

Project Cultivate at Melbourne General Cemetery

Melbourne General Cemetery is home to more than 56 acres of native grasslands, established as part of Project Cultivate.

These grasslands recreate the open grassy landscapes that once covered much of Victoria and provide important habitat for wildlife including birds, butterflies, bees and lizards. Native grasslands are one of Australia's most threatened ecosystems.

To keep these landscapes healthy, diverse and resilient, they are carefully managed throughout the year according to their growth needs and the seasons.



Why do the grasslands look different at different times?

Different plants flourish and rest at different times throughout the year according to the Wurundjeri seasons.

Our grasslands are divided into five management areas. Only one area is heavily managed each year. This schedule of maintenance means that some areas may look freshly cut, while others are tall and flowering. This is intentional and aligns with seasonal works to help maintain biodiversity and habitat across the site.

Seasonal management approach:



Why do native grasslands need active management?

Without active care, grasslands can become dominated by a small number of vigorous species. This reduces wildflowers, limits habitat for wildlife, and allows weeds to spread.

Our management approach helps to:

Allow native plants to flower and set seed



Maintain open spaces between grasses for
wildflowers

Reduce weeds and excess biomass



Maintain safe access and clear sightlines
for visitors

How the management program works

Management is carefully timed to the natural lifecycle of native grasses and wildflowers, and the **Seven Wurundjeri Seasons**. Works are scheduled after plants have flowered and set seed, allowing new plants to establish naturally.



Biderap Dry Season (Jan–Feb)	Grasslands dry and turn golden, while Banksias bloom across the site.
Luk Eel Season (Mar)	Rains return, wildflowers renew growth and moths appear in large numbers.
Waring Wombat Season (Apr–Jul)	Birds nest, wattles begin to bloom and fungi, new grasses and tiny wildflowers emerge.
Guling Orchid Season (Aug)	Wildflowers bud, migratory birds return and insects become increasingly active.
Poorneet Tadpole Season (Sep–Oct)	Wildflowers peak, grasses green up and blue-tongued lizards and small birds are easily spotted.
Buarth Garru Grass Flowering Season (Nov)	Grasses grow tall and burst into flower, with butterflies active across the grasslands.
Garrawang Kangaroo Apple Season (Dec)	Birds feed their young, microbats emerge at dusk and Kangaroo Apples begin to fruit.



In each year of our five year maintenance cycle, we will perform works at one of the five Project Cultivate areas at MGC.



Biderap - Luk (Dry Season - Eel Season)

Grasses are cut after seeds have dropped. Cut material is collected and removed to help reduce weeds and support new plant growth.



Waring (Wombat Season)

Small open spaces are created between grasses. Native wildflower seed is sown, or young plants are planted.



Poorneet (Tadpole Season)

Most areas are left untouched to allow flowering. Light trimming may occur near paths and monuments for safety.

Successful grassland management results in:

- Open grasslands with visible tussocks and wildflowers.
- Increased butterflies, bees and birds
- Reduced weeds
- A living landscape that honours both people and place