

2009/2010 Mallee Futures Program Update

2009/2010 was another successful year with 23 landholders completing 33 projects:

- 862 ha Perennial Pasture (Lucerne)
- 11.5 ha Revegetation
- 7.5 ha Old-man Saltbush
- 8 ha Earthworks to Stabilise Dunes
- 50hrs of Boxthorn Removal
- 185 ha Remnant Vegetation Fenced

It's now time to apply for funding for 2010/2011 projects – see the Funding Options document which lists projects that can be funded. If you require more information contact George King on 8531 3075 or at george.king@internode.on.net

So, please fill in the Expression of Interest form and return it to us as soon as possible. We may be able to fund a project right now.

This year we are hoping to fund more fencing and/or earthworks for dune stabilisation, fodder plantations, shelterbelts, revegetation and remnant vegetation fencing.

Please note that after the 30th of June 2011 any unspent money will have to be returned to the Australian Government. It is possible that less or no funding will be available after that date.



Peter and Hannah Loller's fencing project to protect remnant vegetation

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MURRAY MALLEE



Local Action Planning Association Inc.

www.malleefutures.org.au

Mantung Tree Planting



Lizzie Lewis, John Nettlefold and Heather Shearer (right to left) assist with the Mantung tree planting

This planting is part of a larger program in the Mantung area to restore 300 ha of shrubby dunetop vegetation over a three year period. This program is being implemented by a partnership of Greening Australia, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Murray Mallee LAP and the Mantung Maggea Land Management Group.

New areas of degraded dune are being sought for restoration in the Mantung Maggea area. For further information please contact Chris Grant on 0427 604 254 or Rowena Danks on 8531 2066.

Chris Grant, Department of Environment and Natural Resources

National Landcare Awards

The 2010 National Landcare Awards ceremony was held at Parliament House, Canberra on Thursday 24 June to celebrate 20 years of community environmental volunteering in Australia and to honour the individuals and groups in the running for a National Award.

The 88 finalists were selected from amongst the approximately 6,000 Landcare and Coastcare volunteer groups across Australia, with the winners of the 12 National Landcare Award categories and the People's Choice Award announced at the ceremony. Catriona Rowntree hosted the evening with guests including the Honourable Tony Burke MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and actor Jack Thompson.

As winner of the 2009 South Australian Landcare NRM Region Award, the Murray Mallee Local Action Planning Association was invited to attend the National Landcare Awards ceremony as one of the finalists. Our Treasurer, Rex Spinley, attended the ceremony on our behalf, as well as participating in the afternoon workshop where participants gave presentations about their work.

Our presentation was well received at the workshop. Rex was able to meet a range of people and to learn about the activities of other groups as well as their participants being exposed to the work we do.

The Murray Mallee Local Action Planning Association was one of the seven finalists for the Australian Government Landcare NRM Region Award which was won by Desert Channels Queensland.

This year the Australian public were encouraged to participate in the Awards by voting online for their favourite finalist in the Landcare People's Choice Award. This was won by South Australia's Sinclair Gully, a small family-run vineyard in the Adelaide Hills.

For the other award winners visit <http://svc009.wic050p.server-web.com/nationalawards2010/>

A successful tree planting was performed near Mantung on the 30th of June with the assistance of the Riverland Friends of Parks group. Eight members of the group kindly gave their time, planting of 460 trees in a Heritage Agreement block owned by Glenda and Andrew Hall.

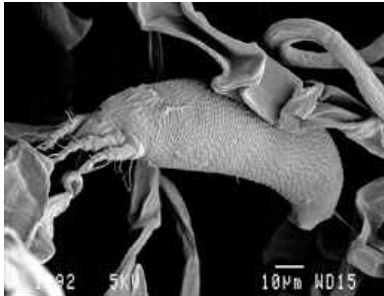
The trees were planted in conjunction with direct seeding which had been performed a couple of days before, in an effort to restore shrubby dunetop vegetation that previously existed on the site.

The mix of direct seeding and tubestock is intended to restore the original vegetation mix and structure, recreating an underrepresented vegetation type and providing habitat for fauna species. This vegetation type is important habitat for Southern Scrub Robins, Purple-gaped Honeyeaters, Shy Heath Wrens, White-crowned Babbblers and other species which have declined in this area.



The Hon. Tony Burke MP gives the key note speech at the 2010 National Landcare Awards in Canberra.
Photo courtesy of Landcare Australia Limited

Biological control of Boneseed



Boneseed leaf buckle mite, photo by Charnie Craemer & Alan Hall

Biological Control

Classical biological control programs seek to establish a group of specialist enemies of the invading weed to provide a level of natural long term control. Most biological control programs aim to introduce agents (insects and pathogens) that attack all parts of the plant from roots, stems and leaves through to flowers and seeds.

Boneseed Biological Control Program

A biological control program to combat boneseed, *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *monilifera*, in Australia was established in 1987. Since 1989 six biological control agents have been released in South Australia, which attack the developing seed, leaves and new shoots. The latest agent, the boneseed leaf buckle mite (BLBM), was released in 2008.

For many reasons no biological control agents for boneseed have yet established in South Australia but in other states BLBM has recently established, with sites in Victoria and Tasmania showing promise.

One of the main barriers to establishing agents in Australia has been the high levels of predation by native insect fauna. BLBM is able to avoid most predation and weather extremes by producing hairy galls on the leaves as a form of protection.

BLBM is a sap sucking microscopic mite that impacts on the vigour and well being of boneseed plants by taking up valuable water, nutrients and energy. This type of general weakening of the plant could reduce growth rates and ability to produce flowers and therefore impact on seed set.

Community Biological Control Nurseries

BLBM is also a lead biocontrol agent being used to test the potential of community groups to play a greater role in weed biological control, through the use of community biological control nurseries. For boneseed biocontrol this involves groups growing potted boneseed plants infected with BLBM for later release into field sites. Once plants have a good infection of BLBM, leaf material can be used to inoculate field plants or plants can be planted out within boneseed infestations from where mites can natural disperse over time.

Some of the benefits of growing your own BLBM are:

- A convenient and continuous supply of mites
- A greater supply of mites and greater quantity of releases
- Reduced risk of mite loss caused by accidental destruction of field sites through grazing, spraying, weeding or burning

To grow boneseed for biocontrol nurseries community groups will need an exemption letter from their regional NRM Board, exempting them from various provisions in the NRM Act dealing with prohibited plants.

If you are interested in establishing a BLBM nursery then contact Susan Ivory from SARDI Entomology, on 8303 9672 or at susan.ivory2@sa.gov.au.

Susan Ivory, Project Officer, SARDI Entomology

SAVE PAPER AND HELP SPREAD OUR DOLLARS FURTHER

Do you really need a hard copy of the Mallee Update?

GET A FULL COLOUR VERSION AT A FRACTION OF THE COST BY EMAIL
all it takes is an email or a phone call to give us your details

Please contact us on ph: (08) 8531 2066 or email: mmlap@internode.on.net

Thank you



After large plagues of locusts travelled through New South Wales, northern South Australia, northern Victoria and southeast Queensland earlier this year, landholders should be vigilant in protecting winter crops and pastures from spring locust hatchings by using targeted applications of registered or permitted insecticides. **A co-ordinated approach to control hopper bands is the most effective way to reduce the locust population and prevent crop damage.** Growers need to keep themselves informed on predicted hatchings in their area.

Eggs laid in autumn will produce a generation of high density nymphs in spring. After hatching, nymphs (also known as hoppers) grow through five growth stages (from 4mm to 18mm) with wing buds becoming more noticeable through each stage. The nymphs move from the egg beds and concentrate into dense marching bands which vary in size from a few square metres to several hectares. Bands then merge to create a distinct front of hoppers which can travel up to 500 metres a day. Four to six weeks from hatching, development is complete and after the final moult young adult locusts emerge and concentrate into swarms which make low drifting flights up to 5 metres high and can cover 10 to 20 kilometres per day depending on age, wind speed and temperature.

Locust population models usually predict around 90% mortality between egg and adult, so less than 10% of eggs laid result in breeding adults. The favourable conditions expected to exist in the spring could see 80% of hatching eggs surviving to adulthood, increasing the potential impact as a result unless a well-planned and well-executed intervention strategy is put into place. **The best results come from targeting hoppers, not adult locusts, so spray when hopper bands begin to appear including spot spraying bands along crop edges before they enter crops.** If you are unable to spray the area likely to be affected with locusts, consider utilising a contractor or talk to your local advisors about options.

For the latest expected hatching dates go to <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts/current> or contact 1800 635 962. As the season progresses, actual rather than predicted weather conditions and temperatures can be used to estimate hatching dates more accurately. Start surveillance on your property at least a week before forecast hatching dates, focussing on an area where swarm or egg laying activity was evident in autumn, as well as roadside and track areas.

You are able to register to receive locust information updates (commencing in September 2010) by sending the following information by mail to Felicity Hindle, PIRSA Strategic Communications, GPO Box 1671, Adelaide SA 5001, by email to felicity.hindle@sa.gov.au or by fax to 8226 0027:

- By sending your name and email address if you would like to receive a weekly general email newsletter, and indicate that you are from the Murray Mallee region.
- By sending your name and mobile telephone number if you would like to receive SMS mobile telephone updates, and indicate that you are from the Murray Mallee region.

Crops most at risk are those containing green plant matter. Hoppers prefer thinner green crops. Dense crops tend to be avoided, although the edges of the crops can be damaged. Where crops have dried off and no green plant material remains, damage is unlikely and insecticide control is unnecessary. Green and drying pastures are very susceptible to hopper attack. Pastures that have completely dried off are not preferred.

The Government of South Australia has introduced **a rebate scheme** to encourage landowners, sharefarmers and lessees in the Riverland / Mallee region to undertake the necessary control of Australian Plague Locusts by ground-spraying locust hopper bands with registered or permitted chemicals on their own land. The scheme is administered by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries through Primary Industries and Resources SA (PIRSA).

Undertaking spraying is critical in achieving the overall aims of the Locust Control Program of reducing the damage locusts can cause to our primary produce throughout the State. Effectively targeting locust hopper bands reduces the number of adult locusts that can develop and then move to other areas of the State.

Under the Plant Health Act 2009 the ground control of locust nymphs (hoppers) is required by landholders to ensure the successful control of Australian Plague Locusts in South Australia.

The one-off rebate is intended to assist eligible applicants with costs incurred to purchase and apply Registered or Permitted chemicals between 1 July 2010 and 31 December 2010. Funding is not available to compensate for any loss of income suffered as a result of the impacts of a locust infestation. Applicants may only lodge one application. To obtain an application form or make enquiries, please contact the PIRSA Locust Control Centre at Loxton by phoning 1800 833 451. Completed applications must be received at the Locust Control Centre no later than 31 March 2011.

Following insecticide application, the relevant withholding periods **MUST BE OBSERVED** in relation to harvesting, windrowing, cutting for hay or stockfeed and grazing, more information is available on the PIRSA Website at www.pir.sa.gov.au/locust.

For information or to report locust activity or sightings please phone:

Locust Hotline (until 1 September 2010) - 1300 666 010

Loxton Control Centre (after 1 September 2010) - 1800 833 451

The Mallee In Flower



We are currently organising the printing of a revised edition of *The Mallee in Flower* by Ian McCann to increase the knowledge and skills of landcare groups and individual landholders in the SA Murray Mallee region.

Through the availability of this plant identification book, landholders will have a tool to become more aware of the local native species in their area. It is expected that this knowledge will assist in the improved management of those species.

Previously published in 1989, we have obtained the rights to publish this valuable tool for identifying plants of the Mallee. The author's aim was to provide a pictorial introduction to Mallee plants for people who live in the region and those who visit for recreation.

Many of the illustrations were reproduced close to natural size. To aid identification, a brief description, height range and the months or season of its main flowering period have been given for each plant.

Because the original collection of photographs is no longer intact, this revised version is being produced by scanning original copies of the book. Species names have been updated and errors in the first publication have been amended thanks to the efforts of staff and associates at the State Herbarium of South Australia.

Copies will be available for \$22.00 each (GST inclusive).

Opportunities for Landholders

The Murray Mallee Local Action Planning Association will be providing a number of educational opportunities for landholders over the next twelve months.

The **MALLEE MENTORS PROGRAM** will send participants to the Eyre Peninsula in October, to inspect a number of successful and innovative farming enterprises. Younger participants will be paired up with more experienced farmers throughout the program (August 2010 - March 2011). Free workshops on risk management and finance will also be included for Mentees. Mentors will receive a one-day program-specific training workshop. Registrations are still open – Call George King on 8531 3075.

The **ADVANCED PASTURE CROPPING COMPANY** ran a successful two-day workshop over July 18-19 at Murray Bridge. Both Pasture Cropping and No Kill Cropping provide opportunities for low risk cropping in grazing systems whilst maintaining and enhancing perennial pastures. The Murray Mallee LAP and the Mt Pleasant Natural Resource Centre are seeking further expressions of interest in a course to be held over the 7th and 8th of September or the 14th and 15th of September. Please register your interest and preference with George King on 8531 3075. The course is approved for Farm Ready reimbursements. Seats are also available for a **Field Trip** over the 16th and 17th of September to the Morchard Field Day and also to view innovative cropping and grazing enterprises that have utilised Pasture Cropping techniques.

The **WHOLE FARM PROGRAM**: The South Australian Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board (the Board) has contracted Rural Directions to deliver the workshops and technical advice associated with the whole farm program. A partnership has been developed with Murray Mallee LAP to deliver on-ground works specifically to reduce the risk of wind erosion. The Whole Farm Program has been developed to ensure you receive the information that is specific to your farm business with an individual farm visit. Through the individual farm visits common issues are identified which are presented at the final workshop. The workshop allows for enough time to chat and compare experiences.

To become involved in the whole farm business program you need to register your details.

The consultant will run you through *Snapshot Now* a computer-based analysis tool to identify the strengths and weakness of your farm business, and through the analysis identify opportunities for improvement. Through the program you have the option to analyse the strength, weaknesses and opportunities relating to your business.

Feedback received from farmers who have participated in The *Snapshot Now* program consult has been positive, with the analysis credited as 'enabling a look beyond figures'.

Contact Bernadette Lawson on 8532 1432, 0429 674 428 or bernadette.lawson@samdbnrm.sa.gov.au for further information.

Upcoming Events

Murray Mallee Local Action Planning Association AGM

Sunday 10th October 2010

11.00 a.m. at Saunders Gorge Sanctuary

Bus tour of Marne Valley after meeting.

Past funding recipients encouraged to show their support.

Contact Rowena Danks

Phone: 8531 2066

Email: mmlap@internode.on.net

2010 Mallee Sustainable Farming Inc.

Waikerie Field Day

Tuesday 7th September 2010

Contact Kathryn Kenny

Phone: 03 5021 9100

Email: kathryn.kenny@msfp.org.au

Murray & Mallee Carbon Forum

Murray & Mallee Carbon Forum

Town Hall, Bridge Street, Murray Bridge SA

Thursday 19th August 2010: 9.00am - 4.00pm

Now is the time to understand the multiple benefits of carbon plantings, the emerging carbon economy and how you might participate.

Murray & Mallee Carbon Forum brings specialist speakers to answer the many questions which regional landowners are asking.

Make The Most Of This Opportunity At No Cost To You Register Now!

Regional Development Australia- Murraylands & Riverland Inc.

Murray Bridge SA 5253

phone: 08 8535 7170

email: information@rdamurraylands.org.au

RSVP: 8th August 2010

Free Upcoming Field Trips

Seats are available for a bus trip on the 16th and 17th of September to the Morchard Field Day and to look at several innovative cropping and grazing enterprises.

A bus trip in October will be taking participants in the Mallee Mentors Program to look at innovative producers on the Eyre Peninsula and the Minnipa Research Station. Registrations are still open for the program which also includes free financial risk management workshops.

To register contact us on 8531 3075, 8531 2066 or george.king@internode.on.net

MMLAP Committee Membership

Rod Brown (Chairperson/ Public Officer)
Lameroo ph: 8577 4033

Damian Berger (Vice Chairperson)
Karoonda ph: 8578 6066

Chris Grant, (Secretary)
Berri ph: 8595 2174

Rex Spinley (Treasurer)
Para Hills ph: 8265 0522

Neville Pfeiffer
Parrakie ph: 8576 2051

Andrew Hall
Wunkar ph: 8589 7029

Trevor Schiller
Waikerie ph: 8541 9096

Malcolm Johns
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Adrian Growden
Karoonda ph: 8578 1057

Lew Westbrook
Loxton ph: 8584 7811

Leighton Pearce, SA MDB NRM Board
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