

Palya!

STRONG PEOPLE HEALTHY COUNTRY and WATER

Anangu Kunpu, Ngura Kunpu munu Kapi

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Government of South Australia
Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources
Management Board



Australian Government



From the Regional Director, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara



Here we are at the end of another year. As you will see through this edition of Palya – we continue to partner and deliver on a great variety of projects across the region and beyond.

Maralinga Tjarutja and Oak Valley Councils, Yalata Community, Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation and Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation. We value these partnerships and are grateful to each of these organisations for working with us to deliver land management outcomes across the region.

the agricultural stream – Pastoral Management Program in APY.

I would like to acknowledge all of the staff in AW for their efforts in achieving this funding and the commencement of delivery of outcomes. We have also done a review of what was achieved through the first phase of the National Landcare Program and this was a highlight when the staff recently met in the Adelaide Botanic Garden at our second "All Staff Muster" for 2018.

I'd like to thank all of our delivery partners, and in particular Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara,

We have been fortunate to be selected as the preferred delivery organisation for the Australian Government's National Landcare Program 2 in the AW Region. We are finalising the contracts to work with partners to deliver activities supporting the conservation and recovery of Mallee Fowl, Hooded Plovers and Warru; and under

These staff gatherings are important for sharing information, learning about each other's work, building relationships between the Ceduna and Adelaide office, and celebrating our successes.

Thanks to all who have played a part in the achievements in the AW Region this year. Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a wonderful 2019.

INVITATION

The Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board invite you to join us on Facebook www.facebook.com/awnrm

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:
February 2019, Port Lincoln

Ceduna Arts and Cultural Centre
Features genuine local Aboriginal art
2 Eyre Highway, Ceduna

National Apology Anniversary
13 February 2019

National Close the Gap Day
15 March 2019



All Staff Muster at Adelaide Botanic Garden

Palya

Mary-Anne Healy
Regional Director
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.



Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board Region



02 Meeting the AW NRM Board

New Minister gets to know the AW NRM Board members

02 Seeking local input

Minister Speirs consults locals about new Landscape SA Act

03 Board in session



AW NRM Board visits Parliament House

04 Oak Valley celebrates



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05 Sandhill dunnarts survey

06 OV Ranger happy to get started

Rangers start working on Maralinga Tjaratja Country



07 Thank you Gerry Butler

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Yalata celebrates re-opening and up-grade of Women's Centre

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New AW Strategy and Best Practice Guide for buffel grass management

11 Protecting threatened species



Spectacular Nullarbor Plain

photo: Belinda Margan

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Taking care of remote stations has its challenges



14 Visitor strategy for SA's Far West



16 Far West tourism opportunities



Considering all that the SA Far West has to offer

17 Caring for culture and heritage

18 Indigenous Tourist Conference



Entrepreneurship - from little things, big things grow

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Elliston massacre Memorial ceremony helps healing



20 Co-managing AW Region's Parks

21 Conservation legend honoured

22 Hooded plovers doing it tough

Feral animals predation a serious threat to breeding plovers in far west



24 Spectacular sculptures

Marine debris comes to life at Yalata



From the Presiding Member



Welcome to the 2018 Summer edition of Palya.

As the weather heats up and the holiday season kicks off it's time to reflect on

some of the highlights of 2018 and to consider how best to build on our many achievements in the new year.

The AW NRM Board remains committed to developing and maintaining strong relationships that not only support us in achieving our NRM goals but more broadly help to build better understanding of the region, its people and their culture.

Partnering with the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board to deliver the Adelaide Meets the Bush (AMB) initiative was, and remains an important partnership.

Some of the key outcomes of 2018 were the delivery of satellite exhibitions across the state, the AMB Exhibition at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, workshops at WoMADelaide (in partnership with the Far West Aboriginal Women's Council) and building understanding through a formal agreement with Oak Valley Community.

The board also keenly supports and promotes employment of traditional custodians to work on Country. Through partnering with the nationally recognised 10 Deserts Project, participating in the Indigenous Desert Alliance Conference and providing on-ground training and support for the newly formed Oak Valley Rangers team, our focus remains on the well-being of the people who live in our region and the health of their Country.

On behalf of the AW NRM Board, I would like to extend best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season and a happy, healthy 2019.

Parry Agius
Presiding Member

Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board



Meeting the AW NRM Board

Minister for the Environment, Hon. David Speirs dined with the AW NRM Board members following their October Board meeting in Adelaide.

In his address to the Board, the Minister praised the AW NRM Board as a model for future Landscape Boards to follow. He noted that the AW NRM Board has the highest rate of procurement to Land Holding Authorities in the State; Board representation by all Land Holding Authorities in the Region, and formal and informal partnerships with numerous other Boards and organisations.

The Minister also noted that the Board's priorities of People, Country and Water are consistent with his stated aims for the new Landscape SA Boards.

Board members were pleased to have an informal opportunity to talk with the Minister and to share their views with him on a range of topics.

Above: Minister Speirs chats with Presiding Member Parry Agius over dinner

Below: (L-R) Board members Mima Smart, Mick Hayes and Peter Miller



Environment and Water Minister seeks local input

Above: Minister Speirs (second from left) and NRM staff from Streaky Bay and Ceduna offices were joined by local member Minister Peter Treloar (far left), Ceduna Mayor Allan Suter (second from right) and Councillor Geoff Ryan (third from right)

Consultations on the new Landscape SA legislation, to replace the SA NRM Act, took place across South Australia over the past few months.

Three community consultations were held in the AW NRM Region, at Ceduna, Scotdesco and in the APY Lands.

Representatives from the region's Land Holding Authorities were invited to advise the Minister and his consultant about community priorities and matters relating to the environment including tourism and natural resources management.

Below: Consultation held at Scotdesco with representatives of regional Land Holding Authorities

Minister Speirs visited Ceduna to hear from local leaders.

The mayor of Ceduna Alan Suter and Councillor Geoff Ryan also dropped in to the Ceduna Natural Resources Centre during the Minister's visit.

"Both spoke about how much better the working relationship between the Department's (Environment and Water) locally-based staff and Ceduna Council is now compared to in the past" said Senior Ranger Robbie Sleep (far right).

"Peter Treloar, our local Member of Parliament, also spoke well of our team which was really encouraging" he said.





The Board in Session...

Members of the AW NRM Board visited South Australia's Parliament House in October this year at the invitation of Hon. Russell Wortley MLC.



Above: Hon. Russell Wortley explaining parliamentary process

Below: Board members gathered outside Parliament House

Mr Wortley, who is a member of the SA Parliamentary Natural Resources Committee (NRC), escorted the group through the original sections of the building where he described the history and development of South Australian Parliament. Board members also visited the areas currently used by both houses of parliament where the board members took the opportunity to see how it felt to sit in the South Australian Legislative Council's seats of power.

In his capacity as an NRC member, Mr Wortley has visited the AW Region several times over the past few years. His familiarity with the region and the work of the Board made the visit a relaxed and enjoyable learning experience for all concerned.



Rangers acknowledged in SA Parliament

At the South Australian Parliamentary sitting on July 2018, the important and significant role that rangers play in protecting and preserving our natural environment was acknowledged.

Park rangers contribute day-to-day to the protection of the environment in tangible, practical ways

The Minister for Environment and Water David Speirs spoke about the state government's intention to expand the number of Indigenous people working as rangers with traditional owners being paid to increase awareness of the cultural value of getting onto country and helping people to understand a particular landscape and its cultural significance.

"It is also about giving traditional owners the skills and employment opportunities to work in environmental protection... tackling pest plants and animals which are in many ways offensive to traditional owners—and providing them with employment pathways that not only focus on cultural aspects of their traditions but also on environmental aspects" said Minister Speirs.



Ref: hansardpublic.parliament: Hansard-11-31909



Rangers (L-R) Leon Brown, Clayton Queama, (Ben Deslandes, Land Management Coordinator), Hilary Williams, Cindy Watson, Gaye Boogar (Caro Bird, Field Support Officer)

Oak Valley celebrates new Ranger team

Oak Valley now has a ranger team! Since early October, six permanent rangers have been employed along with casual rangers... a team of men and women. This is a huge step forward for the people of Oak Valley who are very excited about the jobs which will allow Traditional Owners to return to country and manage the land that has always belonged to them.

Even though the rangers have only started recently, the team has managed to pack a lot into the last couple of months. Through a mixture of overnight and day trips, the Oak Valley rangers have focused on surveying country for the presence of threatened and introduced species and studying the overall health of country.

Malleefowl monitoring has also been a focus, checking known nests and surveying new areas has led to some exciting discoveries. A couple of days

Rangers (L-R) Sylvia Boogar, Gaye Boogar (behind), Cindy Watson, Hilary Williams, Leon Brown, Lance Ingomar and Clayton Queama check a malleefowl mound for signs of recent activity

were spent with some NR Alinytjara Wilurara staff which was a great chance for everyone to learn from each other.

Tourist access is an ongoing concern for Oak Valley community members and the rangers have begun to put signs along



the roads to make sure that travellers are shown where the right places to camp are. Teaming up with the Tjuntjuntjara rangers to put signs up along the Anne Beadell highway is set to happen in the near future.

The whole team attended the Indigenous Desert Alliance conference in Perth early November. This was a great chance to meet other Indigenous rangers from across Australia's deserts and participate in land management sessions. There were sessions on burning country the right way, threatened species monitoring, landscape scale management, knowledge transfer and ranger-to-ranger sessions, just to name a few.

The rangers are all looking forward to the 2019 field season, with our planning for next year including training, helicopter work, fire management and return to country trips.

What a great start!

by Ben Deslandes

AW NRM Board

One of the key discussion points raised when the AW NRM Board visited Oak Valley in June 2018 was the establishment of a ranger program.

"To hear that the ranger team has started up is really great news. Our (MoU) agreement with Oak Valley, the *Tjungu Palya* (Pitjantjatjara: good together), reflects our on-going support for the ranger program" said Presiding Member Parry Agius.

Below: Travis Bridely working on Country



Cindy Watson and Sylvia Boogar recording data



(L-R) Travis Bridely, Clayton Queama, Lance Ingomar and Ben Deslandes surveying

The ranger team is funded by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet with support from 10 Deserts Project and the Department for Environment and Water.

Congratulations to the rangers and all those who worked so hard to put this program in place.



Sandhill Dunnarts Surveyed

In October 2018, NR Alinytjara Wilurara's Ecologist Brett Backhouse was joined by John Read and Katherine Moseby from Ecological Horizons for the long-term monitoring of the Immarna site in north-west corner of the Yellabinna Regional Reserve.

This site has been monitored for sandhill dunnarts since around 2008, following the original discovery at the site in 1987 during Biological Surveys undertaken by the then Department of Environment.

John and Katherine's three young daughters Layla, Elke and Jarrah joined us during their school holidays. They worked very hard and did a great job.

Pitfall trapping was undertaken across eight sites within the Dunnart's preferred habitat of spinifex grass.

Large diameter pits spread along drift fences funnelled various species to the pits. They were removed the following morning, identified and measured then let go. One very healthy young female sandhill dunnart was caught this year.

In addition to the pitfall trap surveys, spinifex grass was measured to identify optimum height and density.

Much of the dunnart's habitat in this area had been burned in 2012. This provided the perfect opportunity to examine regeneration and determine how long the species take to reappear after these types of disturbance.

Despite the fire removing practically all spinifex in most areas, the site is regenerating well, and it appears that it will be suitable again for dunnart habitation in the next 2-5 years.

by Brett Backhouse



By Brett Backhouse

Cindy Watson and Lance Ingomar collect bush tucker, sugar excreting lerps



Using Cybertacker for surveys

Oak Valley Rangers' Nganamara Survey

In November 2018, NR AW's Ecologist Brett Backhouse, Sustainable Communities Coordinator Karrena Veltman and Senior Ranger Robbie Sleep travelled to Oak Valley to join up with their newly formed Ranger Team to conduct Nganamara (Malleefowl) *Leipoa ocellata* monitoring.

The Nganamara (Malleefowl) is a mainly ground dwelling species of bird found within various regions of South Australia, including much of the AW region.

The Maralinga Tjarutja people in Oak Valley Community, together with NR Alinytjara Wilurara have been monitoring the Nganamara for many years. Consequently members of the new ranger team are familiar with the techniques used for this type of monitoring.

Photography by Robbie Sleep

Nganamara lay their eggs to incubate and hatch in large mounds. The young, once hatched, are totally independent of their parents from day one and remain vulnerable throughout much of their life.

Searches were conducted along the Business Road that runs between Oak Valley and Tjuntjuntjara, with no new signs of mounds found. These searches entailed attempting to find the tell-tale large and distinctive malleefowl footprints.

Once these are found, they are followed in the hope of finding new mounds. On this occasion however no tracks were noted. Although the absence of tracks was disappointing it did provide a clear indication that these areas were not currently inhabited by malleefowl.

Below: Clayton Queama, Hilary Williams and Brett sorting through the images obtained from Trail cameras that were installed on Nganamara mounds



Bush tucker: lerps



Nganamara mound analysis in Maralinga Tjarutja

Below: Undertaking vegetation assessments





Ngiyari (thorny devil - *Moloch horridus*)

Searches did however discover an unusual tree, which the Rangers noted as not having been seen by them before. As it happens however, DEW Botanists identified it as *Psyrax ammophila* (it has no common name), which is generally found sporadically but normally further north in SA – another new record!

In addition to searching for Nganamara and finding unusual trees, the Rangers and Brett sorted through a number of trail cameras, looking at the images of the birds working their mounds, and looking for predators or threats to the mounds.

Nganamara in this region, as in others are threatened by introduced carnivorous predators, being both the feral cat and the fox. These cameras provided evidence that the mounds are visited by foxes, and as such will be a target for future works as part of the RLP funding to help protect the Nganamara in MT.

Jewel Beetle - *Maralinga Tjaratja*



Thank you for making a difference

In August 2018, Gerry Butler, Landcare SA's long-serving and highly dedicated Chairperson, announced his intention to stand down. The AW NRM Board enjoyed a long association with Gerry through his strong advocacy for Aboriginal inclusion and recognition in Landcare.

Gerry worked tirelessly as a volunteer in the Landcare movement for nearly 30 years in community groups and as a professional Landcare Officer. In 2008 he took on the role of Chairperson of the Landcare Association of SA with the aim of reinvigorating Landcare across SA. In that role he has provided outstanding service, leadership and dedication to community Landcare across SA and at the national level through the National Landcare Network.

Gerry's passion to increase recognition of, and opportunities for, the involvement of Aboriginal Communities in Landcare took many forms. For example, Gerry actively sought to increase the participation and involvement of Aboriginal Communities in the biennial State Community Landcare Conferences convened by Landcare SA. In 2017 Gerry formed an Aboriginal Community Engagement

Committee, including representatives from NR Alinytjara Wilurara, to drive Aboriginal engagement in Landcare and provide opportunities for involvement in the Landcare Conferences. As a result of this committee and consultation process there was a vibrant program of presentations by Aboriginal speakers at the 2017 Conference in Clare.

Feedback from Conference delegates showed that the involvement of Aboriginal Community representatives plenary speakers, concurrent speakers and delegates, was a major factor in the success of the conference.

Please email Gerry (gbutler@landcaresa.asn.au) for copies of the 2017 Aboriginal Engagement workshop and/or to get involved in the proposed 2019 workshop.

Thank you for all your hard work Gerry.

Above: Gerry Butler (left) with SA NRM Boards' Presiding Members in 2016

Below left: Gerry Butler, Landcare SA Chairman

Below: Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator Walter Tjami presenting at the State Community Landcare Conference 2017





Yalata Women's Centre re-opens after Upgrade

Organised by Yalata Anangu Aboriginal Corporation (YAAC) and the Yalata Community the Anangu women gathered to celebrate, along with Community partners, the opening of their newly upgraded Women's Centre.

After Desley Culpin, the CEO of YAAC welcomed the women and introduced the Women's Centre's new Coordinator Debra White, AW NRM Board member, YAAC Board Director and respected Yalata Community Elder Mima Smart spoke about how important it was for women to have a place where they could go. Mima thanked Eddie and Derek for the work done and said she felt very proud of the new centre and looked forward to having a look through the revamped "Op shop".

The Women's Centre Program provides a well-managed, well-equipped venue staffed by a coordinator, to deliver regular CDP activities, ongoing programs, events, workshops, forums and a place for the women to paint and make crafts along with meeting privately and to be supported through many programs.

Yalata Community, Far West South Australia

The colourful and hard work/upgrade was undertaken by a local community contractor Eddie and local Yalata Community member Derek Bryant.

In acknowledgment of how important the Centre is to the Community, representatives from many partner organisations attended the event.

Along with NR Alinytjara Wilurara's Pia Richter these included representatives of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Centacare, Complete Personnel, Yalata School, Tullawon Health, and SAPOL.

After the speeches everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch and each-others company well into the afternoon.

Pia said many of the women expressed how keen they were to take part in any on-Country ventures.



Above: Yalata Elder Mrs Rita Bryant



Above: Roslyn Charra and children enjoying lunch at the opening

Left: The Women's Centre's new Coordinator Debra White with Yalata girls



Thank you Pia

Pia Richter
Manager Parks and Co-management

Pia did an amazing job of stepping into the Manager's role at Ceduna NRC (while Yasmin Wolf was on maternity leave). Keeping the ball rolling across a number of complex and landmark projects for almost 18 months was not an easy job.

She leaves NR AW to take up an important and challenging role with the Ceduna Services Collaboration project (Department of Human Services).



All the Best Codee

Codee Spitzkowski
Ceduna-based Project Officer

Natural Resources AW and the AW NRM Board bid farewell to Codee. Codee worked at the Ceduna NRC over the past 2 and a half years as Project Officer, supporting Aboriginal people to undertake work on behalf of the AW NRM Board. Codee came to AW with extensive experience working with Aboriginal people in partnership with mining companies. His good communication skills and practical ability were much valued.

Thank you Pia and Codee for all your hard work and dedication. The team wish you well in your new role and future endeavours.





Perth hosts Indigenous Desert Alliance conference 2018

The largest ever gathering of Indigenous rangers from the Australian deserts took place at the fifth annual Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA) Conference, in November 2018.

Held at the University of Western Australia, the conference was attended by over 260 Indigenous rangers and key stakeholders. As an IDA partner, the Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board was represented by its Presiding Member Parry Agius and board member Michael Haynes along with Natural Resources AW Regional Director Mary-Anne Healy.

Mr Lindsey Langford, IDA executive officer stated that, "The IDA was excited to host this annual event, which gets bigger and bigger each year and highlights the profile and importance of the work Indigenous men and women rangers do."

The conference provided rangers from Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia with an incredible opportunity to come together to share skills, network and collaborate on regional land management issues.

Over the course of the three-day conference, ranger teams from across

the deserts discussed a wide range of topics including looking after landscapes and working together on traditional fire management practices.

Biodiversity including feral animal and threatened species management, tracking, regional tourism and the ranger leadership project were also discussed.

The conference was opened by the Western Australian Minister for Environment, Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Hon. Ben Wyatt MLA attended the sundowner at the end of day one and federal Minister for the Environment, Hon. Melissa Price attended the national Night Parrot recovery team meeting on day three.

AW NRM Board members Parry Agius and Mick Haynes with Oak Valley rangers at the Conference



"Indigenous rangers manage a massive land area of approximately 1.2 million square kilometres. This represents around a seventh of the total land area in Australia. These unique desert ecosystems are under increasing threat due to destructive wildfires, invasive weeds and feral animals. Indigenous rangers are vital to managing this landscape and sharing their traditional knowledge" Mr Langford continued.

The IDA connects desert-based land managers who are working on Indigenous lands to improve cultural, environmental, economic and social outcomes.

The IDA is funded by the 10 Deserts Project and supported by Western Australian State Natural Resource Management Office, Australian Government, Desert Knowledge Australia, Country Needs People, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Assets Western Australia, Territory NRM, Rangelands NRM, Northern Star Resources and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

For more information contact: Lindsey Langford, IDA, 0429 885 979.



Buffel Grass Strategy to drive future management

Managing the spread and effects of buffel grass in the Alinytjara Wilurara (AW) Region remains a high priority for the AW NRM Board. The publication in November of the AW Buffel Grass Operational Strategy (2018-2023) and Best Practice Management Guide (2018) provides for up-to-date, long-term management aimed at protecting the natural ecosystems in the AW Region.

The AW NRM Board plays a pivotal role in overseeing, coordinating and increasing the capacity of stakeholders to manage the region's buffel grass. These roles include maintaining and building cooperative relationships with all relevant agencies and stakeholders to ensure the most strategic and effective use of available resources.

Integral to this role is fostering and encouraging appropriate control efforts from government agencies and stakeholders at key inter-state and intra-state localities to complement and magnify AW's efforts.

Article reference: Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Operational Strategy and Best Practice Guide written by Troy Bowman.

Buffel grass is widely recognised as amongst the most serious environmental threats to the rangelands of Australia because it is an ecological transformer species, capable of destroying Australian ecosystems and threatening many plant and animal species with extinction.

Not only does buffel grass or mamu tjanpi/tjanpi kura (devil grass/bad grass in Pitjantjatjara) destroy natural ecosystems it is also widely recognised as a significant threat to the culture and safety of Anangu communities in the AW Region. Heavy infestations prevent traditional hunting, foraging and



cultural activities and lead to dangerous and destructive fires.

Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Operational Strategy

The aim of the Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Operational Strategy is to implement an effective buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris* and *Cenchrus penisetiformis*) eradication and control program in the AW Region and provide direction to AW staff and Land Holding Authorities (LHAs) in relation to key priorities.

This strategy will assist the AW Region to fulfil its vision of healthy people and communities working together to protect culture and country.

Healthy Country Planning undertaken in close consultation with Aboriginal communities identifies buffel grass as one of the biggest land management issues impacting on the environment and culture of the region.

Natural Resources AW covers the North Western portion of South Australia and contains two different management



Burning buffel at Cook airstrip

Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Best Practice Guide

The Strategy is accompanied by a Best Practice Management Guide that provides detailed information on surveillance, control regimes, buffel grass biology/ecology hygiene and herbicide selection and safe use practices.

A key focus of the AW NRM Board is to build the capacity and ownership of indigenous communities to undertake buffel grass control and management. The best practice guide is for AW staff and other land managers in the AW Region.

Regular targeted surveillance and control efforts are integral to successful management of buffel grass infestations. Both surveillance and control should be prioritised based on the density and distribution, accessibility, risk of spread and resources available.

The Best Practice Management Guide provides a reference to prioritising control of infestations. For example, along roadsides and around parking bays and railway infrastructure whereas infestations on grazed stony plains adjacent to other infestations are much lower priority for control.

Together with our partners NR AW will continue to work to protect the pristine environments of our region.

zones in line with the SA Buffel Grass Strategic Plan 2012-2017. The APY Lands to the north has been identified as Zone 1 (asset protection) due to the significant expanses of high-density buffel grass already established.

The priority in Zone 1 is to protect sites of cultural and environmental significance. This is achieved through targeting specific sites and preventing spread along roads and within communities.

In the lower half of the region (MT Lands) the target is eradication (Zone 3). In the medium term significant efforts will continue throughout the region to eradicate buffel grass, particularly in Oak Valley, Mamungari Conservation Park and along the east west rail corridor.

For further information about buffel grass management in the AW Region contact Leah.Feuerherdt@sa.gov.au



Protecting threatened species through environmental management

Maintaining the natural ecology in which threatened species live is an essential part of their ongoing survival. With the potential for the region's pristine environments to be destroyed by buffel grass and other weeds, the need to monitor and halt spread is a land management high priority.

In late November, Senior Ranger Robbie Sleep and AW Sustainable Communities Co-ordinator Karrena Veltman inspected a total of 20 sites along the East West Trans Pacific Rail Corridor for signs of buffel grass at approximately 20km intervals particularly targeting larger previously known sites.

Approximately half the sites showed varying stages of buffel infestation from early germination to healthy seed set present.

At almost all visited sites, several quicker germinating plants such as *Salsola australis*, native grasses and native tobacco were present in good numbers. This indicated that there had been sufficient rainfall to support buffel germination, however little was observed at half the sites, none at the other half.

This may indicate that the three-in-one mix (Glyphosate/Fluprofenate and Pine oil) being applied recently is having the residual and seed dehydrating affects hoped for.



Going the extra mile to keep Remote Weather Station working

Working in the remote regions of South Australia is often challenging but two AW team members showed that with tenacity and creative thinking the impossible might be achieved.

At the end of October, Natural Resources AW's Leah Feuerherdt and Adam Wood were undertaking a mapping exercise in the APY Lands, when, as Leah describes below, they were called on to go the 'extra mile' to get an unexpected job done.

Adam and I received word that a burnt cable on the Sandy Bore weather station was stopping it from working properly. The station is situated in remote desert country about 4 hours drive from Coober Pedy and is one of five weather stations providing data from across the AW Region.

We decided to stop in at Mimili to get the keys to the weather station fence from local man Sammy Dodd. I asked him if he wanted to come out with us, but he says 'Wiya (no), rain is coming'. I could see his point, there were some heavy summer storm clouds in the distance, but knowing we didn't have a lot of time in the area, Adam and I decided to go on without him.

Unfortunately Sammy was right. Within a minute of arriving at the weather station, it started to rain. It was fairly light so we continued to with work until we realised we needed an allen key, which we didn't have, to undo

the cover. As the rain became heavier I searched around the area to see if I could find a tool we might be able to use, but didn't have any luck.

In the end, with both of us working together, we finally managed to get



Sammy Dodd in Mimili "Wiya (no), rain is coming"

Adam Wood working on Sandy Bore weather station



the cover undone with pliers and brute strength. Then we realised we needed a small screwdriver to undo the cable. Since we didn't have one of those either we tried to think what else might work?

We had all our travel gear with us and in desperation I remembered that I had a nail file in my bag... it did the trick perfectly.

Then the sky really opened up and, accompanied by thunder and lightning, gusts of rain poured down. We ran across to the nearest shelter we could find, an old corrugated iron outback toilet. However, with lightening flashing all around us we soon realised it probably wasn't the greatest place to be taking shelter!

After a mad dash to the car we were soaking wet and, with the storm raging all around us wondered if we should call it quits. Perhaps we should have listened to Sammy... but it's not like we could just pop back later to fix the station given its location.

In the end we decided to wait for the worst of the weather to pass. When the rain eased a bit we splashed back out and continued removing the cable housing, threading cable underground through a pipe and reattaching the new cable.

By the time we finished we were completely drenched and muddy but happy that we'd got the job done and were heading back to Coober Pedy.

Story by Leah Feuerherdt
Photo of Sammy Dodd by Ninti Media



Select your Weather Station: Website Upgrade

Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara has five weather stations in our region, filling gaps in areas where there's little or no weather information. The data these stations provide is important for land management planning and decision making such as spraying weeds in the right conditions, accessibility for roads, planning biological monitoring/surveys, sustainable water monitoring and fire management.

The stations are located in Oak Valley, Rodinia Airfield (near Mamungari CP), Sandy Bore (near Mimili), Murputja and Watarru. All stations required maintenance to communicate with the new server.

The website address is:
<https://www.awsnetwork.com.au/>

You can now customise your desktop or mobile page with a primary station and a list of favourites. That means you can select the relevant stations to appear on your main page.

Currently Sandy Bore, Murputja and Oak Valley are available for you to select as primary station or favourites. Rodinia Airfield and Watarru are currently not available until maintenance has been completed.

Many thanks to Clyde Jochheim (Ranger Coordinator, Kalka Pipalyatjara IPA) for upgrading the Murputja station and to Meryn Codell (formerly Training Coordinator for APY) for providing contact and access to the Sandy Bore station.

The website is available for anyone in the community to use. Please spread the word to those who may find this service useful.

Partner organisations:

- Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin
- Natural Resources South East
- Natural Resources SA Arid Lands
- Lower Murray Water
- Langhorne Creek Grape and Wine

by Adam Wood



HOME PRIMARY STATION SELECT PRIMARY SELECT FAVOURITES ABOUT CONTACT

NRM Weather Network

NRM Weather Network. Welcome to the NRM Weather network displaying current and historical weather data from over 80 weather stations across the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM, South East NRM, and Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Regions and the Lower Murray Water, and Langhorne Creek Grape and Wine irrigation districts. You can select primary and favourite stations below to view local weather information.

Primary

The screenshot shows a mobile-style interface with a 'Primary' tab selected. The main weather card for 'Sandy Bore' displays a temperature of 36°C. Below the temperature, it shows wind speed (22.6km/h average, 43.1km/h max), wind direction (NW), and relative humidity (23.9%). To the right of the main card are four smaller cards, each with a star icon and a 'SELECT STATION' button, representing other available weather stations.



World Cup Cricket

Spotlight on Adam Wood, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara's Program Development and Reporting Coordinator and... Vice Captain of the Australian Deaf Cricket Team who competed in the 2018 T20 Deaf Cricket World Cup in India November 2018.

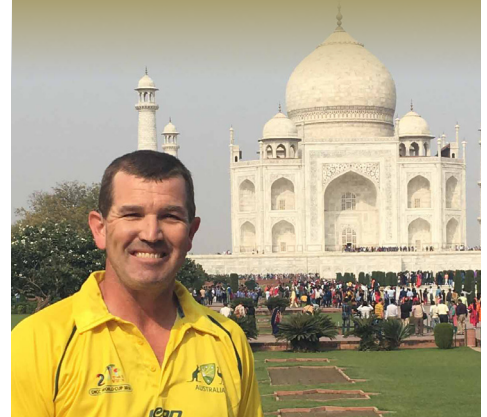
Adam was thrilled to be selected to play for Australia following the success of the South Australian Deaf Cricket team, of which he was Captain, when they brought home the Australian Championship's cup last year for the first time since 1991.

"It was an incredible honour to compete at an international level and represent Australia wearing the green and gold" he said.

"The tournament was very well organised and the Cricket was of a very high standard.

"Unfortunately, Australia missed the final on run rate, but we learnt from the experience, which is important particularly for our young players. Sri Lanka play extremely well and won the cup, returning home as heroes.

India is a fascinating place and... they simply love Cricket. I met many amazing people and the whole tour was a great experience" said Adam.





Planning for Visitors... to Far West Parks

The diverse parks and reserves of the Far West of South Australia cover vast areas. The larger parks continuously traverse approximately 50% of the state in an east to west direction.

Visitor Experience Strategies have been developed to improve visitor safety and access, protect environmental and cultural sites and to explore economic opportunities

through tourism in the Nullarbor and Far West Coast Parks.

The strategies were prepared in consultation with the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee and Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board.

Each strategy notes the current condition of facilities and access and environmental and cultural assets. They also include recommendations related to tourism opportunities such as accommodation.

caves and blowholes. The Nullarbor Parks are recognised as a largely intact and natural area and are listed on the National Wilderness Inventory (Australian Heritage Commission 2003).

The Mirning people have occupied the Nullarbor for thousands of generations. Evidence of this long history of occupation is present throughout the landscape, as well as in the memories, stories and associations of Aboriginal people on the Nullarbor.

The scientific community confirmed Aboriginal peoples' knowledge of their history by dating the finger flutings



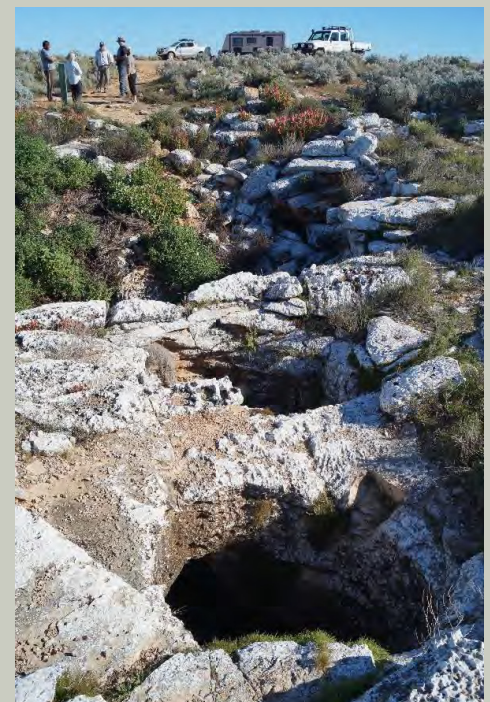
Nullarbor Parks

The treeless plains of the Nullarbor Parks are an internationally renowned iconic landscape. The saltbush and bluebush scrubland dominated plain is deceptively monotonous. Beneath the surface is part of the world's largest arid karst system consisting of many hundreds of dolines,

Left: Bunda Cliffs dropping from the Nullarbor Plain

Below: Entrance to one of the Murrawijinie caves

Below Left: Recommendations about Koonalda cave awaiting approval by NPAC





and other archaeological evidence in Koonalda Cave to 22,000 years ago. This was a significant discovery because it changed the view that Aboriginal people had occupied Australia for only 8,700 years. It proved that Aboriginal people had survived in the harsh semi-arid environment for far longer than previously thought.

The significance of Koonalda Cave to Australian and world history was recognised when it was listed as a National Heritage Place in 2014.

The planning process, in consultation with Traditional Owners and Department for Environment and Water staff included initial site visits and investigation, preparation of site analysis and option studies, consultation and site confirmation and revisions to planning studies.

Many opportunity options were considered such as walking tracks, tours, cave exploration, camping and cultural tourism, accommodation and visitor safety.

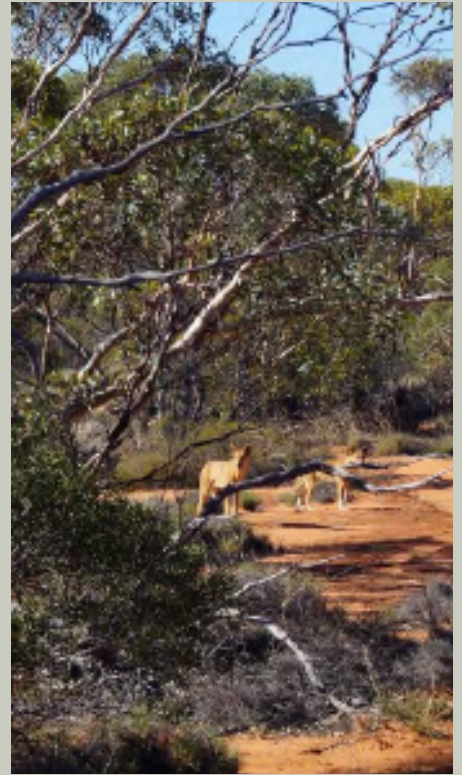
To support these activities a range of recommendations related to infrastructure, accommodation, way finding and interpretation signage are proposed.

Note: Currently the only caves with public access in the region are the Murrawijinies which between them feature examples of all the Nullabour karst structures.

Yellabinna and Yumbarra

The Yellabinna Parks consist of large areas of red quartzitic sand dunes with mallee, mulga and associated spinifex. The dunes are interspersed with salt lakes and rocky outcrops with rock holes that have sustained life in this landscape for eons.

Yumbarra Conservation Park protects large areas of sandy dunes country and its flora and fauna. It also includes the spectacular Googs Lake which is a popular visitor destination is only able



to be accessed by 4WD through woodland and dune landscape.

The extensive camping areas around the salt lake have been recently defined to reduce degradation with the support of NR Alinytjara Wilurara and local volunteer groups.

Opportunities proposed within the Plans for increased visitation are aimed at greater cultural awareness and protection of the fragile environment.

Based on Parks Visitor Experience Strategy Plans developed by Shannon Architects

Above: Dingoes in Yellabinna Regional Reserve
Below Left: Camp site at Googs Lake
Below: Protecting native flora at Googs Lake





Tourism Opportunities in South Australia's Far West



Between 29 and 31 October 2018 senior staff from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) visited various sites within the Alinytjara Wilurara and Eyre Peninsula NRM Regions to assess possible tourism assets and infrastructure in our parks and to consider opportunities for the future.

The Economic and Sustainable Development (ESD) staff and NRM regional staff visited five sites in the AW Region included the Head of Bight Whale Watching Centre, Murrawijinie caves, Koonalda homestead, Koonalda cave and Diamond bore.

An unmet demand for quality accommodation, nature-based and Aboriginal cultural experiences in the region presents a key opportunity for economic advancement.

Head of Bight Whale Watching Centre

Head of Bight Whale Watching Centre is managed by the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) who have developed concept plans with an architectural firm for future development of the site.

(L-R) Peter Wells (Snr Heritage Architect) Matt Johnson (Group Executive Director) and Pia Richter (A/AW Manager Parks and Co-management) at Head of Bight

Considered a game changing asset for the region, the visiting group noted the potential for the Centre to be a show-case for Aboriginal Tourism for the state and to generate significant revenue growth.

Having a National Parks ranger based at the Head of Bight might also be an option pending ALT and Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee (NPAC) consultation and approval.

Murrawijinie caves

Murrawijinie caves are currently managed by DEW as part of the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area.

The Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee has developed concept plans to manage visitors for the Murrawijinies. The Nullarbor Parks Strategic Plan is awaiting endorsement from NPAC Committee.

The caves provide an opportunity to introduce visitors to the Nullarbor and Aboriginal heritage, however visitor access works to and around the caves to manage public risk and impacts need to be considered.

Visitor wayfinding, cave signage and infrastructure would be undertaken in partnership with the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee.

Koonalda homestead

Koonalda homestead is regularly used for overnight stays by caravans and campers. However the structures are in poor condition, there is no interpretive signage, only one pit toilet and no other facilities.

Above: Koonalda cave entrance
Below: Gilberabbie Hut on the Nullarbor Plain



Visitor management concept plans have been submitted to Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee for the homestead and the cave site and include removing vehicle access away from the buildings, and providing adequate parking for visitors to walk into the site.

A number of other possible projects were noted for consideration by the NPAC. These included work on the old shearing shed, improving the facilities at Koonalda homestead to return it to usable condition and providing a managed camping area.

Improvements to the facilities and development of a camping area may be considered in partnership with Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation.

Stabilising and repairing the structures of heritage value may be done through the NPAC and perhaps support delivery of a trades training course.

The group also noted the potential for employment of campground hosts, or for an Aboriginal business to manage Koonalda homestead camping area.

It was also noted that mobile phone coverage at the homestead to support on-line booking and visitor safety would be an important requirement.

Koonalda cave

Koonalda cave is an Aboriginal heritage listed site of national significance and its geological value is equally substantial.

Visitors may well be unaware of the immense anthropological/archaeological significance of the Koonalda cave, and of its importance to the viability of the pastoral enterprise.

The need to close/rehabilitate all unwanted tracks, establish an unsealed



Piers Brissenden (Manager Crown Lands Program), Matt Johnson

carpark and viewing area and erect information signs and fencing was noted.

There is potential for a staircase to allow safe general visitor access. In addition to being a new experience this would likely manage much of the public risk of visitors wanting to walk the perimeter.

Also considered was the potential to partner with a tour operator/provider for guided access into the cave.

Diamond bore

Approximately 60km east of WA/SA border is the now disused DPTI depot known as Diamond bore.

This location has the potential to be developed as a tourist base point (perhaps offering glamping), for various tours to the caves, Bunda Cliffs, Eucla coastal area, whale watching and for walking/bike riding tours, particularly as there is already mobile phone coverage available at this site.

Aside from those photographed, Mary-Anne Healy (AW Regional Director), Mark Anderson (EP District Manager) and Robbie Sleep (EP Senior Ranger) joined the group.



(L-R) Jono Clark (EP Regional Director), Peter Wells (Snr Heritage Architect), Piers Brissenden, Matt Johnson, Pia Richter and Tim Hall (EP Manager Parks and Sustainable Landscapes)



Caring for Cultural and Heritage sites in Tallaringa Conservation Park

Contracted by NR AW, the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation (AMYAC) assess, maintain and develop infrastructure within the Tallaringa Conservation Park.

Work on-country in September 2018 focussed on sensitive cultural sites and areas of environmental significance identified through the Healthy Country Planning process. This builds on the work undertaken in 2017 related to cultural water sites.

A report for the Tallaringa Co-management Advisory Committee that outlines future work to resolve identified issues relating to unrestricted access to culturally sensitive places within the Park is being prepared.

In August, the AMYAC team surveyed the northern Tallaringa area for camel impacts. A significant amount of damage to fences and vegetation was recorded.

Recommended changes to signage, other infrastructure was proposed for consideration by the Tallaringa Co-management Advisory Committee.

All workers had completed prior training in Safe Handling of Dangerous Chemicals.

These contracts are funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.



Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference

Entrepreneurship - from little things, big things grow

The development of tourism in the Alinytjara Wilurara Region closely aligns with AW NRM Board objectives related to the health of People and Country.

To stay informed about the latest developments in Indigenous Tourism, the board supported Ranger Tamahina (Tammy) Cox who is based at the Ceduna Natural Resources Centre, and Wanda Miller from the Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board to participate in the Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference.

Held in Lorne (Victoria) in late October 2018, the conference brought together Aboriginal representatives from across Australia to share experiences, successes and hopes, to consolidate stronger directions and to inspire future action.

Keynote speakers included: Traditional custodians (including tour operators and Aboriginal Corporations); Tourism WA commissioner Kia Dowell, Reneta Lowe also from Tourism WA, WAITOC chair and board; Rhonda Murphy – Dept. Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions and; Nick Morris OAM – Accessibility and Universal Design for Indigenous Tourism.

When offered an unexpected opportunity to speak at the conference, Tammy and Wanda spoke about co-management and how tourism and natural resources management are closely interlinked.

This was further illustrated by a presentation by a group of Nywaigi people, Traditional Owners who successfully land manage their seasonal wetlands and tourism side by side on Mungalla Stud Station in Queensland.



Further information:
www.mungallaaboriginaltours.com.au

Another successful undertaking presented at the Conference was *Camping with Custodian*. With three campgrounds operating, and a further two yet to begin, the enterprise is 100% local Aboriginal owned. It promotes consistent, quality delivery of tourist experience/engagement and facilities.



Wanda Miller, Shelley Ware and Tamahina Cox

It also provides a platform for further tourism enterprises such as an art gallery, hospitality and jobs.

Other highlights discussed were: using Cultural Centres to expand Indigenous tourism, Aboriginal cultural security, tourism SA and using social media.

“Meeting Traditional Custodians from across the Country, making connections and learning about the great work our people are doing nation-wide was both encouraging and inspiring” said Tammy.

Tammy presented to the AW NRM Board in December on what she had learned and provided recommendations about future related endeavours. She emphasised the importance of Aboriginal tourism in helping protect and preserve traditional culture and how it encourages communities to become economically viable by providing income and jobs.

The World Indigenous Tourism Summit planned for 2020 in Perth strongly supports the inclusion of young Aboriginal people.

Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board member Wanda Miller “stopped to smell the roses”





Reconciliation at its Best

In September 2018, Wirangu Elder and AW NRM Board member Peter Miller joined South Australia's west coast locals and other dignitaries, to celebrate the official opening of the Elliston Coastal Trail and the Reconciliation ceremony held at the nearby Wirangu memorial. This was dedicated to the victims of the 1849 Waterloo Bay massacre. The Elliston Coastal Trail spans 13.6 km along the spectacular cliff top coastline between Little Bay Surf Break and Cape Finnis.

"My wife and I went to the monument early in the morning, before people started coming, while it was quiet. It was very emotional thinking about what happened at the cliffs and that it was finally being recognised in this way" said Mr Miller.

Peter said he was proud to have witnessed this day where, in the spirit

and true meaning of reconciliation, many sad and painful feelings could begin to heal. The only way for reconciliation to succeed in the future is through true recognition of the past, he said.

The speeches and visit to the Wirangu Reconciliation Monument were very moving for all of the estimated 200 people who attended. They were however delighted by a performance from the young Aboriginal dance troupe the Dusty Feet Mob. The dancers also held workshops for local youths to enjoy.

Amongst those attending: Mr. Peter Goers, OAM, (ABC Broadcaster), Mr. Jack Johncock (Vice Chairperson, Wirangu II Native Title Claimant Group), Mrs. Veda Betts, Mr. Peter Miller, Mr. Neville Miller, Mrs. Della Sansbury, (Wirangu Elders), Mr. Peter Treloar (MP, Member for Flinders, SA), the Hon. Kyam Maher (MLC, Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, SA), Mr. Alex Gallacher (SA Senator, Parliament of Australia), Mr. Pat Dodson (WA Senator, Parliament of Australia), Mr. Kym Callaghan (Chairperson, District Council of Elliston and Mr. Bill Denny (President of the SA RSL and Chair of the Aboriginal Veterans of South Australia Committee).

The designs for the Wirangu monument were drawn by 'Penong' (Vernon) Miller and etched onto the sculpture.

Helpers from the Elliston Men's Shed and CWA assisted with catering.

The celebration day was funded by The District Council of Elliston, the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board; Country Arts SA and Regional Arts Australia.

Aboriginal dance troupe, Dusty Feet Mob performing at the ceremony



Welcome Joseph

Joseph Sullivan: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Officer

With AW's MERI Officer, Aude Loisier heading off on maternity leave we are very happy to have found Jo whose MERI and program management experience is extensive. Jo comes to us from AMLR where he held the position of Water Projects Officer. His strong cultural awareness and desire to work with Aboriginal people make him a great addition to our AW team.

Welcome Karrena

Karrena Veltman: Sustainable Communities Coordinator

I am a Perth local of Noongar decent with a background in conservation and education. I began my career with the Department as an NRM Officer with Aboriginal Partnerships in the beginning of 2018 and have now made the move from EP to AW. I am very happy to have been selected for this position and I look forward to working with community and the new team. Cheers!





Co-managing Parks in the Alinytjara Wilurara Region

Co-management in South Australia is a partnership between the state government and Aboriginal groups and plays an important role in advancing the reconciliation process and resolving issues relating to traditional land ownership.

The involvement of Aboriginal people in the management of their traditional lands contributes to improved cultural site protection, maintenance of traditional practices that may have otherwise been excluded, and improved management of parks through the combination of traditional knowledge and contemporary science.

Levels of Co-management

Tier	AW Co-management Body	Land Owner and Management
1	Maralinga Lands Unnamed Conservation Park (Mamungari) Board	Co-management Board makes decisions on Aboriginal owned land
2	Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board	Co-management Board makes decisions on Crown land
3	Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee provides advice to Director/Minister on Crown land

Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board

Vision Statement developed through Healthy Country Planning:

We are all custodians of the Yellabinna and Warna Manda Parks, which are central to Far West Coast Aboriginal communities.

Our culture is strong and our people are proud - looking after, and sharing Country.

We welcome visitors.

We ask them to appreciate the sensitivity of this land and to respect our culture.

We want our Country to remain beautiful, unique and healthy for future generations to enjoy.

At the November Board meeting members discussed governance and endorsed the following behaviours.

- We are respecting each other and listening to each other
- We are working together
- We are all sharing
- We are really happy our views and knowledge are included

Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee

Vision Statement developed by the Committee through Healthy Country Planning:

The vast, spectacular and unique Nullarbor (Mirning Country) has a strong and respected spirit. Mirning people are taking care of Country and providing opportunities for all.

The Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee's most recent meeting was held in Ceduna during November 2018.

The proposed 2018-19 budget, draft Nullarbor Parks Management Plan and the wording for the Nullarbor Entry Signage were endorsed.

The members also discussed and identified the priorities of the Visitor Experience Strategy.

Plans for 2019 included progressing from having advisory capacity to becoming a Co-management Board and what that entails.

Future visitor management and tourism including karst management were also discussed and continued implementation of their Healthy Country Plan.

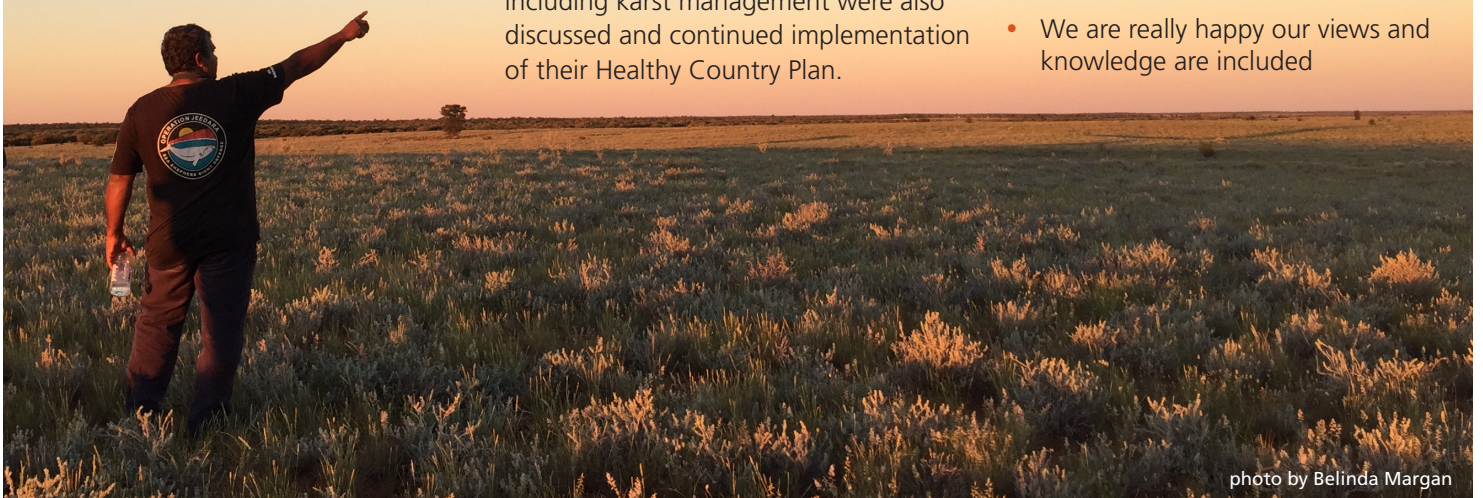


photo by Belinda Margan

- All the voices are making decisions
- The relationship of the Board is really good
- It's about what we want to happen on our munda (land)
- We are responsive and committed to our priorities
- We are all accountable to each other

Also endorsed were the Instrument of Delegation document, the proposed budget for 2018-19 and the Co-management in FWC Parks agreement with FWCAC, AW and EP.

Plans for 2019 included: extending the Board's co-management advisory capacity for the Warra Manda Parks to full Co-management Board status; progressing the Visitor Management Plan and; implementation of the Healthy Country Plan.

Maralinga Lands Unnamed Conservation Park (Mamungari) Board

Due to a number of unforeseeable circumstances the MLUCP Board have not convened this financial year.

Through *Out of Session* meetings however the Fire Danger Season gazettal was signed, financial statements endorsed and audit related endorsements and responses were made. The Oak Valley Ranger Program Steering Committee was established with financial delegations and authorisations endorsed. Camel management plans were also endorsed.



Conservation legend honoured at SA Environment Awards

2017 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Sue Colman Haseldine was awarded the 20th annual Jill Hudson Award for Environmental Protection at a gala ceremony at Tandanya on 2 September.

Ms Colman Haseldine, a proud Kokatha-Mirning woman and respected Elder, was recognised for a lifetime of work caring for Country. Her campaign to defend land and people against nuclear testing as a member of ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) culminated in her attending the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Awards ceremony in Oslo where she accepted the Award on behalf of the group.

"Sue's experience, attributes and values deeply align with those acknowledged by the Jill Hudson Award, and she is a continuing mentor and inspiration to many," said Dave Sweeney from the Australian Conservation Foundation.

"Many environmental activists and conservationists go for years without recognition. Last night was our opportunity to honour the work that these great South Australians do on behalf of all of us," said Craig Wilkins, Chief Executive of Conservation SA.

"South Australia is blessed with so many wonderful people looking after our environment. It is such a

Above: Taking a break from restoration work at Googs Lake in the AW Region

Right Sue Colman Haseldine's work caring for Country acknowledged at gala ceremony

thrill to acknowledge and celebrate their enormous contribution," said Mr Wilkins.

"This year, being the 20th anniversary of the Jill Hudson Award, was particularly special. It was a delight to gather previous winners, and remind ourselves again of what they have given the community over the last two decades," he said.

The Honourable David Speirs, Minister for Environment and Water was among the special presenters for the evening. The event was hosted by Conservation SA and sponsored by the Department for Environment and Water, Adelaide Cemeteries Authority and Gemtree Wines.





Tough Times for Hooded Plovers

In October 2018, Natural Resources AW Ecologist Brett Backhouse and Senior Ranger Robbie Sleep travelled west along the coast from Ceduna to Yalata beach to inspect the shoreline for signs of shorebird activity, in particular hooded plovers and oystercatchers.

The hooded plover (*Thinornis cucullatus*) is a small beach nesting species spread between New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Within South Australia, the species is known along much of the coast line in the South East, Kangaroo Island, Fleurieu Peninsula, the Yorke Peninsula and the Eyre Peninsula. The furthest western population occurs with the Alinytjara Wilurara Region along the sandy beaches of the Yalata Coast, extending up to the Bunda Cliffs

of the Nullarbor, where they are stopped by this natural barrier. It is estimated that there are only about 700 individuals within all of South Australia.



The populations of this species are reducing across their known regions. This is mainly due to pressures from feral cats and foxes, beach vehicle access by 4WD or bikes, and from people walking dogs along the beach. This is in addition to the natural pressures such as silver

gulls, snakes, goannas, birds of prey and even large scale storms. They have it tough.

The species is particularly vulnerable to these pressures when breeding. hooded plovers breed just above the high tide mark, in a very small scrape on the ground. The breeding pair use camouflage as a means of hiding their eggs making them hard to see, and lay in sandy areas where people typically walk dogs or drive vehicles. Even with camouflage, predators can and do, still find them. The tiny hooded plover chick remains vulnerable after hatching as it is flightless for the following 4 weeks.

Below left: Hooded Plover egg found prompting camera set up

Left: Fox caught by infrared camera at night

Below centre: Fox caught taking Plover egg

Below: Plover returns to find egg missing





Funded through the Australian Government's Regional Landcare Partnerships, Alinytjara Wilurara has been undertaking a project focused on attempting to identify threats to the Hooded Plover in the Yalata region, and to work on alleviating these pressures. The first challenge is to find breeding birds in the very large and dynamic coastal region, then once found, establish trail cameras at nests to observe it through the brooding and fledging period.

Thus far, a total of five pied oystercatchers nests and three red cap plovers (another two native beach nesting species with the same pressures as the hoodie) were found. These were observed over the period of a month on a number of trips.

Unfortunately, for the pied oystercatchers, none of the pairs appeared to be raising chicks. There were however a number of young red caps observed, indicating that this species has at least managed to hatch a few chicks. As for the hooded plovers, two pairs were monitored closely for nesting in the 'Granites' region, with

both pairs showing positive signs of attempting to nest. In October one of these was observed with a nest so a trail camera was quickly put in place.

This camera provided a great insight to the nest, and managed to record the Hooded Plovers at their nest for approximately a week after installation. Unfortunately, at this point, a fox also found the nest, and was caught on camera eating the eggs. It was feared that the installation of the camera may have attracted the fox to this area, however, on inspection of the other cameras in close proximity, no images of fox were noted, indicating that it was not the camera but the nest itself which attracted the fox.

These images provide a strong indicator that the hooded plover, and the other nesting birds such as the pied oystercatchers along this coast, are facing pressures from predators and future works can focus on predator control to make the chances of successful breeding more likely.



Above and below: Camouflaged eggs in scratches



below: Pied oystercatcher



by Brett Backhouse



Spectacular sculptures from Beach Debris



by Sue Ryan,
Art Director of the Ghost Net Art Project

In July this year the Ghost Net Art Project was invited to run an introductory workshop in Yalata with the aim being to make large sculptural works from net and rope and other marine debris. Back in 2014 we created Jidirah a four metre long Southern Right whale sculpture at Ceduna Arts with Ceduna artists and the help of some visiting Yalata women. Jidirah travelled to Europe for the blockbuster exhibition Taba Naba — Australia, Oceania, Arts of the Sea People at the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, after which went on to be exhibited in Paris and Geneva. Following this Ghost Net Art Project returned again to facilitate a 4 x 4 metre Blue Swimmer crab Guldamera with Ceduna artists. Jidirah and Guldamera were both exhibited in a museum in Switzerland where they were united for the first time and now reside together in Crans Montana in the Swiss Alps.

This year we were at it again, this time in Yalata. The workshop was funded by AW NRM and Ceduna Arts. I joined Ceduna facilitators Pam Diment and Sherrie Jones and with a trailer filled with old fishing net, rope and materials, we made our journey from

Ceduna to Yalata. Yalata CEO Desley Culpin arranged terrific accommodation which was to be our home for the next two weeks. Youth Coordinator Nigel Aspin supplied the work space at the back of the Youth Centre. Nigel had also involved youth to patrol local beaches to collect marine debris for the workshop. As we started to bring materials into the work space we were greeted by Derek Bryant and Polly Charra. Polly suggested we should make a Harlequin Fish, a big orange fish with blue markings found in

South Australian waters. Derek drew up the 2 metre pattern for the fish and the next minute Derek and I were splitting bamboo and frame making began before we'd even had the chance to unpack.

Thanks to Pam and Graham Diment who had sourced a wide range of abandoned fishing net and rope from Port Lincoln, we had a fantastic selection with lots of orange for the Harlequin Fish, coloured ropes and a good deal of black and white net, along with debris collected near Yalata. Available materials help dictate what will be made, so with this in mind a Killer Whale was also decided upon.

I began working on the 3 metre whale frame while Sherrie and Pam worked with participants on the Harlequin fish and other items. The weather was wet, windy and cold and a funeral affected participation. However people popped by throughout the workshop to have a look and joined in to help cover the frame with net, stitch and weave designs for the fish and split bamboo for the framework of the whale. By



Cassandra Binell working on one of the Harlequin Fish sculpture's fins



Bell who were absolute legends.

Cassandra created beautiful fins for the Harlequin fish while Julie powered in a stitch-a-thon mode to cover the whale in the various layers of black and white net for the form to take its shape. These two women proved to be natural ghost net artists! On the last day we had the big pack up and clean up and the Killer Whale and fish made their way to Ceduna Arts where the final finishing touches were to be made. I think the whale may have got some looks as it sailed by on the back of the trailer across the Nullarbor. Who knows where these artworks will end up? The world is their oyster!

the end of the first week we had the Harlequin fish well under way and the Killer Whale frame finished ready for covering with net.

The second week was all hands on deck to attempt to complete the two works which was quite an ambitious feat to say the least. The works started to come together to the delight of the Yalata people who had witnessed the early stages of development. It's at this point where people understand what on earth we are doing as the works take shape and seem to come to life with their own personalities. Big smiles from the community at this moment!

Towards the end, as we were getting tired with all the stitching we were joined by Julie Coleman and Cassandra

Many thanks to Bruce Macpherson from Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara and the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board for the core workshop funding; Serena Gunter from Ceduna Arts (funding and assistance); Desley Culpin CEO Yalata; Nigel and Mark at the Yalata Youth Centre; Elders and other participants at Yalata; Port Lincoln – materials; Graham Diment – net and rope wrangler and general trouble shooter; and to my excellent co-workers, Pam Diment and Sherrie Jones. Perhaps we will be back again next year to create a giant Mulloway! Stay tuned.

Above: Mima Smart busy weaving
Below Pam Diment and far west artists at work on the Killer whale sculpture



Spotlight on Sherrie

Sherrie Jones is one of a number of talented artists working at Arts Ceduna. She proudly shows visitors around the gallery, humorously sharing stories about the art works and Aboriginal culture.

She has travelled the world as a professional artist. Amongst her many accomplishments, she was a feature artist at the *Adelaide meets the Bush* exhibition at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute last March.

"It was fantastic being involved in the Ghost Net Project in Yalata this year with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists working together, using different materials and sharing stories with each other and the locals who wandered in," said Sherrie.

"To make something related to reconciliation we chose the black and white of a Killer Whale to reinforce that Indigenous and white people can work together to remind people about how important it is to take care of our environment.

"I'm learning to become an Outreach worker in Ceduna and being mentored by Pam Diment who's been involved in the Ghost Nets Program since it started in Ceduna. Her knowledge of the far west, the people and the art scene is amazing" she said.

Above: Killer Whale sculpture with teeth made from old things collected from far west coast beaches
Below Pam Diment, Sherrie and Sue Ryan in Yalata



Parry Agius
Presiding Member



AW NRM Board

Mima Smart
Board Member, Yalata



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

Debbie Hansen
Board Member, Tjuntjuntjara



Kristy Richards
Board Member, ALT



Julie O'Toole
Board Member, AMYAC



Peter Miller
Board Member, Far West Coast



Anton Baker
Board Member, APY Lands



Mick Haynes
Board Member, Far West Coast



Sally Scales
Board Member, APY Lands



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