



# CARING FOR COUNTRY

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## What's happening

### AW weather stations

Check out data from the weather stations in the AW region on...

<http://aws.awnrm.sa.gov.au/>

### Next AW NRM Board meeting:

23rd - 24th April

Venue: Ceduna Natural Resources Centre

### Alice Springs Cup Carnival

13th April - 6th May

Pioneer Park Racecourse

South Stuart Highway, Alice Springs

[www.alicespringsturfclub.org.au](http://www.alicespringsturfclub.org.au)

### National Sorry Day, 2013

26th May

### Reconciliation Week, 2013

27th May - 3rd June

### South Australian Country Music Festival and Awards

31 May - 10 June, Riverland Barmera comes alive with country music with 10 days of new talent, old favourites, workshops, tributes, awards, [riverlandcountrymusic.com](http://riverlandcountrymusic.com)

## From the Regional Manager



Welcome to *Caring for Country*, the Alinytjara Wilurara (AW) Natural Resources Management (NRM) region's quarterly publication. With the AW NRM Board and AW staff already working in full swing, our plans to undertake many new programs and projects throughout 2013 are set to achieve significant NRM outcomes. Working with communities and partners, these will deliver many benefits to the AW Region's people and environment.

Recently, the Australian Government released their priority areas for **Caring for Our Country** investment across Australia. It was exciting to see that many parts of the AW region included, particularly in the north-eastern portion of the AW and the Far West Coastal region.

AW's north-eastern region covers the Eastern APY Lands and Tallaringa Conservation Park. The Far West Coastal region includes much of the Yalata and the Nullarbor coastline. This means that range of AW's current NRM activities will be continued and a number of new initiatives will be developed for implementation across the region. A strong focus remains on Aboriginal engagement in NRM, minimising impacts of pest species and ensuring water resources are protected.

The AW NRM Board and its partners hope to build on previous state and federal investment in implementing NRM outcomes in these areas, as well as building on the strong relationships already established between the Board, AW staff and communities.

During 2013 I am also looking forward to working with the AW NRM Board in building its capacity, strategic and leadership role. As part of this, Board members will be taking part in a leadership development program. Strengthening skills in strategic leadership will directly benefit communities by enabling the Board to address regional NRM issues with greater effect.

Matt Ward

A/Regional Manager, Natural Resources - Alinytjara Wilurara

## Where we are and what we do

The Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Region covers the northwest quarter of South Australia. In Pitjantjatjara, *alinytjara* means 'north' and *wilurara* means 'west'. The Region spans more than a quarter of a million square kilometres and has a population of approximately 2000 people, many of whom identify with the Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra, Kokatha, Mirning or Wirangu peoples.

Natural Resources Management (NRM) is an approach to protecting land for the mutual benefit of people and the environment.

The AW NRM Board is the only all aboriginal NRM Board in Australia.



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## From the Presiding Member



Welcome to the first edition of *Caring for Country* in 2013.

The AW NRM Board has already been busy working on the development of Board Policies in our February meeting and taking the opportunity to introduce ourselves and our region to our new Minister, Minister Ian Hunter MLC.

In developing our policies it is our aim to ensure that the Board has strong foundations in place to move confidently into the future and make our position clear to all our stakeholders.

Our policies are in line with the three main theme areas of our AW Regional Plan, People (eg Community Engagement Policy), Country (eg Camel Policy) and Water (eg Coast and Marine Policy). It is our intention that all our policies will be finalised over the course of the year and periodically communicated to our stakeholders.

The Board is also excited about undertaking a range of training over the next 12-24 months. The Board has committed to undertaking training in governance, personal leadership and strategic thinking. This presents an excellent opportunity for board members to build their capacity in these areas and to continue to move forward working together as a strong, effective team.

I look forward to further growth of NRM in the AW region for all of its people.

Parry Agius  
*Presiding Member*  
Alinytjara Wilurara Natural  
Resources Management Board





# Alinytjara Wilurara

## Natural Resource Management Board

### meets Minister Hunter



Board member Sydney Chamberlain meets Minister Hunter MLC prior to discussions

The Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, and Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Ian Hunter MLC, met for the first time with members of the Alinytjara Wilurara (AW), Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board at the bi-monthly Board meeting held in February.

Board members took the opportunity to introduce themselves and tell the Minister about their backgrounds and discuss the particular regions they were most involved with and the issues that most concerned them.

Board Member Brian Queama drew the Minister's attention to the need for young people in the communities

to have jobs and asked that the government support more training for them. He said he has spent many hours working with young people from the communities on various AW projects including mulloway tagging, and cleaning up Yalata beach and sees the enthusiasm they have towards being involved in land care. He emphasised the importance of having "our young people involved in protecting our sites and carrying through our story".

He also mentioned Buffel Grass and some of the problems it presents. "Kangaroos (traditional food source) have become scarcer and because it (Buffel Grass) burns so hot it's also a real fire danger when it grows close to our communities."

Minister Hunter asked about the spread of seed and how we currently manage it. He also asked about water in the region. Board member Sydney Chamberlain responded that communities are concerned about the possible impact of mining on water in the AW Region.

Minister Hunter noted that the need for local jobs is very important. He said that he wants to see decision making move toward the people on the ground rather than high up in government. "NRM is about putting control back into the hands of local people, in doing this we recognise that priorities are different in every region".

Presiding member Parry Agius explained that currently there are land management teams working in the various regions and explained about the need for funding to pay Traditional Owner's contracts, pointing out that this not only creates positive outcomes for the land but also raises the quality of life in communities.

"I understand that many of the Board members travel long distances to get together and bring with them an understanding of the land and traditions that have been passed down through generations. Their joint contribution is greatly appreciated and plays a key role in the success of

*"caring for the AW region's people, country and water remains a high priority within DEWNR and for me"*



Board member Brian Queama explains to Minister Hunter about the Women's 'return to country' trip

AW's natural resource management programs," said Minister Hunter.

The key message that Board members wanted the Minister to take away was the potential for NRM based work to support whole communities by motivating and supporting the development of young people from the communities.

The Board also explained to the Minister about the problems associated with introduced species such as camels, goats, rabbits and exotic plants such as Buffel Grass, that have the potential to rapidly destabilise and in some cases devastate the delicate ecosystems of the AW region.

"Along with the Traditional Owners we will continue to address these problems and ensure that caring for the AW region's people, country and water remains a high priority within DEWNR and for me," said Minister Hunter. The AW NRM Board and AW staff will be working hard to make sure this happens.



Presiding Member, Parry Agius presents the Minister with a welcome gift of local AW regional artwork

## Land Management Unit

### Oak Valley: *taking a collaborative approach...*

In keeping with Natural Resources AW's partnering strategy of supporting communities within our Region to increase their capacity to undertake land management work, AW staff have been developing stronger links with the Oak Valley (OV) community. In February, this work culminated in a commitment to contract to Maralinga Tjarutja (MT) for work on a variety of projects related to the Oak Valley Land Management Plan and the Alinytjara Wilurara Land Management Plan for the MT Region.

In the December edition of *Caring for Country*, we reported on AW's active support of the Oak Valley Pre-Employment program. Under that program AW arranged for a number of surveys to be undertaken around OV during the training period; specifically on the Malleefowl and Sandhill Dunnart surveys. Involvement in these surveys provided training and experience in collecting data, use of palm pilots to record this data, and traditional tracking to identify the occurrences of these species. The surveys were well attended and enthusiastically received by the

community members. In addition to the NRM success of the program were positive outcomes in employment, literacy and numeracy development.

Over the summer months Oak Valley employed a Land Management Coordinator, Con Miller who met with AW and CDEP Literacy Program Coordinator Michelle Anderson, to discuss a work and training plan for the community. Maralinga Tjarutja has contracted to complete a variety of land management work over the next 6 months. Projects include:

- Burning and Buffel Grass management
- Support to a number of endangered species surveys to be undertaken in the MT Region
- Work on protection and cleaning of Women's rockhole sites

These projects will be supported by AW staff. Training will include Fire Safety training, Work Safety training and training in Safe Handling of Chemicals. MT and AW will jointly evaluate the successes of the program to inform future contract work between the two organisations.



Michelle Anderson (Literacy Program Coordinator, CDEP), Michael Eckhert (MT General Manager), Bruce Macpheyson (AW Community Engagement Manager), Con Miller (Land Management Coordinator), Paul Parker (Manager CDEP), and Nathan Williams (AW Project Officer) discuss land management opportunities in Oak Valley





# Marine Turtles found on Yalata Coast

Harald Ehmann and Nathan Williams, Natural Resources AW

During Mulloway fishing surveys and other NRM work on the Yalata Coast in October 2012 AW Officers Nathan Williams and Yasmin Wolf and Andrew Cox (Yalata volunteer worker) were very surprised and delighted to find two beached marine turtles within the same week. Both of them, a Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) and a Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) were unfortunately dead, but this is explained by an understanding of their limitations. Both species are listed as “vulnerable” at the national level due to overseas hunting activities (eggs and live turtles).

Marine turtles generally live in the warmer seas of the tropics and subtropics where the warmth provides marine turtles with the right body temperatures for them to function well. The Southern Ocean is not warm enough for them to stay healthy so to discover they managed to reach our southern coast makes this find even more interesting.

The upper side of the dead beached juvenile Green Turtle showing partial drying of some exposed tissues and the characteristic upper shell plates

*Photo Nathan Williams*



The dead beached adult Loggerhead Turtle after a further 4 days and in an advanced state of decay.

*Photo Nathan Williams*



The Leatherback or Luth (*Dermochelys coriacea*) is a slight exception however as it is occasionally found alive on our southern shores, probably because

this species can produce internal heat and maintain a suitable functional body temperature in cooler waters. Unfortunately they often show signs of shark attack or boat propeller injuries as it ventures more widely into temperate waters.

Loggerhead turtles (like the one shown above) grow to a shell length of about 100 cm, and have a massive head with strong jaw muscles that allow it to feed on thick-shelled marine molluscs and sponges that encrust reefs and corals. The one found in October on Yalata Coast was an adult.

The Green Turtle grows to a shell length of about 90 cm, and as adults mostly eat marine plants (both grasses and algae) and jellyfish. When young they eat more meat including dead, injured or slow fish and any other sea animals they can catch. The one found on Yalata Coast was a juvenile.



Nathan Williams cutting a tissue sample from the dried edge of the rear flipper of the dead Loggerhead Turtle with Yasmin Wolf

*Photo Andrew Cox*



The underside of the dead beached juvenile Green Turtle being examined by Andrew Cox.

Photo Nathan Williams

on an accumulation of observations over several or many years it was therefore useful to make opportunistic observations and take photographs and tissue samples from our find.

Tissue samples include small amounts of skin, muscle and sometimes bone that hopefully still retain (in the case of an animal that has been found dead) some intact proteins and DNA. The tissue samples are stabilized for decades and longer when stored in very low temperatures. Such samples may in time come to provide information about the actual places where these animals came from and possibly even where they travelled. Better and deeper information recovery technologies are being developed each year, and could reveal greater insight in years to come.

Can anything be said about climate change and these turtle finds? The considered opinion on the forecast changes with a rapidly warming climate is that there are likely to be greater variations in ocean circulations and currents, with warmer waters moving further south at times, and more often. It is therefore possible that as world temperatures continue to rise we may see more marine turtles along the southern coasts and Yalata Coast. Such movements are part of the responses that can be expected of survival-oriented marine turtles and many other marine animals and plants. Such shifts and changes may well be part of life in the decades and century ahead.

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## What the...?



Natural Resources AW's Project Officer Nathan Williams writes up his report in the sandhills at Coombra beach.

*It's a tough life Nathan but someone's got to do it!*



### So how did these turtles get here?

It is most likely they came from the coastal waters of north western Australia and were carried/swam southward, around the south west of the continent, and then eastward into the Great Australian Bight. The progressively cooler waters and possibly different foods would have made it difficult for them, and the lack of reef protection over wide areas of ocean would expose them to shark attacks. Sometimes marine turtles make it as far east as Spencer Gulf where the shallow warmer conditions (at least in summer) provide temporary suitable conditions for these tired and probably exhausted long distance travellers.

The arrival of two different species of significantly different ages at this location suggests that there may have been a major shift in currents. To confirm this however, a far broader set of indicators would need to become apparent. It is very likely that most turtles that are carried and venture to the southern coast are taken by sharks because they are in a weak and vulnerable state. The few that are washed up are probably the tip of the iceberg. As trends are based





People: *community engagement*

# Warru Recovery Project

Anangu Pijtantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands



From left: Eric Abbott, Quentin Lewis, Marissa Thompson, Thomas Tjilya, Sherada Stanley and Timothy Dalby returning Warru to the APY Lands for release inside the predator enclosure at Donalds Well (photo by Simon Booth)

Thomas Tjilya releases a Spinifex Hopping Mouse (*Notomys alexis*) during small vertebrate trapping surveys on the APY Lands (photo by Simon Booth)

In late 2012, five young Warru were returned to the APY Lands from Monarto Zoo where they had been cross-fostered by Yellow-foot rock wallabies as part of the captive breeding program.

The Warru were welcomed back to the APY Lands by the Ernabella community with traditional Warru *inma* (song) as the plane landed at Ernabella airstrip.

Escorted by Warru *minyma* (women) and rangers they were then driven out to the site inside the predator-free *pintji* (fence) where they were released to become accustom to life in the hills on the APY Lands.



## Small Mammal Surveys

A number of annual small mammal surveys have also been undertaken inside and around the *pintji* by Rangers.

These surveys compare the small mammal populations living within the fenced off zone (that keeps out feral predators and herbivores) to small mammal populations living in unprotected areas.







# What's Happening in the APY Lands

## Working on Caring for Country

### Building strong and constructive relationships

All NR AW projects located within APY lands are conducted as partnerships with APY Land Management. These strong and constructive relationships support the achievement of real outcomes both in natural resources and for the communities and groups involved.

#### The EMU project

Some communities with cattle are taking part in land management development through involvement with the Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU) project. Run by Hugh Pringle, the strength of EMU is that it builds on the solid foundations of local knowledge. Through the EMU project, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara assists communities to work out what they want to do on their land and then how it might be achieved. All information gathered during this process is confidential and remains the property of the land owner.

#### Horses and Donkeys

The removal of feral horses and donkeys across the APY Lands has been undertaken by APY Pastoral. This is aimed at helping to reduce the negative impact of these animals on the area's vegetation as well as to make it safer for people travelling around the region. A package of programs to help set up a sustainable pastoral industry on the lands is also being developed.



Katapitura rockhole with Lorna, Vanessa and Fiona Dodd (as Katapitura is a sacred area, photos beyond this point are not to be taken)

#### Caring for Rockholes

Natural Resources AW's contractor Laura Mitchell has been working with women from Mimili community on the *Dreamweaver* project on the lands. They recently met to talk about the work completed at the Katapitura rockhole. A story book will be produced next trip showing what has been achieved.

#### Working on country - Kanpi Nyapari

Laura also attended a community meeting held at Kanpi to discuss working on country projects for Kanpi Nyapari. These community projects support people from the communities in getting back out on country again.



School girls visiting from Adelaide's Mercedes College helped to clear out Buffel Grass around Victory Well



An area where the buffel grass has been removed by the young people

Everyone at the meeting was very enthusiastic and now that Laura understands what the community wants a number of actions and projects are being planned for 2013.

#### City kids lend a hand- Victory Well

Mercedes school students helped community land care by removing Buffel Grass in the Victory Well area. A lot gets done in a short time when there are over 20 there to help!

It's good for young people from the city to come and work on country so they can understand better that living on the land and looking after it takes effort. When they go back, they have a different story to tell – one of experiencing the beauty of the people and the land. This helps build stronger partnerships with community and urban people.



# Yalata Mulloway Carcass Composting Bins



*Written by Phil Coleman (Yalata Environmental Health team), Sandro Madonna (Yalata Land Management team) and Yasmin Wolf (Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara)*

## Yalata Community: improving coastal natural resources

Natural Resources AW and partner organisations (Yalata Environmental Health, Yalata Land Management) recently met to determine if the Yalata Community would be interested in undertaking local projects that would provide natural resource outcomes for the region and what they might be. At the meeting it was decided that a number of tracks along the coast of Yalata's Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) needed to be closed to avoid on-going erosion. It was also decided that action needed to be taken about Mulloway carcasses being left on the beach and around campsites after filleting as they were drawing pest species, such as dingoes and feral dogs to the campsites.

Phil Coleman (Supervisor, Yalata Environmental Health) and his team and Sandro Madonna (Manager, Yalata Land Management) and the Yalata Land Management team were recognised as having the capacity to undertake these works, a good knowledge of the region and a keen interest in making it happen.

Management of tracks along the coastal zone was identified as a high priority. Unchecked, these tracks become unsafe to drive on and cause widespread deterioration of erosion prone areas of the IPA. It was decided

to begin work on the main tracks to encourage drivers to use them (as opposed to going off-road) and to make them safer.

It was also decided to restrict access to a number of unused tracks and undertake revegetation on those that were no longer required.

The Yalata Land Management team identified track closure and track maintenance sites based on the frequency of track use. High use tracks would be upgraded to discourage visiting anglers from creating random additional tracks. Unused, unwanted and erosion prone tracks were identified and selected for closure and revegetation. Revegetation was performed on blocked tracks, with seeds and cuttings being collected from nearby areas to ensure species success rates.

## Coastal Compost Bins

Concerns were raised at the Yalata Community Council Meeting that fish carcasses were becoming an issue along the Yalata IPA coastline. Management action was called for to ensure that the environment remained pristine.

Compost bins were trialled at two sites within the Yalata IPA campsite area. These were installed to help to reduce scattered material that attracts pest species and to manage organic waste.

Geues and Bob's Kitchen campsites were selected by the Yalata Land Management team and Natural Resources AW staff, as the best locations for the trial both being identified as successful fishing locations with a high frequency of visitors.



Heavy equipment and materials were delivered over a number of days to location at the Geues campsite





# ...and Track Maintenance

These two sites also host a range of diverse and endangered shorebird species that could potentially be impacted upon by pest species attracted to the area by Mulloway carcasses.

To enable microbes from the soil to assist in the fish carcass break down and ensure ease of removal when full, 1000 litre rain water tanks, cut in half, were identified by the teams as the first option to be trialled.

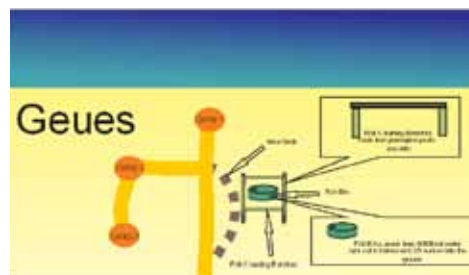
Fish cleaning benches were also created to encourage visiting anglers to use the compost bins rather than leaving carcasses at the beach or around campsites.

## Work underway...

In February 2012, the Environmental Health Team (Phil Coleman, Mark Young, Mathew Kite, Shaun Peters, Regan Baker and Erwin Mungee) and the Yalata Land Management team (Sandro Madonna, Teddy Edwards, Benjamin Koko, Adrian Brown and Brian Queama) began undertaking track management and

revegetation works and trial compost bin installations along the Yalata IPA coastline.

The fish bin installation started with delivering the materials and machinery to the first site, Geues camp site.



Due to the logistics of getting the heavy machinery 90kms into the site on off-road tracks and through sand dunes it took several days before work began.



The second site, Bob's Kitchen, provided an even bigger challenge for machine access, but was an ideal location, complete with pre-existing driveway access.

Although the Yalata Land Management



and Environmental Health teams are still waiting for signage to be installed, the fish bins are already showing signs of being used. Yalata Land Management have reported a decrease in feral animal tracks in the area and will continue monitoring the sites for signs of improvement.

With the Fish Bin's complete, it was time to move on to the track closures.

*(continued on following page)*

After clearing the site and digging the pit, 1000 litre rain water tanks, cut in half, were inserted and back filled before bollards were installed to prevent vehicle's driving over the tank



Clearing the bin area and driveway access was undertaken using heavy equipment to provide a flat surface





## Yalata: Track Closure

*(continued)*

The track maintenance and rehabilitation process involved:

- blocking access to tracks in erosion prevalent areas
- providing more suitable access
- re-seeding the blocked-off areas with local native seed
- breaking up the surface of blocked tracks to encourage new growth
- installing water run-off points to assist in minimising erosion.



The work done by these teams has been, and continues to be, exceptional and they should be praised for their initiative, commitment and hard effort.

Both works were undertaken primarily by the community and clearly show the resolve and capacity of community members to make a real difference by taking part in projects such as these, caring for their land and the environment.

Natural Resources AW is proud to have worked with all parties involved in these projects and looks forward to supporting communities in any such future endeavours.

## Eradication of Exotic plants Agave growing near Nundroo



Sprayed on the 5th of October 2012

Agave (from the Americas) and Aloe (from Africa) were very popular plants grown in many of the region's old farm gardens. They were known to be hardy, could survive on minimal water and care and were able to be used as home remedy medicine.

The Agave plant found near Nundroo has grown undisturbed for many years. Previously an offer had been made to destroy the plant by bulldozing the site. This however would not have been an effective way to permanently destroy the plant. It may have in fact worsened it by spreading the growth from its existing site to wherever it was moved.

Natural Resources AW Authorised Officer Teresa Gurney decided that to eradicate it effectively it would be best to treat it with a herbicide mix.

The results were dramatic with a high level of knockdown apparent over several months following the initial application. Some small Agave plants in the surrounding area were missed initially, but these, as well as any new growths that were revealed as the large Agave deteriorated, were also treated.

It is also interesting to note that after the initial treatment, a second flower spike was sent up as a survival mechanism to offer a chance for the Agave to re-establish itself by flowering and seeding quickly.



9th October 2012



10th November 2012



Spot sprayed on the 1st of February 2013





## AW contributing to National Groundcover monitoring project

The South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) has recently begun field work as part of the Ground Cover Monitoring for Australia project. This national field data collection project is in collaboration with State and Territory agencies, Geoscience Australia, CSIRO and the TERN/AusCover initiative.

The objective of this Australia-wide project is to deliver a nationally agreed, reliable, cost-effective basis for measuring and mapping using satellite imagery to produce regular updates of ground cover conditions across Australia.

The on-ground work involves looking at the amount of vegetation cover compared with bare soil within small areas to make up a detailed big picture. The field data collected is used to confirm satellite imagery of the region and produce detailed cover maps of Australia.

DEWNR and AW staff recently completed field data collection work on nine field sites (six in the Nullarbor and three in Southern Maralinga Tjarutja). This involved taking an individual measurement of the ground surface every metre for 100 metre lengths, three times diagonally for each site. A total of 28 plant species samples were also collected and will be entered into the BDBSA (Biological database of South Australia).

The nine sites are now permanently marked with a star picket and aluminium tag stamped with a site identifier. These sites will be used for future reference to help monitor changes in ground cover and structural composition in the event of wild fires that may occur at the site locations.

DEWNR's David Thompson, and AW's Leah Kyriacou and Nathan Williams establish monitoring sections and collect plant specimens

## Our Good Food *Nguly Gu Yadoo Mai*

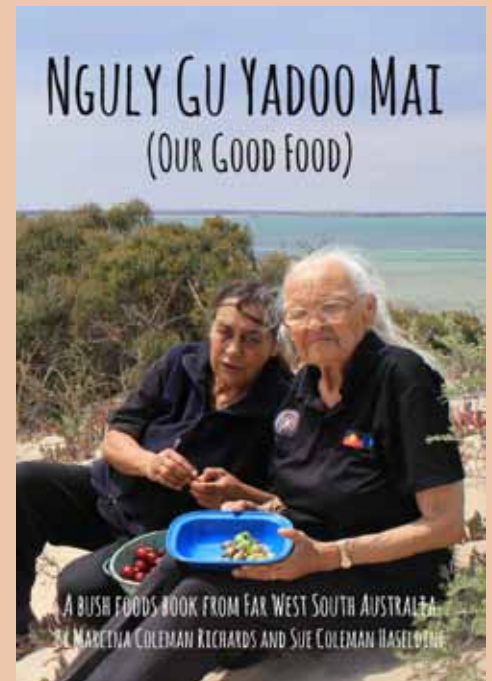
Nguly Gu Yadoo Mai (Our Good Food) is a 40-page, full colour bushfood book from Far West South Australia, by Marcina Coleman Richards and Sue Coleman Haseldine.

Marcina and Sue's stories touch on environmental and social issues and change, the importance of teaching young people, and their hopes for the future. By sharing their extensive knowledge of harvesting and cooking bush foods, the book reveals that food is so much more than just what you can eat.

Nguly Gu Yadoo Mai (Our Good Food) is the initiative of Kokatha Mula woman Sue Haseldine, and draws heavily on the expertise of Sue's Aunty, Marcina Coleman Richards, a great-great grandmother and the oldest Aboriginal woman currently living on SA's west coast.

### Cost:

- \$20 (inc postage and handling)
- \$36 GIFT pack with bush medicine ointment (inc postage and handling)
- \$55 DONATION special includes signed copy of the book and bush medicine (inc postage and handling)



### How to order:

Email order to: [wunylie@gmail.com](mailto:wunylie@gmail.com)

Please include your postal details.

Or place order on Facebook Page

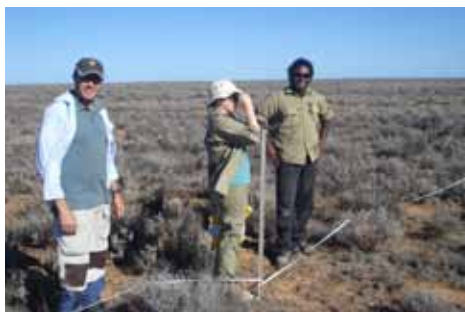
[www.facebook.com/NgulyGuYadooMai](http://www.facebook.com/NgulyGuYadooMai)

### Deposit payment into:

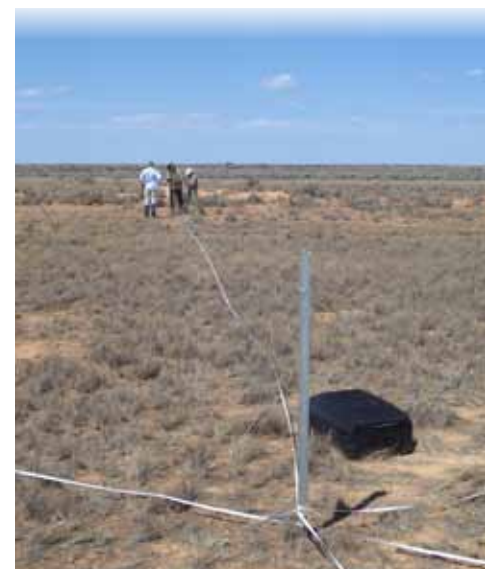
Bank Account: West Mallee Protection  
BSB: 105100 Account: 035185740

or

Cheques or Money Orders made out to West Mallee Protection and sent to:  
PO Box 25, Ceduna, SA 5690



The team take measurements and record data on the Nullarbor Plain







## Dreamweaver: Supporting Womens' Participation in Natural Resource Management - Mimili Update

The women of Mimili community, led by Project Manager Lorna Dodd, have continued to work on selected rock-hole sites in the Mimili area, using funding provided by the Caring for Country program. This is one of eight sites across the state participating in the Dreamweaver program.

Vanessa Coulthard and Eva Goodwin on their way to Katapitura rockhole to carry out a site assessment

Site assessments have been completed at the Katapitura and Kalpi Rockholes. Various threats to the sites have been identified and systems put in place to minimise their impact on these sensitive cultural and ecological sites. A rockhole cover is being built over one of the sites to allow the smaller native animals to reach the water, but restrict access to larger herbivores such as camels and horses. Accumulated sand and other debris has also been removed and burning carried out to reduce invasive weed species such as Buffel Grass. To advise men that they should not enter the area, signage has been erected around one important site.

A *Women in NRM Camp* is being planned for May 2013, funded by the *Dreamweaver* program and supported by DEWNR Alinytjara Wilurara, APY Land Management and the Federal Government's *Caring for our Country* (CfoC) Program. The trip will provide the opportunity for women in several communities adjacent to Mimili to visit

important women's sites in the Region, to share stories with each other, their daughters and granddaughters and to identify future work required to maintain Women's sites.

The work being carried out through *Dreamweaver* is ecologically and culturally important. Rockholes in the area are important sources of water

for native animals, but are often fouled through use by feral animals and encroachment by invasive weeds. The Program supports women to maintain their sacred cultural sites, connect with country, gain employment, training and expertise in land management and transfer knowledge between generations of Anangu women.



Vanessa and Eva carrying out track based monitoring; studying the area around the rockhole for animal tracks to determine which animal species are visiting the rockhole



Vanessa Coulthard cleaning out a small rockhole near the important women's site Katapitura Rockhole. (Images cannot be shown of the culturally sensitive women's site Katapitura)





# Feral camel cull helps protect the Dog Fence

A week long aerial cull of nearly 1000 feral camels in the Far West, Nullarbor and northwards towards Coober Pedy will help safeguard the South Australian Dog Fence.

The cull was organised in response to many local reports of emaciated feral camels gathering along the Dog Fence and putting it at risk of damage.

Biosecurity SA's State Feral Camel Manager, Nick Secomb, said the aerial cull, which began on 11 February and followed the Dog Fence in the Yalata and Ceduna areas, before tracing the fence towards Coober Pedy, had resulted in positive support.

"Feedback from local people has been good regarding our efforts in removing weak and emaciated camels accumulating along the Dog Fence," Mr Secomb said.

"While the removal of nearly 1000 feral camels might not seem significant, the benefits are considerable. We have been able to reduce a major traffic risk to road users travelling the Eyre Highway from potential collisions with weak and hungry camels seeking out vegetation.

"And there is the benefit of taking pressure off the fence, so that camels don't breach it and create pathways through which dingoes can move and then threaten local graziers' sheep, south of the fence.

"For this exercise, we received permission from the Yalata Aboriginal Community to have full access to the traditional lands for removing camels that had been searching in the region for scarce water.

"While commercial opportunities in reducing feral camels are always pursued wherever possible for

Traditional Owners, under this exercise aerial culling was considered the preferable option."

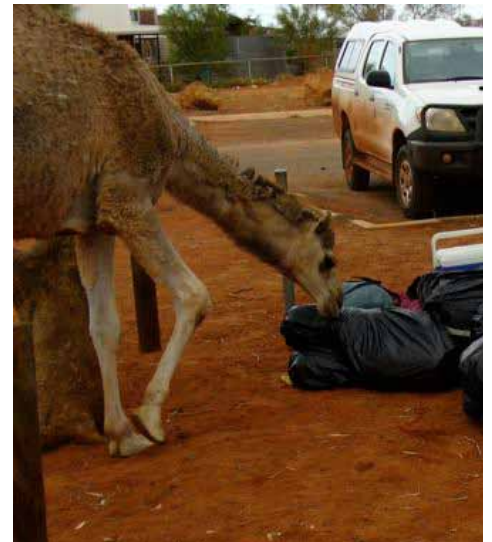
Mr Secomb said the camel cull will deliver environmental, social and infrastructure and animal welfare benefits.

"Feral camels do substantial damage to the environment, foul waterholes and wreck outback infrastructure; from an animal welfare point of view the removal of the weak and starving mobs also has been beneficial," he said.

The feral camel cull was a joint initiative by PIRSA and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, with support from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country fund. The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure and SAPOL were also involved to ensure the operation was conducted safely. No animals were culled within 500 metres of any public roads during the exercise.



Camels seeking water at a spring already contaminated by camel carcasses



Scrounging for food and water in Community rubbish



Arid landscape before camels were removed



Landscape recovery after camels removed from region



Camel herd crossing open country





# Vale Tjilpi Kunmanara

## Great Sadness and Heartfelt Respect

January 2013

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of one of the most senior men of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, Tjilpi Kunmanara from Walalkara, south of Kaltjiti (Fregon).

Tjilpi Kunmanara was a leader in the development of current land and natural resources management on the APY Lands based around traditional cultural relationships to country.

He and his family were early participants in the joint APY Land Management – Department for Environment and Heritage biological survey program on the APY Lands in the 1990s, and enthusiastically shared their knowledge of the plants, animals and landscapes of their country, so that it could be recorded for future reference.

Tjilpi actively supported the establishment of ground-breaking conservation research projects for desert-dwelling malleefowl and for southern marsupial moles on his homelands.

The focal work on these species then lead to Tjilpi supporting the introduction of the national Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) concept onto the APY Lands with one of the first, and one of the largest IPAs in South Australia (700,000ha), being designated over

his country around Walalkara. More recently, Tjilpi and his daughter Jeannie continued to work with IPA, APY Land Management and the AW NRM Board in caring for country, including looking after rockholes, applying traditional burning regimes and in expressing very firm views about challenging land management issues.

Tjilpi Kunmanara was a kind and generous man who provided support for an extended family who often sought guidance and connection to country at Walalkara. He was also a very powerful and traditional man who commanded the greatest of respect. Yet he was a man of few words, (especially in English!) and often communicated most effectively through actions and/or his art. Many learnt about the practical use of fire through his skilful demonstrations with a drip-torch; or learnt about the different animals on his country by being shown how to track them or shown where they lived; or learnt about some of the important food plants by being taken to different areas to see where they occur and how to use them – all first-hand.

Through Tjilpi's leadership in many areas, Walalkara has become a frequent port of call for many APY staff, government workers, politicians and visitors. And through such visits, Tjilpi left indelible and very positive memories in the minds of many who had the privilege of spending time with him on his country.

Tjilpi's influence also reaches far from his homelands. He was a highly regarded artist whose works hang in national galleries. For example, one of Tjilpi's more recent works, "Nyangatja ngayuku ara irititja: This is my life from long ago", received national recognition and recounts ancestral journeys across the APY Lands caring for country, looking after rockholes and teaching children traditional ways. His artwork also recounts more recent experiences in combining traditional work with piranpa (whitefella) science. One work in particular, shows Itjari itjari (the marsupial mole) and illustrates the use of the "mole radio," to hear and track the moles' movements underground.

Tjilpi's contribution to natural resource management across the APY Lands and the state's biological knowledge cannot be overstated.

Tjilpi will be very sadly missed as a person and role model. Whilst the social and political landscape continued to change around him, Tjilpi's love for his country and commitment to cultural landscape management never wavered. His legacy should never be forgotten, nor wasted.

Tjilpi was born at Walakara circa 1930. Our sincere condolences go out to his wife Antjala and and all his family.





# NPY Women's Council Ngangkari Book

## *Traditional Healers of Central Australia: Ngangkari*

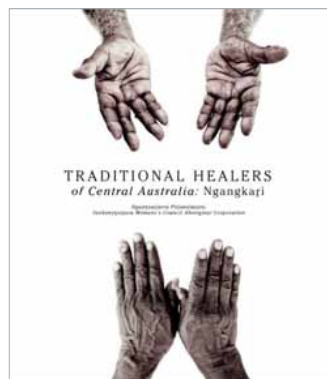


Delighted with the end product are three of the ngangkari featured in the new book: (left to right) Josephine Mick, Ilawanti Ken (holding the book and accompanied by her sister Mary Pan) and Marinka Burton. The ngangkari are photographed here by Rhett Hammerton, whose wonderful imagery features throughout *Traditional Healers of Central Australia: Ngangkari*

Who are ngangkari? What does their work entail? How do they get their healing abilities? How can traditional healers address contemporary issues? What is their attitude towards Western Medicine?

*Traditional Healers of Central Australia: Ngangkari* is an absorbing collection of firsthand accounts by ngangkari which traces personal histories from pre-contact time through to the present. The ngangkari outline some of the changes they have seen in their lifetimes and how, in their work, they grapple with the multitude of complex issues facing Anangu today.

The powerful content of this book is beautifully interwoven with stunning contemporary photography, historical photographs and striking artworks by the ngangkari themselves. NPY Women's Council Ngangkari team is



pleased to announce that *Traditional Healers of Central Australia: Ngangkari* will be available for purchase in late March 2013. This publication is the much anticipated follow up to the popular *Ngangkari Work – Anangu Way*. Published Magabala Books, it will be available from NPY Womens Council and good bookstores nationally.

RRP \$49.95

## Sharing stories

There are wonderful things happening and great opportunities in land management happening around our communities. Natural Resources AW want to make sure that these good stories are told and that people from all over can see what's happening on country.

Digital media is one of the most powerful ways of showing what is being done. To help make this happen 10 young women from Oak Valley and Yalata will be taking part in a *Digital Story Recording Workshop*, based in Yalata Communities' brand new IT hub.

"We will be learning from each other as a team, pooling our knowledge and getting out and about around Yalata. We'll be looking for stories from the recent Mamungari Women's Gathering, stories about women, land and culture, and what future aspirations women have for their role in land management" said Ollanta Lipcer (AW's Community Programs Coordinator). The group will be armed with *Tablets*, Yalata's latest digital technology. These are accessible, user friendly devices that will help build on the already strong storytelling, story 'catching' and story sharing skills of the group.



Ollie with people from Taoundi College and DEFST planning the Women's video project for Yalata

The women involved will have the opportunity to become digital reporters, and work on other land management projects to capture stories, and create a digital platform to share them on.

This project has formed an exciting new partnership between AW, Yalata Community Inc, the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science & Technology (DFEEST), Taoundi College, Oak Valley Community and Ceduna Aboriginal Arts and Culture.



Natural Resources  
Alinytjara Wilurara

## Supporting Care for Caves of the Nullarbor

As the affects of increased tourism becomes more apparent throughout the region, the need to develop a management plan to maintain and protect the caves and sinkholes of the Nullarbor becomes more pressing.

Native Title determination for the Region is pending. As part of the Alinytjara Wilurara's Natural Resources Management commitment to the region, a plan is currently being developed to undertake an audit of these formations in consultation with the Mirning Traditional Owners.

Aside from the archeological, scientific and cultural significance of a number of these caves, the audit will review and update interpretive signage across the Nullarbor and look at other sites such as the Merdeyarah Sandpatch at the western end of the Nullarbor.

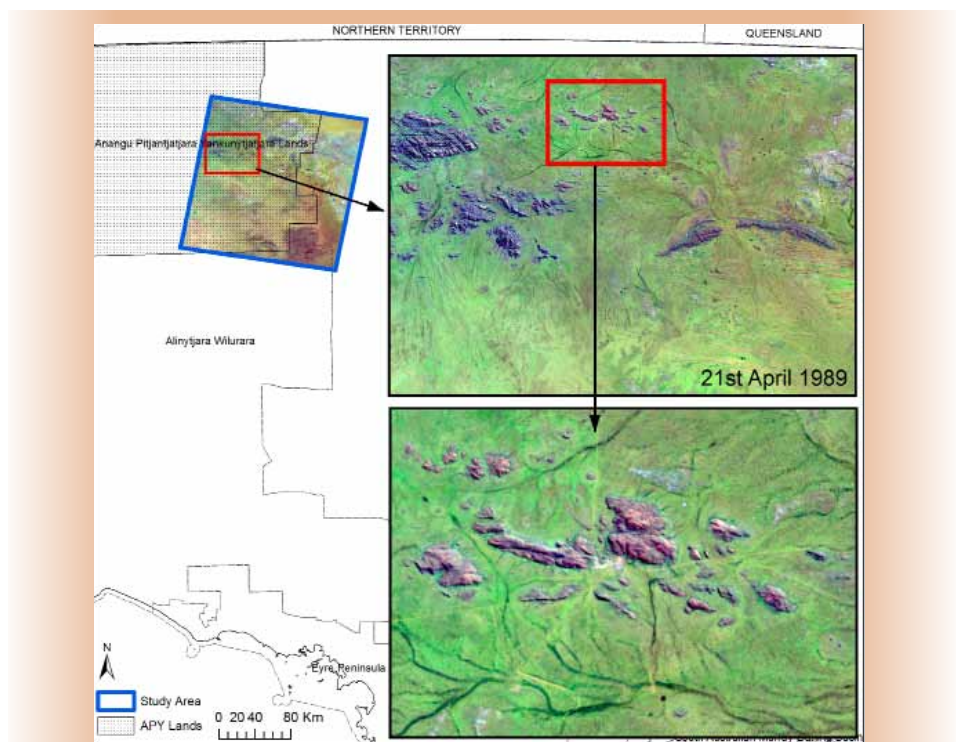
## Satellite imagery used to improve management of grazing lands

Satellites have been photographing the earth's surface for over 40 years. Landsat satellites have been faithfully recording every point on the globe since 1972. The current satellite, Landsat 5 has been operating since 1984 and taking photos of the earth's surface every 16 days at a pixel resolution of 30x30m. This is great for looking at how vegetation, and indeed entire landscapes have changed over the past 30 years.

Allen McIlwee, an ecologist and remote sensing expert has started a 3 month contract to investigate how the AW NRM Board can use time-series Landsat imagery to enhance grazing management decisions at the paddock and station scale. Some of the uses of this imagery include monitoring changes in the density of woody plants and the spread of weeds, changes in available pasture to stock, as reflected by ground cover, and mapping of the most productive areas across a station (generally run-on areas, drainage channels and their floodplains, and areas where raised water tables give plants more reliable access to water).

The project is designed to support the development of management plans across grazing stations in the APY Lands based on assessment of critical ecological processes. The process involves the generation of a set of mapping products that are derived from an analysis of time-series remote sensing data and targeted field surveys. This information, when combined with the long-term management goals and aspirations of station managers can be used to develop an adaptive management program that is intrinsically linked to the long-term sustainable management and improvement of pastoral properties. The project will support to the Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU)<sup>TM</sup> process that is being used to address some key issues in land management including the identification of drought buffering habitats for livestock production, biodiversity conservation and landscape living (eg bush tucker, habitat for key hunting species etc.)

To find out more about the project you can contact Allen on 0435 578 564.





# Welcome (and welcome back) to the Alinytjara Wilurara



**Aude Loisier**

Planning and Marine Research Officer

Aude has a research masters degree in marine science where she studied the effectiveness of surrogates for the selection and design of intertidal protected areas. She then worked as a research officer for the University of Newcastle, NSW and trained community groups to help assess and monitor the biodiversity on intertidal reefs between Sydney and Newcastle. Following her interest for marine parks design, she moved to Adelaide to work with the planning team on the development of SA's network of marine parks. She then joined AW and worked as the Coast and Marine Officer in Ceduna for two years developing a range of projects and programs along the Great Australian Bight Marine Park including monitoring the impact of recreational fishing activities on the local mulloway fish population.

Aude took extended leave to take up an exciting opportunity in New Caledonia working on a marine planning project aimed at developing a marine protected area in the Coral Sea. Recently returning to Australia, she has rejoined AW working as the Planning and Marine Research Officer and support the Board with a range of funding applications, reporting requirements, and to offer support to the coast and marine program.



**Paul Gregory**

Project Officer

In February 2012 I left Ceduna and my role with AW to take 12 months leave to work, study and live in Adelaide. Working full time as a Mobility Aid Technician (wheelchair mechanic) was certainly a big change after three years of working as a Project Officer in Ceduna. During my year in Adelaide I also completed a Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management.

Although I enjoyed my year in Adelaide, I found I missed being away from the pristine environment and the magnificent coastline that the Far West Coast of SA offers. Hence, I am back and have resumed my role as a Project Officer based in Ceduna.

Many changes have occurred during my absence, most significantly the integration of DEWNR, NR EP and NR AW into the new Natural Resources Centre.

I have to say, I'm very happy to be home. I look forward to getting back into the swing of things and working alongside the busy team in Ceduna with the wide range of upcoming projects.

Having grown up in the region, I have always felt a strong connection with the land, natural habitat and the coast. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with this great group of people again in an area that is very close to my heart.



**Belinda Cooke**

Warru Recovery Project Officer

I have recently been contracted by AW to support the Warru Recovery Project on the APY Lands. For me this is a really great opportunity to be involved with conservation work on the APY Lands again and revisit good friends. I worked for APY Land Management for three and a half years, leaving in 2006. During that time I mainly worked with Traditional Owners on listed and proposed Indigenous Protected Areas. I learnt so much from my time out there and was able to work on a variety of threatened species and land management programs. The best memories are of the more remote trips on country and of course the school trips for classes undertaking Land Management and Conservation Cert I and II, which also involved community. It is exciting that the Warru project has grown and that there is so much expertise and support. I am looking forward to being part of such a good team.

As well as loving the arid lands, I have also worked in other environments, in Zimbabwe and short stints in Samoa and Papua New Guinea. Recently I have been working on a PhD examining the extent of coastal management in Australia and biological monitoring for sandy beach environments. It will be good to get back to the red sand again.

Parry Agius  
Presiding Member



Rose Lester  
Board Member, APY



Mima Smart  
Board Member, Yalata



Sydney Chamberlain  
Board Member, Far West



Brian Queama  
Board Member, Maralinga Tjarutja



Janet Queama  
Board Member, Oak Valley



# AW NRM Board members

Serving the  
**PEOPLE, COUNTRY, WATER**  
of the Alinytjara Wilurara

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