

NACC Notes May 3 2010

www.nacc.com.au

Email Jackie Gill at msm@nacc.com.au to have your information included in NACC Notes.

QUOTE:

Science is what you know, philosophy is what you don't know - -Bertrand Russell

REMEMBER :

2010 is the **International Year of Biodiversity**, visit www.cbd.int/2010/welcome

BREAKING NEWS (From ABC Regional News Thurs 29 April)

More fears about Caring for our Country cuts

Catchment management authorities are worried that a reported cut to Landcare funding will damage their organisations. There's speculation that there'll be a 22 per cent cut to the program that funds Landcare, Caring for our Country, in the Federal Budget.

Catchment Management Authorities (*such as NACC – editor's note*) get the bulk of their funding from the Federal Government and cuts to funding will threaten programs.

The chair of the North East Catchment Management Authority in Victoria, Paul Carrick, says Landcare is more than 20 years old and politically, governments don't know what to do with it.

"Landcare is a bit like the family pet that is loved when it's a puppy," he says. "It gets to a certain stage in its life and it's not quite so loveable. Everybody takes it a bit for granted. I think that is the case with Landcare."

"The work is still being done at a grassroots level, but it's not the new exciting thing with the gloss that it had when it was first established."

The Victorian Landcare Council says cuts to Federal Government funding for natural resource management would devastate the industry.

Roger Hardley, from the Victorian Landcare Council, says Landcare is already suffering.

"The bucket has sprung a leak and the bucket is very quickly being emptied. We're at a critical tipping point here in Landcare in Victoria."

A natural resource management group covering nearly ten per cent of Queensland says the environment will suffer if its funding is cut.

Caring for our Country funds groups like NQ Dry Tropics NRM and NACC.

Chairman Mark Stoneman says money for environment stewardship is hard enough to get as it is.

"We can't have this degree of uncertainty and this continual nibbling away at the funding processes, it can't be sustained, nor can our organisations continue under those terms." (ABC Regional news)

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- AG tactics starts up again – get yours now!
- Evergraze on the lookout for Pasture Cropping
- Virtual project assistants available for NRM
- State profile: population, economic data and more, now on line
- Mid West Planning Committee up and running
- Telecentres by any other name!
- Murder Under the Microscope – Fun education for years 5 to 10.
- Supporting women and young people in agriculture
- New Threatened Ecological Community listed (in the Eastern States)
- Two yearly WWF report card shows what species we're losing
- SustainableWA goes live and public!
- Farm exit packages may be available in 'good times'
- WA expected to trial new drought aid scheme
- Australian River Restoration Centre now open
- Harvester prototype paves the way for further mallee industry development
- Shrimp industry for Port Gregory
- Farm groups fear funding cuts to research bodies
- Jobs in Water promoted
- Is it a cat, a dog, or the Emmaville Panther???
- Dedicated online space for bird lovers around Australia (started right here in the NAR)
- Pestmaps now live on feral.org.au
- Biosecurity engagement guidelines released
- Greens concerned about cuts to environment programs

SURVEYS

- Kerbside Recycling Survey for Geraldton Greenough Residents
- Women Farmers and Biotechnology
- Durack's biggest survey – have your say.
- Join The Big Conversation

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Wondering where we are on Climate Change?
- Local Climate change news: Climate Change Centre and what NAR residents say
- Climate change risks to the marine environment

EVENTS

To get your event in NACC Notes email msm@nacc.com.au

NEWS IN DETAIL

INSIDE NACC

New phone numbers for NACC – keep them handy

As part of NACC's restructure all staff now have direct lines to make it easier to get hold of them. The new numbers are on the website at www.nacc.com.au/Contact-Us/Staff.aspx

Main NACC number	9938 0100
Shelley Spriggs	9938 0102
Margi Weir	9938 0103 (until May 14)
Stanley Yokwe	9938 0105
Katherine Atkinson	9938 0106
Rolan Deutekom	9938 0107
Marieke Jansen	9938 0108
Robyn Nicholas	9938 0109
Tom Maina	9938 0111
Jackie Gill	9938 0112
Fax	9938 0166

Changes at NACC include Moora office closure

NACC is moving with the times and in response to our new arrangements with the Australian and State governments regarding natural resource management priorities, we are restructuring our operations.

As a result, the Moora office has been closed down. NACC staff who've worked out of the office have asked me to pass on their regards to everyone they've worked with.

However they say that the service will remain the same – our diligent Natural Resource Management Officers who are hosted around the region are still working hard in partnership with the project coordinators to achieve the outcomes we've agreed to deliver for the Australian Government.

NACC appoints Coastal Monitoring officer

The NACC Coastal Team is delighted to announce the appointment of Riki Porteus to the part time role of Coastal Monitoring Program Coordinator, thanks to the support of NACC, Coastwest and the City of Geraldton-Greenough.

Over the next twelve months, Riki will be working with the City of Geraldton-Greenough, the community and other partners to develop a beach monitoring program that:

- Engages the community of the City of Geraldton-Greenough in developing a long term record of beach dynamics, seasonal, historical and erosion trends, assisting coastal planning and management; and,
- Provides an opportunity for the community to increase its participation in and contribution towards integrated coastal zone management by supporting improved risk management of the coastal zone.

As an anthropologist, Riki has an abundance of experience working with a diversity of communities, studying communities and their interactions with their biophysical environments, and understanding the requirements of resilient communities in a changing environment. Not to mention her passions for history, teaching, research, photography and the local coastal environment.

Riki is WA born and bred and has a wealth of knowledge in a variety of areas and a multitude of experiences across the globe very relevant to this position. We're lucky and proud to have her on

board and look forward to introducing you to her over the next few months. You can get Riki on 9956 6190.

Margi leaving us, Euan stepping up to take on Wind Erosion

Margi Weir, one of the region's best known and most experienced natural resource management practitioners is heading off for a well earned rest. NACC thanks Margi for her amazing work (in difficult circumstances) in running with the wetlands and rivers program from late 2008. Her team managed to pull off some amazing results, including securing a management agreement for the single biggest rivercare project NACC has undertaken - 18.9km of fencing protecting 676ha of riparian zone and connected buffer zone, and the single biggest wetland project negotiated by NACC (500.9ha and 12.3km of fencing).

Euan Scott, who's been working with NACC in forestry related positions for a year or so, is taking on Margi's role as Wind Erosion Coordinator. Euan has vast technical experience and has already met many people across the region – so make him welcome.

NACC Deputy Chair and yours truly head to Darwin for National NRM Knowledge conference

Yvonne Marsden, NACC's Deputy Chair and I made our way to Darwin last week for the National NRM Knowledge conference. It was an excellent couple of days and worth the long, hot, humid trip. It was fantastic to see representatives from all 56 regional NRM groups from around Australia gathered in one place and to hear presentations from many. All the presentations (including the one I did on NACC's Targeted Investment Program) will soon be up on the web.

While there I met with the other members of the National Working Group on Corporate Investment – there's some announcements to happen soon. Stay tuned.

Everyone is a carer for the land - National landcare conference

NACC staff also attended the National Landcare conference. Our Landcare Facilitator Stanley Yokwe also attended a meeting of the National Landcare network. Much of the focus of this conference was on the emerging Framework for Landcare and the difference between Landcare (big "L") and landcare.

Kim Chance, the National Chair of Landcare Australia, emphasised the need to start engaging people who weren't currently interested or involved in landcare. He said something NACC's been saying for years – that we're all carers for the land!

"Landcare belongs to the whole community, and in each community there's different facets," he said. "It means different things to different people and we must come to a common understanding if we are to convey its importance to the whole community".

He also reiterated that the private sector owns 60 per cent of the land area, and much of the funds for NRM were directed at the 40 per cent of public land.

In his address at the Forum, Minister Burke welcomed the opportunity for the Landcare community to celebrate its success and explore how it can continue to play a vital role in land management in the years ahead. See media release at www.maff.gov.au. Presentations from the Landcare Conference are now on the web at www.nationallandcareforum.com.au/

Behind the scenes with our Social Science Research officer, Rolan

Residents of the NAR are familiar with the work of our Social Science Research Officer, Rolan Deutekom through the surveys and reports he does in the region, however many people are also becoming familiar with another talent – as a didgeridoo player. Recently local filmmaker Chris Lewis made a short 'mini-documentary' about the weekly didgeridoo sessions he holds at St. Georges beach in Geraldton. You can find it at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc93X7VRS_Y

NACC PROJECT NEWS

Wind Erosion and Coastal grants - \$10,000 for your project – closing May 7

Applications are still open for NACC's small grants for Wind Erosion and Coastal Projects. All the details are on our website www.nacc.com.au. The criteria are very broad so land managers and community groups can be innovative in their thinking.

NOTE: PDF forms can be used for handwritten applications. Electronic forms available from NACC on 9964 9774 or email Ashley on cpo@nacc.com.au for coastal forms or wec@nacc.com.au for wind erosion forms.

East Wallabi Islands works tender extended to May 21

NACC is helping to preserve the environmental integrity of this wonderful tourism spot which also has great biodiversity values. Get the tender documents from the website at www.nacc.com.au

Oil mallee seedlings still available – get in quick

There are still seedlings left for planting this winter. Call Euan Scott on 0438 989 500 for details and to get your order in.

Rabbit suppression fact sheets now available

Robyn Nicholas has been busy completing fact sheets for the Rabbit Suppression project and they're now available. Give her a call on 9938 0109 or email bpc@nacc.com.au. The fact sheets will be online soon.

NACC Sustainable Farming Tour great success

Landholders, representatives from production and landcare groups, community volunteers and interested NRM and/or environmental professionals recently participated in a free bus tour to view sustainable farming practices.

The tour was organised by Stanley Yokwe, the Landcare Facilitator of the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC), and incorporated visits to three farms.

During the tour the group got to learn, see and hear first hand practical experiences from local innovative farmers who have adopted sustainable farm practices/technologies in the region.

The tour visited farms in Geraldton, Pindar, and Irwin. Key presenters were Yvonne Marsden (Geraldton - Mt Magnet Rd); Mike Kerkmans (Pindar, east of Mullewa) and Craig Forsyth (Irwin, near Dongara). Participants saw a vast alley oil mallees enterprise; a grazing enterprise with wheel cell grazing systems and a combination of subtropical perennial grasses, annual pasture and tagasaste paddocks; and the use of biodiversity plantings.

The event was organised to deliver on NACC's commitments to the Australian Government's National Landcare Facilitator program; and to demonstrate the benefits of implementing sustainable farm practices in the region. A sample of the feedback:

"Just want to say THANK YOU VERY MUCH for a fabulous day today on the Landcare trip. I learnt a lot, met new people, got heaps of ideas, was fed and watered well, went to places I'd never been and generally am pumped to try some of the ideas and experiences shared today.

Please do all you can to keep these kinds of programs alive. They are very beneficial to the people on the land and beyond. The ripple effect cannot be under estimated.

I wish you every success with your future work along with the rest of the team. You are all bright shining lights, that is obvious.

Maybe I can offer something to the group in the future?"

For case studies of the three farms visited go to www.nacc.com.au/Programs/Case-Studies.aspx

Carnamah land managers hear about NACC incentives and small grants

NACC's wind erosion and biodiversity project officers held an information day at Carnamah recently for land managers in the region to hear about what's on offer through the Caring for our Country program. NACC has incentives for on ground works, and a small grants program. Details are on the website www.nacc.com.au.

Curtin students hear about what's happening in landcare in the NAR

Recently NACC organised a briefing for about 80 students from Curtin University, at the request of Professor John Glasson, who brought a group of students up here last year and was very impressed with the welcome they received. Thanks go to Stanley Yokwe, NACC's landcare facilitator for organising the event. You can find Stanley's cases studies at www.nacc.com.au

Great roll up at Coastal Formations workshop at Greenhead

Recently NACC supported a workshop which helped more than 40 people learn about the formation of Green Head's remarkable coastal environment. The workshop was presented by top Western Australian coastal experts Ian Eliot and Bob Gozzard.

Community and local government participants from Cervantes to Geraldton heard about the formation of the beaches, bays, headlands, dunes and near shore reefs between South Bay and Point Louise. Some of these ancient landscape features date back millions of years.

MEDIA RELEASES

Community Beach Watch helps in understanding Coast The Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC), together with the City of Geraldton-Greenough and Coastwest are embarking on a Coastal Monitoring Program that will help the community and decision makers to better understand our ever changing coastline. And they're calling on the community to help to observe and report changes...

Fantastic results for local woodlands protection program Farmers in the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR) have put in a huge effort to protect native vegetation areas on their farms, including protecting habitat where the endangered Carnaby's Cockatoo is found....

Beach Clean up at Ledge Point Members of the Ledge Point community got together for Clean Up Australia Day and picked up more than six cubic metres of rubbish...

West Midlands Group help in Planning for Farming Prosperity A training program aimed at helping farmers strengthen farming practices and make farming businesses more profitable will be piloted in the Northern Agricultural Region this month....

OMA Group elects new president The Oil Mallee Association of Australia (OMA) has elected prominent Narrogin identity Lex Hardie as its new President. Mr Hardie, who is continuing his business interests in Perth after farming at Narrogin for over 45 years, will bring to the role his experience in rural affairs and new industry development. ...

Be on the lookout for unwelcome weeds Residents in the Midwest are being asked to keep a look out for two types of weeds that have the potential to wreak havoc on productive pastoral and farm lands in the region....

GRANTS AND FUNDING

NACC's grants for Wind Erosion and Coastal projects - Close May 7

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for a wide range of activities right across the Northern Agricultural Region. Go to www.nacc.com.au for more information and the easy to fill in application form or contact details for someone to speak to.

FRRR Small Grants for Rural Communities – Closes 30 Sept 2010

The Small Grants for Rural Communities program benefits people in rural and remote communities.

Not for profit organisations can apply for projects and activities that offer clear public benefit for communities living in small rural and remote locations in Australia, contributing to their development in social and community welfare, economic, environmental, health, education or cultural areas.

www.frrr.org.au/programsDetails.asp?ProgramID=4

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance - Applications until 29 Oct 2012

This assistance helps irrigation water providers to develop modernisation plans for their districts that identify ways to upgrade irrigation infrastructure and assess options to adapt to a future with less water. Visit www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/srwui/impa.html

Junior Landcare Grants Program - 2nd round closes Fri 14 May

Information on the 2010 Junior Landcare Grants Program at www.juniorlandcare.com.au

FarmReady Reimbursement Grants

FarmReady Reimbursement Grants, for courses completed prior to 30 May 2012, assist primary producers and Indigenous land managers to attend approved training courses aimed at improving their capacity to adapt to climate change and increase self reliance and preparedness.

Reimbursements of up to \$1500 per year are available. Applications forms need to be lodged and approved prior to attending approved courses, followed by submitting the claim for reimbursement (up to 30 days after the completion of the course). www.farmready.gov.au

Water for the Future funding

Through *Water for the Future*, the Australian Government is investing in a range of programs over 10 years to address four key priorities - taking action on climate change, using water wisely, securing water supplies and healthy river waterways. www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/index.html

Heritage Grants for private owners of State registered heritage places - closes June 4.

Private owners of State-registered heritage places across WA can access funds to help with the conservation and revitalisation of their properties through the Heritage Council of WA's 2010-11 Heritage Grants Program. The Program offers funding of \$20,000 or more for conservation works and grants of \$3,000 or more for conservation plans. Places in heritage precincts or groups can apply for individual grants of \$1,000 or more for conservation works relating to structural stability or the streetscape. Go to www.heritage.wa.gov.au or phone 9221 4177.

2010 Community Heritage Grants - Closes 14 May 2010.

The Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program aims to preserve and provide access to nationally significant, Australian cultural heritage material held by community groups across the country. Grants of up to \$15,000 are available for preservation projects and training through community based workshops. www.nla.gov.au/chg/

Counselling on farm succession planning

The Federal Government has provided \$2.43 million to help older farmers hand their farms to the next generation. The money will be allocated to the Rural Financial Counselling Service, where counsellors have been asked to make succession planning their key focus.

The money has been allocated on a recommendation from last year's drought review, which found that many farmers found it hard to face issues such as succession.

According to RFCS figures, more than a quarter of farmers that counsellors worked with in the past nine months were over 60 years old, and more than a half of those did not have succession plans.

WA Rural Counselling Association www.rfcswa.org.au/

Grants & Funding websites

Grantslink www.grantslink.gov.au/

DAFF grants & assistance www.daffa.gov.au/about/grants_and_assistance

DEWHA grants & funding www.environment.gov.au/about/programs/index.html

FRRR grants www.frrr.org.au/currentprojects.asp

Caring for our Country funding www.nrm.gov.au/funding/index.html

Grants Directory www.grantsdirectory.dlg.wa.gov.au/

Lotterywest www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants

GrantGuru - Community <http://community.grantready.com.au/>

Grant Finder www.business.gov.au/grantfinder/grantfinder.aspx

AWARDS, TRAINING AND OPPORTUNITIES

Woolworths Agricultural Business Scholarship Program - closes May 28

The Royal Agricultural Society, University of Western Sydney and Woolworths are offering 30 young Australians working in agriculture the chance to fast track their career in a unique way.

Now in its third year, the course aims to give participants the opportunity to gain a broad view of the grocery / FMCG industry, the many stages involved in putting a product on the shelf as well as guidance on how to ensure their businesses are successful in the future. Participants will take part in lectures, group work and assignments and will hear from many people within the industry.

To apply go to www.wowcareers.com.au

Nuffield Scholarship Open – closes June 30

Applications for Nuffield Australia are now open for scholarships in 2011 and will close on 30 June, 2010. Winners will be announced in October 2010. Scholarships are for primary producers aged 28 to 40 years, although applications outside this range may be considered. Each scholarship is valued at \$28,000, sponsored by major agribusiness and industry groups across Australia. All scholars take part in a six week Global Focus Program, with up to 10 weeks of individual travel to investigate a topic of their choice. Application forms are available from Nuffield Australia on 03 5480 0755, via email, enquiries@nuffield.com.au, or from the website www.nuffield.com.au

ICCWA Community Safety Awards - closes 9 July

www.iccwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Criteria-Community-Safety-Awards-2010.pdf

Scholarships for Not For Profit Managers - Applications closing throughout the year.

Help your organisation become more effective and jump start your career with a Scholarship for training and development. Australian Scholarships Foundation (ASF) has over \$470,000 of scholarships available from major universities and private education providers across Australia.

www.scholarships.org.au

Westpac Kookaburra Awards - Close 12 May.

These awards offer prizes to individuals and organisations and projects that really make a difference - that stretch people's vision of what's possible in Australian society today.

www.ourcommunity.com.au/control/control_article.jsp?articleId=4438

Riverprize awards now open – close May 14

The 2010 Riverprize awards are open for entry. Further information can be accessed at

www.riverfoundation.org.au

Banksia Awards now open – close Aug 2

The 2010 Banksia Awards are open for entry. For more www.banksiafdn.com

Australian Museum Eureka Prize now open – close May 7

Entries are now open for the \$10,000 Eureka Prize for Water Research and Innovation. Sponsored by the National Water Commission, the Prize is awarded to an individual, team or organisation for research and innovation that has made or has the potential to make an outstanding contribution to the sustainable use and management of Australia's water resources. For more go to <http://eureka.australianmuseum.net.au/eureka-prize/water-research-and-innovation3>

Innovation in Agriculture Awards – close May 31

The National Farmers Federation is calling for nominations for the second annual national innovation in Agriculture Awards which recognise and encourage excellence in modern farming. Go to <http://congress.nff.org.au/awards/html>

Supporting women and young people in agriculture

The Australian Government is continuing its support for women and young people in rural and regional areas with funding of more than \$1.5 million under the Recognising Women Farmers and Next Gen Farmers grants. For a list of successful applicants visit www.daff.gov.au/farmingfuture.

REPORTS, NEWSLETTERS AND PUBLICATIONS

Reports:

Farming the Future – the role of Government is assisting Australian farmers to adapt to the impact of climate change

A parliamentary inquiry has brought down its findings on the role government needs to play in helping farm communities deal with the impacts of climate change.

The committee report says if our farmers are to maintain their productivity into the future, we must start investing now in new and better ways of producing food and fibre. Among the recommendations are increased funding for research and development, soil carbon sequestration, grass roots support, and permanent counselling services. There's a long list of recommendations including one which reads:

"The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, as part of its overall response to issues affecting agriculture and climate change, invest research funding in the following high priority areas:

- Soil carbon sequestration
- Soil stabilisation and pasture improvement
- Soil water retention strategies and water use efficiency
- Landscape planning and natural resource management, and
- Risk management."

It's an interesting read. www.aph.gov.au/House/committee/pir/australianfarmers/report.htm

Australia's Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry at a glance 2010

The Australia's Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry at a glance 2010 publication provides easy-to-read information on the key features of Australian agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries including size, location, contribution to the economy, export standing and major markets for the various industries. To download a PDF of the publication visit

www.daff.gov.au/about/publications/australias_agriculture_fisheries_and_forestry_at_a_glance_2010

Australia's Forest's at a glance 2010

Australia's Forests at a glance 2010 is a pocket-sized publication, updated annually, providing a snapshot of our forests and their management, including their size, location, and their contribution to the economy and export markets. To download a PDF of the publication visit

www.daff.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1536_253/forests-at-a-glance-2010.pdf

Free native plant guide

The Australian Native Plant Guide is ideal for home and landscape gardeners, farmers, government departments, councils, Landcare groups, students and anyone interested in Australian Native plants. The new version has over 500 photographs of native plants and includes a filter to select species that meet your requirements. You can download a free copy of the Australian Native Plant Guide from the Native Shop website. Visit <http://nativegrowth.com.au/nativeguide>

National Plant Health Status Report released

The National Plant Health Status Report was released in March 2010. The report provides readers with a revised and updated synopsis of Australia's plant biosecurity system for 2008-09. It covers a wide range of information, including:

- the plant pests of significant concern to Australian plant industries
- the organisations and processes involved in managing the pest status of Australia's agricultural and forestry industries
- innovative plant health research projects currently being undertaken by research organisations and universities

Plant Health Australia compiled the report with contributions, input and advice from Australia's key plant biosecurity stakeholders.

www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/index.cfm?objectid=5BFBAE9D-CE9D-0C69-F38C9EEAAE3EE56E

Newsletters

Latest newsletters from around the region www.nacc.com.au/Resources/Library/Newsletters.aspx

Evergreen Farming Newsletter

- A drought case study of Jim Wedge's farm in West Binu
- A drought case study of John Willmott's farm in Eneabba
- Integrating saltbush on saltlands
- Results from pasture cropping trials

www.evergreen.asn.au

Saltland Pastures Assoc Newsletter

- Saltbushes ain't Saltbushes
- Investigating perennial pasture decline
- Cattle can do better on bluebush and stubble
- Update on Messina

saltland.pastures@westnet.com.au

MIG Links (Mingenew Irwin Group)

Weekly newsletters at www.nacc.com.au/Resources/Library/Newsletters.aspx

DEC Conservation News

The latest issue of Environment and Conservation News is now available. Stories include:

- Scores of black cockatoos injured in Perth storms
- Visitor upgrades at Port Kennedy
- DEC site fitted with Australia's first permeable reactive barrier
- Recycled products being used in WA parks and visitor facilities

<http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/>

Moore Catchments Council

OTHER INTERESTING STUFF

New landcare case studies on Landcare website.

Landcare Online boasts an enormous database of other case studies that span the entire landcare spectrum, including large and small scale projects that highlight sustainable farming, Coastcare and Junior Landcare. <http://www.landcareonline.com.au/>

AG tactics starts up again – get yours now!

The second edition of the 2010 NAR AgTactics has been distributed. The AgTactics team meets each week to discuss the topical issues around the region, with agribusiness input, and sends out the AgTactics newsletter either weekly or fortnightly. Points covered in this week's edition include;

- Seasonal prospects
- Dry seeding on false hope
- Time of sowing
- Chance of rain
- Stored Soil Moisture
- Mice Activity
- Livestock

We are collecting information on mice activity across the region. If you have experienced increased mice numbers in your paddocks, let us know. If you're not receiving Ag tactics, contact Naomi Simpson at DAFWA on 9956 8542; mobile 0407 777 976 or email naomi.simpson@agric.wa.gov.au

Evergraze on the lookout for Pasture Cropping

As part of the EverGraze project Eric Dobbe and Paul Sanford are looking for land managers who are pasture cropping. They're looking for sites in the south rather than the north though if NAR land managers are interested then there's projects that we can put you in touch with (such as the EverCrop).

Paul says they've concluded that the most effective way to implement the work is to capitalise on what growers are going to do this year as part of their cropping program. So, for example if they can locate a grower who is going to crop his kikuyu this year with canola we can implement our three pre-cropping treatments (no herbicide, knock down and kill) prior to sowing and take measurements as required in the crop phase.

So...is there anyone out there kikuyu with canola, barley, oats or lupins this year on the south coast or anyone cropping lucerne with canola, barley or oats in the Kojonup region? Ideally they would be doing the same to an annual pasture. They're also interested to hear of any additional treatments that could be of interest to producers. One example is cultivating kikuyu pre-cropping. Give Paul Sanford a call at paul.sanford@agric.wa.gov.au (and NACC would like to know too!).

Virtual project assistants available for NRM

A group of PhD students have developed a small business called 'Hire a Professional Virtual Assistant'. They are offering their services in the hope establishing short term work opportunities for

mature PhD students with a background in agriculture, Natural Resource Management / environment, food, policy and economics.

Outsourcing project work through these registered Professional Virtual Assistants can save your organisation time and money and give you access to talented people with a wide range of professional experience. Ring Christine Kershaw, PhD Candidate, UWA, 0429 236 729

State profile: population, economic data and more, now on line

A range of State-wide economic and social data is now available on the internet. The new online WA Workforce Development Profile includes detailed data on the State's population, economy, labour market, industries, regions, training system and workforce development initiatives.

It's for anyone undertaking planning activities for commerce, land development or services provision, including State Government agencies, large and small businesses, and the not-for-profit sector. The profile is available at <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au>.

Mid West Planning Committee up and running

The first meeting of the Mid West Regional Planning Committee has been held in Geraldton following the appointment of its inaugural members by Planning Minister John Day and the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC).

The Mid West Regional Planning Committee is one of four new regional committees established in response to current economic, social and environmental pressures in the regions. They will play a role in developing regional priorities and policy settings to inform statutory region plans.

Councillor John Sewell from the City of Geraldton-Greenough and shire president Nino Messina from the Shire of Mullewa will be representing the interests of local government.

Telecentres by any other name!

Telecentres have been rebranded as Community Resource Centres, marking a new phase for the Telecentre program, which began in 1991. The opening of the new Boddington Community Resource Centre begins the roll-out of new centres across the State and is the first to be established with funding from Royalties for Regions. www.telecentres.wa.gov.au

Murder Under the Microscope – Fun education for years 5 to 10.

This year's event called "Shockwave on the Shoreline" begins on May 3 so register now. It's an eco-murder mystery in which students are presented with an environmental crime and must find the villain (the cause), the victim (the effect) and the crime site (the specific environment).

www.microscope.edu.au.

New Threatened Ecological Community listed (in the Eastern States)

The Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-Eastern Australia ecological community has been listed as endangered under the EPBC Act. For details: <http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicshowcommunity.pl?id=86>

WWF Yearly Report Card – Australia not too flash

In October the WWF, Zoological Society of London and the Global Footprint Network will issue their latest 2 yearly report card on our planet. Australia is one of the worst offenders, according to the 2008 Living Planet report which noted (amongst other things) that:

Native Animals decline since white settlement

- Birds down 13%
- mammals down 24%
- Reptiles down 6%

Vanishing Species

- under threat
 - 91 Mammals
 - 108 Birds
- Listed extinct
 - 27 Mammals
 - 23 Birds

Our water use is:

- 1.12 times more than the global average, but only
- 1/2 that used by the USA

Share of Resources

- we have the world's 5th largest ecological footprint per capita
- we use 7.8 global hectares per person
- if we all used the same amount of resources as the US we would need 4 earths

http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/

SustainableWA goes live and public!

Welcome to SustainableWA is a movement with the vision of supporting WA to become the most sustainable society for the world. They now have a website.

SustainableWA is a 'movement', not an organisation, and the intention is to connect the growing numbers of people, communities and organisations within our society contributing to the vision of WA as the most sustainable society for the world.

Dr Carmen Lawrence helped with the 'official' launch on 30 March, where she endorsed the vision and approach and affirmed the role of idealism, the importance of thinking expansively, and remaining ambitious for positive change in our society. The group has started to 'map the network' of organisations who are contributing to sustainability within WA. www.sustainablewa.net.au

Australian River Restoration Centre now open

This new not for profit organisation has been established for people working in river restoration around Australia.

The ARRC builds on work of Land and Water Australia's successful river, riparian and knowledge management programs and offers services to anyone with an interest in river restoration. For more about the program and their training go to www.rrc.com.au.

Harvester prototype paves the way for further mallee industry development

A mallee harvester prototype has been launched in Narrogin, Western Australia, representing an important milestone in the emergence of the mallee industry in Australia.

The machine can dramatically reduce the supply chain costs of getting mallees in the paddock to produce uniform quality, chipped biomass that can be delivered to a processor's door.

The development of the prototype harvester follows in Australia's proud tradition of engineering innovation in agriculture such as the Sunshine Harvester and the stump-jump plough that created new efficiencies for farmers and international markets for our technologies.

Invented by Biosystems Engineering, the harvester prototype will now embark on a series of field trials and further design modifications to further improve its performance.

The prototype's unique handling capability combined with its wood chipping ability enables it to harvest high wood density trees of different size and shapes at greater rates than previous modified agricultural harvesters. www.futurefarmonline.com.au/AnnouncementRetrieve.aspx?ID=31145

Sea monkey industry for Port Gregory

A cutting edge-design commercial brine-shrimp farm has opened at Port Gregory, near Geraldton.

Brine-shrimp, also known as Artemia or 'sea monkeys' are a key component of the food used in the commercial aquaculture of fish and prawns.

Department of Fisheries scientist Sagiv Kolkovski, had developed the technologically-advanced facility to cultivate the minute Artemia, in partnership with Cognis Australia, the world's biggest producer of the naturally occurring red pigment, beta-carotene.

The farm is located at Cognis Australia's Hutt Lagoon, Port Gregory plant, where the company farms micro-algae from which beta-carotene is extracted.

Apparently this new facility has potential to create a new multi-million dollar industry in rural WA and will help lead to more sustainable fish farming practices both domestically and internationally and its development marks the culmination of seven years' research work, providing a much-needed source of high quality, sustainable fish-feed for Australian and international fish-farms.

Commonly known as 'sea monkeys', Artemia feed on micro-algae and can be an unwanted pest in the production of beta-carotene.

WA expected to trial new drought aid scheme

A pilot program of the Federal Government's new drought policy is expected to be rolled out in Western Australia.

It comes two years after Agriculture Minister Tony Burke announced a review of drought assistance, which he said needed to change to help farmers adapt to longer and more frequent droughts.

Rural leaders are not saying a word on the government's new drought policy.

Many say they've been sworn to secrecy, while others confirm briefings have taken place.

But the ABC can reveal that sources close to the federal and state governments are expecting a pilot of the new program to be rolled out in Western Australia, which currently has no Exceptional Circumstances declared areas.

The pilot will focus on supporting the community and helping farmers change the way they farm.

The new program will not include interest rate subsidies, but could offer exit grants to farmers who aren't in drought.

The Federal Government won't confirm or deny the WA roll-out and the WA Government issued a 'no comment'.

Farm exit packages may be available in 'good times'

Farmers could be paid to leave the land during good times, when the rains are falling and the pasture is lush. Federal Agriculture Minister Tony Burke has hinted that the government's new drought policy could see exit payments made available not only to farmers in drought.

Mr Burke told ABC's Bush Telegraph program that the government needs to reconsider its approach to helping farmers who are struggling to stay viable.

"I think one of the problems with exit packages to date is they're only available during the toughest times, so what that means, generally, is that the only time the government will help you get out is when your property's at its lowest value anyway."

Mr Burke says the new drought policy will be released very soon.

Farm groups fear funding cuts to research bodies

Farm lobby groups are worried rural research corporations will have their budgets slashed, as the Federal Government looks for savings.

The Productivity Commission is reviewing Australia's research and development organisations like Meat and Livestock Australia and Dairy Australia, with the final report to be delivered to government next year.

The Federal Government says it has no plans to cut funds, but the Productivity Commission wants to know if there are too many RDCs and, if so, how the number could be reduced.

Andrew Broad, president of the Victorian Farmers Federation, says bureaucrats at Federal Treasury have always wanted to cut funding to RDCs.

The Federal Agriculture Minister Tony Burke says there are no plans to cut funding. He'll argue not only for no cuts to funding, but an increase.

"My intention is to improve the productivity of the sector," he says. "In real terms, unless there is an increase, it's a cut. Any model where you get the same amount of money as last year, it's really a cut in funding."

Jobs in Water promoted

The H2Oz program is embarking on a nationwide campaign to encourage more students to consider a career in water. The program begins at the Sydney Career Expo on 30 April 2010 - 1 May 2010, and there will be one in Perth. www.h2oz.org.au/

Is it a cat, a dog, or the Emmaville Panther???

A mummified creature has been found just outside of Canberra and it's inspired a bit of debate. Some say it's definitely a cat, while others are convinced it's a dog. Given the scale of the creature, there is even some suspicion that it may be the Emmaville panther. The animal is roughly 20 inches long from bum to nose.

www.invasiveanimals.com/publications/feral_flyer/index.html



Dedicated online space for bird lovers around Australia (started right here in the NAR)

There's lots to read about on Australia's only dedicated news service for bird lovers is now on Facebook – just go to your usual page and type thebirdsnest in the search bar and our page should come up. If you wish to join us on this page, all you have to do is press 'like' and you'll be added to our friends list.

Meanwhile, bird news. Australia's zebra finches are making news for a couple of reasons. Firstly they've become the first songbird in the world to have their genome decoded. The zebra finch is only the second bird to have its genome unravelled – the first was the chicken and the parrot is due to be the third.

Scientists in the US have led an international team to achieve this so that they can assist those suffering vocal disabilities as a result of stroke or Parkinson's disease. Zebra finches have also been the subject of a study in Germany – scientists there have discovered female finches aren't averse to outsourcing some of their parental duties. One in every five nests has been found to contain an egg that hasn't been laid by the attending parents – in effect, it's a 'cuckoo' egg.

And if you harbour a secret desire to be Indiana Jones, you'll be interested to read how an amateur palaeontologist has discovered what could be the oldest fossil bones in North America.

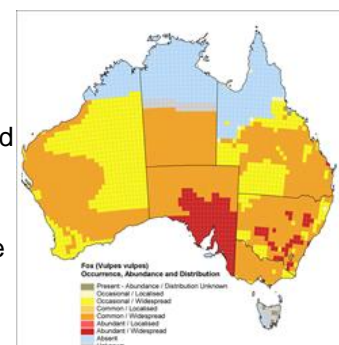
Contact Karen Hunt, Editor at editor@thebirdsnet.net.au (yep our very own Karen Hunt from the local ABC!!) www.thebirdsnet.net.au

Pestmaps now live on feral.org.au

PestMaps provides access to various maps that report information on the occurrence, distribution and abundance of significant invasive animal species throughout Australia.

The aim of PestMaps is to promote access to existing published maps and information developed from previous projects, and to promote use of that information by a broad cross-section of interested end-users.

PestMaps is a work in progress, and will eventually contain a broad range of spatial information at national, state/territory, and regional scales



(including natural resource management or catchment authority) for many species. It currently contains information for cane toads, common carp, foxes, rabbits, starlings, wild dogs, feral cats, wild deer species, wild dogs, feral goats and feral pigs.

www.feral.org.au/content/PestMaps/PestMaps.cfm

Biosecurity engagement guidelines released

Policy makers, managers and engagement practitioners in agencies responsible for biosecurity can now refer to a resource to help them better engage with communities on biosecurity matters. The resource 'Biosecurity engagement guidelines: practical advice for involving communities' was released in March 2010. It explains how effective community engagement in biosecurity can be undertaken and is based on practical experiences within Australia.

Engagement practitioners may be interested in the tips and ideas on how to communicate with stakeholders and recognise and address potential pitfalls.

The Office of the Chief Plant Protection Officer commissioned the Bureau of Rural Sciences to develop the guidelines for its *Engaging in Biosecurity* project. This project aims to develop a biosecurity engagement framework (in association with landholders, industry and local communities) for detection and surveillance of exotic pest incursions to enhance on-farm biosecurity. The guidelines were developed with the assistance of six horticultural regions undertaking community biosecurity engagement programs. http://adl.brs.gov.au/anrdl/metadata_files/pe_brs90000004183.xml

Greens concerned about cuts to environment programs

The Australian Greens today (Wed 27th) voiced concern over reports that the Rudd Government intends to slash funding to natural resource management and environment programs in the coming budget.

"I am very concerned by reports that the Caring for Our Country program may have its budget cut by up to 22% and that other environment programs may also be cut by up to 25%," said Greens environment spokesperson Senator Rachel Siewert said on Wednesday.

"These cuts would come on top of the many serious problems with the program - problems which have already seen significant job losses in regional natural resource management organisations and volunteers walking away from community programs after decades of dedicated work."

"Cuts of this magnitude will adversely impact on the important work these groups are doing in tackling landscape degradation, in protecting agricultural industries from weeds and feral animals, and in conserving threatened ecosystems."

"Caring for Our Country needs a serious overhaul, not further cuts to our core natural resource management programs."

"Not only are the Rudd government walking away from the threat of climate change, they are now turning their backs on regional Australia and the environment," Senator Siewert said.

SURVEYS

Kerbside Recycling Survey for Geraldton Greenough Residents

In order for kerbside recycling to occur, all material from household waste must be separated and sorted into key components in order for it to be accepted by markets all over the world. Part of the separation of recyclable materials will be dependent upon householders, with each household planned to be provided with a recycling bin, with a fortnightly collection service. The separating and sorting plant, known as a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) is currently planned to be located at the Meru Waste Disposal Facility in Geraldton to process all recyclable materials from the City and surrounding Shires. The processed material will then be transported to Fremantle, ready to be exported overseas.

An alternative to locating a MRF in Geraldton would be to seek access to a MRF elsewhere, possible in the metropolitan area, transporting the collected contents from household recycling bins there for processing. Costs may ultimately determine the choice, based on assessment of affordability across the community. The experience in other places is that as much as 70% of household waste is not recyclable, and must still go into landfill, or be processed with other waste treatment systems. In addition to the current MRF initiative, alternative waste treatment technologies are being investigated for possible future use, to reduce this 70% of residual waste, with the longer term goal of achieving zero waste going into landfill. www.cgg.wa.gov.au

Women Farmers and Biotechnology

The Molecular Plant Breeding CRC is seeking women farmer's opinions of biotechnology and genetic modification. Results of the survey will be used to inform researchers, plant breeders and science policy makers on the views towards agricultural biotechnology.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2DGPTNV>

Durack's biggest survey – have your say.

Federal Member Barry Haase is doing what he calls "Durack's Biggest Survey" – in order to understand the issues that are important to people in the electorate of Durack. The survey includes issues on the environment and climate change.

If you haven't received one, then get in touch with Barry's electorate office on Barry.Haase.MP@aph.gov.au or 9172 2332.

Join The Big Conversation on national values

Have your say in Australia's first national values survey. What values best reflect how our society should operate? What values does our society want to see in the future? We want to know what Australians think. We want to start a conversation. <http://bigconversation.org.au/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Wondering where we are on Climate Change?

Just to recap on what's happened since Copenhagen when the World leaders got together and let China and America slog it out to create the "Copenhagen Accord" which basically says "let's all wait for a year and see what happens. The key provisions of the accord were:

- Any increase in the Earth's temperature should be limited to two degrees Celsius.
- By January 31 this year developed countries are to identify new commitments to emissions reductions by 2020,
- Developing countries other than the least developed countries and small islands states are to identify nationally appropriate mitigation actions by 2010, and
- Developed countries will contribute around \$30billion to support mitigation and adaptation activities in developing countries.

Seeing as we haven't yet done the last three, it's going to be interesting to see how we're going to achieve the first point! Anyhow, as you're no doubt aware, Australia has now put the introduction of an ETS (Emissions Trading Scheme) onto the back burner.

Local Climate change news: Climate Change Centre and what NAR residents say

NACC continues to work towards adaptation, believing that all the actions put in place for climate change are going to be beneficial to sustainability down the track. NACC and several other organisations in the region have been working on proposals for a Centre for Regional Climate Change Solutions. More on this in coming newsletters.

On a local level, NACC's 2008 – 09 Community Environment and Sustainability Study has a lot of data collected from the residents of the region on what we, as a community, think about climate change.

Full survey go to www.nacc.com.au/Programs/Current-programs/Social-Science.aspx

Climate change risks to the marine environment

Climate change and its impacts on marine biodiversity and resources – as well as surrounding coastal habitats, communities and industries – will be the subject of a new research plan. The *National Climate Change Adaptation Research Plan: Marine Biodiversity and Resources* states climate change will lead to ocean warming, changes in ocean currents, more intense storm events and changed ocean chemistry. The Plan identifies research priorities in four main areas – aquaculture, commercial and recreational fishing, conservation management and tourism and recreational uses. In response to the Research Plan, the Government has announced \$5.5 million for research to help managers and users of the marine environment to prepare for the likely impacts of climate change. The Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency will provide \$3.5 million of the funding, with the additional \$2 million from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). FRDC is managing the process for allocating the funding and Expressions of Interest are now open.

For more www.frdc.com.au/environment/climate-funding.

EVENTS

See the NACC calendar for NAR events www.nacc.com.au/Events.aspx

May

- 11-17 **National Volunteer Week “Volunteering: Now, more than ever.”** National Volunteer Week is the largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism in Australia.
- 18-20 **Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility Annual Conference.** Cairns, Australia

June

- 5 **World Environment Day**
- 8/9 **World Migratory Bird Day**
- 8-10 **Australian Irrigation Conference & Exhibition** will be held from the June at Sydney. Visit www.irrigationaustralia.com.au
- 22 **International Day for Biological Diversity**
- 23 **World Turtle Day**
- 24 **National Landcare Awards**
- 29 -1 **International Climate Change Adaptation Conference**, Gold Coast. Visit www.nccarf.edu.au/conference2010

July

- 21-23 **Enviro 2010**, Sydney. Visit www.nccarf.edu.au/conference2010
- 30 **Schools Tree Day**

August

- 1 **National Tree Day.** This year, Landcare Australia and environmental foundation Planet Ark celebrate over a decade of working together in partnership on programs and events such as National Tree Day. Last year more than a million native trees and shrubs were planted at 3,000 sites around the country. Register online at the [National Tree Day website](#) or call the Planet Ark information centre on 1300 88 5000.
- 1-6 **19th World Congress on Soil Science**, Brisbane. Visit www.19wcso.org.au

September

6-12 **Landcare Week.**

5-7 **2nd National Farmers' Federation Congress**, Melbourne

16/17 **Mingenew Expo**

20 **2010 Coast to Coast Conference** (biennial national coastal conference) will be held in Adelaide this year, beginning September 20th. The community subsidised price is \$645.00.

This offer ends on **June 20th**.

For more info go to <http://www.coast2coast.org.au/regist-info.html>

26-30 **Australian Rangeland Society 16th Biennial Conference**, Bourke

October

10-13 **Australian Forest Growers National Conference 2010**, Mt Gambier SA. www.afg.asn.au

19-22 **3rd National Indigenous Land & Sea Management Conference**, Broken Hill, NSW. Contact Mark Sutton on 0432 293 445 or email mutawintjimurdi@yahoo.com.au

November

December

1-3 **Australasian Wildlife Management Society**. Torquay, Victoria.

6-10 **Ecological Society of Australia 2010 Annual Conference**. ANU, Canberra