



Newsletter of the Weed Society of Victoria Inc.

volume 28 issue 4 2017

Weedscene

Cactus Warriors Win Another Award

Tarrangower Cactus Control Group received the Parks Victoria Kookaburra Award in the 'conserving special places' category in 2016. This year, they have won the Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award.

This hard-working group of volunteers has again been recognised for their efforts to control the invasive wheel cactus (*Opuntia robusta*) in the Maldon Historic Reserve and Nuggetty Ranges near Maldon in central Victoria. We congratulate the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group on their dedication, persistence and vision which has led to their inspiring achievements in wheel cactus control.

Weedscene has published several articles on the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group over the years. In this issue, we are very pleased to be able to include a media release on the mapping component of their Wottenhall Environment Trust funded project, 'Promoting biodiversity through community actions, education and networking'.

Also in this issue is an article on prominent Tarrangower Cactus Control Group member, Ian Grenda, who has dedicated two decades to Landcare activities, primarily weed control, in the Maldon district of central Victoria.

The Weed Society of Victoria is very keen to hear from other individuals or groups dedicated to weed control in Victoria. Please contact Ingrid at editor@wsvic.org.au.



Tony Kane, Steve Templeton, Cheryl Kane, Lee Mead, Ian Grenda and Noel Muller (left to right)



You are invited to submit an abstract to the 21st Australasian Weeds Conference.

For more information see page 7.

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WSV Membership Rates 2017–18

Pay for 1, 3 or 5 years

Concession*	\$20
Ordinary	\$60
Corporate	\$140

* Students and Pensioners

WSV is not registered to collect GST

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COVER PHOTO: *Opuntia monacantha* (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.

Want to receive Weedscene as a PDF? Contact the Secretary.

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- Logo displayed on 'Weedscene' – four issues per year
- Logo and sponsor name on the Society's website
- One promotional article in 'Weedscene' per year (subject to ed. control)
- One free membership per year (optional)

Advertising rates

■ One sixth page	56 mm wide × 128 mm high	\$50
■ Quarter page	180 mm wide × 64 mm high	\$75
■ Half page	180 mm wide × 128 mm high	\$150
■ Whole page	180 mm wide × 257 mm high	\$300

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Weed Champion Profile

Lee Mead has provided the following article to acknowledge the Landcare work of Ian Grenda, a finalist in the 2017 Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award, for which he was highly commended. Lee herself is a weed champion through her tireless dedication to the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group whose work was also recognised at the 2017 Victorian Landcare Awards. Lee has contributed several articles to Weedscape, and has presented at the WSV Conference and the WSV Symposium. Lee has also contributed to the newly-released best practice manual, 'Managing Opuntoid Cacti' (see 'New Publications' in this issue).

Ian Grenda

Ian Grenda has been a driver of Landcare activities in the Mount Alexander Region for the past 20 years and is currently an executive committee member of three different Landcare groups; President of both Maldon Urban Landcare Group (MULGA) and Nuggetty Landcare Group (NLG) and Vice-President of the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group (TCCG).

MULGA focuses on engaging an urban community with their local natural environment, controlling many different weed species in the Maldon Heritage Park. The TCCG has the single goal of raising community awareness of and controlling the noxious weed wheel cactus (*Opuntia robusta*), and the NLG has more of an agricultural focus, working to control weeds and pest animals, revegetate indigenous species, and managing erosion. All three groups are very active and their ability to work together creates opportunities for large-scale projects and events reaching a broad range of communities.

Ian was the President and driving force of the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group for its first 10 years and received recognition for his dedication and tireless work by being awarded Maldon Citizen of the Year in 2011. For many years Ian has stored and maintained supplies and equipment for Landcare activities and frequently meets with landholders at any time to provide them with equipment and knowledge to enable them to participate in the management of wheel cactus and other weeds. On several occasions Ian has travelled long distances to other regions in Victoria and southern NSW to hold demonstrations to other groups about how to treat wheel cactus infestations.

Ian is also a committee member of the Mt Alexander Landcare Network Steering Group, and thus contributes his knowledge and experience to a broad community. He engages many local community members with on-ground weed management and landscape restoration events.

Ian is passionate about engaging young people with caring for and understanding their local environments and teaching them land management skills. He is frequently involved with projects including local primary school students in weed education and tree planting.

He also hosts a group of students from Monash University each year when they come to Maldon to learn about wheel cactus. The students spend a few days helping with weed control and gaining experience with the TCCG. Ian has opened his home to these students to allow them free accommodation during their visit.

On many occasions Ian has supervised and managed the activities of various work crews, such as Green Army, Drought Relief, Landmate and Work for the Dole, and organised different environmental projects for these work teams to complete. Ian helps promote the work of the Landcare groups by setting up stalls at local events and community markets and helps organise the TCCG's participation in the annual Maldon Easter Fair parade.



Cactus Warriors, Ian Grenda and Lee Mead, installing a new farm fence sign to remind landowners to control wheel cactus

New Map of Wheel Cactus in Victoria

Lee Mead

Members of the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group (TCCG) call themselves the 'Cactus Warriors'. After more than ten years battling wheel cactus around the Maldon, Nuggetty and Baringhup districts of central Victoria, they rightly deserve the name.

With funding from the Wottenhall Environment Trust, the group has completed a project to map Wheel Cactus sites around Victoria. "To create the map, we tried to find as many records as possible. Existing records came from government departments and the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA). But more importantly, we also looked for new locations", said project officer Max Schlachter.

"As it turned out, about 70% of the locations we recorded had not previously been mapped at a state level. Many of the new records came from council officers who have been mapping and treating wheel cactus in their own shire. Other records came from members of the Landcare community who responded to our request for locations." The project concluded with a map showing infestations widely distributed over Victoria, but concentrated in a band running from the northwest of the state, through central Victoria to the north of Melbourne.

For TCCG President, Lee Mead, the map is a good starting point for the Cactus Warriors' future manoeuvres. While the group has been very successful, Lee says that achieving their

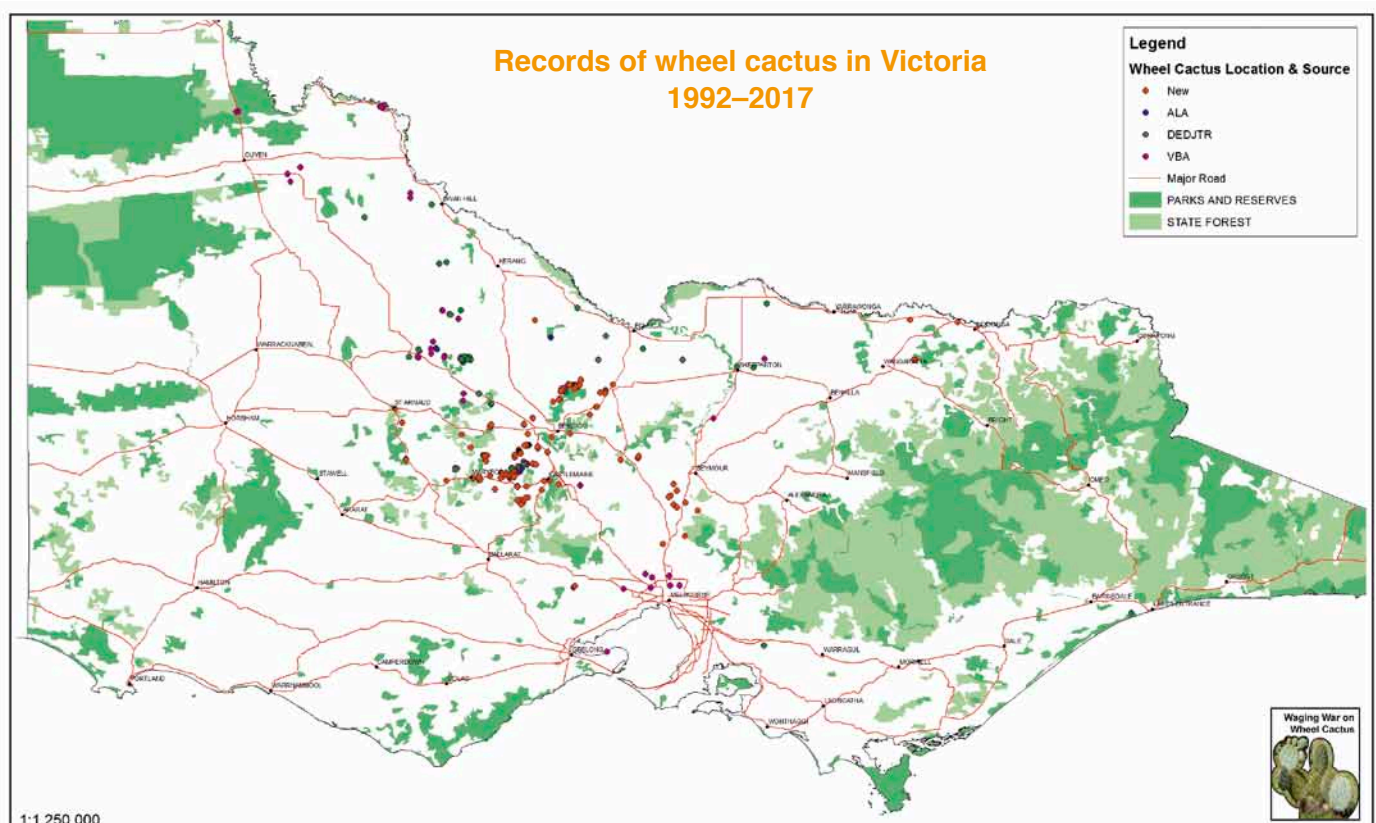
ultimate goal of eradicating wheel cactus is proving difficult. Wheel cactus seed is readily spread by flocks of ravens that eat the fruit, and also foxes. It only takes a few properties with mature, fruiting plants to keep re-infesting neighbouring properties.

"Despite having successfully increased the number of local landowners who now quietly go about destroying wheel cactus on their properties, there are still many property owners in our district who ignore their responsibilities to destroy noxious weeds", says Lee. "They are frequently absentee landowners and very difficult for our volunteer group to connect with. Hence the seed bank is never eradicated and new wheel cactus plants continue to germinate and spread further."

Lee is quick to remind landholders "If you've got wheel cactus on your property, kill it. And do it before it sets fruit." To reinforce this message, the project also created twenty farm fence signs which were distributed to Landcare groups, and also posted out 1200 information brochures to seven outer localities where the mapping work revealed significant wheel cactus infestations.

The Cactus Warriors can be contacted through their website www.cactuswarriors.org.

Contact: Lee Mead, President, Tarrangower Cactus Control Group Inc. Email: info@cactuswarriors.org



Red Imported Fire Ants – Eradication from Australia?

Ingrid Krockenberger

There has been a lot of movement on the red imported fire ant (RIFA) front lately. And I don't mean their spread into new territory. Instead, RIFA (*Solenopsis invicta*) has featured in many recent news articles, social media, blog posts (see 'In the Media' in this issue) and, most importantly, on the agenda of government agriculture departments.

Back in 2014, the Agricultural Ministers' Forum agreed to commission and fund an independent review of the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program (south-east Qld). Previous reviews have estimated that cumulative impacts of RIFA in Australia could be between \$5.3 billion and \$45 billion over 2-7 decades, and have shown that the eradication program in south-east Queensland had effectively prevented further impacts in Australia.

The review panel was appointed in 2015 and the resulting report was tabled in parliament in November 2016. The review panel concluded that it is in the national interest to eradicate RIFA from Australia, based on potential impacts,

technical feasibility of eradication and benefit-cost analysis (estimated at \$25:1).

Monash University was commissioned to model scenarios determining optimal treatment and the budget required to achieve eradication within a ten-year timeframe. This enabled the panel to conclude that the then-current budget was insufficient to achieve eradication, and that a long-term commitment to an increased treatment and surveillance budget was necessary.

The panel also concluded that there is only a small remaining window of opportunity to eradicate RIFA. This sense of urgency was picked up by environmental, Landcare and farming groups. Much of the gathering momentum on the public call for RIFA eradication is the result of efforts by the Invasive Species Council (ISC). ISC had been publishing warnings of the potential and current impacts of RIFA in Australia since 2015 in Facebook posts and as blogs and fact sheets on the ISC website (<https://invasives.org.au/>).

ISC organised a national speaking tour, 'Fire Ants Down Under', in March 2017 by Dr Robert Puckett, A&M University entomologist from fire ant hot spot, Texas. He gave public presentations in Brisbane, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, and met with key state and federal politicians.



In July 2017, ISC issued an open-letter statement of concern to Australian governments, with endorsement from 20 organisations including the National Farmers' Federation, the Victorian National Parks Association, the Council of Australasian Weed Societies and Local Government NSW.

Then in late July 2017, media statements were issued by the (then) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Barnaby Joyce, and Bill Byrne, the Queensland Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, and

Minister for Rural Economic Development, announcing a **TEN-YEAR \$411.4 MILLION COMMITMENT TO RIFA ERADICATION IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND**. Every state, territory and the federal government supported the eradication commitment.



Former Minister Barnaby Joyce stated in his media release: “A permanent steering committee will be established to oversee the program and provide increased governance and transparency, with an independent chair to be appointed by the National Biosecurity Committee later this year. Reports from the public have accounted for up to 70 per cent of new detections over the last four years, and the steering committee will ensure that community and stakeholder engagement continues to be an important part of the program.”

Sources of information for this article:

<https://theconversation.com/eradicating-fire-ants-is-still-possible-but-we-have-to-choose-now-70199> (contains many useful links, including the full-text Biological Conservation review article ‘Improving invasive ant eradication as a conservation tool’)

The Hon. Barnaby Joyce Media Release, 26 July 2017. Ten year RIFA eradication commitment. (no longer available online)

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2017/7/26/4114-million-funding-for-new-era-of-fire-ant-eradication>

<https://invasives.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Fact-Sheet-Red-Fire-Ants.pdf>

www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jul/26/biosecurity-blitz-to-target-red-fire-ants-that-threaten-australian-way-of-life

<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/weeds-pest-animals-ants/invasive-ants/fire-ants/general-information-about-fire-ants/impacts>

Why target RIFA for eradication?

Fire ants have very high invasion potential and vast areas of Australia would provide suitable habitat. They are very aggressive multiple-stingers, swarming to protect their nest, and are voracious feeders on small animals including insects, spiders, lizards, frogs, birds and mammals. They also eat or damage seeds, as well as small animals which pollinate native plants. Their potential to displace native species poses a serious ecological threat.

The agriculture industry is also under threat because newborn and hatching animals are vulnerable to attack by fire ants. Animal feed and water supplies may become inaccessible due to proximity to fire ant nest mounds, and tunnelling and feeding activities can affect crops. Important biological control agents and integrated pest management practices can be adversely affected. Damage to agricultural and electrical equipment can also occur.

Fire ant stings are extremely painful and resulting pustules can become infected. Fire ant stings can

also cause anaphylactic reactions in susceptible people and have been attributed to more than 85 deaths in the United States. It is estimated that, if not controlled in Australia, fire-ants may potentially result in 140,000 medical consultations and 3000 anaphylactic reactions a year.

The Guardian reports that there have been seven separate incursions in Australia – four in Brisbane, two elsewhere in Queensland and one in Sydney. CSIRO exotic ant specialist, Ben Hoffman, said Australia has become a world leader in fire-ant eradication, according to The Guardian. The successful eradication achieved in Gladstone is the largest ant eradication in the world so far. Still to be achieved is eradicating the largest population of a single incursion, which remains in south-east Queensland – a huge undertaking.

Both ISC CEO Andrew Cox and Ben Hoffman emphasise that improved biosecurity to avoid further incursions is just as important as the huge eradication effort.

Dates for your Diary

December 2017

14th Queensland Weed Symposium

Our Place, People, Priorities and Practice in Weed Management. Port Douglas, Qld. 4–7 December
<http://event.icebergevents.com.au/qws-2017>



World Soil Day

5 December. www.un.org/en/events/soilday/#

January 2018

4th ANDina International Workshop

Species Range Extensions and Local Adaptation
San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina. 29 January–2 February
www.andina4argentina.weebly.com

June 2018

18th European Weed Research Society Symposium

New Approaches for Smarter Weed Management
Ljubljana, Slovenia. 17–21 June. www.ewrs2018.org/



August 2018

103rd Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting

New Orleans, Louisiana USA. 5–10 August

September 2018

21st Australasian Weeds Conference

Weed Biosecurity ~ Protecting our Future
Sydney, NSW. 9–12 September. www.21awc.org.au/

21AWC abstract submissions now open



Do you have significant experience in weed management research, practice or regulation? You're invited to add your voice to the 21st Australasian Weeds Conference by submitting an abstract before 1 February 2018.

This biennial conference carries on a long tradition of bringing the weed management community together to discuss new developments and share information about cutting-edge and best weed management practices. The conference attracts over 250 delegates from across Australasia and globally. Delegates will come together to network with peers, engage with industry

sponsors, listen and participate in presentations and field trips.

Our five conference themes are:

1. Modelling and new technologies in weed management.
2. Biological, mechanical, herbicide weed control research.
3. Herbicide resistance.
4. Weeds of crops and pasture.
5. Weeds of National Significance and environmental weeds.

Please ensure your abstract aligns with one of the conference themes listed above.

SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACT:

<https://www.21awc.org.au/abstracts>

This is a fantastic chance to become a key presenter for one of the most significant events in the weed management community's calendar – don't miss out!

Conference registrations will open in February 2018.

In the Media

First Australian to Win Top American Award

Australian Academy of Science Fellow Professor Stephen Powles has won the American Chemical Society International Award for Research in Agrochemicals, which is awarded for outstanding contributions to the field of agrochemicals at the international level, opening new horizons for investigators in their field and beyond.



AAS Fellow Professor Stephen Powles is widely regarded as a foremost expert in herbicide resistance in plants (photo: www.atse.org.au)

Director of Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative at the University of Western Australia's School of Agriculture and Environment, Professor Powles was recognised for his long-standing research contribution to identifying the role of cytochrome P450 enzymes in endowing herbicide resistance in plants.

Australian Academy of Science media release: www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/plant-scientist-first-australian-win-top-american-award

EU Votes to Phase Out Glyphosate in Five Years

The European Union has decided to renew the licence for glyphosate for only five more years, despite the European Commission's Committee for Risk Assessment conclusion that, on the basis of all the available science, glyphosate does not cause cancer and is not an endocrine disrupter.

Possible future outcomes of the decision include reliance on more risky herbicides, adverse impact on Australia's canola industry, and increased production of alternative oils displacing Asian rainforests.

More on the controversial decision:

www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2017-11-28/glyphosate-renewed-for-five-years-in-europe/9199740?smid=Page:%20ABC%20Rural-Facebook_Organic&WT.tsrc=Facebook_Organic&sf174500218=1

www.nature.com/news/european-union-nations-vote-to-keep-using-controversial-weedkiller-glyphosate-1.23044?WT.mc_id=FBK_NA_1711_FHNEWSDEADLYWEEDKILLER_PORTFOLIO

Turnbull Must Plug Biosecurity 'Leaky Sieve'

Farm Online and other rural news organisations are reporting on the Invasive Species Council's (ISC) campaign to ensure that the recommendations made in the recent review of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) are carried out. Access: www.farmonline.com.au/story/5078859/turnbull-must-plug-biosecurity-leaky-sieve-to-protect-farmers/

The ISC 'Protect Australia' campaign uses an electronic online letter template directed to the Prime Minister, the federal Environment and Energy Minister Josh Frydenberg and state ministers relevant to the individual sender's jurisdiction, urging them to follow Barnaby Joyce's footsteps as a 'champion' of Australian biosecurity. Access: <https://invasives.org.au/blog/protect-australia/>



ABARES Pest Animals and Weed Management Survey

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) has conducted a pest animals and weed management survey. The survey respondents were 6470 agricultural land managers across broadacre, horticulture, dairy and other livestock industries,

across 53 NRM regions in Australia. The survey found that 85 per cent of respondents were actively managing weeds on their property in the last 12 months. Ninety per cent of these used herbicides which were reported as effective by the vast majority.

Key findings and full report can be downloaded here: www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/social-sciences/pest-animals-weed-management-survey

World Interest in Farmer's Weed-Destroying Invention

ABC's Landline reported on a Western Australian farmer's invention which destroys weed seeds during harvest. The retro-fitted device pulverises weed seeds so that they are no longer viable.

University of Western Australia research has shown it is effective for 95 per cent of weed seeds collected in the chaff. The implement is being trialled in the United States, Canada and South America.



Engineering solution attracting interest from around the world (photo: Prue Adams, ABC Landline)



The cage mill pulverises 95 per cent of weed seeds into unviable chaff (photo: Glyn Jones, ABC Landline)

Access: www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-17/australian-farmers-invention-draws-world-interest/8619826

Rise of Environmental DNA Analysis

Explainer of eDNA: https://thebiochemistblog.com/2017/07/24/frontier-forensics-the-rise-of-environmental-dna-analysis/?utm_content=buffer42a2a&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Dicamba Crisis

US farmers are angered by the newly-released dicamba system which is claimed to guarantee weed control in soybeans and cotton. Commercial use has revealed off-target damage to adjacent crops and vegetation due to vapourisation following application and subsequent drift.

www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/this-miracle-weed-killer-was-supposed-to-save-farms-instead-its-devastating-them/2017/08/29/33a21a56-88e3-11e7-961d-2f373b3977ee_story.html?undefined=&utm_term=.b34bfd08160d&wpisrc=nl_most&wpmm=1

History of Fire Ant Mismanagement

ABC's Background Briefing aired a program on Australia's history of failure to eradicate (or even to adequately control) RIFA. The Invasive Species Council's Andrew Cox is interviewed. Listen here (transcript also available): www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/fire-ant-threat-australia/9209922



Andrew Cox, CEO, Invasive Species Council (photo: invasives.org.au)

Fire Ants Intrigue Systems Engineer

The devastating floods caused by recent hurricanes have highlighted intriguing survival tactics of fire ants, from their fascinating ability to cooperatively form water-repellent lifesaving rafts that can float for weeks on flood waters, to

the organising ability to assemble towers with the same load-bearing principle used by architect Gustave Eiffel for his famous tower.

<https://theconversation.com/how-do-fire-ants-form-giant-rafts-to-survive-floods-80717>



Hundreds of thousands of fire ants form a giant raft to survive floods (photo: Omar Villfranca, from theconversation.com)

Examples of the flurry of media attention on fire ants following the hurricanes:

www.huffingtonpost.com.au/entry/floating-fire-ants-harvey-floods_us_59a48945e4b041393a1ffc91

www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-30/tropical-storm-harvey-fire-ants-join-together-to-form-raft/8856092

www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/08/30/the-terrifying-science-behind-floating-fire-ant-colonies-and-how-to-destroy-them/?tid=hybrid_mostsharedarticles_3_na&utm_term=.e8f185a3f093

Serrated Tussock Identification Sites

Rural newspapers in NSW are informing readers that the New England Weeds Authority will set up serrated tussock identification sites to increase the public's ability to recognise the weed.

Prickly Acacia Nightmare

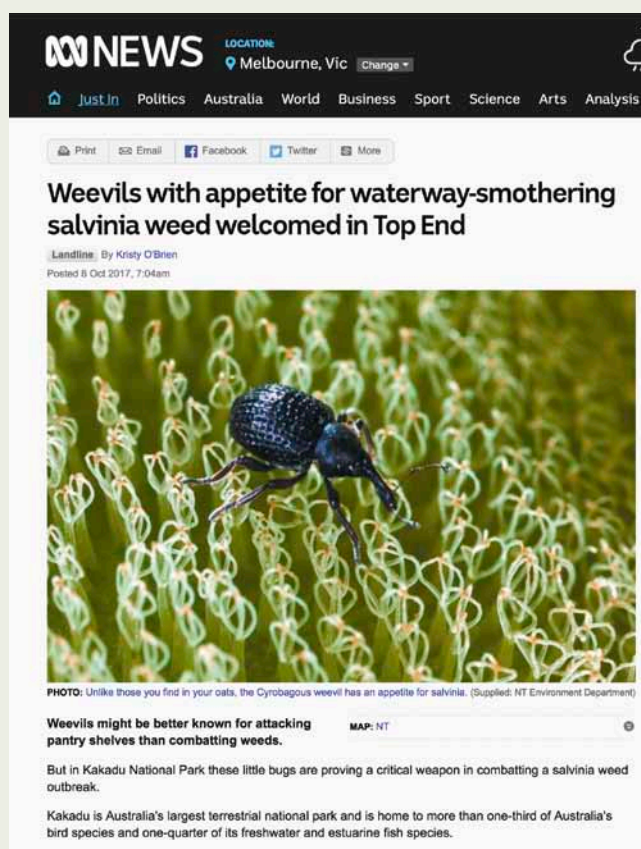
Prickly Acacia infestation is becoming a problem too big to eradicate in parts of north Queensland. ABC Rural reported on the problem weed, *Vachellia nilotica* subsp. *indica*, introduced for shade and fodder. One landholder says that eradication of prickly acacia from his property was not feasible but the strategy was to stop spread to new areas. www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2017-08-04/outback-queensland-multi-million-dollar-battle-prickly-acacia/8770686

RIRDC is now AgriFutures Australia

AgriFutures Australia is the new trading name for Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC). Access: www.agrifutures.com.au

Top-End Salvinia-Munching Weevils

ABC's Landline reported on a salvinia biocontrol agent and the recently constructed weevil-breeding facility which ensures weevil numbers can be maintained to combat salvinia in Kakadu National Park. Access: www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-08/weevils-fighting-salvinia-weed-in-nt-kakadu-national-park/9023768



Levy to Control Pasture Species Turned Invasive Weeds?

Listen to ABC Rural's discussion with ANU researcher Don Driscoll and the CSIRO's Richard Culvenor on whether farmers should be charged to pay a levy to control invasive weeds originally introduced as pasture species. Discusses the costs not considered and a disincentive scheme for new varieties, and conflicting advice to farmers. www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2014-11-04/weed-levy-proposal/5864804

And here is ABC's The World Today report. 'Calls for polluter-pays system to fight invasive weeds': www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2014/s4121155.htm

CAWS report

September 2017

By Ingrid Krockenberger



A survey conducted by the organising committee of the 2016 Australasian Weeds Conference showed that the majority of participants were satisfied and would be happy to see the same format for the 2018 conference. A full report will be completed soon.

President, Rachel Melland, noted that the revised Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027 (AWS) was released on 5 September 2017 and can be found at: www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/pest-animals-and-weeds. CAWS had contributed a submission to the review. Rachel presented at the Environmental Biosecurity Forum run by the federal government at Canberra in June 2017, outlining the main points submitted to the AWS, namely agreed and assigned roles and responsibilities, named leadership and accountability tasks, and listed actions with timelines.

Rachel is continuing to build the CAWS relationship with the Invasive Plants and Animals Committee (IPAC), a sub-committee of the National Biosecurity Committee, the governing body under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity. She will be attending the next Biosecurity Roundtable to be held at Canberra in November 2017.

Michael Widderick reported that the 26th Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society (APWSS) Conference held recently in Japan was a great success, with about 400 attendees and a higher standard than for previous conferences. The conference celebrated its 50th Anniversary.

NSW is organising the 2018 Australasian Weeds Conference (AWC) and reported that the AWC website was going live next week (as of 28 September – website: www.21awc.org.au). There is a preliminary list of keynote speakers but the CAWS orator still needs to be chosen, with some consideration of a declining budget (a local speaker is being sought).

Kerry Harrington and Trevor James provided a good-news story from NZ. The highlight of the New Zealand Plant Protection Society symposium was

the involvement of the Port of Tauranga, which has recently developed and implemented an excellent biosecurity plan. All staff are alert for any biosecurity threats, and potential threats are reported immediately for prompt investigation. Awareness by all staff allows increased surveillance and detection.

Matt Baker reported that there was no enthusiasm to resurrect the Tasmanian Weed Society, despite a very active weeds social media group with about 760 members (see Tasmanian Weeds Facebook page). There was some discussion of potential solutions but it remains a problem. If the society folds, CAWS will have only just enough members to be an incorporated society.

This meeting was followed by the AGM, in which all office bearers were re-elected unchallenged.

It was reported at the AGM that the CAWS website will be converted to a system that uses WordPress, making it easier to use. [Possibly something for WSV to consider.]

Next ordinary meeting: 14 December 2017.

Next AGM: 9 September 2018 (in conjunction with the 21st Australasian Weeds Conference in Sydney).

POSTSCRIPT: Rachel Melland has recently announced that the CAWS grant application to the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) for conference sponsorship has been successful in securing \$20,000 + GST each for the 21st and 22nd AWCs in 2018 and 2020, respectively.

Ingrid Krockenberger and Brett McGennissen are your CAWS delegates.

New Publications

Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027



The first Australian Weeds Strategy was published in 1997, with the aim of developing a strategic national approach to weed management. The Australian Weeds Strategy undergoes reporting every 5 years and a 10-yearly review and revision process, involving public consultation and input from key stakeholders, to develop national strategy for the subsequent decade.

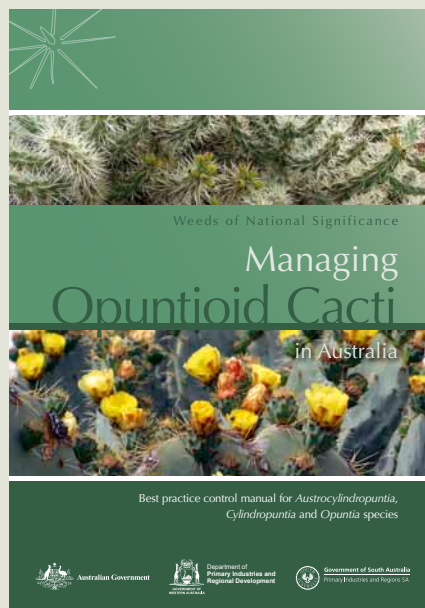
The Invasive Plants and Animals Committee (IPAC) has oversight of the Australian Weeds Strategy. IPAC, a sub-committee of the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC), comprises representatives from Australian, state and territory primary industry or environment departments, with a number of technical groups providing technical and advisory support.

The Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027 specifies the roles and responsibilities of public and private landholders, federal, state/territory and local governments, industry groups, community groups, and natural resource management groups. The goals and priorities detailed in the Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027

come under the headings of prevention, detection and early intervention; minimise the impact of established weeds, and; enhance Australia's capacity and commitment to weed management.

Endorsement by the NBC of the Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027 occurred in June 2017. The pdf document is available for download at: www.agriculture.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/pests-diseases-weeds/consultation/aws-final.pdf

Managing Opuntoid Cacti in Australia: a best practice control manual for *Austrocyllindropuntia*, *Cylindropuntia* and *Opuntia* species



A national best practice control manual has been developed for invasive opuntoid cacti in Australia. The manual for the first time brings together tools and knowledge from a number of sources, to provide an easy to use guide on how to successfully manage opuntoid cacti.

Twenty seven species of opuntoid cacti have been recognised as Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) since

2012. Cacti grow over a wide climatic range and have serious impacts on pastoral, agricultural and conservation land; pose a risk to stock and wildlife; reduce aesthetic values and recreational use; and can have a direct impact on human safety.

While there are a number of valuable publications on opuntoid cacti, to date there has been no consolidated management or control information for these weeds. Managing Opuntoid Cacti in Australia has six stand-alone, yet complementary chapters. The manual provides a step-by-step guide, from understanding and identifying cacti, through to developing and implementing a strategic management approach. It also features seven case studies from across Australia, detailing the experiences of land managers in managing cacti.

Tools and features included are:

- a quick look-up index to cross-reference botanical and common names of each of the 27 WoNS opuntoid species
- checklist and summaries of key steps and considerations for planning and management purposes
- a decision matrix for selecting an appropriate management approach and treatment technique
- useful templates and links to external resources
- a glossary of key terms and abbreviations.

Managing Opuntoid Cacti in Australia was launched on 1 November 2017 by the Minister for Agriculture and Food (Western Australia), Alannah MacTiernan.

The pdf document is available for download at: www.agric.wa.gov.au/invasive-species/opuntoid-cacti-best-practice-control-manual