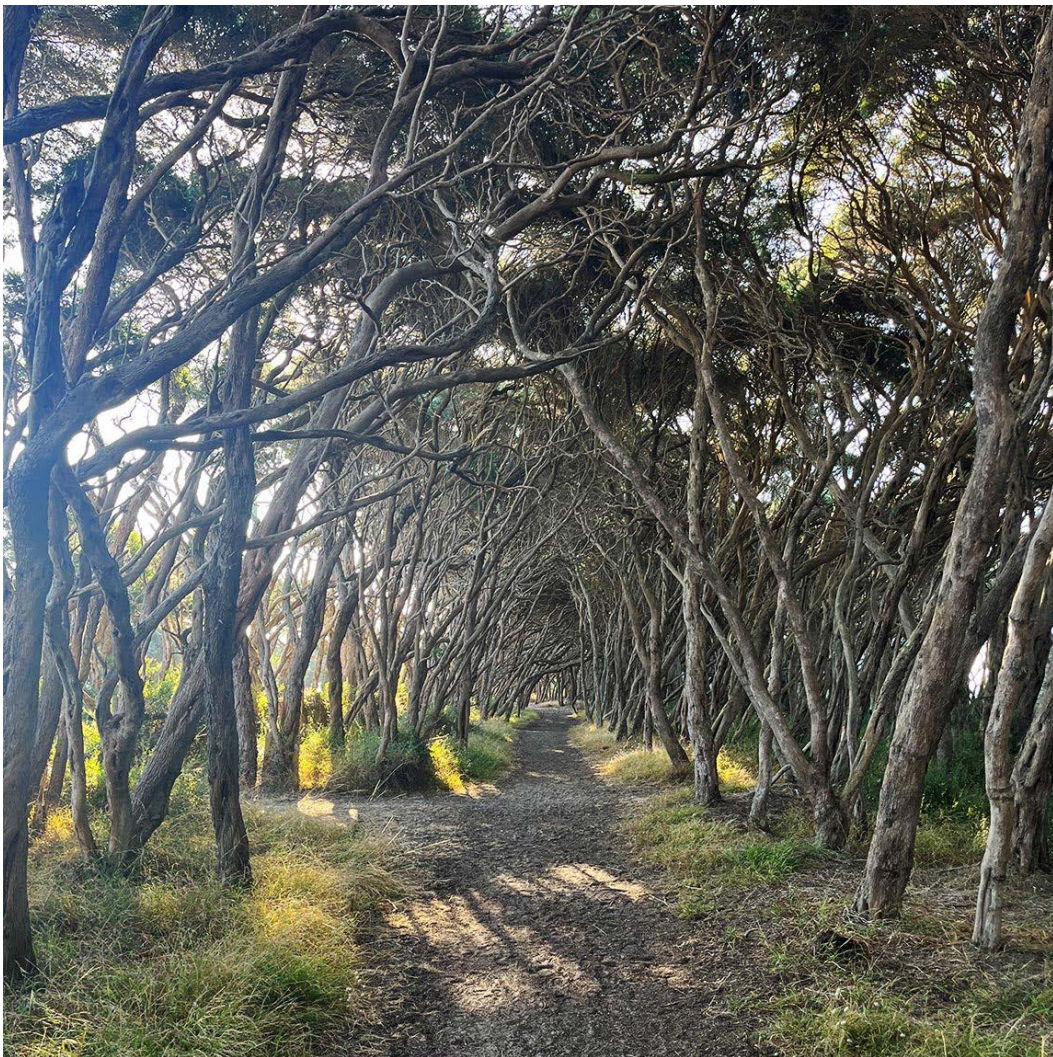


# Moonah NatureWise

**A Moonah Woodland Communities Restoration  
and People and Parks Foundation**

**‘Live Nature Wise’ program:**

*Bringing environmental and human health back together.*



A partnership project with the People and Parks Foundation, Parks Victoria, Mornington Peninsula Shire, St Joseph’s Primary School, St Mary’s Star of the Sea Parish and community champions.

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## **Moonah NatureWise – Moonah Woodland Communities Restoration** *For environmental, human and community health benefits*

The People and Parks Foundation is working in partnership with Parks Victoria, the Mornington Peninsula Shire, St Joseph's Primary School Sorrento, St Mary's Star of the Sea Parish and a number of engaged community members to create a 'Moonah NatureWise Community' program for the southern part of the Mornington Peninsula.

### **Why Moonah?**

Coastal Moonah Woodland Communities are dominated structurally by Moonah *Melaleuca lanceolata*, a stunning tree that twists into striking shapes, iconic and beloved across both the Mornington Peninsula and Bellarine Peninsula, across southern coastal Victoria. While the Moonah tree is iconic, with existing specimens believed to be hundreds of years old, pre-dating colonial contact, the tree itself belongs to a whole woodland community which is in urgent need of support.

As a plant community, Coastal Moonah Woodland is important because it helps stabilise dune systems and prevent erosion caused by climate and sea level changes, which are currently and accelerating threats for our coastal communities.

Now with less than 8% of its original distribution, Coastal Moonah Woodland is listed as a threatened community under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. In its final recommendation, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC 1998) determined that Coastal Moonah Woodland:

- has a restricted distribution in the state due to the reliance on soil type and coastal influences;
- is in a demonstrable state of decline which is likely to result in extinction.



### **Why NatureWise?**

This innovative program focuses on restoring and re-establishing the iconic and threatened Moonah Woodland Communities on the Mornington Peninsula by engaging the local community in NatureWise activities, based on the evidence-based concept of Nature Dosing.

Nature Dosing is both connecting with and caring for nature for at least two hours a week, for healthier people, places and planet.

This highly engaging cross-sector program will encourage and support people to Nature Dose *with and for* enhanced local Moonah Woodland Communities. 'Moonah NatureWise' aims to deliver multiple benefits, including environmental outcomes, health and wellbeing outcomes, and a broader, deeper community sense of agency and connection to place in the face of biodiversity loss, climate change and, for many, eco-anxiety.

### **Priority Moonah Woodland Community sites – across tenure**

Nature is not bound by tenure. The People and Parks Foundations brings together cross-tenure partnerships to maximise the engagement, resources, impact and sustainability of our programs. For Moonah Nature Wise, our current land manager partners have identified priority remnant areas of Moonah that require urgent remediation and protection in both the Police Point Shire Park and the Point Nepean National Park.

We will engage local residents, environmental groups, visitors to these parks, and local school communities in environmental restoration activities in the priority locations, as well as facilitating community environmental action and education for Moonah Woodland Communities closer to home. This will include Moonah Woodland Community propagation and plantings, ongoing maintenance, and not least, Moonah celebrations (eg. through arts and events) on school grounds, in community areas and potentially on private properties.

Additional sites for Moonah Woodland Community restoration and/or planting will be guided by community interest and support. We warmly invite community involvement into this decision making process.

We are confident that the success of this initial Moonah NatureWise program will attract additional public land and water managers into a broader and deeper iteration of Moonah NatureWise.





## **Schools and Community**

Our founding partner school, St Joseph's Primary School Sorrento, will be supported to not only connect with and protect existing remnants of Moonah Woodland Communities, they will also be supported to propagate, plant, care for, restore and celebrate their own pockets of Moonah Woodland Community on or near their school campus, including in the Parish grounds. School households will be encouraged to actively support this program, including considering what they can do at home to protect, nurture and promote the health of their local environment, and themselves, through regular Nature Dosing.

Community events and activities will be additional opportunities to promote the program and engage local residents and visitors alike in the history and ongoing value of Moonah Woodland Communities. The program will advocate for the need to nurture nature and highlight the multiple benefits of actively caring for nature.

## **Moonah NatureWise program – Key Steps**

This Moonah NatureWise program has been structured over three years, with year one being the most intensive year of activity, involving both establishment and significant delivery, requiring the employment of a parttime Moonah NatureWise Coordinator. Years two and three have been structured here as building on and maintaining the more intensive efforts of the first year, and do not include the dedicated Moonah NatureWise Coordinator. However, if there is strong interest and sufficient resources, years two and three could be restructured to deliver the partnerships, program of works, and community campaign and education as year 1, including extending the Moonah NatureWise Coordinator role over these years.

### **Year 1**

1. PPF engages Moonah NatureWise Community Program Coordinator (part time)
2. Form local Advisory Group to oversee and support the project:
  - People and Parks Foundation (provides secretariat function)
  - Mornington Peninsula Shire
  - Parks Victoria
  - Primary School (1-2)
  - Parish (1)
  - Community members (up to 4)
3. Finalise Program of Works, including:
  - Confirm priority Moonah Woodland Community restoration and planting sites, and resources:
    - Point Nepean National Park
    - Police Point Shire Park
    - Community determined sites:
      - School/s
      - Potentially including private land
  - Support environmental volunteer opportunities across tenures:
    - site preparation, including weeding
    - Moonah Woodland Community propagation
    - Moonah Woodland Community community plantings
    - Moonah Woodland Community site monitoring, care and maintenance

4. Develop and implement community engagement campaign and materials:
  - Engage volunteers, including school communities, environmental groups, local residents:
    - Program of Works (as above)
    - Community/visitor education and engagement about Moonah Woodland Community, native habitat protection and promotion, and Nature Wise (promoting Nature Dosing with and for Moonah Woodland Communities)
      - Link with existing community events, activities and networks
      - Seek out new partnerships and opportunities for cross-sector engagement
5. Secure resources:
  - post and wire fencing for areas requiring this protection
  - interpretation, education and campaign materials and activities
  - Moonah Woodland Community stock of local provenance (seeds, tube stock, seedlings)
6. Deliver the Program of Works with partners and volunteers as seasonally appropriate

### Years 2 and 3

7. Support ongoing maintenance and community engagement for two years:
  - Invasive weed species removal – hand weeding and woody weed removal
  - Propagation and planting
  - Moonah Woodland Community education and engagement
  - NatureWise messaging, Nature Dose practicing

### The People and Parks Foundation

The People and Parks Foundation is a national charity uniquely structured with an Environment Trust and a Health Trust. We catalyse, lead and support large, transformative, cross-sector partnerships for healthier people, places and planet.

As part of the Moonah NatureWise program, all partners and participants will be introduced to the evidence-based concept of Nature Dosing. Nature Dosing involves regular, intentional, multi-sensorial connection with nature – including caring for nature – for at least two hours a week.

By supporting our partners and participants to Nature Dose *with and for* Moonah Woodland Communities, we can protect and promote this greatly treasured but threatened environment, while promoting health and wellbeing outcomes, greater connection to place, and a sense of real agency in the face of accelerating climate and environmental challenges.

The People and Parks Foundation is a registered charity with the ACNC, and all donations of \$2 and above are tax deductible.

**Please contact:**

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