



Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

volume 23 issue 2 2012

Weedscene

AWC ratchets WoNS up by 12

April 2012 – The Australian Weeds Committee (AWC) has declared another 12 Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) (for plant list see table on page 3), 13 years after identifying an inaugural score for priority management. The management strategy for each WoNS is formulated by a central body, while the execution of the strategy is carried out by the state and territory governments concerned.

First drafted by John Thorp, Project Manager for the National Weeds Strategy Executive Committee, the criteria for listing are the taxon's invasiveness, impacts, potential for spread, and socioeconomic and environmental values. The AWC itself has had an eventful history. Between restructuring and reformation amidst a sea of acronyms, the Committee successfully sought and affirmed the WoNS program at the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) meeting in 2009.

What may be a concern to stakeholders, including the public, is the AWC's position on resource allocation. At the same NRMMC meeting, the Committee made it clear that any increment to the WoNS list 'cannot be done on the assumption of additional resources being available'. To assuage the risk of overstretching ground forces, the AWC has partitioned resources into three contiguous segments:

- Phase 1: Ramp up and execution. The bulk of effort and resources will be spent here, with the appointed coordinator playing a key role in developing and implementing a major part of the weed strategy.
- Phase 2: Completion of the remaining action items, with the coordinator adopting a lesser profile at this stage.
- Phase 3: The national coordinator hands over the reins to states and territories, with the AWC relegating itself as an observer.

The AWC envisages a roll-over mechanism where existing WoNS are gradually moved towards the latter phases, while new ones are assessed and inducted into the program. It is unlikely, however, that any WoNS will drop out of the weed list, because of the inherent threat of a comeback. This stance will be watched closely by weed managers and stakeholders in Victoria, with eight inaugural WoNS, and 10 out of 12 new WoNS occurring in the state.

In an independent review of seven WoNS programs commissioned by the AWC in 2007, the assessors found that all programs examined had made 'significant contributions to the delivery areas outlined in the strategic plans developed for their management'. Victorians, living in both

rural and urban areas, are familiar with the pernicious weed, Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*). Our Gorse Control Strategy (Victorian Gorse Taskforce) runs from 2008 to 2013, and partitions the state into weed containment, reduction, and eradication and prevention zones. While it is encouraging to see gorse stands stricken with spidermite webs, it is still disconcerting to observe largely intact thickets along the Hume Freeway and other areas. It is easy to be fatalistic. Julian Cribb, in his *Canberra Times* (29 March 2012) review of the new book *The Biological Control of Weeds in Australia* (see page 6, Bookshelf), is almost resigned to a 'green tide of alien vegetation'.

But still in its teens, the WoNS program may yet mature into a potent deterrent in its own right. It must, however, be nurtured with good science and judgment. It is increasingly apparent that weed science must be tempered by community participation and socioeconomic reflections. These themes will be presented in the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference in Melbourne in October; in particular, Bertie Hennecke will talk about the assessment of WoNS candidates. We hope to see you there.

For more information on the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference, see page 3.

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WSV Membership Rates 2012

Concession*	\$20.00
Ordinary	\$55.00
Corporate	\$130.00

* Students and Pensioners

WSV is not registered to collect GST

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Joining the Weed Society of Victoria

The benefits of membership to WSV include:

- Weedscape: newsletter packed full of information
- eWeedscape: regular electronic bulletin on weed news and events
- Discounts to WSV seminars, workshops, conferences and other events
- Opportunities to network with others.

To apply for membership, download and print the membership application form from the WSV website, www.wsvic.org.au, complete the details and mail to the WSV Secretary.

Weedscape Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

Contributions to Weedscape are welcomed. Please contact the editor for further information.

Readers are free to circulate and reproduce Weedscape material with acknowledgment of the author and source.

The views expressed in Weedscape are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the WSV Executive Committee.

Advertising rates

■ One sixth page	56 mm wide x 128 mm high	\$90.00
■ Quarter page	180 mm wide x 64 mm high	\$135.00
■ Half page	180 mm wide x 128 mm high	\$275.00
■ Whole page	180 mm wide x 257 mm high	\$450.00

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www.weedinfo.com.au

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New WoNS taxa

* African boxthorn	<i>Lycium ferocissimum</i>
* Asparagus weeds	<i>Asparagus aethiopicus</i> <i>A. africanus</i> <i>A. asparagooides</i> Western Cape form <i>A. declinatus</i> <i>A. plumosus</i> <i>A. scandens</i> Incl. original WoNS <i>A. asparagooides</i>
Bellyache bush	<i>Jatropha gossypiifolia</i>
* Brooms	<i>Genista linifolia</i> <i>G. monspessulana</i> <i>Cytisus scoparius</i>
* Cat's claw creeper	<i>Macfadyena unguis-cati</i>
* Fireweed	<i>Senecio madagascariensis</i>
Gamba grass	<i>Andropogon gayanus</i>
* Madeira vine	<i>Anredera cordifolia</i>
* Opuntiod cacti	<i>Opuntia</i> spp. (excl. <i>O. ficus-indica</i>) <i>Cylindropuntia</i> spp. <i>Austrocylindropuntia</i> spp.
* Sagittaria	<i>Sagittaria platyphylla</i>
* Silverleaf nightshade	<i>Solanum elaeagnifolium</i>
* Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>

* Recorded in Victoria

The 18th Australasian Weeds Conference 2012

Developing Solutions to Evolving Weed Problems



The Sebel and Citigate Albert Park, Melbourne ■ 8–11 October 2012 ■ Go to: www.18awc.com

This year, the 18AWC continues the proud legacy of the Australasian Weed Conference series in providing the latest in weed research, policy and management best practices.

Keynote speakers include Prof. Richard Hobbs (UWA), Prof. Richard Mack (Washington State University), Prof. Paul Martin (UNE) and Anthony Kachenko (NGIA), among others. The conference program is available on the official website.

The early bird registrations are still open. They close 30 June, so get in early for the cheaper conference prices. Earlybirders attract savings of up to \$100!

Paper and poster sessions are now closed, and presenters are due to submit their papers and posters soon. If anyone would like to be a referee for the papers, please contact Nazli Barootian, nbarootian@eventcorp.com.au, or Sally Ford, SFord@eventcorp.com.au.

Do you have a business that you would like to advertise?

We have a variety of sponsorship packages to elevate your profile with industry purchasers, decision makers and researchers. You can get your message across effectively as a sponsor, or network with conference attendees as an exhibitor. To find out what opportunities hold for your organisation, contact the Sponsorship Chair, Greg Wells at wells1@dow.com, or download the Sponsorship Kit.



WSV News

President's Report for the 46th Annual General Meeting, 19 April 2012

Last year I concluded the President's report with an appeal for people to volunteer as members of the executive committee, and that appeal is even more urgent this year. We did welcome one new member to the committee, Bonnie Gelman, following last year's AGM. However, there will be a number of retirements from the executive committee this year, for various reasons.

A number of strategies have been discussed and implemented to attract new committee members, but unfortunately so far, to no avail. As a result, the executive committee will struggle to continue to function in the manner prescribed in the WSV's constitution. I hope that one outcome of the AGM will be that this situation has been resolved by the injection of some fresh faces.

The major focus of the executive committee, apart from this, has been the ongoing arrangements for the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference, to be held in Melbourne this October, and hosted by the WSV. The organising committee and various sub-committees for the 18th AWC have worked hard to ensure the success of this event.

The WSV has also continued to confer awards on students at a number of



institutions who have excelled in studies relating to weed science. Students who received awards this year were from the University of Melbourne, Dookie Campus – Stephanie Krezel (Bachelor of Agriculture); from the University of Melbourne, Longerenong College – Kate Cross (Advanced Diploma of Agriculture), Mathew Hill (Advanced Diploma of Agriculture), Matthew Schnaars (Apprentice in Agriculture), Mia Muller-Bond (Certificate IV in Agriculture); from the South West Institute of TAFE, Glenormiston College – Kristy Haworth (Diploma of Agriculture and Diploma of Agronomy).

Finally, I trust that you have enjoyed today's seminar. Some of the feedback we

An appeal from the Secretary

This year's turnout for the WSV seminar has been less than stellar. As the Society tries to put on a seminar that captures our members' interests, we would appreciate if you can tell us what works for you. Please contact me with your ideas at secwssv@surf.net.au.

On a brighter note, the Society welcomes Gerry Ho, Matt Hayes and Rebecca Grant as committee members. We are of course still looking for a new President, Secretary and Treasurer to take the Society beyond 2012. To find out more about these roles, please contact me at the above email address.

Ros Shepherd
Secretary

have received regarding the WSV and the work it does in the world of weed science is that these seminars are not only widely appreciated, but serve an important purpose in the dissemination of information to the wider weed community. I hope that this work is able to continue.

James O'Brien
President

Appeal for information on garden escapees – southern African irises

I am a postgraduate candidate with the Botany Department, La Trobe University. Using a mix of genetics and field work, I'm investigating why some members of the iris family (Iridaceae) from southern Africa have naturalised in Australia, while others fail to do so. As these weeds may spread rapidly, many populations are not recorded in our State flora and herbarium databases. **If you have information on where these weeds may occur on public land, please let me know.**

I am especially interested in the genera *Babiana*, *Chasmanthe*, *Dietera*, *Gladiolus*, *Ixia*, *Moraea*, *Romulea*, *Sparaxis* and *Watsonia*. A good place to know what they look like is on Pacific Bulb Society's website: www.pacificbulbsociety.org. (I am not associated with the PBS, and cannot help eradicate weeds!)

Gerry Ho, Tel: 03 9479 2281, Fax: 03 9479 1181
email: hermitsquid@gmail.com.

Tool Box



Giving a RATS to herbicide resistance

Project UA00124 of the Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC) — the one concerned with ‘Understanding and management of resistance to Group M, Group L and Group I herbicides’ — has launched a free newsletter called *Giving a RATS*. It sounds all mysterious,

until it was explained that the eponymous rodent actually stands for *Resistance, Application, Tactics and Systems* pertaining to integrated weed management. Issue 1 is a easy-to-digest coverage of glyphosate resistance in weeds; thankfully they didn’t call it *Giving a TARS*. Click on the ‘Giving a RATS’ link at www.agronomo.com.au to subscribe to the newsletter.



Driving weeds away with Weed ID: The Ute Guide

GRDC’s *Ute Guide* is a visual mobile app that helps identify paddock weeds in southern Australia over various growth stages.

The app also has a calendar that tells you which weed are likely to be present at any time, and works even when there is no mobile coverage.

Previously only portable to the Apple iPhone, it now works with Apple iPads and Android phones.

Go to: www.grdc.com.au/director/events/apps?shortcut=1 to download.

Diary

Queensland Pest Animal Symposium

30 July – 2 August 2012

Caloundra, Queensland

Go to: www.pestanimalsymposium.com.au

The conference theme is ‘Adapting pest animal management to a changing world’, and there are presentations on community initiatives, policy matters, research innovations, and harvesting techniques, and a field trip showcasing urban pest issues and solutions in South East Queensland. Registrations close 25 July.

New Zealand Plant Protection Society Conference

14–16 August 2012

Nelson, New Zealand

Go to: www.nzpps.org.conference.php

A draft conference program can be expected after mid-June.

16th Australian Agronomy Conference

14–18 October 2012

University of New England, Armidale

Go to: www.agronomy.org.au/events/2012/
Focusing on ‘Capturing opportunities and overcoming obstacles in Australian agronomy’, speakers will offer their perspectives on the state and practice of Australian agronomy, plant breeding and weed management, with a field day to stretch the legs. Registrations close 1 October.

Ecological Society of Australia 2012 Annual Conference

3–7 December 2012

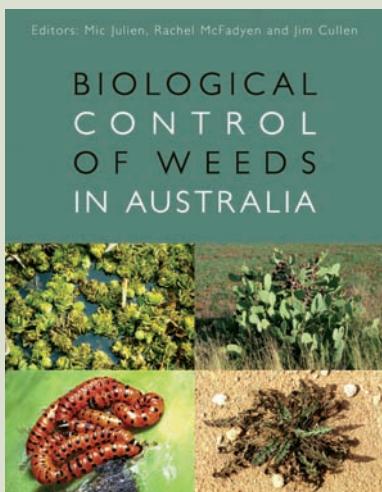
Melbourne, Victoria

Go to: www.esa2012.org.au (Don’t forget the ‘.au’!)

Another big one in Melbourne. Where 18AWC is about recent advances, ESA2012 goes back to the drawing board with ‘Ecology: Fundamental Science of the Biosphere’. An exciting development for weed folks is that the Invasive Species Research Chapter will host the second ‘round-table’ workshop (the first being at the 18AWC) for weed managers and researchers; email Ben Gooden bengooden@gmail.com if you have an idea to pitch. Registration for ESA2012 opens 6 June.

Bookshelf

Biological Control of Weeds in Australia



Edited by Mic Julien, Rachel

McFadyen and Jim Cullen

Published by CSIRO Publishing

Hardback, 648 pages

ISBN 9780643099937

Price \$A180.00

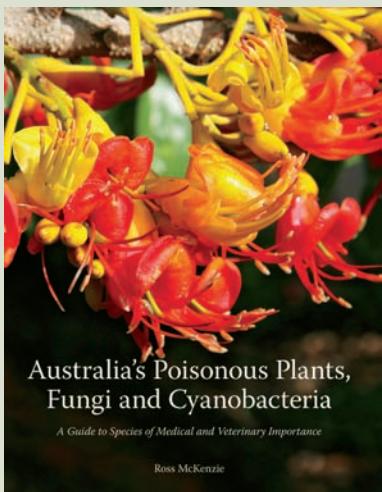
Biological control of weeds has been practised for over 100 years and Australia has been a leader in this weed management technique. The classical example of control of prickly pears in Australia by the cactus moth *Cactoblastis cactorum*, which was imported from the Americas, helped to set the future for biocontrol of weeds in many countries. Since then there have been many projects using Classical Biological Control to manage numerous weed species, many of which have been successful. Importantly, there have been no serious negative non-target impacts – the technique, when practised as it is in Australia, is safe and environmentally friendly. Economic assessments have shown that biocontrol of weeds in Australia has provided exceedingly high benefit-to-cost ratios.

This book reviews biological control of weeds in Australia to 2011, covering over 90

weed species and a multitude of biological control agents and potential agents. Each chapter has been written by practising biological control of weeds researchers and provides details of the weed, the history of its biological control, exploration for agents, potential agents studied and agents released and the outcomes of those releases. Many weeds were successfully controlled, some were not, many projects are still underway, some have just begun, however all are reported in detail in this book.

Biological Control of Weeds in Australia will provide invaluable information for biological control researchers in Australia and elsewhere. Agents used in Australia could be of immense value to other countries that suffer from the same weeds as Australia. The studies reported here provide direction to future research and provide examples and knowledge for researchers and students.

Australia's Poisonous Plants, Fungi and Cyanobacteria



By Ross McKenzie

Published by CSIRO Publishing

Hardback, 976 pages

ISBN 9780643092679

Price \$A195.00

Australia's Poisonous Plants, Fungi and Cyanobacteria is the first full-colour, comprehensive guide to the major natural threats to health in Australia affecting domestic and native animals and humans. The overriding aim of the book is to prevent poisoning, as there are few effective treatments available, particularly in domestic animals. The species have been chosen because of their capacity to threaten life or damage important organs, their relative abundance or wide distribution in native and naturalised Australian flora, or because of their extensive cultivation as crops, pastures or in gardens. These include flowering plants, ferns and cone-bearing plants, macrofungi, ergot fungi and cyanobacteria.

The plant species are grouped by life form such as herbs, grasses and sedges, shrubs, trees, and for flowering plants by flower

type and colour for ease of identification. Species described have colour photographs, distribution maps and notes on confusing species, habitats, toxins, animals affected, conditions of poisoning, clinical signs and symptoms, post mortem changes, therapy, prevention and control. Symbols are used for quick reference to poisoning duration and available ways of managing poisoning. As further aids to understanding, poisoning hot-spots are highlighted and the book lists plants under the headings of animals affected and organs affected. A Digest gives brief details for all poisonous species in Australia. This book is written in a straightforward style making it accessible to a wide audience including farmers, veterinarians, agricultural advisors, gardeners, horticulturists, botanists and park rangers, medical practitioners and paramedics, teachers, parents and pet owners.