

13. Dry Creek and Sunday Creek in Broadford



Sunday Creek and Dry Creek meet at the Broadford Common below the town. These creeks have a series of floodplain reserves through the town, with a mix on natural bushlands and parklands. Large old Redgums provide wonderful habitat along these corridors, mixed with more recent regeneration of native trees and shrubs and community plantings of trees, shrubs and ground covers. This is all maturing as a wonderful place for wildlife and people.

These reserves are on the land of the Taungurung People, and the floodplains are areas of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#). We acknowledge their Elders past and present and emerging, and their care of Country over many millennia. We ask that all people respect this ancient heritage and care for the land we now share.

Directions

The waterway reserves are easily accessible from the town, with walking tracks providing great places for people to exercise and enjoy the natural environment. The Dry Creek and Sunday Creek Waterway Reserves are divided into several sections. Many roads lead from the town to different parts of the Reserves – see Walking Tracks and Map below.

Walking Tracks

The main creekline walking track includes gravel tracks along Dry Creek and Sunday Creek with detours along urban streets. Hopefully, there will be a continuous track along the creeklines in the future.



Dry Creek Walking Trail and Donaldson Drive Parklands: A gravel walking trail begins at the south end of High Street, Broadford before the Dry Creek bridge. Turn into the southern entry of Casey Crescent and left down a dirt road to the start of the track. The track starts at the gate and information signs and follows the Dry Creek Water Frontage. The bushland corridor has occasional large and ancient Red Gums, abundant Red Gum regrowth and an understorey of tree violets and silver wattles. The track then enters the open grasslands of the Donaldson Drive Parklands. Distance to Donaldson Drive. Distance 1380 m.

Detour: turn left along Donaldson Drive past Horace Court. After 200m, enter the laneway between 25 and 29 Donaldson Drive running through to between 14 and 18 First Street. From here, either:

- return to the start of the Dry Creek Walking trail: turn right up First Street and right again along the walking track adjacent to High Street. Distance back to the start of the Dry Creek Walking Trail: 1730m, a total loop of 3110m. Or:
- continue to follow Dry Creek downstream: turn left down First Street past the old school pine plantation. After 220m, turn right into Mollison Street and continue to the corner of Mollison Street and White Street (another 240m).

Broadford Recreation Reserve and Dry Creek Water Frontage: From the corner of Mollison and White Streets, a walking track heads west along the boundary fence towards Dry Creek then loops back towards the Broadford Leisure Centre and the corner of Mollison and Pinniger Streets.

This track runs down and across lower terraces of rich grassy woodlands with many large old trees. Other tracks branch north through an old plantation on Hamilton Street/Sugarloaf Creek Road behind the Broadford Leisure Centre. Some rough tracks drop down towards Dry Creek but most of the floodplains are untracked dense grasslands with occasional billabongs.



McKenzie Bushland Reserve: The floodplains and long billabongs continue along the northern side of Hamilton Street/Sugarloaf Creek Road Street, from McKenzie's Bridge downstream to the Mollison Street corner near the cemetery. An old track follows the higher land from a gate on Hamilton Street but may be overgrown and hard to follow. **Note:** McKenzie Bushland Reserve is not an official name for this section.

Detour: rather than following indistinct tracks or bush-bashing along the creek in the Bushland Reserve, continue along Mollison Street.

Broadford Common: The Dry Creek Walking Trail begins again with a steep drop from the Mollison Street corner onto the floodplain behind the cemetery. The rest of the track is on level ground beside Dry Creek, past the confluence of the creeks and up the west side of Sunday Creek. The track runs under the High Street bridge to the low road crossing. To the left are toilets and a footbridge onto The Island (Lions Park).

The Island: Above the footbridge onto The Island, Sunday Creek has two channels: the current main creek against the steep bank to the west and a second mostly dry channel to the east, with an old channel dividing the island (that was the original surveyed course of the stream before the railway embankment and bridge were built around 1872). The walking track runs across the two islands. It branches up a slope to the Broadford Bowling Club with the main track running under the railway bridge to Chloe Drive.

The Parade: From The Island, The Parade runs off the other side of High Street and follows the eastern side of Sunday Creek downstream to the confluence with Dry Creek, then downstream to Last Street and Broadford Mill. The Reserve is dense grassland with some trees and shrubs near the confluence of the creeks but no tracks. An interesting bridge over the creek leads to an old basalt quarry (private).

Chloe Drive Floodplain: Upstream from The Island (and under the railway), Chloe Drive is along a high terrace with a drop to a narrow floodplain on Sunday Creek. This floodplain was revegetated around 2000. It has an old weir and other features reflecting the industrial past of the creek. The junction of Chloe Drive with Rupert Street overlooks a very wide floodplain between Sunday Creek and a small side creek. This area is being transformed from a very weedy scrubland into farmland and a natural corridor of Red Gums, Silver Wattles and Tree Violets on the narrow water frontage reserve. It is not yet accessible for walkers.

Catherine Court Reserve: An unnamed creek runs through the Catherine Court Reserve, then under the railway, through the old police paddock behind Broadford Living and Learning Centre and into Sunday Creek at The Island. The walking track through Catherine Court Reserve starts on Rupert Street and follows the creekline upstream through open bushland to Mia Mia Road.

Davidson Street and Whiteman's Reserve: The west bank of Sunday Creek opposite Chloe Drive is steep and there is no access under the railway bridge. The west side of Sunday Creek can be reached by following Hamilton Street across the railway and through to Davidson Street. From here, a loop walk runs down Davidson Street past some grand old Yellow Box trees to a small area of floodplain at the end of the street. Mown grasslands can be followed upstream beside a steep bank with native trees and shrubs to Whiteman's Reserve. Community and Council have transformed Whiteman's Reserve into a lovely walk back to the Broadford Wandong Road and Davidson Street.



Broadford town loop, including gravel trails from Dry Creek Bridge to Donaldson Reserve and around the Common to the Sunday Creek bridge, are generally accessible for all abilities. The link from Mollison Street down to the track near the Cemetery is too steep without assistance. The toilet area at Lions Park has no disabled parking and pathways provide poor access to the toilets and The Island. The Island is grassland only suitable in dry conditions.



The Island has picnic tables and shelters. Donaldson Drive Parkland and Broadford Common have seating along the walk.



Toilets are in the parking area at The Island, and in Memorial Park outside the Post Office in High Street.



Vehicles should not use the walking tracks.

Landform and Geology

The underlying geology is Devonian marine deposits of mud, silt and sand laid down on the edge of an ancient submarine continental shelf and adjoining deeper seas around 440 to 400 million years ago. The deposits have hardened over time as the *Broadford Formation* and *Humevale Siltstone*). Bands of these rocks are visible in the stream beds and banks in many places.

Around seventeen million years ago, basalt flows (*Pintadeen basalts*) south to Kilmore East filled the ancient Sunday Creek valley and split the creek into Dry Creek and Sunday Creek. In the past six million years, newer basalt flows from Round Hill came down to the northern edge of Broadford and may have blocked Sunday Creek north of the Broadford Common.

Since then, the creeks have cut deep into the Devonian rocks beside the harder basalt flows. Upstream from Broadford, the Pintadeen basalts are now a high ridge - the Bald Hills – over 100m

above the creeklines. In Broadford, erosion and alluvial deposits have created two levels of terraces - higher terraces now well above flood levels carrying the main township of Broadford and a series of lower terraces prone to flooding (floodplains). The line between the terraces is visible as a steep slope where the creeks on the flood plain have cut into the higher terrace (eg. near the Common).

The wider flood plains also have higher levees of sandy soils deposited adjacent to the creeks and broad poorly drained swales behind the levees. The swales have swamps, channels and water-holes cut by floods, most visible in the top and bottom commons.

The basalt now stands out as steep hills on the west side of Dry Creek and Sunday Creek (with an old basalt quarry opposite The Parade).

The two creeks are now deeply incised into their floodplains and the stream is on bedrock in some places. Some early photos suggest that the creek was not so deeply incised and formed a chain of ponds common in many waterways. Any natural erosion would have been made a lot worse when the land was cleared from about 1840. Drains and swales running into the creeks have also been incised down to creek level (such as the creek in Whiteman's Reserve).

Vegetation

The vegetation along the creek-lines is mapped as [Creekline Grassy Woodland](#) with [Plains Grassy Woodland](#) on the wider floodplains and [Red Gum Swamps](#) in a few very wet areas.

River Red Gums are the dominant trees in all these places, with a Silver Wattles, Tree Violets, Hemp Bush and many other native species. The floodplains are also rich places for Introduced species such as Phalaris. Poorly drained areas on the higher terraces also have Red Gums typical of Plains Grassy Woodland. One grand old Red Gum stands in the heavy soils near the Recreation Reserve.

[Grassy Woodlands](#) occur on the better drained slopes around the town, with Yellow Box a feature of the town and some lovely diverse grasslands still present in places such as the slopes towards the creek west of Broadford Recreation Reserve/Top Common.

Plant lists are in preparation.

Wildlife

Aquatic species have been poorly surveyed but Rakali (Water Rats) are common and Platypus are likely to occur. Five frog species have been recorded in the past, including an old record of Bibron's Toadlet (a Threatened species).

The woodlands along the creek are rich places for wildlife. The corridors of old trees are mostly continuous with a few wider woodland areas providing habitat for Brush-tailed and Ring-tailed Possums and probably Sugar Gliders and Tuans. The reserves are a haven for a diversity of birds.

These woodland corridors are part of a network of wildlife corridors up Dry Creek including several more Natural Treasures such as Broadford Streamside Reserve (on Jeffreys Lane) and Kilmore Recreation Reserve, and the biolink from the Dry Creek Walking Trail up to Mount Piper. These corridors are the focus of Landcare's Mount Piper to Monument Hill Habitat Highway.

Species lists are in preparation.

Aboriginal history

The Reserve is on the land of the Taungurung people. The creeks and swamps and floodplains at the confluence of the creeks would have been a rich place for the First Nations people to live, find food and play. The reserves along Dry Creek and Sunday Creek are in areas of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#).

History after colonisation

From the late 1830's Broadford became a crossing and stock watering place on Dry Creek and Sunday Creek and consequently the main route through to Sydney. The township of Broadford was surveyed and gazetted in 1854. Land near the Dry Creek bridge was a travelling stock reserve and the land behind Broadford Living and Learning Centre was police paddock. In the 1860s, several industries opened along Dry Creek and Sunday Creek. A water-powered mill was built near the site of the present Australian Paper Manufacturers' Mill and a tannery opened near the Dry Creek Bridge in 1868. The north-eastern railway line was completed to the Goulburn River by April 1872. Firewood for the growing population of Melbourne was one of the main commodities for the freight trains. The town was bypassed by the Hume Freeway in the early 1980s.

In 1861, the Town Common of 117 acres (47ha) was proclaimed. In 1867, petitions to stop the sale of the Common at the end of Piper Street were successful. The land was reserved as a botanic garden that did not eventuate, and parts were sold over the years. In the early 1900s, the Common was used as a horse racing track, a cricket ground (the cricket pitch is still there) and a golf course. The Common was also called "cow dung flat" because many residents grazed their cattle on the land. The current "Common" is now 6.4 ha, one of only two commons in Victoria. It is surrounded by other reserved Crown land on the floodplain mostly managed by the Council.

Many residents learnt to swim in the Broadford Swimming Hole on Sunday Creek downstream from High Street until the pool was built. The creek was hugely different then.

In 1996, the walking track along Sunday Creek and Dry Creek was finally built after a lot of discussion. Fencing and plantings by the Council and community groups (including BEAM Mitchell Environment Group) has transformed the streamside reserves into places for native plants and animals and people.

Management

The upstream section from the private land fences to the creekline is owned and managed by Mitchell Shire Council down to First Street, apart from a narrow meandering corridor of Crown Land marking an early survey of the creek (the current creek has moved from this corridor in many places). The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has a works area is immediately downstream from First Street. The upstream section of Sunday Creek including Whiteman's Reserve is also Council owned or managed land. The downstream sections of both streams are through Crown land. All these sections of the reserves are managed by the Council and/or the DEECA. The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority is responsible for works in the stream channel (bed and banks).

The Crown land is included in the [Land Use Activity Agreement](#), a part of the [Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement](#). The waterways are sites of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#).

Further information

Mitchell Shire Council:

Broadford Town Loop: <https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/points-of-interest/broadford-common-link-to-Walking-Map> at <https://walkingmaps.com.au/walk/5558>

Donaldson Reserve: <https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/our-region/parks-and-playgrounds/donaldson-reserve>

Lions Park: <https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/our-region/parks-and-playgrounds/lions-park-broadford-1>

Whitemans Reserve: <https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/our-region/parks-and-playgrounds/whitemans-reserve-broadford>

Taungurung Land and Water Council at <https://taungurung.com.au/>

Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement at <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/native-title/taungurung-recognition-and-settlement-agreement>.

Goulburn Broken CMA Revegetation Guide: information on different ecological vegetation communities, plant communities and plants in the Sugarloaf zone at <https://www.gbcm.vic.gov.au/revegetation/zones/sugarloaf>.

Acknowledgements

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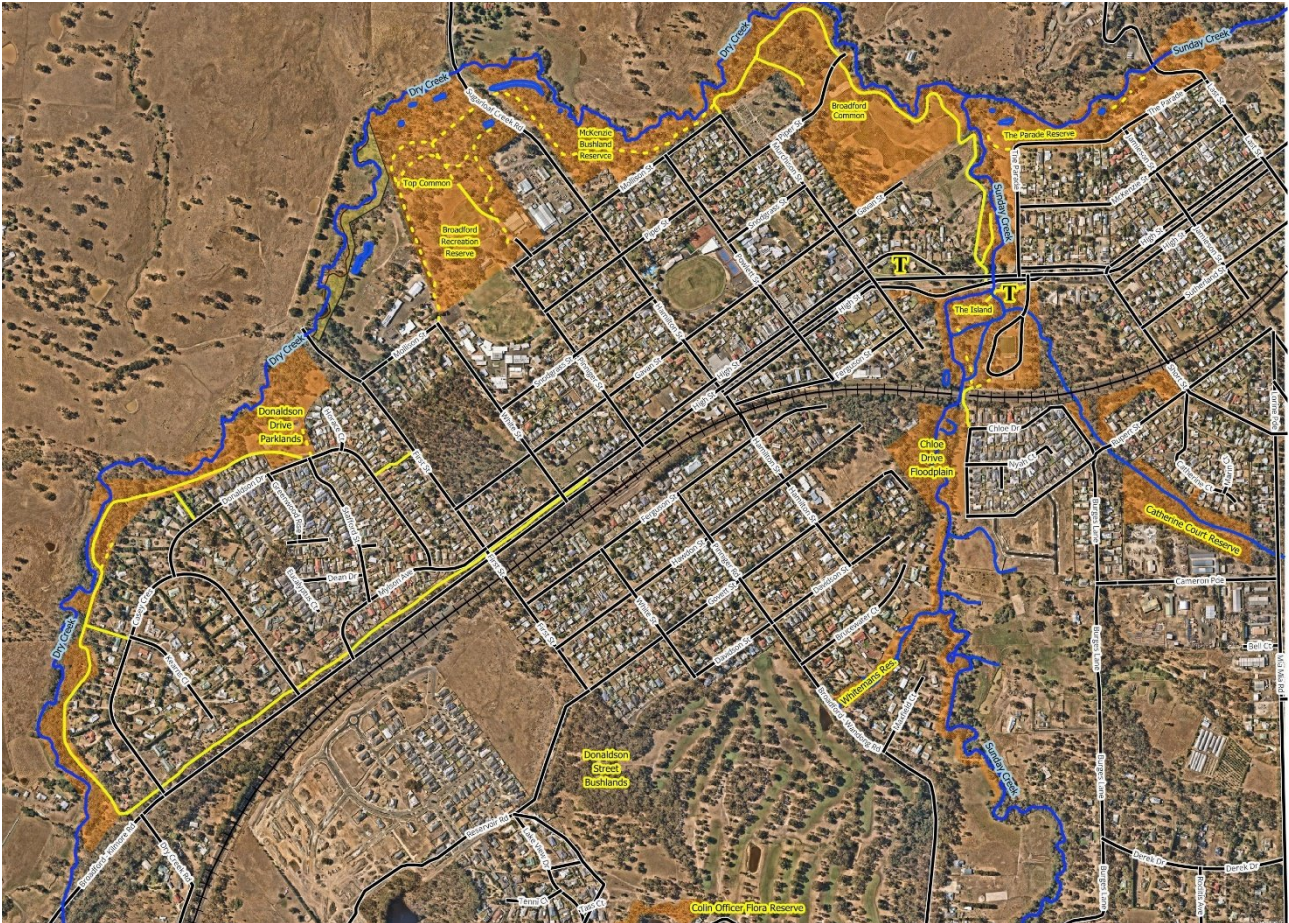
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These notes are a work in progress. If you have any comments or additional information on the nature and ecological history of the streamside reserves in Broadford, please contact us at <https://www.beam.org.au/contact>



Dry Creek and Sunday Creek in Broadford



 Broadford Waterway Reserves	 Creeks and billabongs	 Walking trails	 Rail
 Other Crown Water Frontage	 Roads	 Rough tracks	 Toilets

