

GREENLINK NEWS

Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

Newsletter December 2011

CHRISTMAS EDITION

Greenlink's Address:

All Correspondence:

63 Monash St

Box Hill South 3128

Nursery Address:

41 Wimmera St

Box Hill North 3129

Phone: 0479 121 653

NURSERY VOLUNTEER MORNINGS and SALES TO THE PUBLIC : 9.00-12.00 Tuesday and Wednesday. Tubes are \$1.50 & \$2.00.

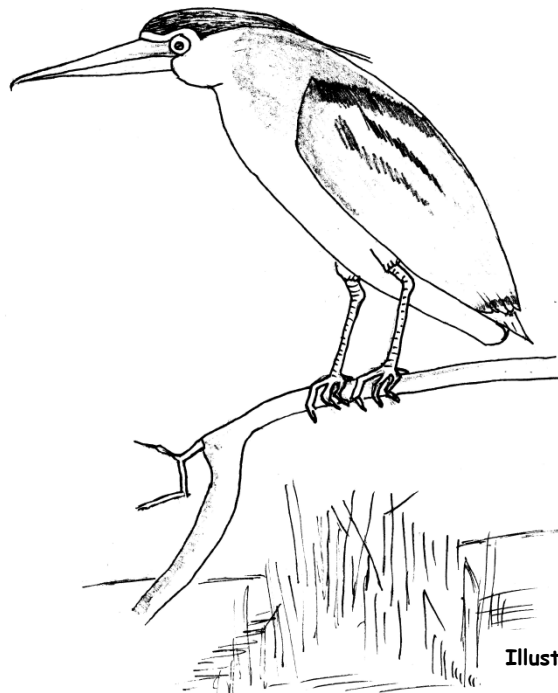


Illustration by Shirl

'Twas the Night-Heron before Christmas and all through the park
The silence was shattered by a frantic mudlark
The miners were restive, 'twas quite some shindig
As the Heron sat silent on a neighbouring twig

(Celebrating Editors' best Box Hill bird sighting of 2011)



Production of this newsletter is funded through
Melbourne Water's River Health Incentives Program

**CHRISTMAS MORNING TEA
AT THE NURSERY
TUESDAY 20/12/11 AT 10AM
(BRING A PLATE)
ALL ARE WELCOME!
Enquiries: Heather Eadon 9890 9072**

Newsletter Articles

All contributions gratefully received! Please email articles to greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com 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 greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com and you will be removed from the mailing list.

Newsletter is published in Adobe Acrobat format.

NURSERY VOLUNTEER MORNINGS and SALES TO THE PUBLIC:

9.00-12.00 Tuesday and Wednesday. Tubes are \$1.50 & \$2.00

Next Meeting: Tuesday 6th February 2012: 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.

30-12-11	Blackburn Creeklands, Kalang Park, car-park Blackburn Bowling Club - head east to inspect Waratah Wetland (north of creek), THEN head west, cross Pakenham Street to Blacks Walk Reserve - inspect creek rehab. plantings; climb the hill to enjoy the vista/Stipa	47H11
26-02-12	Ronald E. Gray Reserve, Outlook Drive, Nunawading	48G6

"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	Heather Eadon 9890 9072
Secretary	Peter & Shirley Dwyer 9890 5362
Email	greenlinkboxhill@gmail.com
Internet	https://sites.google.com/site/greenlinkboxhill

Minutes: Greenlink Monthly Meeting 6th December 2011 at Kerrimuir Neighbourhood House

Present: H Treeby, B Pell, M Symons, S Dwyer, M Burton, M Brewster, L Henry, G Stephens, M Witherspoon, G Andrew

Apologies: P Dwyer, L Norden

Correspondence Received (includes material received during October)

Threatened Bird Network	Newsletter
Delanie Piyatissa	Call for action to restore indigenous vegetation in Victoria
Toorak Primary School	Rain garden article
CRISP	Newsletter
Craig Family Centre	Donation of plants
PPWCMA	Newsletter
Friends Network	. FriendsNet Newsletter
	. Conference summary
	. PV Kookaburra Awards
Environment Victoria	. Green Action News
	. Affiliate Bulletin
Farm Tree & Landcare Assn	. FTLA News
	. Email bulletin
Planet Ark	. National Tree Day
	. Survey
Manningham Council	Upcoming Events
City of Whitehorse	. Australia Day Awards
	. Bicycle Path Works Wimmera St
	. Total Fire Ban Days
	. Environmental Events program 2012
	. Fuel Reduction Works
	. Bushland inspections
	. Down to Business
	. Whitehorse Volunteer Network - December meeting
IFFA	Indigenotes and related emails
Invasive Species Council	CRC Extension Proposal
Neil Angus MP	Nature Grants Program
Nillumbik Shire	Fringe Focus
VNPA	Nature's Voice
WCIPP	. Spring Festival
	. Friends of Leadbeater's possum (forwarded)
	. Meeting with Ryan Smith & Neil Angus
	. AGM
	. Christmas Barbeque
B&D TPS	Newsletter
Sustainable Living Foundation	Sustainable Living Festival
Greening Australia	Introducing Greening Australia's new leaders
Correspondence Internal	
Graham Andrew	Changes to Associations Incorporation Act

Greenlink Treasurer's Report - October 2011

Payments	\$
Coordinator	1667.00
AGL Electricity	331.81
Kitchen & Minor Supplies	73.60
Books, Laminating	165.70
Tags for Pots	242.15
Tyre, Powerboard, Stakes	145.16
Mobile Phone	19.00
Total payments	<u>2644.42</u>

Receipts

Invoiced Sales - Schools	1436.00
- U3A	339.00
- Spring Festival	500.00
Sale Day Takings	983.50
Nursery Weekday Sales	710.40
Memberships	<u>22.00</u>
Total Receipts	<u>3990.90</u>
Operating Surplus	1346.48
Balance 30.9.2011	10902.24
Balance 28.10.2011	12248.72
Comprising -	
Bank	9613.92
Outstanding Invoices	1936.00
Cash & Cheque	<u>699.00</u>
Total	<u>12248.72</u>

Greenlink Treasurer's Report - November 2011

Payments	\$
Coordinator	1667.00
Yarra Valley Water	478.65
Kitchen & Minor Supplies	157.95
Envelopes	19.95
Tags for Pots	147.55
Mobile Phone	<u>19.00</u>

TOTAL PAYMENTS	<u>2490.10</u>
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Receipts

Invoices 193, 198, C. Truman	1493.00
Nursery Weekday Sales	613.00
Memberships	<u>7.00</u>

Total receipts	<u>2113.00</u>
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Operating Deficit	(377.10)
Balance 28.10.2011	12248.72
Balance 26.11.2011	11871.62

Comprising -

Bank	10728.62
Outstanding Invoices	783.00
Cash & Cheque	<u>360.00</u>

Total	<u>11871.62</u>
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Moved: G Stephens Second: B Pell Carried

President's Report - Heather Eadon

Where do I start? There have been many events /functions that have taken place in the preceding months. All at Greenlink have been very busy, and as the year draws to a close there are the Christmas celebrations and the shutting down of the nursery for the holiday period (Christmas/New year 21/12/2011-3/1/2012).

The weather has had an effect on everyone, the warmer days and the rain have affected many of the events that we have attended, with the rain (Ian Moodies walk at Yarran Dehran) and warm humid conditions (spring festival), we have managed to carry on regardless and enjoy ourselves.

Several members joined other park volunteers on a walk through Yarran Dehran with Ian Moodie, to observe the wild flowers that were in bloom in the parkland, even though it poured rain, every one learnt from Ian's informative talk, and seeing the wildflowers in their natural surroundings.

SPRING FESTIVAL-The coming together of the many and varied organisations throughout the City of Whitehorse, at the civic Centre in Nunawading. The planning that had gone into the PARKLANDS display had gone on for several months prior to the event and on the day the display looked great, showcasing the different aspects of the work that we do in the parks and the equipment that we may use to carry out our work.

The day was fine, clear and warm and as the day progressed it got very humid, unfortunately the tent that was supplied for the parklands display was smaller than expected and with the weather and it became a sauna. It was a good day and everyone survived the heat and humidity.

Combined nurseries meeting- an annual event for the two nurseries to meet with Parkside team to give reports on the last 12 months, and for Parkside to let us know what has been happening at their nursery.

Volunteers Christmas celebration- The City of Whitehorse gave the volunteers an afternoon tea, there were 13 volunteers from the nursery. Much fun was had and we enjoyed the music presentations and the food was delicious. There was a lucky door prize and one of the nursery volunteers was lucky enough to win a prize.

Thank you, to the "field workers" who have done such a good job in the surrounds of the nursery, keeping the weeds down to a manageable level, and moving several loads of mulch onto the beds. Trimming plants back and planting in the area behind the Neighbourhood house.

Seed collection-has commenced and is going well, we have learnt to gather as much seed as we can on the fine warm days, and busy cleaning the seed on the wet days.

To the members of Greenlink who are not enjoying good health or find the weather too warm or wet to attend the nursery or functions, we are thinking of you and hope to see you soon.

There is a Christmas morning tea at the nursery on Tuesday 20th December at 11am, we look forward to seeing you there, if you are able to, please bring a plate.

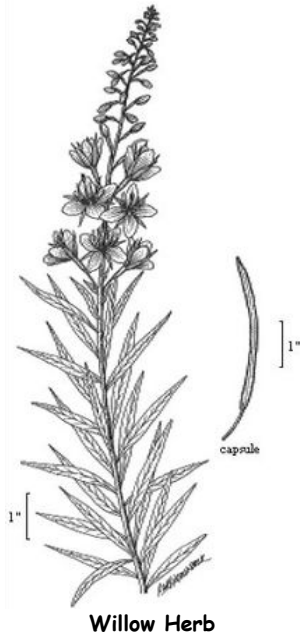
Nursery Report - Michele Burton

This month we started off with 35 ml of rain. In fact, most of November has been wet with a total of 169 ml for the month! November has had the most rainfall for any month this year!

Weeds:

This means lots of weeds! Andrew, Sam, Raymond, Graham, Bruce, Maria, Rosemary, Karin and Jeff have been our main weeding team this month trying to keep up with the amount of weeds growing in our tube stock. The main weeds are:

- . Flick weed which can flick its seed up to 3 metres and has even got me in the eye! It is a winter annual related to the mustard family. Common cool-season weed but can persist and spread year round in shaded, moist environments. Slender annual growing up to 30cm tall.
- . Liverwort : As with moss, if you have a damp climate, you're going to find it very difficult to get rid of Liverwort. It has long rubbery green tongues that creep around pots or other places, on which form pitted circles from which grow frilly green 'umbrellas'. A liverwort is a flowerless, spore-producing plant - with the spores produced in small capsules Try and remove it from pots, as it prevents air, water and light reaching your plants, so they die.
- . Epilobium -Willow Herb is part of the Onagrarriacae plant family. There are several species of Willow Herb that can be used medicinally- A local indigenous plant which has become a weed problem in Nurseries.



Stock Levels

We are currently working on getting our stock levels up again after very busy spring sales. Our volunteers: Elaine, Florence, Robert, Faye, Robyn, Jeannie, Geoff and Karin have sown trays of seed, cuttings and divisions covering our Acacias (wattles), Fabaceae (pea family), Grasses, Saltbushes, our 2-4 mt shrubs and trees - 32 species in all this month. We currently have 110 seed trays in the seed house and our volunteers are already busy pricking out into tubes. For example Patrick pricks out 200 plus plants a week which means over a year he pricks out over 10,000 plants! A mighty effort!

Spring Sales

For example some of our Spring Sales included: 15 Local Primary Schools have planted out 3,768 plants in the last 6 months. From a Rain garden, to having Indigenous plant garden beds, planting along our creeks, using indigenous plants to make a traffic screen along the school boundary, planting a red, yellow, green and blue /purple flowering area and even creating a pattern of wildflowers in large pots. There have been many different ways of using Indigenous plants to create a local and native environment. It is great to see children and the community, planting indigenous species in their school grounds.

New Volunteers

We welcome 2 new Volunteers/ members this month Jeannie Hall and Petros Massouridis. Jeannie is a retired public servant from Canberra who moved to Blackburn 5 years ago with husband and bossy cat. She is still trying to get her post retirement bearings and spends time in her garden battling the weeds. She hopes to increase her plant knowledge at Greenlink and get to know our indigenous plants and weeds.

Petros has been revegetating 30 acres of his property near Ballarat into a Wetland area over the last 20 years. He welcomes any manpower to help with this ongoing project. Ring Petros 0409661889 for details.

Field Team

Our Field teams keep working away in the Parks. Peter Cockroft has delivered a number of loads of mulch this month to Bushy Park Reserve- thanks Peter. Margaret, Mary, Paul, Kate with Brian supervising have spread it around the Sculpture Garden, around the new Acacia area and across the path behind the Nursery. Brian and Paul have removed dead trees from behind the Nursery this week as well.

Helen and Ted planted 50 *Lomandra longifolia* at Neighbourhood House in late November after returning from a trip to India.

Peter and Shirley planted 55 trees at Gardiners Creek in the pouring rain! - 52 ml we had on that Saturday!

Shade Cloth

The time of the year has arrived when we need to put the shade cloth over the Poly and Seed Houses. The temperature under plastic rises considerably when the weather is warmer and the sun shines hotly. It is like a sauna! A lot of manpower was needed to unravel the shade cloths and hoist them over the buildings - not an easy job. Then we tied them down so they don't go flying off in a strong wind.

Each building measures around 5 mts x 11 mts. These buildings are a vital part of our Nursery activities.

The Seed House has 2 hot beds where all our cuttings start their life. The temperature of the hot beds are around 24 degrees and this stimulates root growth. There are also 4 rack benches 1 mt x 3 mt where the rest of our seed trays go.

When the seedlings are ready to be pricked out into tubes they then spend a month in the Poly House where their roots get established. Then the big move out into the Nursery for our customers.

Planting: 122

Ytd: 4,373

Volunteer hours: 511

Bungalook: Liz Henry

- . Watching seed set
- . End of December walk will be in Kalang Park
- . Christmas Breakup will be held at nursery 12 noon on Friday 16th December

Matters arising from Correspondence

Deakin Bridge: Greenlink has written to the minister, Ryan Smith, expressing its opposition to approach by Deakin to build a bridge on public land. He replied and reassured us that no approach had been made yet

General Business

Michele: Has requested 2 weeks' leave from December 21st to 9th January. This was approved.

Cooling our shed: It seems to be a difficult job to cool the shed. It has been suggested that we increase our shade cloth area outside, including covering the transparent panels on the roof. We also need to have a "hot weather" policy for volunteers, A motion was moved "when the ambient temperature reaches 33 deg or higher OR on days of Total Fire Ban the nursery is to be closed". Moved M Burton, seconded M Symons - carried.

Christmas Party Tuesday 16th December: Michele proposed that we should give a voucher for 10 plants to volunteers as a "thank you". This was approved.

Bicycle Path at Bushy Creek Playground: This will be addressed on 7th December. Greenlink favours moving the path to run near the existing bollards

Whitehorse Festival: Following the 2011 Festival, Greenlink would like the format/structure of the 2012 Festival to be discussed and finalised earlier than in previous years. This would give groups time to formulate plans and ideas.

Biolinks: Following a presentation by David Berry at Whitehorse Festival regarding Biolinks - linking all parks within the City with natural vegetation corridors - Greenlinks supports the project and moved to provide: "funding of \$5,000 for 2012 to develop Biolinks across the City of Whitehorse. David Berry is to be approached as co-ordinator of the project". Moved by B Pell, seconded by M Symons - carried.

Greenlink Calendar for 2012

January		February	2 Monthly Meeting
March	6 Monthly Meeting	April	3 Monthly Meeting 21 Nursery Open Day
May	1 Monthly Meeting 26 Nursery Open Day	June	5 Monthly Meeting
July	3 Monthly Meeting	August	7 Monthly Meeting 18 Nursery Open Day
September	4 Monthly Meeting 15 Nursery Open Day	October	2 Monthly Meeting 20 Nursery Open Day 27 Spring Festival
November		December	4 Monthly Meeting

ALL dates are subject to confirmation. If you notice an incorrect entry, please let us know.

NB: MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH (Except January and November) AT KERRIMUIR NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE, 57 LINDA CRES, BOX HILL NTH

Can't think of a Christmas present?

You can purchase a Greenlink Voucher from our Nursery. This brings us to our Plant of the Month our very own Christmas Tree: We have our own Native Christmas Tree: *Allocasuarina littoralis* : Black She-oak

Allocasuarina littoralis is a fast growing, nitrogen fixing tree, that can be grown on recharge sites and a wide range of shallow, well-drained soils. It has one of the widest latitudinal gradients of any tree species in eastern Australia. It is considered an excellent fuelwood and would make a useful windbreak or shelterbelt species. In the past, the wood of *A. littoralis* has

been used for turnery, tool handles, yokes, furniture, farm buildings and roof shingles. The tree's growth is upright, and *A. littoralis* will grow no wider than 4m; as a young plant, it will be about 2m wide. The flowers are showy, typically dark red in spring. It's full growth is 6-8 mt x 4-5mt.

A. littoralis will grow in any well-drained site, including those where summer irrigation is limited. Its growth is fastest where full sun is provided, and will respond well to irrigation during establishment. *A. littoralis* is relatively fast-growing for a small-statured tree, growing up to 800mm per year under ideal conditions.

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND MUCH HAPPINESS IN THE NEW YEAR - BEST WISHES from GREENLINK NURSERY.

City of Manningham Thursday Nature Walks: 4th Thursday of Month

Walks start at 9.30am. Please wear appropriate clothing for the weather including a hat and sturdy footwear. Bring a water bottle and snack. Walks are free but places are limited. bookings are essential: 9840 9124 or eepadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au

Waterwatch

Emmanuelle is leading Waterwatch the first Saturday of the month, excluding January. Location is Elgar Park behind St-John ambulance Hall (entrance opposite Paul St on Station Street) and it all starts at 10am. Contact Emmanuelle via email at manumonde@hotmail.com for further details. You can find out more about Waterwatch at this website: www.vic.waterwatch.org.au/

Field Naturalists Club of Victoria

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV) is Victoria's oldest conservation group. The FNCV was founded in 1880, and continues as a vigorous and practical advocate of conservation and the study of natural history to this day. The Club has close to 1000 members and publishes the bimonthly journal 'The Victorian Naturalist'. Early Club members for two decades successfully worked towards reservation of Wilsons Promontory as a national park. The FNCV continues to thrive to this day. We are a very active club with a diverse calendar of events.

The huge range of interests within the club have seen the development of various Special Interest Groups. Members are welcome to attend activities of any or all of these groups. Visitors are welcomed, but please note a \$5 fee may apply to non-members on some group activities (this includes insurance). Please contact FNCV on 9877 9860 or at 1 Gardenia St, Blackburn 3130 for further information

The Ringwood Field Naturalists Club Inc.

The Ringwood Field Nats also conduct their own activities. No phone number is listed on their website but the secretary is Peter Rogers, who may be contacted via P.O. BOX 418, RINGWOOD, Vic. 3134

Eltham Copper Butterfly Walk and Talk: Sunday 19 February 2012 10am-12noon

Venue is Pauline Toner Reserve, Eucalyptus Road, Eltham (Melway 22 C6). Bookings can be made by contacting Environment and Strategic Planning Administration on 9433 3316

Toorak Primary School Rainwater Garden (from Susan Tate)

The grade 1/2 students have been learning all about things that live in our waterways and how pollution and rubbish can affect these life forms. With help from Julie Morris from Melbourne Water we looked at some water bugs and walked to the Yarra River and did a survey of all of the litter that we could see. We were amazed and a little bit sad about how dirty the river and surrounding areas were.

It was decided that we would rejuvenate the rainwater garden that runs along Brookville Road, past the level 4 learning area. Not only is this a lovely native garden but it also plays a big part in filtering rain water and runoff before it goes into the stormwater drains which lead to the Yarra River, helping to reduce pollution.

Thanks to a Junior Landcare Grant from CitiPower Powercor and some extremely hardworking parents and students the garden now looks amazing. We cannot thank those who helped out enough. It will be a wonderful peaceful learning area in the years to come. Special thanks to Mr Coleman who applied his talent and muscle to the landscaping and organisation of the students. It has become an ongoing project, maintaining and adding to the garden. Please take a moment to walk down Brookville road and admire the beautiful work.

We are grateful to CitiPower Powercorp for their generous Junior Landcare Grant which enabled us to send some of the Green Team students to the Kids Teaching Kids conference earlier in the year. Their generosity has also enabled us to cover all costs for the rainwater garden revival.

Thank you also to Melbourne Water for their support and Greenlink Nursery in Box Hill for providing 800 native plants at a very reasonable cost. Greenlink also lent us some hole punches to make the job of planting so many seedlings much easier.



Greenlink is set in the beautiful bushland areas of Whitehorse at 41 Wimmera Street, Box Hill North. They sell native plants such as blue bells, correas, wattles, wildflowers, wildflowers and flowering shrubs which can be purchased at the nursery on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9.00am-12.00 pm.

Prices range between \$1.50 and \$2.00 per plant or \$1.00 for schools and community groups. You can look them up on the internet or contact them on 0479 121 653.

Join the Earthwatch Microbat Expedition

Volunteers and families are needed to help scientists discover the secrets of Melbourne's elusive little microbats in the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne.

This summer, Earthwatch, a not-for-profit organisation, is asking the public to join one of Melbourne's Microbats overnight research teams to protect microbats and the liveability of the city.

Little is known about microbats but researchers have found they play a vital role in the ecosystem by keeping mosquitoes at bay, eating up to 600 mosquitoes an hour.

Unlike fruit bats, microbats are tiny creatures ranging from the size of a moth to the size of a hand that live off mosquitoes and other insects. Being nocturnal they go largely unnoticed by many Melburnians and are extremely important in spring and summer when insects, particularly mosquitoes are more prevalent.

Richard Gilmore, Earthwatch Executive Director, says that so far the research has found that urbanisation has reduced the number of bat species and backyards may have already lost their most sensitive bat species. "The University of Melbourne research is showing that not all microbats are able to adapt to the changing landscape, meaning that the various species may need to be managed differently, particularly when it comes to the trees they use to roost", he goes on to say.

Now in their third year, the Melbourne Microbats research teams are being headed up by Dr Rodney van der Ree, Senior Ecologist from Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and School of Botany University of Melbourne, and other PHD researchers from the University of Melbourne.

Dr Rodney van der Ree says that over the last two years the public has been invaluable in helping to identify approximately 16 species of microbats across greater Melbourne and locate areas of natural habitat.

The teams will survey bats using harp traps and record ultrasonic bat calls with hand-held bat detectors and GPS equipment. Teams will also investigate the diet of urban bats by using light traps to sample nocturnal insect fauna.

Summer teams kick off on Friday 2 December (first family team 11 February 2012) and run through until 3 March. To sign up call Earthwatch on 03 9682 6828 or email earth@earthwatch.org.au

Be wary when emailing your local member!

As reported in *The Age* on 2 December, emails sent to state Liberal MPs by constituents raising concerns about electoral matters are being harvested for a centralised Coalition database that is being used to fight Labor's carbon tax. Authorities say they are powerless to stop the practice because political parties are exempt from state and federal privacy laws. The email includes a link to a personalised page on the Liberal Party's anti-carbon tax website. The website, which uses the constituent's name, suggests that the constituent is against the tax and remains active despite attempts to unsubscribe.

Your Newsletter Editor recently received one of these emails after having emailed Burwood MHR, Graeme Watt, on a non-related constituent matter.

Victorian Government review of the Climate Change Act

Last month this review was mentioned in *Greenlink News* and an Internet url was provided. Unfortunately, just as the Baillieu Government was asking for submissions, it modified the reference document url for Victoria's Climate Change White Paper. Thanks to Environment

Victoria, it has been "found" at a new location. So if anyone wants to read it, you can now browse to tinyurl.com/6obqoyk - although the cut-off date for submissions has now passed.

Strive for empty bins on Boxing Day

From Katrina Hawkins, Sustainability Officer, City of Whitehorse

The festive season generates mountains of waste. Whitehorse City Council has plenty of ideas for keeping the lid on excess this Christmas.

When planning your Christmas and New Year festivities a little planning can go a long way to reducing garbage.

Decorations

- . Use a tree in a pot as a Christmas tree that can be reused each year.
- . Use energy-saving LED lights and set a timer to turn on between 8pm and 10pm.

Food And Drink

- . Buy local, organic or fair trade food for Christmas meals.
- . The Whitehorse Farmers Market will be held on 11 December (8am to 1pm) on Whitehorse Civic Centre grounds, offering a wide range of seasonal produce.
- . Compost vegetable scraps and store leftovers properly to eat later.
- . Dine with crockery or re-useable bamboo or plastic plates and cutlery or buy compostable plates.

Presents

- . Shop for socially responsible gifts including toys, accessories and kitchenware from fair trade organisations that support farmers, producers and communities in developing countries.
- . Buy handmade clothes, art and crafts from local markets such as the Nunawading 'Christmas' Market on 11 December (1pm to 5pm) on Whitehorse Civic Centre grounds.
- . Buy 'experiences' rather than 'things' such as tickets for movies, theatre or sports events.
- . Consider items made of wood from sustainable sources.
- . When buying toys with batteries, buy rechargeable ones.
- . Ensure your electronics have good energy star ratings.

Wrapping And Cards

- . Use gift boxes or reusable gift bags.
- . Wrap your presents using fabric, safety pins and fabric ribbon, or last year's wrapping. Or try Furoshiki - the Japanese art of cloth wrapping.

You can also visit the Environment Victoria website (www.environmentvictoria.org.au) for their Festive Season guide.