

WINTER ISSUE · JUNE 2025

# GREENLINK NEWS

Your local indigenous plant nursery

## Celebrating Volunteer Week

In case you missed it, the week of May 20-25 marked National Volunteer Week; a perfect occasion for us to acknowledge the incredible contributions our volunteers make to Greenlink Nursery.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all those who choose to volunteer within the wider community, but especially to our committed team of Greenlink volunteers, for their dedication and hard work.



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:

Rug up! Winter is here, and with it a great selection of articles:

Winter heralds the arrival of fungi season, with an exciting competition on right now that is suitable for all ages.

The volunteers have been busy facilitating school visits to the nursery, attending workshops to improve propagation skills, and exchanging ideas and knowledge with other local indigenous nurseries.

We feature a story on a very nifty way of protecting our frog species from a deadly infection, and take a look at what a large city in Europe is doing to encourage streetside biodiversity and how we can apply these principles to our own suburban areas.

Our grant from North East Link Authority has arrived, and we are very excited about the new shade sails that were installed recently. Read on for the big reveal!







## Street Planting for Biodiversity...Vienna-Style

BY JANET RUSSELL

In January of this year we caught up with one of our sons in Vienna. While there, we noticed many streetside garden beds with a mixture of herbaceous perennials, and not in the style of a formal display garden. To find out more we turned to our son, who reads German, to interpret the signage. It turns out that these beds are part of a city project to promote biodiversity and adapt to climate change.

Herbs and grasses: Vienna's Department of Parks and Gardens has planted eight unique herb and grass mixes across the city's open spaces and streetscapes. These are designed to have different plants in bloom for as much of the year as possible. This provides food and habitat for insects for many months, which in turn provide food for birds.

Both local species and exotics from Asia and North America are used in order to cope with streetside conditions: sunny, dry and nutrient-poor, due to urban heat islands and climate change. The blends are winter hardy and only need maintenance two or three times a year.

A notable feature is the number of species in each blend: between 15 and 24. While some species of plant are present in more than one mix, few cultivars are repeated, meaning that over 120 different plants make up the eight mixes. Even in winter, when many species would be dormant, there was considerable variety visible.

Although the [Vienna city website](#) pages are in German, you can find more photos of the beds in bloom by clicking on the links under "Sortiment der Wiener Stadtgärten".

Water retention: Vienna is also taking care of its trees and beds by implementing the "sponge city" principle. Highly compressed urban soils are being replaced with a mix of coarse gravel and finer particulates. This acts as the titular sponge, soaking up valuable water and storing it for longer, rather than letting it run into drains. The white gravel also helps to insulate the soil and suppress weeds. Additionally, root space for street trees is being extended underneath paved areas such as streets and footpaths.

This significantly improves the lot of street trees, which are better able to uptake water over time. Healthier trees offer myriad benefits to locals, from local cooling via shade and transpiration to CO<sub>2</sub> capture, wind protection and even dust filtering by the leaves. Naturally, they also support biodiversity as a habitat.

## So What Can We Learn From This?

The street plantings are just one element of a much wider future strategy: [Smart City Vienna](#). I think it's worth a look for its people focus, integration of nature and climate goals into buildings and streetscapes, and recognition that nature also benefits people's quality of life.

It's exciting to see a city embracing and showcasing biodiversity and cooling measures on a large scale. Maybe there are aspects to learn and apply here too!



Images: Janet Russell





## President's Report

BY ROBERT JONES

Time seems to fly when we are having fun, as they say, and this quarter has certainly been a busy time at the nursery and hopefully fun for all the volunteers involved in keeping things running.

Winter is suddenly upon us with cooler days and nights, and although from time to time we have grey skies above, very little results in anything more than a few drops of rain. The subsoil continues to dry out with all our gardens and parks shouting out for a good downpour of moisture. It is these times that we sympathise with those that make their living from the land, with many parts now being in drought conditions.

These past few months have kept us busy pricking out many thousands of seedlings to fill our orders and keep the benches well stocked; a battle that at times we struggle to win, as it seems that plants continue to walk out the gate with a customer quicker than we can replace them. However it is very satisfying to see so many indigenous plants being planted in people's gardens, nature strips and our bushland parks.

With the little bit of rain we have had, hopefully we will see the rows of benches that are presently stocked with orders start to move out of the nursery, as the plants are at a stage where they need to go into the ground. Then we can reorganise the nursery and move more plants out of the polyhouse.

Work continues to progress out in the park, with areas being prepared for a winter planting of a few hundred plants (rain pending) and those who have visited the nursery in recent weeks will have noticed that the East side nature strip has been planted out with over 100 various plants, which come springtime will put on a spectacular display showing what you can do with your nature strip to beautify the front approach to your house.

Construction work on the installation of new shade sails at the front of the shed has now been completed, and by the time this newsletter goes out the shade sails will have just been installed. This will be a substantial improvement for us, especially over the summer months and will also save us from getting up and down ladders every year to roll out the old shade sails. A photo of the new sails appears on the next page, and hopefully everyone will agree it is a vast improvement. Many thanks to North East Link Authority for the grant we received to implement this project.

## Wurundjeri Seasons

### Guling Orchid Season (August)

- Cold weather is coming to an end. Guling (orchids) are flowering.
- Ae-noke (caterpillars) of Common Brown butterfly feed on grasses at night.
- Muyan (Silver Wattles) are flowering.
- Bulen-bulen (Superb Lyrebird) males perform the last of their courtship displays.
- The star Arcturus is seen on the northwestern horizon soon after sunset.
- Gurrborra (Koalas) begin mating. Males bellow at night.

Source: [museums victoria.com.au](http://museums victoria.com.au)



Image: Canva.com





## President's Report...cont

A few weeks ago we hosted a visit by 25 prep students from Box Hill North Primary, who wanted to assist our volunteers with a morning's work planting out in the park. It seems the children had a great time with us, although a few of them were a little reluctant about getting their hands dirty and into the soil.

Seed collection is now over and cleaning and collating the years' work is almost complete. The next task will be a full stocktake of our seed inventory to determine if we have any that may be too old to give good germination; a substantial but important task to give us a clear picture of what we need to target for collection in the next season.

Overall Greenlink continues to operate at a high level with several new volunteers joining us this year, and ever-increasing demand for our plants. This year we added an extra Saturday sale day in autumn, giving us three Saturdays instead of the traditional two, and which proved to be successful and hopefully we can make this an ongoing arrangement.

Once again if you have not been to the nursery for some time, call in and have a look around at the changes going on, and join us for morning tea.

## Treasurer's Report

BY TREVOR EDDY

As we approach the end of our financial year it is clear that we will have a strong trading result despite our high level of spending on nursery upgrades and training.

Nursery supplies, potting media and water expenses have also been higher due to increased production and significant plantings in Bushy Creek. We will also keep our commitment to make significant donations into our community.

Plant sales will be higher than at any time in Greenlink's history with all weekdays, sale days and invoiced sales exceeding budget expectations. Investment income has been higher this year due to favourable interest rates.

So, we have a very strong financial safety net and based on what we know, we will be able to continue our work and cope with any unexpected events without financial concerns.

## North East Link Project Grant Presentation

Jacqueline Weedon from North East Link Project (NELP) visited Greenlink on March 19<sup>th</sup> to present us with the "big cheque" for the grant we received as part of the Community Development Fund.

This money is being used to build permanent shade sails in front of the main shed and poly house. The support poles were installed in mid-May, with the shade sails going up in early June.







## Digital Microscope Photos

Last year Greenlink invested in a new digital microscope, which will be used for a variety of purposes. This includes assessing the health and viability of seeds, assisting us in identifying challenging plant species (yes, I'm looking at you, *Juncus*!), and utilising it during workshops and school groups to showcase plants and insects up close.

Here are a few photos captured with the microscope – can you identify what they are? The answers can be found below.

All images: Greenlink Box Hill Inc



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.

1. *Correa reflexa* flower 2. *Acacia dealbata* flower buds 3. *Viola bentonitfolia* seed capsule 4. *Eleocharis sp.* seed 5. *Acaena ovina* seed 6. *Romaderis racemosa* leaf underside 7. *Azolla* sp.





## Fern Propagation Workshop

On Saturday 5 April a number of Greenlink volunteers attended a workshop at Knox Environment Centre (KES) on propagating fern species. This was another initiative by CINERG, the collective of eastern suburbs indigenous nurseries, of which Greenlink is a participant.

We talked about collection, preparation and propagation of different types of ferns. Many fern species have been impacted by the degradation of habitat in urban areas, so we were very interested in picking up any tips that will help us to propagate more ferns.

Thanks to John Exon for sharing his knowledge on this subject.



## Banksia Cuttings Workshop

Saturday 3 May (hmmm, I'm sure something else happened that day as well....) saw us back at KES, this time for a workshop on propagating Banksia cuttings.

Greenlink currently sells *Banksia spinulosa*, and we would love to add *Banksia marginata* to our plant list, but to date have found it to be somewhat tricky to propagate.

We were very eager to learn from the experts, so we brought along some cuttings from our own nursery plants to practice with, hoping they will take root and thrive.







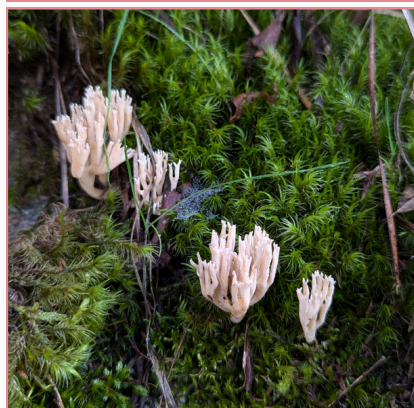
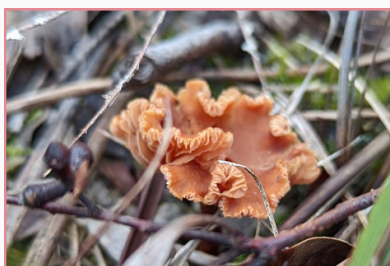
## Fungi Season Is Upon Us

Fungi season has begun, making it an ideal time to venture into your local park or bushland reserve and see what you can discover. There's plenty of fungi species to see - as an example, the photos below were taken from in and around our local area.

And if you are interested in taking it a bit further, you can put on your citizen scientist hat and help out with the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt 2025. This is a collaboration between FungiMap Australia and iNaturalist. There will be prizes for the Most Research Grade Finds (young and old) and the most Exciting or Rarest find. You can read more [here](#).

This [short video](#) by FungiMap gives you some tips on how to photograph and upload your fungi photos.

Good luck, and have fun...gi!!



## Charles Rooks Reserve Submission

Earlier this year Whitehorse Council released a Draft Landscape Concept Plan for a range of proposed upgrades to Charles Rooks and Dagola Reserves in Nunawading, and the community was invited to provide feedback.

Greenlink has maintained an ongoing connection with these reserves, which is why we felt it was important to provide our feedback on the draft plan. In our response we commended many of the proposed initiatives, highlighted our primary concerns, and offered recommendations to enhance the final design.

We now await the next stage of the process.







## What's in a Name? Melicytus Dentatus

YOUR REGULAR CORRESPONDENT MIKE ROLAYNER EXPLAINS:

If you were to come up with a common name for *Melicytus dentatus*, would you call it the Tree Violet? It's not a tree by any accepted definition of a tree, and it probably doesn't fit with most people's idea of what a violet might look like.

Why is it called that?

First, let's start with the scientific name. The genus name *Melicytus* comes from two Greek words, 'meli', meaning 'honey', and 'kytos', which can mean a hollow or a jar. So in effect, *Melicytus* means honey pot, and this is a reference to the rows of nectar-containing flowers we see in spring. The *dentatus* part is Latin and means 'with teeth'. Not in a Little Shop of Horrors way, it's referencing the slightly toothed margins (edges) of the leaves. So, a honey pot with teeth – nice.

As for the common name, the Tree Violet is in fact in the *Violaceae* family, which is made up of 24 genera (including *Viola*) containing about 1000 species. The only thing that's likely to make us associate it with this family is the scent of the flowers, but surprisingly most *Violaceae* are actually trees and shrubs. However, the Australian representatives are dominated by herbs, and relative to these, *Melicytus dentatus* is a tree, hence the 'Tree Violet'.

Before it was known as *Melicytus dentatus*, the Tree Violet was known as *Hymenanthera dentata*, but your correspondent has chosen to opt out of explaining that one.....

Fun fact: *Melicytus dentatus* can live for over 100 years!



Image: Walsh, Neville G CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0

## School Visit

On Wednesday May 21, we welcomed a group of students from Box Hill North Primary School for a tour of the nursery.

They also helped some of our volunteers in planting grasses and shrubs in an area of the parkland near the nursery.

We really enjoy hosting school groups, and are always delighted by the students curiosity, and to answer the numerous intriguing questions from them!!





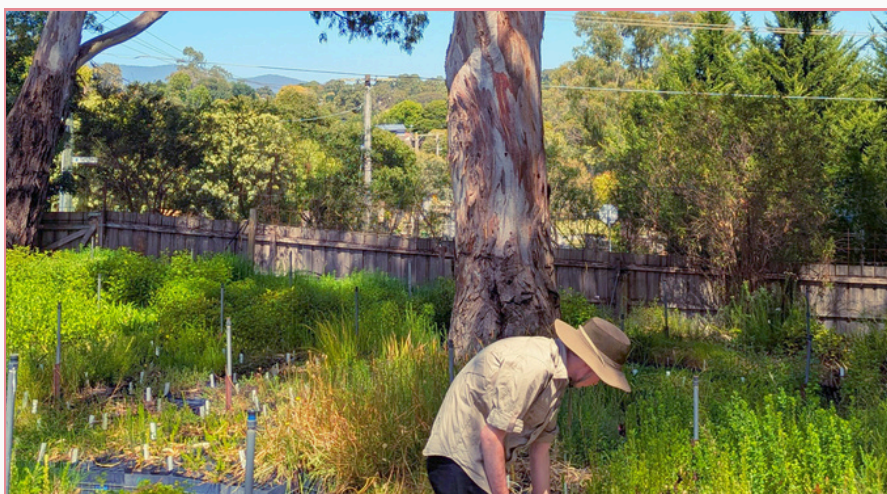


## Candlebark Nursery Revisit

You may remember in our last issue we covered a visit to Greenlink by a couple of people from Candlebark Nursery. A few weeks ago, several volunteers from Greenlink made a return visit for a tour of the site in Mooroolbark.

Debbie, Jarvis and Liam were very generous with their time, showing us through their nursery and production facility. We were able to exchange ideas and knowledge on a range of propagation, production, and seed management issues.

Visits like these are advantageous for everyone involved, as we are all facing comparable challenges due to the impacts of a changing climate on plant species that are already under duress due to fragmentation and loss of genetic diversity. The aim is that all indigenous nurseries we are collaborating with will be able to continue providing our customers with healthy and resilient plant stock well into the future.



## Frog Sauna

HOW SOAKING IN SAUNAS COULD SAVE OUR FROGS

Across the world, chytrid fungus is hitting frog species hard. To date, it has been linked to the extinction of 90 species, with many hundreds more in decline.

So a novel approach by a biologist at Macquarie University in NSW may just be the good-news story for the future of our beloved froggies, by building frog saunas.

Dr Anthony Waddle's research found that by keeping frogs warm over winter, when chytrid is most prevalent, they were able to effectively "bake off" their infections, as well as developing resilience against future infections. He has also published an [online guide](#) to show you how to build a frog sauna in your own garden, so you too can help protect these wonderful amphibians.

Read the full story [here](#) or [here](#)



Image: Anthony Waddle





## Hey Kids!

ARE YOU READY FOR AN ORIGAMI CHALLENGE?

Sharpen up your paper folding skills and have a go at making an origami parrot and cockatoo, created by [Bush Heritage Australia](#).

Download the origami instruction sheet for the Golden-shouldered Parrot [here](#)

You can [read more](#) about this beautiful bird, and its importance as a totem species for the Olkola people of central Cape York Peninsula.

Or if you love cockatoos, you can try making an origami Carnaby's Black Cockatoo - you'll find the instruction sheet [here](#).

These cockatoos are listed as a threatened species due to loss of habitat and rising temperatures, and you can read more about efforts to protect them [here](#).



## 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.







## Greenlink Box Hill Inc. is now on **LinkedIn**

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

Or follow us on Instagram: [@greenlink\\_nursery](#)

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

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Vice-President: Emi Luppino

Secretary: Chris Almond

Treasurer: Trevor Eddy

Committee Members: Andrew Hardie,  
Heather Eadon, Janet Russell, Gabrielle Bradley

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### 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:  
23 August 2025  
4 October 2025  
8 November 2025

### Contact:

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