 *Sumner Loving* program on 22 February, offering a new sense of place to Merri Park Northcote. The morning performance and stories from Wurundjeri dancers Djirri Djirri had the audience spellbound, and kids flocked to see the Spotted Marsh Frog, the Blue tongue lizard and the butterflies. Adults enjoyed weaving using local plants and people queued to have indigenous flora and fauna stories painted on their arms. This event was part of the three year Friends of Merri Creek *Sumner Loving* project, funded by the State Government's *Communities for Nature* grants program. MCMC is helping the Friends deliver the project.

More *Sumner Loving* Merri Park events are coming up: All will be at Merri Park Wetland, Northcote, Sumner Ave near Traill St, Melway 30 C8, follow the flags.

Saturday 14 March *Sumner Loving Weed Workshop* 1.30-3.30pm. This is the first of a series of weed workshops for 2015.

Saturday 18 July *Sumner Loving Planting & BBQ* 1.30-3.30pm.

Clean-up shows people are *Sumner Loving*

As part of the *Sumner Loving* project at Merri Park Northcote, 36 people registered for a Clean Up Australia Day event at the site on Sunday 1 March. Together the group filled 19 bags with rubbish and gathered up some other dumped material as well. Our sincere thanks to all those who contributed. Clearing the debris and rubbish is not just for humans to appreciate. In the last two years, the Friends of Merri Creek quarterly bird surveys have found an astonishing 72 species of birds in the Merri Park area ([bird survey details](#)).

If you're interested in contributing to the ongoing battle with litter in Merri Creek, consider joining the Friends of Merri Creek monthly litter clean ups. These are held at a different site each month. For details see the [Friends of Merri Creek events calendar](#).

See the Gorge-ous Works at Northcote Gorge

See what's been done at the striking Northcote Gorge in 2014, for the Friends of Merri Creek project, *Gorge-ous Views! Restoring the Merri Creek Habitat Corridor*. There is still more work to be done, but a [photo story](#) (pdf 739KB) shows the success of the project so far. The project is funded by a Melbourne Water Community Grant. You can contribute to this project on **Sunday 24 May Planting & BBQ 10am-12.30pm**. Enter from East St off Westgarth St Northcote Melway 30 G11

School looks deeper into water

Brunswick North West Primary School is working closely with MCMC on a new water-focused plan. Together, we aim to improve some decrepit property at the northern boundary of the school and to re-landscape an area above Melville Main Drain (ex-Melville Creek). It will include planting of over 3,000 indigenous plants. This integrated water cycle project is funded by the Victorian Government. If you're interested in this project, contact Angela Foley: angela@mcmc.org.au.

Another school jumps into frogs

Fawkner Primary School hit the ground running with early excursions in February to Merri Creek. Students explored the life cycles of indigenous animals such as the Spotted Marsh Frog, the Short Finned Eel and the Damselfly. They became acquainted with indigenous plants along the way, through sketching and printing with our local plants. The activities were funded through Moreland Council's annual contribution to MCMC.

For more information on our schools' excursions and activities see our [Environmental Education page](#). If your school is interested in similar excursions and activities, contact angela@mcmc.org.au

Yet another school fastens indigenous ties

Thornbury Primary School is building on its Woiwurrung language education program with a new master plan for indigenous revegetation in their school grounds. Their successful 'Communities for Nature' grant application in 2014, supported by MCMC, will see the school community involved in

replacing some concrete and bitumen with indigenous plants. MCMC's involvement is also supported through Darebin Council's annual contribution to MCMC.

If your school is interested in developing indigenous gardens, please contact us. Check out more about our program of [Indigenous Gardens for Schools](#).

MCMC's 2015 Committee of Management

The following office bearers were elected for 2015 at our recent AGM. The information in brackets is the MCMC member organisation the office-bearer is from.

President: Ann McGregor (Friends of Merri Creek),

Vice Presidents: Cr Drew Jessop (Hume City Council) and Nicole Lowe (Friends of Merri Creek),

Secretary: Damien Harrison (Hume City Council),

Treasurer: Allie Dawe (Friends of Merri Creek).

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Acknowledging the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Custodians of the land of the Merri Merri