



Hundreds of Studley Park Gum trees are being grown at the Royal Botanic Gardens from local seeds, ready for planting this year.

Studley Park Gum tree planting program

We're working to increase the number of these significant trees

The Studley Park Gum is a hybrid of the River Red Gum and Swamp Gum. The majority of Studley Park Gums in Melbourne are found in Melbourne's north-east along the Yarra River.

We expect up to 52 Studley Park Gum trees may be impacted by construction of North East Link. Each tree removed will be replaced by two – ensuring an increase in the local population.

Specialists started collecting seeds from these trees in 2020, ready for planting to start in 2021 well before major construction begins.

To ensure the 2:1 replacement goal will be met, more than 300 juvenile trees will be grown, planted and carefully monitored for up to ten years.

Where we're planting

We're planting Studley Park Gum trees at three sites along the banks of the Yarra River on land managed by Parks Victoria.

210 trees will be planted at two sites in Westerfolds Park in Templestowe. 100 trees will be planted at one site in Montpelier Reserve in Lower Plenty.

How the sites were selected

The three Yarra River parkland sites chosen for the North East Link planting program are around four kilometres from where trees will be removed in Yallambie and offer ideal growing conditions.

The area is already home to one known Studley Park Gum tree and both parent trees (River Red Gum and Swamp Gum) are common.

At the moment, the sites are large areas of cleared grassland. Establishing a population of Studley Park Gum trees will help increase the number within the Yarra River parklands while allowing people to see these unique Victorian trees up close along the Main Yarra Trail.

Growing and planting the trees

North East Link has partnered with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria to grow the seeds collected last year into juvenile trees. The trees are being kept at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria nursery and cared for until they grow to around 30 centimetres tall, ready for planting in Autumn or Winter this year.

Planting the trees in the cooler, wetter months gives them time to establish before the hot, dry weather arrives. It also requires less hand watering. If average rain falls are received, we expect the trees will not require any additional water.

Protecting the trees from native animals and pests

To protect the trees during establishment from kangaroos, deer and rabbits a two-metre high fence will need to be installed around each site. The fence will stay in place for up to five years to give the trees time to mature.



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Maintaining and monitoring the trees

For the first five years after planting all three sites will be kept clear of weeds every six months and a qualified ecologist or botanist will visit every three months to check the trees and the fence.

The trees will then be visited at least once a year for up to 10 years until the 2:1 establishment goal has been met.

During each monitoring visit the trees will be counted, measured and have their condition recorded and photographed.



Studley Park Gum planting sites



FAQ

Will trees need to be removed from the recipient sites to make room for the Studley Park Gums?

No. All three recipient sites are currently open, grassed areas. No trees will need to be removed.

Weeds, such as Paterson's Curse and blackberries, are present and will be removed. The grass will also be slashed. Before work starts specialists will check if there are any high-value, native ground cover species at the sites. If any are found, they will be protected.

Will open space will be lost at Westerfolds Park?

The two recipient sites at Westerfolds Park are around 1.1 hectares each, which is a bit less than two per cent of the 120-hectare park. The sites will need to be fenced for the first five years to protect the trees while they are establishing. After the fence is removed, public access will return.

Does planting trees all in the one area replicate the conditions where they occurred naturally in Yallambie?

The majority of Studley Park Gums in Melbourne are found in Melbourne's north-east along the Yarra River in close, clustered groups. We'll be planting the trees in three Yarra Valley parkland sites in similar group style clusters.

What happens if the planting program doesn't work?

We're committed to the survival of this unique hybrid tree. Studies done for the North East Link Project have helped discover more about this tree than ever before. To help ensure the 2:1 replacement goal will be met, we're planting more than 300 trees and will be monitoring them closely.

It should be noted that this information is current at the time of publication, however changes may occur. Please visit our website for the latest updates.

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