

My Healthy Soil Project

NEWSLETTER

30th July 2025

Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest

Planting Day now Saturday 2nd August

Due to a variety of logistical reasons and because there are no thunderstorms forecast, we have decided to go ahead with the Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest planting this **Saturday 2nd August** with registrations starting 10.30am.



We have over 45 adults and 25 children registered to participate so it should be a great day. The other good news is that the seedlings should get a good soaking because at this early stage the forecast is for quite a bit of rain which most likely will be in the form of passing showers. Gazebos will be provided for temporary shelter.

So the important thing is what to bring? Here is a check list:

- Old (warm) clothes and shoes/boots which you don't mind getting dirty.
- Rainjackets and other wet weather gear.
- Gloves.
- Drinking water.
- Snacks.

Please do not bring trowels as the ground will be very soft and we don't want to have to worry about *Phytophthora* dieback. We will supply sticks for people to use to make planting holes in the soft ground.

We expect that the planting and other formalities will be over by about 1pm but we hope you will be able to stay for a bit longer and hear from Sam and Rex the Black Baudin's cockatoo visiting from Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre while enjoying some of the snacks provided by volunteers. There will also be sample size free Fasera biochar aka charcoal to take away.

If you are worried about the rain and have children, then songs such as ‘Plant a tree’, ‘Singing in the Rain’, ‘Raindrops keep Falling on my Head’, ‘Incy Wincy Spider’ may be good ones. If you don’t have children then the ‘Pina Cola Song’ might be a good one. If you haven’t already registered then [go to this page](#).

SUGi sponsorship

I mentioned previously that international pocket forest organisation SUGi was one of the main sponsors of our Black Cockatoo pocket forest. Dr Grey Coupland is the Chief Scientist for SUGi. They have put our project on their [map of the world](#) and even created a [webpage](#) and have funded a videographer/photographer who will be there on planting day.

Planting list

The Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest planting list is now available [here](#). The list cross references the plants suited to the soil-landscape of the area with the Black Cockatoo species and which plants they forage on. This information was derived from Dr Christine Groom’s book Creating Black Cockatoo Friendly Suburbs.

Making a Miyawaki Pocket Forest Planning evening

Making a Miyawaki pocket forest requires a lot of organisation and preparation, most of it done by volunteers and starting a year out from the actual planting. Then once the plants are in the ground, there is maintenance and monitoring required. We will be having a planning evening on **Thursday 14th August 6.30-8.30pm at the Floreat Athena clubrooms in Leederville** (near the Black Cockatoo Forest).



There are a number of objectives for the planning evening:

1. Outline the process for making a Miyawaki pocket forest, which is the method we are using for the Black Cockatoo pocket forest.
2. Evaluate how things went with the first Black Cockatoo pocket forest and how we can improve for next and subsequent years.
3. Plan the next steps associated with the first Black Cockatoo pocket forest e.g. maintenance, monitoring.
4. Start planning the interpretive walk trail*.

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5. Commence planning for next year's Black Cockatoo pocket forest(s)*.

*Note: The City of Vincent have generously granted Transition Town Vincent (TTV) funds for 2025/2026 for:

- Purchasing plants for another Miyawaki pocket forest.
- Developing an interpretive trail.

So if you want to be involved please come along or send an email to info@ttv.org.au . We are also keen to hear from groups which are interested in having help in developing a Miyawaki pocket forest in their area.

Another year older

What a fantastic afternoon at the Britannia Community Food Forest 2nd birthday celebrations on 29th June. Almost 30 people turned up to celebrate by planting some fruit trees, nitrogen fixing natives and bush tucker plants.

As a special birthday treat, each plant was given some composted biochar which the Wednesday morning composting crew had prepared. Meanwhile the food foresters celebrated their efforts with some delicious cakes provided by volunteers.



Making a Mini-Forest



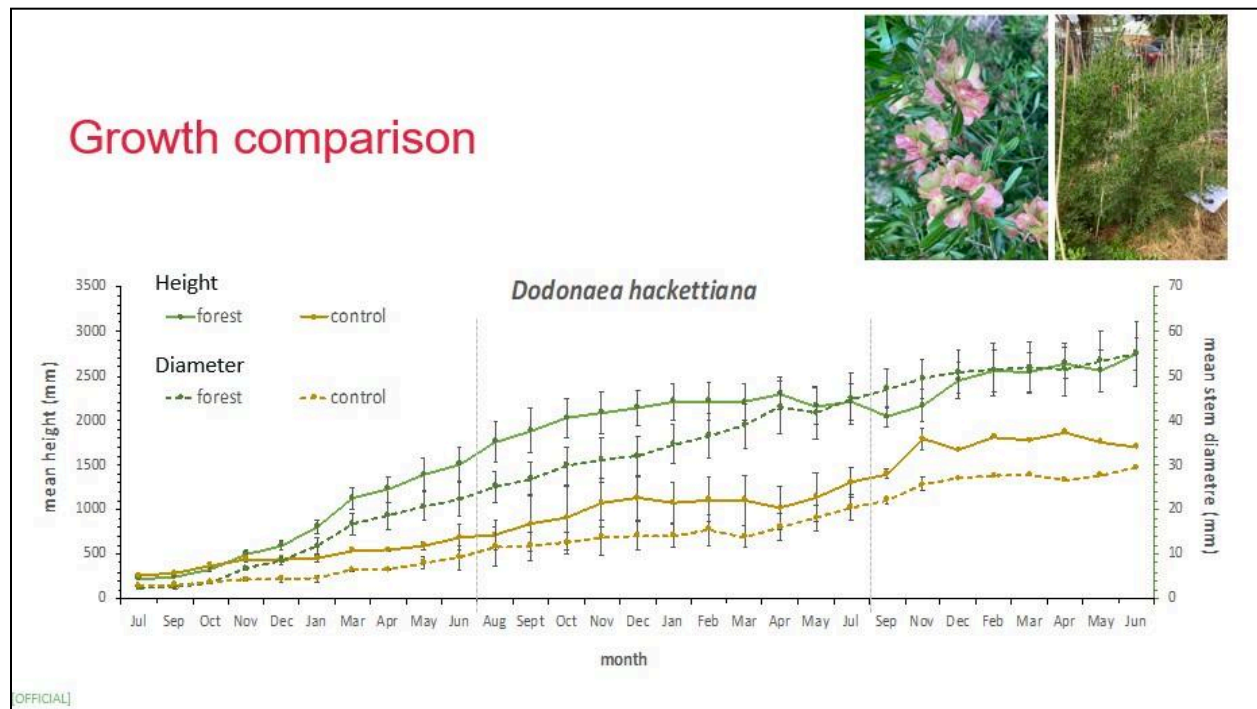
Inspirational! Around 50 people came along to Transition Town Vincent's monthly movie night and were inspired by Angelina Lee's documentary Making a Mini-Forest Making a Mini-Forest which showcased the Miyawaki pocket forest movement in Europe. It expertly used case studies across the continent to take the viewer through the process of how Miyawaki pocket forests are created.

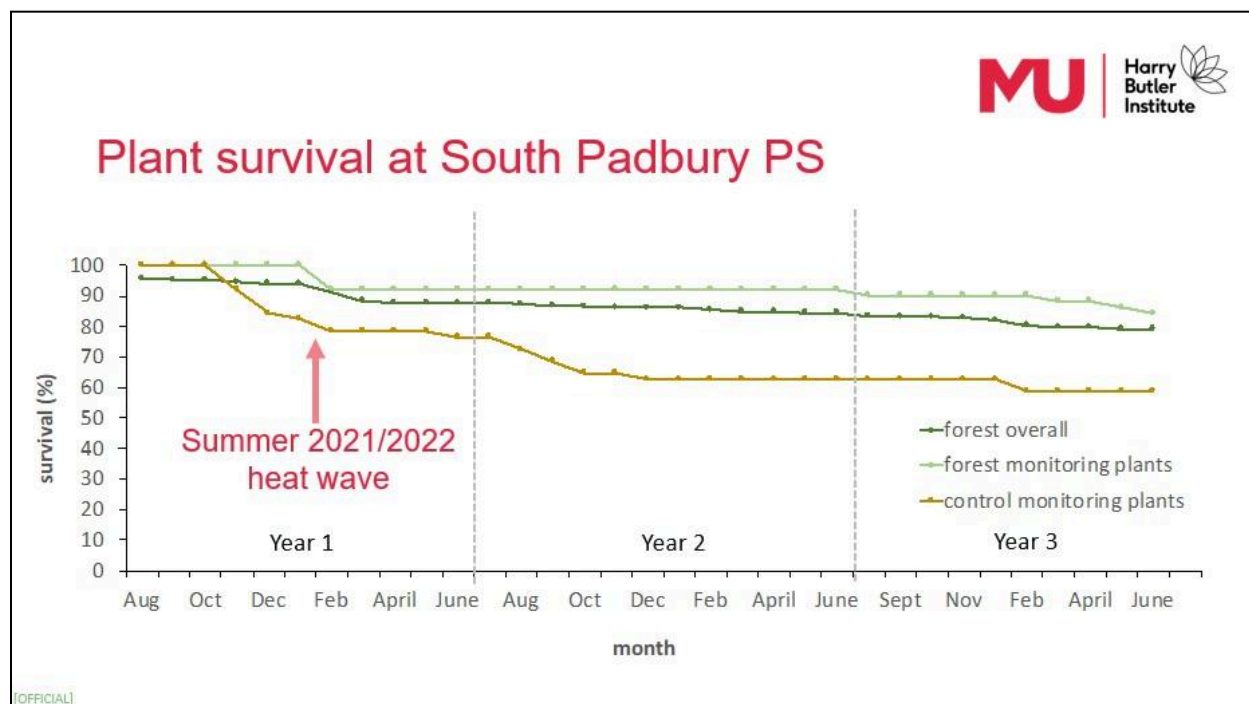
One of the things that struck me was that creating a Miyawaki pocket forest is as much about bringing communities

together to learn and work co-operatively as it is about creating something lasting and wonderful.

This was a perfect segue to Dr Grey Coupland from Murdoch University who has been working with around 17 schools and 4 other communities across Perth over the last 5 years establishing pocket forests. Grey's pocket forest program has been recognised as an exemplar by UNESCO's Green Citizens initiative. Grey outlined the process she goes through with the school children and the many benefits pocket forests provide. Grey also spoke about our own Black Cockatoo pocket forest which is being supported by the City of Vincent, SUGi pocket forests, National Tree Day and Fasera biochar.

In addition to advising and assisting us with our Black Cockatoo pocket forest, Grey is also Chief Scientist with SUGi Projects, an international organisation of supporting the establishment and management of pocket forest's. Grey's presentation included a number of graphs showing the growth rate and survival rates of pocket forests compared to controls which highlighted some of the benefits of the approach used. See the graphs below:





Coming events

When	What
Saturday 2nd August 10.30am-2pm Britannia Community Food Forest	Black Cockatoo Forest Planting (The Big One)
Monday 11th August 6.15-8.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms	TTV Movie Night - The Oil Machine Link here for details and registration
Thursday 14th August 6.15-8.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms	Meeting workshop: Black Cockatoo pocket forest planning (see above)
Monday 8th September 6.15-8.30pm Floreat Athena Clubrooms	TTV Movie night - The World's Longest City Link here for details and registration
Saturday 20th September Times TBA North Perth Community Garden	North Perth Community Garden Spring Fest & plant sale

Updates

Walking tours



The regular walking tours of the Community Food Forest and proposed Black Cockatoo Forest have been popular with around 20 people participating to date. On one of the tours we were inspecting the Tuart tree and noticed a mass of small fungi growing out of the bark as well as a furry caterpillar. It made us realise the biodiversity of

small things occurring in nearby bushland which we hope to see in the Black Cockatoo Forest. We are having discussions with Grey about having the walking tour featured as a SUGi walking tour and maybe taking in Galup too.



Composting crew

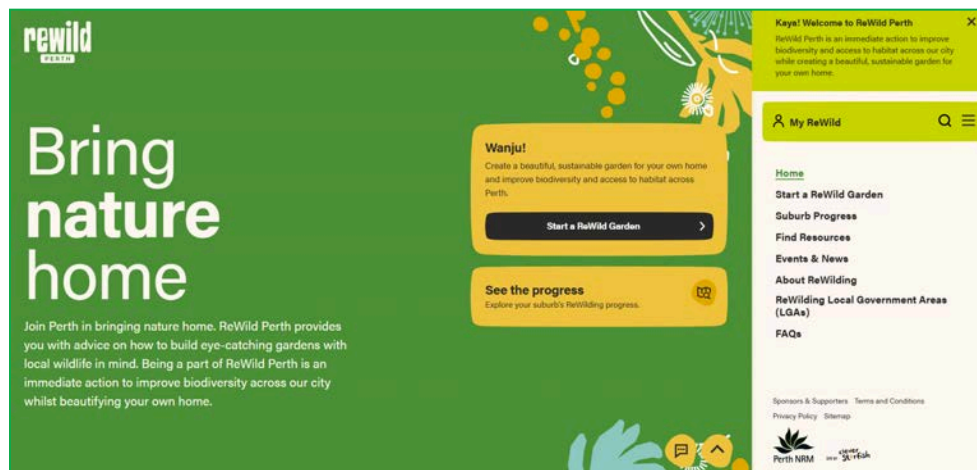


The composting crew at the Britannia community food forest continues to grow and do more than make compost. We also eat a bit of cake and drink some tea and coffee too 😊. A couple of weeks ago we had 7 people and Coco the Kelpie come along.

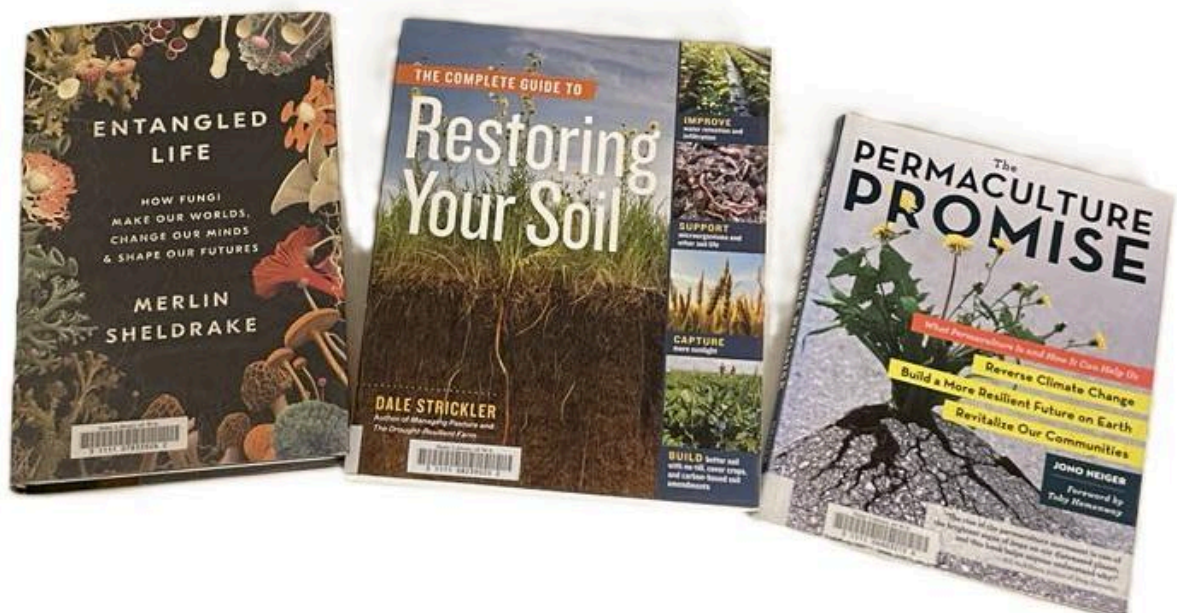
The compost is of course for the Black Cockatoo Forest and volunteers. It is blended with biochar in a process called co-composting. This inoculates the biochar, which is extremely porous, with microbes and nutrients. We usually meet on Wednesday mornings between 10am to 12noon. Email info@ttv.org.au if you are interested in joining in.

Rewild Perth website

If you are interested in Rewilding your property, then I highly recommend you visit the Rewild Perth website by Perth NRM. Click on the image and navigate to the relevant pages.



Book reviews



I first read 'Entangled Life' by Merlin Sheldrake last year after being fascinated hearing him interviewed on [Conversations by Sarah Kanowski](#). 'Entangled Life' was published in 2020 and is an enthralling read about fungi and related organisms such as lichen. In it you will learn many things including about mycorrhizal fungi and their underground networks of mycelium and symbiotic relationships with plants, especially plant roots. You will not look at soil the same way again and will think twice about putting a shovel into it lest you break the magical network of mycelium. Merlin is coming to the Regal Theatre in December and presenting the Secret Life of Fungi.

While browsing the gardening section of the City of Vincent library I came across 'The Complete Guide to Restoring Your Soil' by Dale Strickler 2021 and immediately thought "That's what our My Healthy Soils Project is all about. I have to have a look at this!" Then I opened it and thought "Oh, it's an American book and relates to broadscale agriculture. Maybe it's not so relevant?" But I was wrong. I found the section on 'What is Ideal Soil' particularly illuminating. It has similar content as Matthew Evans book 'Soil' but presents it in a more structured way with lots of diagrams and photos. There is still a significant focus on agriculture but many of the principles are applicable to the residential scale.

'The Permaculture Promise' by Jono Neiger is a very good introduction to permaculture principles and practices and has plenty of things which you can apply to the home garden or larger scales e.g. city scale. It is also an American book but it is writing about permaculture which was named by two Australians, Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, back in 1978. The founder of the global Transition Town movement, Rob Hopkins was also a proponent of permaculture in his early years and permaculture principles are now applied in many community gardens, and regenerative agriculture (see Restoring Your Soil above), and our My Healthy Soils Project. One could perhaps say that permaculture is one of Australia's greatest export ideas.

Back issues

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

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