



GOLDEN VALLEY TREE PARK

— B A L I N G U P —

2011 Newsletter

Dear Balingup residents and friends of GVTP

As we write the wind howls and the rain pours. The trees will greatly appreciate the “normal” winter rains later in the year, but for now the weather loosens their roots and pushes against their heavy wet canopies. This is when the deciduous types show their cunning.

When we consider that last year’s rain, at some 400mm, was less than half the long-term average, our tree collection has come through really well, validating what has been a generally conservative species selection over the years. But still **the drought** was not without its casualties. In particular some of the conifers have suffered, most noticeably our treasured pair of rare Larch (*Larix decidua*) that have grown strongly for nearly thirty years, have died back, and some of the giant sequoias have been attacked by canker. This reminds us that across the millennia conifers in Australia and the world generally, are genera in retreat, clinging to cool mountainous or lush fire-free habitats. So we see replicated at the Park in small-scale the strains of our planet. Also affected are the sheoaks from wetter habitats Karri Oak (*Allocasuarina decussata*) and the River Sheoak (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*).

Mallet, mallee and gimlet scoff at these challenges. So next year we shall extend our dry South-West tree collection with a **big planting of WA species** that will boost Balingup’s carbon neutral effort for 2012. This winter’s planting of Eastern States eucalypts comprised a special selection of drier potential farm forestry candidates, collected by tree buff David Rankin of Margaret River.

Come hail or shine the arboretum grows and its potential to showcase interesting trees develops unabated. To keep up with this potential we are seeking serious funding to upgrade our visitor infrastructure, including an exciting new tree house for our young visitors, to prove that today’s kids can still climb trees! But we are getting ahead of ourselves.....

This spring we will be busy tending sections that need some care, so if you can join us we’d greatly appreciate a hand on a Saturday morning busy-bee for an hour or two ~ see over ~ and the season will culminate with the **Community Spring Picnic on Sat October 15th**. This year’s will be inspired by **dance and fire**, featuring old favourites of **maypole dancing** and a spectacular **bonfire, live music** as well as an **original dance** performance, **fire sculpture** and Balingup’s community kids **circus**. What a line-up.....**See you there!**

*2011 Spring Programme ~ see over 2011 Spring
Programme*

*Busy-Bees from 9am for a couple of hours Saturday 3rd September:
Around the Homestead Sat 10th September: The Oz car park and
Rainforest section Sat 17th Sept: The Hidden Valley Sat 24th
September: Cypress Hill and surrounds Sat 1st October: World
Collection Car Park Sat 8th October: Main Picnic Site preparations
Please bring gloves. Tools provided. Light work. Good company.*

Community Spring Evening Picnic

Saturday 15th October From 3pm to midnight Entry by Donation
Featuring traditional Maypole Dancing Spectacular Bonfire
Original Dance Performance Fire Dancers Community Circus Byo
picnic
Sponsored by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup Dry Season Community Service Grant

Our spring picnic showcases Balingup's creativity at its best, from local musicians to kids' circus skills to an original ballet, all against the beautiful backdrop of a Park that has been created by thirty one years of community effort and inspiration. Managing the largest arboretum in Western Australia with over five hundred species of trees is a real achievement for Balingup. Every year dozens of locals donate some time to the Park. Over the past three years alone over five and half thousand hours of local voluntary work has been put into Golden Valley and over twenty five thousand visitors have come along each year. Well done everybody!

Tree Sponsorships are the best way to support the Park by providing vital financial support for the project. Tree sponsorships make a wonderful gift to someone you love or to mark a special occasion and can last for hundreds of years! Check out the interesting new list of trees available: www.goldenvalleytreepark.org.au