



Greenlink NEWS

Newsletter of Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

June 2015

In this issue

Propagations	1
Committee Meeting	2
NOG	2
President's Report	2
Plant of the month	3
'Sorry Day' Planting, Kingswood College	4
Subscriptions Reminder.....	4
National Tree Day.....	4
Healesville Freeway Reserve	4
Biolinks	5
Calendar 2015.....	6
Out and About	7
New Equipment	7
What's On.....	8

Propagations

Winter Solstice is behind us. Seed and poly houses are full and although growth is slow at this time of year, we expect the nursery to be replete for Spring. Visitors to the nursery will notice we have re-arranged stock and after testing the layout, we will redo signage. It was pleasing to receive positive feedback last week about the range, health and success rate of Greenlink plants.

We are just keeping up with an encouraging 25% increase in sales, in mid-week and Saturday trade. Several large commitments, including orders for Melbourne Water River Health, Blackburn Creeklands, and Council have been filled. We have prepared for National Tree Day and a large Council project in Mitcham, with our sister nursery, Bungalook. We enjoyed a visit from the Boroondara Backyard Diversity Project and many vouchers were redeemed.

There has been some wonderful advocacy work too, in accordance with our objectives, detailed within. Field work continues near the nursery and with Kingswood College students. We have also made contribution to an indigenous plant guidebook for Whitehorse to be released by Council soon. Plus... some new equipment.

From the winter sunshine at Greenlink,

Nicky

Committee Meeting

A committee meeting was held on June 3rd. For a copy of the minutes, contact the secretary. In attendance were Robert, Trevor, Helen, Brian, Heather, Nicky and Suzette. Here is a synopsis:

There were discussions on the Work for the Dole program being introduced next month. Committee decided that Greenlink will not take part in the program.

Again, the Treasurer reported that our sales are higher (approx. 25%) as we manage increased utilities costs, repair and small capital expenditures as well as some volunteer training.

Committee also decided that after 10 years, it is time to increase some of our plant prices, as of July 1st.

We welcome some new and very enthusiastic members from the Boroondara Backyard Diversity Group. Our AGM is on August 5th at 8pm at Kerrimuir Neighbourhood House.

Our next Saturday sale mornings are August 15th and September 12th. As usual there will be some giveaways and specials.

NOG

We have been very busy pricking out many thousands of seedlings and the polyhouse is now full. Our large order for Fuller Street wetlands has been managed with plants either pricked out or in seed trays.

Both in and around the nursery, we are keeping the weeds under control. Members of the Boroondara Biodiversity Group were treated to a tour of the nursery and the surrounding

parkland, on a fine Saturday afternoon in May. They commented on the appearance of the nursery which is very rewarding for our volunteers.

We welcome some new volunteers. We particularly thank Emi for her time, effort and expertise 'after hours', especially priming our new computer system with data.

We are also considering modifications to equipment to enhance our throughput, as well as a start on reviewing the watering system. Overall the week by week operations of the nursery are running well and there is a good 'buzz' of activity.

President's Report

We've had an incredibly busy couple of months. The whole committee plus a core group of volunteers and a couple of brand new volunteers have all been working really well together and have achieved a lot. This is Greenlink's busy sale time, particularly since we've finally had some rain, and we've all managed really well.

The due date for the Fuller St Basin project is October. We are on track to supply 3820 of the 5975 tubes. Production is going well, however, as a consequence, this will inevitably lead to lower numbers in the nursery of general stock for the following season. Thank you to Karin and Robert for their continuing overseeing of this big project.

The Nursery Management System (NMS) sat idle for a couple of months, however, Emi has taken this on and we hope to refresh the skills introduced by Andy Cameron earlier this year.

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.

We are also working on a revision of our Volunteer Induction Manual, with up to date information for volunteers and adoption of some new policies. Thank you again to Emi for this work.

Millie Wells from Council has been in touch with us regarding a Whitehorse Indigenous Plant Guidebook. Nicky and I have been given feedback on the text and I have supplied some photos for the booklet. We are really looking forward to seeing the finished product.

Brian has been involved in some advocacy work relating to very old and beautiful *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, scheduled for removal in Burwood. After visiting development site, Brian urged Council and Councillors to consider preservation. Council has noted our concerns and have requested an independent review of the red gums. We await the decision.

Also along the theme of advocacy, everyone will have seen that the Healesville Freeway Reserve is to be protected as open space. This is great news and hearty congratulations go to the Friends of Healesville Freeway Reserve team for their five years of sustained advocacy. Brian makes further interesting comments on this very important Biolink.

After months of discussion, on a freezing cold and wet 5th May, we rearranged the plants in the nursery to free up more space in some rows where the plants were too cramped. We will observe and reassess our watering system, but

are hoping for better sprinkler coverage, with the new layout. Temporary signs have been put up and Nicky has created the new 'Greenways' so we can find plants in their new spaces. Once we are sure the new layout works, then we can make the signs more permanent. Huge thanks to the hardy bunch that moved all the racks and special thanks to Emi and Trevor for the delicious pumpkin soup, complete with sour cream and nutmeg.

Brian was involved in a planting for Sorry Day in May, then last week, Nicky and I, along with Grant McAdam from Council thoroughly enjoyed working at Gardiners Creek with Kingswood



College students planting two new 'islands', near



Station Street, and some infill understorey planting on the north edge.

The children are engaged and enthusiastic. It is

Plant of the month



***Epacris impressa*.** Common Heath

Size: 0.5-1.5m x 20-60cm.

Requirements: Moist, well-drained soil tolerating limited dry or wet periods once established; semi-shade

An attractive rockery plant, particularly when planted in groups. (Flora of Melbourne 4th ed p 58)



Pink is sometimes available

very rewarding to work with them in this activity.



We have filled several large orders including National Tree Day orders for Council and schools. There are gaps in the nursery as is often the case at this time of year, and germination and growth in the polyhouse is slow.

Robert has been doing a sterling job with our NOG lists. Others of us feed in extra tasks here and there and Karin is doing the pricking out list. It all seems to be working well as long as we all keep communicating well with each other.

Morning tea is time to chat and relax, but also to learn and Heather has been giving some mini-tutorials on plant and seed identification. We hope to continue and develop these. We have our AGM coming up in and we are delighted that Brian Bainbridge, the president of IFFA, will be our guest speaker. All members are welcome.

'Sorry Day' Planting, Kingswood College

To mark 'Sorry Day' on 26th May, 160 Kingswood College students from Prep to Grade 6 continued the planting of indigenous plants, under a group of Eucalypts at the edge of the oval. On this occasion, the focus was on plants used by the Indigenous People, including food plants, Yam Daisy (*Microseris lanceolata*), Bulbine Lily (*Bulbine bulbosa*), Chocolate Lily

(*Arthropodium strictum*), Ruby saltbush (*Enchylaena tomentose*) and the basket making *Lomandra longifolia* was also planted. Previous plantings are doing remarkably well and the students are justifiably proud of their achievements.

Subscriptions Reminder

Just a quick reminder that membership subscriptions are now due. Members should have received a renewal notice in the mail.

National Tree Day



National Tree Day (Sunday 26 July) and Schools Tree Day (Friday 24 July) combine to make Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event. As already noted, Greenlink has been filling orders for Council and schools. It is the 20th anniversary and since 1996, more than 3 million people have planted 21 million trees and plants. For more information, see the website <http://treeday.planetark.org/>.

Healesville Freeway Reserve

In April, the following was circulated:

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.

Media Release

From Shaun Leane MP, Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region, Parliamentary Secretary to the Special Minister of State, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport

ANDREWS LABOR GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO HEALESVILLE FREEWAY RESERVE

13 April 2015

Shaun Leane media contact: 9887 0255

And from the Minister's website
<http://www.shaunleanemp.com.au/preserving-the-healesville-fwy-reserve/> (June 20):



I am delighted to advise you that the Andrews Labor Government has honoured its commitment to preserve the Healesville Freeway Reserve as public open space.

The Andrews Government has begun the process to transfer the land from VicRoads to the Crown, so it can become crown land reserved for public purposes.

Once this transfer is complete, the Government will work with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; and Parks Victoria on land management arrangements.

The Andrews Government will make sure that the community is involved in the future management of the Reserve.

The former Liberal Government was not committed to preserving the corridor in its entirety, for the community, but we have taken down the 'for sale' signs.

I will continue to work with the local community along with the Minister for Roads and the Minister for the Environment, to see through this process and achieve a fantastic outcome for the future of the reserve.

Biolinks

When Greenlink was established in 1988, one of the objectives was to 'identify and develop greenways to enable the migration of wildlife within and across the municipality'. The term 'wildlife corridor' was common then, and 'biolink' came later. Biolinks are corridors along which fauna, including birds, mammals, reptiles, bats and insects, can travel from one location to another. Fragmentation of habitat, due to development of land for farming and urban development, including roads, has been a major cause of the loss or threatening of many species, including the Alpine She-oak Skink, Eastern Barred Bandicoot, Helmeted Honeyeater, Leadbeater's Possum, New Holland Mouse, Southern Bent-wing Bat and the Southern Corroboree Frog. Biolinks are important in joining remnant patches of habitat together. An interesting example is the possum ladders across the Hume Highway past Benalla. Early work focussed on birds and large mammals, but we now think about all wildlife - frogs, insects and even micro-organisms.

Why is it important to save threatened species? Does it matter if the Helmeted Honeyeater becomes extinct? It is Victoria's Bird Emblem. More importantly, each species has a unique set of chromosomes which may be vital in our future. Less than 100 years ago Penicillin was a fungus that grew on over-ripe citrus. In the last 100 years it has saved millions of lives and transformed modern medical practices. Biodiversity provides us with vital benefits including air and water purification, pollination of crops and natural vegetation, flood mitigation, preservation of soil fertility – to note a few. We don't know what benefits will come from any species. In fact micro-organisms greatly outnumber all other species and the majority are still to be identified, let alone understanding how they work. We need to keep our gene pool world-wide. We do know that many organisms are interdependent and the loss of one species may have many unknown consequences.

Greenlink has been very active in developing and promoting biolinks. Prior to 1980 Gardiners Creek was devoid of vegetation, Koonung Creek was a wasteland and Bushy Creek Reserve did

not exist. Greenlink assisted Box Hill Council and several community groups to hold many community planting days between Station St and Burwood Highway along Gardiners Creek. Greenlink members continued weeding and maintenance of this area and in recent years, Greenlink has helped Kingswood College with infill planting and maintenance.

Greenlink undertook extensive plantings behind the houses in Valda Ave in Box Hill North. When the Eastern Freeway was extended from Doncaster Rd to Springvale Rd, the Koonung Creek Linear Park was developed and Greenlink was there. Greenlink organised a major planting at the Frank Sedgman Reserve with students from nearby Box Hill North Primary School. Melbourne Water lined the entrance of Bushy Creek into Koonung Creek with rock and asked Greenlink to plant out both the floor and the banks of the re-formed Bushy Creek. Later Greenlink revegetated both sides of Bushy Creek back to the playground at the Miniature Steam Railway. Greenlink did much of the planting on the north side of the Koonung Creek between Elgar Rd and Doncaster Rd, and continued to maintain this land until recently. Whitehorse Council developed the Bushy Creek Reserve from Elgar Rd to Dorking Rd and again Greenlink was involved in planting along this Reserve.

Greenlink was a major participant, providing both personnel and finance in the 10 year battle to save the Mullum Mullum Valley during the extension of the Eastern Freeway. This is a very extensive area of remnant bushland with a vital Biolink down the Mullum Mullum Creek to the Yarra River.

Many Councils now have biolink strategies across their municipalities. In 2012, David Berry of the Blackburn and District Tree preservation Society addressed Greenlink's AGM with a plan to develop a system of biolinks across all of Whitehorse. In 2013 Greenlink committed \$5000

to assist this work. The Healesville Freeway Reserve is a major biolink across the City of Whitehorse and it is important to keep as much as possible free from residential and commercial development. The remaining portion of the Reserve from Springvale Rd to the Dandenong Creek was owned by VicRoads. Unfortunately this has long been a political minefield. The previous Labour Government did nothing and the Liberal Government wanted VicRoads to sell as much as possible for housing development. However, at the last election, it became a dominant issue in a marginal seat. Hence it was important that local environmental groups, including Greenlink, put as many resources as they could muster, to save this biolink from housing development. While the new Labour Government has promised to preserve this land, there has been no money allocated, but importantly ownership has been taken away from VicRoads.

Given the past inaction, the environmental groups must keep pressure on the present Government to honour its promise to preserve and develop the biolink. New money needs to be allocated to Parks Victoria to develop and maintain this land. This is a major battle and much of the work on developing a Biolink Plan for Whitehorse has been delayed. I believe this is a very high priority for Greenlink Box Hill. It is one of our key objectives and Greenlink needs to be prepared to commit further financial resources to ensure this land is developed sensitively. Our wildlife cannot speak up, but **Greenlink can**. We need to continue to raise public awareness of the importance of this strategic link and we need to lobby our Councillors and local politicians as well as State and Federal Ministers. At the same time we need to press on with getting other biolinks within Whitehorse, and link those to our neighbouring Councils.

Brian Pell, June 2015

Calendar 2015

August	Wednesday	5	AGM
August	Saturday	15	Nursery Open Day
September	Saturday	12	Nursery Open Day
October	Saturday	10	Nursery Open Day



Out and About

Deakin University Bridge

Brian Pell represented Greenlink at Deakin University's launch of their new design for a pedestrian bridge across Gardiners Creek Reserve on Wednesday 20 May.

The university is proposing to build a high level bridge from just outside the cafeteria on the Burwood Highway site, straight across to the Elgar Road site. Greenlink proposed this, as a compromise at the VCAT hearing. The bridge will be constructed of corten steel with glass side panels, contained within the steel structure. Similar material has been used on the Hume Freeway and Geelong Bypass. It is only 3 metres wide and the Vice Chancellor stated that Deakin would not be using it for any vehicles. By law, it must be able to accommodate an ambulance. While this bridge is a great improvement on the previous one, with only one pillar in the Reserve, it is still a built structure right across the middle of a publicly owned natural Reserve.

Workshop at RBG Cranbourne

While others were hard at work at our April open Saturday, Nicky and Suzette attended the 'Eucalyptus and Close Allies Workshop' at RBG Cranbourne. We were treated to an information packed day and then a guided walk around the garden. Topics ranged from botany, biogeography, ecology, uses, cultivation and use of eucalypts as street trees. The key speaker, Dean Nicolle is so knowledgeable and has authored several books. He described himself as a 'gumnut' from an early age, and his fascination and passion was clear and infectious.

New Equipment

The 'BobShed'.

In an effort to keep our plants warm – and speed up growth at this time of year, Robert has designed a mini polyhouse, around one of our heat beds. Robert's simple but impressive design and construction skills were well demonstrated last Sunday, at minimal cost.

Trevor and Nicky lent 4 more hands and had great fun assisting in assembly of this ingenious project. We will soon see if the plants respond to their warmer clime.

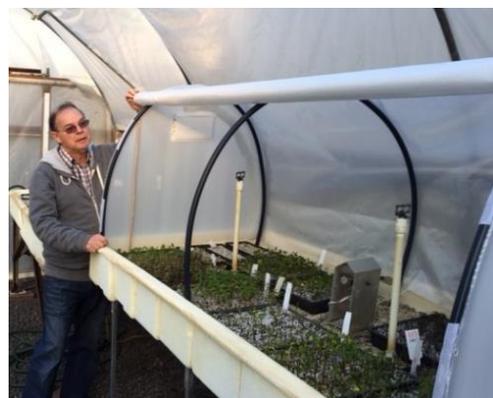


Before.....

During.....



And After

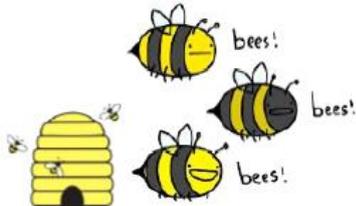


Finished product

What's On

Bees and Beekeeping

Everything that you wanted to know about bees and beekeeping with "Steve's Bees". Steve McGrath is a member of the Victorian Apiarists



Association and will present this talk on Tuesday 14 July 2015 7-8.30pm at Yarran Dheran Information Centre (enter at the Ashburton Drive entrance, Mitcham, Melways Ref 49 B6. Free event, children welcome. Bookings Essential via gay.gallagher@bigpond.com by 7 July.

Bird Walk in Yarran Dheran

Yarran Dheran Nature reserve provides a variety of habitats that are attractive to at least 50 different species of birds. Cecily Falkingham, knowledgeable birdwatcher and local environmentalist will lead the walk on Saturday 4 July 10- 12 noon at Yarran Dheran Information Centre (enter at the Ashburton Drive entrance). Free event. Bring binoculars if you have them. Bookings Essential via gay.gallagher@bigpond.com by 28 June. Children welcome but must be accompanied by an adult. Not suitable for very young children.

For more information see

<https://yarrandherannaturereserve.wordpress.com/wildlife/bird-walks/>

Field Naturalists Club of Victoria

Visitors welcome at all activities, 1 Gardenia St Blackburn. T 9877 9860, E admin@fncv.org.au

Thursday 16 July Botany Group: Pollination: Darwin's Abominable Mystery; speaker Patrick Honan.

City of Manningham

The June and July Nature Walks are fully booked. Bookings for the August walk will open on Thursday June 25.

Nature Walk: Timber Reserve and Fiddler Gully – Wattle Walk, 9.30am Thursday 27 August. At the peak of Warrandyte's wattle season enjoy a colourful walk around some of Warrandyte's

best bushland, learning to identify the wattles as we go, as well as the early wildflowers and orchids. Distance: 3.5 km, time: 2.5 hours. Rating: Moderate to difficult (some steep or slippery sections). Bookings essential, numbers are limited. Meeting point will be given on booking.

Blackburn Creeklands News

There has been a series of working bees held by Blackburn Creeklands. For further information and a very interesting read, check out the activities of this dedicated group. Many Greenlink plants are flourishing in this biolink.

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

AGM

The Greenlink AGM is on August 5th, 8pm at Kerrimuir Neighbourhood House, 57 Linda Avenue Box Hill North. Our guest speaker this year is Brian Bainbridge, President of Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association.

From their website, the IFFA is dedicated to the future of Australian flora and fauna, whether in habitats of world heritage quality or in the urban back yard.

http://www.iffa.org.au/iffa_history

Please come and join us.