



Greenlink NEWS

Newsletter of Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

September 2015

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Propagations

A cold, dry winter is behind us. Volunteers have produced thousands of seedlings and cuttings, despite cold hands on chilly mornings. The tented heated propagation bed – ‘the Bobshed’ is still under trial, but results are promising. Our irrigation controller was becoming unreliable and was replaced. We are assessing the rest of our irrigation system - much to consider when watering over 100 species, at different growth stages, in tubes, numbering in the thousands. We must also be water wise and ensure the watering is effective and not wasteful.

The Fuller Street order is complete; Bungalook has helped with storage as together we prepare for delivery of around 6000 plants to the City of Whitehorse. Orders continue to come in with a new 2000 plant order for a primary school.

Welcome to new volunteers, including an enthusiastic 15 year old boy spending holiday time with us.

Our nursery benches are a little bare but are now covered with new plastic to reduce drying of the tube stock from underneath. Stock is ready to come out from the poly house and harden off but it is still too cold, so we wait. In a few weeks, the nursery will be replete.

Nicky

Committee & AGM Meeting

A general meeting was followed by our AGM on August 5th. For a copy of the minutes, contact the secretary. In attendance were Robert, Trevor, Helen, Heather, Suzette and Nicky. Brian joined us for the AGM, bringing a total of 17 Greenlink members. It was wonderful to have so many people attend the AGM and hear our guest Brian Bainbridge's interesting and inspiring talk. For a summary and link, read on.

AGM Meeting Summary

Overall, our sales figures are a little higher on last year. Our current membership fees have been increased for the first time in many years. Our fees are rising to \$10 concession, \$20 single, and \$30 family. This price rise will help us cover the cost of producing plants, stationery, utilities, postage and insurance. A membership still entitles the member to a generous plant voucher.

Elections were held with the following results: Suzette Hosken was re-elected as President, Robert Jones as Vice-President, Trevor Eddy as Treasurer, and Nicky Mayer as Secretary. Three ordinary members, Heather Eadon, Helen Treeby and Emi Luppino were nominated and accepted. This slight change in structure is in line with our new Model Rules for an Incorporated Association. We welcome Emi Luppino who has already made a dedicated contribution, and also farewell Brian Pell from Committee.

Farewell to Brian Pell

After many years of absolutely dedicated service to Greenlink, Brian Pell has decided to step

away from committee work. Greenlink will not be the same for this and we plan to hold a special event later in the year to celebrate this sustained, steadfast and committed effort to the causes. Even though he has taken off his committee hat, Brian promises to still be involved with Greenlink and he plans to be around for Saturday sale days, and to help with the field work and display garden so that our customers and the public can learn about the indigenous plants of Whitehorse. Brian has been a tremendous advocate for the natural environment and believes that Greenlink has an important role in this.

President's Report

At the AGM I gave a report on the activities of Greenlink over the year. Most of these activities have been mentioned along the way in our newsletters, so I won't repeat it all again here. But I will mention a couple of highlights and also want to say thank you.

Greenlink has had a most productive year and that's thanks to the combined voluntary effort of a large number of people. A sincere thank you to all of Greenlink's volunteers, the people who sow the seeds, prick out the seedlings, weed the tubes, talk to the plants, watch them grow, wave their hands through the leaves, assemble the orders, serve the customers, farewell the plants.

Thank you to the Greenlink Committee – an amazing group of passionate, loyal, thoughtful, dedicated people. This group run the association of Greenlink and keep all the behind the scenes work ticking over. They are all brilliant. Thank you!

Contact Us

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*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.*

Some of the activities of Greenlink over the last year include the following:

Helen, Ted and Nina, under the guidance of Brian have continued their regular maintenance and planting of the Bushy Creek Path around the nursery. This involves near-constant weeding, mulching, planting, labelling and smiling and waving to the passers-by. Locals very much enjoy this stretch of the pathway, not to mention the birds, bees and bugs.

We introduced a choose-your-task system where daily activities are listed on a whiteboard and volunteers can choose what they feel like doing that day. Robert has become the go-to person; he writes and puts up the lists and this has worked very well, helped along by the fact that Robert is always cheery and smiling! We've all chipped in a bit here and there, but Robert has really owned the role. A really terrific job Robert, thank you.

Life Membership was awarded to Peter and Shirley Dwyer, long-term members and volunteers since 1997. Their combined contribution to Greenlink has been outstanding through their committee work and field work, particularly in Gardiners Creek.

'Out with the old and in with the new' has been a theme with a huge amount of cleaning up being done: in the office, in the shed, around the nursery and including new software, improved electronic filing of documents, new manuals, new policies and a new website. You can find us at www.greenlinkboxhill.org. The old website will remain standing until all of the information has been transferred, then a redirect will be put in place. Our all-important Saturday Sale Days for 2016 and the remainder of 2015 are listed on the new website. Also remember we are on Facebook; just look up Greenlink Box Hill or Greenlink Nursery.

Greenlink has contributed to the further education of committee members and sponsored our secretary Nicky with her entry in the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. Nicky came away with Student Landscaper of the Year award, which of course had little to do with Greenlink but we are so impressed it's worth mentioning again.

Thank you to ParksWide, particularly Wayne de Fraga. Wayne supplies Greenlink with potting and propagation media and is always available to ask for advice and have a chat. We hugely appreciate his support. Thanks also to Peter Cockroft, who we thoroughly enjoy liaising with in regards to planting and maintaining around Bushy Creek Path.

Finally, some statistics: Membership stands at 90, seven more than this time last year. 48000 plants were propagated with 3650 volunteer hours.

What a fabulous group of people. Greenlink might be all about conserving, growing and planting indigenous plants, but really, what it's about is people – good company, enjoyable conversation, learning, teaching, sharing experiences with each other. Thank you everyone.

Suzette

Lizard Lounges and Butterfly Bars

Brian Bainbridge from Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association (IFFA) spoke to our AGM.

Brian spoke to the group on creating biodiversity in your home garden using a range of indigenous plants. He talked about the transformation of his own garden and his experiences bringing wildlife into his garden. His garden is his own laboratory. The talk was titled: 'Lizard Lounges and Butterfly Bars'. Brian

Calendar 2015 - 2016

September	Saturday	12	Nursery Open Day
October	Saturday	10	Nursery Open Day
October	Sunday	18	Whitehorse Spring Festival
April	Saturday	16	Nursery Open Day



spoke about the importance of selecting plants for attracting insects. These plants will then attract and provide habitat for small birds. *Bursaria spinosa* was one of the species highlighted. More colourful, bird attracting plants such as grevilleas and banksias should also be planted but as these tend to attract larger more aggressive and territorial birds, (that deter the smaller birds) - these should be located in a group and away from the insect attracting plants.

It is well worth looking at the notes on the IFFA website and thinking about creating your own biodiverse back garden. You will be able to enjoy the plants *and* the visitors, and help with strengthening wildlife corridors – biolinks – and bring wildlife into the city.

<http://www.iffa.org.au/lizard-lounges-and-butterfly-bars>

National Tree Day at Chatham Primary School

To celebrate National Tree Day at Chatham Primary School in Surrey Hills, Suzette guided grade 4 students in some maintenance and planting in their special Koorie Garden. This garden was created by parents three years ago and showcases plants that were used by the Aboriginal people, either for food, basket weaving, making dyes, or even helping children to sleep. As the garden is next to the school oval it receives its fair share of battering from balls

and kids. And then there are the free-ranging chooks! The original design saw four circular mounds that were planted up in a formal-looking design. Now these mounds have chook-sized hollows all through them. However there's no stopping them - the Principal has made his feelings clear on that one - the chooks have priority!



On previous National Tree Days, the children just did some planting, which of course was wonderful. But this year, they did much more than that. They listened attentively to a brief talk about the plants, answered questions, came up with ideas and asked intelligent questions. They then divided into self-chosen groups where one group loosened the compacted soil in one of the mounds; other children weeded out the violets and dandelions, then replanted the violets elsewhere; a group carefully pruned off all the broken branches in the Gold Dust wattles; others redistributed soil back into the chook hollows; some raked out dead leaves from the Lomandra and Dianella tussocks; and then they all planted new tube stock. Not only that, they

Plant of the month



***Acacia acinacea* Gold Dust Wattle**

Size 0.5-2.5m x 2-4m. Open spreading shrub, denser in cultivation, branches arching. Profusion of single bright yellow ball-shaped flower heads in August to November.

Adaptable to well drained soils; full sun, semi-shade. A good low screening plant which will often self-seed in the garden. Annual pruning is beneficial.

From Flora of Melbourne 4th edition 2014 p76

also cleaned up as they went, with the cuttings and weeds being put in the compost bins, all tubes and tags collected and counted, and tools returned to the shed. These kids learnt a lot about Aboriginal use of plants and that gardening is not just planting, and they embraced it all. They were a joy to work with.

Field Work along Bushy Creek Path

There is something very rewarding about working in the nursery, where you prick out tiny seedling into tubes and then watch them grow into decent sized plants. It's even more rewarding when you get to plant them out in public space. Greenlink's regular field team frequently plant in the area close to the nursery along the Bushy Creek Path. They've been doing this for years. Our more recent volunteers have been purely nursery-focussed with growing the plants. We've been so busy at the nursery recently that we found ourselves without any potting media, which means no tubing up and lots of volunteers looking around for something to do. We sensed an opportunity! We contacted Peter Cockroft, from Whitehorse's bushland team, and offered to plant his plants for him. He'd had plants on order for a long time, but Peter's been so busy he hasn't had time to plant them. Thus, we gleefully loaded around 200 plants and five Hamilton planters on the trolley and went for a walk up the path.

There were gaps throughout the plantings along the path, most obviously along the Station St frontage to the Bushy Creek Path. Five of us filled in the gaps with a mixture of Lomandra, Dianella, wallaby grasses and Poas, Sheoaks, Goodenias and hop bushes. We also snuck in a few pretties with soon-to-flower *Epacris impressa*, *Wahlenbergia multicaulis* (Tadgell's bluebell) and some *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* (clustered everlastings). Regular walkers along the path should notice the difference very soon with spring around the corner.

We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and hope to do this sort of thing more often, along with some maintenance in the form of hand-weeding

and mulching. Long-term members will know that this is what Greenlink volunteers used to do weekly, but gradually the field work was handed back to Council and volunteers focussed on the nursery. If we can get back to being in the field more regularly, this will help fulfil Greenlink's purposes and make many of us very happy.



Out and About

Recently Suzette attended the Whitehorse Community Dinner, a function at the Box Hill Town Hall hosted by the Mayor. She enjoyed a social occasion out of work wear, and was very pleased to run into Margaret Witherspoon from Bungalook, Mary Crouch from Blackburn Creeklands and Sue Fenton from Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. A large number of community volunteers enjoyed the evening and their contributions were very much celebrated. Mary Crouch received a most sincere and genuine thanks from Mayor Andrew Munroe for her incredibly dedicated work along the Creeklands come rain, hail or shine.



All of the local Councillors were present, as were many Whitehorse staff. Thank you to the Mayor

and Councillors for their invitation to this enjoyable event.

Nicky attended a night on Urban Streams – How we impact Local River Health at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary hosted by the Below the Lake Friends group. Ian Rutherford, River Health Specialist and passionate, knowledgeable local resident presented a really interesting talk about what we can do to protect our urban streams.

Heather presented a talk for the Botany Group of the Field Naturalists of Victoria on Seed Collection from local plants. A small group enjoyed a presentation and some fossicking around through packets of interesting seeds.

What's On

Field Naturalists Club of Victoria will hold a symposium on Biodiversity "Impacts on Biodiversity during the Anthropocene", to highlight the impacts of humans on the environment. Saturday 12th and 13th September. Prior registration and payment required. Contact the FNCV office.

Free Environment Seminars are hosted by Manningham Council on the first Wednesday of the month (Feb-Dec) at 7.30p.m, in the Chandelier Room (upstairs), The Grand Hotel, Yarra St Warrandyte. Field trips on the following Thursday morning can be booked if you attend the seminar. Enquiries and booking 9840 9326.

Saturday 12th September. **Indigenous plant propagation.** This will include how to select suitable cutting materials, what species to grow from seed, collecting seed and storage, the propagation medium, techniques and care of the growing seedlings. Cost \$25. Edendale, Bookings 9433 3711 www.edendale.vic.gov.au

Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th September, 10am till 4pm. **Australian Plants Society Expo 2015;** Presented by the APS, Yarra Yarra Group. Includes native flower shows, plant sales including indigenous plants, books, art, photography and displays from other environmental groups. Adults \$5, Concession \$4, children free. Eltham Community and Reception Centre 801 Main Road, Eltham. Cost \$5 adults, \$4 concession, children free.

Saturday 26th September 10 -12 noon; **Nature Walk in Yarran Dheran.** The walk is led by Cecily Falkingham. Meet at the Yarran Dheran Information Centre, enter from Ashburton Drive, Mitcham. Bookings essential. Email gay.gallagher@bigpond.com by September 18th.

Saturday 28th September 12.30-1.30pm; **Creating Habitat for Native Animals.** Join Andrew Stocker from the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary and learn about the animals that could exist in and around your back yard. A session to learn about the practical aspects of creating habitat and encouraging indigenous animals like birds, microbats and frogs to reside in your backyard. Bookings – essential 9457 9885

Whitehorse Spring Festival

Sunday 18th October at Whitehorse Civic Centre. Greenlink along with other local groups will have a display. There will be give-away plants from ParksWide. Come and say hello.

Sale Days

Our next Saturday Sale day is this Saturday, September 12th. We are hoping for some warmer weather so that we can move much of our young stock out of the poly house onto the nursery benches.

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.