



NRM Notes

Issue 7 ~ September 2011

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Welcome to our September edition of NRM Notes !

This issue contains a good selection of project updates and reports from a large range of sources- thank you to those who contributed their stories for this issue, it really is great to hear what we are all doing about the ongoing problems that pest animals cause.



Invasive Animals CRC



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

Liaison Officer: Jessica Marsh
Project Officer: Annette Brown

Phone: +61 2 6391 3907

Mobile: 0400 586 060

jessica.marsh@industry.nsw.gov.au

www.invasiveanimals.com



Enter Now!
Competition
closes
31st October!

Out and about with PestSmart: Parkes Landcare Forum & Henty Field Days

PestSmart- a new set of resources focusing on pest animals and their biology, control methods, and long term management techniques, composed by the IA CRC has been the main focus of various exhibits across NSW in the past few weeks.

PestSmart has been on display at the NSW Landcare Forum held in Parkes and the Henty Machinery Field Days which were held during September. The array of fact sheets and case studies look very impressive and there has been significant interest and uptake of the information by farmers, public land managers, catchment groups and teachers.

Thanks to all those we met at both Parkes and Henty, your interest and follow up contact is greatly appreciated and we will continue to provide up to date information and support to you all. See www.feral.org.au for more information and more PestSmart resources.



Above: Students from Henty Primary School talk to Jessica about being PestSmart at the Henty Field Days

Below: The IA CRC PestSmart girls spotted with Merv Hughes



Link: www.feral.org.au
Contact: Jessica Marsh, NRM Liaison Officer (02) 6391 3907 or jessica.marsh@industry.nsw.gov.au



Working together in the Lachlan catchment to manage endangered Malleefowl

Since 2009, project staff from the Lachlan CMA, guided by Angus Arnott, Angela Higgins and Dr Milton Lewis, have been working in the western Mallee areas of the catchment, with the extensive assistance of landholders, to monitor and map the now declining population numbers of the endangered Malleefowl on private and leasehold lands.

The locations of over 60 mounds, 25 of which were active during the 2010-2011 breeding season have provided valuable insights into the ecology of this vanishing bird. Their initial findings have indicated there are problems with direct competition for food with feral animals such as goats. In response to this, the Lachlan CMA provided assistance to landholders to effectively manage goat numbers. During 2010, a scheme to provide funding for the installation of goat traps at watering points was tested with great success.

There are currently over 40 contracts in place with goat traps being erected across the west in strategic locations. By placing these traps in a belt across the mallee, the southerly infiltration of goats into new areas of NSW will be slowed. These traps will also improve the ability of landholders to control goat numbers to suit environmental carrying capacity rather than the current “boom and bust” situation. By managing goats at lower numbers through more frequent harvesting with less labour, graziers across the west will have sustainable incomes at reliable intervals and healthier properties. This project provides a great example of how landowners and NRM groups can come together as a team to make good decisions in conservation.



Link: www.lachlan.cma.gov.au

Contact: Angus Arnott, Lachlan Catchment Management Authority: 02 6341 9322

Community research into responsible cat ownership in the ACT



Recently the ACT Government completed a community research project “Responsible Cat Ownership”, funded through the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IACRC), developed in conjunction with members from the Australian National University (ANU) and RSPCA. 1277 ACT residents, including 506 cat owners were questioned. The existing cat containment suburbs of Forde and Bonner were also targeted, with 192 residents participating from those suburbs.

The group developed and commissioned a telephone survey with the objectives of measuring and exploring the community’s behaviour, perceptions and attitude towards domestic cats, specifically with regard to cat containment.

Some of the survey results revealed that:

- 65% of ACT residents supported cat containment for all new Canberra suburbs
- 98% of cat owners surveyed stated that their cats were desexed and 77% microchipped
- Around 75% of cat owners contain their cat, but half of these only contain their cat at night.

The three main benefits identified were that contained cats:

- are a lower risk to wildlife;
- are less likely to be a nuisance to the community and
- are less likely to be injured, lowering vet bills.

**The full report is available for download from the website.*



Link: http://www.environment.act.gov.au/environment/cat_containment

Contact: Felicity Grant, ACT Government: 02 6207 2490



Coordinated fox control protecting endangered Brush-tailed Rock Wallabies



Namoi Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has partnered with the North West Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) to reduce the impact of foxes on an endangered colony of brush-tailed rock wallabies within Mount Kaputar National Park. Fox baits have been laid on 20 private properties by LHPA staff within an 8 km radius of the brush-tailed rock wallaby colony – about 2 average fox home ranges. Baits are laid in the autumn and spring to disrupt key breeding and dispersal events.

North West LHPA ranger Duncan Wallace says that “the response from the community has been fantastic with all of the landholders involved in the autumn 2011 baiting backing up again for the spring 2011 program”, where 128 baits are laid and remain in place for two weeks. Program monitoring is carried out using GPS waypoints. North West LHPA is also using remote cameras to monitor bait take.

Namoi CMA Invasive Species Officer Troy Crittle said “we are pleased to be involved in a program with such clear benefits”. This program commits funding to reducing fox predation on brush-tailed rock wallabies for ten years. Mr Crittle went on to say that

“by increasing the area treated this control program complements baiting already being carried out inside the National Park by the Office of Environment and Heritage”.



Contact: Troy Crittle, Invasive Species Officer, Namoi CMA: 02 6764 5914

AWMS Conference 2011 – Call for abstracts extended, we want to know about it!

The 2011 AWMS Conference will be held at Bathurst NSW on 29 November – 1 December. The general theme of this year’s conference is *Communities and Wildlife Management*, with eight symposia and several open sessions. Some of the symposia include:

- Putting science into practice – making wildlife management work
- Local wildlife management in the Blue Mountains and Central West NSW
- Communication of science in wildlife management
- Diseases of wildlife: interactions with human values and biodiversity
- Managing the impacts of wildlife and pest species in urban and peri-urban environments

Spoken papers and poster presentations will be accepted. Abstracts can be submitted online via the AWMS website.



Link: www.awms.org.au
Contact: Peter Fleming, NSW DPI: peter.fleming@industry.nsw.gov.au or 02 6391 3806



'Ferals in the Classroom' workshop comes to Dubbo

In August, teachers headed to Taronga Western Plains Zoo to participate in a workshop, 'Ferals in the Classroom'. It was aimed at primary and secondary teachers and demonstrated how teachers can use 'Pest Tales' and 'Feral Focus' in their classrooms. The workshop was a great success with extremely good feedback given by the teachers about the content and delivery.

These online resources provide lesson plans, scenario based activities, small projects and are also aligned with the current national schools curriculum so teachers can download all the resources they need to teach our future land managers all about the impacts and management of invasive and pest animals.

If you are interested in a 'Ferals in the Classroom' workshop, please contact us, we would be happy to discuss your requirements. 'Pest Tales' and 'Feral Focus' are free resources for teachers, education staff, and those with an interest in pest animals- check them out now!



Link: www.feral.org.au
 Contact: Jessica Marsh, NRM Liaison Officer (02) 6391 3907 or jessica.marsh@industry.nsw.gov.au

Register Now!

Land managers, agency staff, researchers and the wider community are invited to Dubbo's Taronga Western Plains Zoo from Tuesday 11 to Thursday 13 October for 'Reading the landscape'

Check out www.biodiversityconference.com.au for more details



Reading the landscape
 linking biodiversity, research and management

Dubbo, 11-13 October 2011



Map feral animals online!



Help map feral animal sightings in your area.
 Get Involved!



ToadScan & FeralPigScan Coming soon!

New features include:

- Map printing tool – create & print maps for your area
- Bulk data importing table to upload many sightings
- Month & year filter
- New images in all photo galleries



Are you interested in, or responsible for, managing invasive species or are you considering a career in pest plant or animal management?

The University of Canberra's Faculty of Applied Science (UC) has developed a number of courses to provide you with the skills and understanding for you to develop Best Practice plans to manage invasive species (plants or animals) strategically and effectively based on latest knowledge such as the Australian Pest Animal Strategy.

The following courses dealing with invasive species management are delivered through the University of Canberra:

Graduate Certificate in Wildlife Management
(Strategic Pest Management) \$7500

Graduate Diploma in Natural Resource Management
Additional \$7500 to the Graduate certificate
(approval expected in 2012)

Course Work Masters in Natural Resource Management
Additional \$7500 (approval expected in 2012)

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Diploma in
Conservation and Land Management (Specialising in Pest Management)
(Nationally accredited course conducted through University of Canberra College)
\$3,500

** Fee HELP is available for these courses**

The University of Canberra also offers.....

Tailored short courses specifically designed for agencies responsible for pest plant and animal management, incorporating, where required, certificates of attainment for competencies successfully completed (this is based on shorter versions of the material covered in the VET Diploma and the Graduate courses).

Notable features of these courses are:



The courses are delivered mainly on-line (approx 85%) through the UC's open source software, Moodle. This allows the courses to be undertaken by remote domestic students in their workplace or international students studying and completing the course in their home countries.



Extensive use is made of inquiry-based learning based on discussion and analysis of real case studies



As part of the course, students are encouraged to prepare a relevant project plan for a natural resource and/or pest management issue that they are currently dealing with or are particularly interested in



There is a face-to-face component usually in the form of residentials



The courses are delivered by recognised experts in invasive pest management

For more information please contact David (David.Walter@canberra.edu.au) or by phone (02) 6201 5728

Research in review...

This section of NRM Notes is dedicated to the scientific papers that have recently been published and don't readily find their way out to on-ground managers and members of NRM agencies. Below is a summary of two recent journal publications regarding pest animal management.

Detecting pest and prey responses to fox control across the landscape using remote cameras

Alison L. Towerton A.D., Trent D. Penman B, Rodney P. Kavanagh C and Christopher R. Dickman

From: *Wildlife Research*, 2011, **38**, 208–220

Journal Homepage: www.publish.csiro.au/journals/wr

Journal Abstract:

We explore the use of remote cameras to estimate the activity and spatial occupancy of foxes and potential mammalian and avian prey species before and after poison baiting in the Goonoo region, central New South Wales. In the first of two studies, we set camera traps at 48 sites in forest and cleared areas, on and off tracks, during autumn 2009. In the second study, we placed camera traps in forest and cleared areas, on tracks only, at 100 sites covering an area of ~441 500 ha during winter 2009. We examined camera-trap rates of all species detected and the activity and site occupancy of a selected subset of species before and after poison baiting.

Camera traps indicated greater levels of fox activity on vehicular tracks than off them, with this difference being more marked in forest than in cleared agricultural land. Fox activity and occupancy were greater in agricultural land than in forest, with no effect of baiting detected at the landscape scale. Thirty-five other mammal and bird species were identified from photos, with activity for most being greater on than off tracks. No clear effects of fox-baiting were detected on foxes or potential prey species in either study by either activity or occupancy. The lack of a baiting effect may reflect rapid recolonisation by foxes from unbaited areas, as bait placement is generally clustered in agricultural land, or the ready availability of alternative food (lambs or lamb carcasses) in some cleared areas.

Our results demonstrate that remote cameras provide a simple means of monitoring changes in fox activity and occupancy at the landscape level, and that these measures have great potential to quantify the success or otherwise of fox control campaigns on both pest and prey species.

Can Shooting Be An Effective Management Tool for Foxes? Preliminary Insights From a Management Program.

Lynette J. McLeod, Glen R. Saunders and Andrew Miners

From: *Ecological Management and Restoration* (2011), Volume 12, Issue 3

Journal homepage: www.blackwellpublishing.com/EMR

Journal Abstract:

Historically, shooting has been a popular method for controlling foxes in Australia but past research has shown it to be an ineffective method for significantly reducing fox population numbers. These past studies investigated shooting when conducted in isolated, one-off programs. In more recent years large, coordinated group fox management programs have become popular in both agricultural and conservation areas. These landscape scale programs give more chance of long-term respite from predation damage by slowing down the immigration rates of foxes into the culled area. Studies have been conducted investigating the effectiveness of large-scale group fox management programs that primarily used 1080 baiting as the method of control to protect vulnerable livestock and small animal. This study investigated the potential of a large-scale group program that used shooting as the main form of control to reduce the impact of fox predation.