

# Merri e-News AUGUST 2014

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

## Merri Corridor for sale

MCMC is deeply concerned about the state government's proposal to rezone the site of the former Lakeside Secondary College at 31 Radford Rd Reservoir, from Public Use Zone to Industrial Zone, in preparation for its sale on the open market.

The rear portion of this property, between the school oval and Merri Creek, forms a vital part of the Merri Creek corridor. It has functioned as public open space since the mid-1980s and includes the popular Merri Creek Shared Trail. The area has been managed for many years by the City of Darebin for its passive recreation, biodiversity and waterway values. [>> Read more](#), including what you can do.

## MCMC now has solar panels

On Thursday 10 July, a 1.5kW solar electricity system was installed on the roof of our office in East Brunswick. MCMC paid a discounted price for the system through the generosity of [Moreland Energy Foundation](#) (MEFL) and Moreland Council. Council won the system through the 2013 Earth Hour pledge competition, when hundreds of Moreland residents pledged to reduce their carbon emissions. Thanks to MEFL who offered the system to MCMC and made the necessary arrangements. We're happy that our payment for the system will provide seed money for the [Moreland Community Solar Project](#), auspiced by MEFL.

## Habitat Heroes and Woodland Wonders

A tiny patch of revegetation, visited by unusual bird species, has inspired a project to strengthen the Merri habitat corridor. The three year *Habitat Heroes* project will double the size of the patch of Fawkner woodland, and introduce local community to this wildlife hotspot. Don't miss the project launch on **Sunday 24th August**, 10am to 12 noon, at the eastern end of Jukes Rd, Fawkner. It will include a planting and barbecue, a *Welcome to Country* by a Wurundjeri Elder, a reptile show, and a self-guided tour of habitat plants. [>> Read more](#)

## Habitat Gardening

Planting local indigenous plants gets us in touch with nature and is a fascinating hobby. The habitat in our garden can be a small stepping stone for the wildlife that use the larger habitat corridor of the Merri Creek. Find out more at a **Habitat Gardening Workshop: Saturday 25th October** 1.30-4.30pm at MCMC's office. Numbers limited, bookings essential at [admin@mcmc.org.au](mailto:admin@mcmc.org.au) or phone Ray or Monica on 9380 8199. [>> Read more](#)

## Wild Discoveries @ Bababi Marning

There is a reserve on the Merri Creek where surprising discoveries and rediscoveries are not so surprising at all! In 2011 a rare Japanese Snipe re-appeared after a decade's absence and in 2012 an endangered grass re-appeared. It is ten years since Golden Sun Moths were rediscovered here after having been presumed extinct in the Melbourne area for decades. **A Wild Discoveries walk on Sunday 26th October** offers an opportunity to have a surprising encounter at Bababi Marning Native Grassland Reserve (Cooper Street Grassland). Book on [admin@mcmc.org.au](mailto:admin@mcmc.org.au) or 9380-8199. >> [Read more](#)

## Primary School children launch book on Merri Creek

MCMC congratulates Brunswick East Primary School on the launch of their beautiful book *Our Creek, Merri Creek*. The book was created by pupils in Grades 1 – 3. Two terms were spent researching the history of Merri Creek and producing a set of collages that illustrate the changing faces of the creek. The children themselves launched the book, based on the collages, on 25th July. Representatives of MCMC and the Friends of Merri Creek joined the well-attended and lively launch. We were very impressed by this innovative example of how to connect the next generation to their local waterway. The book can be previewed and purchased [here](#).

## Twenty years of Waterwatch (and 22 at MCMC)

Last year was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Waterwatch Victoria. The [Waterwatch Celebrating 20 Years](#) Report recognises and celebrates the significant contribution of volunteer monitors to this program. It includes some familiar faces from the Merri. The report's timeline acknowledges that community water quality monitoring in Merri Creek began in 1992. MCMC is proud to have supported community monitors for such a long time (twenty-two years). We look forward to many more years of Waterwatch at Merri Creek and thank our member councils - Darebin, Mitchell, Moreland, Whittlesea and Yarra - for their continuing support of this important 'citizen science' program.

If you'd like a hard copy of the Waterwatch Celebrating 20 Years or to join a monitoring group, contact our Waterwatch Coordinator [Jane Bevelander](#).

## Merri Creek Environment Fund Special Appeal

Our 2014 Special Appeal to raise \$18,000 for the Merri Creek Environment Fund has had a great start. Thirty-seven generous donors have donated a total of \$6,840 to fund two projects. Planning for the first of these, the *Planting the Gap project* on Merri Creek in Fawkner, has started. Site preparation begins next year and a community planting will be held in May 2015.

The second project, *Preserving 25 years of Merri History*, has been given an early boost by two skilled volunteers who are digitising and cataloguing MCMC's precious image collection. Plans are afoot for a 2015 exhibition of 'before and after images'. The aim is to show the dramatic transformation of Merri Creek through many years of community effort.

We'd appreciate your support to help us reach our target for these project. For further information and how to donate >> [Read more](#)

## Daisy-chain links the centuries

The story of the Plains Yam Daisy links us to thousands of years of this land's traditional custodianship and to conservation challenges facing current and future generations. In May 2014, a community survey added another line to this story.

For thousands of years, the daisy's sweet, fat roots were a staple food for local Aboriginal people. The abundance of Yam Daisy reported by early European explorers seems likely the result of the careful tending of the land to sustain important foodplants.

The introduction of sheep in 1835 broke this age-old relationship. On the grassy plains around Melbourne, the flocks ate the daisies and then dug up and ate the roots. Within a few years the daisy was decimated. Detailed knowledge around this plant disappeared along with the forced removal of Aboriginal people from their land, their language and their traditional way of life. >>  
[Read more](#)

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