

Media Release:

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Trees Branch into Heritage and Significant Registers

Although many people may not realise it, Darwin is home to a number of trees that have social, cultural and historic meanings to their local surroundings.

The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts (NRETA) is working with Greening Australia NT to help gain public awareness of the significance of these trees and gain a deeper understanding of their value.

NRETA Director of Heritage and The Arts Michael Wells said the *Heritage Conservation Act* plays an important role in protecting trees such as the iconic Tree of Knowledge in the Darwin Civic Centre and the Boab Tree on Cavenagh Street.

“The Tree of Knowledge is highly valued by the community for its associations with phases in Darwin's development, and is one of the largest banyans in Darwin,” Mr Wells said.

“The Boab Tree was planted in the 1800's and was nearly destroyed during World War II when a “Daisy Cutter” bomb fell unexploded and lay within its shade for several days before detection.”

In addition to preserving and protecting trees through the NT Heritage Register NRETA is assisting in the maintenance and development of The Register of Significant Trees which was established in 1985 by Greening Australia (NT) and National Trust of Australia (NT).

Greening Australia NT Significant Tree Officer Lisa Peters said the Register was set up in recognition of the need to care for trees that are significant to the Territory and that some of these trees feature information plaques for visitors and locals.

“The Register for the Greater Darwin Region has over 200 entries which include both individual trees and larger areas of significant vegetation,” Ms Peters said.

“Some of the lesser known significant trees are the two Tamarinds below Government House on the corner of Jervois Road and Kitchener Drive, which are estimated to be between 300-400 years old.

“The Tamarind was brought to Australia by Macassan fishermen who visited the northern coast as early as 1700 so they could camp under the trees shady canopy and use the Tamarind fruit to flavour their rice.

“Now all that remains of the Macassans' camps are the magnificent stands of Tamarind trees in many favourable places along the coast.”

Greening Australia is currently working on a brochure with maps and information that will enable a self-guided walking tour of significant trees in the Darwin CBD.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Michael Wells on 8999 5036 or Greening Australia on 8981 1962

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