

31 August 2007

Media release



Seeds for survival – a special walk on Threatened Species Day

Friday 7 September

10am - 11.30am; 2pm – 3.30pm

Meet at the Visitor Centre, Observatory Gate.

\$10 adult ; \$8 concession/ child

Booking required Tel: (03) 9252 2429

A special walk to highlight the threatened plant species work undertaken at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne has been arranged for Friday 7 September, Threatened Species Day.

Approximately 3,200 native species of plants can be found in Victoria, but unfortunately nearly 700 are said to be threatened with extinction.

Scientists and horticulturists at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne are safeguarding these plants against extinction by establishing the Victorian Conservation Seedbank, part of a worldwide project, the Millennium Seed Bank Project.

This project led by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, in the United Kingdom, involves 50 countries collecting seeds until 2010.

So far the Melbourne staff has:

- Banked the second millionth seed of Victorian plants
- Collected over 4 million seeds from across Victoria in the two years the program has been running and
- Managed to germinate a threatened Gippsland shrub (*Rulingia prostrata*) Dwarf Kerrawang from dormant seeds, a breakthrough for ongoing species conservation work at the Gardens.

The Seeds for Survival Walk will take visitors on a journey to meet the people who have collected these precious seeds and to learn how they are cleaned, stored and tested at the National Herbarium of Victoria and the young plants cared for in the Nursery.

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