



Australian Government



## **The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**

Federal Member for Flinders  
Minister for the Environment

## **The Hon. Bruce Billson MP**

Federal Member for Dunkley  
Minister for Small Business

# **JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Green Army makes a difference in Mount Eliza**

The team of young Australians working to improve the natural environment of Mount Eliza's Linear Reserves were today acknowledged for their hard work as they officially graduated from Green Army.

The team has spent 26 weeks carrying out extensive weed control, contributing to fuel reduction and improving the biodiversity of indigenous species.

Environment Minister Greg Hunt said he was delighted to visit Mt Eliza Regional Park to congratulate the graduating Green Army team.

"It was terrific to meet the graduating Green Army team and to hear about their experiences in the field," Minister Hunt said.

"The feedback from these projects has been overwhelmingly positive, both from the community groups and from the young people involved."

"Many of the participants have already lined up jobs in the environmental sector and both the team leader and one of the participants of this project have already stepped up into more senior roles. This is a great result."

Member for Dunkley Bruce Billson said the Green Army graduates had made a noticeable difference to the local environment.

"Congratulations to these graduates who worked on the Mount Eliza Linear Reserves and Access Fuel Management Project," Minister Billson said.

"It was fantastic to observe the team undertaking a range of activities at the Mount Eliza Linear Reserves, including reducing woody and ground flora weeds and increasing seed bank diversity and quantity.

"I was struck by their enthusiasm and commitment to learn and work with the local Bellbird Millbank Friends Group to improve the local environment.

“These graduates are a shining example of the benefits of the Green Army programme. Not only does it achieve important environmental outcomes, it provides young people with valuable skills and experience to get them job ready.”

The Green Army is a key Government commitment and has already grown to more than 250 teams.

The Programme encourages practical action to support local environment and heritage conservation projects across Australia, providing training to thousands of young Australians by 2018.

The Green Army will continue to grow with more than \$700 million budgeted over four years.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Mayor Bev Colomb said the team had worked hard and the results could now be enjoyed by the whole community.

“The young people, under the close supervision of service provider Manpower Australia and in conjunction with the Mornington Peninsula Shire, have done a great job and they should be immensely proud of their efforts,” Cr Colomb said.

“The team has regularly worked alongside the Shire’s bushland management team, learning new skills and developing relationships within the industry.”

“I am so pleased to hear of each individual participant’s success and hope their passion improving environmental outcomes in the community will continue.”

The Green Army team has completed work across a number of locations, focusing on Mount Eliza’s Linear Reserves – Earimil Creek Bushland Reserve, Millbank-Bellbird Bushland Reserve, Mount Eliza Regional Park, Mann Road Bushland Reserve.

The team also completed a number of activities to improve natural environments on the Mornington Peninsula and build on their skills:

- Worked in the Shire’s nursery to learn how to propagate indigenous plants
- Developed and implemented tree condition surveys for eucalypts that are affected by die-back in Mount Eliza
- Undertook fauna spotlighting at Earimil Creek Bushland Reserve and Mount Eliza Regional Park
- Assisted community volunteers in bushland work (Millbank Friends Group, Balcombe Estuary Reserves Group Mount Martha)
- Carried out rabbit control at the Briars Park
- Researched naval gun shields in Mount Eliza Regional Park (including a visit to Cerberus Naval Base) and the development of signage to interpret their history
- Designed and constructed a garden surrounding the gun shield in Mount Eliza Regional Park

Further information on the Green Army is available online at: [www.environment.gov.au/green-army](http://www.environment.gov.au/green-army).

**Media contacts: Samantha Robin (Minister Hunt) on 03 5979 3188 or 0400 175 355  
Kristie Lavery (Minister Billson) on (02) 6277 7930 or 0466 305 206**

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