

# GREENLINK NEWS

Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

## Newsletter November 2009

Greenlink's Postal Address for all correspondence is:

C/- 63 MONASH ST  
BOX HILL 3128  
VIC

**NB: ALL MONTHLY MEETINGS TAKE PLACE ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH  
(Except January)**

**NURSERY WORKING BEES TUESDAY 9:00-12:00**

**"IN THE FIELD" WORKING BEES WEDNESDAY 9:00-12:00**

### Newsletter Articles

All contributions gratefully received! Please email articles to [skc1@connexus.net.au](mailto:skc1@connexus.net.au) or post them to 63 Monash St, Box Hill South 3128. We can scan documents that are supplied as "hard copy", but would prefer electronic documents.

### Who ya gonna call?

EPA CONTACT FOR CREEK (or OTHER) POLLUTION REPORTS  
9695 2777 (24 hour number)

REPORTS OF DECLARED NOXIOUS WEEDS BEING SOLD IN THE NURSERY TRADE  
136 186.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you would prefer to download the newsletter - and help save on printing and postage costs - please email Peter Dwyer at [skc1@internex.net.au](mailto:skc1@internex.net.au) and you will be removed from the mailing list.

NB: Newsletter will be in Adobe Acrobat format unless another format is requested

**NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER**

## **Working Bees**

. Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at Sedgman Reserve: Contact Mary on 9890 2647 for further information

. Each **Tuesday** 9am at Nursery, 41 Wimmera St, Box Hill North.

. Each **Wednesday** 9am - contact Mary on 9890 2647 for details.

**Next Meeting:** Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009: Kerrimuir Neighbourhood House, 57 Linda Ave Box Hill Nth at 8pm.

## **Special Events**

**Plant Lovers:** Australian native plants are our passion! We are the Australian Plants Society, Maroondah Group: your local district group. We meet at 8pm on the 3rd Friday of each month (February to November) in Blackburn, when we have a speaker on Australian native plants or a related topic.

We also have discounted plant books, member plant sales and a garden visit each month. We welcome new members and visitors. For further details contact our Honorary Secretary, Brenda Moore, on 9876 1267.

## **Whitehorse Community Indigenous Plants Project (WCIPP)**

Friday visits to Parklands: These visits take place on the last Friday of every second month. Note that some months have five Fridays. Meet at 10:00am at the nominated reserve. We look at how plant communities exist naturally and identify plants. We collect plant parts for propagation, where appropriate. We weed as we walk and also pick up rubbish (bring plastic bags). Morning tea concludes the activity at around midday. For further information, please contact the Nursery Co-ordinator, Liz Henry, on 9890-4542.

### **"Whitehorse in Flower" Poster & "Plant Indigenous" Book**

The poster and book are still on sale from the Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society, PO Box 5 Nunawading 3131. Phone enquiries should be made to 9874 2641. The book costs \$10 (plus \$1 p&p). The poster costs \$2 (unlaminated), \$5 (laminated) - NOTE SPECIAL PRICE!  
Whitehorse Community Indigenous Plants Project (WCIPP)

## **Greenlink Contact Details**

President	Mary Symons 9890 2647
Secretary	Peter & Shirley Dwyer 9890 5362
Email	skc1@connexus.net.au
Internet	<a href="http://home.vicnet.net.au/~greenlnk">http://home.vicnet.net.au/~greenlnk</a>

## No Greenlink Monthly Meeting in November 2009

All correspondence and reports have been held over for December

## Greenlink Calendar for 2009

November	14 Working Bee	December	7 Meeting 12 Working Bee 25 Eat turkey & Pud
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ALL dates are subject to confirmation. If you notice an incorrect entry, please let us know.

**NB: MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH AT KERRIMUIR NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE, 57 LINDA CRES, BOX HILL NTH**

### City of Manningham Environmental Seminars

Manningham's Environmental seminars (1st Wednesday of the month except January) provide an opportunity to hear speakers on diverse environmental topics in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The seminars are free, no booking is necessary and a light supper is provided afterward. The venue is South Warrandyte Hall 66-68 Hall Road, South Warrandyte. Melways Ref. 35 J8. Starting time is 7.30 pm

*Wednesday 7 December : Bell Miner and associated Eucalyptus dieback with Amanda Dare PhD. Amanda will discuss whether the minor call frightens off other psyllid predators; the impacts Bell Minor presence on insect and spider predators of the psyllid, and what habitat structure is preferred by the Bell Minor.*

### City of Manningham Sunday Walks

The walks are free. Appropriate shoes, hat, clothing and water bottle are required. All commence at 10.15am unless otherwise stated. Note that recent walks have been booked out so book early! Contact to Kay Toussaint on 9840 9348 or email eepadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au for details and bookings for forthcoming walks.

### Spring Outdoors

A regional program of environmental events brought to you by Banyule City Council, Manningham City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council.

As the sun returns and we all come out of hibernation, Banyule City Council, Manningham City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council are once again coming together to celebrate with a series of fun environmentally themed events. Offering something for everyone, the Spring Outdoors program encourages families and friends to spend time together while getting their hands dirty and learning about our natural environment. Please note that while almost all events are free, most require you to book ahead. Places may be limited, so please book early to avoid disappointment. Here's a selection of the coming events:

Friday 20 November, 8.30pm-11.00pm - Star Gazing Night - Presented by the Astronomical Society of Victoria: Join the Astronomical Society of Victoria as we celebrate the International Year of Astronomy with a stargazing evening at Westerfolds Park. ASV astronomers will be on hand with telescopes and demonstrations. Bring a torch covered with red cellophane, and warm clothes. Cost: Free. Where: Westerfolds Park, Fitzsimons Lane Templestowe. Mel Ref. 33 F2. Bookings: Essential. Manningham City Council: 9840 9348

Thursday 19 November, 7.00pm-8.30pm - Create a Water Efficient Home and Garden - Presented by Nillumbik Shire Council: Learn ways you can reduce your water use in the home and garden and find out how to select the right water conservation products and methods for you. Bring along your old showerheads on the night (maximum of two) and receive free water efficient ones to replace them! Cost: Free. Where: Edendale Farm, Gastons Road Eltham. Mel Ref. 22 A1. Bookings: Essential. Georgia Ramsey: 9433 3210

### **Indian Myna: The "Cane Toad of the Air"**

*We came across this Fact Sheet from CIMAG (see below) recently and wondered about its relevance to Box Hill. In our street in Box Hill South, the native Noisy Minor (no relation) rules its domain in an aggressive manner, excluding most other local birds. However we have also noticed an abundance of Indian Mynas, mainly in areas of Box Hill with regular supply of food scraps, or where residents put out bread to "feed the birds". So this fact sheet, whilst specific to Canberra, does have some relevance in our patch.*

Indian Myna: *Acridotheres tristis* (starling family)

Common names: *Indian Myna, Common Myna*

Native Habitat: *Tropical southern Asia from Iran to India and Sri Lanka.*

*Feral Pest*

The Indian Myna has extended its range into most of Southeast Asia, and has been introduced elsewhere, including South Africa, North America, the Middle East, Australia, New Zealand and many Pacific islands. Indian Mynas were introduced into Melbourne's market gardens in the 1860s to keep down insects. They were then taken to Cairns and other places in far north Queensland to control insects in cane fields. They failed! Intelligent and aggressive, Mynas are now often the predominant bird in urban areas all along the east coast - from Cairns to Melbourne.

#### *Indian Mynas in Canberra*

Indian Mynas arrived in Canberra in 1968, when a misguided newcomer from Sydney released a dozen birds because he missed hearing their call. It is now estimated that there are some 250 Indian Mynas per square kilometre in the urban area of Canberra. This is a 150,000 feral population, out-competing our native birds and arboreal mammals for nesting sites, preying on eggs, chicks and mammal young. Indian Mynas are a major problem in Canberra's backyards and particularly around schools, outdoor cafes and shopping centres where there is easy food. Public Opinion One of World's 100 Most Invasive Species - World Conservation Union Extreme Threat category - National Vertebrate Pests Committee The Most Hated Pest in Australia - ABC Wild Watch Quest for Pests 2005 (beating cane toads, feral cats and foxes).

### *Why they are a threat*

Indian Mynas are noisy, territorial and not afraid of humans. They use superior numbers to aggressively take over and defend territory. During breeding season, they seek out nesting hollows, which they take over from native birds and animals, after harassing and evicting them.

Indian Mynas kill the chicks of other birds or destroy their eggs, or build their own nests on top and smother them. They have been seen to block the entries to hollows, causing the inhabitants to die of starvation, after which they then lay their eggs in the hollow. Mynas build and defend several nests during the breeding season, although they only lay in one nest - which excludes native birds and animals from those nesting sites. They can raise two broods of young every year, and over-night in noisy communal roosts.

Health risks: The Indian Myna poses a potential health risk to humans - from bird mites and faeces dust - due to its habits of closely associating with human activity, for example scavenging at outdoor cafes and eating areas, and domestic patios.

Mynas also build large untidy nests, using sticks, straw, feathers and rubbish, like scraps of paper and plastic, in roof spaces and cavities, which are a fire risk and an entry point for bird mites into houses. Canberra Indian Mynas are a particular threat to the nationally endangered Superb Parrot in the threatened area north of Canberra. In addition, ACT birds such as the threatened Brown species Treecreeper will potentially benefit from a reduction in Indian Myna numbers, as will the threatened insects which Mynas feed on: the Flightless Grasshopper *Perunga ochracea* and Golden Sun Moth.

There is also some evidence that the Myna's aggressive nature, which excludes small insect-gleaning native birds from providing ecological services to native vegetation, is resulting in a loss of tree health and vigour. In doing so, it poses a risk to Yellow Box and Red Gum grassy woodlands - an endangered ecological community in the ACT - such as at Mulligan's Flat and Goorooyarroo nature reserves.

### *What can people do?*

Here are some things people can do to help discourage Indian Mynas

- Clear away food scraps after eating outdoors.
- Feed pets indoors, or clear away when they've finished.
- To reduce open areas in gardens, plant native shrubs.
- Avoid planting trees with dense foliage, such as pencil pines, in which Mynas will roost at night.
- Block holes in roofs or eaves to prevent Mynas from roosting or nesting - make sure you don't accidentally trap a possum, bat or other native species.
- On farms, feed stock only as much as they need, cover the feed bins and clean up any spills.

### *About CIMAG*

The Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc - is a non-profit community-action trapping and group that has the aim of protecting our native birds and mammals from the threat euthanasia? posed by the introduced Indian Myna in the Canberra region. Their trapping and euthanasia program - endorsed by the RSPCA and the ACT Government - has been highly successful, and has humanely removed over 12,000 Mynas from around Canberra in around 18 months. The program has led to a marked decline in Indian Myna numbers in backyards and nearby urban nature reserves, and has had a positive impact on local native biodiversity conservation. CIMAG trappers are reporting a significant increase in small birds returning to backyards after trapping has removed mynas, and the return of rosellas to nesting Trap designed by boxes and tree hollows in backyards and along streets that had previously been. If you want to know more, contact CIMAG: 02 6231 7461 or [president@indianmynaaction.org.au](mailto:president@indianmynaaction.org.au) .  
[www.indianmynaaction.org.au](http://www.indianmynaaction.org.au)

### **Maroondah Festival**

Sunday 8 November at Town Park, Norton Road Croydon from 10am to 5pm: The Maroondah Festival is again a spring event - and we're moving back to Town Park in Croydon - so come and visit us on the Sunday after Melbourne Cup Day. Meander amongst the trees and enjoy a relaxed community event for the whole family.

### **What is sustainable shopping? Find out how to make a difference to the world by changing the way you shop!**

What you buy and where you buy it from has a big impact on how 'sustainable' your life-style is. You can make a difference to the world through ethical shopping, and exercising the power of choice to prioritise the environment, or promote ethical considerations. For example, how do you know the products you are buying are not harming the environment, animals or other people? What are the true costs of the products you are buying? What are the "best buys" for our health, our community and our planet? How can you find the most sustainable option available? The Guide to Ethical Supermarket Shopping has been developed to help make your choices sustainable, and easier to evaluate.

Producer of the guide, Nick Ray, will be at Chatham Primary School on 11 November 2009 to present a Shopping with A Conscience Workshop and talk about making your dollars work for a sustainable, ethical, world. Join Nick and local community members to find out how you can make a difference—just by changing the way you shop!

Date and Venue: 7.15pm for 7.30-9.00pm, 11 November 2009 @ Chatham Primary School Hall, cnr Banool Road and Weybridge Street, Surrey Hills (Greenlink is having a stand). RSVP: Fiona Armstrong [fiona-armstrong@bigpond.com](mailto:fiona-armstrong@bigpond.com) or 0438900005