

# Merri News

AUGUST 2010

Newsletter of Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) 2 Lee St East Brunswick VIC 3057



## Staff welcomed to country

Merri Creek Management Committee's (MCMC) staff and members of Friends of Merri Creek (FoMC) were privileged to receive a 'Welcome to Country' smoking ceremony beside Merri Creek in Northcote during June. The ceremony welcomed MCMC and FoMC's presence in Wurundjeri country and acknowledged our care for country on behalf of Wurundjeri custodians.

The 'Welcome to Country' was performed by Uncle Ringo (Ronald Terrick) who is a Wurundjeri Elder. The ceremony is based on Aboriginal Dreaming and it recognises Indigenous nations and the ancestral spirits who enable safe passage for visitors. This is a traditional Indigenous protocol dating back thousands of years and can only be performed by those with rightful ancestry, usually as traditional owners.

Our grateful thanks go to Uncle Ringo who came to us through the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Cultural Heritage Council. The ceremony was wonderful for all involved and meant a great deal to MCMC and FoMC.

## Edgars/Merri Creek Parkland win

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July the state government announced that 10.7 hectares of VicRoads land near the confluence of Merri and Edgars Creeks in Coburg parkland has been gifted as public open space, to be managed by Moreland City Council. The area, long utilised as public open space, was under threat of residential development by its owner VicRoads. A vigorous campaign by the Merri and Edgars Creek Parklands Group and the Friends of Edgars Creek led to the government forming the Edgars Creek Taskforce, which conducted a thorough investigation of the most appropriate use of the site and found there was overwhelming support for the retention of parkland and open space.

## Threatened Species Day Bus Tour Tuesday, 7 September, 10am-1pm

A bus trip on National Threatened Species Day to two Whittlesea sites which are home to local endangered species, including the Growling Grass Frog. Suitable for adults and children. There will be short walks and lunch is provided. **Bookings essential:** Contact Jane on 9380 8199 or email [jane@mcmc.org.au](mailto:jane@mcmc.org.au).

Organised by Waterwatch and MCMC, with City of Whittlesea support.



## Off the beaten track!

MCMC introduces people to new areas through a variety of programs to show off our terrific indigenous ecosystems. Youth from Banksia Community Centre's Vacation Program in Hume (*photo above*) and the Turkish Women's Group in Whittlesea (*photo below*) were rapt to be taken out to explore local natural areas.



## The Merri Creek Environment Fund

The Merri Creek Environment Fund is seeking donations for revegetation and conservation works in the Merri Creek catchment. *Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.* Please make cheques out to Merri Creek Environment Fund and send to MCMC, 2 Lee Street, East Brunswick, 3057, or drop in a cash donation (sorry, no credit card facilities) or contact us to arrange a direct deposit.

## Tiger tails

A Swamp Tigertail Dragonfly was an exciting find at the Beveridge Community Reserve in February.

Most records for Swamp Tigertails near Melbourne are from mountainous areas (eg. Ferntree Gully, Healesville, Taggerty). The only other record for the volcanic plains is from 1959 at a site over 70km away.

The lack of records may be partly due to the small number of observers, but this dragonfly is certainly more typical of sub-alpine bogs and fens.

The unusual spring-fed swamp at this site creates the preferred habitat conditions for the dragonfly nymphs. This sighting possibly indicates an isolated population surviving from the once extensive Inverlochy swamp. MCMC found the dragonfly while preparing a vegetation management plan for this significant reserve for Mitchell Shire Council.

Some recent popular publications have enabled interested amateurs to identify these beautiful insects and no special equipment is needed. We hope to discover the dragonfly's habitat needs by monitoring the site in the coming summer.

*Thanks to Ian Endersby of The Entomological Society of Victoria for providing distribution data and comments on this finding. The Society is a great way to follow up an interest in insects. See [www.entsovic.org.au](http://www.entsovic.org.au) and check their Facebook page to share any comments and observations*

## Singin' the Merri success

The *Singin' for the Merri* Concert on Friday 18 June at Northcote Uniting Church Hall was a big success, and lots of fun. It raised \$3,257 for MCMC. We are very grateful to Rogues Choir, Havana Palava, Expressive Women's Choir, Errols Angels and Men in Suits for their generosity and fantastic entertainment.

## More staff changes:

MCMC welcomes Michael Longmore, Chris Dench, Elise Dewar and Amanda Christie to our Parkland Management Team. Meg Gasson is now permanent and David Woods was promoted to Parkland Management Team leader, replacing Aaron Eulenstein, who has reduced his work commitments to complete a Bachelor of Environmental Science. Farewell to Luke Dragonetti and Hadley Cole who recently left.



## Fly like a bird!

MCMC website now has a 'Virtual tour' using *Google Earth* to explore Galada Tamboore in Campbellfield as if you were a Brown Falcon. See [www.mcmc.org.au](http://www.mcmc.org.au)

The virtual tour is part of the *Nearby Nature* project, which also funded the following activities and materials:

- A colourful brochure explaining the human and geological history of the area (you can get a hardcopy from our office or download a pdf. from our website);
- Twelve guided tours with community groups, which introduced many people to Galada Tamboore;
- Stormwater education and the effect of pollutants in the catchment on our waterways;
- A laminated A3 book showing Galada Tamboore's history, location, plants and animals, with translations into Turkish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Somali.

The Friends of Merri Creek and other community added to the project with weed eradication and plantings.

In 2009 Parks Victoria began a busy period of park development at Galada Tamboore, with new pathways to be completed late this year. You'll then be able to appreciate the area's natural, cultural and geological heritage by bicycle too.



## Street gardens upgraded

MCMC staff and volunteers from CERES planted indigenous shrubs and grasses, including a demonstration native lawn, in the street gardens in front of the MCMC office and CERES at Lee St East Brunswick.

## More successful grants

MCMC's Catchment Programs Team has received grants for two community engagement projects to work more closely with Indigenous communities in the Merri catchment. Thanks to *The Ian Potter Foundation* for \$20,000, and to the *International Year of Biodiversity Council of Australasian Museums Directors* for \$5,000.

Critically endangered grassland at Kalkallo will receive \$9,000 worth of ecological management through a *DSE Bush Guardians Grant* to the Parkland Management Team. Friends of Merri Creek will also contribute to this with a bird survey at Kalkallo grassland on 29 August.

**For upcoming community events see the MCMC website: [www.mcmc.org.au](http://www.mcmc.org.au)**

Download Merri News from our website or obtain a printed copy from:

**Merri Creek Management Committee 2 Lee St East Brunswick VIC 3057. Phone: 9380 8199.**

**Email: [admin@mcmc.org.au](mailto:admin@mcmc.org.au) Website: [www.mcmc.org.au](http://www.mcmc.org.au)**