

Your questions answered



Living Maroondah: a future for our plants, animals and us
Saturday, 16th February 2019

During the Living Maroondah event there were many questions posed to our guest presenters. Due to time constraints, not all of these were able to be answered. Our presenters have now addressed these questions post the event.

Presenter Q&A: John Senior

Q: *The idea of "green cities" are not overly radical, and the benefits are clearly significant - how can we increase its adoption in Melbourne?*

A: The State Government has a number of policy and strategy initiatives under development plus quite a few councils now have development requirements regarding vegetation retention/replacement. The City of Melbourne itself has an urban forest strategy (see <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/parks-open-spaces/urban-forest/Pages/urban-forest-strategy.aspx>) with precinct plans for parts of the municipality. These are approaches that other councils could emulate.

Q: *How can we engage young families in events like vegetation and biodiversity reviews and city planning? If both parents are working full-time? And schools?*

A: The Knox 'Gardens for Wildlife' scheme I briefly mentioned is a good example. Other ideas are to use messages based on the 'heart as well as the head' approach – reminding parents of their own nature experiences/delights (cherished memories) as a child – using a bit of a guilt complex! Highlighting the detrimental effects of loss of vegetation (scenically, global warming, health and wellbeing, etc) is part of protecting the future situation for their children. Encouraging kindergartens and schools to go outside more (evidence that contact with nature improves cognitive performance). Its not just about nature study - though involving students in improving school grounds by planting and learning about nature would be great – Math and English classes, etc can be held outdoors. Remember that recycling was greatly aided by school children convincing their parents to do better!

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