



# Greenlink NEWS

Newsletter of Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

February 2015

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## **Propagations**

2015 is off to a flying start and we welcome volunteers back from holidays. Many exciting things are happening here at Greenlink. There has been wonderful training, in grasses and wetland plants with ecologist, Dr Graeme Lorimer, as well as a workshop in computer software for nurseries with Andy. Learning within the nursery continues as volunteers gain skills and plant knowledge, with different tasks on offer through our new NOG system.

Many plant families require sowing in December and January. Subsequent pricking out of seedlings from trays into tubes has taken priority. Fresh trays are being moved into the nursery. ...but it's time now to attend to those bothersome weeds.

Maintenance work, including some strenuous gardening saw the removal of a kangaroo apple (growing like a 'Triffid') in the poly-house. There has been pruning of large trees and clematis at the front fence. Old baths used for soaking dry trays have been sent to the hard rubbish collection, from whence they probably came many years ago. Clean up generally continues.

Morning tea with fellow volunteers as well as customer interaction is always enjoyable.

*Nicky*

## Committee Meeting

There was a committee meeting held on February 11th. For a copy of the minutes, contact the secretary. In attendance were Robert Jones, Trevor Eddy, Suzette Hosken, Helen Treeby, Brian Pell, Heather Eadon, Karin Godfrey and Nicky Mayer. Margaret Witherspoon from WICCP was unable to attend. A synopsis of the discussions follows:

The Greenlink Committee meeting was very interesting with discussions on the watering system, and nursery layout. We heard about some creative initiatives from our new treasurer, and terrific progress on the new management software.

Preparation for planting at Kilmore is well underway although seed germination rates have been low so it may be time for some fresh seed.

Upcoming sales days are opportunities for introducing people to Greenlink and the benefits of indigenous plants and ideas were discussed.

Suzette will be out of the weekly nursery action for March and April due to shoulder surgery, so plans for our NOG system are in place in her absence.

## NOG

Volunteers are involved and enjoying the NOG system. Over the last 2 months we have been cutting back, to shape and to harvest seed heads, pricking out no less than 36 species (*Rytidosperma racemosum*, *Dichelachne crinita*, *Carex appressa*, *Doodia australis*, *Pterostylis nutans*, *Melaleuca decussata* (Kilmore), *Goodenia ovata*, *Leptorhynchos squamatus*, *Melicytus dentatus*, *Prostanthera lasianthos*,

*Xerochrysum viscosum*, *Arthropodium strictum*, *Cassinea aculeata*, *Cassinia arcuata*, *Coronidium scorpioides*, *Rytidosperma caespitosum*, *Glycine tabacina*, *Gynatrix pulchella*, *Rytidosperma pallidum*, *Microlaena stipoides*, *Pelargonium inodorum*, *Poa labillarderie*, *Poa morrisii*, *Acacia pycnantha*, *Acacia myrtifolia*, *Elymus scaber*, *Austrostipa elegantissima*, *Themeda triandra*, *Correa reflexa*, *Desmodium gunnii*, *Olearia myrsinoides*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Correa glabra*, *Spyridium parvifolium*, *Kennedia prostrata*, *Hardenbergia violacea*.) There has been some more strenuous work with the removal of a kangaroo apple which had taken up residence within the polyhouse, tree pruning, cleaning the pond and moving of many racks into the nursery. We have filled 6 orders and completed stocktakes. Weeds have taken advantage while all this has been happening, so attention has been re-focused and the weeding is now back under control.



We are also pleased to announce that we have lots of beautiful sweet bursaria, *Bursaria spinosa*, ready to be taken home and planted. In the past, success with bursaria has – at times

## Contact Us

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[www.facebook.com/GreenlinkNursery](http://www.facebook.com/GreenlinkNursery)

Credits: Background illustrations adapted from the Endeavour Botanical Collection courtesy the Trustees of the Natural History Museum.  
Photo on front page is of *Microseris* sp.3, taken by Suzette Hosken.

– eluded us, however Karin has come up with a good recipe for success: neglect! Water them only about once a week.

We keep them separated and away from our watering system.

The magpies, however have been particularly enjoying the water. They have learnt to bounce up and down on the pipes to force water out of the sprinkler heads!



## Field Report

Helen is on our field work team and spends much of her volunteer time tending to Bushy Creek Reserve. She has supplied this photo of *Lythrum salicaria* in full glory – reward for the care and effort by the field team.



Take a closer look at Purple Loosestrife in Plant of the Month. Here is her report:

Although some decent rain fell over our Christmas break, we need now to man the hoses. The ground is very dry and the next Greenlink News

month or so may seem some of the planting die off. Being indigenous though, most of the plants are fairly tough.

We have a wonderful display of Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) on the north side of the track. It does well because it likes wet feet and there is a pond in there. In the past, light fingered people have stolen edgings, pegs, signs and plants and they have discarded bottles for us to pick up. These people must have left the area (or grown up), so there is nothing to report here.

Brian and Ted have very bravely been lopping trees and branches in an endeavour to prevent them falling and causing damage. Otherwise it is business as usual, weeding, mulching, clearing up and accepting compliments for the passers-by.

## Activities

### **Christmas Party**

The 2014 Christmas Party was a great way to finish the year. Wayne and his fellow workers from ParksWide joined us along with some of our friends from Bungalook. A convivial vibe was enjoyed by all.

### **Attendance at Nature Photography**

Suzette and Nicky attended an entertaining talk by Ian Moodie, on nature photography. The talk was held in charming Warrandyte at the Grand Hotel, hosted by the City of Manningham. Ian's photos are superb – and he had many take home messages for budding nature shutterbugs.

### **Grasses and Wetlands Plant Courses**

Suzette and Nicky each attended Dr Graeme Lorimer's courses.

Nicky attended the Wetlands course held at Lilydale Lake over 2 hot sticky January days. She enjoyed meeting other attendees from different councils, Melbourne Water, and Water Watch. Graeme explained the history of Lilydale Lake, also the successes and the lessons learned. He wished he had bought real estate in the area before the lake and wetlands were developed! I noticed so much activity on and

around the lake – people walking, running, kayaking, even swimming. It is a lovely place to visit.

Graeme discussed how wetlands function ecologically and he stressed how dynamic and responsive they are to changes in water level. He explained that because of these changes, the many flora and fauna species are adapted to rapid colonisation and are good competitors even against introduced species. Wetlands recovered amazingly quickly after the drought years. Weeds were discussed and group members talked about their strategies for weed management. Graeme suggested that many introduced plant species have low environmental impact, yet little prospect of long-term control. It is important to determine which weed species to target and the best approach for management.

We looked at the importance of a shallow slope at the water's edge, thus allowing a broad band of mud as water recedes. This is best for the many ephemeral species to grow to maturity, and provide habitat for fauna.

We studied plants in groups. Wind pollinated plants included: grasses (Poaceae), rushes (Juncus), sedges (Cyperaceae), cumbungis (Typha), Triglochin and restiads (Restionaceae). We also looked at Knotweeds, Alisma, Willow-herbs, submerged plants and floating plants. We did some microscope work and tested a Juncus key developed by Graeme.

Due to a full newsletter and program, the

Grasses course will be summarised next issue.

### **What's in a name? More on *Bursaria* ....**

Some of our volunteers and customers are a little shy of Latin plant names and with the 36 'un-pronounce-ables' just pricked out, it is reassuring to know that the Latin names are often helpful and interesting. For example, *Bursaria spinosa* is descriptive: *bursa* or a purse describes the seed capsules, seen in these photos, on larger bushes in our parks; *spinosa* means spiny referring to the spiny branches – so helpful to little birds. It is a very attractive bush and is flowering well this year.



*Bursaria spinosa* Photo: Nicky Mayer

Blackburn Creeklands group have featured it as their Plant of the Month.

<https://blackburncreeklands.wordpress.com>

Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) – often called the Father of Taxonomy devised the naming

## **Plant of the month**



### ***Lythrum salicaria* Purple Loosestrife**

Size: over 2m high if well-watered and sheltered

Requirements: favours swampy ground, the water's edge, but will persist in dried-out land.

Perennial, forms a bushy and well-shaped clump, strong tall stems with free branching, curving inward so no staking required; top growth dies down for winter; cut back to ground level. Short flower spikes last well as a cut flower in water.

system. He discovered that plants had male and female parts in their flowers – very controversial and challenging for conservative times. His rivals criticised his system as 'loathsome harlotry' and ladies were dissuaded from looking at flowers - the sexual parts of plants! However, the classification system, based on such observation, caught on. As well as descriptive, the binomial names can also be commemorative – so in respect of fellow botanists, e.g. Banksia species in honour of Joseph Banks. Or dis-honour ... Linnaeus named a genus Siegesbeckia after his main critic, Johann Siegesbeck with whom he quarrelled,

*Siegesbeckia orientalis* or Indian Weed is a small creeping herb that grows in the mud !

Latin names may also refer to the use of the plant. For example, *Lythrum* - from one of the Greek words, *lythron* meaning 'blood'. It is astringent and it is possible that the plant was used in ancient times for stopping blood.



*Salicaria* – means willow-like, referring to the leaves or flower spikes. (Willow trees are *Salix*) (<http://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp2/lythrum-salicaria.html>)

Thanks to Suzette for these photos.

### **Update of Vertical Garden**

In last issue, we followed the progress of a vertical garden, established by one of our customers for a school project. It continues to thrive through summer. It is on a north facing wall and is in direct sun for most of the day. February may be a tough month as the sun lowers in the sky, but the heat continues. The Running Postman looks particularly comfortable.



## **Upcoming events**

### **City of Manningham**

Environment Seminar and Field Trips. No bookings for evening talks, however bookings are required for the field sessions and you must attend the seminar to keep your field trip booking. Phone Lyn Meredith for enquiries 9840 9326 or Natalie for bookings 9840 9124.

'Let's go batty' for Australasian Bat Appreciation Week presented by Rob Gratton. Wednesday

## **Plant Sales and Volunteering**

The nursery is open for sales and volunteering from 9.00-12.00 Tuesday and Wednesday. We also open on some Saturdays – see the calendar below. We are closed on fire ban days and when the temperature reaches 35°C. Tubes are \$2.00 & \$2.50.

We also supply to schools and other organisations. Please call or email to discuss your planting requirements. You can find our plant lists and lots of other helpful information on our website. If you would like to try volunteering with us, telephone, email or visit.

4<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30 pm Bull and Bush Room at the Grand Hotel Warrandyte. Field trip immediately after, 9.30-10.30pm.

'Frogs – constants, colonisers and conservation dependants' presented by David de Angelis. Seminar Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April, Field Trip Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 6.30-8.30pm Warrandyte State Park.

'Nocturnal Birds in Urban Landscapes' presented by Marian Weaving. Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May

### Field Naturalists Club of Victoria Inc

1 Gardenia Street Blackburn. For the Calendar of Events, check the website.

[www.fncv.org.au](http://www.fncv.org.au) Phone enquiries 9877 9860

'The wonderful world of plants': adaptations to environment, presented by Dr Mary Gibson Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February.

### Sustainable Gardening of Australia (SGA)

<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/forums/>

SGA is holding a series of training forums on how to reconnect gardens with the surrounding environment. The first forum is "How gardeners can be champions for wildlife" and focuses on bringing indigenous animals back into the garden through building habitat. It will be launched by SGA's patron Jane Edmanson on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March at Edenvale Community Environmental Farm in Eltham, 1-4pm.

### Yarren Dheran Nature Reserve

<https://yarrandherannaturereserve.wordpress.com/>

Meet at Information Centre in Ashburton Drive (Melway 49, B6)

Clean Up Australia Day Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 10 – 12 noon

'Frogs in Focus' with David De Angelis Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 7pm

'Indigenous Gardening' with City of Whitehorse and Community Nurseries Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 10-11am

'A Day in the Bush for the Whole Family' followed by sausage sizzle with City of Whitehorse Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 11am-1pm.

'Stag Watch and Possum Prowl' with Ray Gibson Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 6-9 pm

Working Bee Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 10-12 noon

'Frog Walk' with Aaron Cook Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April 6.30pm

### Blackburn Sanctuary

The Plight of Our Native Bees Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2-4pm Jess Baumann from University of Melbourne is researching native bees at the sanctuary. Join Jess for a talk and walk. Bookings not required.

Clean Up Australia Day Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 10 – 12 noon

Below the Lake Friends. Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 3-5pm Be part of the action. Tools provided, celebration tea afterwards. Call Lynette on 0416 178 945

## Calendar 2015

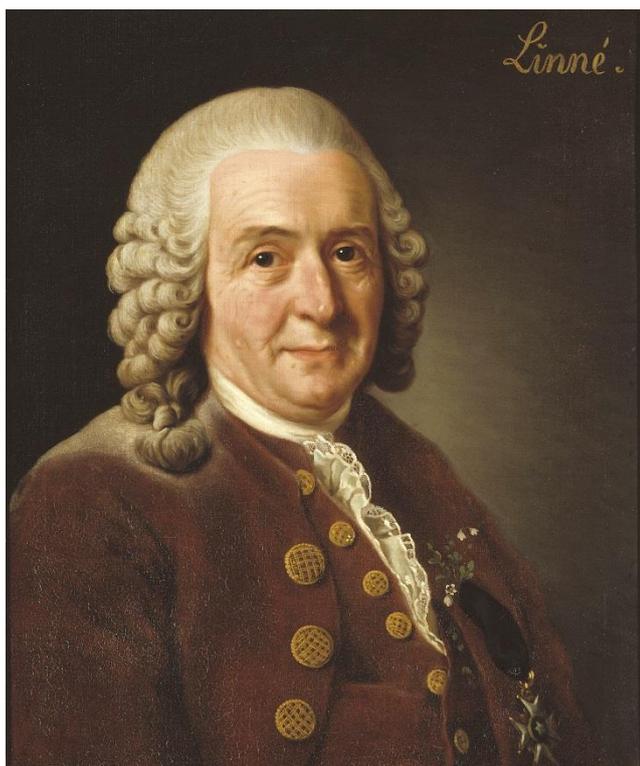
April	Wednesday	1	Bi-monthly meeting
April	Saturday	18	Nursery Open Day
May	Saturday	16	Nursery Open Day
June	Wednesday	3	Bi-monthly meeting
August	Wednesday	5	Bi-monthly meeting
August	Saturday	15	Nursery Open Day
September	Saturday	12	Nursery Open Day



World Water Day / Sustainable Living Week  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 10 - 12noon

The Wurundjeri people have lived in harmony with our waterways for thousands of years. Come and share World Water Day with a Wurundjeri elder and explore our connection to country through stories and activities in the beautiful bushland setting of Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. Bookings preferred

[www.water-day.eventbrite.com.au](http://www.water-day.eventbrite.com.au) or phone 9262 6211



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_Linnaeus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Linnaeus)



*Bursaria spinosa*. Photo: Suzette Hosken