

Media release

BRING ON THE BUTTERFLIES

The butterfly is the 'canary in the mine-shaft'. It is the barometer of a healthy habitat. The more butterflies we see in our gardens and in our fields, the closer we get to restoring the health of our environment.

Greening Australia is launching its new **Butterfly Circle** campaign on **Tuesday 17 May**, most fittingly, at the Melbourne Museum Butterfly Display, Carlton. The Butterfly Circle is part of the *Greening Circle* program, a program established in 2005 with donations from enlightened Victorians who have made the choice to support Greening Australia in its mission to transform our landscapes.

"Greening Australia is a big thinking organisation with a marvellous reputation for taking steps of great magnitude to restore our landscapes to their original condition. They deliver. They do what they say they will do." Geoff Handbury AO, Leading Patron Greening Circle

Greening Australia is the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit, non-government environmental organisation and works throughout Australia to protect and restore the health, diversity and productivity of our unique natural environments. With over 29 years of experience, Greening Australia is dedicated to protecting Australia's heritage, its biodiversity and its natural resources through an innovative blend of practical experience, science and community engagement, in a way that allows all Australians to be part of the solution to climate change.

The **Butterfly Circle** has been created to recognise the growing level of 'grass-roots' interest from people wanting to support Greening Australia - whether participating in regular workplace giving programs or making generous individual annual donations. The **Butterfly Circle** program aims to raise community awareness of indigenous plants and animals through an innovative mix of training, planting guides and the creation of butterfly gardens in schools and high profile public spaces to inspire us all.

Why butterflies? The focus on native butterflies will help build awareness of Greening Australia's vital work by using one of the most seductive barometers of a healthy habitat across rural *and* urban environments. All Greening Australia's work - from large-scale landscape transformation, to building butterfly gardens in local communities – improves the health of the environment and encourages the return of these delicate creatures.

During the launch **Betty Amsden OAM** will present students from Blackburn Lake PS, the first school to be involved, with a conceptual plan of a Butterfly Garden for their school, funded by the **Butterfly Circle** program. Betty is supporting this program and has donated \$25,000 to the Greening Circle to support the establishment of butterfly-attracting gardens in our schools.

Also at this event, the partnership between Greening Australia and Alcoa of Australia will launch the innovative **Bio4** project, a research project exploring new opportunities to tap into emerging markets based on the services provided by native vegetation. What we have called the four 'Bio's': Biodiversity , Bioenergy , Biosequestration and Biochar.

For **media enquiries** please contact:

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Photo opportunity:

Time: from 9.30am

Where: the Butterfly Display area of Melbourne Museum (*located on the ground floor at the entrance to the Science and Life Gallery*)

Who: Betty Amsden with students from Blackburn Lake PS, Eltham East PS and Footscray City PS