

ACROSS THE OUTBACK

How can our volunteers help you?

A new booklet which encourages pastoralists and other land managers to 'dump their assumptions' about using volunteers on their properties is being used by the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board to sponsor a drive to connect more land managers with volunteers.

The booklet – *Working with Volunteers: Advice for land managers in the South Australian Arid Lands* – borrows from the lessons behind the Blinman-Parachilna Pest Plant Control Group (BPPPCG), a six-year partnership between Adelaide-based volunteer groups and pastoral properties which undertakes Wheel Cactus and Oleander control in the North Flinders district.

It was written by BPPPCG coordinator Lorraine Edmunds, herself no stranger to volunteer work, with funding from the SAAL NRM Board and the Australian Government's *Caring for Our Country* program.

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Lorraine Edmunds (Blinman-Parachilna Pest Plant Control Group coordinator and booklet author) and Sid Kuchel (Australian Retired Persons Association and BPPPCG volunteer) at the Volunteer Appreciation Evening and launch of the Working with Volunteers booklet.



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Pastoral Board meets with lessees at Marree

Representatives from nine stations attended the Pastoral Board’s open forum on 4 June in Marree.

They were joined by Pastoral Board members Geoff Mills, Roger Wickes, Vicki Linton, Julie-Ann Mould and Douglas Lillecrapp, and Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff.

The Pastoral Board also welcomed the attendance of several SAAL NRM Board representatives as it gave lessees the opportunity to raise natural resource management questions.

Geoff Mills, Presiding Member of the Pastoral Board, provided an overview of the Pastoral Board’s strategic priorities, the water point development guidelines and Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

He also spoke about the Board’s responsibility to ensure Crown land is managed under the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989* in a way that is both conducive to the economic viability and long-term sustainability of the pastoral industry.

At the same time he noted the importance of working closely with the SAAL NRM Board to give a consistent service.

Chris Turner (Senior Pastoral Inspector, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands) gave an update on the Pastoral Board Lease Assessment and Inspection Program, reporting that the Eastern Districts assessment is now finished and work will soon begin on assessments in the North Flinders District. The current assessment program is expected to be completed by 2016.

Following the forum, the lessees and Board members enjoyed a meal together.

The Pastoral Board thanks the lessees who attended the forum – from Wintabatinya, Depot Springs, North Moolooloo, Motpena, Murnpeowie, Cordillo Downs, Muloorina, Willippa, and Mundowna Stations – and the Marree Hotel for their hospitality.

ISSUES RAISED

Here’s a summary of some of the issues raised at the forum.

DRY SHEEP EQUIVALENTS (DSES)

Lessees were keen to hear how the Pastoral Board is progressing with a move to DSEs from the current practice.

The term DSE is used to describe the amount of feed or dry matter required to maintain a wether or non lactating ewe (weighing 45-50 kg) per day. It is used as a standard to compare between different classes of livestock and to determine stocking rates and the carrying capacity of a property. One DSE requires one kilogram of dry matter per day to maintain body weight.

Lessees generally agreed that DSEs are a better way of comparing different breeds of sheep and understanding how much stock a particular property can sustainably manage.

MEASURING LAND CONDITION

Lessees expressed concern that measurement of progress against target 70 of *South Australia’s Strategic Plan* – ‘by 2020, achieve a 25% improvement in the condition of pastoral land’ – does not account for improvement works that may have been carried out prior to the implementation of the Pastoral Lease Assessment Program, such as through improvement programs

implemented in the 1970s and 1980s.

KANGAROO HARVESTING

Lessees expressed concern with the decision by one meat processor to only accept male kangaroos, especially as this may not result in a reduction in kangaroo population numbers and associated grazing pressure. It was also noted that kangaroo shooter numbers are declining.

RENT NOTICES

Lessees requested a due date on their rent notices to assist with their financial planning. The Board noted that rent notices are issued by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. Enquiries will be made.

LAMBING RATES

The impact of wild dogs on lambing rates is an issue the Pastoral Board needs to be aware of if and when Dry Sheep Equivalents are introduced.

DOG BAITING

Wild dog control needs to be coordinated with neighbouring properties in order to extract the most benefit.

THE SUGGESTIONS, QUESTIONS AND ISSUES RAISED ARE OF GREAT VALUE TO THE BOARD AND WILL BE FOLLOWED UP.



Claypan, Simpson Desert

PASTORAL BOARD 2013

MEETING 137

Wednesday 7 August, Waite

MEETING 138

Wednesday 9 October, Waite

MEETING 139

Wednesday 11 December, Waite

PASTORAL BOARD AND UNIT CONTACTS

The Pastoral Board of SA
Level 1, 1 Richmond Road
KESWICK SA 5035
(GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001)

General enquiries

Phone 8303 9751

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Presiding Member

Geoff Mills

Pastoral Board matters

David Hanna 8226 2127

Public access to pastoral lands

David Oag 8648 5174

Lease assessments

Craig Baulderstone 8303 9752

Lease inspections and tenure

Chris Turner 8303 9755

Need some help getting there?

Natural Resources SA Arid Lands have funds available to support land manager attendance at the conference. Contact Lisa Taylor 8648 5300 for further details.

6th Lake Eyre Basin Conference

17-19 September 2013

The Institute Theatre, Port Augusta

Land managers and other interested community members in the SA Arid Lands are encouraged to attend the 6th Lake Eyre Basin Biennial Conference in Port Augusta in September – a rare opportunity to take part in discussions on the management of the Lake Eyre Basin in our own backyard.

The conference theme '*Basin voice: shared understanding and action for a sustainable LEB future – linking science and management*' will be explored through presentations, landholder stories, poster displays, small group discussions, social gatherings and local field trips.

Keynote presentations will challenge participants to consider how we can use our knowledge of the Basin's water and associated natural resources to manage current and future threats to this remarkable, inland river system.

Presenters will address:

- the expanding extractive industry
- visitor access and impact management
- river and catchment health
- climate change
- regional natural resource management
- adaptive management challenges
- pest and weed management
- protection of culturally significant sites
- water resource development.

This is only the second time the LEB Conference has been held in South Australia and a healthy attendance is anticipated by SA Arid Lands' land managers, community members, scientists, government staff and industry groups.

Lake Eyre Basin Biennial Conferences are convened by the LEB Ministerial Forum, represented by Ministers from the Australian, South Australian, Queensland and Northern Territory governments.

For program and registration information visit www.lebmf.gov.au, or contact the Lake Eyre Basin Secretariat, 02 6275 9348 or emma.ross@environment.gov.au.

Deadline for registrations is Tuesday 3 September.

Places may be limited by the size of the venue, so make sure you get in early!



Blackwood Church of Christ volunteers tackling Oleander

Continued from page 01...

How can our volunteers help you?

In a region where there are few hands to look after vast tracts of country, *Working with Volunteers* was developed to provide pastoralists and other land managers with the confidence to collaborate with volunteers.

'In return for accommodation, volunteers can help with all sorts of activities including weed and erosion control, fencing, revegetation, wildlife and vegetation monitoring, surveys, and threatened species conservation,' said Ms Janet Brook, Presiding Member, SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board.

'And, as we have seen with the Blinman-Parachilna Group, there are many volunteers, particularly in Adelaide, whose members have the appropriate skills, vehicles, experience and mindset that make them very suitable partners for projects on pastoral properties.'

Using the words of the pastoralists and volunteer coordinators, the booklet profiles the volunteer partnerships of Keith and Lisa Slade (Moolooloo Station), Sally and David Henery (Alpana Station), and Bill and Jane McIntosh (Gum Creek Station).

It also outlines land manager obligations and responsibilities, opportunities and resources, and indicates where the Natural Resources SA Arid Lands Volunteer Program can provide assistance in finding volunteers, planning a volunteer activity, insurance cover, funding opportunities, and technical advice.

The release of the booklet is also significant for volunteers.

'The traditional model for volunteers in the region often restricts them to particular National Parks or pastoral leases,' said Ms Brook.

'But we know that some four-wheel drive groups, for example, are keen to connect with new volunteer experiences elsewhere in the region.'

'We hope that by getting this publication out to the region's land managers we'll generate new volunteer experiences, which we can use to encourage new volunteers to the region and to offer different experiences to our existing volunteers.'

TELL US YOUR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

On behalf of the SAAL NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff are using the release of the new booklet to encourage land managers to utilise volunteer support for land management activities on their properties – and to send in 'expressions of interest' for using volunteers by **30 October**.

All land managers in the SA Arid Lands region will be sent a copy of *Working with Volunteers* with an 'expression of interest' form inviting them to advise Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff of any natural resource management projects they think may be suitable for volunteers.

Volunteer activities may include weed control, erosion control, fencing waterholes and springs, threatened species conservation and data collection, revegetation, restoration and maintenance of heritage sites, and wildlife and vegetation monitoring.

The information will then be used to test the level of interest in using volunteers on property and to refine the Natural Resources SA Arid Lands' Volunteer Program. Depending on the response we receive we hope to 'sell' these new experiences to attract new and existing volunteers.

For additional copies of *Working with Volunteers*, to speak to someone about potential volunteer opportunities on your property, or for further information contact Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.

SOME OF THE REGION'S VOLUNTEER GROUPS...

- Great Tracks Cleanup Crew
- Friends of Mound Springs
- Arkaroola Landcare Group
- Mitsubishi 4WD Group
- Blackwood Church of Christ
- Sporting Shooters Association (Hunting & Conservation Branch)
- Friends of Simpson Desert
- Friends of Flinders Ranges
- Friends of Innamincka Reserves
- Scientific Expedition Group
- Australian Retired Persons Association
- Four Seasons Bushwalking Club
- Toyota Landcruiser Club
- Outback Field Naturalists
- Friends of Gawler Ranges National Park
- Friends of Gammon Ranges National Park
- Adelaide Bushwalkers
- Overland 4WD Club
- French's Forest Baptist Church



Above: Lisa, Keith, Henry and Millie Slade of Moolooloo Station with Sue Linnell (Mitsubishi 4WD Club SA) who leads the volunteer group's Wheel Cactus control works on Moolooloo



Left: Trevor Coleman (Friends of Innamincka) accepts his award from Trevor Naismith (Natural Resources SA Arid Lands Regional Manger) – Trevor and Terrie Coleman both won a Premier's Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Volunteer Service last year.

'It's got to be a valid project, necessary – not just a matter of keeping volunteers happy.'

Sue Linnell, Mitsubishi Club SA

'At the start you don't know what you're in for – you've got to have a bit of trust.'

Keith Slade, Moolooloo Station

'It was just amazing that the volunteers stuck with it for all those years – it's a real credit to them.'

Sally Henery, Alpina Station

'People have taken on ownership – they want to be there until the last cactus.'

Vince Monterola, Toyota Landcruiser Club SA

'For Jane and I, this has been a huge morale lifter – we actually believe we can get on top of this now.'

Bill McIntosh, Gum Creek Station



Bill and Jane McIntosh (Gum Creek Station)

Volunteers give generously

The SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board held a *Volunteer Appreciation Evening* in May to formally recognise the variety of volunteers that are working and contributing to natural resource management in the SA Arid Lands region.

Held in Adelaide, the event brought together representatives from various Friends of Parks groups, 4WD clubs, walking groups and church groups as well as the Sporting Shooters Association and Great Tracks Clean Up Crew.

Last financial year, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands records showed that, across the region, 277 people volunteered in activities including flora and fauna surveys, animal and plant control, boardwalk construction and tree planting – and between them, they contributed 16,140 hours.

To put this in perspective, this amounts to one person working 7.5 hours every day for nearly six years – and that's just the volunteer hours and activities that are on record.

'We are indebted to all volunteers in the region who are contributing to natural resource management,' said Murray Tyler, SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board member during his welcome.

'Many of our volunteers are Adelaide-based and they combine volunteering with their travel and enjoyment of the SA Arid Lands region.

'Whether the work occurs on National Parks or on private land, we all benefit from the volunteer efforts and it is all contributing to the targets in our Regional NRM Plan.'

For further information on volunteering opportunities contact Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.

See p. 16 for an inspiring tale of a young volunteer group and their work on Bullyaninnie Station



CLMA brings workshops south

Camilla Osborn, Coordinator, CLMA

Ten land managers attended the Centralian Land Management Association’s (CLMA) soil conservation workshop in April, its first in South Australia, with support from Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff.

The workshop took place on Wintinna Station in the Marla-Oodnadatta district and focussed on rehabilitating a section of the old Stuart Highway and offering participants skid steer, dozer, loader and grader training.

Participants learned how road construction can impact pastoral productivity and landscape function and saw first-hand how following appropriate road maintenance practices can slow and spread overland water flow.

These five day workshops, which have been running successfully for several years in the Northern Territory, allow participants to gain nationally accredited machinery tickets while learning about and carrying out on-

ground soil conservation works.

They build on the works that have been done through the Ecosystem Management Understanding (EMU)TM process which is running on properties throughout central Australia, Western Australia, and Africa.

The CLMA is a not for profit Landcare group based in Alice Springs which provides support for landholders throughout central Australia. This series of workshops is funded through the Australian Government’s *Caring for our Country* program.

Machinery ticket training was provided by Civil Train and soil conservation and machinery demonstrations by Mark (Sharky) Frahn.

Thanks to Digby and Bernadette Giles, and Jack Hamman (all of Wintinna Station) for their hospitality and Janet Walton (NRM Officer, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands).

Further information

To find out more about the CLMA phone 08 8953 4230 or email clma@clma.com.au. The next workshop is scheduled to take place at Undoolya Station (just east of Alice Springs) from 8-12 July 2013.

PMRR PROGRAM COMPLETE

The Pest Management and Rangelands Rehabilitation program finished up in June with a total of 84 projects funded on 66 properties in the SA Arid Lands region in 2012-13.

Since the project began in 2009, funded activities have included pest plant control (Mexican Poppy, cactus, Pepper Tree, African Boxthorn, African Rue, Noogoora Burr, Onion Weed, Mimosa Bush,) pest animal control (cats, rabbits, and goats), contour banking, revegetation, soil

conservation, water ponding, and direct seeding.

A wide variety of land managers have sought assistance through the incentives-based program including pastoralists, Aboriginal communities and Progress Associations.

Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff are gathering feedback from participating land managers which will be used to improve and inform any future incentive program. It is

noted that the current program was oversubscribed and unable to assist all of the applicants.

The PMRR program was carried out on behalf of the SAAL NRM Board with funding from the Australian Government’s *Caring for Our Country* program.

Further information

Terry Boyce, Active Communities Team Leader, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300



Ben Parkhurst

Kowari

Threatened fauna surveys

Reece Pedler, Community Fauna Officer

Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff and contractors have been busy working with land managers and volunteers to track some of the region's threatened mammals whose habits, distribution and behaviours are often poorly understood. Here's a summary of what's been found during recent surveys.

Over 60 Kowaris were captured in Elliot traps – small aluminium boxes baited with fish oil and dog biscuits – in April surveys across Sturt's Stony Desert at the top of the Birdsville Track.

The results were a contrast to similar trapping conducted in the same area in 2011 when Kowari capture rates were very low and native Long-haired Rats were in the middle of a major plague in response to the exceptional rainfall and flooding.

It is thought that the ferociously carnivorous Kowaris, which are themselves not much bigger than a rat, took advantage of the Long-haired Rat plague, eating and breeding well in late 2012.

Meanwhile, four native Plains Mice were captured using Elliot traps at Quinyambie Station, over 300 kilometres east of previous records.

This find, in combination with other recent records from the west of Lake Frome, is causing a re-think of the distribution and habitat tolerances of this species.

The Plains Mouse is an endearing native rodent closer in size to a small guinea pig. It has previously been found inhabiting cracking clay areas in the belt of stony plains stretching from the western side of Lake Torrens, north to Oodnadatta, and the southern Northern Territory.

The March survey was mounted after Plains Mouse remains were found in a dingo scat at Quinyambie.

Good numbers of the Ampurta (or Crest-tailed Mulgara) were detected during track surveys at 130 sites between Oodnadatta and the lower Birdsville Track in May.

Ampurtas are small marsupial carnivores which mainly inhabit canegrass sand dunes and prey on just about anything smaller than themselves, including reptiles, mammals and insects.

Sites first surveyed in 2006 were revisited and evidence of Ampurtas (or their tracks, scats or burrows) was found in much the same areas.

Evidence was also found at an additional site about 50 kilometres south of previous records, adding to the trend in recent years suggesting that Ampurtas may be re-inhabiting parts of their former range, possibly as a result of lower rabbit numbers brought about by calicivirus.

Community Fauna Officer Reece Pedler assisted seven Friends of Simpson Desert Parks volunteers in their search for the elusive Marsupial Mole during their annual working bee in May.

The group dug 40 one-metre-long trenches in sandhills across the western Simpson Desert to help monitor this highly elusive animal which spends most of its life beneath the sand and is rarely seen on the surface.

These trenches allow for the detection of the moles' back-filled tunnels and are the only sure way to detect the mole's presence.



Nerissa Haby (Natural Resources SA Arid Lands ecologist) and volunteer Anni Walsh processing a Kowari in Sturt's Stony Desert

THANK YOU

Thanks to the 11 volunteers who assisted with work on the Kowari, Plains Rat and Marsupial Mole, the managers and owners of the 18 pastoral properties involved, and contractors Rick Barratt, Karen Harris, Katherine Moseby, Andrea Tschirner and John Read. Funding and support was provided by the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board and the Australian Government's *Caring for Our Country* initiative.

For further information on our threatened fauna program or to contribute a sighting or a specimen contact Reece Pedler, Community Fauna Officer, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.



Ampurta



JUNE 2013 • ISSUE 21

The *Dingo Update* brings you the latest news from the Dingo Research Project, an initiative of the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board, as well as ongoing management news. North of the Dog Fence the Board is investigating the impacts dingoes have on beef cattle in baited and unbaited areas to determine optimum dingo management strategies. South of the Dog Fence, the Board and sheep industry fund the landholder-initiated *Biteback* program for wild dog control, a critical program for protecting the region's sheep industry.

News from North of the Fence

Dingo Project Manager, Heather Miller, will commence property visits to all land managers north of the Dog Fence in late June to gather land manager perspectives and input into dingo control.

Taking in approximately 30 properties, land managers will be canvassed on their opinions about a variety of issues including the difference between a 'wild dog' and a 'dingo', the effectiveness of their current management strategies, monitoring and data collection, the indicators that are used to assess whether dingoes are a problem,

buffer baiting, the system to obtain baits, the affect of baiting on any accreditation (eg organic, European Union market), NRM Group involvement, and the best way to develop a management plan.

Along with the results of the Dingo Research Project, the feedback will contribute to refining a dingo management plan for improved cattle and biodiversity outcomes north of the Dog Fence.

The survey has been developed in consultation with the Marree-Innamincka and Marla-Oodnadatta NRM Groups.

News from South of the Fence

The 2012-13 baiting results are in, and they're showing that 100 per cent of properties in the Kingoonya district have participated in some form of dingo baiting – either ground baiting, aerial baiting (see p. 15), or both – in the past 12 months.

Land managers in the North Flinders district have the next highest participation rates (83%), followed by the North East Pastoral (56%), and the Gawler Ranges (41%) districts.

The participation rate in the Kingoonya district may be higher because of larger holdings, a smaller number of properties, and the district's proximity to the Dog Fence. However, land managers in this district are also working together irrespective of land tenure and understand the importance of being proactive in their wild dog control efforts.

While participation rates may be lower in other districts, in all but the North East Pastoral district this is actually an increase in participation on previous years and calls to the Dingo Management team are indicating that land managers know where to go for help when it's needed.

For example, the lessees on a station in the Gawler Ranges contacted *Biteback*

Coordinator Lisa Stevens for assistance after a wild dog was seen in a small flock of sheep after a possible breach to the Dog Fence.

Having focused on the Kingoonya and Gawler Ranges districts last year, *Biteback* will turn its attention to the North East Pastoral district this year and land managers will be contacted to arrange property visits over the next six months.

JAKE SOFT-JAWED TRAPS FOR HIRE

Land managers south of the Dog Fence are reminded that Natural Resources SA Arid Lands has trapping kits for hire.

Trapping should be undertaken as part of a coordinated baiting program and used in situations where wild dogs are most often found or where there are 'hard to bait' wild dogs present.

Their proactive use along water runs should also be considered.

Lures, which can be used as attractants, are also available upon request, but specific consideration needs to be given to the type of lure used (food or scent) and where lures are placed.

For example, a food lure would not be used near a trap that is set next to something a wild dog would usually use to mark its territory.

Trapping kits include a steel box with 10 traps, 10 droppers, a chain, a scratcher, a 3/8th spanner, gloves, pliers, paper towel, a paint brush, five extra D shackles, a sheet for data collection, a map of your property, workshop manual and the Invasive Animals CRC's wild dog trapping DVD.

Trapping kits can be borrowed for up to four weeks.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact the Dingo Management team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300



Land managers attend a *Biteback* bait injection service on Commodore Station



The DEWNR aircraft on Cordillo Downs Station



KANGAROO MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Annual kangaroo survey underway

Tom Gerschwitz, Operations Manager

The annual kangaroo management survey got underway in June – and this year the aircraft is fitted with new technologies that will improve the safety and efficiency of the survey and communication with station owners.

Traditionally, the survey has taken place south of the Dog Fence, but this year it will also include some flight lines north of Coober Pedy between Marla and Oodnadatta, and some additional lines will be flown in the eastern districts of South Australia (north of Renmark, south and east of Peterborough and to the east of Burra) to count goats.

This year, the aircraft, a Cessna 206 owned by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, has been fitted with new technologies to improve communication with station owners.

An iPad containing station paddock plans allows pilot Matthew Graham to see aircraft tracking in real time across the paddocks.

This capability will enable improved communication when talking with station aircraft who may be mustering.

A 'glass cockpit' also allows for a digital display of other aircraft in the vicinity that have transponders fitted.

The DEWNR aircraft is principally used in the SA Arid Lands region – a region covering over half of South Australia – where it is used extensively for survey work, staff shift changes, and feral animal and fire spotting operations as well as Co Management and NRM Board activities.

The survey will commence on 17 June in the east of the state then move north and west at which time land managers may see a small plane making sweeps at a height of about 250 feet – this is the most efficient way of counting kangaroos.

The survey will extend into July and is weather dependent.

Further information

**Contact the Kangaroo Management Team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands
8648 5300**

ABOUT THE SURVEYS

South Australia's aerial kangaroo survey is one of Australia's longest-running aerial wildlife surveys having taken place every year since 1978.

The survey occurs over 207,000 square kilometres of South Australia's pastoral zone and parts of the agricultural zone, collecting information regarding the trends of kangaroo populations across the landscape.

Trained observers fly east/west transects counting red kangaroos and western grey kangaroos as well as recording euros, emus and goats, and noting other large species of interest, such as camels or donkeys.



The Nipapanha area in the North Flinders district

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

The Aboriginal Partnerships team help the SAAL NRM Board better connect with Aboriginal communities in the SA Arid Lands and provide opportunities for Aboriginal communities to successfully achieve NRM project outcomes. Does your community have a project in mind? Call 8648 5300.

Nipapanha carbon farming trial

Leonard Cohen, Director, Canopy

The Nipapanha community in the North Flinders has secured a grant to investigate the feasibility of mounting a carbon farming project under the Australian Government's *Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund*.

The grant will provide the community with access to training and assistance to develop business ideas for gaining additional income by creating carbon credits.

It will also allow the community to use their existing skills in vegetation management and business development, and it is seen as a potential model for other Aboriginal communities who may seek to manage their country in this way.

The focus of the work will be on Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area, 58,000 hectares of land located between the Flinders Ranges and Gammon Ranges National Parks which is managed by rangers from the nearby Nipapanha community.

This land is believed to be capable, in part, of regeneration through replanting and by controlling pests and erosion.

Greening Australia will soon undertake vegetation surveys with the community as part of evaluating Nantawarrina's natural resources.

The income stream from carbon in the SA Arid Lands where rainfall is low and erratic is likely to be small as it is driven by water availability.

However, good outcomes for the Nipapanha community are expected to flow from careful advance planning and from finding appropriate funding for vegetation management which complies with the system for generating carbon credits.

The work is being coordinated by Alan Smith, Nantawarrina IPA Coordinator, and Greg Moore, CEO of Nipapanha in conjunction with Canopy and Greening Australia.

The team will be working with Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff to ensure knowledge and information on the Carbon Farming Initiative is shared in a participatory and culturally appropriate manner.

The community has said that it may model its efforts in part on the Jabalbina Yalanji Land Trust's work to derive carbon credits from reforestation in Far North Queensland.

Further information

For further information on carbon farming opportunities contact the Aboriginal Partnerships team, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands 8648 5300.



Aaron Stuart and Millie Warren with Minister Hunter at the special signing ceremony at Finnis Springs in May



HAVE YOUR SAY!

EASTERN EYRE PENINSULA PARKS

Interested people have until 30 August 2013 to submit their feedback on a draft management plan that incorporates two conservation parks in the Gawler Ranges district.

The draft *Eastern Eyre Peninsula Parks Management Plan* has been prepared to provide for the ongoing protection and conservation of the natural and cultural values of eastern Eyre Peninsula reserves, including the Lake Gilles and Ironstone Hill Conservation Parks.

The plan has been developed in collaboration with a number of stakeholders, including adjoining land owners and staff from across the South Australian Government.

Through the consultation process, two priority management themes have been developed: conserving biodiversity and working across boundaries.

In addressing only priority issues and opportunities, the plan strives to provide realistic and achievable goals for the management of these parks.

The draft plan also includes the Munyaroo, Malgra, Heggaton, Plug Range, and Sheoak Hill Conservation Parks in the Eyre Peninsula NRM region.

To obtain a copy of the draft Plan or to submit your comments visit www.environment.sa.gov.au/haveyoursay/easterneyre-mgtplan, or email DEWNRProtectedAreaManagement@sa.gov.au

Arabana sign lease on Finnis Springs Station

The Arabana Aboriginal Corporation signed a 99-year lease over the former Finnis Springs Station in the Marree-Innaminka district on 25 May.

A special signing ceremony was held at the site of the station's former mission and on the first anniversary of the Federal Court determination of native title over the area surrounding Finnis Springs.

'From today, the land will be held by the Arabana Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of the Arabana people,' said the Minister for Conservation and Aboriginal Affairs Ian Hunter at the signing.

'The Arabana will now be directly responsible for its care and control.'

The Arabana native title area includes Lake Eyre National Park, Wabma Kadarbu Mound Springs Conservation Park and Elliot Price Conservation Park, all of which now have a co-management arrangement in place with the Arabana.

Under the terms of the lease, the Arabana will be free to run tourism activities on the properties that are consistent with conserving the environmental and cultural values of the land.

The signing of the lease agreement was followed by a ceremony celebrating the renaming of Lake Eyre as Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre.

The dual name was approved by South Australia's Geographical Names Committee in December to recognise the significance of Lake Eyre to the Arabana people.



A THORNY DEVIL!

Thanks to Petie Moore (McDouall Peak Station) for sending *Across The Outback* this photo of a Thorny Devil (*Moloch horridus*) found on the old Stuart Highway between McDouall Peak and Ingomar Stations.

'My husband was led to believe they aren't around these parts and we were surprised to come across it while driving,' said Petie. 'We put it back where it was found after taking some photos hoping it would return to its home and maybe breed in this area!'

According to Rob Brandle, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands ecologist, Thorny Devils are known to be as far east as Whyalla on the Eyre Peninsula and are probably on the margin of their easterly range in the McDouall Peak-Ingomar area.



Nature Foundation SA launches Hiltaba Nature Reserve

A former sheep station turned nature reserve was launched by Nature Foundation SA in the Gawler Ranges district in May.

Located adjacent to the Gawler Ranges National Park, Hiltaba Nature Reserve is a 780 square kilometre Private Protected Area of high conservation value purchased in 2012.

Hiltaba is a biodiversity 'hot spot' with a rare collection of flora and fauna from three converging ecosystems—the rocky Gawler Ranges, arid country to the north, and mallee to the south.

The reserve will provide protection for nine native plants and animals of national conservation significance, 40 of state conservation significance, and seven plant species that only occur in the Gawler Ranges.

Bushblitz – Australia's largest nature discovery project – visited in November 2012 to assist in creating an inventory of plants and animals on the property and there are ongoing monitoring activities to track plant and animal populations.

Nature Foundation SA has an ongoing management plan to control introduced predators and remove feral goats, with over 6300 goats removed over the last 12 months.

Hiltaba was purchased in 2012 with assistance from the Australian Government's *Caring for our Country* program and the South Australian Government.

Damien Pearce recognised

The Hiltaba launch included a special presentation to the family of Damien Pearce, a former Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources employee who passed away in 2010.

A plaque will be placed at Hiltaba to recognise the work that Damien did for the area through the *Bounceback* program.

'Damien had a vision for Hiltaba and nature conservation in the arid zone and he worked hard to achieve that,' said Trevor Naismith, Regional Manager, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands.

'He would be saying it is bloody great [the opening of Hiltaba reserve] and I am sure he was here today in spirit.'

NEW APP FOR PEST ANIMAL INFORMATION

Land managers can now access the latest information about Australia's pest animals via the new *Field Guide to Pest Animals* app.

Developed by the Invasive Animals CRC, the app contains species profiles for 31 of Australia's worst pest animals including cane toads, camels, cats, horses, donkeys, foxes, goats, pigs, wild dogs, and rabbits.

Users have access to species descriptions, photo galleries, footprints, audio calls, maps, and control techniques, as well as quick links to plenty of pest control resources.

Further information

Contact Peter West, Invasive Animals CRC (02) 6391 3887 or peter.west@dpi.nsw.gov.au

DOWNLOAD IT NOW!

The app is currently available only for iPhone and iPad users and can be downloaded from the Apple Store.



FLINDERS RANGES HOSTS EPIC BIKE RACE

The Flinders Ranges played host to a new endurance mountain bike race on 28 April – the *Flinders Ranges Outback Epic* – and the *Flinders Ranges By Bike Route* provided the ideal course for the event with tracks and trails to suit most riders.

The 72 competitors chose from three distances – 64km, 109km or the entire 205km loop – all safely finishing the course at Wilpena Pound and in time for a barbecue tea.

Flinders Ranges By Bike links the Flinders Ranges National Park, Wilpena Pound Resort and neighbouring Rawnsley Park, Upalina, Willow Springs, and Gum Creek Stations. Each property has accommodation options available.

Want to ride the trail?

If you are interested in riding the *Flinders Ranges By Bike Trail* contact the Wilpena Pound Visitor Centre 8648 0048.

2013 OUTBACK RACES CALENDAR

Innaminka Races

31 Aug-1 Sep

Birdsville Races

6-7 Sep

Copley & Districts Gymkhana

14 Sep

Glendambo Gymkhana

12 Oct

Blinman Races

19 Oct

Red Sand Green Heart re-released

Locals and visitors to the SA Arid Lands region rejoice – a revised edition of *Red Sand Green Heart*, the award-winning book from ecologist John Read, has been released.

Describing John's ecological adventures in the region, the book has been updated and republished after the original print runs sold out, and in response to continuing feedback about how the book has helped locals and travellers alike enjoy and appreciate outback South Australia.

Two new chapters highlight the developments of the Arid Recovery conservation project at Roxby Downs, and provide an assessment of the environmental performance and potential of the modern Australian mining industry.

'I'm hoping that no readers look at inland taipans, kangaroos, long-range weather forecasts, greenies, pastoralists or miners in the same light after reading this book,' said John.

The book is available online from Amazon, at tourist locations in northern South Australia and from Arid Recovery, where book sales are a fundraiser.



ARE YOU ON THE ACROSS THE OUTBACK MAILING LIST?

Across the Outback is a free publication that is issued to 1500 individuals or organisations with a stake or interest in the SA Arid Lands region.

If you would like to join the mailing list or update your details please contact the editor jenny.barker@sa.gov.au.

Please include your name, mailing address and email address (to receive electronic notification).

CALL FOR CONTENT

Across the Outback
August 2013 edition

Content due by COB 9 August 2013

Contact jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354 for further information.

THIS SPACE COULD BE YOURS!

Across the Outback remains committed to reporting on government activities in the region in the single publication and we welcome contributions from other agencies. We'd also like to hear from non-government organisations, Progress Associations or Friends groups operating in the area. Tell us what you're doing to support your community and if we have space we'll try to accommodate you.

Further information

Contact the editor jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354. A fee per article may apply.





A new approach to managing OJD

Following extensive review and public consultation, the new national approach to the management of Ovine Johne's Disease will come into effect from 1 July 2013.

The revised *OJD Management Plan 2013-18* delivers a national framework for states to work from in setting OJD policy.

It relies on a risk management approach and gives producers greater responsibility to manage their OJD risk through the provision of tools, guidelines, business rules and advice.

At the centre of the Plan are new Sheep Health Statements (SHS).

SHS are an important tool for allowing buyers of sheep to make an informed decision about the health status and management history of the stock they're looking to buy.

The new SHS will provide recognition for vaccination and abattoir testing but remove the ABC point scheme, a scheme built around recognised OJD prevalence areas which will no longer exist.

The SHS will be a series of 'yes/ no' questions which will enable the relevant

information to be provided for a buyer to determine if the consignment presents an acceptable level of risk to their own enterprise.

The *OJD Management Plan 2013-18* encourages the use of vaccination as it is the only tool available to reduce the clinical expression of the disease and for significantly reducing the level of shedding by infected sheep.

Much of this information was sourced from www.ojd.com.au. Please refer to this website for updates, the new SHS, Regional Biosecurity Plan guidelines and templates.

Find out more

Pastoralists in the SA Arid Lands will be invited to attend an information session planned for July-August 2013. A webinar is also planned for those who cannot make it to the roadshows.

Keep an eye on your emails and the *Stock Journal* for details of the roadshow or call PIRSA 8648 5166.

WHAT IS A SHEEP HEALTH STATEMENT?

The Sheep Health Statement (SHS) is an important tool for allowing buyers of sheep to make an informed decision about the health status and management history of the stock.

This is the most important disease risk management tool that sheep buyers can use. It allows producers to make a disease risk assessment for OJD, as well as a range of other biosecurity risks including brucellosis, footrot and lice.

Sheep Health Statements are compulsory documents in New South Wales and South Australia and the onus is on purchasers to request a completed SHS when they buy in sheep.

WHAT IS OJD?

Ovine Johne's disease (OJD) is a silent but costly disease. Sheep may look healthy but shed high numbers of bacteria and spread the infection before the disease becomes apparent. In infected flocks, OJD has a serious welfare and financial impact, as it affects growth and production. Infected sheep can waste away and die.





Opal Air pilots Tay Shepherd and Lindsay Matthews with Jane and Bill McIntosh ready for aerial wild dog baiting.



44,200 baits dropped in aerial baiting program

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Land managers are invited to attend a workshop to provide feedback on the aerial baiting and *Biteback* programs for wild dog control.

- Glendambo Hotel 25 June, 2pm
- Blinman Hotel 26 June, 2pm
- Olary Hotel 27 June, 2pm

To RSVP

Contact Bill McIntosh
gumcreek@activ8.net.au
or 8648 4883

Peter Bird, Biosecurity Officer

The 2013 aerial baiting program for wild dog control took place over nine days in April-May dropping 44,200 baits in the sheep pastoral zone south of the Dog Fence.

This year 88 properties participated, offering land managers important aerial support to *Biteback's* ground baiting program.

Commencing in Coober Pedy and targeting inaccessible areas, the Cessna 210 aircraft flew an 8,800km flight path chosen and approved by land managers.

The flight path revisited all properties baited in the 2012 trial and added 18 more.

A GPS system warned the pilot and bombardier to cease baiting whenever pre-selected no-baiting buffer zones were approaching.

Twice a day the ground crew led by coordinator Bill McIntosh (Gum Creek Station) would meet the aircraft to replenish baits and fuel.

While aerial baiting has been an important additional tool for wild dog control, wild dogs remain a significant problem inside the Dog Fence and it is critical that *all* landholders continue to participate in the *Biteback* (see p. 08) ground baiting program and pursue a range of other control options.

Funding for the program was provided by the sheep industry through Australian Wool Innovation and the SA Sheep Industry Fund, and by Biosecurity SA.

For more on wild dog control see p. 08



Some of the Bullyaninnie Station volunteers

ACROSS THE OUTBACK

Across the Outback is prepared and edited by Jenny Barker, Senior Communications Officer, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands.

It is currently jointly funded by the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board; Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources; the Pastoral Board; and Biosecurity SA (a division of Primary Industries and Regions SA).

Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Please contact jenny.barker@sa.gov.au or 8463 3354



Government of South Australia

Bruce Lyman flew all the way from Sydney to Adelaide to attend the *Volunteer Appreciation Evening in May* (see p. 05) where he told of his association with a group of young adults at Bullyaninnie Station. His story was so inspiring – and timely – that we asked him to put pen to paper for *Across The Outback*.

City kids pitch in at Bullyaninnie

Bruce Lyman, French's Forest Volunteer Coordinator

Five years ago a group of young adults from French's Forest Baptist Church travelled 1600 kilometres from Sydney to kill cactus at Bullyaninnie Station in the North East Pastoral district.

In one week they knocked off over 300 cactus, mended boundary fences, witnessed the damage done by goats, fed cattle, repaired water pipes, had lessons in identifying native grasses and local animals, and in managing stock.

Above all they laid the foundation of a friendship with the landholder that continues to this day and drove back to Sydney a very different group of people (see inset).

In subsequent trips, sometimes twice a year, the group have poisoned about 5000 cactus, crutched sheep, tailed lambs, shoveled manure, repaired windmills, serviced machinery including pumps, repaired fences, painted miles of yard railing, learned how to butcher their own meat, and the

tradesmen among them have updated plumbing and hot water units.

They undertook an especially satisfying project two years ago and upgraded, repaired and painted the shearers quarters, the original building on the property.

The short story is that there is nothing they will not do.



Repairing the shearers quarters

For city folk freshly landed in a rural setting it's been a very impressive performance and the impact on the lives of these young adults has been profound.

Prior to Bullyaninnie, none had ever driven outside the confines of the city, some had never driven faster than 80 kilometres an hour, and this was the first introduction for all of them to a farm.

Said one Korean girl: 'It was so much fun to spend time out in the red dust, removed from technology, and to learn how a farm runs.'

They are trusted with tasks and responsibilities few, if any, have had levied on them in the city and through it all have responded with a deep sense of ownership of the property and pride in what they can contribute.

Their respect for the property is reflected back by the neighbours, with one asking if the team can help on their property, and another complimenting them on the respect they show the property and the landholder.

A local kangaroo shooter has been equally complimentary while a shearing gang were surprised at how quickly the teenagers mucked in and stuck at the work.

Individuals now travel on their own to the station to spend time with the landholder, and to share birthdays and Christmas celebrations.

As one of the original visitors noted recently: 'It's great to get out and see the agricultural side of life, and to connect with friends and nature – it's spiritual in a way.'



Wheel Cactus control