



# VINC News

\*\*\*\*\* AUTUMN 2008 EDITION \*\*\*\*\*

Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Co-Operative Newsletter  
Yarra Bend Road Fairfield (off Heidelberg Rd)

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## Autumn: The Perfect Time for Planting

Welcome to the first electronic edition of our newsletter. We have decided to save on paper, labour and postage costs and email the newsletter. If you have received the newsletter by mail it means that we either don't have an email address for you or that the email address is incorrect. To lessen our impact on the environment, please let us know your email address. Emails should be sent to [vincmat@vicnet.net.au](mailto:vincmat@vicnet.net.au).

Now is the time to have a good hard look at your garden. Pull out those plants that have not survived the long, hot dry summer(s). Prune plants that are not doing what you want. If they don't survive then it won't matter as you didn't like what they were doing anyway\*. Come in to VINC and have a look at our drought tolerant list and buy some plants.

Autumn is the best time for planting:

- the soil is still warm
- autumn rains will come (here's hoping)
- your plants get a head start (at least six months) before the onset of summer heat
- it is great for your health to be out in the fresh air

You can help your plants through tough times by:

- Adding some water crystals to help maintain moisture around the plant.
- Sprinkling around some wetting agent so that water penetrates the soil. Some mulches make the soil repel water. You might think you are watering the plant but it may be just running off under the mulch.
- Watering your plant really well with a seaweed tonic to help establish their root systems.

If you are using grey water from the laundry on your plants don't forget to check if your detergent is environmentally responsible. [Particularly sodium content](#). You can do this at the lanfaxlabs website which is

<http://www.lanfaxlabs.com.au/laundry.htm>

## Opening Times:

Weekend hours: 12pm - 4pm  
Monday to Friday: 9:30 - 4pm

We have EFTPOS facilities - not like in the old days when you chose your plants, realised you didn't have enough cash and had to drive to the nearest ATM!

## Changes to Retail Prices

If you have visited the nursery this year you will have noticed that our plant prices have changed. Unfortunately most have increased with a few prices remaining the same. The reasons are: increased costs of equipment and supplies, staff wage increases, infrastructure investments in the expansion.

This is the first price rise since July 2005

## Garden Products for Sale

We have expanded our stock of garden products. As part of our Sustainable Gardening Australia accreditation we sell garden products that have low environmental impact. Some of the products are:

| Product                           | Price   |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Rain Saver - 250g                 | \$11.50 |
| Soil Wetter 2.5kg                 | \$12.50 |
| Natural Native Fertiliser (1.5kg) | \$13.00 |
| Slug-It                           | \$12.00 |
| Bamboo stakes                     | \$0.50  |
| Plastic tree guards               | \$0.50  |
| Jute matting                      | \$0.95  |
| Organic Potting Mix (30 litre)    | \$12.00 |
| Native Potting Mix (30 litre)     | \$11.00 |

## Nursery Changes:

In the wholesale area VINC has expanded  
A new super igloo has been installed  
A shade house was constructed in early 2007 to combat wanton possum destruction of nursery plants. They too have been victims of the drought.



2006/7

### Top 10 Retail Plants

Do you have any of our top ten selling plants in your garden? [Common names?](#)

| No. | Species Name                                       |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | <i>Poa labillardieri</i>                           |
| 2   | <i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>                   |
| 3   | <i>Wahlenbergia communis</i>                       |
| 4   | <i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>                     |
| 5   | <i>Lomandra longifolia</i>                         |
| 6   | <i>Correa glabra</i>                               |
| 7   | <i>Themeda triandra</i>                            |
| 8   | <i>Brachyscome multifida</i>                       |
| 9   | <i>Indigofera australis</i>                        |
| 10  | <i>Dianella laevis</i> (was <i>D. longifolia</i> ) |

### Plant availability

Can't find the local plant that you are looking for? There are many reasons why a plant is not in the retail area. Some of these are:

- Not much seed was collected
- Good quality cutting material was not available
- It is the wrong season for the plant
- There may only be a few tubes left and it has been put back out in the yard
- The plants may not be big enough for sale

If you particularly want a plant then you can ring the nursery before your visit and we can check on availability. Also, you can place an order so that we keep the plants for you. Just ask our staff.

### Friends of VINC wetlands

This group was formed to enhance the appearance of the wetlands next to the nursery. The wetlands known as Dullum Bulluk were created when VINC first moved to this site.

The first meeting of the group will be on Saturday 29 March. We will then meet on the third Saturday of every second month from 10 am - 12 pm.

If you would like to become involved and have your name added to the "Friends" email list, please contact Mark or Jenny during the week on 9482 1710 or [vinc@vicnet.net.au](mailto:vinc@vicnet.net.au).



### The calendar of events is

| Dates               | Activities                                                                                               |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sat, 29th March     | Walk & Talk with Jen and Mark<br>Wetland Maintenance – some weeding and plant maintenance near 'pond 4'. |
| Sat, 17th May       | Planting Day/site maintenance followed by a BBQ                                                          |
| Sat, 19th July      | Plant maintenance – other activities TBA                                                                 |
| Sat, 20th September | Plant maintenance – other activities TBA                                                                 |
| Sat, 15th November  | End of year BBQ with guest speaker "Birds of the Yarra Park Bend. Some weeding if we feel motivated!"    |

### Plant name changes

Most plant names change as botanists working on a plant or group of plants find that some are more closely related than others. There is usually some debate about this in the botanical world. A year or two ago there was an uproar when the acacia genus was reviewed. The final name change resulted in the Australian acacias remaining as acacias. Other countries had to change their acacia species names. It was a close call!

There are a number of other reasons - some are just incorrect or the plant may have been discovered previously and the original name stands. If you know some Western Australian plants you may know that *Dryandras* may become *Banksias*. If you want to find out more on that issue have a look at: <http://asgap.org.au/APOL2007/aug07-1.html>

| Previous name                              | Current name                  |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Hymenanthera dentata</i>                | <i>Meliccytus dentatus</i>    |
| <i>Kunzea ericoides</i><br>(Burgan)        | <i>Kunzea leptospermoides</i> |
| <i>Dianella laevis</i><br>(Pale Flax Lily) |                               |
|                                            |                               |
|                                            |                               |

### VINC Personalities

#### Judy (the Propagator)



I started at VINC as a volunteer while studying Cert III in Horticulture at NMIT, when the nursery was still at CERES. When I became the Propagation Assistant, I completed the Graduate Diploma in Applied Science at Burnley, and am now the

Propagation Manager. Last year we propagated 300,000 plants from seed, cuttings and division.

**Loves:** Working with the volunteers, talking to students of Conservation and Land Management, listening to the stories of Friends' Groups.

**Dislikes:** Weather that keeps you indoors, talking to Turf students, Foxtail/Fountain grass.

**Currently:** I am trialling germinating plants out of season with the help of "The Germinator" (temperature controlled germination cabinet).

After completing a documentary making course at Open Channel and I am making a training film 'Seeding the Future: Seed collecting, Cleaning and Storage of Indigenous Plants' which could be finished by Autumn 09.

**Renowned for:** Knitting very colourful beanies for African children, and elaborate possum pouches for orphaned possums, stories of the challenges of managing my two Friends' Groups.

Some recent staff changes:

Jess Hard has left for a new life in Mauritius.  
Toni Clarke is now working as the Propagation Assistant.  
You may have seen a new face in the weekend retail area: Beth Kimber.  
Lloyd McRae has become the proud father of a daughter, Kate Laura.

VINC *Volle Est Five*  
(by Elspeth Brock)

**Richard Harcourt - Volunteer, Member and Wetland Weeder!**

**Q1.** How long have you been involved with VINC?

**A1.** Since 1997.

**Q2.** Do you have a memorable volunteer moment?

**A2.** Discovering that VINC existed, and that it was within jogging distance for me.

**Q3.** What excites you about indigenous plants?

**A3.** Indigenous plants are truly local, (and Australian!), and therefore they help to create environmentally sound "sacred sites". I consider that indigenous areas remain as nature intended them to be, (therefore "holy!"), prior to the arrival of us non-indigenous people, commencing 1788. Indigenous areas could be considered to provide examples of the mythical "Garden of Eden"! And indigenous plants are associated with indigenous areas. Thanks to VINC, indigenous plants are now the primary plants in our garden. As a consequence, we have occasional visits from eastern spinebills and other native birds.

**Q4.** What is one of your favorite indigenous plants? What do you like about it?

**A4.** Possibly either Hop Goodenia, or Sticky Boobialla, both of which grow in our garden. I like the "bright yellow" flowers of the Goodenia, and the ease with which the Boobialla grow. I would like to add Rock Correa with "yellow-green tubular bell-shaped flowers", and Prickly Moses, with its "bright, yellow, flowering spikes", to my list of favourite indigenous plants.

**Q5.** What do you think is the greatest environmental challenge Australia is presently facing?

**A5.** The destruction of the indigenous ecology, thereby enhancing possible climate change.

*Long Island at the Royal Botanic Gardens*

You may not know that VINC provided the plants for the planting on Long Island at the RBG in Melbourne. Species from five different plant communities are on the island. These plantings have survived with minimal irrigation. It is a beautiful part of the gardens.

[http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/rbg\\_melbourne/living\\_collections/long\\_island](http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/rbg_melbourne/living_collections/long_island)

*Is your favourite plant on Long Island?*

On the RBG website they now have a plant census. You can find where a plant is growing. If you want to find if there is a *Banksia marginata* on Long Island then you just type the name, click 'Search' and 'Voilà' - a list of plants and their location comes up on the screen. The wonders of modern technology!

<http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/dbpages/rbgcensus/index.php>

**Feedback**

Anything you would like to see in the newsletter? Anything you don't like about it? Let us know at [vincmat@vicnet.net.au](mailto:vincmat@vicnet.net.au).