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Yass Area Network Landcare Newsletter

Spring 2010

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"A healthy & productive Murrumbidgee catchment and its communities working together – Yindymarra"

Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority

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Murrumbateman Field Days—a big success



Photo by Melinda Johnson

Yass Landcare Network (YAN) contributed a great display and lots of volunteers to the Landcare/Murrumbidgee CMA tent at the 2010 Murrumbateman Field Days.



Photo by Melinda Johnson

Taylor's Creek, Gearys Gap/Wamboin both had great plant displays. Taylor's Creek challenged landholders to identify different native grasses, and Gearys Gap/Wamboin put on a great potting and cutting display and Murrumbateman showed serrated tussock alongside similar native species.

A good turn out despite the weather

Although the weather was inclement, it snowed for the first time ever at the 2010 Murrumbateman Field Days on the Saturday and in places the mud was two inches thick.

The Landcare/Murrumbidgee CMA tent was well received with approximately 600 visitors over the two days.

Landholders were able to access a variety of information, talk to Landcarers and CMA staff and obtain some good ideas to take back to their own properties. Many also took the opportunity to join their local Landcare group.

Photo right: John Franklin, Catchment Coordinator, Murrumbidgee CMA, discusses property plans with a landholder at the 2010 Murrumbateman Field days.



Photo by Matt de Jongh

www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au

Let us know...

If you are interested in receiving regular updates about field days, training courses, funding opportunities or Landcare Activities via email, please send a request email to:

Melinda.johnson@cma.nsw.gov.au

Event coming up? Something worth sharing? NRM issue your passionate about? Let us know... contact:

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Indian Myna Traps

The plans for the Indian Myna bird trap were very popular at the Murrumbateman Field Days, so if you missed out on a copy you can download them online from the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group (CIMAG) website:

www.indianmynaaction.org.au

Please note that these traps are not for commercial use and are not to be built and sold without approval from the original designer of the trap. Details can be found on the CIMAG website along with instructions on how to use the cage and humane euthanasia of the Indian Mynas.



This newsletter is a partnership between Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups and Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority



Spotlight on Taylors Creek Landcare Group "Willeroo" farm visit

Submitted by: Joan Limon, Taylors Creek Landcare Group

This was the second in a series of farm visits to update our knowledge of Taylors Creek and Allianoyonyiga Creek catchments. We plan to monitor work already done as part of Landcare projects earlier in the decade. The Group has, as its baseline, the 2002 publication prepared for our group entitled "Overview of the Taylors Creek and Allianoyonyiga Catchments" which provides the initial stock take of the catchments' biophysical and land management attributes. Now, eight years on, after the intervening years of disheartening drought, we are undertaking another stock take by returning to the original properties surveyed as well as visiting new ones.

On a cold winter's afternoon on Sunday, the 18th of July, a group of ten enthusiastic people were treated to a tour of 6 sites of environmental interest on "Willeroo" on the Collector Road. George and Erica Gundry led our convoy across this large property which was settled by members of George's family in 1894. George is a qualified educator in the field of holistic management and "Willeroo" is managed according to these principles.

The first site, a Brittle Gum woodland (*Eucalyptus rossii* or *manifera*) past the woolshed, was fenced off from stock in 1984. George was concerned that regeneration was slow. We saw evidence of quite a lot of eucalyptus regeneration, though most of these trees seemed to be much the same age and quite small. There was some discussion on the merits of grazing or not grazing stock under the eucalypts. Some grazing is obviously occurring, from the many kangaroos that visit this woodland. Besides the eucalypts there was strong growth of various grasses such as Kangaroo, Wallaby and Spear Grass, and many forbs to investigate.

We were excited to see circles of bright yellow, tiny button fungi, obviously brought up by the good rain of the last couple of months. I even spotted a larger yellow button fungi growing on a cow pat!

The second site, further towards the eastern boundary, was of historical interest. In the early days of settlement water was piped from a spring-fed waterhole here by small lengths (about 30cm) of clay piping, all the way to the homestead – about 3 km! Today only one or two lengths of these pipes remain. It would have taken a huge effort to lay this piping all that way.

From there we were taken to a spot where we had magnificent views of the whole property, looking west towards the Lake. Erica said this was a favourite picnic spot for the family – well, the picnics were held just behind the hill where there was some shelter from the wind!! From this hill it was clear to see the amount of work carried out by George and Erica since the mid 1980's in planting inter-connecting tree lines. Behind this hill, towards the east, is the thickly wooded ridgeline where koalas and other fauna once lived. As far as I know, no koalas have been seen here for decades. Early on in the 1900's these now beloved Australian animals were killed off for their pelts and also for dog food, fragmenting and isolating populations until they could no longer survive.

Lake George in August 2010 Photo- by Erica Gundry



LAKE GEORGE

With the great rainfall over winter it is wonderful to see water is gradually covering the Lake basin. The Lake is back! Many hundreds of water birds have returned with a recent survey by Michael Lenz from the Canberra Ornithologist Group identifying hundreds of Green Teal Ducks, swans, a Royal Spoonbill, Mountain Ducks, Banded Lapwings and Australian Grebes. Let's hope this water remains for a long time and doesn't disappear in a few months as happened last year. Water is now oozing out of the ground and farmers are getting bogged – a novel experience to be sure!



Myna Trap photo by Melinda Johnson

Serrated Tussock



From Edition 2 of the Tussock Talk newsletter

Serrated Tussock Control is listed as one of the conservation works eligible for funding under the Rural Assistance Authority's Special Conservation Scheme.

Serrated Tussock seeds can be spread large distances by wind, vehicles, animals, people and water.

Serrated Tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*) seed banks can decline quickly if land managers stop serrated tussock seeding—from mid August use glyphosate to prevent seeding. Bioactive round up is suitable for situations where tussock plants are close to water or in waterways.

Check the label for appropriate application rates.

Serrated tussock has already invaded many of south-eastern Australia's most endangered grassland remnants and its presence is a serious threat to the native flora and fauna of these grasslands.

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority can provide funding for works that will have a significant beneficial impact on the land, local community and the environment. The funding is in the form of a loan and more details and application forms are available from the NSW Rural Assistance Authority on phone: 02 6391 3000, Toll Free: 1800 678 593, website: www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Sign up for the Tussock Talk newsletter

The Tussock Talk newsletter is written by the Serrated Tussock Working Party for NSW and ACT. Join the mailing list by sending an email to: clare.hamilton@midwestern.nsw.gov.au with 'Subscribe to Tussock Talk' in the subject line.

Murrumbateman Landcare Myna Trap

The Murrumbateman Landcare Myna Trapping program was of great interest to many landholders, although many junior landholders seemed a bit disappointed that the trap was empty! See back page for details of trap plans.

Yass Area Network AGM

The YAN AGM will be held on **Thursday, 9 December 2010** at the Grazing Restaurant, Gundaroo, commencing at 7pm. At the completion of the AGM (approx 30-45 minutes) the YAN Christmas party will begin.

The current President of YAN, Greg Northover, has made clear his intention to step down from the President's position at the AGM. Nominations are required for the position of President, so if you would like to nominate please let Greg know.

Any Landcare group that would like to add an item to the agenda please contact Greg Northover. Also, if you would like to combine your Landcare Group's Christmas party with YAN's you are most welcome.

The cost is \$50 per person, payable on the night to Grazing, (drinks not included). Please RSVP to Melinda Johnson by Friday, 3 December 2010 so that numbers can be finalised.

RSVP's can be sent to Melinda.johnson@cma.nsw.gov.au or telephone: 02 6118 6013, mobile: 0427 938 125.

Note: Nominations for the John Betts Memorial Landcare Award are still open. If your group has a member who you think has been going above and beyond for the Landcare cause, please nominate them today. Nominations can be made directly to Greg Northover on greg.northover@harboursat.com.au. Nominations close on Friday, 3 December 2010.

Dates for your diary

2010 International Year of Biodiversity

December

3: RSVP for YAN dinner closes today

5: World Soil Day

9: YAN AGM and Christmas Party at 'Grazing' Gundaroo 7pm start

January

2011 International Year of Forests

Yass CMA office will be closed from midday Friday, 24 December 2010 – 9am Monday, 10 January 2011.