



Invasive Animals CRC



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

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NRM Notes

Issue 8 ~ December 2011

- Invasive Animals CRC funded for 5 years
- PestSmart Roadshows are coming!
- Feral Photos competition winners
- Southern Yorke Peninsula baiting for biodiversity
- NSW DPI wild dog workshops
- Desert Channels feral pig project
- Protecting Bulloo Lake birds from feral pigs
- Carp trapping in the Ward river
- Australian Government biodiversity fund



As I pull this last newsletter of the year together, I realise that there is just so many people out there to thank for helping me build and create this regular dose of handy information for the benefit of others. It is so important to keep forming relationships and partnerships, sharing information and ideas, helping and encouraging each other, providing feedback and looking to do things better. I hope you have enjoyed what has been produced for you over the past two years - Please don't hesitate to send me your feedback, your stories and your ideas on what you'd like to read about in 2012!

Wishing you and your families a very cheerful holiday season with a safe and happy new year. Cheers! Jessica

Invasive Animals CRC funding success!

On 22nd November 2011, Australian Minister for Innovation, Kim Carr, announced that the IA CRC was one of only 6 successful bidders in the 14th Selection Round for Cooperative Research Centres, effectively extending the IA CRCs life for another 5 years beyond June 2012. The selection round was extremely competitive with 26 applications received. The IA CRC, its partners and the interview team managed to secure \$19.7 million.

Leading on from the great work the IA CRC has done over the past 6 years, the next five years will see us transform pest animal control and reduce their impacts by developing: new detection and forecasting knowledge and technologies to underpin national and regional incursion response systems and strategies; new biocontrol agents, platform technologies and disease models for long term strategic control of rabbits and carp, combined with new national rabbit and wild dog co-management approaches, to enable recovery of landscapes and inland waters; new institutional and social knowledge to enable long term community-based pest animal management; new humane control technologies (particularly for rodents), and fertility control options for macropods and wild horses; and enhanced capability and capacity of the industry and end-users through new, highly-trained and informed researchers, program leaders and land managers. We are all looking forward to the next 5 years and congratulations to all involved!



The IA CRC interview team:

Pictured (back row to front row left to right) are Dr Jim Thompson – Chief Biosecurity Officer, Biosecurity Qld; Robert Anderson – Deputy Chair, Meat and Livestock Australia Board; Paul Martin – University of New England; Professor Frances Shannon – Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, University of Canberra; Lisa Thomas – Senior Ranger, Central West Livestock Health and Pest Authority; Glen Saunders – Terrestrial Program Leader; Professor Linton Staples – Managing Director, Animal Control Technologies Australia; Steve Lapidge – Uptake Program Leader; Helen Cathles – Chair, Invasive Animals CRC Board and Andreas Glanznig – CEO, Invasive Animals CRC.



Feral Photos competition- Winners announced!

The 2011 Feral Photos competition was a great success and I would like to thank all the entrants for taking the time to send your photos in. We received some great entries and some of the winning photos are displayed below. First prize: Fox with rabbit by Daniel Schembri, Second prize: Feral pigs and cattle by Jason Wishart, Third prize: Cane toad eating a snake by Crystal Kelehear, Best remote camera prize: Deer by Darryl Panther and the People's Choice prize: Goat silhouette by Rocco Pirrottina. These entries and more will make up a 2012 Feral Photos calendar which will be available early next year. Thanks again to all who entered.



Image: Daniel Schembri



Image: Crystal Kelehear



Image: Rocco Pirrottina



Image: Darryl Panther
tasco

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New feral pig and cane toad mapping websites available NOW!

FERALSCAN.ORG.AU

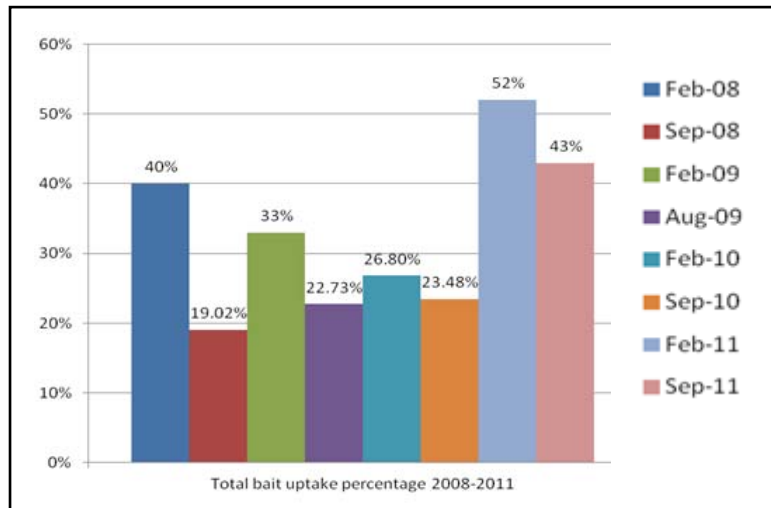
Help map feral animal sightings in your area - **Get involved!**

Select a feral animal

- RabbitScan
- CamelScan
- FoxScan
- MynaScan



Southern Yorke Peninsula fox baiting for biodiversity



Fox Baiting for Biodiversity is a large scale project being undertaken to protect endangered species such as Malleefowl, Western whipbird, Hooded plover, sand goanna, little penguins and Tamar wallabies on Southern Yorke Peninsula. The project began in February 2008 to complement existing baiting being undertaken by the Department of Environment and Heritage on Innes National Park as part of the Tamar wallaby re-introduction program.

We have established 550 permanent bait stations across 35,000 Ha on Southern Yorke Peninsula over 26 rural holdings and 4 Parks. Baiting is carried out over 2 eight week baiting periods in February / March and September / October each year.

We have several remote cameras to monitor bait stations and have observed that after three years of using commercially prepared 1080 fox bait, bait shyness is increasing. In February 2011 we switched to Kangaroo meat injected with 1080 and achieved a big increase in bait uptake. We are in the process of preparing Tuna chunks injected with 1080 for our February 2012 round of baiting. We also use the remote cameras to monitor Malleefowl nests, and have observed that no foxes have visited the monitored Malleefowl nests during the incubation period.

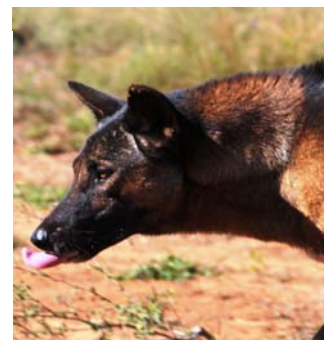
Other observations associated with the project are the sightings of 3 echidnas which were thought to be extinct on Yorke Peninsula. There has also been a Bush stone curlew sighting, which has not occurred in Innes National Park for many years, and there have also been several sightings of Heath goannas which are listed as endangered in the region.

This project highlights what can be achieved over a large scale area and the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation and the need to modify techniques to achieve the best results. We are continuing to work in conjunction with DENR to bait at concurrent times and we also receive baiting assistance from staff.

Contact: Ken Rudd, Northern & Yorke NRM ken.rudd@nynrm.sa.gov.au

Have you got wild dog problems?

The NSW Department of Primary Industries is running a series of wild dog management workshops across western New South Wales over the next 12 months in response to growing wild dog problems in livestock production areas south of the dingo barrier fence. Subsequent on-farm training is also available for livestock producers who would like more assistance on their farms. The workshops are being funded by Australian Wool Innovation in an effort to address the problem. The first workshop was recently held at Engonnia in November, with some people travelling over 500km to attend. Sit-down workshops were followed by hands-on demonstrations of new and emerging technologies for the control of wild dogs and foxes. The day was a big success, with positive feedback provided to the organisers.



Landholders were asked to show on a map where wild dogs had been sighted in the last 12 months, and many were surprised to learn just how widely distributed wild dogs are throughout western New South Wales. All regions have recorded wild dogs in the last 12 months, but most places have not yet experienced wild dog problems. However, there is concern that 'a few may become many' in time, and livestock producers are keen to prevent wild dog problems before they occur. The workshop planned for Wanaaring was postponed until early next year due to wet weather, but the Wanaaring workshop and many others are being planned for 2012. For more information on wild dogs and the wild dog workshops, please contact Ben Allen from NSW DPI for more information. *Photo courtesy of Lee Allen.*

Contact: Ben Allen, NSW DPI benjamin.allen@industry.nsw.gov.au or (08) 8088 9300



“Pigs Might Fly” – A Caring for our Country initiative

Controlling *Sus scrofa* populations and their impacts in Queensland’s channel country



Desert Channels Queensland’s “Pigs Might Fly 2011-2012” program, funded by the Australian Government’s Caring for our Country initiative is aimed at preventing the spread of feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) down Queensland’s inland river systems towards sensitive wetlands like Coongie Lakes and Lake Eyre itself. Monitoring conducted earlier this year found feral pigs were causing severe damage to river banks and floodplains.



Vigorous rooting had led to unstable river banks coupled with wallows, and the fouling of water supplies. Evidence of the consumption of native mussels and crayfish by *S. scrofa* was present on water edges supported by videos and photographs taken during kayak transects and aerial surveys.

In November 2011 aerial control works were conducted across the Lower Barcoo, Cooper Creek and Lower Diamantina systems with the successful removal of almost 7000 pigs. Autopsies conducted with the assistance of Biosecurity Queensland found all specimens to be healthy with no notable signs of disease. Stomach contents in sows and piglets showed a diet comprised primarily of nardoo whilst that of boars was almost entirely freshwater mussels and crayfish. Blood samples taken from 20 animals are currently being tested for presence of exotic diseases.

Stage 1 (November) of this control program covered 96,000 hectares of wetlands and river systems. Partnerships have been formed with landholders, South Australian Parks and Wildlife, Biosecurity Queensland, and Queensland Parks and Wildlife. Further monitoring and control works are currently being planned for 2012.



Link: www.nrm.gov.au (Caring for our Country)

Contact: Leigh Deutscher, Desert Channels Group leigh.deutscher@dcq.org.au

*** **A reminder to ENROL NOW!** ***

“I strongly recommend this course to any person involved in pest management.”

VET Diploma student

If you were considering enrolling in either the **VET Diploma in Conservation and Land Management (Specialising in Pest Management)**; or the **Graduate Certificate in Wildlife Management (Strategic Pest Management)** the time available before the courses at the University of Canberra commence in 2012 is running out.

The courses incorporate the principles and strategic approach set in the Australian Pest Animal Strategy. For example, the VET Diploma (\$3,500, VET FEE HELP being sought) and Graduate Certificate (\$7,500 FEE HELP available) cover:

- The **Principles of Strategic Pest Management** including the process of analysing information on pest impacts (environmentally, economically and socially) to define the pest problem within a regional or broader context).
- **Pest Management Strategies** stressing the need to assess pest management in the boarder context, taking into consideration: Resources availability; Economic and environmental consequences; and Management limitations.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** covering experimental design, operational and performance monitoring and data evaluation.
- **Program Implementation and Funding.**

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



Protecting Bulloo Lakes nesting birds from feral pigs

With the boom and bust cycle of South West QLD leaning heavily towards the “boom” end of the scale for the last couple of years, the local environment has never looked so inviting to introduced pests such as rabbits and pigs. Bulloo Lakes form a part of the 1,170,000 hectares of the Bulloo Downs station – a privately owned grazing aggregation running approximately 20,000 head of cattle.

The ecological importance of Bulloo Lakes (which is classified by the Federal Government as a “High Ecological Value Aquatic Ecosystem”) prompted South West NRM, in conjunction with Gibson Partners to take action to protect the area from pigs in the form of a coordinated feral animal control program.



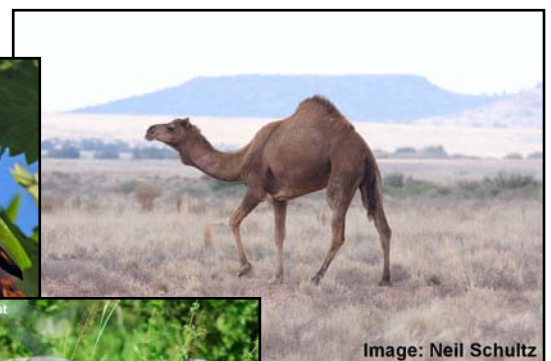
Pigs have been observed digging wallows up to 1 metre deep, eating roots and shrubs and stirring up sediment on a large scale – affecting the clarity, oxygen levels and temperature of the water, but by far the most damaging behaviour exhibited is the predation of native fauna. Nestlings unable to escape are eaten in their nests and entire clutches of eggs are devoured in seconds. This has a knock on effect as many migratory waterfowl, once disturbed, are easily displaced. In addition, the sediment stirred up by the pigs often settles to form sand banks connecting previously inaccessible rookeries to the shoreline, thus allowing easy access not only to the pigs, but also to feral cats and wild dogs. A large number of pigs have the potential to decimate the nesting bird population if left uncontrolled.

Due to ecological sensitivity of the area, a large scale poisoning campaign was not an option. The physical environment also would have made trapping and/or ground shooting extremely difficult and therefore impractical, and the use of pig dogs would have risked disturbing the nesting birds. After careful thought, it was decided that the most effective approach would be an intensive aerial shooting program.

The shoots took place along the Bulloo River floodplain and associated lakes, and were scheduled for the most effective times to achieve the best outcome. The first shoot occurred over a 3 day period in late autumn – a time of high pig activity and favourable conditions. The second shoot was designed as a follow up to the initial cull for maximum effectiveness of the program, and took place over 3 days towards the end of winter. Despite feral pigs having the capacity to increase their numbers by up to 500% in favourable conditions, their sedentary movements result in slow repopulation rates in areas that have been cleared more than once. Over the course of the cumulative 6 days of shooting, the joint efforts of SWNRM and Gibson Partners netted 4100 pigs and 17 feral cats - An excellent outcome that will serve to protect the waterbirds of the area for some time.

Contact: Julie Frousheger, South West NRM biodiversity@swnrm.org.au

More entries from the Feral Photos competition....





Feral carp trapping in the Ward river

Carp have been responsible for a myriad of potentially damaging ecological changes and it's not uncommon for Carp to comprise up to 70-90% of the fish biomass of lowland rivers and lakes. And while we might have "daughterless carp" and Koi Herpes Virus (KHV) as a bio control agent in the future, we still need to manage Carp populations now.

South West NRM spent a couple of weeks trialling large Carp traps in various locations across Murweh Shire with the assistance of local adults and children, members of the Charleville Fishing and Restocking Club and 5 'grey nomads' who happened to be passing through at the time of trapping.

The traps themselves consist of two 50ft wing nets to drive the fish towards the opening of the tunnel, a 20ft tunnel that the carp can swim into but not out of, a large catch net to hold the captured carp (with a 500 fish capacity), and a detachable sock which allows for the removal of fish without having to bring the trap to shore. The traps were baited with a Carp specific bait.

The traps spent between 48hrs and 5 days in the water at different sites. Checks were made daily to release any non-target species, and to ensure that the traps were functioning as they should. In the course of the checks, turtles, Bony Bream and Eel Tailed Catfish were released unharmed. Of the turtles, several were of the Broad Shell variety – an endangered species that appears to be doing well in this area.

Overall, well in excess of 800 Carp have been removed from the region with the help of local communities - a fantastic result, and one that will hopefully be repeated in upcoming trapping campaigns.



Contact: Ric Newson – information@swnrm.org.au or Gary Butler- manager@swnrm.org.au

Biodiversity Fund



Australian Government

The Australian Government has committed to reducing Australia's carbon emissions by between 5 and 25 per cent from 2000 levels by 2020. It's known as the Clean Energy Future Plan. An important measure within the plan is the Biodiversity Fund. The Biodiversity Fund is an ongoing program which will provide \$946.2 million over its first six years to support land managers to undertake projects that establish, restore, protect or manage biodiverse carbon stores. The Biodiversity Fund creates an unprecedented opportunity to establish and manage biodiversity throughout Australia's unique landscapes and in the process develop new market opportunities for ecosystem services. It will do this through:



- support for revegetation, including in areas of high conservation value
- management and protection of existing biodiverse carbon stores, including publicly owned native forests and land under conservation covenants or subject to land clearing restrictions
- **support for actions to prevent the spread of invasive species across connected landscapes.**

Biodiversity Fund grants are targeted towards individual land managers, groups of land managers working in partnership or organisations working on behalf of multiple land managers.

Applications are now open. Applications must be received by **Tuesday 31 January 2012 5pm AEDT.**

Link: <http://www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund/index.html>

Roadshow Calendar

The Invasive Animals CRC is bringing the PestSmart Roadshow to a place near you.

It will showcase best practice pest animal management including the latest innovations brought to you by the species experts.



Mark the date in your calendar now. For venue details, registration and other additional information see: www.feral.org.au/pestsmart/roadshow

JANUARY 2012

Monday 30th QUEANBEYAN, NSW
(National Launch)

MARCH 2012

Wednesday 14th CHARLEVILLE, QLD
Friday 16th TOOWOOMBA, QLD
Tuesday 20th ARMIDALE, NSW

FEBRUARY 2012

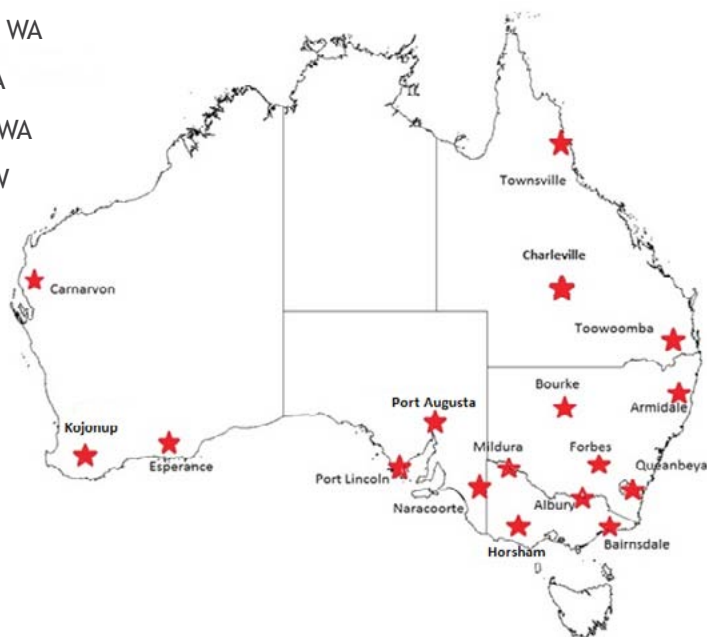
Wednesday 1st FORBES, NSW
Friday 3rd ALBURY, NSW
Tuesday 7th NARACOORTE, SA
Wednesday 8th HORSHAM, Vic
Friday 10th MILDURA, Vic
Tuesday 14th PORT AUGUSTA, SA
Thursday 16th PORT LINCOLN, SA
Monday 20th CARNARVON, WA
Wednesday 22nd KOJONUP, WA
Friday 24th ESPERANCE, WA
Tuesday 28th BOURKE, NSW

APRIL 2012

Tuesday 17th BAIRNSDALE, Vic

MAY 2012

Tuesday 1st TOWNSVILLE, QLD



No Roadshows are planned for Tasmania or the Northern Territory but we will be bringing PestSmart to AgFest 2012 and attending various NT events.

The PestSmart Roadshow is carried out in conjunction with our partners Australian Wool Innovation Ltd, Meat and Livestock Australia and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

The PestSmart toolkit is funded under the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences

For more info contact:
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