



Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

volume 23 issue 3 2012

Weedscene

Victoria proposes new Invasive Species Management Bill, acts on roadside weeds

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has recently announced its intention to formulate a new Invasive Species Management Bill. This Bill is perceived as an evolutionary piece of legislative instrument, and is expected to coalesce and replace the various provisions in far-flung Acts of Parliament into a stand-alone legislation, to govern the management of invasive species in the state. Presentation of the Bill to Parliament for consideration and enactment is expected late 2014, and subordinate legislative instruments will be developed once Royal Assent has been received for the new Act.

This legislative review has been prompted by two primary factors. One, new legislation is needed to align the state with the provisions in the National Environment Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA). Two, current legislation has been found wanting, or is overly complex to cope with present and anticipated invasive species, in the light of global change and trends.

Administrative powers for the new Act is likely to be vested in the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and this in turn will relieve Catchment Management Authorities the responsibility of managing invasive species, which is the present arrangement under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act). These powers will enable the Minister to fasttrack

action against biosecurity threats, on a case-by-case basis.

The new Act promises to cover important legislative loopholes. A greater number of incursive taxa—including arthropods and marine organisms, and prescribed carriers of invasive species—will be caught under the provisions of the Act. In a nutshell, the Minister will be empowered to stop the entry of high-risk species into the state, to eradicate such species already established, and to contain the spread and impacts of other widely-established species in all of Victoria, on both public and private lands. However, taxa already covered by the Plant Biosecurity Act and Livestock Disease Control Act will be exempt from the proposed Act.

How this may affect stakeholders remains to be seen. Many specific provisions will be defined in the subordinate legislative instruments themselves, and this will only be progressively formulated not sooner than 2014. In the interim period, current provisions in the CaLP Act and other Acts will continue to be implemented. While the *Discussion Paper* on the new Bill certifies that ‘a person would be able to discharge his or her obligation(s) by meeting the requirements prescribed in these instruments,’ DPI assures stakeholders that the subordinate legislation will be developed such that ‘they do not create an unreasonable burden and are proportionate

to the risks that they are managing.’

If there is any indication of where the subordinate legislation is headed, the *Plant Biosecurity Act 2010* and the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* provide important compass points. In these Acts, both Ministerial power and stakeholder obligations are spelled out succinctly, with the ability to enforce a main part of both Acts. This does suggest that public awareness on, and obligations towards invasive species management will be raised to new levels, once these subordinate legislations have been enacted.

A more tangible impact of the new Act is a trimming of the lexicon of invasive types. Terms such as *state prohibited*, *regionally controlled* and *restricted* will make way for a two-tiered classification system:

- Category 1—for prohibited or ‘prevention and early intervention’ taxa—will be applied to high-risk species to stop their entry into Victoria, or to eradicate them (pending a realistic chance of eradication, and if a national cost-sharing agreement applies).
- Category 2—restricted or ‘ongoing management’—pertains to taxa that have established in the wild in Australia after European settlement, and significantly affects the economy,

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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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COVER PHOTO: *Alhagi maurorum* (courtesy Rob Richardson)

Joining the Weed Society of Victoria

The benefits of membership to WSV include:

- Weedscene: newsletter packed full of information
- eWeedscene: 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.

Weedscene Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

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

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

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

Advertising rates

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

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environment or social amenity in Victoria or other parts of Australia, but where eradication is deemed not feasible.

In a separate initiative against roadside weeds and pests, the Victorian Government in September 2012 provided \$7.8 million funding to councils to tackle weeds and rabbits along 100 000 km of local roads. In a press release, Minister for Agriculture and Food Security Peter Walsh said that the Government, in accepting the recommendations of the *Bailey Report on Roadside Weeds and Pests*, believed that local councils were in the best position to manage such weeds and pests along local roads. A council may receive up to \$50 000 per year, based on the road length managed.

The *Invasive Species Management Bill Discussion Paper* is open for public comments until 5 October 2012. Visit the DPI website (www.dpi.vic.gov.au), navigate to Agriculture > Pests, Diseases and Weeds, and click on the New Invasive Species Legislation hyperlink in the Update/alerts box.

From the President

I have just returned from a 'holiday' in Great Britain and Canada. And it's good to see some familiar 'friends' were there too. So, I took some holiday snaps of my encounters with Japanese knotweed, *Fallopia japonica*, a State prohibited weed in Victoria: a very rarely encountered weed in Victoria (thankfully). Do you know what this thing can do overseas? It takes over entire stream banks, and can also take over urban areas, surrounding your entire house and garden, its roots and shoots breaking up bitumen, masonry, and even entering your house! There are overseas websites entirely devoted to the management of this one species. Try googling this weed.

Now back in Victoria, and Melbourne is just about to host the biggest weed show in town: the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference. I urge all members to try to attend the conference at the Sebel and Citigate Hotel in Albert Park. It will be a great opportunity for networking and seeing presentations on a diverse range of weed projects and research. And your Weed Society of Victoria membership will give you a substantial discount to attend the conference. And while I'm on the subject of membership, I would encourage any

members to become more active members by considering joining the committee of the Weed Society of Victoria, where you can contribute your ideas to help shape future Weed Society events. Finally, putting on an international conference doesn't just happen; I would like to thank the conference organising committee, and in particular Ros Shepherd, for all their efforts in organising the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference.



Michael Hansford with Japanese knotweed



Japanese knotweed seedlings erupt at the edge of an infestation



Is this house 'feeling the squeeze?'

The poster features a blue sky background with a silhouette of a city skyline. On the left is a photograph of the Melbourne Convention Centre. The text '18th Australasian Weeds Conference 2012' is prominently displayed in white. Below this, it says 'The Sebel and Citigate Albert Park Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 8-11 October 2012 www.18awc.com'. A large orange banner across the middle contains the text 'Developing Solutions to Evolving Weed Problems'. At the bottom, there are logos for various sponsors: Platinum Sponsor (Australian Government, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation), Major Sponsor (GRDC, Grains Research & Development Corporation), Gold Sponsor (Department of Primary Industries, mla), Silver Sponsor (Dow AgroSciences), Field Trip Sponsor (PRACTICAL ECOLOGY), and Supporters (various smaller logos).

The making of a conference

Few are those for whom the impending 18th Australasian Weeds Conference represents their first scientific conference. Indeed, to present at a conference is a credential in itself, and to present flawlessly at one is an inevitable part of the training of a postgraduate student, or an aspiring young scientist. But how much of the blood, sweat and tears do attendees see shed in the long run-up to the few days of conference glamour? *Weedscene* catches up with Ros Shepherd, the Secretary of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc., for her perspective in the making of the 18AWC.

How did the 18AWC come to Melbourne?

There are seven member organisations under the Council of Australasian Weed Societies (CAWS) umbrella – New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia and New Zealand. Now, the conference series is biennial, and each member Society hosts a weed conference in a round-robin fashion. Victoria last hosted the 11th AWC sixteen years ago in 1996, and it is our turn again this year.

There is talk of making the AWC series triennial again—it was felt by some that the conferences need to be spaced out a little more. But Tasmania will host the next AWC in two years time, and details of the Conference will be announced during the 18AWC itself.

When did planning for the 18AWC start?

It started as soon as the last conference in Christchurch, New Zealand ended. We gathered the statistics and comments from that conference, and the Queensland one too in 2008—since it was held on mainland Australia—and did our projections for the Victorian conference.

What were the milestones for the 18AWC?

I'd say there were three main ones: setting the theme, venue and date of the conference, and also selecting a Conference manager to help with all the organising. As the executive committee and committee members are intimately involved with the conference, clearance was obtained from their supervisors for them to take time off to attend meetings and perform other related matters. Throughout the run-up to the Conference we have had plenty of monthly milestones to meet also.



Conference Centre, The Sebel and Citigate Albert Park Melbourne

What challenges did you face?

When we planned for 18AWC, the global financial crisis (GFC) had yet to strike. We had worked out a conference budget, based on the expected number of attendees, which were based on figures from the last few AWCs. When the GFC struck, we saw an unexpected drop in registrations and corporate sponsorships, as institutions and companies went into belt-tightening mode. I realised that cost-cutting is in their financial interests—and many of the higher-echelon people view conferences as mere junkets for their staff—but I wish that they take instead a broader perspective that such conferences really help employee development, and that they would be in a better position in the long run, were they to promote, rather than curtail, continuing education.

Second, we had some trouble getting presenters to adhere to their timelines. For example, some presenters did not submit their papers on time. They have to realise that even a missed submission will have repercussions down the line.

What are your wishes for this conference?

I hope all attendees will gain new knowledge and ideas from the conference, and learn of new advances in weed science and management. The conference provides a great platform for networking, and I

feel that we all can gain a lot from meeting new people, and talking to others working in similar fields. Lastly, I just wish that everyone would enjoy themselves and have a great time here!

What goes on after 18AWC ends?

Well, a conference doesn't just end when everyone leaves and the venue is packed up. There are all sorts of administrative issues to take care of—the conference costs have to be tallied and the budget

balanced, attendee feedback has to be studied to make subsequent conferences even better, and the conference proceedings have to be published—so things go on for quite a bit yet.

Ros's mainstay role in the organisation of the 18AWC continued even with the transition to a new executive committee, following the Society AGM in April 2012. She has put off her retirement from the Committee to see the conference through; however, the quest for some personal time—'perhaps to take in a world tour'—is high on her cards now, and the WSV is very grateful for her time and dedication to our cause. If you would like to do something for the Society and fill Ros's (big) shoes, please let us know. Our contact information is on page 2.

New Invasive Species Management Bill

An interview with John Burley, Director, Invasive Plants and Animals, Biosecurity Victoria, DPI



What is your role in the drafting of the new Bill?

I'm responsible for ensuring we have a proposal to the Government to reform the way in which we manage invasive species across Australia.

What factors triggered the drafting of a new invasive species Bill?

One of the factors is the recognition of the increased risks [brought about by global trade and change], and the need for better tools to manage these risks. We're also in a different environment nationally, because there's very much a push towards an integrated approach towards biosecurity issues—not just for weedy plants and animals—but also for plant and animal diseases. This is happening nationally, and in Victoria as well. All these issues are handled by Biosecurity Victoria; whereas in the past, they were handled by a range of different Acts.

The very definition of an 'invasive species' is missing from the *Discussion Paper*—this would have been a moot point for any legislation.

I suppose it is in the sense of what's not be covered [by the new Act]. Plant and animal diseases are covered by other pieces of legislation, and are therefore excluded from the definition of invasive species. The Act will cover invasive species not native to Victoria, and will include species not covered by other legislation. This is not to say that we're going to legislate against every new organism—it will be on a case-by-case basis.

What about incursions into Victoria, arising from species migrations brought about by global climate change?

It's unlikely we'll look to provide for controlling, or force control, upon these species. But as I'd mentioned, we adopt a case-by-case approach; action can be considered, but there is no commitment

to do that. And of course, Australia has a fairly unique flora and fauna, and a pretty big barrier between this biota and other potential invasive species.

The *Discussion Paper* seems to signify a move against novel taxonomic groups, but adopts a status quo approach to invasive plants and animals.

No, not really—the old legislation is prescriptive with regards to pest plant and animals—for example, what you need to do to clear pests—but the new legislation will give the ability to catch them, and the subordinate instruments will define what those actions are in detail, and these can be applied to implement Government policy on a case-by-case basis. So while the current legislation calls for four categories of weeds, there are only two categories of invasive species in the new legislation; and within these categories, we will develop appropriate management regimes to handle the risks posed by those invasive species.

What's the mechanism to nominate something as an invasive species under the new Act?

Declarations under the current legislation is made on advice from the CMA and Catchment Management Council, but under the new legislation, it may well be that this process is handled at a lower level, but it may not necessarily be an open process for nomination. However, people can and currently do recommend a species for declaration. But we need to have a system in place to make sure that resources can be directed towards species where Government intervention makes a difference. That's the point for legislation—if Government intervention makes no difference, then there is no point for declaration.

Can nomination be done in the manner in which threatened species or communities are nominated now?

No, we won't be going down that track. And a nomination may not necessarily be considered by an independent panel.

Will the new Act bring with it more resources to manage invasive species?

We'll be implementing the new legislation with the resources that the Government has. There is no commitment to a higher level of resources in the new legislation. The legislation will enable action to be taken, and it will be a Government policy decision as to what level of resources are needed to address those priorities.

We work within the idea that we prioritise actions that can be taken. Within the area of biosecurity, we look at risk management; for example, we look at the likelihood of a new invasion occurring. If something is likely to occur and the impact is great enough, then it becomes a higher priority than something else. And so there will always be a system of prioritisation and action against those species we can have the greatest impact on.

There are many risk management models out there...

There are probably hundreds of risk management models, but the principles are fairly similar to the ones we apply. It's been said that the Victorian risk assessment processes are the Rolls Royces of risk assessment models, but there are moves to get more uniform risk assessments across the range of biosecurity threats in Australia.

The recent funding to councils to fight roadside weeds and pests happened at about the time the new drafting of the Bill was announced. Is the Government jumping the gun here?

The new legislation will probably not come into effect until sometime after the next

Continued on page 6/...



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state election, because the subordinate legislation has to be developed and put into place. So, the Government has decided it can't wait for those issues to be dealt with before it addresses the roadside issue. The roadside issue has gone on for the past eight years, because of the uncertainties over legal responsibilities. The Government has now addressed this issue in a practical way of letting local councils take up responsibility by providing grants, and by looking at changes in the current CaLP Act to ensure that these changes are legislated for [in the new Act].

So there will be no effective change of ownership of roadside areas?

No, the Government roadside initiative is to make the road manager responsible for all

aspects of roadside management, including the clearing of weeds and pest animals. If a council is managing that land, then they become the organisation responsible for weed and pest animal management on that roadside. If it was VicRoads, then VicRoads would continue to have that role. But this will apply mostly to rural road networks, and not the urban nature strip.

Do you have any take-home message for our readers?

One thing I think is important is that we are providing some new mechanisms under the subordinate tools, which will include things like management plans, codes of practice (which we don't currently use very much within the legislation), the ability to accredit particular systems, or to certify produce and so on, so we're aiming for a much more flexible set of tools for the management of invasive species.

As for the roadside weed situation, one of the responsibilities is for the councils to develop management plans as a way to show that they are meeting their responsibilities for roadside weed and pest animal management, and this is a concept that can be applied more broadly, so that instead of having to inspect all land areas to ensure that land owners are controlling their weeds, one way would be to develop and implement an appropriate management plan to show that you are taking reasonable steps to control the weeds within your locality. These will go a long way of turning things around.

This interview has been edited for brevity, and should not be taken as a legal document due to inevitable errors in transcription. *Weedscene* is grateful to John Burley for taking the time to attend this interview.

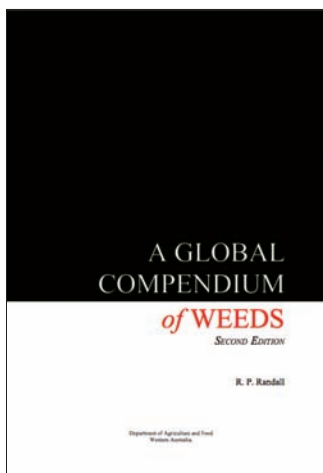
Bookshelf

A Global Compendium of Weeds 2nd edition

by R.P. Randall

Published by Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia, electronic version, 1115 pages.

ISBN 978-0-646-57878-1.



Price: Free to download. Available now.

The original *Global Compendium of Weeds* is a veritable tome to invasion biologists and weed scientists, and ranks as one of

the few go-to sources of information for all things weedy and uninvited.

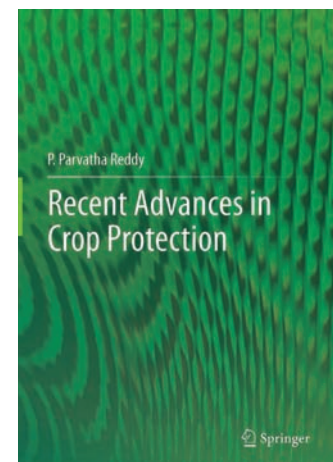
There are some changes to the first edition. Randall writes in the Aliens-L digest: '[T] here is more detail as to what weed status has been applied by which reference and the extensive index of synonyms and common names is gone. I decided to only list those synonyms that are also mentioned in the text so no matter what name you look up you should also be directed to the current name and any other synonyms listed in the book, without the use of an index.' Second, 12 000 new names and 1000 new references have been added. And last, it's free to download. Get your copy at www.agric.wa.gov.au/objtwr/imported_assets/content/pw/weed/global-compedium-weeds.pdf.

Recent Advances in Crop Protection

by P. Parvatha Reddy

Published by Springer, hardback, 259 pages.

ISBN 978-81-322-0722-1.



Price: €149.95. Available now.
www.springer.com

A rapidly increasing population demands escalating food production. Limited land resources has resulted in intensive farming systems, at the cost of more prevalent diseases and pests. At the same time, traditional pest management practices have been largely abandoned. However, the threat of greater crop susceptibility to pathogens and pests with global climate change has encouraged researchers to look

for eco-friendly and fresh approaches to pest management.

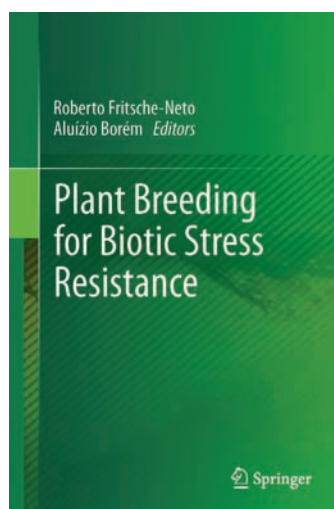
The book brings together in one volume the gamut of breakthroughs in sustainable crop protection. The author first defines a technique, and then explains how to put it into practice. Reddy, a veteran with over 30 years' experience working with horticultural crops, covers concepts such as avermectins, bacteriophages, biofumigation, transgenic crops, biomimicry, plant defence activators, plant growth promoting rhizobacteria, soil solarisation, and biointensive integrated pest management, among others.

Recent Advances in Crop Protection is targeted at students, policy-makers, scientists, researchers and extension workers.

Plant Breeding for Biotic Stress Resistance

edited by Robert Fritsche-Neto and Aluizio Borém

Published by Springer, hardback, 166 pages.
ISBN 978-3-642-33086-5.



Price: €139.95. Due 31 October 2012.
www.springer.com

Experience shows that biotic stresses occur with different levels of intensity in nearly all agricultural areas around the world. The occurrence of insects, weeds and diseases

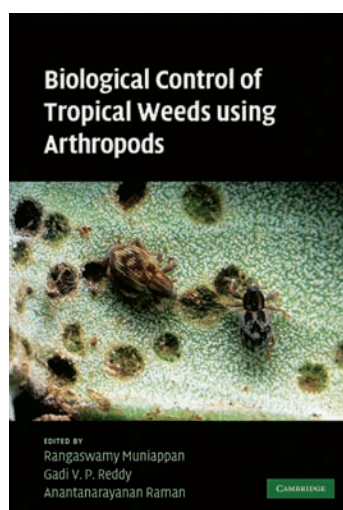
caused by fungi, bacteria or viruses may not be relevant in a specific year but they usually harm yield in most years. Global warming has shifted the paradigm of biotic stresses in most growing areas, especially in the tropical countries, sparking intense discussions in scientific forums.

This book was written with the idea of collecting in a single publication the most recent advances and discoveries concerning breeding for biotic stresses, covering all major classes of biotic challenges to agriculture and food production. Accordingly, it presents the state-of-the-art in plant stresses caused by all microorganisms, weeds and insects and how to breed for them. Complementing *Plant Breeding for Abiotic Stress Tolerance*, this book was written for scientists and students interested in learning how to breed for biotic stress scenarios, allowing them to develop a greater understanding of the basic mechanisms of resistance to biotic stresses and develop resistant cultivars.

Biological Control of Tropical Weeds using Arthropods

edited by Rangaswamy Muniappan, Gadi V. P. Reddy and Anantanarayanan Rama

Published by Cambridge University Press, paperback, 507 pages.
ISBN 978-1107411265.



Price: £37.99. Due October 2012.
www.cambridge.org

An upcoming re-issue of the acclaimed 2009 hardback version in paperback format,

this book promotes cost-effective biological control of tropical weeds as a sustainable approach to weed management. Touted at scientists and policy makers concerned with weed management, practitioners in Victoria may be particularly interested in the treatment of noxious species found in their state, including *Eichhornia crassipes* (Water Hyacinth), *Mimosa pigra* (Mimosa), and *Prosopis* spp. (Mesquite). An Adobe eBook version is also available (\$US 109).



Biological Invasions in New Zealand

edited by Robert B. Allen and William G. Lee

Published by Springer, softback, 457 pages.
ISBN 978-3-642-06759-4.



Price: €194.95. Due 30 November 2012.
www.springer.com

This book is a re-issue of the 2006 hardback edition in a paperback format, and presents an in-depth review of the level and rate of invasions to and from New Zealand, and investigates what controls the success of invaders and the consequences for ecosystems both on land and offshore. Although written from a Kiwian perspective, this book contains nuggets of information that will interest invasion biologists. The electronic version is cheaper (€159.99) and faster (immediate download).

Diary

9th FJC Rogers Seminar: Garden Design with Australian Native Plants

10–11 November 2012, Preston and Cranbourne, Victoria. *Go to:* www.apsvic.org.au/fjcrogers/index.html

This one's very tight – registrations close 1 October 2012, but if you do like native gardening, this Australian Plants Society event is ideal, with expert speakers, workshops, and behind-the-scene tours of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. You don't have to be an APS member to register, but it's cheaper if you are one. Call (03) 5998 7608 for enquiries.

Ecological Society of Australia 2012 Annual Conference

3–7 December 2012, Melbourne, Victoria
Go to: www.esa2012.org.au (Don't forget the '.au'!)

A great way to top the year. 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 is still open at time of press.

Global Herbicide Resistance Challenge

18–22 February 2013, Perth, WA. *Go to:* www.herbicideresistanceconference.com.au
The Global Resistance Challenge 2013 conference offers a multidisciplinary forum focused on all aspects of herbicide resistance in crops and weeds and their impact on global food production. Scientific sessions will range from the molecular basis of herbicide resistance evolution through agro-ecology and agronomy to on-farm resistance management. Registration is open, and abstract submissions have been extended to November 1, 2012.

16th European Weed Research Society Symposium

24–27 June 2013, Samsun, Turkey.

Go to: www.ewrs2013.org

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk created the Turkish liberation movement in Samsun on May 19, 1919, effectively launching the Turkish War of Independence against the Allies. It's a little more pacific 94 years later, when the EWRS convenes at this Black Sea city to articulate the war against weeds. A program was not available at the time of press, but attendees are expected to hear the latest in weed science and management practices. Registration is open, and abstract submission closes October 14, 2012.

Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions (EMAPi)

12th International Conference, 22–26 September 2013, Pirenópolis, Brazil.

Go to: www.emapi2013.org

Details were not available at the time of going to press, except that registration opens 1 February 2013 and abstract submissions a month later.

News & Appeals

Ratification to the WSV Constitution and Financial Year

The WSV Constitution was ratified at a special meeting, held at Fitzroy Library on 19 September 2012. The following sections were added to the Constitution, bringing the Constitution in line with the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*:

- Quorum at general meetings; ■ Notice of general meetings; ■ Vacancies;
- Presiding at general meetings; ■ Adjournment of meetings; ■ Voting at general meetings; ■ Poll at general meetings; ■ Manner of determining whether resolution carried; ■ Proxies;
- Funds; ■ 18. Discipline, suspension and expulsion of members; ■ 21. Register of members; ■ 22. Custody and inspection of books and records;
- 24. Winding up.

The end of the financial year for WSV Inc. has also been ratified, and now falls on the end of February, instead of the end of December as before. The 2013 WSV

Annual General Meeting and Seminar will be held in April. There will be more information on these events in the next issue of *Weedscene*.

Silverleaf nightshade: the fightback begins

After infesting 350 000 ha of cropland and pastures across southern Australian mainland, and earning itself a WoNS nomination in the process, the silverleaf nightshade *Solanum elaeagnifolium* is now under the spotlight for strategic management.

Over the next five years, the Australian Weeds Committee wants to prevent the plant from spreading, to eradicate outlier populations, and to contain core populations. A draft management plan has been published online, and is open for comment until November 2, 2012. More details at www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/silverleafnightshade/.



Silverleaf nightshade

Weedscene goes regional

Starting in 2013, *Weedscene* will give more coverage of regional Victoria. If you think that your region, shire, township or holding is doing something newsworthy about weeds or the environment, please let us know by writing to the *Weedscene* editor at editor@wsvic.org.au.

We're also looking for op-ed contributors, and reader feedback about the contents of *Weedscene*. Please send your ideas and comments to the editor at the above email address—after all, this is your newsletter!