

My Healthy Soils Project

NEWSLETTER

17 March 2026

Can you make a difference? Yes you can!

There's been a lot of hot days in Perth this summer and the trend is for these to increase. This is having significant impacts on liveability and health, as we found out from Dr George Crisp at our Healthy Soils workshop on World Soil Day in early December. The good news is many of us have the ability to manage urban heat around our neighbourhood and homes by doing things which reduce urban heat e.g. de-paving AND things which increase cooling e.g. revegetate with trees and shrubs.

The first really hot day we had in Perth on the 1st of December 2025 provided the opportunity to assess the impacts we were having on urban heat at our food forest and Black Cockatoo pocket forest. This started with an assessment of ground temperatures in and around the forests using a simple \$15 meat thermometer from Woolworths. A couple of days before, on a 33 degree day I also did an assessment of surface and ground temperatures at the property of one of our members, who had de-paved her front and back yards, amended the soils using some co-composted biochar from our soil hub and planted turf and natives. Surface temperatures there were assessed using a surface infrared thermometer purchased for \$30 from Bunnings.



Black Cockatoo Forest Case Study

Effects of soil carbon and organic matter on soil temperature in the Black Cockatoo pocket forest and community food forest, NW Britannia Reserve, Leederville

Soil temperature measurements taken to 10cm depth with an outside temperature of 34 degree at 5.30pm on 1st December 2025 (peak temperature 42 degrees)

Observations:

- Unshaded soft soil around the irrigated fruit trees in the community food forest and in the Black Cockatoo forest were consistently 24°C. These areas have high levels of biochar / compost/ microbes.
- Partly shaded humus layer around trees such as the Moreton Bay fig were 22-25 °C.
- Exposed irrigated grass areas in the food forest and on the slopes around the soccer pitch were consistently hard and dry and ~34 °C
- Temperature of the irrigated turf of the soccer pitch was between 25-27 °C.





Black Cockatoo Forest Case Study

Tuart Hill - Courtyard Pocket Forest - Depaving



Surface temperatures (Celsius) on a 33 degree day, 1pm in the afternoon



Planter beds (sand) enriched with co-composted biochar and roo poo mix. Planted September 2024.



Permeable reactive barrier (PRB) created to capture stormwater runoff



November 2025. 14 months later. Soil temperatures.

So what happened? Basically the soil organic carbon has helped with soil structure and waterholding capacity making the soils much cooler than untreated areas. Just as we have optimum temperatures in which we perform, the same applies to many soil organisms. This, along with other factors has a lot to do with the rapid growth rates we are seeing in our Black Cockatoo pocket forest, yards and verges.

The presentations of the Dialing Down Urban Heat Using Healthy Soils forum [can be accessed here](#).

Stuart Street Reserve Black Cockatoo project starts to take flight



Back in October last year 9 people met at the little known Stuart Street Reserve in the suburb of Perth to discuss the idea of a Black Cockatoo pocket forest in the reserve. The Stuart Street 9 represented local residents, Claise Brook Catchment Group, Northbridge Common Town Team and Transition Town Vincent. They all agreed it was a great idea for the reserve and with Anne Courtney and Diana Adorna volunteering to coordinate the project, things got going. At a meeting

with Mayor Alison Xamon and the Manager of Parks, Sarah Hill we got agreement that we could progress the project with some modifications (e.g. limitations on density to preserve visibility) and

enter the next phase which would be consultation with the local community. If you would like to be kept up to date on this project or to be involved then please [email Anne](#).



Coming events and news

Making soil for the Black Cockatoo Forest



With guidance from Dr Grey Coupland and others, we've been using regenerative practices to achieve quite impressive results in our Black Cockatoo pocket forest and in our own gardens. Learn from members of TTV how you too can use regenerative practices and local organics to transform sand into soil in your garden, pocket forest, rewilding and other garden projects. We have two workshop dates for March:

- [Saturday 21st March 9-11am](#)

- [Thursday 26th March 9-11am](#)

The principles we teach you are applicable to all gardens large and small. We'll also have some soil making equipment for sale at a discounted price. Proceeds will go to our Black Cockatoo pocket forest projects.

Movie Night - The Forest 23rd March



The story of a brilliant ecologist with a plan to save the world by restoring the planet's forests. His original work was hijacked by corporations and politicians with disastrous effect. Now he's using science to fight back. This is an amazing story which talks to the huge amounts of carbon which are sequestered in biodiverse forests and their biodiverse soils, something we are trying to replicate

with our own Black Cockatoo pocket forests.

We will be joined by guest speaker Dr Treena Burgess, Executive Director of the Harry Butler Institute at Murdoch University whose research field is the biology, ecology and genetics of beneficial and detrimental microorganisms in natural ecosystems, plantation forestry and horticulture, Treena's studies have ranged from use of mycorrhizal fungi to promote tree growth, the global movement of eucalyptus pathogens, soil and plant microbiomes, the role of canker pathogens in stressed ecosystems, the systematics, biology and ecology of *Phytophthora* and the complex biotic interaction in declining ecosystems. [Get tickets here.](#)

Lets Grow Grants

The Let's Grow Grants recognise the role schools and community groups can play in leading urban greening. The grants seek to empower local leadership and support projects that align with the Urban Greening Strategy.

A total package of \$10 million over four years will deliver the grants program, with \$2.5 million allocated each financial year to support as many eligible projects as possible. [Find out more here.](#)



If you are interested in applying for a grant, then attend our Making a Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest Demystified short course.

March for Forests 22nd March

Recently we hosted Paddy Cullen who planted a banksia in our Black Cockatoo pocket forest to raise awareness of the upcoming national March for Forests on 22nd March. This is a not to be missed event to show your concern for the loss of our forests [Find out more information here.](#)



The Great Cockie Count 12th April

Join us for the Great Cockie Count on 12th April. Next year we hope to have better local coordination. [Register here.](#)

Diary

When	What
Saturday 21st March 8.45-11am Tools n Things Library, 41 Britannia Rd, Leederville (entrance off Kalgoorlie Street)	Soil making for the black cockatoo forest Link here for details and registration
Sunday 22nd March 10am Forrest Place, Perth City	March for Forests Link here for details and registration
Monday 23rd March 6.15-8.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms, 41 Britannia Rd, Leederville (entrance opposite Egina Street)	The Forest Link here for details and registration
Thursday 26th March 8.45-11am Floreat Athena Clubrooms, 41 Britannia Rd, Leederville (entrance opposite Egina Street)	Soil making for the black cockatoo forest Link here for details and registration

When	What
Thursday 2nd April 4.15-7.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms, 41 Britannia Rd, Leederville (entrance opposite Egina Street)	Making a black cockatoo pocket forest demystified Link here for details and registration
Sunday 12th April 5.15-6.45pm	Great cocky count Link here for details and registration
Monday 20th April 6.15-8.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms, 41 Britannia Rd, Leederville (entrance opposite Egina Street)	Night Calling TBA
Sunday 26th April 9-11am Britannia Community Food Forest 41 Britannia Road, Leederville (entrance opposite Egina Street)	Community Food Forest Busy Bee

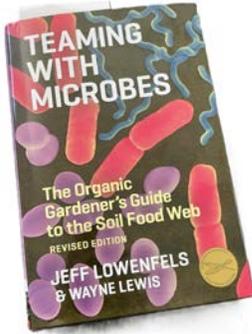
For sale by donation

The following can be obtained by donations by prior arrangement from the Tools n Things Library on Wednesday afternoons between 4-6pm and Saturday mornings 9-1pm. All donations go towards community run Black Cockatoo Forest planting projects.

Item	Recommended Donation
Recycled wool worm blankets (ea)	\$5
Recycled wool sheet 1.5 metre length	\$15
Recycled hessian coffee sack (ea)	\$5
Fasera biochar sample (200 ml bag)	\$10
Black cockatoo forest soil mix (30 litres)	\$60
Black cockatoo forest soil mix (50 litres)	\$100

Soil making equipment	RRP	Recommended donation
Compost bin 200 litre	\$70	\$35
Compost spiral	\$25	\$15
Worm towers (farm)	\$99	\$49
Worm farm blanket	\$14	\$5
In ground worm tube	\$65	\$30
Compost/worm farm conditioners	\$14	\$5
Bokashi	\$79	\$39

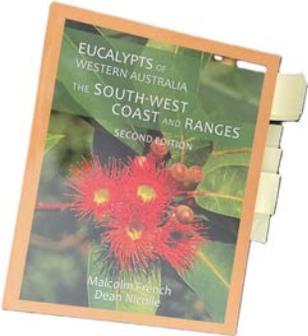
Book reviews



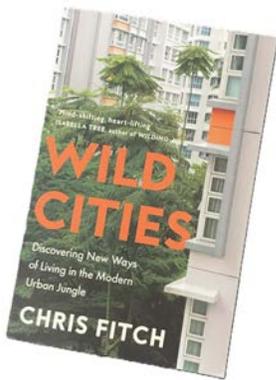
Teaming with Microbes - The Organic Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web is a fantastic read combining very interesting and well communicated information about the underground world of soil with an easy to follow layout with some lovely photos, diagrams and tables. Best of all though it has some very practical tips about things like composting, mulch and compost tea and application to different situations including forest growing, lawns, and growing annuals and vegetables. I am currently in the process of making some fungi rich compost tea which is apparently good for native gardens and forests (pocket and otherwise).

Next I plan to make some bacteria rich compost tea which is good for lawns and vegetables. I can tell I am going to love this book. I bought it from Boffins books in the city but have recommended it to our local library.

Speaking of our local library, Malcolm French, one of the authors of Eucalypts of Western Australia - The South-West Coast and Ranges (2nd Edition) will be giving a talk on the Eucalypts of Boorloo Perth on the afternoon of 18th June. I bought this book at Aspects of Kings Park and



it has lots of interesting information about the Eucalypts which occur in Perth including the more familiar ones such as Marri with their honky nuts, Jarrah, Tuart and Flooded gum as well as four other species. For each species the authors have provided photos of the tree, its bark, leaves, flowers and fruit. They also have other information such as common and scientific names, key features distribution and habitat (with map), conservation status and description, including maximum height attained. I was quite interested in buying the book initially to identify the distribution of certain Eucalypts to help determine 'climate readiness' of some of the species we are planting in the Black Cockatoo pocket forests.



I spotted Wild Cities - Discovering New Ways of Living in the Modern Urban Jungle in our local book store, Diabolik on Scarborough Beach Road in Mount Hawthorn and immediately started scanning the first chapter which was titled 'Tokyo, Japan - The big city with little forests', thinking that it would be about Miyawaki forests. Much of the first 20 pages though were actually about *shinrin-yoku*, forest bathing which at the time I was disappointed about but in reflection taught me about one of the main roles of forests in an urban context which is to do with human health and well being. Anyway I got to the part of the chapter on Miyawaki forests and was not disappointed finding out quite a few new things about them. One was that the dense planting (i.e. from 3 plants per metre square) has a lot to do with root density and interactions and presumably the density of soil flora and fauna e.g. microbes which

occurs as a result. I'm still on the first chapter but the rest of the book looks equally intriguing.

Snippets

Website additions

A resource page for [Black Cockatoo pocket forests](#) and [Growing our local native plants](#)

Combining newsletters

TTV are considering combining our two newsletters into one. This will likely be distributed using Mailchimp.

Keysbrook Hills Orchardring Club

Are you interested in sharing a weekend hideaway close to Perth in the bush but with a productive orchard? Local Leederville resident Sue Eslick, a member of the Keysbrook Hills Orchardring Club has advised that their club is seeking one new family group (it can be a couple) to join the existing 5 family members.

Members have access approx. one week in five, with the possibility of additional times through negotiation with other members. There are maintenance jobs to do on the property on rostered weekends but people can work at their own pace - watering, pruning, mulching, weeding, fruit picking, wood chopping etc. as the mood takes you.

For more information ring Sue 0401037973 or email hobbes2@iinet.net.au

Contact

Ian Kininmonth TTV Project Coordinator

E: ian.kininmonth@ttv.org.au

M: 0401 521 895

Back issues

All back issues of this newsletter can be obtained [from this page](#).

Social media

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/blackcockatooforest/ and Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/blackcockatooforest/>

Transition Town Vincent webpage <https://transitionaustralia.net/site/transition-town-vincent/>

Black Cockatoo Forest webpage <https://transitionaustralia.net/projects/black-cockatoo-pocket-forest/>

To unsubscribe from this newsletter please email me ian.kininmonth@ttv.org.au with the words Unsubscribe from newsletter in the subject line.

END