

ACROSS THE

Edition 113

OUTBACK

OCTOBER 2026



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Cover image: *Sunset on the dunes.*
Photo: *David Wilkins, DEW AST team*

Background Image: *Oodnadatta Track,*
Isaac Forman, SATC

Artwork: *Marika Davies*

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to country and commit to working with the First Nations People of the SA Arid Lands as we undertake our business on this shared and sacred country.



Presiding Member update

Welcome to this edition of the widely read and valued *Across the Outback*, and my last Presiding Member update.

The bumper winter we have experienced with significant rainfall across the SA Arid Lands region has been a gamechanger for everyone.

The country has never looked better, with fat stock and breeding conditions ideal, alongside some future proofing for ground cover and grazing conditions as things naturally dry off.

With the many blessings that come from these conditions, the board faces a few extra challenges as well.

Projects, events and control operations have been postponed, multiple times in some instances. The growth and regeneration mean the numbers and spread of pest plants and animals also explode, so too, the pressure on our resources and people. On behalf of the board, I'd like to thank the proactive partners, land managers and community members who work with us to address the threats. If pest plants and animals remain unmanaged or untreated, they create much bigger problems for us all later.

The way nature and humans adapt never ceases to amaze me. Hopefully the locals and the visitors to our part of SA are appreciating the wildflowers, and a lot less dust.

Some stories and images in this edition will showcase both the seasonal conditions and the achievements of the board over the past year or so. I am proud to present this information to you, despite the many pivots across our business, we have continued to deliver a range of services and outcomes.

Finally, I will be stepping away from my role on the board with my tenure ending. My last meeting will be in December, making way for a new chair to begin in early 2027. It has been a privilege to serve the region on the SAAL Landscape Board and more recently as the chair. I wish the incoming board members and chairperson the very best in stewarding the board into the future. The Minister will announce appointments in November.

Thank you for the confidence placed in me to lead the board for the past four years.

Douglas Lillecrapp



General Manager update

Well, this has been a season for the record books. What a time it has been for residents, visitors, industry and our natural and productive landscapes in SAAL!

In this edition, you can engage with some of our high-level achievements and some great stories too, across our suite of programs. We have a feature on our outgoing chairperson who is a well known and loved resident and pastoralist in the region, who has many stories to tell and many more he probably can't! We will miss you, Douglas. Lucky for us all, you're still local and part of the 'landscape' we serve. Your honourable service through some complex matters, has brought us a great distance and we are grateful as a region and a staff, for your service.

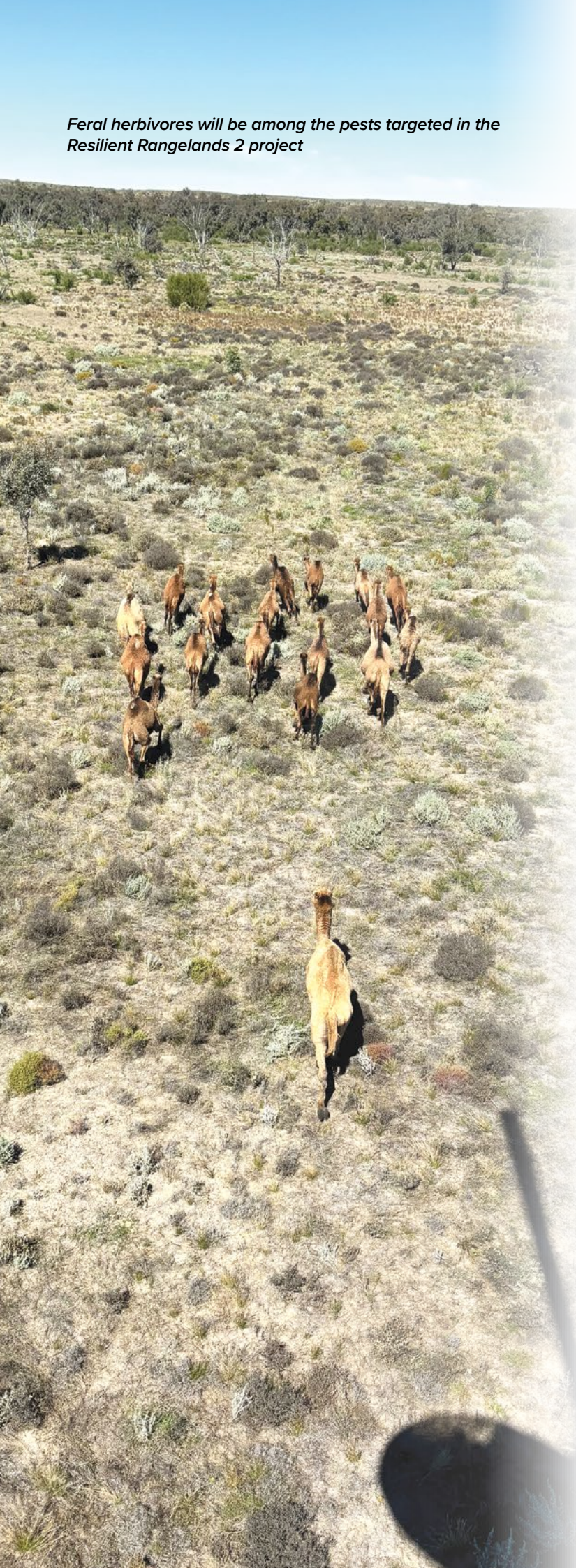
The pops of colour and expressions of our thriving natural landscape are throughout this edition, alongside some of the operations and programs we have undertaken to remove threats to the rare and sensitive places that make SAAL so unique.

The Kowari – a bit of a poser in one story, having persisted throughout the dry times, feral predation or stomping and the big wet, has brought much joy to the staff and other enthusiasts who painstakingly review camera footage (when the cameras are not under water or washed away). These discoveries after the careful planning and engagement, remind us that the integrated approaches to protecting, managing and restoring our habitat for nature, truly pays off. To that end, the land managers who have partnered with us to remove feral animals from the region – thank you.

Our resolve remains stronger than ever to prevent the biosecurity threats, with Bird Flu mitigation projects and reducing the transmission of diseases through the monitoring and removal of feral pigs. One of the trade-offs of plenty of water in the system, is the threat of these disease vectors and prolific breeders taking hold in some of our more sensitive country. Let's keep working together to tackle this issue and prevent the scourge some of our neighbouring states struggle to reverse. Every report helps us build a case for investment and plan landscape scale action.

The achievements report shows the volume and scale of our effort over the past year and I thank our amazing staff for their tireless commitment.

Jodie Gregg-Smith



Feral herbivores will be among the pests targeted in the Resilient Rangelands 2 project

New projects for Flinders springs and pest control

Projects to monitor the health of springs in the Flinders Ranges, and to provide a consistent approach to the control of pest plants and animals in the SA Arid Lands, have been funded by the Landscape Priorities Fund in 2026/27.

The SAAL Landscape Board received \$575,000 for the two projects.

Monitoring springs in the Flinders Ranges will record baseline monitoring data to help understand the ongoing health of the region's springs.

Anecdotal evidence suggests springs are under increasing pressures and this project will help determine the main risks to spring health and condition.

Through the project, staff will undertake fauna and flora assessments, monitor water quality and flow, and speak with landholders, First Nations and other stakeholders to determine the current health and condition.

Flinders springs are known to have varying permanency, hydrology and geomorphology. Many have Aboriginal cultural heritage values and all are refugia for aquatic biodiversity, water sources for native animals and stock, and are valuable for tourism.

Springs in the Flinders Ranges are threatened by climate change and growing seasonal variability, groundwater extraction and pest plants and animals. The collected data will be used to plan future and ongoing management options.

Resilient Rangelands 2 will provide a consistent, integrated and dedicated focus for on-ground control of pest plants and animals.

With pest populations growing, the funding builds on the existing two-year Resilient Rangelands project.

The project involves a coordinated approach to pest management, working with land managers, industry and government to tackle invasive herbivores, pigs and declared weeds and will provide landscape scale impact and shared responsibility to maintain productive, biodiverse and resilient rangelands.

The Landscape Priorities Fund is funded from landscape levies collected by Green Adelaide in the Adelaide metropolitan area and redistributed to South Australia's regional landscape boards to enable them to invest in environmental projects.

Established by the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, the fund enables investment in large, landscape-scale projects addressing regional and cross-regional priorities.



Yandruwandha/Yawarrwarrika Country

Birds take flight to Coongie

More than 124,000 waterbirds were counted in the most recent Aerial Survey of the Coongie Lakes wetlands, almost double the number surveyed in 2024.

Recently available results from the October 2025 survey, counted 39 different species of waterbirds in 49 wetlands across 24,935ha.

Widespread flooding and increased available habitat led to an increase in the abundance of birds, and widespread areas they were found. This was also thought responsible for a small decrease in species in 2025 – with 39 different species down on the 44 recorded in 2024.

The system total of more than 124,000 waterbirds in 2025 placed it within the top wetland systems ever recorded by the aerial survey program, which has undertaken 43 years of counts across eastern Australia.

Abundance was not evenly spread, with one unnamed wetland containing 73,074 waterbirds – or 59 per cent of the 2025

survey total. Almost 75 per cent came from five wetlands – Lake Sir Richard with 6031 and a further three unnamed lakes contributing an additional 21,619.

Ten species made up 95 per cent of the total number. Eurasian Coot experienced a 10-fold increase, most likely reflected by an increase in the abundance of aquatic plants.

A report from the survey stated that the unaltered natural flows of the major rivers and watercourses in the Coongie Lakes system, which includes flooding and dry periods, provides a dynamic and complex range of habitats for birds and aquatic species.

It went on to state that the unregulated condition of the Coongie Lakes wetlands and reserves makes it ideal for measuring

and understanding waterbird community dynamics, providing a rare opportunity as a reference point to measure against equivalent regulated or restored wetland systems. The survey was managed by the Centre for Ecosystem Science, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences from the University of New South Wales in Sydney and was completed as part of the board's Wetland Wonders project.

Wetland Wonders is funded by the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust and is delivered by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.

THE TOP 10 BIRD SPECIES FOUND IN 2025

- Eurasian Coot
- Grey Teal
- Hardhead
- Black-tailed Native-hen
- Pink-eared Duck
- Australian Pelican
- Pacific Black Duck
- Black Swan
- Small waders
- Plumed Whistling Duck

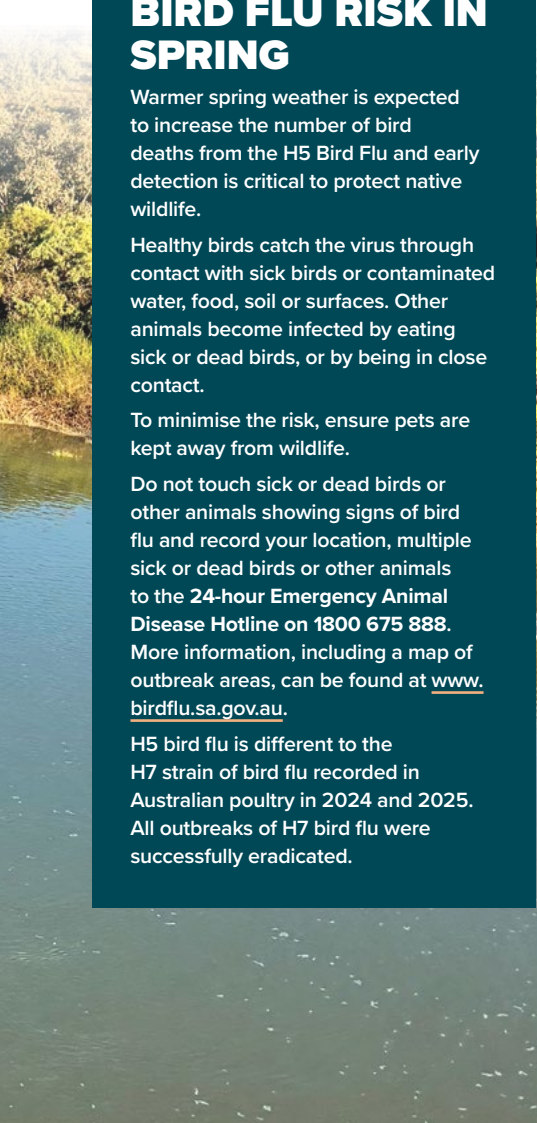


COONGIE LAKES

Coongie Lakes form part of the Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park, which covers more than two-million hectares and serves as a vital arid wetland for migratory birds, native fish and other wildlife.

It was officially designated as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance on 15 June 1987. To maintain that status, it needs to have more than 20,000 birds or one per cent of the total population of a single species.

In addition, the site needs to provide a critical winter roosting, feeding or drought refuge location; support vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered bird species and host a significant number of plant or animals during a critical stage in their biological cycles.



INCREASED BIRD FLU RISK IN SPRING

Warmer spring weather is expected to increase the number of bird deaths from the H5 Bird Flu and early detection is critical to protect native wildlife.

Healthy birds catch the virus through contact with sick birds or contaminated water, food, soil or surfaces. Other animals become infected by eating sick or dead birds, or by being in close contact.

To minimise the risk, ensure pets are kept away from wildlife.

Do not touch sick or dead birds or other animals showing signs of bird flu and record your location, multiple sick or dead birds or other animals to the **24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888**. More information, including a map of outbreak areas, can be found at www.birdflu.sa.gov.au.

H5 bird flu is different to the H7 strain of bird flu recorded in Australian poultry in 2024 and 2025. All outbreaks of H7 bird flu were successfully eradicated.

BITEBACK NEWS



Wild dog control support has been bolstered with the Sheep Industry Fund (SIF) providing \$425,100 for trapper, bait injection services and remote aerial baiting.

The SAAL Landscape Board will receive \$165,000 from the SIF funding to cover the costs associated with its biannual injection services, provide subsidised manufactured baits to landholders and provide free baits in response to wild dog reports.

This will see the board reverse its recent decision for landholders to co-contribute to bait injection services, which was made when there was a gap in industry co-funding.

PIRSA led programs will receive \$255,000 for the continuation of remote aerial baiting in hard-to-reach places along the dog fence and for the professional dog trapping program. In 2025/26 the trapper program removed 54 dogs from within the SA Arid Lands.

The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board received \$5100 for contributions to the Box Flat wild dog control group.

In other changes to the management of wild dogs, a change to the policy relating to mandatory dog baiting areas has occurred, moving away from a complex bait per track calculation to a bait per property-size, capped at 1000 baits per property. Landholders have been sent a map of their property

that displays boundaries, total area and the number of baits required per baiting round. This change will reduce the number of baits required by some properties and in a few cases, will see the baiting requirement increase.

In the 2025/26 financial year just 23 per cent of properties required to bait met the requirements. Properties baiting, but not to the required level amounted to a further 42 per cent, while 35 per cent of landholders south of the fence and in the buffer zone were not baiting at all.

Landholders failing to bait were sent reminder letters from the board, and most have booked into Spring injection services as a result.

Preventative baiting plays a significant role in reducing impacts to sheep operations and protects the livelihoods of outback communities and the viability of the pastoral industry.

When undertaken at a landscape scale, baiting reduces the dog numbers across the region, reducing the impact of predation in the sheep industry.

Reporting of any wild dog activity and impacts is pivotal to the Biteback Program and key partners in being able to resource, customise and respond to the management of wild dogs.

SPRING INJECTION SERVICES

Injection services began in late September and will continue until late October.

- North Flinders-Marree
28 September -1 October
- Gawler Ranges
14-15 October, 28-29 October
- North East Pastoral
19-22 October
- Kingoonya
26-28 October



Alana Anderson

A



Riley Fisher



Jade Inglis



Tori Lowe

OUTBACK IN BLOOM

Pops of red, pink, yellow, orange, white and plenty of green are bringing the SA Arid Lands to life in a way that hasn't been seen for many years.

Blooming in response to an exceptional year of rainfall, you'll be hard pressed to miss something in flower anywhere across the region.

In the Flinders among paddocks of Sturt desert peas (*Swainsona formosa*) in red, pink and white, the Mulla Mulla (*Ptilotus exaltatus*) are splendid in shades of pink and wattles are providing pops of yellow in a landscape of green.

Head north on the Stuart Highway towards Glendambo and you'll spot Orange Peas (*Swainsona stipularis*). Amongst the Sticky hop bush (*Dodonaea viscosa*), Marieana recruitment and senna species are yellow Ptilotus (*Ptilotus gaudichaudii* and *Polystachyus*) and purple Wild Parsnip (*Trachymene glaucifolia*).

There is a swathe of purple peas (*Swainsona* spp) along the William Creek road and carpets of Poached egg daisies (*Polycalymma stuartii*) in sand dune country, while peas are plentiful amidst the Koonamore daisies (*Erodiochrysum eldredii*), trefoil (*Lotus australis*) and senna species in the North East Pastoral.

While some say it is not as wet as some years in the mid seventies, it is an impressive rainfall year by anyone's standards.

By mid year, Bollards Lagoon in the Far North East had received more than 605mm, Partacoona, near Quorn had received 469mm, Koonamore in the North East Pastoral had received 308mm and Thurlga in the Gawler Ranges had received 308mm. In the Kingoonya district, Billa Kalina had received 270mm – when the property's average is just 140mm.

On the Birdsville Track, 480mm had been recorded until 1 September at Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Kalamurina Wildlife Sanctuary. It included 107mm in three hours at the end of February to bring an end to intense hot and dry conditions.

Grasses and herbaceous species started to cover the sand dunes and clay pans after that rainfall event. The follow up rain through winter resulted in the wildflowers merging with the grasses, turning the entire landscape to green with flourishes of purple, yellow and white.



Ryan Hayward

C



Elisa Sparrow

D

“The vegetation is so thick in areas, it is hard to walk through,” the property’s Senior Land Management officer Dr Annemarie van Doorn said.

Birds are taking advantage of the incredible conditions, evident along the Warburton River, as well as through the surrounding landscape, just as they are across the SA Arid Lands.

“On any given day at the homestead, you can find flocks of spoonbills, herons, ibises and pelicans flying overhead, budgies nesting in old fenceposts, orange and crimson chats in flocks across the sand dunes, avocets foraging in flooded clay pans and brown and rufous songlarks singing all day,” she said.

“There is evidence of Dusky Hopping Mice and Crest-tailed Mulgara in the sand dunes and as temperatures rise, we are seeing more reptiles such as Painted Dragons becoming more active.”

At Kalamurina, detailed fauna and bird surveys are conducted routinely to assess species diversity and abundance. However, with the property isolated most of 2025 due to flooding and in 2026 due to local rainfall, the surveys have been postponed until 2027. When they happen, the results should be exciting.

In the Gawler Ranges, opportunistic Sturt Desert Peas had appeared in the thousands at Thurlga Station in late August, with pink peas found amongst the red.

Owner Ian Morris said it was one of the best seasons he’d seen, and while the peas were plentiful in 1996, they were not as thick then as they are this year.

He has seen a lot of ground dwelling birds and expected the Billy buttons (*Pycnosorus*) and paper daisies (*Rhodanthe chlorocephala*) to bloom when the weather warms up.

In early September, Thurlga had received 400mm, far more than the property’s average of 250mm. Thurlga’s highest rainfall was recorded in 1992 with 600mm, and Ian said, with some early summer rains, that figure could be achievable again.

“Coming off some dry years, it’s great to see how the country bounces back,” he said.

Now is a perfect time to visit the SA Arid Lands. ‘Wattle’ you miss if you don’t?



G

Tori Love



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Tori Love



I

Jade Inglis



J

Tori Love

A Carpet-of-snow (*Lobularia maritima*)

B Sturt Desert Peas (*Swainsona formosa*)

C Minnie daisies (*Minuria leptophylla*)

D Multicoloured peas (*Swainsona formosa*)

E Sticky hop bush (*Dodonaea viscosa*)

F Hairy Mulla Mulla (*Ptilotus helipteroides*)

G Wild Parsnip (*Trachymene glaucifolia*)

H Orange Peas (*Swainsona stipularis*)

I Sturt's pigface (*Gunniopsis quadrifida*)

J Purple Darling pea (*Swainsona purpurea*)

K Fleshy groundsel (*Senecio gregorii*)

K



Tori Love



Ongoing control makes an impact at Coongie Lakes

Repeated control efforts are making an impact on feral pig numbers in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar area – with no sign of the pest during a recent control program. At a time when H5 bird flu is a high risk, it is welcome news for reducing the potential spread of the disease in such a diverse bird population.

For more than a decade, the internationally important Coongie Lakes Ramsar area, and the vulnerable birds, mammals and reptile species that call it home, have been protected with annual aerial control programs.

A season of exceptional rainfall, which followed a year of flooding resulted in this year's control program being expanded to other areas of the Warburton-Diamantina Creek catchment, to tackle rising pig numbers.

In one of the most successful programs ever undertaken by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, the week-long exercise used thermal survey techniques and was supported by National Parks and Wildlife Service SA aerial marksmen and pastoral landholders to target pigs.

In addition to removing 630 feral pigs, the aerial program removed 985 large feral herbivores and three feral cats from the landscape – which will have a lasting impact on the wetland and other key conservation, cultural and pastoral areas and the threatened flora, fauna and the tens of thousands of migratory birds that move into the wetland annually.

At a time when there is a high risk of H5 avian influenza (bird flu) spreading

among bird populations, removal of pigs was a priority. Feral pigs damage habitat by trampling plants and increasing erosion. They also prey on birds, their chicks and eggs. The feral pest may be a high-risk spreader of H5 bird flu should it impact the wetland, through movement of infected soil and as scavengers of infected birds.

These control efforts are already helping build stronger populations and healthier habitat, supporting at-risk native species to better withstand and recover from the potential impacts.

Removing more than 1600 pests from the landscape will also have a lasting impact on native vegetation. Each day, 7060kg of dry matter will be left on the ground. Over one year, that equates to 2577 tonnes of vegetation retained in the landscape, benefitting native animals and production.

The aerial control program was funded by the Australian Government's H5 bird flu preparedness package and delivered by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board.

PROPERTY TRIAL LEADS TO SMARTER PIG CONTROL

Feral pig monitoring in remote areas could become easier following a technology trial undertaken on Strathearn Station in the North East Pastoral district.

The two-week monitoring system field trial in August demonstrated the capability of the system to reliably transmit remote monitoring data in the field.

Using the technology, remote monitoring of pig traps and bait stations in near real time, reduces the need for frequent on-site inspections. It improves response time, animal welfare outcomes and operational efficiency.

The monitoring system trialed is expected to significantly reduce the frequency of site visits by both staff and landholders, allowing trap activity to be assessed remotely and only requiring attendance when operationally necessary.

The trial project focused on its suitability for long-term remote use in all weather conditions. It included investigating remote camera hardware, Starlink and mobile connectivity options, solar charging systems, battery storage, and low-voltage power management systems to maximise operational uptime.

The platform is also being designed as a portable and scalable off-grid monitoring solution that may support additional remote monitoring applications in the future.

The technology trial was part of a larger trial to test the use of mobile pig baiting stations in periods of flooding and extensive food resources. They had previously only been used in dry conditions.

The baiting program resulted in the removal of 30 pigs; all were baited prior to the addition of the satellite monitoring system.





*Hawker Area School principal Daren O'Neil plants a *Eucalyptus socialis* along a walking trail reserve in the town. The project was funded by a 2026/27 Grassroots Grant.*



*Theres Bertram takes a close look at a *Balcanoona* wattle in the Copley Botanic Garden. It is one of many native species thriving in the garden since fencing was added to keep pests out.*

Support for community-driven projects

Arid Recovery will study the interactions of threatened Plains Mice with Western Quolls, Hawker students will plant 100 Eucalypts in the development of a community walking trail and a rainwater tank will reduce pressure on a shared aquifer in Blinman through the board's 2026/27 Grassroots Grants round.

Seventeen projects have shared in \$150,000 in a round that attracted 25 applications worth almost double the available funding.

Also funded this year are projects to limit impacts of pest plants and animals, including support for volunteers who have been central to cactus control in the North Flinders district for many years,

Nukunu Wapma Thura received funding for a community-led cultural event at Quorn's Pithi Kawi Bush Food Garden, which will bring together Elders, youth, students and residents to celebrate Nukunu culture through storytelling, language activities and junior Ranger style learning.

Stirling North Primary School received funding for a day-long nature-based learning experience for Year 5-6 students and at Leigh Creek Area School, students will be involved in hands-on learning experiences covering ecological monitoring with Yellow-footed Rock

wallabies with the Adelaide Zoo.

Port Augusta Coastcare received funding to offer local schools and the community an environmental education program with the Marine Discovery Centre.

Funding was also provided for signage at Strangways Springs to support the work of the Friends of Mound Springs.

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board chair Douglas Lillecrapp said all funded projects aligned with the board's key priorities and the goals of the Grassroots Grants program.

It was the seventh round of the Grassroots Grants, an annual funding program introduced with the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. Full details of funded projects are available at www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal/get-involved/grants-funding/grassroots-grants

False Sarsparilla
(*Hardenbergia violacea*)



LANDSCAPE GROUP NEWS

PORT AUGUSTA/QUORN

Members of the Port Augusta-Quorn Landscape Group met in late August to set out a plan to guide the group's work for the next two years.

Among priorities for the district is supporting nature education opportunities to help foster a shared responsibility for landscape stewardship, as well as promotion of district weed management to reduce impacts of pest plants on production systems.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to acknowledge Richie Paynter, Francene O'Connor and Rebecca Buono, who extended their terms on the Port Augusta-Quorn group extended.

The majority of participants completing Chemcert training in July were Quorn farmers. The training will now help landholders with accessing chemicals for ongoing weed control work.

Community Landscape Officer Brett engaged with local landholders at the Quorn Agricultural Show in August.

Copies of the *Grazing Value of Common Pastoral Plants* were popular, as were *Plant Local*. If you would like a copy of either of these publications, please get in touch with Brett.

A *Things that Bite and Sting* workshop with Julian Craig will be run in Port Augusta in November. Keep an eye on the board's social media channels for location and registration details.

The group will next meet in Quorn on Friday 13 November.

Brett Devitt: 0409 753 495
Brett.devitt@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: Group members Jodie Harris, Rebecca Buono, Garret Miller and Francene O'Connor joined the planning discussion.



MARLA-ODDNADATTA

Two new members were welcomed to the Marla-Oodnadatta Landscape Group at its most recent meeting at Wintinna.

Janet Walton and Andrew Clarke joined the group as members for the next two years, with existing member Donnagh Clarke reappointed as a proxy.

To promote the understanding of land systems and how they can influence production and biodiversity, the group supported a *Rangeland Management Course* with Ali Kain and Caleb Schwartz from the Northern Territory Pastoral team at Macumba Station for 15 attendees.

To encourage landholders to better understand ways to trial adaptive land management, the group supported a *Self Herding workshop* at Todmorden with

Bruce Maynard. It was attended by 24 station hands and managers.

To connect the city to the rangelands, Community Landscape Officer Tori Love facilitated a *Mound Springs Seminar* at Adelaide University with the Friends of Mound Springs and Arabana Aboriginal Corporation.

A *Growing Native Gardens* initiative was well supported and delivered two community projects and three additional projects on pastoral properties.

Tori Love: 0408 807 498
Victoria.love@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: Bailey Rogers, Community Landscape Officer Tori Love and Paul Quinn collect dry vegetation in the Rangelands Management Course at Macumba.

NORTH FLINDERS

During the North Flinders Landscape Group meeting at Oratunga Station in September, members shared observations and emerging issues from around the region.

Updates were provided on key water initiatives, including regional water projects, the Flinders Ranges Springs Monitoring Project, and the review of the Water Affecting Activity Policy, followed by discussions on local water management concerns and successes. At a spring on the property, members observed site conditions firsthand, identified indicators of a healthy spring system, and engaged in discussions with the SAAL water team.

It was the first meeting held after Chris Ferguson was appointed as the group's chair. Mopsy Daniels

and Reg Wilton had their terms extended in the recent district group membership call.

Hawker and Leigh Creek students will experience an Oceans to Outback tour in October and snake awareness training in November, both supported by the group.

A community pizza night at Mt Little Station will follow the group's next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday 4 November.

Alice Allington: 0436 403 682
Alice.allington@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: North Flinders Landscape Group members Mopsy Daniels, Theres Bertram, Chris Ferguson and Gini Lee visited springs on Oratunga Station, where they heard from the board's water staff Julia Short and Tori Love.

NORTH EAST PASTORAL

Yunta Race Club grounds and cemetery are looking greener after local residents planted 120 trees and shrubs in July. The National Tree Day event was attended by 20 locals and followed similar events in Yunta and Olary. Keep an eye on your emails for the location for next year's event.

A Feral Animal Control Trapping workshop at Olary was well attended and timely, given some properties had noticed signs of feral pigs. Some properties were involved with a control trial using PIGBAITTA and 15 sites on properties in the district's north will now be monitored for feral pigs as a plan is made with property owners for future control.

With pigs on the rise, there will be more controlled efforts to manage populations. Property owners are encouraged to report impacts by contacting Ryan or reporting through Feralscan.

Group members Nick Rasheed and Aaron Crowley had their

terms extended during the recent membership call.

The group's most recent meeting was held in Peterborough and was a joint meeting with the Port Augusta-Quorn group. While each group has a different focus, it was a good opportunity for members to understand how priorities change from region to region.

Yunta Race Club will host the North East Field Day in June 2027. Early planning is underway – if there's something you'd like to see at the event, contact Ryan as the Community Landscape Officer.

Ryan Hayward: 0459 762 603
Ryan.hayward@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: David Ladd, Chris Duthy, Warren Breeding with Jude, Betina Bendall, Ros Breeding, Eva Kessler, Ruby Duthy, Mel Lewis, Lisa Crawford, Stella Duthy, Sheryl Lewis, Ava Duthy and Richard Steel at the National Tree Day event at Yunta.

GAWLER RANGES

The Gawler Ranges Landscape Group welcomed three new group members. Pastoralist and ecologist Jacob Mills, ecologist Grace Hodder and Iron Knob Progress Association's Public Officer Rebecca Allport have joined the group following the recent group membership call.

In July, the group joined the Port Augusta-Quorn Landscape Group for a combined meeting in Whyalla. This included a glass-bottom boat tour and discussions around how a group of locals have raised the profile of the giant cuttlefish. This had many flow-on effects around conservation, nature engagement, tourism and education. The activity sparked conversations around potential projects to improve conservation outcomes for key species in both districts.

In September, the group gathered to begin drafting a new District Action Plan for 2027/2028. It is a process that will continue at the group's November meeting.

The group is actively seeking to connect and engage with all sectors of the community to support positive landscape and community outcomes for the Gawler Ranges district.

If you would like to learn more about the Gawler Ranges District Landscape Group or have a project the group may be able to support, please contact the Community Landscape Officer.

Nick McInerney: 0477 307 038
Nicholas.mcinerney@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: At the combined meeting of the Port Augusta-Quorn and Gawler Ranges Landscape Groups were, from left, operator Steve Storic, Brett Devitt, Waynes Wadsworth, Rebecca Buono, Pauline Zanet, Nick McInerney, Richie Paynter, Karl Wurst, Renata Hackett, Wendy Walladge, Tammy Leggett, Victoria McCarron, Phobe Michael, Barbara Murphy and Amanda Michael.



MARREE-INNAMINCKA

New member Ali Matthews of Innamincka was welcomed to the Marree-Innamincka Landscape Group at its latest meeting.

The group is supporting a visit of the Oceans to Outback tour to Marree Aboriginal School in October and funding Snake Awareness training in November, in time for the hot weather and a likely increase of reptile sightings and movement.

An Innamincka Bird guide, being developed in collaboration with National Parks and Wildlife Service SA and the Friends of Innamincka Reserve, is also being supported by the group.

A feral and unwanted cat control program in Marree through a desexing and trapping program run by Outback Communities Authority, was also supported by the group.

Wet weather and road closures

have caused the postponement of community events and training. *Walkshops* that will discuss plant identification and their nutritional value have been rescheduled to 2027, as has the Mungerannie Community and Family Day.

At the group's next meeting in November, the group will focus on identifying priorities and actions for the next two years.

Alice Allington: 0436 403 682
Alice.allington@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: Kowari monitoring is planned for the northern part of the Marree Innamincka district later this month.

KINGOONYA

Members of the Kingoonya Landscape Group are keen to foster and showcase environmental stewardship throughout the region.

The group hosted *Red Dirt, Green Thumb* – a workshop with Andamooka residents and school students learning how to read the landscape.

A *Native plants for community groups* project was fully subscribed. It has resulted in one large community project in Kingoonya and four smaller projects on pastoral properties in the district.

To increase the conversation about goats moving north and identifying their impacts, a *Plants under Pressure* browsing workshop was held at North Well in September. It was designed to increase collective knowledge on impacts and early warning signs.

The group supported the Outback Community Authority's feral and unowned cat management program in Andamooka in September to increase awareness of the impact feral predators have on native species.

The district's properties have received soil tool kits, to help them understand how soil health influences biodiversity and landscape rehydration.

The group's next meeting will be held at Arid Recovery on 1 October, where members will look at local soil erosion works.

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Victoria.love@sa.gov.au

IMAGE: A native plant workshop at Andamooka was well supported.



Landscape-scale approach removes 11,000 goats

Landowners have been supported to control feral goats with more than 11,000 goats removed through aerial goat musters in the North Flinders and North East Pastoral districts, and aerial control in the Gawler Ranges.

The removal of feral goats is aimed at improving environmental and production outcomes, including protecting stock feed resources from overgrazing. Some goats that didn't meet 'fit for load' welfare standards were also used to support feeding programs at Monarto Safari Park.

Twelve properties applied and were selected to be involved in the mustering program based on their willingness to work with neighbours to ensure a broader, landscape-scale impact.

It involved SAAL-funded helicopters and property-funded ground mustering support and goat transport. Land managers were also required to manage unmarketable goats or use the board's undersize goat program.

In the North East Pastoral, one helicopter mustered almost 6000 goats from five properties in the Yunta area in late May.

A month later, seven properties in the Blinman area were supported by two helicopters, able to muster 3447 goats. It included 341 unfit to load goats that were used to provide feed to carnivores at Monarto Safari Park.

The Helifarm pilots flying the North Flinders lines said having the use of two helicopters in hard-to-reach areas made a difference to the numbers mustered, potentially increasing mustered goats in those areas by 50 per cent.

The aerial mustering program was funded through the board's Resilient Rangelands project, which was funded by the State Government's Landscape Priorities Fund.

In the Gawler Ranges, aerial control was undertaken as a joint program with the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board and National Parks and Wildlife Service SA.

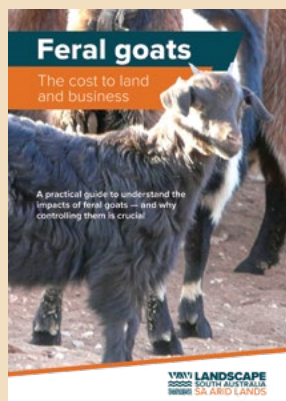
The 29 hours of control undertaken in the SAAL region resulted in the removal of 723 goats from five properties, as well as 900 goats from publicly managed land in the Gawler Ranges National Park and Ironstone Hill and Lake Gilles Conservation Parks.

The control in SAAL was undertaken through the Protecting the Feedlot project, which is funded through the State Government's Landscape Priorities Fund. Control on publicly managed land was funded through the Department for Environment and Water's Bounceback program.

With the average single dry feral goat consuming 900g of dry vegetation per day, the removal of 11028 goats from the landscape has saved 9925 kg of vegetation cover across the three districts of SAAL each day. Calculated over one year, that amounts to 3226 tonnes of vegetation saved.

To better understand the cost of goats to the landscape and production businesses, the booklet, **Feral goats – The cost to land and business** is a practical guide to understanding the impacts and why control is crucial to your pastoral business.

Download a copy of the booklet on our website at www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal



SA Arid Lands Landscape Board ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT 2025-2026

Leading the way to biodiverse and productive landscapes in a changing climate

Each year, the SA Arid Lands (SAAL) Landscape Board delivers projects and programs across five key priority areas.

The SAAL Landscape Board works across Outback SA, partnering with community, industry, traditional owners and government agencies to sustainably manage, protect and restore soils, water, native plants and animals.

It's work balances the needs of regional communities with the long-term health of the environment.

The board also acts as the relevant authority for a range of water, land protection, and animal and plant control activities.

This work is funded through a land-based Landscape Levy and a water levy, and additionally grant funding, both from state and federal government, and industry.

The board has five strategic priorities:



CLIMATE RESILIENT REGION



PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS



WATER MANAGEMENT



ADAPTIVE LAND MANAGEMENT



PROTECTING AND ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

This achievement report provides a snapshot of what was achieved in 2025-26

The SA Arid Lands region

525,000 km² or
52,500,000 ha



25,000
people live here

Average

annual rainfall
100-250 mm



19 Traditional Owner Groups

Adnyamathanha, Antakirinja
Matu-Yankunytjatjara, Arabana,
Barngarla, Dieri, Eringa, Gawler
Ranges, Irrwanyere, Kokatha,
Kuyani, Malyankapa, Ngadjuri,
Nukunu, Tjajiwara Unmurur,
Wangkangurru/ Yarluyandi,
Walka Wani, Wilyakali,
Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka



Main industries

Mining,
Pastoralism,
Renewable energy,
Tourism



Major centres

Port Augusta, Quorn, Hawker,
Woomera, Roxby Downs,
Andamooka, Coober Pedy,
Leigh Creek, Marree





CLIMATE RESILIENT REGION

Resilient landscapes, communities and enterprises are mitigating and adapting to climate change

Revegetation trials to build climate resilience

Revegetation trials underway in the North Flinders, Gawler Ranges and North East Pastoral districts have delivered varying results.

Undertaken as part of the board's *Building Pastoral Sustainability* Project, the demonstration site trials tested a range of methods to rehydrate and revegetate soil.

The highly sodic and salty nature of the 1ha revegetation site at **Wilkatana Station** was found to be the biggest constraint to establishing vegetative cover. Slow germination resulted from heavy rains early in 2026, but the sodic clay soils meant it was difficult to maintain good drainage.

Having been used for grazing and cropping for many years, the soil at **Rockville, near Hawker**, was fertile, with good structure.

Deep ripping improved rainfall infiltration on a 6ha fenced site and a Frankenpitter was trialled to improve water holding capacity and deliver seed into the soil profile. Plant growth here should build soil organic matter, improving soil structure and allowing rainfall infiltration.

Mt Victor's site was fenced to exclude stock and encourage regeneration. The clay loam soil was highly sodic and dispersive, and contained calcrete deposits, which are common across low rainfall regions.

Four trial plots were established using deep ripping and pitting, and laid commercially-sourced wood pellets, aged sheep manure, biochar, wool scraps and native perennial plant seed across the soil bed.

The trials are continuing.

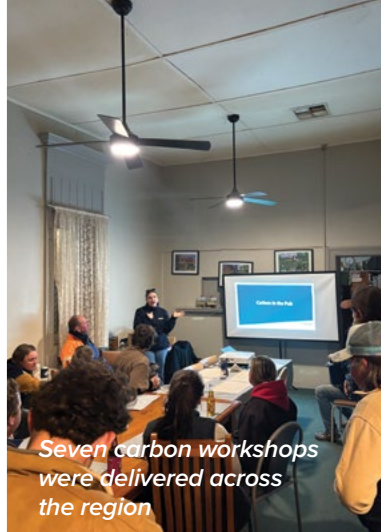


This site at Wilkatana was one of three across the region used as part of a revegetation trial



Transect monitoring formed part of the Hiltaba Landscape Rehydration workshop

A frankenpitter was used as part of the revegetation trial near Hawker



Seven carbon workshops were delivered across the region



The board offers weather station data across the region



The board supported tours at the Koonamore Vegetation Reserve centenary celebration



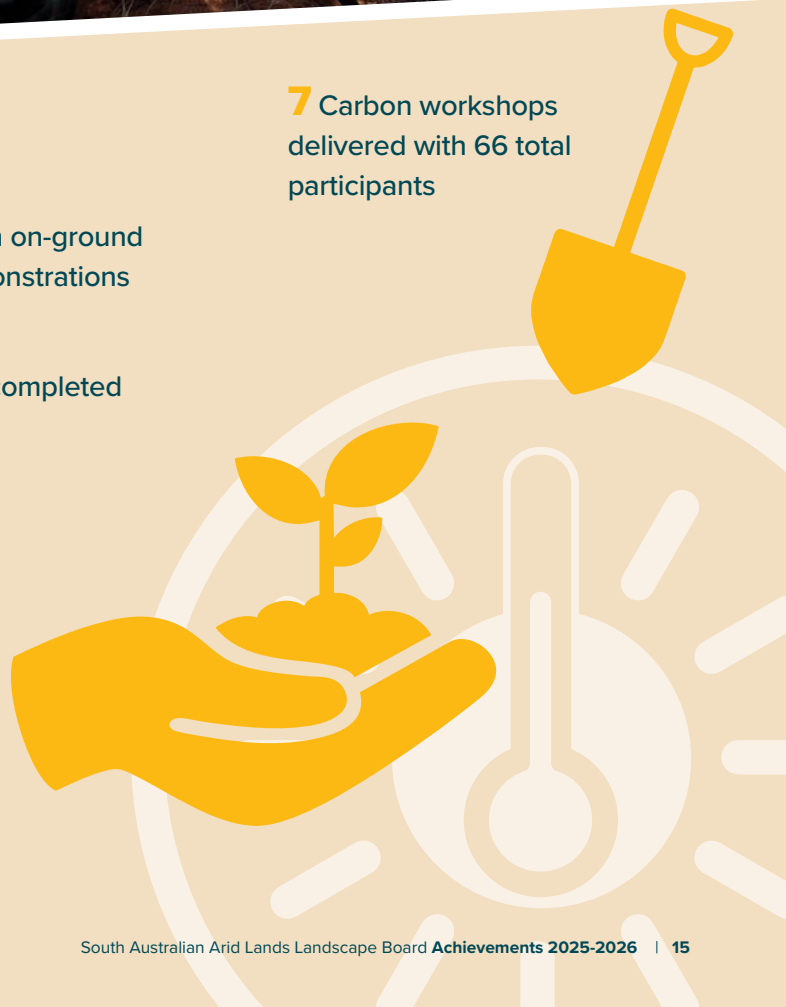
3 Ecologically Sustainable Rangelands Management (ESRM) plans developed

7 training events hosted with 157 total participants

3 revegetation on-ground trials and demonstrations delivered

64 soil tests completed

7 Carbon workshops delivered with 66 total participants





PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS

People and community are central to looking after our landscapes

Celebrating the contribution of volunteers

The contribution made to environmental outcomes in the SAAL region by Adelaide-based volunteers were celebrated in October 2025.

The Adelaide event was attended by representatives from the Friends of Mound Springs, Retire Active SA Bushwalkers, Four Wheel Drive SA, Toyota LandCruiser Club SA, Range Rover Discovery Club of SA, Mitsubishi 4WD Club, Friends of Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park, and the Overland 4WD Club.

Volunteers heard about how their involvement supports the work of the board, property owners and adds to a collective effort for improving the region's natural resources.

Over the past decade, volunteers have conservatively contributed 56,339 hours of on-ground work, making an invaluable contribution to the region's environment and one that is gratefully appreciated by the region's landholders.

Presentations were shared by:

- Ian Frost from the Toyota LandCruiser Club of SA, who shared the club's cactus control work in the North Flinders;
- Simon Lewis, presenting on the conservation efforts led by the Friends of Mound Springs.
- Gini Lee from Oratunga Station, expressing her thanks to volunteers for their ongoing support in remote areas, emphasising the appreciation by landowners and local communities.

Volunteers will again be celebrated later this year, with an event planned for Pichi Richi Park near Quorn on Sunday 8 November.

A bush garden has been established at Mt Ive Station through Grassroots Grants funding



Operation Flinders Volunteers were supported on a Pepper Tree control program



The board's Adelaide based volunteers were celebrated to thank them for their work in the SAAL region

The bubbler was visited by Indigenous Rangers during a gathering on Finniss Springs station, on Arabana Country



A National Tree Day event was held at Olary in the North East Pastoral district



A workshop with Cooper Basin Rangers in Port Augusta brought together key groups to collaboratively plan and align priorities on Dieri and Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka Country



Station hands and managers attended an Applied Self Herding workshop at Todmorden



20 Landscape Group meetings across
7 landscape districts

7 landholder capacity building/extension activities delivered

8 community education events delivered

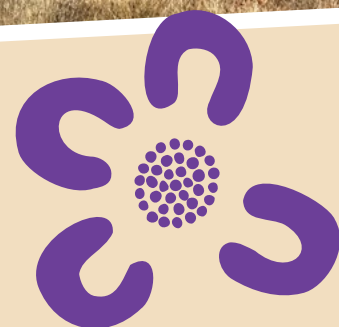
10 nature education events with schools and teacher professional development

21 grassroots grants awarded 25/26 worth \$163,000

14 Aboriginal Engagement workshops to build relationships with Traditional Owner groups

1 Aboriginal Ranger forum hosted for **42** rangers from **7** teams on Arabana Country

10 community events and **4** Kids on Country™ events supported by Community Landscape Officers



4 ATO editions delivered to **2,163** subscribers



An increase in **1,346** Facebook followers, **65** Instagram followers, and **286** LinkedIn followers





WATER MANAGEMENT

The region's water resources are managed judiciously

A consistent approach to springs monitoring

Protection and monitoring of Great Artesian Basin Springs is the focus of work by the board, landholders, rangers and volunteers, so all groups can use similar methods to assess spring health.

A standardised monitoring protocol and assessment method has been finalised by the board's water and ecology staff that will allow for a range of data to be collected about the condition of spring vegetation, the impact of pest plants and animals, water quality and invertebrate and fish populations. This data will be incorporated into the Biological Database of South Australia.

Wet weather has hampered attempts to return to the mound springs to undertake further monitoring work and use the standardised assessment protocols.

Priority springs for monitoring and management were identified in consultation with the Arabana Aboriginal Corporation to guide and prioritise future works. Board staff will work with pastoralists and Arabana Rangers on establishing a regular monitoring and maintenance program for the prioritised springs.

With Friends of Mound Springs volunteers stepping back from their annual working bees at fenced springs and the Peake and Strangways Overland Telegraph Stations, Arabana Rangers have agreed to undertake annual maintenance at fenced springs on Arabana Country.

The planned works will also include photo point monitoring and provide continuity in the protection of GAB Springs.

Works to protect the endangered plant salt pipewort (*Eriocaulon carsonii*) were undertaken at Finnis Springs, where a cultural burn took place. Salt pipewort relies on fragile artesian mound spring ecosystems, which are threatened by an overabundance of native reeds (*Phragmites*). The burn controlled the reeds to give the endangered plants the best chance of survival.

Board work on the protection and monitoring of GAB Springs was shared with Witjira Co-Management Board members in June.

A spring vent at Billa Kalina Spring



A demonstration of how water moves across the landscape was given to landholders during a Landscape Rehydration workshop at Hiltaba



Endemic GAB Spring Isopods
at Emerald Springs



Dalhousie is the largest of the springs in
the Great Artesian Basin in SA



4 meetings with First Nations and scientists on springs management initiatives

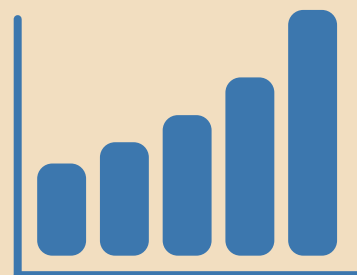
2 land managers directly engaged in water management initiatives



2 springs monitoring activities

5 water accounting trials completed

21 Water Affecting Activities permit enquiries addressed, **1** site visit



2 compliance visits

1 site visit to a proposed mine

8 infrastructure and **6** non-infrastructure projects completed

1 feral animal survey and pest animals controlled over **270,000** hectares of land in GAB springs environments



SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

Land management practices protect soil, vegetation and biodiversity

Wet season provides perfect conditions for pests to thrive

High rainfall and flooding over multiple years has provided the ideal storm for landholders in some areas of the SA Arid Lands.

Just as the wetter than normal season has brought on phenomenal growth of native plants, pest animals and plants have also thrived.

In the year to June, in partnership with pastoral and conservation properties, more than 18,000 goats were removed from the landscape through aerial control, aerial mustering, and undersized goats used for meat for fox and dog baiting, and to feed carnivores at Monarto Safari Park.

This work supports healthier ecosystems and was undertaken in areas home to species such as the Western quoll and Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby.

In addition, large feral herbivore control in the far north removed 2496 camels and donkeys while aerial operations also controlled 888 feral pigs in the year to June 2026. The removal of feral pigs from the landscape protects areas of the Coongie Lakes Ramsar area for native fish and birds, and lowers the risk of disease spread to birdlife and livestock.

Across the region 51 properties were involved in on-ground support for 10 aerial control programs designed to protect areas of high biodiversity. The programs could not happen without landholder support.

Together, these programs removed grazing pressure that would have consumed 55,423 kilograms of dry matter each day. The coverage that remained on the ground as a result has contributed to soil health and moisture and results in healthier livestock and native species.



Buffel grass control has been undertaken on roadsides across the SA Arid Lands

Noogoora Burr infestations located in and near creeklines risk spreading in years of high rainfall



Feral pigs are impacting areas of the Marree Innamincka, North East Pastoral and North Flinders districts



Landholders have been supported to remove feral goats from the landscape

Trapping workshop: Landholders in the North East Pastoral district were supported to undertake feral animal trapping at a workshop focussing on feral pigs, cats, foxes and wild dogs



63,238 wild dog baits distributed to **139** properties at **28** injection services across **7** districts

2 Rangelands Goat Management Working Group meetings held

15,405 feral goats controlled saving **13,865kg** of ground feed

149 feral goats used to control pest animals and contributed to **5,800** fox baits

999 undersized goats used by Monarto Safari Park and **2,841** undersized goats culled on behalf of landholders

Advice and support provided on **9** weed species

1,500 kg of pig baits and pre-feed provided to **7** properties

2 million hectares controlled in aerial operations targeting large feral herbivore

35 volunteers contributed **1,708** volunteer hours for weed control and natural resource management

2 Compliance Review Panel meetings

4 Kangaroo Partnership Steering Committee meetings held



1 Natural Resource Management Regions Australia (NRMRA) Communities of Practice meeting for sustainable kangaroo management

15 properties supported to adopt Sustainable Agriculture practices

27 landholders received technical advice from Sustainable Agriculture Facilitators (SAFs)

10 SAF engagements involving community negotiations

2 Significant Environmental Benefit (SEB) project assessed

21 landholders engaged in a national soil monitoring program





PROTECTING AND ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

Intrinsic biodiversity values are protected and enhanced

Partners support board's work to protect wildlife

Partnerships are central to the board's work on protecting wildlife and controlling pests through the *Discovery4Recovery* and *Wetland Wonders* projects.

Partners have come from 19 different organisations, including conservation organisations, established volunteer groups, National Parks and Wildlife Service SA, Indigenous Ranger groups and pastoral landholders.

Partnerships are critical in the SA Arid Lands, given its vast size and remoteness.

"Collaboration helps build capacity for data collection and monitoring by combining resources and expertise," senior ecologist Elisa Sparrow said.

"These partnerships strengthen local knowledge and awareness of threatened species, their habitat and management requirements.

"By working together, stakeholders can improve conservation outcomes, enhance community engagement, and support the long-term recovery of threatened species across the region."

In the *Discovery4 Recovery* project, First Nations people were among more than 120 people involved in a Quoll trapping survey, Flinders Ranges Mogurnda surveys, Arckaringa daisy surveys and Desert Greenhood surveys. Individual landholders, volunteers, students and researchers were also involved.

A Citizen Science project to record sightings of the Western Quoll has been established and partners have supported the deployment of camera traps, attended workshops and training, analysed data from cameras and learnt more about threatened flora on Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area.

The *Wetland Wonders* project has also engaged with many organisations, including the newly-formed Cooper Basin Rangers and National Parks and Wildlife Service SA, to collaboratively plan work in the area.

Six different groups, including pastoral landholders were engaged on aerial operations to control large feral herbivores, an aerial waterbird survey and using helicopter pilots undertaking aerial control to retrieve monitoring camera data from land that was inaccessible due to repeated flooding events in the district.



Landholders supported monitoring activities in the hunt for the Plains-wanderer



Budgies

Landholders, indigenous rangers and staff were involved in a trapping exercise for the Western quoll on Arkaba Station





Surveys were undertaken to detect the Desert Greenhood orchid in the Gawler Ranges



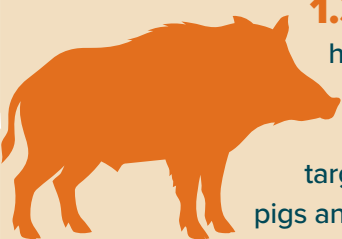
Flinders Ranges Mogurnda is a critically-endangered freshwater fish that lives in permanent springs in the Flinders Ranges



Friends of the Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges National Park joined SAAL staff to monitor the Flinders Ranges Mogurnda



Arckaringa Daisy



1.35 million hectares of aerial control programs targeting feral pigs and large feral herbivores in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site

3 Fauna surveys in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site targeting Kowari and waterbirds

3,562 hectares of buffel grass control

56 participants engaged in educational activities



360,995 hectares of aerial control targeting foxes

4 fauna surveys targeting Idnya (Western quolls)

3 flora surveys targeting Arckaringa daisies and Desert Greenhoods

4 camera surveys of pest animal activity

2 Citizen Science projects maintained for Idnya and Plains-wanderer

9 fauna surveys targeting Plains-wanderer

1 stakeholder engagement hosted for Plains-wanderer survey and information sharing

2 song meter datasets analysed for Plains-wanderer detections

2 Plains-wanderers detected in data collected from 61 properties

632,919 hectares of aerial control targeting feral pigs in Channel country



Projects – Looking forward

LANDSCAPE PRIORITIES FUND

Building the Feedbank – Supporting Resilient Rangelands

Aerial action to control feral herbivores including camels, donkeys and horses to protect biodiversity and native pasture on pastoral enterprises in the North East Pastoral and Marla Oodnadatta districts.

Sustainable Use of Undersized Goats to Protect Native Habitat and Pasture

This joint venture between Zoos SA and landscape boards makes use of protein from harvested feral goats. It involves humane, on-site destruction and processing of undersized or unfit to load animals to feed carnivores at the Zoos SA sites, while reducing goat impacts on the landscape.

SA DROUGHT HUB

Nature Informed Decision Making

Learning how to monitor grazing pressure from feral goats, rabbits and kangaroos and track changes in plant form and browsing intensity, is the basis for this project. A glovebox guide supports landholder workshops, with the guide a handy reference for assessing the impacts of herbivores on property, to assist with management decisions including control efforts, or moving stock.

Smart Grazing, Stronger Lands

This project supports pastoralists to identify grazing improvement opportunities through training, peer-to-peer learning and support from mentors and technical experts. Demonstration sites showcase real-world application of technologies to encourage adoption in the rangelands, and a mentoring program will develop pastoralists networks. This project was delivered by the SA Drought Hub, through funding from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

BHP FUNDED

Great Artesian Basin Springs Project

This project involves a monitoring protocol developed to expand knowledge on the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) springs. It will establish baseline conditions, identify the occurrence of threatened plants and use sensitive indicator plant species to measure spring condition and determine threats. It enables staff, volunteers and First Nations groups to individually collect springs data.

LEVY AND INDUSTRY FUNDED

Native Not Noxious Project

On ground control to reduce population sizes, establishment, distribution and impacts of declared weeds that align with board priorities and landscape group plans. **Also supported by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport.**

Biteback – Wild dog management

A comprehensive wild dog management program run in partnership with landholders and PIRSA. Twenty-one wild dog local area groups are supported to implement the best practice guidelines for baiting and wild dog control. **Wild dog control also receives funding through the Sheep Industry Fund.**

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FUNDED

National Soils Monitoring Program

The National Soils Monitoring Program monitors national soil health indicators, and the data will be used to help understand soil condition and trend, improving soil health at a range of scales. Landholders will be supported to strengthen their soil knowledge and improve soil health. In SA, this program is led by the Limestone Coast Landscape Board.

Great Artesian Basin Water Security Program

Funding for the rehabilitation, maintenance, and replacement of wells and associated distribution networks available on a cost sharing basis for landholders accessing water from the Great Artesian Basin (GAB). It is administered in partnership with the Department for Environment and Water

Monitoring Plains Wanderer to Track Trajectory

Partnering with Bush Heritage Australia and Birdlife Australia, this project improves understanding of the Plains-wanderer distribution by deploying bioacoustic equipment in known habitat and analysing call data. A species distribution map map will be updated with known Plains-wanderer habitat.

H5 threat mitigation in South Australia

Aerial control of invasive feral pigs and large feral herbivores is being undertaken in and around the Coongie Lakes Ramsar area to mitigate against H5 avian influenza outbreaks. By targeting key sites, the project is reducing habitat degradation, protecting critical waterbird breeding grounds, and minimise disease transmission risks. The project

is administered by the Department for Environment and Water in SA.

Far North Regional Drought Resilience Plan implementation

Key goals, strategies and opportunities outlined in the Far North Regional Drought Resilience Plan are being met through an event to celebrate and raise awareness of the region's volunteers. Five additional weather stations will expand the outback SA network to improve access to local, reliable weather data to support drought preparedness, land management and reduce data gaps.

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST

Discovery4Recovery

This project continues monitoring of Western quolls and reduces threats by targeting pest species, monitoring the Arckaringa Daisy and key populations of the Flinders Ranges Mogurnda to understand population trends and guide management actions. Surveys for Desert Greenhood will determine population and extent and provide opportunities for First National groups and other organisations to participate in conservation of an EPBC-listed species.

Wetland Wonders

Threats to maintain the Coongie Ramsar values and beyond are being protected through a focus on impacts by feral animal and priority weed incursions, particularly after flood. On-ground management informed by a Strategic Adaptive Management process is being implemented in collaboration with land managers. Monitoring will involve traditional owners and community volunteers and aims to fill knowledge gaps in past and existing monitoring data.

Building Pastoral Sustainability

Pastoralists are supported to adopt sustainable practices that improve ground cover, soils, and landscapes. Information will be provided to help them reduce emissions, and plan, implement and monitor practices such as rotational grazing, soil erosion works, and carbon accounting. Soil will be tested and demonstration sites revisited to build a better profile of understanding the region's soil carbon. This project focuses on building the knowledge and capacity of pastoralists through events and peer-to-peer learning.

Yarning Circles capture First Nations voices

The cultural importance of kangaroos to First Nations people have been the focus of conversations held across South Australia.

A series of First Nations led Yarning Circles were held on Nurungga, Kurna, River Murray and Mallee, Far West Coast and Bungala/Nukunu Country. They brought together 60 attendees from 16 nations.

The Yarning Circles were designed to ensure First Nations people's perspectives on kangaroos, their cultural significance, and opportunities to reduce their overabundance are captured so they can be included in the state and national discussion about addressing overabundant macropods.

Also evident from the conversations were the deep connection to cooking kangaroos, the health of country and the health of people from a kangaroo diet.

A full report on the Yarning Circles outcomes will be available later in the year with the information collected to be used to inform government and policy decision makers to ensure First Nations perspectives are considered in the kangaroo conversation.

Organised by the Kangaroo Partnership Project (KPP) and supported by the state's landscape boards, the Yarning Circles were facilitated by Nat Sommerville, a Wagadagam woman of Mabuyag Senadh/Torres Strait Islands, who lives and works on Ngadjuri Country as a primary producer near Spalding SA.

PARTNERSHIP FORUM

Funded projects and program outcomes recorded over the life of the Kangaroo Partnership Project were showcased during a Partnership Forum in September.

The forum brought together representatives of industry, conservation, primary producers, First Nations, government and academia to hear the learnings of the trials and projects to manage kangaroo populations that have occurred,

Among projects showcased included *Hop Skip and a Rump* on Kangaroo Island which harvested more than 3,300 kangaroos to increase the supply of kangaroo meat for local restaurants.

It was one of seven projects funded through the Kangaroo Partnership Project. These also included using drones to manage grazing pressure and a collaring project to better understand kangaroo movement.

KPP Funded Projects are now complete, and outcomes will be made available with the KPP final report to be released by early 2027.

The Kangaroo Partnership Project is funded by the State Government's Landscape Priorities Fund and the SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub.

Western Grey kangaroos





From gymkhanas to governance: a life of giving back

A community leader isn't always born into that role. Sometimes it comes about by simply wanting to help out – and being prepared to step up.

That's how Douglas Lillecrapp came to dedicate a large part of his adult life.

He first dipped his toe into community organisations with the Oodnadatta Gymkhana and Sports Club. For many years he was the gymkhana organiser and has been recognised for his involvement with life membership.

"I've never been much of a public speaker, but I do like organising things," he said.

"I've always been interested in community. I think it's good to give back a bit."

Home for Douglas is Todmorden Station. The Oodnadatta Track runs through it, as does the road from Oodnadatta to Mt Dare.

He has lived there for all but a few years since 1962. It is where he did his primary schooling through the School of the Air and where he has been since completing a gap year following his high school years at St Peters College.

After finishing school, he worked on a large cattle station on the Barkly Tablelands in the Northern Territory and said the opportunity to experience

work on another property helped when he returned to the family property the following year.

Today, Douglas is a partner in the Todmorden Cattle Company with his sister, Mary-Anne McMichael. His 97-year-old father, Gordon, was also a partner until his passing in September 2026.

As a fresh-faced young stockman, he worked on an open range grazing property with 'virtually no paddocks'. Everything was done on horseback and a cattle muster involved camping out for three to four weeks, including droving sale cattle to Oodnadatta to put them on the train and send them away to market.

"Back then we left it up to the stock agents to market our livestock, (which was) mainly four-year-old steers and bullocks. Now we're far more involved in the marketing," he said.

Today the property is divided into 34 paddocks and working bores feed the many man-made watering points and ephemeral water sources. Windmills and pumpjacks have been replaced by solar pumps, and telemetry systems now monitor water levels.

Like many remote stations, one of the biggest issues he faces is staffing. In his early years on the property there was a

large pool of Aboriginal stockmen from Oodnadatta and Indulkana who made a valuable contribution to the day-to-day running of the property.

The extra hands completing work on the property gave Douglas time to contribute to the district through committees.

In the 1980s, Douglas joined the Marla branch of the United Farmers and Stockowners Association and was the chair for many years. It was a role that saw him “quite involved with the drafting of the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act of 1989”.

Soon after, he was appointed to the SA Pastoral Board as a deputy member to Keith Greenfield of Billa Kalina. When Keith retired, he became a full member.

The Marla Soil Conservation Board was the second created after the North Flinders board and Douglas was the chair for almost a decade. During those years, the board was instrumental in describing the different land systems.

“The soil board did a lot of good things. We had information days at Marla and Cadney Park and one year we were told we needed a land rehabilitation project,” he said.

“We worked with Col Stanton and others from Alice Springs on a 100ha paddock at Welbourn Hill, to trial a range of treatments to determine which ones worked best for our area,” he said.

“We shared the results at a big field day.”

Douglas said the soil board had its own budget and could seek additional funding for special projects. Among them was a feral animal control project to remove brumbies, camels and donkeys.

“Coming off some pretty good years, rabbits were a big issue. Total grazing pressure has always been an issue,” he said.

Around the same time, Douglas was very involved in the development of the first Water Allocation Plan in 2000, as a member of the Water Allocation Committee.

“We set the 100L per animal per day amount. We used the Coopers notebook which listed volumes of sheep and cattle drinking per day and multiplied it by the maximum number of cattle on a lease document,” he said.

“There really wasn’t a whole lot of science around it.”

Despite that, the 100L figure still stands today.

When the board was told it needed to

create a plan, the group came up with the Marla-Oodnadatta name that continues to be used by the Landscape Board. Douglas said the board felt it was the best way to incorporate the full area – and the Marla Oodnadatta Soil Plan was created.

With changes in government structures, the district-based Soil Board became the district based Natural Resource Management (NRM) Group – and Douglas continued his involvement. After being a member for a few years, he stepped up to become the chair after former Wintinna owner Digby Giles retired.

When the NRM Board was transitioning to a Landscape Board in 2018, Douglas thought it was a good time to ‘retire’ from committees and community groups.

Ross Sawers, inaugural chair of the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, had other ideas, convincing Douglas to stay involved, but this time as a Landscape Board member.

“He wanted people with experience, knowledge and connections,” Douglas said.

An inaugural member of the SAAL Board, Douglas was involved in delivering the second Water Allocation Plan for the Great Artesian Basin.

“When Ross retired, I was going to do the same, but I thought I could still make a contribution,” he said.

There were also opportunities he didn’t want to miss out on and said the regional board meetings were among them.

“I agreed to stay on for two years, but the Minister appointed me as chair for four years.”

In the end, Douglas has been a member, and later chair of the SAAL Landscape Board for seven years, with plans to make the December 2026 meeting his last.

He said he had found it hard to divide his time between board and property commitments.

“I want to put some more energy in here and know stepping aside will give me more time for business, he said.

“The property still captivates me, and I think I’ve still got a bit left in me to give.”

His favourite part of the property is the softer country around the Alberga drainage lines, because it is more productive.

“The waterholes along the Coongra Creek are nice too. When the waterholes are full, they are nice places.

“There’s some good country between here and Oodnadatta.”

Todmorden is looking great this year, and for Douglas, “it’s up there with the best”.

He said 1974-76 were exceptional years, as were 1984, 1989 and 2000. Douglas has seen the cycle of seasons many times over and takes the good with the bad.

“There were woeful years, including the millennial drought and bushfires in 2011 and 2012,” he said.

“Some of the bad things you choose to forget,” he said.

There’s no bad to report from his involvement in community groups and committees.

To people considering dipping their toes into community roles, he said it is good to share your knowledge and experience and promote your local area.

“I believe in grassroots and community participation. Communities should run from the ground up.”

BELOW: Douglas, third from right, with fellow SAAL Landscape Board members, from left, Jodie Harris, Ellen Litchfield, Sanchia Treloar, Mark Mayfield and Chevahn Hoad





Smart grazing tools to be used in new project

Virtual fencing in a cattle enterprise and an Optiweigh system in a sheep business will be demonstrated at two sites in the SA Arid Lands through the *Smart Grazing, Stronger Lands* project.

At De Rose Hill Station, in the Marla-Oodnadatta district, steers will be fitted with 200 satellite-enabled collars in the *Adaptive Grazing Management using Virtual Fencing* project.

Used in conjunction with an Optiweigh paddock weighing system, the collars will track cattle grazing patterns and collect data on average daily gain. Following six months of monitoring, steers will be moved to a largely unfenced property to further test if virtual fencing can be a substitute for physical fencing in the rangelands.

An Optiweigh system at Lyndavale Station will measure the gains of a control group under a traditional grazing system in similar pasture conditions, to compare how a controlled grazing system is influencing conversion performance of grass to beef.

The second demonstration site will be at Pinegrove Station in the North Flinders, to *Trial Optiweigh in a sheep business*. It will help property owners Matt and Charmayne Clarke make informed decisions regarding animal nutrition, health and feed budgeting on the rotationally grazed property, while retaining landscape condition.

“The automated Optiweigh real time paddock weight data will transform our rotational grazing system from a game of guesswork into a precise, data-driven operation where livestock weight trends will directly mirror pasture quality and availability,” Matt said.

He said this would allow more accurate feed budgeting and timely decision making to destock early in dry times to conserve pasture and maintain critical ground cover that’s needed to retain soil moisture and soil health.

Four mentoring sites have also been established through the program, linking landholders, and groups of landholders with experts and mentors over two years, to implement decision making capabilities.

Yadlamalka Station, in the Gawler Ranges, will work with CIBO Labs on satellite pasture monitoring to support stocking rates, with earlier recognition of drought conditions enabling early action.

A group of five North Flinders properties will be mentored to help develop tools to translate property-level feed availability into a stocking rate recommendation tied to cost per DSE. Involving Angorichina/Alpana, Gum Creek, Oratunga, North Moolooloo and Willow Springs stations, the mentoring relationship will close an information gap that exists for cost of production decision making.

Gumglen, in the Port Augusta-Quorn district, will work with Dronehand in the use of the DLI Matrice 4 product and software to monitor grazing livestock, monitor land condition, early determination of pest activity and identification of fauna species in protected paddocks. Doing so will make the property more resilient to a changing climate while maintaining a profitable and sustainable grazing enterprise.

The Smart Grazing, Stronger Lands is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.

The project is led by Adelaide University through the SA Drought Hub, in partnership with Charles Sturt University through the Southern NSW Innovation Hub, Grower Group Alliance through the South-West WA Drought Hub, South Australian Arid Lands Landscape Board, DustWatch, CSIRO, NSW Local Land Services, Rangelands NRM, Gascoyne Pilbara Rangelands Initiative, Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance, and the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association.

SECURE YOUR SEAT ON THE PASTORAL BUS TOUR

If you are wanting to explore the research, innovation and practical solutions shaping Central Australia's pastoral industry, you will want to be aboard the Central Australia Pastoral Bus Tour.

Heading north from Coober Pedy, the tour will visit livestock production businesses in Central Australia, meeting with landholders involved in a range of projects and programs to manage grazing country in a highly variable climate.

Learning from experienced pastoralists, the tour group will see first-hand how pastoral enterprises are implementing innovative technology and adding value to existing production systems. They will observe how family-run businesses navigate management challenges like climatic variability and succession.

The tour runs from 25 October to 1 November, travelling to Alice Springs. It includes:

- A visit to Old Man Plains Research Station Field Day to hear from researchers involved with long-term studies on cattle production including breeding efficiencies and sustainable grazing management;
- Inspecting a rotational grazing program on Mt Riddock Station;
- Looking at state-of-the-art cattle yards at Henbury Station;
- Learning about the wildlife responsible for regeneration at Alice Springs Desert Park;
- Seeing a walkover weigh system in use at De Rose Hill; and
- Hearing about the journey into tourism at Curtain Springs and the two-year paddock challenge at Mulga Park Station.

Seats on the bus are strictly limited and require a co-funding contribution of \$200. Attendees will need to cover some evening meals.

Applications are open at landscape.smartygrants.com.au/2026NTbustour

The Central Australia Pastoral Bus Tour is offered as part of the board's Building Pastoral Sustainability Project, which is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.

Richard Marver, right, talks with Mt Eba manager Brock Duffield in the development of an Ecologically Sustainable Rangeland Management Plan for the property



Four properties to receive a tailored management plan

Four properties in the SA Arid Lands will soon have a plan that helps identify the production potential of their land systems.

As part of the continuation of the board's support for pastoral properties to have Ecologically Sustainable Rangeland Management (ESRM) Plans, the properties were successful in applying to be part of the Planning on Property Projects program.

As well as highlighting production potential, the plans look at degradation risks and prioritise them into action/response categories. The land systems with the greatest productive potential as well as the highest risks of on-going or future degradation are chosen to be prioritized for future works to ensure sustained productivity.

North Flinders properties, Mt Little and Glenroy, Yadlamulka in the Gawler Ranges and Mt Eba in the Kingoonya district, were visited by Richard Marver and Che Parker from Contour Consulting in August and September.

Through the in-depth property visit, Richard and Che talked with landholders

about climate, land systems and rainfall, and will now produce a property plan that includes maps, and documents natural resource management and production goals, with practical and achievable actions.

The detailed implementation plan lays out the current situation, and for each action, has indicators of what success looks like. It includes dry season planning, pasture and landscape monitoring systems, erosion repairs, grazing strategy and fire management plan.

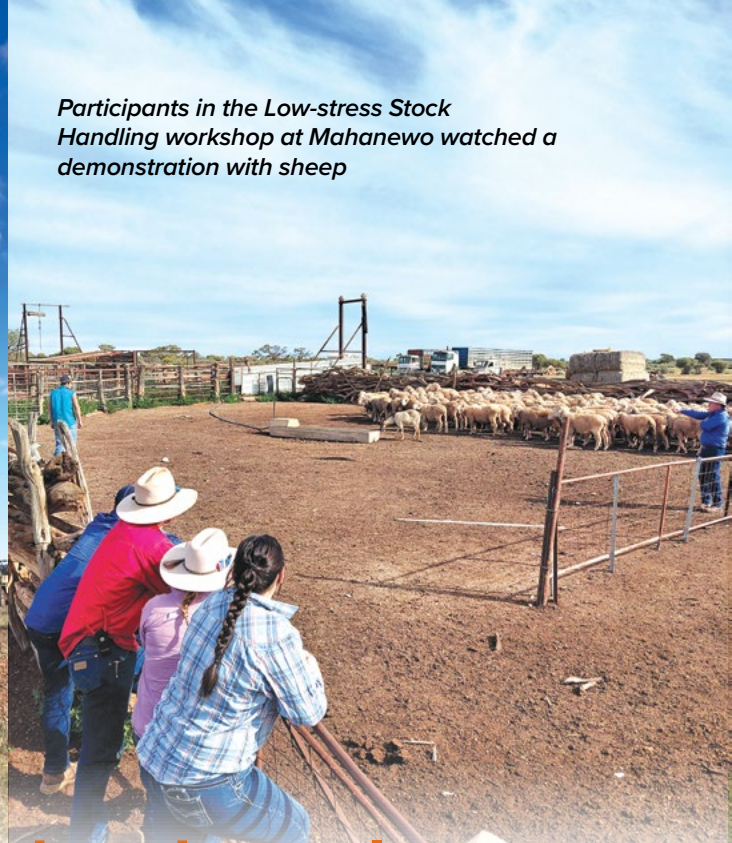
These properties join 25 others in the SA Arid Lands that have also received an ESRM plan under the current project and the previous Property Management Planning process of the Building Pastoral Sustainability Project.

The Building Pastoral Sustainability project is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.



Applied Self Herding workshop participants watch a demonstration to show how food rewards can influence cattle movement

Participants in the Low-stress Stock Handling workshop at Mahanewo watched a demonstration with sheep



Herding without the hustle

Low-stress stock handling and self-herding principles were the focus of workshops at Mahanewo and Todmorden in July.

Bruce Maynard returned to the region to work with land managers, building on their knowledge for the Todmorden workshop, and introducing the concept to a new group at Mahanewo.

At Mahanewo in the Gawler Ranges, a small group of stationhands from Mahanewo, Kootaberra and Oakden Hills discussed animal behaviour, ways to change livestock behaviour using nutritional interventions, and principles of low stress stockmanship.

An opportunity to put the stress free stockmanship theories into practice followed, and under Bruce's guidance, participants used position, aspect and movement to communicate with the mob and shape their movement patterns. The practical component also included techniques for reducing livestock stress and using pressure and release to modify their behaviour.

The Applied Self Herding workshop at Todmorden covered the theory and application of self-herding principles in cattle. The workshop shared knowledge of self-herding concepts and provided examples of methods to support putting it into practice.

Managers and staff from Todmorden, Wintinna, Allandale, Hamilton and Old Andado stations attended.

Self-herding principles and the behaviours driving cattle responses were shown in videos before practical sessions which showed attendees what self-herding techniques could achieve and the animal behaviors driving self-herding outcomes. It covered the three senses drawn on (sound, smell and sight), and how they could be used to attract and influence cattle.

Self-herding theory highlighted how rewards could promote behaviour and

draw cattle towards smell and sound to aid mustering – best used with repetition and reinforcement. In practice, it was a technique used in rotational grazing and to move cattle to undergrazed country.

Workshop feedback was positive, with most participants saying their knowledge, understanding and skills had increased.

A mentoring group has also been established with five properties in the Marla-Oodnadatta district. Staff from De Rose Hill, Wintinna, Todmorden, Macumba and Tieyon stations will work with Bruce Maynard to implement self-herding strategies to change cattle behaviour leading into dry times, to retain landscapes and future productivity.

Stress-free stockmanship and Applied self-herding workshops were delivered through the Building Pastoral Sustainability project which is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program

The Applied Self Herding workshop involved theory sessions before practical demonstrations



Digging deep for soil data

The biggest ever national collection of soil data has included samples from 21 sites in the SA Arid Lands (SAAL).

The sites across 13 properties were selected by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and form part of one of the biggest soil health monitoring efforts ever attempted in Australia.

Properties from the SAAL region involved in the project include Buckleboo and Myola from the Gawler Ranges; Partacoona in the Port Augusta-Quorn district, and Witchelina near Marree. The remaining nine properties are located in the North Flinders and include: Beltana, Glenlyle, Lovegrove, Martins Well, Nantawarrina, North Moolooloo, The Oaks, Wallerberdina and Yankaninna.

The SAAL board is one of seven landscape boards across the state contributing to the National Soil Monitoring Program, a large-scale project led by CSIRO and funded by the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The 346 sites to be tested in SA form part of a national effort collecting 30,000 samples from 3000 sites. Together they will fill a critical knowledge gap – Australia doesn't have nationally consistent, long-term measured soil monitoring data to guide land management decisions and information investment in climate-smart sustainable agriculture.

Accurate soil data, collected and analysed to a high standard, is essential to understand the condition and trajectory of Australia's soil, and will inform any

response to changes over time.

The data collection in South Australia has been led by Ehsan Sayad from the Limestone Coast Landscape Board, who said the benefits go well beyond a spreadsheet of soil chemistry.

"Maintaining healthy soils is critical to productivity. If we can better understand the nature of our soils and their vulnerability, we can better manage our environment, improve our resilience to natural disasters and use water more efficiently," he said.

The value of the data will be as practical as it is scientific. All data collected will be publicly available via the Australian National Soil Information System, giving farmers, pastoralists and researchers open access to reliable, long-term soil information.

The program will also strengthen local extension services and build regional capacity in soil management, running until 2028 as part of the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust, in collaboration with CSIRO. Sites will then be revisited every five to 10 years in an ongoing effort to gain long-term picture of Australia's soil health.

The National Soil Monitoring Program has been supported by funding through the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust, in collaboration with CSIRO

UPSKILL YOUR GRAZING GAME

Two Grazing Land Management workshops, tailored to the SA Arid Lands region, will be offered again in November this year.

The one day EDGE course was developed by Meat and Livestock Australia for an 11-workshop tour of the SA Arid Lands in 2023. This tour had almost 150 participants with 92 per cent of attendees indicating an intent to change a practice and receiving an average satisfaction score of 9.4/10.

Funded through the board's Smart Grazing, Stronger Lands project, the two workshops will be offered in the North Flinders and Gawler Ranges. They will be delivered by Deb Scammell of Talking Livestock and Dionne Walsh of Range IQ

Open to pastoral staff from station hands to managers and suited to a range of literacy and numeracy skills, the workshops are designed to upskill the next generation of pastoralists and expose attendees to new thinking and updated processes.

It will cover grazing topics including:

- Soil;
- Livestock production, with a focus on the dietary requirements relevant to the environment;
- Land and vegetation types, climate and rangelands ecology and processes;
- Grazing management in semi arid ecosystems, with a focus on land condition assessment, forage budgeting, grazing systems and total grazing pressure; and
- How the seasonal climate profile for your location can help identify decision points for stocking decisions.

Further details, including information on how to secure your seat in these workshops, will be available through the board's website soon. Early registration is encouraged.

The Smart Grazing, Stronger Lands project is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.



Adnyamathanha Country

Indigenous Ranger Gathering



In its fourth year, the annual SA Arid Lands Indigenous Ranger Gathering hosted three new ranger teams, and the largest number of rangers to date.

Hosted by Nantawarrina Rangers, the Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA) and the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board (SAAL), the gathering was held over four days at Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary on Adnyamathanha Country

The two-day event provided valuable opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing, informal training, and celebrating the collective achievements of Indigenous Ranger groups working on Country in the SA Arid Lands region.

The 69 people attending the event included 51 Indigenous Rangers from Arabana, Gawler Ranges Aboriginal Corporation, Nantawarrina, Kanku-Breakaways, Kokatha, and Far West Coast, along with new teams from Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka, Dieri, and Nukunu. All were welcomed to Country by Adnyamathanha elder Roger Johnson from Nepabunna.

The gathering also included 19 female rangers, the highest number to date. The growing representation of women across ranger teams reflects the increasing role women play in caring for Country. Additional women ranger teams are expected to attend future gatherings, and female leadership and participation in land and cultural management activities will continue to strengthen across the network.

The program featured an on-Country field trip to Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area where attendees took part in native tree planting at Angus Hut Well and a walk through Moro Gorge.

Rangers also completed three practical workshops to build knowledge of technology, feral predator trapping and traditional bush foods.

Drone Mapping Applications with Chris Warrior from Wiru Drone Solutions provided participants with practical knowledge of the technology and how it can be used in landscape monitoring and mapping.

The workshop covered drone operation and safety, mapping country using drones, and a practical demonstration.



A Kokatha Rangers, from left, Sam Stuart, Tyree Warren, Stanley Wingfield, Amelia McKenzie, Taelah Linton and Graham O'Toole

B Michael Luke (IDA) and Adnyamathanha elder Roger Johnson, who welcomed rangers to Country

C Chris Warrior of Wiru Drone Solutions with Nukunu's Darryn Petry



Sian Johnson, an Adnyamathanha woman and Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park ranger, ran a bush foods and medicines workshop to increase understanding of traditional bush foods and medicinal plants and their cultural and environmental significance.

The third workshop was run by Rachel Paltridge (IDA) and Nathan Manders (Arid Recovery) and covered feral predator management. It was designed to build knowledge of impacts and management approaches.

Participants heard about feral predator ecology and impacts, predator monitoring techniques, program planning and implementation and establishing and maintaining management programs.

D Zaheer McKenzie, Greg Crammond, Donald Morrison, Jumeeka Saunders, Vivian Sansbury, Rex Wayne (back), Nathan Manders, Tori Love, Laura Mitchell, Elisa Sparrow, Nataline Ross, Kalina Saunders, Hayden Stuart, Alice Allington, Julette Johnson, Ammy Singleton with Rome Singleton, Georgia Salt, Roxanne Thomas, Darryn Petry, Daisy Milera Taylor, Alex Fraser, Phillip Stuart jnr, Ronald Freeman Cherie Sauer, Phillip Stuart snr (back), Cameron Johnson, Roger Johnson, Tristan Stuart, Lee Timms, James Davies, Cassandra Coulthard, Caleb Stuart, TRex Haynes, Stanley Wingfield, Amelia McKenzie, Briony Jarmyn, Taelah Linton, Graham O'Toole, Michael Luke, Sam Stuart, Rachel Paltridge, Chantari Warren, Shearne Gray, Shakiah Newchurch, Estelle Miller, Shontelle Lennon, Keesha Lennon, Emma Lucas, Josh Smith, Jesse Evans, Sian Johnson

E Arabana Ranger Hayden Stuart plants a River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)

F SAAL staff Elisa Sparrow, Tori Love, Cherie Sauer and Alice Allington planted a Balcanoona Wattle (*Acacia araneosa*)

G Dieri Corporation's Amy Singleton and Cooper Basin's Dieri Rangers James Davies, Phill Stuart Jnr and Caleb Stuart planted an Umbrella Wattle (*Acacia oswaldii*)

H Nantawarrina Rangers, from left, Vivian Sansbury, Cameron Johnson, Jumeeka Saunders, Julette Johnson and Kalina Saunders





Levy supports landholders and communities

The region's Landscape Levy contributes to the management of a landscape area that covers more than half of South Australia.

Together with a water levy paid by the mining and extraction industries to the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, it provides critical funds for the board to undertake on-ground works to meet its responsibilities under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* and supports leveraging further funding from government and industry.

The Landscape Levy amounts to 12 per cent of the board's total funding, while the water levy accounts for 28 per cent. Total levy payments received by the board amount to \$3,360,920.

Together, they are used to leverage further funding (largely through grants from government and industry) – bringing the

board's total expected income for 2026/27 to \$7,915,352.

The combined investment allows for the management of pest plants and animals, water resources, protection of native plants and animals and support for the pastoral industry dependent on natural resources.

The board's expected income and planned expenditure is outlined in the board's annual Business Plan, which can be viewed at <https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal/about-us/our-regions-plan>

Landholders living outside of council areas receive their levy notice directly from the SAAL Landscape Board, and pay a levy that has been adopted on a tiered rate

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

14-15 OCTOBER

Bait injection services, Gawler Ranges

19-22 OCTOBER

Bait injection services, North East Pastoral

21-31 OCTOBER

Oceans to Outback school incursions, region wide

23 OCTOBER

Economics of Trees and Shrubs, Hawker

26-29 OCTOBER

Bait injection services, Kingoonya and Gawler Ranges districts

25 OCTOBER TO 1 NOVEMBER

Central Australia Pastoral Bus Tour, Coober Pedy to Alice Springs

1-8 NOVEMBER

Large Feral Herbivore aerial control, Kingoonya and Marla-Oodnadatta districts

4 NOVEMBER

North Flinders Landscape Group Meeting 81, Mt Little Station

8 NOVEMBER

Environmental Volunteer celebration, Pichi Richi Park

13 NOVEMBER

Port Augusta-Quorn Landscape Group Meeting 31, Quorn

20 NOVEMBER

Snake Awareness Workshop with Julian Craig, Iron Knob.

20 NOVEMBER

Marree-Innaminka Landscape Group meeting 89, online

20 NOVEMBER

Kingoonya Landscape Group Meeting 78, Bon Bon

21 NOVEMBER

Marla-Oodnadatta Landscape Group Meeting 86, Location TBA

21 NOVEMBER

Snake Awareness Workshop with Julian Craig, Port Augusta

24 NOVEMBER

Snake Awareness Workshop with Julian Craig, Hawker Area School

25 NOVEMBER

Snake Awareness Workshop with Julian Craig, Leigh Creek Area School and Marree Aboriginal School

27 NOVEMBER

Snake Awareness Workshop with Julian Craig, Yunta

28-29 NOVEMBER

SAAL Board Meeting 38, Port Augusta

30 NOVEMBER – 6 DECEMBER

Grazing Land Management workshops, Gawler Ranges and North Flinders

For full details go to [Landscape South Australia - SA Arid Lands | Events](https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal/about-us/Lands-Events)

dependent upon the area of rateable land. It means larger properties which are likely to receive greater support and investment and use the region's resources at a larger scale, pay a higher fee than those living on a residential block.

Residents living inside a council area also pay a landscape levy and it is raised and collected by local councils through rates notices.

To find out more about your regional landscape levy, please visit www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal/about-us/landscape-and-water-levies



Nukunu and Barngarla Country



Boards meet in Quorn

The SAAL Landscape Board and Pastoral Board shared a joint community meeting in Quorn in June.

The annual regional meeting was held in the board's newest district, and allowed discussion on shared issues, concerns and ideas.

Among the topics discussed were management of feral goats, feral pig issues, heightened disease risks due to flooding and persistent rain in the Marree-Innamincka region and the complexity of cultural heritage considerations.

Protection of the endangered Kowari was also discussed to identify options for better monitoring, protection and management of threats.

A community dinner at Quorn Bowls Club was well attended. Both boards were joined by representatives of Livestock

SA, the Invasive Species Council and the Dog Fence Board, who provided updates on their priorities across the region. It also provided an opportunity to connect people wanting to discuss key local issues face to face.

On day two of the meeting, outgoing SAAL Board member Scott Michael hosted a tour on his Gawler Ranges property, where members inspected a population of Desert Lime trees and the use of a reverse drain and telemetry and tanks system.

The boards' 2027 regional board meeting will be held in the North East Pastoral region.

ABOVE: Visiting Carrierloo Station during the combined meeting of the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board and the SA Pastoral Board were, from left Zita Bull, Lauren Young, Jodie Gregg Smith, Andrew Smart, Ellen Litchfield, Chevahn Hoad, Saravan Peacock, Mark Mayfield, Douglas Lillecrapp, Brett Devitt, Jodie Harris, Scott Michael, Matt Humphrey, Sanchia Treloar, Roger Wickes, John Reid, Anne Collins, Ian Morris, Nick McInerney, Sharon Oldfield, Emma Bury and Mark May

BELOW: Addressing the community dinner audience during the panel session were, from left, Douglas Lillecrapp (SA Arid Lands Landscape Board), Geoff Power (Dog Fence Board), Roger Wickes (SA Pastoral Board), Jack Johnston (Invasive Species Council) and Travis Tobin (Livestock SA)



ACROSS THE OUTBACK

Across the Outback is prepared and edited by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

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Cut off by floods, Kowari cameras reached by air

Record rainfalls, road closures and flooding have seen new methods employed to collect camera footage in the hunt for the endangered Kowari, and the initial results are promising.

Rare footage of the elusive Kowari has been captured in the far north east, with initial analysis showing seven of nine monitoring cameras on one property recorded sightings of the tiny endangered marsupial.

The cameras were accessed by helicopter due to road closures and enabled a further 12 cameras to be placed in areas inaccessible to vehicles, which will provide extra insight into kowari activity in areas that have been rarely surveyed. There are now 39 cameras spread across three properties, enabling a wider monitoring of the population and its threats.

The sightings were great news for SAAL ecologists and others working to protect the Kowari, which lives in remote gibber plains of north east SA and neighboring QLD areas. In 2023 its status was lifted from vulnerable to endangered and it is now found in less than 20 per cent of its former range.

Flooding and road closures meant some of the original cameras had been unchecked for 18 months with access impossible. A recent aerial feral herbivore control operation presented an opportunity to access them and without the use of the helicopter, many would have remained unchecked.

A trapping exercise to monitor distribution and health of Kowari populations is planned for the end of spring, when additional cameras will be added to the monitoring effort.

The Wetland Wonders project is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.

If you would like to learn more about this pint-sized outback assassin, we've recently released a video that can tell you more about the Kowari, where it lives, how it survives in the harsh desert climate and what's being done to protect it.

You can watch the video on the podcasts and video page of our website, or at bit.ly/3UMYvKD

