



Upper Stony Creek Transformation Project: A Socio-Ecological Study

Background

Upper Stony Creek in Sunshine North is being transformed from a concrete channel into an **accessible urban wetland and park**.

This project is funded by the Australian Government, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Melbourne Water, City West Water, Development Victoria, Brimbank City Council and Greenfleet.

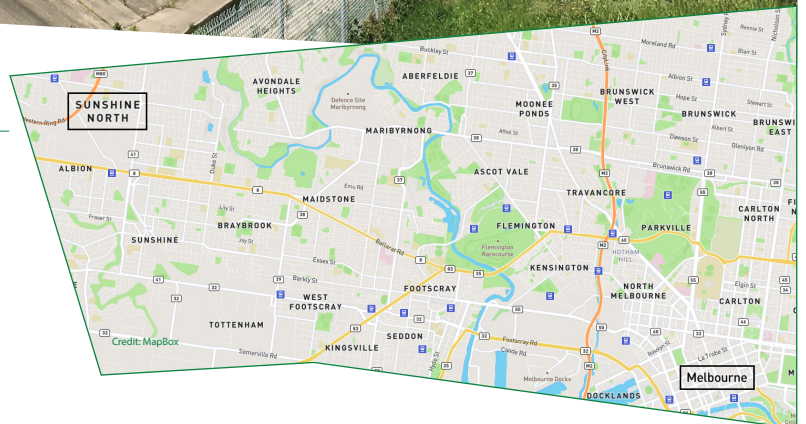
A multidisciplinary team from RMIT University and the University of Melbourne are conducting a longitudinal study which aims to determine the impact of the Upper Stony Creek Transformation project on residents, with a focus on psychological, social and physical health outcomes as well as biodiversity benefits.

Baseline data collection over 2016/17 has been completed to assess the impact of this greening intervention and waterway restoration on **residents' health and wellbeing, and plant and animal biodiversity**. Selected results are provided overleaf.



The Location

- 14 kilometres west of Melbourne's CBD
- Population is about 11,700 people (ABS, 2016)
- Average 3 people per household (ABS, 2016)
- Over 50% of residents born overseas (ABS, 2016)



Australian Government



ECOLOGICAL FINDINGS

Frogs

Frog species found at the Stony Creek transformation site: **Pobblebonk, Striped Marsh Frog, Spotted Marsh Frog.**

Frog species found in the neighbourhood: **Common Eastern Froglet.**

Frogs were often heard calling from the concrete channel, particularly where plants grew through cracks in the concrete.



Insects

Insect pollinators found: 7 native and 3 non-native.

Pollinators interacted mostly with non-native herbaceous weeds.

The most common pollinators were native bees, followed by non-native European honeybees.

Bats

Bats detected: 8/14 species of insect-eating microbat found across Greater Melbourne.

Number of calls recorded: 7,000.

More common species: **Gould's Wattled Bat** and the **Southern Free-tailed Bat.**

SOCIAL FINDINGS

Results from surveys and interviews with residents:

- 65% of survey respondents say the area is a good place to live.
- Only 35% of survey respondents feel they have many opportunities to be physically active.
- Survey respondents rated their subjective wellbeing as 65 on a 0-100 rating scale which is lower than the Victorian average of 77.
- The current Stony Creek site in Sunshine North is used by less than 2% of residents.
- The site is currently unloved and underused.
- Residents have concerns about safety and maintenance.

"We don't go there because of the weed problem and there's no pathway."

- Residents are observant of local biodiversity and perceive native species favourably.

"We're slowly seeing ...a lot of our native birds coming back to this area."



- There are some concerns about snakes and mosquitoes.
- Most people are excited about and looking forward to the transformation.

"We're very grateful, and [it] feels like Christmas has come [laughs]."