

ADELAIDE SOUTH WEST *community newsletter*

December 2021 – February 2022

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The Value of Verge Gardens

Emma Lewellyn gives us some tips about starting a verge garden in your street.

It was the start of January and I was ambling through the Adelaide streets on a short excursion from a hospital stay – a deflating way to hail in the new year.

It was hot. The harsh Adelaide sun radiated from the grey, monolithic, built environment all around me. In my search for respite, I stumbled across the Whitmore Square Community Verge Garden. My breathing slowed and deepened. Bees, butterflies, and the scents of herbs and flowers danced on the summer air, and my spirits were instantly lifted by the garden's soothing smorgasbord for the senses.

Verge gardens connect us with nature and provide opportunity to build relationships with community. They beautify our streetscapes and increase the biodiversity in built-up areas.

The Whitmore Square Community Verge Garden is a fine example of their impact. Though it's on a larger scale – a coordinated effort by local residents with the support of the Adelaide City Council – getting a verge garden happening can be a relatively simple affair. Here are some tips for getting started.

Start small.

I love the permaculture principle of 'Use Slow & Small Solutions'. Small things are easier to manage and accomplish than

big ones, and we're likely to stick at things if we experience success. Rather than becoming overwhelmed by the execution of an entire verge garden, think of ways you can break the project down into smaller pieces or stages. Could you plant one tree or transform a small portion of the verge to start with?

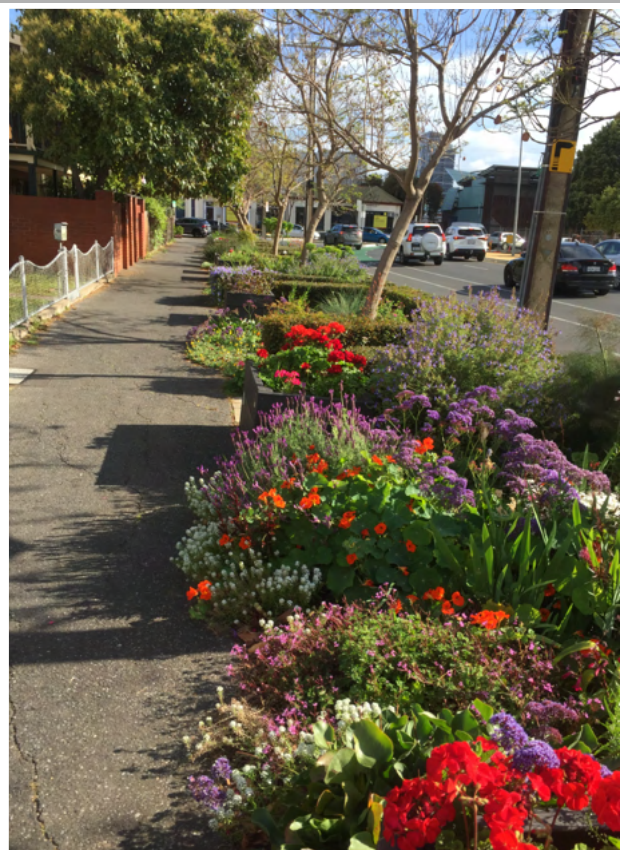
Value community.

Get talking with your neighbours. Many hands make light work and perhaps there are others on your street who have been thinking about creating a verge garden that you could team up with. Verge gardens are brilliant for building community connectedness. Collaborating on the project can be a helpful way to share resources, responsibilities, costs and ideas.

Celebrate diversity.

As well as connecting us to community, verge gardens connect us with nature. They're called nature strips after all! They're great for welcoming biodiversity back into the urban landscape by providing food and habitat for insects, birds and small reptiles. Think about planting in different layers such as ground covers, grasses, small shrubs and larger shrubs, and be sure to include native plants for native animal species. The more diversity you plant the more diversity it will attract.

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The Value of Verge Gardens (Cont.)

Know where you stand.

Before you start, it's a good idea to check local council's regulations around the installation and maintenance of verge gardens. The Adelaide City Council requires submission of a Nature Strip Application form. They also can assist with design ideas, plant suggestions, and the supply of soil, mulch, plants and irrigation. For more information contact naturestrips@cityofadelaide.com.au

Have fun.

Gardening should be fun and therapeutic. Approach your verge garden adventure as an opportunity to paint some colour, joy and diversity around your street and, potentially, inspire others to do the same.



Meet the Candidates

The South Australian State elections are on Saturday 19 March 2022.

SWCCA has booked the Minor Works Building in Sturt Street on Wednesday 23 February to host a *Meet the Candidates* session. This will be your opportunity to meet and talk to candidates nominating for the seat of Adelaide. We'll hear from each candidate and then move to questions from the floor.

The meeting starts at 5.30pm. Put the date in your calendar as it's a busy time of year.

Adelaide Firefighter Belatedly Honoured

Simone McDonnell, local resident and CFS volunteer, acknowledges a new gravestone in West Terrace Cemetery.

History buffs among you may have missed an interesting new gravestone at the city's West Terrace Cemetery for Mr Albert Greenman.

Albert Greenman was one of three firefighters who died battling the catastrophic ship fire onboard the *City of Singapore* on 26 April 1924.

The *City of Singapore* was docked at Port Adelaide when a small fire was spotted onboard. With the crew ill-equipped to put out the fire, the Wakefield Street-based Adelaide Brigade was called to support firefighting efforts.

Sadly, their work was in vain with the fire quickly spreading through the ship's cargo, causing such a large explosion that residents across the city reported an earth tremor.

Eleven firefighters and two of the ship's crew were rushed to Port Adelaide Hospital, including Mr Greenman, who succumbed to the severe head injuries he had received during the explosion.

Firefighters George Anderson and Jim Hickey also died from their injuries and are buried at Cheltenham Cemetery.

A former MFS firefighter, David Sweet, discovered that Mr Greenman lay in an unmarked grave and felt compelled to ensure his sacrifice was not

forgotten. Through the efforts of many in the MFS, and with the help of the Fire Service Fund, the grave was refurbished with a memorial headstone.

Mr Greenman rests with his son Albert, who was born and sadly died only a few weeks after the explosion, and his mother-in-law Caroline Martorana.



Headstone and ceremony in West Terrace Cemetery to honour the tragic death of Albert Greenman in 1924



PHOTOS: Simone McDonnell

In a serendipitous and touching tribute, Ailsa Enting-Hawke, a descendant of Mr Greenman's widow Laura, and herself an MFS firefighter, joined dignitaries in unveiling the memorial on St Florian's Day, the patron saint of firefighters, in May this year.



Adelaide's Fauna Refugees

Lynette Fisher explains why there is an increasing diversity of bird species in the Park Lands.

I was born in Australia, in Kaurna Country, and although for more than 20 years I lived elsewhere, I have always appreciated being close to the unique natural

environment of this country.

In 1998 I was awarded an Australia Council Fellowship to deepen my exploration of community cultural development. This took me to the United States and an international researcher role with San Francisco State University.

When I moved back to Adelaide (Tamtanya) in April 2021 and the South West corner of the city, I was rewarded with Adelaide's wonderful Park Lands. Almost immediately I became aware of the expanded diversity of bird species that are either migrating through or have established territory in the Park Lands.

Many species I was familiar with: the Australian Magpie, Magpie-Lark (also known as the Murray Magpie), Crow, Kookaburra, Willy Wagtail, the wonderful Honeyeaters, to name a few. As winter transitioned into early spring, I started to see birds that I knew from rural South Australia or interstate: Corellas, Galahs, Rosellas, Parrots and Sulphur-Crested and Black Cockatoos. Although I had previously seen these birds in SA, I don't recall seeing the hundred-strong shrieking flocks obviously quite at home in the Park Lands. Maybe during my younger years in Adelaide, I had missed seeing the Australian White Ibis. Now these elegant hook-billed creatures are very at home in Veale Gardens (Walyu Yarta). My first memories of the Ibis were from when I lived in Sydney and experienced the bird's picnic lunch thievery in the Botanic Gardens.

Gisela Kaplan in her 2019 book *Bird Bonds* explains that Australian wildlife, and specifically native birds, have been either decimated or forced to relocate due to the increasing degradation of their habitat, Climate Change, and the increasing number of bushfires. Kaplan writes: "Especially in the past decade, the devastating heatwaves and droughts of the inland have forced flocks of Cockatoos of several species to flee to better lands closer to the coast, at least during prolonged droughts. Some of the most ancient species of Cockatoos and Parrots now are endangered as a result of climatic conditions and severe shortages of suitable nesting places and food sources".

On a recent walking tour led by Adelaide Park Lands Association executive director Shane Sody, I learned of the Grey-Headed Flying Foxes that migrated from the east coast due to food shortages. Standing on the banks of the River Torrens (Karrawirra Pari), beneath an estimated colony of 20,000 of these intelligent creatures, it is evident there is a critical need for a coordinated plan to ensure Australia's beloved fauna survive and thrive.

Maybe I am not alone in discovering that Adelaide is now home to fauna refugees. Yet, with South Australia's tough climate and history of bushfires, how will these newcomers fair?

It is terrific to see the City of Adelaide responding to the challenge. With citizen activation, Adelaide is making meaningful efforts to effectively address restoration of previously neglected public spaces and engaging with residents on joint projects to identify and mitigate potential threats.

As a returning expat I am inspired by the passionate commitment to preserve the Adelaide Park Lands and that government, private entities and communities are working collaboratively to ensure the natural environment is a living legacy for human and animal residents.

Community Christmas Picnic Sunday 5 December from 11.00am

Games for all ages, including Corn Board, Finska and kite flying, treasure hunt, take-home prizes, pop-up wishing well. Bring picnic lunch and chair/blanket. Tea & coffee provided.

Walyu Yarta Community Garden
Veale Gardens (off South Terrace)



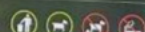
Walyu Yarta Community Garden

Welcome to this community garden. It is a space where local residents come to socialise, cultivate fresh produce and learn how to grow vegetables, fruit and herbs organically. We are run as a cooperative and everyone working at the garden has an equal say in how it functions. Enjoy!

Please:

- Feel free to come in. Visitors are welcome.
- All vegetables, fruit and herbs are grown organically using compost and companion planting.
- You are welcome to pick the produce, but we ask that you leave enough for others and take only what is ready for picking.

For details on how to join the Walyu Yarta Community Garden and upcoming working bees and meetings, please see the noticeboard inside the garden.



SWCCA Update

Riverbank Precinct.

SWCCA lodged a submission strongly objecting to the State government's 70-hectare Riverbank rezoning of the Park Lands. The re-zoning would allow for a vast array of uncontested new developments to proceed on our Park Lands.

SW Community Centre.

We have continued to work closely with Council in our quest to find a new permanent home for the South West Community Centre west of Morphett Street. SWCCA spoke at a Council meeting on 9 November on the importance of providing this facility and that it be located in the centre of the community it serves, rather than at the Minor Works Building. Following some discussion, Councillors voted unanimously to continue the search for a community centre west of Morphett Street until 2022/23, and that the Minor Works Building will be retained as an additional community resource.

Council Representation Review.

SWCCA has put in three submissions and spoken to the Council on this review of how we are represented. The clear majority of respondents wanted minimal changes to the existing Ward boundaries that would have resulted in one Area Councillor being replaced by an additional South Ward Councillor. The structure the Council put forward to the Electoral Commissioner involved major structural changes that the community did not support. It involves only one Councillor for a substantially reduced South Ward. As a result, SWCCA has forwarded a letter of complaint to the Electoral Commissioner objecting to both the process and final option promoted by Council.

Whitmore Square 'Greening'.

SWCCA, along with a number of concerned community members, are disappointed that works underway in Whitmore Square were not those reflected in the 2018 draft Master Plan, on which the community was consulted. We were expecting a rammed earth pathway on the edge of the Square planted with trees, not a 2.5metre-wide concrete roadway set another 2.5 metres into the Square, and the removal of trees to allow for its construction.

We wish to extend our thanks to City South Association for their generosity in covering the cost of printing this edition of the South West Community newsletter.

SWCCA also takes this opportunity to wish you an enjoyable Christmas/New Year break and all the best for 2022.

Susan Collins, Chair
South West City Community Association Inc

More Mowing in the Park Lands

You may have noticed grass in the Park Lands being mown more frequently and tightly.

We asked Matt Jorgensen, Horticulture Team Leader at Adelaide Council, if there has been a change of policy. He confirmed that Council has re-evaluated what he called "turf maintenance".

Council has "increased mowing frequency in our squares, high profile parks and sports grounds". It involves fortnightly mowing for all other irrigated areas and a reduction in the height of the cut.

"This action has had an immediate and improved visual impact around the city," he said.

Matt said Council will continue to work on turf quality by implementing fertilising, scarification and aeration programs to further the health, density and improve the visual aesthetics of the Park Lands.

Minor Works Building Closure

The centre will be closed for two weeks from Friday 24 December to Monday 10 January 2022. No groups will be able to access the centre during this period as cleaning and essential maintenance work is being done.

Kitchen Caddies

Adelaide Council provides residents with a small plastic caddy for your kitchen to make it easier to collect food scraps which can then be placed in the green organics bin.

Using a caddy with compostable liners helps reduce unpleasant odours and spillage, and ensures your green organics bin stays as clean as possible.

Did you know? By placing used paper towels and tissues in a kitchen caddy, any liquids like spoiled milk or sauces can be soaked up. This is a great way to contain any food mess!

A Kitchen Caddy Kit can be ordered online for residents living in a house, detached dwelling, row or terraced house (i.e. not in an apartment or a high-rise) by visiting www.cityofadelaide.com.au/resident/recycling-waste/kitchen-caddies

Additionally, residents can also collect a free Kitchen Caddy Kit at community centres, libraries or the Customer Centre at 25 Pirie Street.

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