



Bushfire season – are you ready?

Department of Sustainability and Environment bushfire management expert Kevin Ritchie will speak at the DPA's next information evening, on Tuesday 24 November. Kevin has 23 years' experience in managing land and bushfires here and overseas. He will speak on Victoria's drought and bushfire history, the Black Saturday fires and the Bushfires Royal Commission and implications for places such as the Darebin Parklands and those who live near them. The meeting starts at 8 pm, in the parklands environment centre, Separation Street, Alphington. All welcome.

Another great year draws to a close

It's been a busy few months for the DPA, with four events in the parklands – our September park care day, Catch a Carp Day, Junior Ranger bonfire night and the unveiling of our founders' memorial.

We have three more events coming up before we end the year, including the announcement of the winners of our photo competition by Banyule mayor Tom Melican on Sunday 8 November. Details about these events are in the following pages.

As well we have made significant progress on one of our major projects, the publication of a history of the parklands and the DPA. Leading historian Sarah Mirams has just been appointed to develop the manuscript following an extensive selection and interview process. Sarah, who is completing a soon to be published history of the Mallacoota area, will start work on the project in the new year. We'll update you with more news about this in future newsletters.

As this is the last newsletter for the year I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the achievements of our organisation over the last 12 months, in particular the hardworking DPA committee, head ranger Pete Wiltshire and of course, you our members.

And finally, a reminder that DPA memberships run for 12 months, and fall due at the start of each calendar year. If you'd like to get in early and pay next year's membership, a form is included in this newsletter. We've now introduced direct debit payments, to make it even easier for you to pay your subscription. All the details are on the form.

Thanks for your support.

Ingrid Svendsen
President

DPA events 2009/2010

- November 8** Photo competition awards
- November 24** Information evening
- November 29** Park care day
- February 5** Junior Ranger camp out*
- February 23** Information evening
- March 14** Darebin Parklands Picnic Races
- April 16** Junior Ranger wildlife spotlighting*
- May 16** Park care day
- May 25** Information evening
- June 6** Park care day
- July 18** Park care day
- August 20** Junior Ranger bonfire night*
- August 31** Information evening
- October 10** Kids Catch a Carp Day*
- November 30** Information evening
- December 5** Park care day

Invitation only event for prize winners

** DPA members' event (guests/non members are welcome to join at the event)*





Parklands gets fire ready

Hello members,

Finally the Melbourne Water projects have started along the creek. The southern end is having the western bank shored up with rocks to protect the shared trail from flood damage and erosion. The works have involved two 6" pumps to divert the creek flow around the work site, a 12 tonne excavator sitting in the creek floor and 1,000 tonne of rock being shifted by a massive front-end loader. As in all things to do with Murphy's Law as soon as they started we had high rainfall for the first time in many years, delaying the job. But it is underway now and should be completed by the end of the month.

The northern site (Reflection Pool) has also been started, with the remaining willow trees removed and the initial earthworks underway. Rocks have been imported into the site in preparation of the enlargement of the pool. Another creek access area 40 metres north of the Reflection Pool is planned. A massive planting will be undertaken to consolidate the site and a temporary fence will be constructed to allow the plants to establish. It is hoped the fence can be removed within 15 months.

The Rockbears Grove weed removal project, again funded by Melbourne Water through its stream frontage program, is due to commence very soon with the first grant payment of \$100,000 received by the DCMC. I will be liaising with Melbourne Water and the Rockbears Grove owners in the next couple of weeks so the project can get underway.

On 16 November the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) organised a walk through the Darebin Parklands as part of Bushfire Awareness Week to firstly learn about the park and its fire risk and secondary to discuss what is needed for the parklands' fire plan, which is being drafted at present. The day allowed me to show the MFB our fire control strategy and the areas I am concerned about every summer. The day was attended by the MFB northern region commander Frank Besanko and members of the Northcote Fire

Brigade. Both councils sent along relevant officers and the day was also attended by DPA members and some local residents. The following Friday the Northcote brigade brought down their fire truck and we drove it around the park evaluating where it could go in the park in relative safety.

The DCMC is currently working on a fire plan and is preparing the park for the summer. We have recently bought a firefighting/planting trailer that will allow the rangers to get to fires the MFB can't reach.

Over the next few weeks I will begin to remove all dead wood on the mulberry trees, so if you see some chainsaw action near the trees that is what is happening.

The invitation for applications for the ranger job closed last Friday 30 October and this week I'm sorting through the applicants in the hope of finding our next ranger at Darebin Parklands. So it's a busy time here on top of the 1,200 students that have been through the park in spring so far.

To finish off I must thank the DPA for another stunning year, with the Melbourne Water project along the creek completed over a two-year period. You planted over 7,000 grasses and 800 tube stock and moved mountains of mulch. I also can't forget the Monday morning crew who work every week in Hidden Valley, which looks a treat. Thank you.

Seeya in the park,

Peter Wiltshire
Ranger in charge

Mayor to do photo comp honours

The mayor of Banyule, Cr Tom Melican, will present the awards for the 2009 DPA photography competition at a champagne afternoon tea on Sunday 8 November, at 4 pm. Please join us at the parklands environment centre to congratulate the prize winners and view the exhibition of photographs. The limited-edition DPA calendar, featuring 14 of the best shots from the competition, will also be on sale for \$18, or \$16 each for orders of more than one.





The Junior Ranger Page!

The unluckiest fish in the Darebin

Around 50 keen young fisher people turned out for Catch a Carp Day on a glorious spring morning on Sunday 11 October.

Carp have been elusive at recent events, but not this time, with star angler Martin Ayres hooking a whopper fish

Martin received a new fishing rod as his prize and two others also took home some new fishing gear. Everyone stayed around for a sausage sizzle and explored the Waterwatch trailer with its interactive displays and real water bugs.

A big thank you to Julia Vanderoord from Waterwatch and our ranger Peter Wiltshire for supporting this terrific day.

– Karina Watson, JR coordinator



What a whopper!

Carp are an introduced fish that muddy up our local rivers and make it difficult for our native fish and water bugs to survive.

During the first five minutes of the lines being in the water at Catch a Carp Day I caught a 70 cm, 2.8 kg slimy carp. I was fishing off the bridge just past the ponds when the whopper took my bait! It was too heavy to reel-in so we used a net to haul it in. It was a lot of fun to catch such a monster and to do my bit to clean up our local river!

– Martin Ayres



Bumper bonfire crowd

On a lovely mild August evening Junior Rangers gathered for our annual bonfire. A crowd of about 100 adults and children enjoyed the spectacle of the bonfire igniting, sending sparks and flames into the night sky. An added attraction this year was ranger Pete's new tractor. The usual fun was had toasting marshmallows and parading sparklers. At the end of the night Pete used the tractor blade to push the fire into a small heap to be made safe to leave. Thanks to Pete for organising the bonfire.

Camp out winners are grinners!

Our end of year Junior Ranger prize was drawn at Catch a Carp Day.

Six lucky Junior Rangers won the opportunity to camp out in the parklands with the rangers next February.

They will be treated to a delicious barbecue dinner, campfire and spotlight walk and the very special experience of camping in the parklands.

This year's winners are: Elizabeth G, Rebecca G, Hugo L-K, Liam H, Lily M and Sam F. Congratulations to all.





November park care day

The DPA's last park care day for the year will be held on Sunday 29 November, from 1-3 pm. We will be sowing native seeds into plant tubes as part of the community plant nursery project.

DPA members can take a box or two of tubes home and watch the seeds sprout over summer. The plants will then be used in the park, or we will donate them to schools and farmers along the creek for planting.

Equipment and afternoon tea are supplied.
Info: Karina, 9499 4338.

Paying tribute to our founders

The DPA recognised the work of its founders at our September park care day, when we dedicated our founders' memorial. The park bench and plaque, purchased with part of the proceeds of a \$7,000 NAB volunteer award, is in Hidden Valley, upstream from the Clifton Bridge, on the Ivanhoe side of the park.

DPA committee member and founder Sue Course paid tribute to all of the fellow founders of the DPA, including her late husband Laurie, whose many achievements include driving the push to purchase the Alphington side of the park and using his photographic skills to record an invaluable archive of the park's early days. Sue was joined by two of her children, sons Tony and Phil, and a large group of members.

The DPA thanks treasurer Karina Rook for her work in organising the memorial.



Photo: Peter Harvey

Ivanhoe reveg project finished

Close to 10,000 native grasses, groundcovers, shrubs and trees have been planted at our Ivanhoe revegetation site over the last 18 months. The project has transformed this area from an eroded and weed infested site. Its habitat values will continue to increase as the vegetation matures.

The site is between the Clifton Footbridge and the Crossing Stones. If you haven't been down there recently, check it out, and be pleasantly surprised at the array of wildflowers that are blooming.

Funded by Melbourne Water, with a contribution from Banyule Council, the project has been a fantastic example of community partnership. As well as the DPA, organisations that have worked on the site include Global Club, Darebin DOGs and Mary Immaculate School.

Thanks are due to everyone who helped out, and especially to head ranger Pete Wiltshire, who project managed the works.

Next year we will be moving on to our new revegetation site, the Snake Grass area, on the Alphington side of the park.



Michael and Minnie get busy. Photo: Peter Harvey

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Darebin Parklands Association – 2009 Membership Application

<p>Junior Ranger Members</p> <p>Family Name: _____</p> <p>First Name(s): _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Parents and Other Members</p> <p>Family Name: _____</p> <p>First Name(s): _____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

I would like to receive DPA news and updates by email (please print clearly)

Membership Type	Cost	Qty	Total
Junior For all kids who want to have fun and contribute to the park.	\$2		
Concession Unwaged, seniors and students	\$10		
Individual One person	\$15		
Family One or more adults plus Junior Rangers, from the same household or family.	\$20		
Corporate	\$50		
Donations Donations of \$20 or more are tax deductible. Make your cheque out to our partner Landcare Australia Ltd and you will receive a tax receipt.			
Please make cheques payable to: Darebin Parklands Association Inc. Or pay us directly (add your name as a reference): BSB 633108 Acc 116325457 Return this form and payment to: The Treasurer, DPA, PO Box 3, Ivanhoe 3079			

<p>My interests are:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Urban parks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Plants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Animals / Birds</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Geology</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other...</p>	<p>I can help out with:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Planting/Horticulture</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Event organising</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Development projects</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grants/fundraising</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other...</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Office use only</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Payment received by: _____</p> <p>Payment by cheque / cash / direct credit</p> <p>Database: New / Renew</p>
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