



HUME CITY COUNCIL

Live Green

Sustainability Newsletter

In this Autumn & Winter 2023 edition:

- Let's Grow Hume update
- Loving Grasslands film award
- Latham Snipe survey results – The Birds Are In!
- Prepare your garden bins for winter
- What to plant in autumn & winter
- Meet a Rural Engagement Officer - Drop-in sessions
- Events and workshops
- Clean Up Australia Day
- Reducing food waste at home
- Environmental Scholarships
- Hume Compost Champions + More!

hume.vic.gov.au/environment



Let's Grow Hume update

It's been an incredible 12 months for Council's Let's Grow Hume program.

Over the last twelve months, we have run a dozen online gardening webinars for the community, and a further thirteen face-to-face, hands-on edible gardening workshops for young people and families across the municipality at community centres and community gardens. Over 100 people got their hands dirty, handled soil, sowed seeds and examined wriggly worms. The big focus of the program is to encourage Hume residents to get into sustainable edible gardening and explore food waste reduction

through effective composting with Council's Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) recycling program. We've received glowing feedback for both the online and in-person workshops and are looking forward to extending our edible gardening offerings in the future!

For more information email Hume City Council's Sustainability Engagement Officer at environment@hume.vic.gov.au
Subject: **Let's Grow Hume**



Loving Grasslands film award

The Loving Grasslands film series is a collaborative project between Council and local film producer-director-writer Brendan Guerin. The series has been recognised internationally, achieving:

- Winner of best TV Web Series at the Sittannaval International Film Festival, India– Screened 21 January 2023
- Selected in first round for Best Web Series and Best Eco work at the Snow Leopard International Film Festival, Spain – awaiting final selection.

Anne Fitzpatrick, Council's Biodiversity Project Officer told us, "Brendan reached out to us last year having been inspired to propose the series while working in Council's bush crew in 2020-21, in a role funded by Working for Victoria during the COVID downturn."

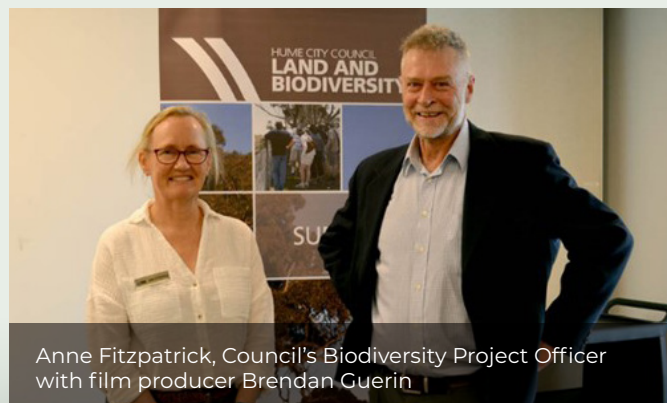
"Hume contains remnants of natural temperate grasslands and grassy eucalypt woodlands that once covered one third of Victoria but have now been reduced to just 1% of their original distribution."

Funded through our Rural Community Engagement program, the four-part series

captures the stories of some passionate farmers and local landholders working with nature to restore and maintain the health and biodiversity of the local environment.

The series launched in December 2022 and has since gained interest from the Australian Teachers of Media who propose to create a study guide to accompany the series as a teaching resource to schools and libraries.

"It has been a rewarding project to be involved in offering inspiration and excitingly being picked up as an education resource for future generations."



Anne Fitzpatrick, Council's Biodiversity Project Officer with film producer Brendan Guerin

LOVING GRASSLANDS

Latham's snipe birds need waterways free of litter

The last Latham's Snipe survey of the season was recently completed with community members. After arriving in Australia in spring to feast on bugs that live in the mud, these rare, migratory birds fly back to Japan in summer. To count them, the Latham's Snipe are flushed out of the reeds and grass along Aitken Creek in Craigieburn.

The survey requires volunteers to keep their eyes peeled for the sudden flash of the white and brown birds awkwardly flapping out of the grass. The birds can be identified by their coughing call. Volunteer monitors watch where the birds land back along the creek to ensure the same bird isn't counted multiple times.

The total number of birds observed is added to a national citizen science bird monitoring program.

The surveys play an integral role in helping us understand the Latham's Snipe and highlight the importance of maintaining waterways free of litter and debris for better wildlife conservation.

To be a part of future environmental monitoring surveys, sign up to our Live Green eNewsletter to get the most up to date info on our events:

hume.vic.gov.au/newsletters



Preparing your garden beds for winter

Follow these tips to 'winter-proof' your garden and improve your chances of a bountiful harvest in spring.

- 1. Clear the bed of any debris or dead plants:** remove any dead plants or leaves that may have accumulated in the bed. This will help to reduce the risk of disease and pests in the bed.
- 2. Remove annual plants:** cut down annual plants that have finished producing and compost them. Leave the roots of the plants in the soil. As they breakdown, they'll add compost back into the soil directly as well as open channels to allow water to flow throughout the garden bed.
- 3. Cut back perennials:** cut back any perennials that have finished producing as they will grow back next spring
- 4. Add organic matter:** add a layer of organic matter, such as compost or well-rotted manure, to the bed. This will help to improve the soil structure and fertility and provide food for beneficial soil microorganisms.
- 5. Mulch:** apply a layer of mulch, such as straw, leaves, or light bark, to the bed to help protect the soil from erosion and fluctuation of temperature.
- 6. Cover crops:** consider planting cover crops to protect the bed from erosion and to add organic matter to the soil.
- 7. Water:** water the bed well before the ground gets frosted to ensure that the soil is well hydrated and will not dry out during the winter.

What to plant in autumn and winter

Plant	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
Asparagus						x
Beetroot	x	x			x	x
Broad beans	x	x				
Broccoli	x					
Cabbage	x					
Capsicum						x
Carrot	x	x	x			
Chickpeas			x			
Chives	x	x	x			
Coriander		x	x	x	x	x
Eggplant						x
Fennel	x	x	x			
Garlic		x	x	x		
Lettuce	x	x	x	x	x	x
Mizuna	x	x	x	x	x	x
Mustard Greens	x	x	x	x	x	x
Onions			x	x	x	x
Pak choy	x	x	x			
Parsley	x	x	x			
Radish	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rocket	x	x	x			x
Silverbeet	x	x	x			
Spinach	x	x	x			

Source: Local Food Connect, North Melbourne Veggie Planting Guide, 2015.

Meet a Rural Engagement Officer | Drop-in sessions

Council Rural Engagement Officers will be available to advise and answer questions on land management. Drop into a session below.

Wednesday 29 March, 10am – 2pm

Anne Fitzpatrick - Sunbury Global Learning Centre

Saturday 1 April, 9am – 1pm

Manni Skopellos - Craigieburn Global Learning Centre

Tuesday 18 April, 4pm – 8pm

Cassandra Borg - Sunbury Global Learning Centre



Events/workshops:

There's lots of Live Green workshops happening over this autumn and winter period! Keep up with all sustainability events happening around the municipality and beyond by signing up to our monthly Live Green e-newsletter www.hume.vic.gov.au/newsletters



Hume student environment leadership summit 2023

Designed for students in years 8-12, this hands on, multi-school summit will connect students to their peers and fellow leaders and increase their understanding of climate change and solutions to take climate ACTION!

Students will gain confidence and inspiration to create positive change in their communities and learn how to advocate for change through engaging with council and community. Buses and CRT provided. Teachers can register by emailing thomasf@hume.vic.gov.au



Introduction to Beekeeping – Sunbury Community Garden

Sunday 16 April 2023, 12pm – 2pm

Sunbury Community Gardens Highgrove Drive
Sunbury, VIC 3429

If you told Jasmine ten years ago that she would be a beekeeper, she would have run away from the thought due to being allergic to bees. After a wonderful turn of events (finding out she's no longer allergic to bees) Jasmine took to studying beekeeping.

She now spends time caring for her Sunbury Community Garden hive. Jasmine's teaching focuses on how to properly care for bees and their importance in our food system. Jasmine will demonstrate a beehive in action at the Sunbury Community Garden, which was installed in 2022 for the purpose of pollination, to educate the local community and to practice recently acquired apary skills. Book in and come along to learn more.





Seed Saving

Sunday 30 April 2023, 10am – 11.30am

Roxburgh Park Community Garden,
30 Whiltshire Drive Roxburgh Park

Saving seeds is a wise move for any gardener. You'll save a fortune on seed packets and seedlings of course. Over time you'll also develop stronger plants that are perfectly adapted to your garden's microclimate and have plenty to share with friends and family. This workshop will cover all the basics of plant selection, pollination, harvesting, drying, cleaning and storing seed for common vegetable varieties.



Natural Pest Management

Saturday 15 July 2023, 10am – 12.30pm

Sunbury Community Garden Highgrove Drive
Sunbury

What's eating your lettuce? Why are your tomato leaves turning yellow? In this workshop we'll go on a garden safari to meet both common pests and their lesser-known predators. Be amazed by the microcosm of parasitic wasps, damsel bugs, praying mantis, lacewings and lizards living all around you, and find out how to encourage these garden allies. We'll learn how to achieve a fantastic yield by growing strong plants and keeping the pests in balance without harmful and expensive poisons.

City Nature Challenge 2023

Council is participating in the global City Nature Challenge 2023 over Friday 28 April to Monday 1 May. The City Nature Challenge is a citizen science competition that involves taking photos of and identifying wild plants and animals.

In 2022, we came fourth for the number of nature observations made in the friendly competition amongst 20 other local governments across Melbourne. This Greater Melbourne collective came 33rd in the 445 cities from 47 countries that took part. Get involved to help boost Hume's numbers and increase our knowledge about local biodiversity.

Several iNaturalist training sessions are being held to show people how to make and upload observations of wild plants, animals, and fungi using your device.

- **Broadmeadows on Thursday 13 April**
- **Sunbury on Thursday 20 April**
- **Online session on Wednesday 26 April**

Visit www.hume.vic.gov.au/discover-nature to view the iNaturalist sessions and City Nature Challenge 2023 guided field survey events running on 28 April to 1 May as they are confirmed.



Plant and produce swaps with seed raising workshops

Saturday 18 March 2023, 10.30am – 12pm

Sunbury Global Learning Centre

Saturday 15 April 2023, 1.30pm – 3pm

Craigieburn Global Learning Centre

Wednesday 26 April 2023, 1.15pm – 2.30pm

Tullamarine Library

Bring along excess plants, seedlings, cuttings, herbs, veggies, and fruits from your garden to swap, or share your gardening tips and experiences. Come along and learn with special guest speaker, Hume City Council's very own Sustainability Engagement Officer, Thom Fox who will run a seed garden workshop focusing on making your own seed raising potting mix, using compost in the garden and sowing seeds.



Clean Up Australia Day

On Sunday 5 March, over 40 local community groups hosted clean up events around Hume's parks and outdoor spaces. Following various clean up events happening across Hume, over 100 attendees came to Town Hall Broadmeadows for a free BBQ lunch, to acknowledge their support in keeping their neighbourhoods clean.

The Mayor of Hume City, Cr Joseph Haweil shared Council's new plans for waste management in Hume to build a stronger sense of pride in the community.

Hume is home to a fast growing population, where all residents should be proud to call Hume home. But there's no doubt the illegal dumping of rubbish is a huge issue for Hume. In the last year, Council has spent \$4.3 million removing illegally dumped rubbish from the community. Council's plans for waste management will continue to focus on illegal dumping with further resources committed to community education.



Reducing food waste at home

Food waste still makes up a significant portion of Hume's overall waste to landfill. As the population grows, landfill space is becoming increasingly scarce and expensive. By reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills, we can conserve land and resources and delay the need to build new landfills. Fortunately, there's advice on innovative ways to reduce your food waste.

Tips for reducing food waste at home include:

- have a weekly leftovers night where you make a new dish using leftovers
- plan your meals and buy only what you need
- create compost and start a garden bed
- purchase a Green Waste bin for kerbside collection of lawn clippings and organic waste

See www.hume.vic.gov.au/waste for further details.

Environmental Scholarships - Hume City Council

Environmental scholarships support those who live, work or volunteer in Hume to create positive environmental change, by providing financial assistance towards environmental education.

Courses that will be funded include conservation, land management, or environment and sustainability courses. The scholarship can fund up to 80% of course fees to a maximum of \$1500 per applicant.

Find out more at www.hume.vic.gov.au/environmental-scholarship

Hume Compost Champions – a great way to tackle organic waste and connect to the community!

Did you know that Hume City is a part of the compost revolution? We are incredibly fortunate to have over 100 residents registering to turn Hume into a composting hotspot!

The Compost Community provides all the materials and information to jumpstart your composting journey at home. Register as a compost champion to explore topics, pose questions and chat with the growing number of residents expressing an interest in actively diverting food and organic material from our waste system. There are so many benefits to composting at home including:

- less food waste to landfill
- reducing CO2 emissions for the delivery and processing of organics at waste transfer stations
- healthy, friable and fertile soil when adding compost as a conditioner
- overall improvement in quality of plants grown in composted soil
- connection through environmental advocacy and agency for waste reduction

Register to become a compost champion
www.compostcommunity.com.au





Gardens for Wildlife - Lots to do amongst the flowers!

Gardens for Wildlife (G4W) supports people to create homes for native wildlife in their gardens. From a few pots to a little patch of plants or the whole yard, there is a wildlife-friendly garden recipe for you to follow to provide the food, water and shelter that animals need.

G4W is free to participate in and open to all households, schools and businesses within Hume City.

Garden visits take about 1 hour, can be scheduled any day of the week, and there is no cost involved; we'll even provide a small gift pack and participants become eligible to get some free seedlings. The visits are conducted by volunteer Garden Guides. During the visit, we chat about the things we can all do to help local wildlife and attract certain animals to our gardens by providing food, shelter, water, or nesting sites. A report is then provided to participants to help them make wildlife-friendly gardens.

The Gardens for Wildlife program will be opening round 3 for garden visit applications on Monday 17 April 2023. If you have questions about the G4W program please contact Council's Urban Biodiversity Officer on **9205 2466** or gardensforwildlife@hume.vic.gov.au.

Article

The power of the Broad Bean – Nitrogen Fixer, Shade Creator, Taste Maker

Do you know the power of the broad bean?

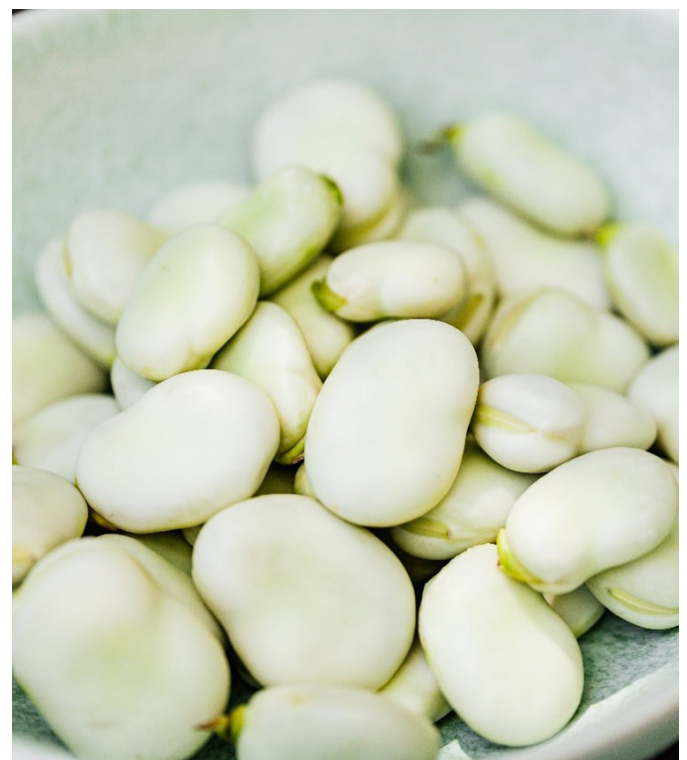
Apart from being delicious in a range of dishes from salads to dips, the roots and stems of the broad bean plant also support a healthy garden system too!

Broad beans (*Vicia faba*) are legumes, which means they can fix nitrogen in the soil through a process called nitrogen fixation. Nitrogen fixation is the process by which nitrogen gas in the air is converted into a form that can be used by plants.

Broad beans, like other legumes, have a symbiotic relationship with nitrogen-fixing bacteria called rhizobia. These bacteria live in nodules on the roots of the broad beans and convert nitrogen gas into a form of nitrogen that the plant can use. In exchange, the plant provides the bacteria with energy-rich compounds they need to survive.

The nitrogen-rich nodules on the roots of broad beans release nitrogen into the soil as the plant grows, which can improve the fertility of the soil and make it more suitable for other plants. This is why broad beans are often used as a cover crop or rotation crop in agriculture, to improve the soil fertility for the following crops.

Additionally, when broad beans are cut down or harvested and left on the soil surface, the nodules will continue to release nitrogen into the soil, providing a slow-release fertilizer for other plants growing in the vicinity.



Book Review

Waste Not Everyday by Erin Rhoads

Waste Not Everyday dovetails nicely into our theme of waste reduction in this edition of *Live Green*. Rhoads' amazing follow up to *Waste Not* focusses on providing both glaring statistics on our impacts on the natural environment as well as the tangible actions we can take up at home and beyond for a more sustainable community.

Her accessible writing style outlines bite size actions for change that appeal to many a reader and environment enthusiast. Rhoads encourages us all to closely examine our relationships with consumption, embodied energy costs and waste outputs.

Waste Not Everyday is a terrific introduction to the concepts of sustainability, our impacts and the actions required for broader, conscious behaviour change towards waste reduction. *Waste Not Everyday* is available to borrow through the Hume Libraries Network.



Sign Ups

Sign up to Live Green eNews!

Our monthly newsletter is the best way to get up-to-date sustainability and environment news, straight to your inbox.

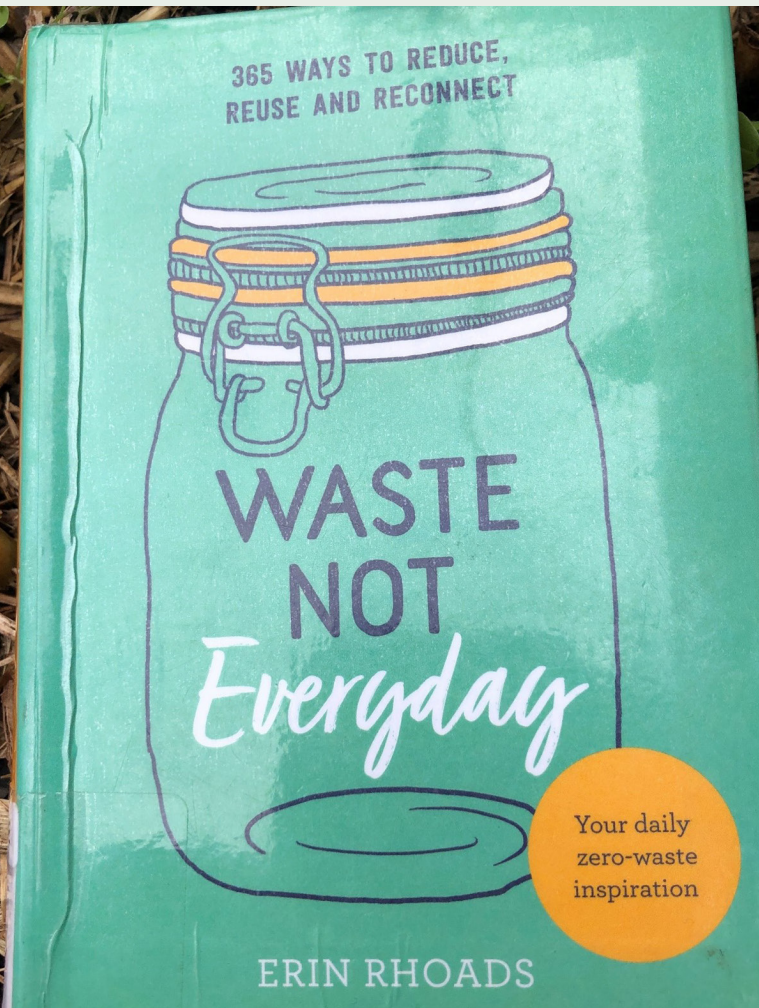
Live Green eNews is sent out at the start of each month. It's a great way to stay on top of our calendar of events and activities as well as hear about seasonal grants programs and other sustainability news. Don't miss out, subscribe today at www.hume.vic.gov.au/newsletters

Teachers Environment Network

If you are a teacher in Hume and interested in the environment, subscribe to our Teachers' Environment Network by emailing environment@hume.vic.gov.au

The network offers:

- Free professional development each term, providing teachers with new approaches to engage students on a range of sustainability topics.
- A way to connect with other teachers and learn about local schools' environmental initiatives.
- Even if you can't make it to all our events, you will find the emails and information provided very useful.



Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, which includes the existing family members of the Gunung-William-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

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