

SUMMER ISSUE · DECEMBER 2023

# GREENLINK NEWS

Your local indigenous plant nursery



Wurmbea dioica

## Spring Festival success!

### GREENLINK PLANT GIVEAWAY A HUGE HIT

In case you missed it, the annual Whitehorse Spring Festival was held in October, and a huge number of people visited the Greenlink Nursery stall to talk about all things indigenous plants! By mid afternoon we had given away over 750 tubestock, and it was great to see lots of kids taking an interest in our plants. So if you were one of the lovely people who dropped by and picked up a free plant to take home...thank you! We hope your new plants are thriving!!



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

Greenlink acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners of the land that the nursery conducts business on, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

## This issue:

In our final newsletter for 2023 we bring you a fascinating article on Mistletoe and its importance within our ecosystem.

We announce the worthy winner of our 2023 photo competition, and show you eight plant species that we grow at the nursery that you may or may not have considered.

There are more snippets about insects, plants, and generally interesting stuff, including an article on soil prep for planting in autumn, a talk we recently held on native grasses, and a beautiful plant that is also a place....

With the holiday season looming, we hope you can find time to get out into nature and appreciate our amazing flora and fauna.

Oh, and don't forget the sunscreen!!







Dipodium roseum

# Boost your garden's biodiversity

## 8 INDIGENOUS PLANTS TO TRY

If you are like me, then you are always on the lookout for new indigenous plants to add to your garden, patio or balcony.

By increasing the different plant species in our gardens, we will naturally increase biodiversity and attract a wider number of birds, insects and invertebrates, which is a good thing for all of us.

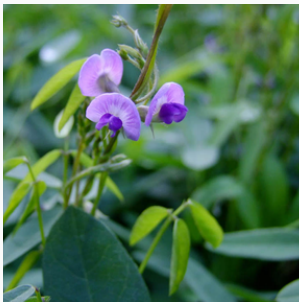
So with that in mind, I thought I'd present you with a few plants that we grow and sell at Greenlink, that you may or may not be familiar with, but are well worth adding to your garden. You can learn more about all these gorgeous plants at our website [here](#)



Left:  
Desmodium gunnii  
Right:  
Olearia myrsinoides



Left:  
Lagenophora stipitata  
Right:  
Pomaderris racemosa



Left:  
Glycine tabacina  
Right:  
Acacia verniciflua



Left:  
Leptospermum lanigerum  
Right:  
Mazus pumilio



Images: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

# Wurundjeri Seasons

## Garrawang Kangaroo-apple Season (December)

- Changeable, thundery weather.
- Dhuling (Goannas) are active.
- Buliyong (bats) are catching insects in flight.
- Days are long and nights are short.
- Fruits appear on Kangaroo-apple bushes.
- Bali (Cherry Ballart) is fruiting.
- Bunjil (Wedge-tailed Eagles) are breeding.

Source: museums victoria.com.au



Image: Canva.com



## Mistletoe, not just for Christmas

BY JEFF ZEHR

The City of Whitehorse's Gardens for Wildlife program would like to help you grow mistletoe in your garden. Why, you may ask, should I grow a parasitic plant in my garden? Australia has 97 species of mistletoe, of which 3 species can be found growing in Whitehorse. Mistletoes are semi-parasitic plants, as they rely on their host trees for water and nutrients, but they make their own carbohydrates through photosynthesis. Mistletoes rarely kill their host trees unless a host has too many mistletoe plants or if a host tree has been weakened by disease or is nearing the end of its life. It is not in the interest of parasitic plants to kill their hosts.

Grey Mistletoe flower



Image: Jeff Zehr

Imperial Jezebel butterfly



Image: Andrew Hardie

Mistletoes are keystone species, as they play a vital role in the health of local ecosystems and support greater biodiversity than comparative areas where mistletoes are not present. Their flowers and fruit are important foods for many species of birds, mammals and insects. The caterpillars of the beautiful Imperial Jezebel butterfly (*Delias harpalyce*) feed only on a few species of mistletoe. Honeyeaters, like Eastern Spinebills, and other birds feed on mistletoe flower nectar, which is an important food source when other nectar bearing flowers are not in bloom. Mistletoes also provide nest sites and cover for many species of animals and their nutrient rich leaves enrich the soil when they are shed from the plant. The leaf litter and rich soils that are created under mistletoe plants support diverse populations of microbes and invertebrates, providing food for ground feeding birds and insectivorous mammals. Ecologist and mistletoe researcher, Dr. David Watson, has conducted a study in southern NSW in which he removed all the mistletoe growing in half his study area, while leaving the mistletoe population intact in the other half.

## Mistletoebird

*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*

Occurring throughout mainland Australia (but absent in Tasmania) and some islands further north, the small Mistletoebird is the only Australian representative of the flowerpecker family, Dicaeidae, and is also known as the Australian Flowerpecker.

Source: [birdlife.org.au](http://birdlife.org.au)



Female Mistletoebird image: Andrew Hardie





Grey Mistletoe berries image: Jeff Zehr

## Mistletoe, not just for Christmas cont....

Three years following the removal of the mistletoe from his study area, there was a loss of 33% of the bird species that had been present before the mistletoe removal. Most of the bird species that were no longer present in the study area, following the removal, were the insectivorous ground feeding birds that benefit from the increased invertebrate biodiversity in the mistletoe leaf litter. While most mistletoes have very specific native plant hosts, Creeping Mistletoe (*Muellerina eucalyptoides*) will also grow on non-native species like Plane Trees (*Platanus × acerifolia*) and Pin Oaks (*Quercus palustris*) and in winter when deciduous street trees have lost their leaves you can see it growing in the canopy of some street trees.

Creeping Mistletoe flowers



Image: Jeff Zehr

Grey Mistletoe seedling



Image: Jeff Zehr

Mistletoes provide sheltered nest sites and cover for birds, even before deciduous host trees have leafed out in the spring. In 2017, the City of Melbourne planted and established a small population of Creeping Mistletoe plants in London Plane trees in the inner city to boost urban biodiversity. London Plane trees provide little value to wildlife, as they are not native to Australia, so adding mistletoes to urban tree canopies provides new resources (food, cover and nesting sites) for birds, invertebrates and other animals. Mistletoe grows and spreads in places where birds feed on the berries of mistletoe plants. Birds deposit the sticky seeds on tree branches after berries have been eaten and passed through their digestive tracts. Mistletoe birds depend on mistletoe berries as their primary food source and they are a major disperser of mistletoe. Other bird species, including Red Wattlebirds and Silvereyes also feed on mistletoe berries and disperse the seeds.

## Interested?

It can be challenging to establish mistletoe plants in garden trees, but it is worth the effort. If you would like to grow mistletoe in your garden, head to the City of Whitehorse's Gardens for Wildlife Program page [here](#).

Depending on seed availability, Gardens for Wildlife volunteers may be able to assist you in finding seed and provide you with guidance on how to "plant" mistletoe seed on suitable host trees in your garden. An information sheet is available, that has tips on how to establish mistletoe in your own garden. You can find it [here](#).



Male Mistletoebird image: Andrew Hardie





Image: Canva.com

# 2023 Photo Competition

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNER!

Once again, our photo competition received a very high standard of entries, and it was difficult to choose a winner.

But following consideration by our judging panel, it was unanimous that Yi Lu's entries of the various birds were amazing, and were chosen as the winner of the \$100 movie voucher. Greenlink also decided that we would award an additional runner up prize to Zena Goldman for her contribution to the competition.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to enter. Here are a couple of photos submitted by the winner and runner-up:



Above: A Grey Butcherbird feeds its eager chicks amidst the blossoms of Jells Park

Below: A Red-Browed Finch with a feather in the beak

Photos by Yi Lu



Above : Gum Trees

Below: Surrey Park

Photos by Zena Goldman





## Is the grass really greener?

GREENLINK TALK HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023

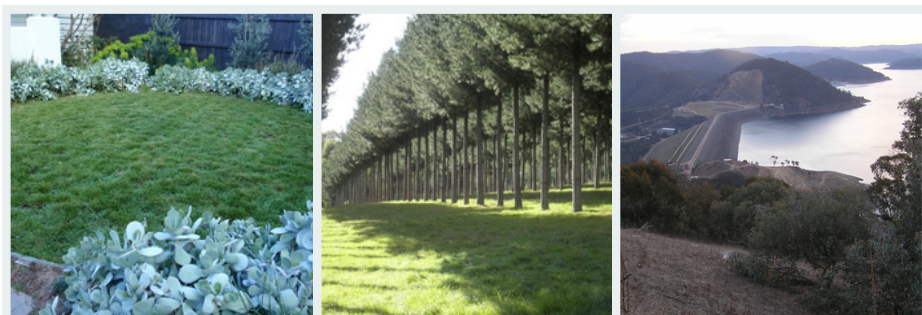
Our invited speaker Dr Augustine Doronila PhD, Retired Environmental Scientist and Greenlink volunteer, talked on the topic : “Is the grass really greener on the other side? Let’s talk about the importance of native grasses for biodiversity in an urban landscape.”

We all know that the City of Whitehorse (6,400ha) was once completely covered in bushland. Approximately 900 ha or 15% of the vegetation communities were forests or woodlands with different types of grassy groundcover. Today the total bushland within Whitehorse covers approximately 117 hectares. That is a loss of approximately 98% of the original Whitehorse landscape.

Reintroducing indigenous grasses back into our local parks, home gardens, road verges and backyards and more was discussed and examples of successful large scale infrastructure, built landscape and urban projects were featured. Many of these projects were a response to the serious impacts of the millennium drought from 1997-2009.

Among the benefits of native grasses:

- They are well adapted to the harsh and varying climate, poor soil structure and low-fertility soils, and play an important part in maintaining ecosystem health.
- Native grasses are deep rooted so they increase soil stability and act as erosion control on bare surfaces.
- They are good for soil forming processes which can help other species to the soil for the next successional species.
- They are more likely to promote the activity of local soil microbes and other micro-flora necessary for nutrient recycling.
- They can tolerate spasmodic grazing or mowing.
- They can be used for attractive and water wise landscaping.



Above: Weeping grass, *Microlaena stipoides* is now being used for a range of purposes in southern Australia, eg: house lawns, agroforestry, surface stabilisation of Eildon Dam wall

## Insect Intel

PINTAIL OR TUMBLING  
FLOWER BEETLE

The Pintail Beetle can be easily recognised by its body shape, with a pointed end to its abdomen, and can be known to jump or tumble when disturbed.

Worldwide, there are more than 2000 species within the Mordellidae family, with around 150 native to Australia.

The family has an extensive fossil record going back to the mid Cretaceous period (approx 100 million years ago).

These small to medium sized beetles can be found on flowers (like this one I saw on a *Bursaria*) in forested and bushland areas, and are therefore significant pollinators.

Source: [biodiversity.org.au](http://biodiversity.org.au)







## Is the grass really greener? cont.....

Moreover, in this increasingly warming climate it was good to be reminded how useful grasses and especially native grasses can be to mitigate some of the challenges to a warming urban environment. Remember grasses in the urban environment are natural air conditioners as they:

- Make your surrounding environment cooler and decreases the energy needed to cool your home. Grasses do this by evapotranspiration of soil moisture through their leaves.
- The temperature on a green lawn in mid-summer is: 10°C less than bare soil, 20°C less than bitumen, concrete or pebble mulch, 40°C less than dry synthetic turf.
- One average front lawn has the cooling effect of 8.75 tons of air conditioning, without the accompanying negative effects on the environment. An average home air conditioner only has a 3-4 ton capacity and increases carbon dioxide emissions.
- Grass provides a greater cooling effect than trees and can achieve the same cooling effect as a pool or lake, with 40% less water evaporation.

Quoting Mr John Arnott, Manager of Horticulture, Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: “The Australian native grass species tend to require less watering and fertilising, and particularly if interplanted with indigenous wildflowers, can attract local wildlife. For example, Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) is good for shady areas and will spring back to life after drying out. It can also be mown if you desire. At Cranbourne Gardens, we are trialling Australian mat grass (*Hemarthria uncinata*), which is a bit like kikuyu, but it does require a lot weeding to keep it at the quality we want for a public space. For a very different kind of lawn, taller Australian grasses such as wallaby and kangaroo grass or *Poa* create a rustic and more natural look, although you can mow some of them down to 4cm or so”.



Left: Augustine Dronila presenting his talk on grasses.  
Right: Attendees enjoying some pre-talk food and drinks.

## Nature Notes

### PROSTANTHERA LASIANTHOS

#### The Plant

Common Name: Coranderrk (Woiwurrung), Victorian Christmas Bush

Height and Width: 2-8m x 2-5m

Habit: Medium shrub to small tree

Flowers: Mainly white, or

occasionally pale mauve, Nov - Jan

Foliage: Aromatic, dark green

foliage with pointed tips

#### The History

The leaves were used by the Wurundjeri as food flavouring and medicinal purposes. Coranderrk was important for fire-making. A stalk was twirled rapidly between the palms while pressing down against the flattened flower-stalk of a grass tree. The smouldering ash created by the friction trickled down onto a ball of tinder which, when blown on, ignited into flame.

Aboriginal people requested the name ‘Coranderrk’ for the Aboriginal Reserve at Healesville, where this shrub grew profusely between Badger Creek and the Watts River. (Source: nrg.org.au) Read more about Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve [here](#)



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc





Image: Canva.com

# Goodbye Spring, Hello Autumn!

BY JAN AKEROYD

It might seem a bit odd to be thinking about autumn when we are just about to move into summer, but autumn is a great time of the year to plant indigenous plants. Once the weather has cooled off, there is a few months of good growing weather and usually some rain that prompts many indigenous plants to come out of summer dormancy and start growing again. Tubestock planted at that time of year will get busy putting down roots and settling into their new home with 6-8 months to get established before the summer heat and dryness challenges their survival skills.

So now that our spring planting window is over, its a good time to start thinking about autumn planting and doing some preparation. If you are planning a project like converting a nature strip to indigenous plants or want to create a garden bed in a spot that is currently lawn, or have a weedy spot in a current bed that needs to be dealt with before you can plant (see next page for tips on weed management), these steps will help to get your planting area ready.

- Clear away any woody plants or mow grass or weeds to a very short height (or use a string trimmer). If the soil is dry thoroughly soak the area to be mulched with a sprinkler as this will help the earthworms and soil bacteria and fungi to break down your lawn or weeds and turn them into soil.
- If your soil is compacted or is heavy clay, it helps to break open the soil with a garden fork or broadfork. You are not turning over the soil, just breaking it open to allow rain and air and plant roots to get down deeper into the soil.
- If there isn't much topsoil and your budget allows, you can spread a 3cm deep layer of compost over the area (order in bulk from a landscape supplier).
- Cover the area with overlapping wet brown cardboard (no glossy colourful cardboard and ideally remove any plastic tape first) or wet newspaper (about 10 sheets thick), and then cover the cardboard or newspaper with a 10 cm layer of arborist mulch\* and give the whole lot another soaking.
- Monitor the mulched area over the following months for grasses trying to grow and escape from under the cardboard and remove the escapees. For creeping grasses like kikuyu, check under the cardboard after several months and remove any living stems you see along with their roots if possible and continue to monitor for shoots coming up through the mulch - even kikuyu will eventually die!

“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished”

LAO TZU



Histiopteris incisa





## Goodbye Spring, Hello Autumn! cont.....

- Once the weather cools off in the autumn, plant into the mulch by making a hole in the mulch and down through the cardboard (to allow the plant roots to reach down into the soil), fill the hole with native plant potting mix and plant your tubestock into the potting mix and give it a good water. The potting mix will give your plant something to grow in and allow its roots to grow down into the soil below the cardboard while the mulch breaks down. Check the moisture in the soil regularly and continue to water as needed until the autumn rains start or if there is a long break without rain.
- Whenever you plant its a good idea to monitor your new plants for a couple of summers and give them a good drink every week in the first summer or when there are extended periods of hot dry weather with no rain. (As we are moving into summer now be sure to keep an eye on any newcomers to your garden over the coming months.) After that first summer many plants can be left to their own devices. Many smaller plants will die back and resprout when it rains relying on the stores of energy in their roots to regrow so wait to see what happens in the autumn if something looks like it has died.
- Over time as the mulch breaks down, it will provide nutrients to the plant and continue to suppress the weeds. You may need to top up your mulch after a year or two as it rots down. But as your plants grow to fill the space, they will act as a living mulch, shading the ground, suppressing weeds and dropping leaf litter so you will only need to refresh the mulch on open areas.
- Even if your proposed planting spot is not currently covered in weeds or lawn, preparing it by mulching now will conserve moisture in the soil, add nutrients at the mulch breaks down feeding ground-dwelling insects and the micro-organisms in the soil as well as your plants. It also buries any weed seeds so they are less likely to germinate and the lovely soft ground created when you mulch makes pulling out any weeds that do come up very easy. Mulch is wonderful stuff!

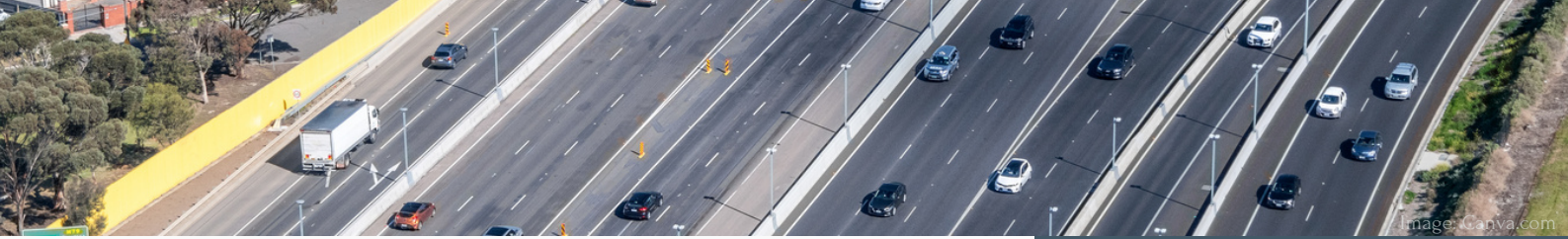
\*Local arborists are often happy to drop off a truckload of mulch (10+ cubic metres). You can also buy mulch from landscaping suppliers: Bush Mulch (aged arborist mulch); Recycled Mulch (coarse composted green waste) or Tree Clippings (fresh arborist mulch). If you are buying mulch from a landscape supplier avoid pine-based mulch, dyed mulches and tub-ground mulch (this is ground up very fine and may form a water-repellent mat).

## Weed Management

If you have a problem with weedy bulbs like oxalis, they have already formed new bulbs at this time of year and are dying back so it is better to do the cardboard and mulch treatment in the autumn when they first emerge. If you have a really thick infestation you may need to wait til it is under control before doing any major planting, so stay on top of any oxalis shoots that make their way out from under the cardboard and if the cardboard is starting to break down, add more cardboard and mulch. In my experience with my garden, oxalis can be brought under control but you do need to do ongoing monitoring for new plants as bulbs can sit dormant in the soil for a long time and can also be moved around by birds and animals so they may come in from elsewhere.







## North East Link and Eastern Freeway Information

BY FIONA HAINES

Like many members of Greenlink, I have been dismayed at the future loss of outdoor space, indigenous plants and habitat for wildlife that will be lost as a result of building North East Link and the massive increase in size of the Eastern Freeway.

So, I went to a recent community drop-in session in Doncaster in October to hear more about the plans for these roads with rather low expectations. This opportunity for the community to make submissions is limited to building that will occur between Burke and Tram Roads, but I thought it was worth going along to ask some questions about the plans for replanting and landscaping of the remaining land.

I am very glad I did. I had a very informative discussion with a landscape subcontractor who is responsible for landscaping and planting in that section. I was somewhat pleasantly surprised about the amount of thought that had gone into the landscaping design to enable as much indigenous planting and habitat as possible.

One of my main concerns is when grass and tall trees are seen as adequate in providing green space. This outcome simply encourages noisy miners, one of my pet hates (They have driven all the small birds from my garden).

I was really surprised to learn that one of the main reasons driving this style of parkland is efforts at crime prevention. I must admit, as a criminologist, this was really troubling. The form of crime prevention that they were adopting, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) has as a basic principle maintaining a line of sight for people walking through the part on the footpaths. This increases the feeling of security along footpaths.

Planting that is consistent with this principle is trees and grass, the worst kind of environment to promote biodiversity (apart from concrete and plastic lawns....).

## Editor's Note

On 29th October a submission was made on behalf of Greenlink Nursery, responding to the North East Link Landscape Design document, outlining our key concerns and making some recommendations toward improving the final design.

This follows on from a submission we made in June of 2019, in response to the NEL Environment Effects Statement.

We believe that our voice deserves to be heard, particularly in relation to the decades-long connection we have with Elgar Park/Koonung Creek, some of which will be heavily impacted by the freeway realignment works.







Image: Canva.com

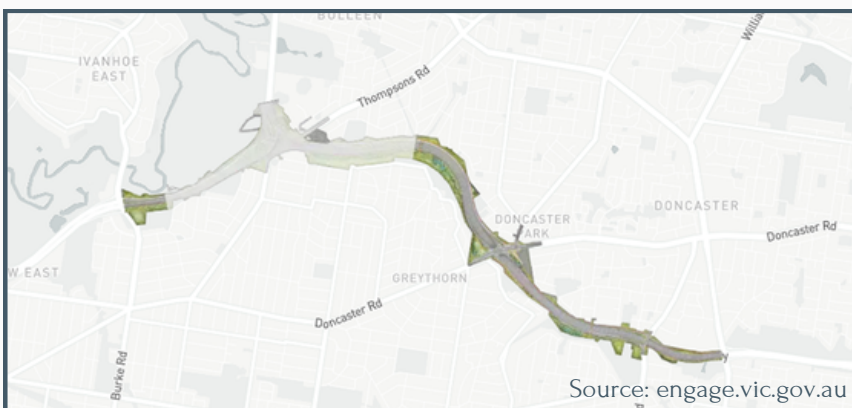
## North East Link and Eastern Freeway Information cont....

But all is not lost. The intention is to create layering of vegetation along the sound barriers away from foot paths. There are also plans for reclaiming wetland as much as possible, capturing the runoff from roads. I was informed that runoff from roads is actually much cleaner than runoff from housing and the plans at this stage include drawing on this water resource.

As we all know, planting is one thing, growing plants successfully is quite another! I was also surprised to learn that the contractor has a responsibility to care for the new plantings for several years after they are planted. There remains a long-term challenge, though. Responsibility for maintaining much of the green space is split between Parks Vic and several councils. They don't all have the same idea on what should be done in terms of maintenance. Even within councils, there can also be differences in expectations between those within the council who are committed to sustainability (who really like a wide variety of indigenous plants and height levels) and those who have responsibility for general park maintenance (who have as their priority trees and grass for ease of maintenance).

A number of important reports are available at [Engage Victoria](http://Engage Victoria). For those interested in the specific plants/trees/shrubs that will be planted in the Burke to Tram Rd section, the information is in the document on the website labelled Eastern Freeway Upgrades UDLP Attachment 2 Landscape Design Part 1.

It was certainly a worthwhile exercise to go to the session and I will be looking out in the near future for the consultations that relate to the next section of works from Tram Road further east.



## They're bloomin' marvellous!!

If you are thinking about what to get the family green-thumb for Christmas, how about one of our gorgeous hanging planters? We still have a few left, so pop by the nursery and pick one up, before they are gone.....







## Field Trip to Blackburn Lake

BY JENNY MCCAUSLAND

There is a very cute little duckling that swims like a Duracell duck on Blackburn Lake. We hope a nearby raven wasn't eyeing him off as a potential afternoon snack!

Apart from enjoying the birdlife in the sanctuary, our nine Greenlinkers were there to see first hand the contribution made by volunteers in such an important bushland area.

Peter, a BLSAC volunteer, took us on a short walk down to a lake jetty, showing us several of the sections cared for by volunteers and explaining how the work gets done. Because BLS is such a large area, Whitehorse take responsibility for some areas and activities such as tree planting, mowing, weed spraying by sub-contractors, felling of dead trees and car park maintenance while BLS weeds, mulches and plants other sections. There can be some frustration in Whitehorse's tardiness in undertaking some of the agreed bush/garden work but the larger infrastructure projects seem to be well-managed.

There are similar observations at both Greenlink and BLS – dry soil and declining bird numbers. BLS has a much greater role in education so their connections with Wurunjeri people, including a bed of plants used by indigenous people, and the numbers of school children who come for educational visits is significant.



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

## Did You Know...

Greenlink welcomes the return of any empty and unwanted plant tubes.

Please return them to the nursery when you next visit or simply throw them over the gate/leave them at the gate if the nursery is closed.



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc





Satin Green Forester

## Field Trip to Blackburn Lake cont.....

The planting and weed management processes are similar although the plants are not germinated on site. Last year between one and two thousand indigenous plants were purchased and planted but it can be up to seven years before a section is revisited for replanting, so to some extent the variety of species can reduce in that time. Somewhat unexpectedly, orchids seem to be an exception; they grow in an area of grass which is mown by council and seem to be surviving!

Working bees are held monthly for volunteers to come and work with the exception of October when working bees are weekly. Sometimes there are twilight and mid-week working bees followed by socializing with coffee and chat. This flexibility certainly suits many 'occasional' volunteers. Greenlink's solid core of weekly park volunteers certainly enables us to achieve an outstanding amount of work which is apparent in the diversity and attractiveness of our gardens/bushland.

We didn't get to see the remnant bushland and wildflower area on the east side so we would like to go back for a picnic lunch and wander in the future.

Our two field trips have given us new ideas, reinforced our awareness of the quality of the work we do and allowed us to relax together. While the trips may have limits on numbers, the trips are open to all volunteers, with a priority being given to park people as the field trips have a focus on park work and management.



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

## Hey Kids....

Q. What has no fingers but lots of rings?

A. A tree trunk

Q. Why does Santa have a garden?

A. So he can hoe, hoe, hoe

Q. Why do echidnas always win the game?

A. They have the most points



Image: natureaustralia.org.au



## Volunteers at Work

Below: Two of our young members Jenny (L) and Mandy (R), here with Jenny McCausland, are on the park planning subcommittee, and are looking at a potential software program to help track the various species we plant in the parkland adjacent to the nursery. The future of Greenlink is in good hands!



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

Above, below, and right: Some of our wonderful volunteers working in the parkland adjacent to Greenlink Nursery.



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc

## Benefits of Volunteering

As a volunteer, you have the opportunity to make a tangible difference to your local community.

But at the same time, volunteering can also provide tremendous benefits to your own physical and mental health.

According to the Volunteering Victoria website, people who volunteer are happier, healthier, and sleep better than those who don't.

But then we already know that don't we!!



Image: Greenlink Box Hill Inc





Image: Canva.com

# President's Report

BY ROBERT JONES

Finally summer is approaching and these recent days of rain are a welcome relief to the dry period we have been having over these past several weeks. I am sure our gardens and parks have appreciated this nice drop of rain.

Once again we have seen a busy time at the nursery, with our 3 Spring sale days, attendance at Spring Festival where along with Bungalook we handed out 1,500 free plants to the public, a visit by Kerrimuir PS grade 3 students visiting over 2 separate days and a talk by one of our volunteers Dr Augustine Doronila on native grasses in an urban environment. At the time of writing this article we have a proposed visit by Box Hill Nth primary school on 29 Nov and the grade 1 students from Kerrimuir on 4 Dec. Thus as well as our usual activities at the nursery and in the park, there have been plenty of activities to keep us on our toes.

Overall, the nursery is operating satisfactorily with a good level of stock of the vast majority of our plants and a good number of seed trays sown over the past few weeks, which will top up any shortages. Our Acacias and Eucs are now germinating and ready to start pricking out over the weeks ahead and we are going to start to do a trial growing of a small number of 1-1.5 mtr Eucalyptus radiata and E. cephalocarpa in the coming weeks.

New roll-out shade cloth will be installed on the west side of the nursery within the next few weeks, and we are working with our supplier for upgraded sprinkler heads for our watering system. The recent spell of dry weather has shown that the sprinkler heads we have at present are not doing the job for us, resulting in us having to hand water the nursery more often than we would like.

With the warmer and drier weather, seed collection will begin in the weeks ahead and at this stage it is hard to say if we will have a good or poor year for collection - suffice to say this is the time of year for all hands on deck to collect seed.

We move into the New Year with a strong level of orders/enquiries for Autumn collection which will keep us busy sowing seed and pricking out new plants over the next several weeks, with the challenge again to find bench space to hold the plants until collection.

In closing I take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for their efforts over the past 12 months, and to wish everyone a safe and prosperous festive season and all the best for 2024.

## River Mint Sorbet

USING MENTHA AUSTRALIS

### INGREDIENTS

- Makes 1 litre
- ½ cup castor sugar
- 600ml ml water
- 100ml lime juice
- 100g River Mint leaves, chopped
- ½ tsp vanilla paste
- 3 egg whites
- 1 tbsp Xanthum gum (optional)

### METHOD

Combine the water and sugar and stir over low heat, without boiling, until dissolved. Simmer for 5 mins.

Add mint leaves, lime juice and vanilla, and simmer further 2 mins.

Let steep and infuse for 1 hour.

Once cooled, blitz with stick blender adding xanthum gum until it thickens slightly (this just helps with mouth-feel and is not a necessary component).

Beat egg whites until soft peaks form, fold completely into sugar mix.

Allow to cool in refrigerator.

Put in ice cream churner until it reaches desired consistency.

Source: tuckerbush.com.au



Image: tuckerbush.com.au





## Greenlink Box Hill Inc. is now on

For those members on LinkedIn, you can now join and follow us using this link [Greenlink Box Hill Inc](#)

At Greenlink Box Hill we value:

- Every customer who deals with us.
- A happy, safe, and enthusiastic workplace that embraces all volunteers and makes them feel welcome, respected, and honoured.
- The high quality of our plants.
- The contribution that everyone makes to our success.
- Honesty and ethics in all of our dealings with customers and each other.



Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

President: Robert Jones

Vice-President: Emi Luppino

Secretary: Chris Almond

Treasurer: Trevor Eddy

Committee Members: Andrew Hardie, Karin Godfrey,

Jenny McCausland, Shirl Palmer

Newsletter Editor: Gabrielle Bradley

### BE A CONTRIBUTOR

If you have any stories, news, photos, or an upcoming event that you would like to share with Greenlink for publication in our next newsletter, please write to the editor at [greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com](mailto:greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com)

## GOOD TO KNOW

**Regular open days:**  
Tuesdays & Wednesdays  
9.00 am - 12.00 pm

**Saturday sales days:**  
20 April 2024  
25 May 2024

**Contact:**  
[greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com](mailto:greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com)  
0479 121 653  
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