



Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

volume 24 issue 2 2013

# Weedscene

## Advocacy for the Weed Society of Victoria? by Andrew Cox

**Should the WSV undertake advocacy? If it does, what type of advocacy would best serve it?**

President Michael Hansford answered the first question for me when he said that the conferences, seminars, *Weedscene*, and other promotional work of the WSV already fit the definition of advocacy.

Advocacy is about advancing an idea. Some people might immediately worry that advocacy means taking a political position or organising a protest. But as soon as you put pen to paper, open your mouth or send an email you are being an advocate, and performing advocacy.

When I spoke at WSV's *Many Ways to Manage a Weed* seminar last April to challenge the audience and members to become stronger advocates for weed control, I expected some discomfort. My perception was that the strong links to Government employment within the Society's ranks precluded its adoption of a stance.

To my surprise, immediately after my talk, I was invited to attend the next WSV Executive Committee meeting to see how I might assist with increasing the Society's advocacy. I have since joined as a member,

and I have attended my first meeting. I was warmly received and this reassured me that the WSV does care about its mission: to promote interest in weeds and their control.

Now I will be working on behalf of the Committee to trial some advocacy (in addition to the usual fora the Society holds) and to develop Society policy positions.

The type of advocacy may consist of promoting policy positions to members, the public, and to present its benefits to the government of the day, other political parties and potential allies. Protocols would need to be developed to avoid any conflicts with members' roles within government.

As I mentioned in my talk earlier in the year, the WSV is uniquely placed to offer a scientific and expert voice about policies and laws needed in Victoria to address some of the root causes of our escalating weed problem.

These are small but important steps for WSV. As a first step, the Weed Society of Victoria's Executive Committee is reviewing the advocacy of a White List or Permitted List of exotic species, to improve weed control (see box story pages 3–4: *Do We Want to support a 'White List' approach*



*to weed management?)* We would love to know what you think about this idea, or the directions WSV advocacy may take. Please send your thoughts to the editor at [editor@wsvic.org.au](mailto:editor@wsvic.org.au), or complete our short online survey at [www.wsvic.org.au](http://www.wsvic.org.au).

### Note

I've joined the WSV in an individual capacity, despite holding the position of CEO of the Invasive Species Council. Not only can I bring to the Society my skills in managing small and medium-sized organisations and conservation advocacy, but I can also draw on the work of the Council. I look forward to assisting WSV achieve its mission.

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## WSV Membership Rates 2013–14

Concession*	\$20.00
Ordinary	\$60.00
Corporate	\$140.00

\* Students and Pensioners

WSV is not registered to collect GST

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**COVER PHOTO:** *Fallopia japonica* (courtesy Fiona 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](http://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
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## Do we want to support a 'White List' approach to weed management?<sup>1</sup>

*Prevention and early intervention are the most cost-effective techniques for managing weeds.*

**Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, Australian Weeds Strategy (2006).**

Weed prevention should be practiced both at the national border (pre-border) and internally (post-border) between states/territories, and also between regions. With quarantine regulations now restricting the import of new plant species to those assessed as low risk, the major weed risks arise from plant species that were imported into Australia prior to weed risk assessment, some of which have already naturalised (established in the wild outside their natural range). Risks can also arise from native plant species moved outside their natural range. Weed prevention requires that non-indigenous plants be not spread to new locations unless they are assessed as a low weed risk.

There are more than 26,000 exotic plant species in Australia, most in cultivation in gardens and paddocks. More than 10% of these exotic species have already become established in the wild. Another 23% are weedy in other parts of the world, suggesting a potential to become invasive in Australia (Panetta *et al.* 2001). There are also more than 11,000 native plant species in cultivation, some 5% of which have established in the wild outside their natural range (Randall 2007). About three-quarters of the exotic weedy species found in Australia started out as cultivated plants (Groves *et al.* 2003) (about 65% as garden/park plants and at least 8% as agricultural plants). Gardens comprise the major pool of future weeds. Many more new weeds are likely to come from this source than from accidental or illegal introductions.

Despite the large number of cultivated plants in Australia that are weeds or

potential weeds, there are very few restrictions over their movement and sale. Assuming that species weedy in other countries are potentially invasive somewhere in Australia, there are about 9000 weeds or potential weeds in Australia (Groves 1999), but only a few hundred (about 500 taxa and genera) are subject to any form of legislative control in any one of Australia's states/territories, apart from Western Australia. There are no restrictions on the sale or movement anywhere in Australia (apart from WA) of more than 90% of weeds or potential weeds and more than 80% of naturalised species. Many of the restricted plants are restricted only in some part of their potential range. A large number of invaders and potential invaders are available for trade in Australia. Of some 8700 garden species available through nursery catalogues and seed sellers in 2002, 12% were weeds somewhere in Australia (Groves, Boden and Lonsdale 2005).

### The Black List or Prohibited List

The unrestricted movement of thousands of weeds or potential weeds within most of Australia derives from the regulatory approach to non-native plants. In what is known as the 'Prohibited List' or 'Black List' approach, the sale and movement of all plant species are permitted except for those that are specifically banned by a state or territory.

Black List systems mostly result in bans on species that have already established, and often long after it is too late to eradicate them. Most declaration processes are slow and onerous. They can be preventative by banning species before they are introduced, but this is done on an *ad hoc*, occasional basis rather than systematically.

It is not realistic to assess the many thousands of potential weeds that could be introduced to determine which should

be prohibited (Csurhes *et al.* 2006). The system is generally non-precautionary in allowing the entry of plant species likely to be weedy with no assessment of risk.

### The White List or Permitted List

The White List system takes the opposite approach of banning all species unless they are on a Permitted List. The latter results in a much larger number of weeds being prevented entry. The difference between the approaches is often summed up as treating species as harmless unless proven otherwise (Black List) versus treating species as harmful unless proven otherwise (White List).

The implementation of a 'Permitted List' or 'White List' approach would reverse this approach, banning the movement and sale of all species apart from those specifically permitted. A 'White List' would still be complemented by a 'Black List' that contains species already assessed as too risky that have additional restrictions).

A Permitted List approach involves developing a list of plant taxa that can be legally sold and transported because they have passed a weed risk assessment and are deemed low risk. Taxa not on the list are automatically prohibited, unless they pass a risk assessment and are added to the list.

*The development of a list of permitted, non-invasive taxa, applied in a consistent manner across all States and Territories, could represent the most effective and timely response to the immediate threat posed by thousands of potentially invasive and unrestricted plant species.*

**Steve Csurhes, Rod Randall, Christian Goninon, Alice Beilby, Stephen Johnson and John Weiss. Turn the tap off before you mop up the spill (2006).**

continued on page 4/...





The Permitted List approach is used in Australia at the national border, in Western Australia and in New Zealand. It is used in the Northern Territory for aquatic plants, and also by state and territory governments for some categories of exotic animals. Experience with these existing systems has shown that a Permitted List approach is workable, effective and cost effective, as discussed in the next section. It is consistent with the Australian Weeds Strategy, agreed to by federal and state/territory governments. In fact, a Permitted List approach is the only way to meet the prevention goals of the strategy.

The aim of a state/territory-based White List approach would be to prevent the deliberate movement of:

1. Existing weeds into new regions where they are likely to invade.
2. Potential weeds into regions where they are likely to invade.
3. Invasive or potentially invasive native plants outside their natural range.

However, as applied to date, Permitted Lists generally also include taxa already traded in the jurisdiction, including those

that are invasive or potentially invasive. Permitted Lists have generally been used to draw 'a line in the sand' to prevent new potentially harmful introductions, but for maximum effectiveness they should also be used to reduce the number of existing permitted species to limit future naturalisations and exacerbation of existing weed problems. White List restrictions would apply only to the sale or movement of plants, not their possession. Thus, landholders with non-permitted plants in their gardens or paddocks would not be breaking the law, except if the plants were on a Prohibited List with conditions requiring landholders to remove those species or if they were breaching a duty of care (Csurhes *et al.* 2006).

### Comparing the White List and Black List approaches

*[This] represents a substantial failure of State and Territory-based environmental regulation.*

**Allen Hawke, Independent Review of the Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (2009)**

Currently, several thousand plant species persist as ornamentals or as naturalised

populations in urban settings. They represent a vast reservoir of potential future problems. Movement of these species within Australia is effectively unconstrained.

White List systems can comprehensively prevent the introduction of new weeds, depending upon how effective and precautionary the weed risk assessment is (Low 2005).

In the first six years of operation Western Australia prevented the entry of 410 plants assessed as a weed risk.

Tests of the federal weed risk assessment protocol on known weeds found that it correctly predicted 90% of weeds and 70% of non-weeds, so some weeds are still likely to gain entry and some non-weeds are likely to be rejected (Gordon *et al.* 2008). The system is precautionary in rejecting plant imports that are likely to become weeds with no certainty that they would (Low 2005). It is systematic in requiring a risk assessment for all new species proposed for import.

<sup>1</sup> Citations for this article can be found in the online version at [www.wsvic.org.au](http://www.wsvic.org.au).



## Profile

### Rebecca Grant, Secretary

In November 2007, I began working at Department of Primary Industries (now Department of Environment and Primary Industries), in Frankston, mainly within weed biological and chemical control projects, but most of my time with the Weed Risk Assessment Team.

After working in weed sciences with the Department of Primary Industries for four years, I decided to join the WSV committee in 2012. I joined so I could maintain a professional link with my colleagues after I left the weed sciences field, having finished my contracted position with the Department. Upon Ros Shepherd's retirement, and with the support of last year's committee, I accepted the nomination as secretary.

Along with my new role as WSV Secretary, I am studying a Bachelor of Science Degree part-time at Deakin University. I look forward to working with the new committee, meeting more of our members and supporting the WSV as the Secretary.

Rebecca Grant

# From the President



## President's Report for the Annual General Meeting, 18 April 2013

2012–13 saw the WSV's hosting of the 18th Australasian Weeds Conference in Melbourne, and I would like to thank the Executive Committee and the Conference Organising Sub-committee for an absolutely top effort in putting on this successful conference. Analysis of the conference evaluation forms showed overall that delegates rated the conference very positively. I would especially like to thank Ros Shepherd, who was the Chair of the Conference Organising Sub-Committee, in addition to her role as the Society's Secretary. Ros is also retiring from the Committee at this year's AGM, so my thanks are not just for her efforts for the past year, but also for her tireless devotion to the Society as Secretary for the last 20 plus years. A big thanks to you, Ros!

The past year also saw the return of regular editions of *Weedscene* being sent out to the members. This is thanks to

*Weedscene* Editor, Gerry Ho. I would also like to thank John Burley for enabling the Committee access to a regular meeting room at DPI in Melbourne. But really I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of all of the Committee members, who have contributed ideas at meetings, and kept the financial and constitutional requirements of the Society functioning in the past year; so thanks also to Jackie Steel, Rebecca Grant, Matt Stephenson, Matt Hayes, and Greg Wells.

Despite our successes over the past year, one of the challenges in having a Committee with a number of departing and new members each year is the challenge of being able to maintain the required number and breadth of Committee positions that are required under the Constitution of the Society. I ask all members of the Society to consider nominating to be on the Committee, even for a non-office bearing position. In fact, we need more ordinary members on the Committee as the highest priority. We like to see fresh

faces and new ideas, and if we fail to fill key positions or Committee numbers drop below Constitutional requirements, we will be unable to continue to function.

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 – Duncan Thomas (Bachelor of Science); from the University of Melbourne, Longerenong College – Dudley Bibby (Cropping and Grazing Apprentice), Erin Arnott (Advanced Diploma of Agriculture), and Mollie Garton (Certificate IV in Agriculture).

Finally, I hope that you have enjoyed today's seminar. Thank you for attending. With your continued support, the new Committee will be planning for more weed-related events for the next year.

Michael Hansford  
President

## Diary

8th Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting  
21–23 October 2013, Basel, Switzerland.  
Go to: [www.abim.ch](http://www.abim.ch)

Novel and safe biological crop protection products will be presented, and new trends in the global market will be discussed.

24th Asian-Pacific Weed Science Conference  
22–25 October 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
Go to: [www.apwss2013.com](http://www.apwss2013.com)

The theme for this conference is *The role of weed science in supporting food security by 2020*, and delegates will learn about weedy threats and risks, sustainable weed management, and the economics of weed control in the Asian-Pacific region.

2nd International Congress on Biological Invasions – Biological Invasions, Ecological Safety and Food Security  
23–27 October 2013, Qingdao, China  
Go to: [www.icbi2013.org](http://www.icbi2013.org)

Hailing the first congress in 2009 a success, the organisers vow ICBI 2013 'will continue to facilitate the exchange of cutting edge research and technical innovations among experts working in the field of biological invasions. It will cover every aspect of the discipline from fundamental research to field management of IAS. It will also address the global challenges of food security and part solutions in relation with IAS.'

Weed XXI Latin American Congress • XXXIV The Mexican Congress Weed Science • International Symposium on Resistance and Tolerance to Herbicide • IX International Symposium on Aquatic Weeds  
11–15 November 2013, Cancun, Mexico  
Go to: [www.asomecima.org](http://www.asomecima.org)

54th Annual Meeting of the Weed Science Society of America and the 67th of the Canadian Weed Science Society  
3–6 February 2014, Vancouver, Canada  
Go to: [wssa.net/meeting/annual-meeting/](http://wssa.net/meeting/annual-meeting/)

XIVth International Symposium on Biological Control of Weeds  
2–7 March 2014, Kruger National Park, South Africa  
Go to: [www.isbcw2014.uct.ac.za](http://www.isbcw2014.uct.ac.za)

26th German Weed Science Conference  
11–13 March 2014, Braunschweig, Germany  
Go to: [www.unkrauttagung.de](http://www.unkrauttagung.de)

4th International Symposium on Weeds and Invasive Plants  
18–23 May 2014, Montpellier, France  
Go to: [invasive.weeds.montpellier.ewrs.org/](http://invasive.weeds.montpellier.ewrs.org/)

Weed Society of Victoria Fifth Biennial Conference  
13–15 May 2014, Geelong, Victoria.  
Go to: [www.wsvic.org.au](http://www.wsvic.org.au)

New Zealand Plant Protection Society Conference  
12–14 August 2014, Taupo, New Zealand.  
Go to: [www.nzpps.org](http://www.nzpps.org)



## Feature

### Boxthorn removal in the upper reaches of the Little River near the You Yangs *by Tim Dowling*

I work as a bush crew member and contribute to the Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program. We are presently working on a site on Melbourne's Little River pulling out boxthorn and briar rose that are too large to spray. The rich red soil of this site is agricultural land used for grain farming, pasture and an olive grove.



Tim with protective gear, all set to battle weeds

The owner of the private property has agreed to be part of the Stream Frontage Management Program, which establishes streamside fencing to keep stock from damaging the banks. Melbourne Water partially funds this program, which includes weed management, planting, revegetation and off-stream water points for stock.

Among the weeds being controlled along the Little River include the briar rose or sweet briar (*Rosa rubiginosa*), tiger pear (*Opuntia aurantiaca*), Cape broom, (*Genista monspessullana*) and African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*), which often grows with the native violet



Boxthorn being towed into a pile for burning

(*Melicytus dentatus*). They are often intertwined and growing together, which makes them even more difficult to remove.

My duties include cutting the boxthorn and briar rose at the base, poisoning the stumps with Roundup Attack, and moving the green waste for burning, by towing it with the work ute. Often the boxthorn would be down over the edge of a rocky escarpment towards the stream edge. This increased the difficulty to remove the weeds as they have often been pushed over by flooding and have re-rooted in the debris. Although these thorny weeds are excellent habitats for animals, such as Willy Wagtails and wrens (and, I dare say, rabbits and foxes), they will be, in time, replaced with indigenous species as part of the program.

Boxthorn lives up to its name with large thorns that make HexArmor gloves, chainsaw chaps, and steel innersoles mandatory protection. Wearing the right gear allowed us to methodically remove the weeds without injury, even after five days on the job! Initially we thought the gloves might have provided a false sense of security but that was not the case, it was a *true* sense of security.

## Gallery



◀ Ros presenting the Weed Society of New South Wales's Certificate of Appreciation to Rob and Fiona Richardson *in absentia*, for 'their long time dedication to the general weed society of the country, for their editorship of *Plant Protection Quarterly*, for their editorship and publication of the *Proceedings of the Australasian Weeds Conferences* since 1993, of the Weed Society of Victoria's seminar and conference proceedings, and of the various weeds books that everyone uses and refers to.' (Editor's note: Not forgetting the copy of *Weedscene* you are now holding in your hands!)



◀ *Rare steaks for a job well done:* Ros Shepherd's farewell dinner, following the AGM seminar.



◀ *Ways to manage a weed:* Will de Milliano (DEPI Melbourne) articulates the new weed legislation at the WSV 47th AGM seminar.



# Bookshelf



## **INVASIVE SPECIES: What Everyone Needs to Know**

by Daniel Simberloff



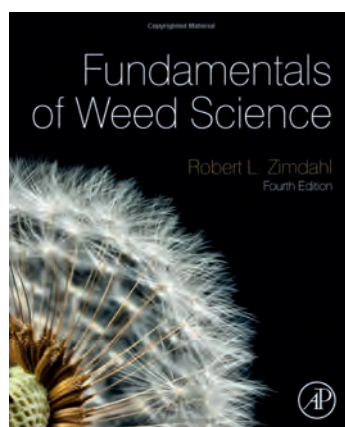
Published by Oxford University Press  
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978-01-999-2201-7 (hardcover)  
Price: \$US16.95 (paperback); \$US74.00  
(hardcover). [global.oup.com](http://global.oup.com)

In *Invasive Species: What Everyone Needs to Know*, award-winning biologist Daniel Simberloff offers a wide-ranging and informative survey that sheds light on virtually every aspect of these biological invaders. Filled with case studies of an astonishing array of invasive species, the book covers such topics as how humans introduce these species—sometimes inadvertently, but often deliberately—the areas that have suffered the most biological invasions, the methods we use to keep our borders safe, the policies we currently have in place to manage these species, and future prospects for controlling their spread. An eminent ecologist, Simberloff analyses the direct and indirect impacts of invasive species on various ecosystems, such as when non-native species out-compete native species for food or light, describes how invasive species (such as the Asian mosquito that is a vector for West Nile virus, itself an invasive species) transmit pathogens, and explains his acclaimed theory of “invasional meltdown” in which two or more introduced species combine

to produce a far more devastating impact than any one of them would have caused alone. The book also discusses the more controversial issues surrounding invasive species and it concludes with suggested readings and a list of related web sites.

## **Fundamentals of Weed Science, 4th Edition**

by Robert L. Zimdahl



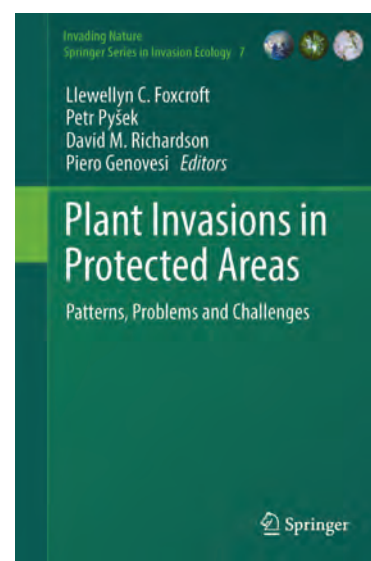
Published by Academic Press, hardcover & ebook, 664 pages.  
ISBN 978-01-239-4426-9  
Price: \$US85.94 (hardback, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)); \$US89.95 (ebook, [store.elsevier.com](http://store.elsevier.com))

This book addresses herbicides and their use as an important aspect of modern weed management and strives to place them in an ecological framework. Many weed scientists believe agriculture is a continuing struggle with weeds — without good weed control, good and profitable agriculture is impossible. Each agricultural discipline sees itself as central to agriculture’s success and continued progress, and weed science is no exception. While not denying the importance of weed management to successful agriculture, this book places it in a larger ecological context. The roles of culture, economics, and politics in weed management are also discussed, enabling scientists and students to understand the larger effects on society. This new edition includes updated information on new herbicides, a new section on

weed resistance to herbicide and genetic engineering, and new information on invasive plants.

## **Plant Invasions in Protected Areas: Patterns, Problems and Challenges**

edited by Llewellyn C. Foxcroft, Petr Pyšek, David M. Richardson and Piero Genovesi



Published by Springer, hardcover, colour illustrations, 636 pages.  
ISBN 978-94-007-7749-1  
Price: €169.99. Available 30 November 2013. [www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com)

This book is the first comprehensive global review of all aspects of alien plant invasions in protected areas. It provides insights into advances in invasion ecology emanating from work in protected areas, and the link to locally relevant management support for protected areas. It provides in-depth case studies, illuminating interesting and insightful knowledge that can be shared across the global protected area network. *Plant Invasions in Protected Areas* includes the collective understanding of 80 ecologists and managers to extract as much information as possible that will support the long-term management of protected areas, and the biodiversity and associated ecosystem services they maintain.



## From the Editor

First, my sincere apologies to you, the subscriber, for the many days when you'd looked in your mailbox and gone, *Where is my Weedscape?* — And to the other Executive Committee members, and Michael Hansford in particular, even more so when he wrote (so long ago!) that 'the past year also saw the return of regular editions of *Weedscape* being sent out to the members.'

I swear that, regardless of the trials and tribulations of a postgraduate candidacy, nothing felt as gut-wrenching as the betrayal of someone's trust in you. So, this won't happen again on my watch.

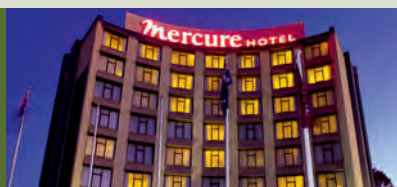
Second, as you can see from our cover story and advertorial for our next biennial conference, the WSV is signalling a change in course, and we want your feedback on this.

The lament of dwindling resources and counteracting policies – all too often heard when weed folks gather – may be a call for thinking beyond *Getting the most done with the resources available*, to: *Are we even taking weed management in the right way?*

And, as Andrew Cox and Tim Dowling show in this issue, the results of negligence aren't pretty. We are not suggesting we descend into a State of Syria; instead, can the Weed Society of Victoria be a vocal organ, albeit a methodical, measured, and calm, one?

Gerry Ho  
Weedscape Editor

## WSV Fifth Biennial Weed Conference



The Weed Society of Victoria will be holding its Fifth Biennial Weed Conference in May 2014. The theme of the conference will be *Invasive Plants and Animals – Contrasts and Connections* and it will be held from Tuesday 13th to Thursday 15th May 2014 at the Mercure Hotel in Geelong. The aim of this series of conferences is to provide information on the latest weed issues relevant to Victorians. This year we would like to explore the parallels between invasive plants and animals.

The Executive Committee of the Weed Society of Victoria is pleased to invite submissions of abstracts for papers from speakers interested in presenting a paper at this conference.

### Call for Abstracts – closing date 11th October 2013

Speakers are invited to present and discuss issues, experiences and knowledge across invasive plant and animal management and science, their technical and operational applications, community partnerships and education. Jointly authored presentations are welcomed. Accepted papers will be published in a Proceedings to be distributed to all conference attendees.

The program will be divided into sessions, each covering a range of topics, including:

- Interactions between plants and animals – including weed dispersal by native and introduced animals, weeds as habitat for native and introduced animals, biocontrol etc.
- Converging themes in research – intersections between research methods in invasive plants and animals, such as surveillance/detection, geospatial technology and modelling. Impacts of invasive animal control on invasive plants and vice versa, genetics, biology, ecology, socioeconomics, invasion stages from new and emerging to widespread species.
- Converging methods in management – National, State, regional and local

planning and policy; compliance, education, monitoring and evaluation, creative use of technology such as social media, the human element including mental health of weed and pest animal workers. Case studies and reports, especially success stories, are also welcome.

- Invasive plants – biology, ecology, control, biogeography etc. These papers may not have any links to animals, but must address an aspect of invasive plant research or management.
- Invasive animals – biology, ecology, control etc. These papers may not have any links to plants but must address an aspect of invasive animal research or management.

There will be invited keynote speakers for each session to be announced soon. Paper presentations will take place on 13th and 14th May, and on 15th May we will have a field day with excursions. A dinner is planned for the night of 13th May and the Society's Annual General Meeting will also be held during proceedings on 14th May.

The conference attracts a wide range of attendees including land managers, scientists, community volunteers, weeds officers, advisors and others with an interest in weeds. We aim to attract similar people from the invasive animal sphere to hear the latest in invasive plant and animal management and science in Victoria, to network and share experiences.

If you are interested in presenting a paper or poster related to any of the four sessions please send an abstract of 150–250 words to the secretary by 11th October 2013 email: [secretary@wsvic.org.au](mailto:secretary@wsvic.org.au).

In March 2006 the Society presented a successful seminar on *Interactions Between Weeds and Animals*. We would like to build on that beginning and include invasive animals in our biennial conference in 2014. Please forward this information to whomever else might be interested.