

Plant Cuttings – September 2025

A tree a minute for 24 hours: the young Victorian forest that was planted in a day – The Guardian, 31 August 2025

On a patch of paddock in West Gippsland stands a small forest, which wasn't there before. Flowering gums and she-oaks reach up nine metres tall, birds nest in their branches, while a giant tiger snake slides through the grass below.

All it took was one day of "bloody hard" work.

About four years ago the Australian film-maker and outdoorsman Beau Miles set out to plant 1,440 trees and shrubs in 24 hours – enough to turn a blanket of rolling Victorian hills back into bush.

Miles decided he was done with the kind of modern-day adventures that burned through money and carbon, delivering little in the way of tangible outcomes except for photos and a great story. Instead, he says, he began looking for physical challenges that offer more "bang-for-buck".

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/aug/31/one-tree-every-minute-victorian-forest-planted-in-day>

Banksia seedlings planted to replace those lost after Black Summer bushfires – ABC News, 1 September 2025

On a frosty winter's morning in Victoria's Upper Murray, 20 volunteers tighten the straps on their backpacks and lace up their hiking boots. They have gathered at Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park, an hour and a half east of Wodonga, on a mission to bring a native species back from extinction.

The critically endangered *Banksia canei* was wiped out when the Black Summer bushfires tore through the region five years ago. However, an intrepid group of scientists recently found a "genetic perfect match" near Mount Beauty and propagated new seedlings. Now the race is on to see whether the critically endangered plant can take root in the area.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2025-09-01/banksia-wiped-out-bushfires-back-from-extinction-upper-murray/105675254>

Alcoa advert about jarrah forests 'inaccurate and likely to mislead or deceive', watchdog rules – ABC News, 2 September 2025

Australia's advertising watchdog has found US aluminium giant Alcoa made inaccurate or misleading claims in an advertisement about its rehabilitation of the forests it mines in.

Alcoa has mined for bauxite — used to create aluminium — in the world's only jarrah forests in Western Australia since 1963.

The WA Forest Alliance, Conservation Council of WA and The Wilderness Society made a complaint to Ad Standards about an advertisement printed in The West Australian newspaper on May 24, 2025.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-02/alcoa-advert-about-forests-inaccurate-misleading-watchdog-finds/105722968>

Varroa mite detected in South Australia for first time – ABC News, 3 September 2025

The "world's worst" honey bee parasite, the varroa mite, has been detected in South Australia for the first time.

The discovery was made in a beehive at Pooginook, in the state's Riverland, during routine surveillance by Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) inspectors.

The CSIRO says it is the "world's worst" and "most serious" European bee parasite. Varroa mites can kill honey bee colonies and transmit numerous viruses to their hosts. They mainly feed and reproduce on honey bee larvae and pupae (bees transitioning between larvae and adults), leading to malformations.

The infested hive is believed to have originated in a consignment of hives from Queensland.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-03/varroa-mite-detected-in-south-australia-for-first-time/105731928>

Fear controversial government plan could destroy 30 per cent of rare Aussie plant – Yahoo News, 3 September 2025

It's a white flowering Australian shrub so rare that recent estimates suggest just 150 to 250 remain in the wild. Consequently, the discovery of a plan by Victoria's Environment Department (DEECA) to clear a strategic fuel break at one of the remaining sites where the round-leaf pomaderris grows has caused an uproar.

Around 40 of the critically endangered plants, or up to 30 per cent of the remaining population, have been documented in a Gippsland forest where land clearing has been scheduled. The massive break would be 20 metres wide and stretch for 23 kilometres.

Conservation group Kinglake Friends of the Forest (KFF), believes the project should be referred for assessment by the federal environment minister, a common requirement when a project will have a "significant" impact on a species listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. The group has threatened to take legal action if the state moves ahead with the firebreak.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/fear-controversial-government-plan-could-destroy-30-per-cent-of-rare-aussie-plant-075003995.html>

Elders lead cultural burns in Barrington Tops to help rare orchid – ABC News, 4 September 2025

On a crisp winter morning, Warrimay elder Michelle Perry quietly wanders across a scorched, snow-grass plain. A few wallabies in the New South Wales Barrington Tops watch

her from a distance. All you can hear is the faint chirping of birds hidden in the trees and the trickle of a nearby freshwater creek. She is hunting a tiny flower.

The area, traditionally known as the Biyan Biyan Plain, is home to the rare veined doubletail orchid, also known as Bularr-Gulga Watuun in Gathang, the language of the Birrbay, Guringay and Warrimay people. The vulnerable species has been declining due to threats posed by feral horses and pigs, invasive weeds and poaching.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-04/cultural-burns-at-barrington-tops-aimed-at-helping-rare-orchid/105463104>

Eucalypt trail named after botanist Dean Nicolle opens in SA – ABC News, 4 August 2025

Nearly two decades ago, artist Ian Roberts set out to paint every known eucalypt. His project is finally nearing completion with about 770 watercolours created to represent the species' 900 varieties. But the art project has had another, unexpected outcome — the creation of a forest.

Thanks to a unique partnership with one of the world's leading eucalyptus scientists, Dean Nicolle, Mr Roberts planted hundreds of trees along a former rail corridor in the small South Australian town of Blyth.

Last month, Mr Roberts honoured that partnership by naming the forest track after Dr Nicolle and opening it to the public. The 4.4-kilometre signposted botanical trail features more than 2,000 Australian plant species, including 300 varieties of rare eucalypt, many of them almost unheard of in South Australia.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-20/rail-trail-forest-blyth-dean-nicolle-eucalypt-walk-sa/105779316>

Some tropical trees cool their leaves to survive the heat — but not all species have ways to cope – The Conversation, 5 September 2025

How do you cool yourself on a hot day? Perhaps you find shade, switch on a fan or retreat to air conditioning? But spare a thought for tropical forest trees. As the climate warms, they must either adjust to the heat, adapt over generations, or begin a slow decline toward death.

In full sun, tropical leaves can become much hotter than the surrounding air – hot enough to slow – or even stop – the life-sustaining process of photosynthesis.

So how can trees keep their leaves within safe temperature limits? And are some species better at this than others? Our new research examined that question.

We found some tropical tree species have ways to cope with damaging temperatures in warmer parts of their range. This could give them an advantage over competitors as the climate continues to warm.

<https://theconversation.com/some-tropical-trees-cool-their-leaves-to-survive-the-heat-but-not-all-species-have-ways-to-cope-264117>

How Chevalier's 1864 painting of Mt Abrupt is restoring Grampians' glory – ABC News, 6 September 2025

There's an old proverb, its origins rooted in Greek and Indian history, that goes something like "blessed is he who plants trees under whose shade he will never sit".

Standing at the foot of the Grampians/Gariwerd National Park, with Mount Abrupt looming large behind him, retired farmer Bill Weatherly offers his own, very Australian, version of the phrase:

"An old man planting trees, it says something. I just think it's a great pleasure to plant a tree and, yes, it's a statement of hope, I suppose," he said.

Formerly the president of The Friends of the Forgotten Woodlands, Mr Weatherly continues to volunteer with the group, which, over the past decade, has planted and distributed close to 50,000 trees across Victoria's western region.

In the bushy plains stretching from the base of Mount Abrupt, a 161-year-old painting is helping to guide their restoration efforts.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-06/nicholas-chevalier-mt-abrupt-painting-helps-replanting-grampians/105658064>

Proposed Great Koala National Park boundary stops mid north coast timber logging – ABC News, 7 September 2025

The long-touted Great Koala National Park designed to protect thousands of native and threatened species on the state's mid north coast is one step closer.

NSW Environment Minister Penny Sharpe has today announced the proposed boundary of what could become the state's largest national park at 476,000 hectares. It will run inland of Coffs Harbour, going south down to Kempsey and as far north as Grafton, and is home to more than 12,000 koalas as well as 100 threatened species, including greater gliders.

More than 175,000 hectares of state forest will be added to the existing reserves in the area.

"We also want this to become an iconic tourism destination that people locally and from overseas will want to visit," Ms Sharpe said.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-07/great-koala-national-park-to-go-ahead-on-nsw-mid-north-coast/105743430>

'No-go' zones to be created in overhaul of environment laws – ABC News, 9 September 2025

"No-go" zones where development will "simply not be allowed" will be created in the overhaul of Australia's environment laws, Environment Minister Murray Watt has confirmed. And to speed up the development process, areas will also be created where individual assessments and approvals will not be required.

The minister is pushing ahead with discussions to fix the "broken" laws, which will be introduced to parliament by the end of this year.

In a speech to the Smart Energy Council, Senator Watt confirmed the first details of the reworked laws, including a new "regional planning" model that takes projects from being assessed on an individual basis to considering their cumulative impacts on a habitat.

The idea was a key recommendation of Graeme Samuel's landmark review that concluded the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act was failing nature and business.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-09/epbc-environment-laws-no-go-zones/105748644>

How do flowers know it's spring? A botanist explains – The Conversation, 9 September 2025

For many plants, spring is just a really good time. They have endured a cold, dark, hard winter and in some places, winters can be murderously tough for plants.

It makes sense that when spring comes around, plants are ready to take advantage of warmer temperatures, longer days and more sunshine. They resume growth after their winter dormancies and many rapidly produce flowers.

You've probably been spotting the sudden springtime explosion of flowers everywhere on your neighbourhood walks, your commute or in your own garden.

But why exactly do flowers go crazy in spring, and how do they know exactly when to show up for duty? Here's the science.

<https://theconversation.com/how-do-flowers-know-its-spring-a-botanist-explains-264782>

Victoria set to have first new national parks in more than a decade – ABC News, 14 September 2025

The Victorian government is making assurances that the conversion of three state forests into national parks would not stop most people from doing the things they love to do in the bush.

Legislation introduced to state parliament last Wednesday aims to make the Wombat State Forest, Mount Buangor State Park and Pyrenees State Forest national parks.

It is a win for conservation groups that have been campaigning for decades to protect the 65,000 hectares of bushland in the state's central-west from logging and mining.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-14/victoria-set-to-have-three-new-national-parks/105762596>

Lord Howe Island detection dog Sebbi retires to Brisbane after years of 'hard work' – ABC News, 14 September 2025

Paradise's four-legged guardian is hanging up his leash. For almost a decade Sebbi the springer spaniel has been Lord Howe Island's last line of defence. As the longest-serving biosecurity dog on the idyllic land mass, he has helped to keep the island untouched and free of contamination for most of his life.

Both he and his son Zuma have been invasive pests' worst enemy in the island's battle to preserve its unique natural environment.

Lord Howe Island is in the Tasman Sea, located 700 kilometres off the coast of Sydney.

Now, after years of sniffing and scavenging for pests, Sebbi is off to the doggy retirement village — otherwise known as suburban Brisbane with his former handler.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-14/lord-howe-island-sniffer-dog-sebbi-retires-to-brisbane/105762486>

Planning commission rejects bid to turn Redbank Power Station into bioenergy hub – ABC News, 16 September 2025

A company hoping to restart a mothballed power station in the Hunter Valley says it "wants to solve all the issues" raised in the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) of New South Wales' refusal of the project.

Verdant Earth Technologies wants to transform the former coal-fired Redbank Power Station into the nation's largest modern biomass generator, using a mix of invasive native species (INS) and purpose-grown plants as fuel.

After wading through nearly 600 submissions — nearly 95 per cent of which were against the proposal — and hosting a public hearing in nearby Singleton, the IPC rejected the proposal on Monday over environmental concerns, including incentivising land clearing.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-16/planning-commission-rejects-redbank-power-station-biofuel-plan/105777592>

Southern NSW farmers paid to permanently fence off land for conservation – ABC News, 18 September 2025

Driving through the small rural community of Savernake in the Southern Riverina in early spring, you will see paddocks of golden canola next to dense woodlands. The mix of farmland and the natural environment in this part of the world is not an accident.

The Sloane family established the heritage-listed Savernake Station in 1862, and they have been at the forefront of environmental preservation for generations. Helen Huggins (nee Sloane) was born on the station and still owns land there.

"I always come back to Savernake, my blood is always here," she said.

Mrs Huggins and her brothers, Alexander and David Sloane, have fenced off hundreds of hectares of land for permanent protection, in an agreement with the New South Wales Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT).

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2025-09-18/locking-up-rural-farmland-for-conservation-nsw/105758786>

Tasmania's tree fern trade accused of 'greenwashing' over native forest logging links, but others say it is sustainable – ABC News, 20 September 2025

Kingsley Dixon's trip abroad could have been perfect. After all, the acclaimed Australian botanist won the "plant Olympics" with a gold for his rare orchid at the Chelsea Flower Show in England. But a few days earlier, he passed a stand selling Tasmanian tree ferns, *antarticta dicksonia*, one of which he guessed was easily 150 years old. He was mortified.

"To see wild-collected plants that were living in native forests suddenly uprooted and now for sale on the open market in London."

Tasmanian tree ferns are a slow-growing, long-living, ancient species. They are beloved, with conservationist David Attenborough reported to have one in his garden, and a popular feature in artwork and logos. But Tasmania's tree fern trade relies on the timber industry, with the plants 'salvaged' from forestry areas prior to clearing. Mr Dixon said the plant's government-issued tag did not make that provenance clear to buyers. He said the plants he saw were advertised as "sustainably harvested".

"It really probably has elements of greenwashing," Mr Dixon said.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-20/tasmanias-tree-ferns-for-sale/105686750>

Wide Bay affordable housing estate scrapped due to 'unfeasible' costs – ABC News, 20 September 2025

A controversial bid to turn 26 hectares of Bundaberg's green space into an affordable housing estate has been scrapped and labelled "unfeasible". The land, four hours north of Brisbane, was to be gifted to not-for-profit housing provider Regional Housing Limited by the Bundaberg Regional Council.

Its decision to gift the land was strongly opposed by parts of the community who wanted the land to be included in the neighbouring Baldwin Swamp Environmental Park for protection.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-20/green-space-saved-as-bundaberg-housing-estate-scrapped/105792456>

Holbrook Landcare Network wins 2025 Bob Hawke Award – ABC News, 24 September 2025

A southern New South Wales landcare group has won a prestigious national award for its sustainability projects. Holbrook Landcare Network (HLN) took out the Bob Hawke Award at the National Landcare Conference on the Gold Coast in front of more than 600 delegates on Tuesday night. The award recognises HLN's work supporting its 531 members in innovative sustainable farming practices over almost four decades.

"For the members in the area, for the staff, it's a big kudos to them," HLN chief executive Alison Southwell said. "We run a very wide variety of projects and have gathered a lot of information, a lot of skills around the region and it's a big celebration for the locals."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-24/holbrook-landcare-network-wins-2025-bob-hawke-award/105803040>

Western Australia's spring wildflowers bloom – in pictures – The Guardian, 25 September 2025

From August until October the wildflowers of Western Australia put on a vibrant show, much to the delight of photographer Pamela Jennings, who has been shooting them annually for almost a decade. She says some reappear each year, other patches are new – each spring is different.

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2025/sep/25/western-australia-spring-wildflowers-bloom-in-pictures>

Events and Opportunities

Australian Land Conservation Alliance 2025 Annual Conference – Cairns QLD, 7-10 October 2025

Across Australia and beyond, diverse communities, businesses, and organisations are leading with solutions that tackle the biggest environmental challenges of our time by enabling, delivering, and scaling conservation, land management, and restoration action.

The 2025 ALCA Conference will showcase these efforts, celebrating the people and partnerships driving this work: from Australia's First Nations leaders to dedicated conservation, farming and business professionals, community volunteers, and local champions— their collective onground efforts strengthen the cross-sector and cross-cultural solutions we urgently need.

<https://www.alcaconference.org.au/>

Australian Citizen Science Association Conference 2025 – Melbourne VIC, 13-15 October 2025

#CitSciOz25 is your chance to exchange bold ideas, expand your network, and learn how citizen science can be the catalyst for transformative change in your community.

The event will bring together practitioners, researchers, government agencies, and community leaders to showcase the latest innovations and insights from Australia and beyond. Don't miss your chance to shape the future of citizen science at Australia's leading event!

<https://citizenscience.org.au/citscioz25/>

The Biodiversity Conference 2025: Nature Positive – Perth WA, 28-30 October 2025

The Biodiversity Conference 2025 brings together custodians, researchers and practitioners from across Country, academia, government, industry and community to share knowledge to protect, conserve, and enhance our incredible biodiversity. In a rapidly changing environmental and political landscape we need to employ a diverse array of strategies to curb our impacts on the environment and pivot to a Nature Positive future.

<https://www.biodiversity2025.com/>

With a strong Western Australian focus, this conference is jointly supported and run by all five WA Universities, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions and The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute.

2025 BGANZ Congress - Advancing our reach: Innovation and leadership in botanic gardens – Canberra ACT, 2-5 November 2025

The next BGANZ Congress will be in Canberra, on Ngunnawal Country. The main venue will be Old Parliament House (OPH), with unique social events at both OPH and the gardens,

and field trips from subalpine regions to the sea, as well as our national public institutions focusing on education and horticulture.

Congress attendees will have the opportunity to share knowledge and experience to advance the role of botanic gardens and arboreta as globally recognised centres of excellence for plant science, conservation, education, and outreach.

<https://www.bganzt.org.au/2025-bganzt-congress-2/>

International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) Congress 2026 – Cairns QLD, 26-29 July 2026

The 19th International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) Congress invites academics, activists, practitioners, and visionaries from all over the world to explore the theme of “*Indigenous and Local Knowledge Connections: Honouring Heritage and Innovation*”

The International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE), founded in 1988, is a global network focused on preserving the links between human societies and the natural world. It provides a unique platform for participants to share research and initiatives from diverse disciplines related to human-nature relationships.

Registration and a Call for Abstracts is open.

<https://isecongress2026.org/>

15th Australasian Plant Conservation Conference (APCC15) – Port Douglas QLD, 24-28 August 2026

The 15th Australasian Plant Conservation Conference (APCC15) will be held at the Port Douglas Community Hall in the Queensland Wet Tropics from 24-28 August 2026.

With the overall theme ‘*Plant Conservation: Culture, Collaboration and Change*’ APCC15 will explore these three spheres of native plant recovery through rainforest restoration partnerships, collaborations with Traditional Owner groups, impacts of climate change induced natural disasters, management of threatened species and communities, and biosecurity threats such as Myrtle Rust.

<https://www.anpc.asn.au/conferences-apcc15/>