

# Merri News

NOVEMBER 2009

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

## Merri Creek & Environs Strategy

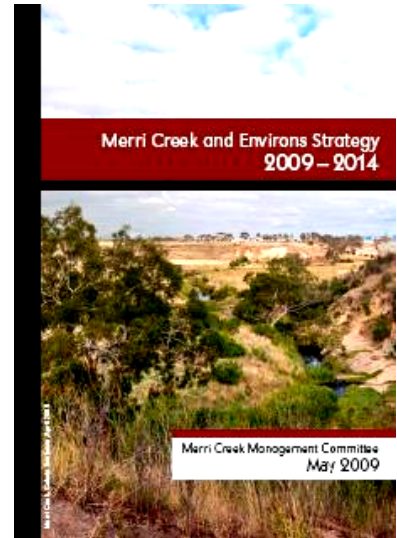
Merri Creek Management Committee's new strategy for the waterways of the Merri Catchment is now available. The *Merri Creek and Environs Strategy* provides a wealth of information about the Merri waterways, highlighting issues and sets objectives, targets and actions to achieve healthy streams, fauna habitat and open space.

The Strategy can be viewed and downloaded from the MCMC website at [www.mcmc.org.au/mces](http://www.mcmc.org.au/mces) Hard copies are available from MCMC for \$20 + p&h.

Implementation of the strategy has started with the priority action of fire planning.

### Fire Planning

MCMC has recently convened working group meetings with Council Officers, MFB, CFA and Parks Victoria to discuss fire management planning needs in the outer urban and inner (south of the Ring Rd) parts of the Merri corridor respectively. Further work is needed to assess risk and to consider development of an Integrated Fire Management Plan. MCMC has a particular interest in ensuring that revegetation areas are planned with fire access and management in mind.



## Galada Tamboore - at the crossroads

For decades, the opportunity for solitude has been a part of Galada Tamboore's charm for a select band of Friends of Merri Creek (FOMC) volunteers, MCMC staff and Campbellfield and Thomastown locals. The 'hidden' entrances and an often forbidding aspect have discouraged many people from discovering the fascinating geology, flora, fauna and significant cultural features of this place.

However, within the next few years Galada Tamboore will change. Construction of the Merri shared trail including a pedestrian bridge across Merri Creek linking Campbellfield and Thomastown will soon commence. This will make Galada Tamboore a cross-roads for visitors to 'Maran Baba', Parks Victoria's Merri Creek Park.

What is being done to ensure a smooth transition from 'hidden jewel' to 'ecotourism showpiece'?

Over many years, MCMC has provided advice to various planning forums for Galada Tamboore. MCMC's on-ground works in partnership with community, Hume City Council and Melbourne Water have accomplished screening plantings, noxious weed eradication, ecological restoration and damage reporting. The effect of this work is that visitors will experience scenic views and indigenous flora and fauna rather than being overwhelmed by the back fences, wheel ruts, dumped rubbish, boxthorns and thistles that dominated earlier years.

A detailed Information Note for Galada Tamboore, recently developed by MCMC has proved useful in informing those involved in shaping Galada Tamboore's future at this critical time. Contact MCMC for a copy of this note or view on MCMC's website. A series of ongoing activities and tours, funded by a FOMC Melbourne Water grant and EPA Alternative Penalties,

continue efforts to prepare this site for the pressures that will attend its entry into the limelight.

*Photo: Planting by Melbourne Uni and RMIT students as a leadership skills building exercise in September - one of the dozens of activities MCMC has helped organise over the years that have protected biodiversity and prepared Galada Tamboore as a visitor destination.*



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

### MCMC Staff

Congratulations to MCMC staff who have clocked up 10 years of service: Angela Foley of the Catchment Programs group, and Megan Jericho & Brian Bainbridge from the Parkland Management team. MCMC recently farewelled its Catchment Programs Manager, Greg Woodward. Greg is now with DSE River Health and State Waterwatch.

## More Merri Monitoring

Although welcome, our recent spring rain has once again raised concerns about stormwater pollution washing from our streets into the creeks. With the support of Merri Creek Management Committee's Waterwatch staff, the community are helping to monitor the effects of this stormwater on our local creeks.

The Merri and Moonee Ponds Waterwatch program, hosted by MCMC, is lucky to have many community monitors out testing water quality. The Friends of Five Mile Creek are a new group monitoring this small tributary of the Moonee Ponds Creek on a monthly basis.

Chris Whakett and Stefanie Carmignani, Conservation and Land Management students, are complementing their studies by respectively monitoring Edgars Creek in North Coburg and Westbreen Creek in Pascoe Vale.

Friends of the Westgate Park have three new members who have recently undertaken Waterwatch training and are now sampling a mammoth six sites a month at the wetlands underneath the Westgate Bridge.

Of course we cannot forget our many other monitors whose countless years of testing is providing incredibly valuable data.

*Waterwatch is a national community based water quality monitoring program aimed at raising community awareness, understanding and ownership of water quality issues. This is achieved through active involvement in monitoring the health of Melbourne's waterways.*

**If you would like to be involved in an existing monitoring group or start your own, please contact Jane Bevelander, Waterwatch Officer on 9380 8199.**



## Here it is! Seeding the Future

*Seeding the Future* a community training DVD for seed identification, collection and storage is ready for screening. Its production was funded by Melbourne Water and the Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association, with lots of voluntary input from Judy Allen, the film's director.

MCMC provided production support for this project which had its Melbourne launch co-hosted by Friends of Edgars Creek in October. Thanks to Judy Allen and MCMC's Angela Foley for their great teamwork and DVD!

**If you would like a free DVD please contact Monica at MCMC.**

## Caring for the Merri

MCMC's Parkland Management Team was extremely busy restoring threatened vegetation along the Merri, Edgars and Aitken Creeks from Clifton Hill to north of Beveridge during 2009. With two grants totalling \$181,236 from the Federal Government's *Caring for our Country* program the on-ground works team expanded to 15 staff. Over 400 community members worked with our team in the implementation of vegetation restoration works at 16 important grassland, escarpment and riparian sites. Habitat quality assessments were made at 10 of these sites. These assessments were used to shape management recommendations that will enhance ongoing restoration efforts for the endangered vegetation at these sites.



*Flame Robin; a winter visitor to the Merri Grasslands*

## 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, drop in a cash donation (sorry, no credit card facilities) or contact us to arrange a direct deposit.

## MCMC 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Galada Tamboore – Merri Creek Gorge photography exhibition by David Tatnall

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of MCMC, an exhibition of photographs was held at Synergy Gallery in Northcote in August.

The exhibition featured stunning images of Galada Tamboore on the Merri Creek taken by renowned photographer, David Tatnall. The opening night was standing room only as the exhibition was officially opened by David Redfearn, Committee Member of MCMC with an evocative Welcome to Country ceremony by Wurundjeri Elder Bill Nicholson Jnr.

The exhibition was a huge success visited by approximately 500 people during its three week duration – a great way of spreading the Merri Creek story. One visitor during the exhibition was Senator Bob Brown, Leader of the Greens (pictured here with David Tatnall) who remarked that the photos reminded him of the Franklin River in Tasmania.



Merri Creek Management Committee produces these quarterly newsletters for the wider community in the Merri Creek catchment. You can download this in colour from our website (see below) or contact Ray Radford for a hardcopy at:

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