



LBLAP news

Autumn 2010

Loxton to Bookpurnong Local Action Planning Committee Inc

Launch of the upgraded Bookpurnong to Lock 4 Land & Water Management Plan

After much huffing and puffing, a multitude of meetings, reviews and re-reviews with and without consultants (*Australian Water Environments [AWE]*), the upgraded BL4 LWMP was finally released to the public Friday 5 March 2010.

The public launch was scheduled to be released by the then Minister for the River Murray, Karlene Maywald, and was preceded by an hour or so of an informal, open discussion “shed meeting” with the Minister and the Committee.

Unfortunately, the Minister was called away immediately prior to the actual

public launch for family reasons, but her place was taken (*with 5 minutes notice*) by BL4EA Chair, Jason Size and Jeremy Nelson of the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board. *Quite appropriate as both have an intimate knowledge of the Plan and have been closely associated with its development for a number of years.*

Jeremy, who (*as those who know him can attest*) can be stuck for words occasionally, came through with flying colours, as did Jason.

Going forward with the Plan, one stumbling block will be finding the funds to implement the Plan, as

many sources previously available, seem to have dried up.

There was a great gathering of local community for the occasion, as well as representatives from SA MDB NRM Board, DWLBC, AWE and Rural Solutions.

The official proceedings concluded with a BBQ on the brand new facilities under the newly constructed shelter at Lock 4. Fantastic weather, good food and great company. A most enjoyable evening was had by all, climbing kids included.

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Jason and Jeremy deliver the good news

Bridal Creeper



Bridal creeper produces bright red berries, which are eaten by birds and foxes, enabling it to be spread over long distances.

Photo: Colin G. Wilson—

www.weeds.gov.au

“...capable of smothering native ground plants and small shrubs.”

What is it?

Bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) is one of Southern Australia’s worst weeds, recognised as such with its declaration as a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, and economic and environmental impacts. It has small glossy green leaves and grows as a twining ground cover or climber over vegetation. It grows from tubers under the ground and shoots from these tubers in autumn and dies off again over summer.

Why is it a problem?

It is very aggressive and highly invasive in bushland, capable of smothering native ground plants and small shrubs. It forms a thick tuberous root mass, which inhibits growth of other plants and prevents new plants establishing. Berries are readily consumed by birds and foxes enabling rapid dispersal of seeds. Bridal creeper invades a wide variety of environments including coastal areas, heath land, woodland, Mallee scrub land, orchards and pine plantations. It can tolerate a wide range of soil and climatic conditions and, unlike many other weeds, it can readily establish in undisturbed areas. Its foliage dies off in summer due to lack of water, but tuber reserves enable it to survive drought conditions.

Where is it found?

Bridal Creeper is wide spread throughout southern Australia’s temperate

regions.

It can be found in a range of environments within the Murray Mallee, most commonly within roadside vegetation and other vegetated areas. It initially occurs under trees where birds have spread it through seeds in their droppings.

What can be done about it?

There are a range of options to control bridal creeper. Small infestations can be dug up by hand ensuring all the tubers are removed. For larger infestations, herbicides may be used but their effectiveness is varied. Refer to your local NRM officer for further information about the use of herbicides for bridal creeper control.

There are two main bio-controls for Bridal Creeper, a leaf hopper and a rust fungus. These have proved very successful over time at controlling bridal creeper by reducing how vigorously the plant grows and can also reduce seed set.

How Does the Rust Fungus Work?

Application of Bridal Creeper Spore Water

Complicated equipment is not needed; to spread rust fungus (*Puccinia myrsiphylli*) spore water on bridal creeper, some simple everyday articles from around the shed can be utilised.

Ensure that this equipment has **not been used for other chemicals, especially fungicides**, as the

bridal creeper rust is a fungus and will be destroyed.

To make spore water:

- Collect mature bridal creeper rust fungus from infected bridal creeper into plastic bags. It can be identified on bridal creeper as rusty brown spots and is usually evident from mid winter.
- Use a clean container to wash the bridal creeper to remove the spores. *Gentle agitation by hand is sufficient for the spores to be removed from the plant.*
- The water will turn the colour of weak tea. *This brown stain is the rust fungus spores.*
- Strain into a clean container using a coarse sieve to remove the leaves, etc...
- If a spray unit is used, it must have the sieves removed and have large aperture nozzles.
- A watering can is ideal as products with fine holes will become blocked.
- Agitate the spore water occasionally as the spores tend to settle.
- Importantly, choose a **damp day** to spread the spore water.

Spray or pour the spore water onto bridal creeper, targeting the thickest parts first.

Further information

contact the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resource Management Board’s NRM Officers at Wade Street BERRI or 08 8582 4477.

Yatco Matters

Pump Relocation

A final decision on the Murray Futures funding to relocate the irrigation pumps from the Yatco floodplain to the main river, is still pending.

Whilst signals out of Canberra have been positive of late, we still do not have the final word.

However, hope springs eternal, all good things comes to those who wait, patience is a virtue, etc etc.



Spiny Rush Control

Contractors have now completed the spray program (*including follow up*) that was funded under SA Government's 'State

Community Natural Resources Management Grants'. This was a \$18,000 program and was undertaken by land as well as water.

Training will be accredited and will also include the possibility of Chemcert training or reaccreditation

Weed Education for Volunteers

This DWLBC project with partners including the SAMDBNRM Board and the Riverland LAPs, is moving along nicely.

The contract to draw up an Operational Plan has been let to Rural Solutions and the contract to develop a Training Package for the project '*Building community capacity to control high threat weeds*

in SA MDB' has been put out to tender.

This \$350,000, three year project, aims to have trained people who are out and about in their own areas of interest (*wetland, National Park etc*) who will be able to recognise existing weeds as well as new and emerging weeds. They'll be able to map the weeds' locations into a da-

tabase usable by Authorised Officers and they'll also know the best way to deal with them and the best time of year to do it.

Training will be accredited and will also include the possibility of Chemcert training or reaccreditation.

I'll keep you posted.

Poor Quality of Water Supply at Lock 4

The Bookpurnong Lock 4 Environmental Association has been trying for some time now to address the issue of the increasingly degraded quality of the water in the Ajax Achilles wetland.

There are around 20 households drawing water from there for domestic purposes as well as three irrigators.

The issue has arisen in the

past and has been caused by the build up of silt at the inlet, outlet and between lagoon connector. It's been rectified in the past by dredging of those sections of the lagoon.

However, an application to repeat those dredgings has been rejected because of objections raised by DEH and DWLBC, on the grounds that the site is a major White

Ibis rookery, one of the few remaining on a permanent wetland.

BL4EA members have no desire to impact detrimentally on the rookery, but remain very concerned about the potential health risk that the poor water quality poses to households.

They continue to investigate other options.

Aquaponics – A Possibility for the Riverland??

You'll possibly recall a Riverland Futures workshop that was held last year at the Moorook Club, where, among other things, aquaponics and a specific system of synergetic aquaculture/hydroponics was discussed and explained.

It generated considerable interest and that in turn has lead to the probability of a number of participants getting involved with the system designer, Andrew Dezsery, as part of a Caring for Our Country (CfOC) Funding application to set up some trial sites here in the Riverland.

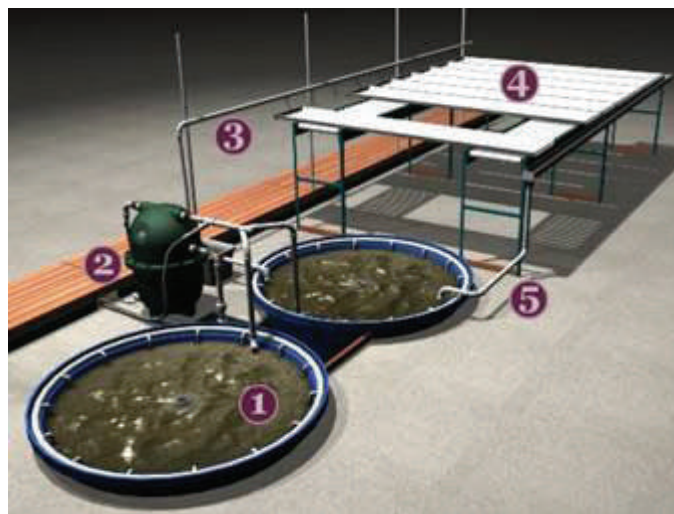
As growers look around for other options because of poor commodity prices, it pays to keep an open mind on all options.

Jeremy Nelson (SAMDBNRM Board) is coordinating the growers. He's aiming for six all up.

The picture above indicates
 1: the main fish cultivation tanks
 2: the main pumping and filtration assembly
 3: the delivery line
 4: the hydroponic production beds

5: the scavenged water return line back to the fish tanks.

the six systems combined with Andrew's training packages to



The total size of this system in floor area is probably around 20 m², with some shading being required to cover the veggies and fish. So existing shedding or shadehousing may be an advantage, but small scale infrastructure can be installed as part of the project.

As you may or may not be aware, CfOC is specifically looking for further works to be developed under the auspices of Aquaculture. If successful, the project will see the establishment and running of

hopefully culminate in some of the first coordinated fish and vegetable production facilities in the Riverland. Obviously, the intent is to finance through CfOC, the establishment and running of the systems PLUS the mentoring and training surrounding the systems in the first 2 years of the project.

Training will be provided by Andrew as a certified trainer and assessor utilizing his own training packages that he has offered through the WEA system.

Complimentary systems of aquaculture and hydroponics. The waste byproduct from each system is utilized by the other system

Seeking Your Riverland Family Stories

As part of a Murray campaign, Conservation SA are putting together a book of hand-written River Murray memories and messages. They will be presenting the finished product, *Our River*, to Premier Rann (and possibly to pollies further up-stream).

This is part of their advocacy work, pushing the State Government to commit to buying permanent water entitlements of 150 GL to ensure the health of the Murray, Lower Lakes and Coorong

until such time as the Murray Darling Basin Plan starts really solving the river system's problems.

To create *Our River*, CSA are asking people to use a particular page (downloadable from their website) to write or draw a message expressing how they feel about the Murray, Lower Lakes and Coorong. The premise is that the Murray is part of the South Australian soul and weaves its way through the lives and memories of so many of us.

CSA want the people, through *Our River*, to remind the government just how precious the river system is to us South Aussies . CSA want the book to be as diverse and representative as possible, and they encourage people to write whatever they want, be it a political message, a story from their memory, a poem or a picture.

See www.conservation.sa.gov.au/our-river.html

Release of Naturelinks Plans

The Department for Environment and Heritage recently released five Naturelinks Plans including the *River Murray-South East NatureLink Plan*.

NatureLinks is an ambitious, landscape-scale approach to conserve the unique plants and animals of South Australia. Landscape-scale conservation is rapidly becoming the dominant approach for responding to the challenges of biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods and climate change throughout the world.

NatureLinks aims to manage and restore large areas of habitat within five broad biodiversity corridors: River Murray-

South East, Arid Lands, Cape Borda to Barossa and Flinders-Olary. This approach builds on existing conservation programs and protected areas by coordinating conservation efforts across private and public land.

The NatureLinks Plans provide a long term vision for a landscape that will sustain people, industry, culture, plants and animals through healthy ecosystems. The plans provide a starting point for government organisations, non-government organisations and the community to work together to secure a sustainable future for South Australia.

Approaching conservation on such a large scale

will take time, but will provide the best opportunity for our native species to survive and adapt to environmental change. The Department for Environment and Heritage would like to invite all South Australians to share in this ambitious vision.

For more information visit www.naturelinks.sa.gov.au

Copies of the *River Murray-South East NatureLink Plan* are available from the Department for Environment and Heritage Murraylands Office in Berri or phone 8595 2111.

**NatureLinks
Plans provide a
long term vision
for a landscape**

Photos courtesy Naturelinks website



Biocontrol Nursery at Your Home????

SARDI is working with regional NRM boards in SA and organisations in other states to expand the national distribution of biocontrol agents for the control of gorse, blackberry, Cape (Montpellier) broom, English (Scotch) broom and boneseed. One of the main aims of the project is to increase

community involvement in biological control programs. As part of this aim SARDI is encouraging the establishment of community biocontrol nurseries using potted weeds as hosts, and the first target is boneseed. If you are interested in establishing a biocontrol nursery, please contact

Susan Ivory on 8303 9672 or via email susan.ivory2@sa.gov.au or contact the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board 8482 4477.



**Adult Bridal Creeper Leafhopper —
Photo courtesy DPI Vic**



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Covering 155,000 hectares to the south of the River Murray, the LBLAP area includes six irrigation areas - Kingston-on-Murray / Lock 3, Moorook, New Residence, Pyap, Loxton, and Bookpurnong / Lock 4 - some dry land located within the Loxton/Waikerie District Council boundary, and fifteen wetlands, including Katarapko Island, Yatco, Ajax Achilles, Pyap and Gurra Gurra Lakes .

The main areas of focus of LBLAP are:

- ◆ Irrigation and Drainage
- ◆ Flora and Fauna Conservation
- ◆ Climate Change
- ◆ Community Education Development and Awareness
- ◆ Wetland and Floodplains
- ◆ Water Quality
- ◆ Recreational.

If you have an interest in any of these areas or have any ideas for local projects that you believe should be undertaken in these areas, please contact our Office.

Membership of LBLAP is **FREE** and you can be as hands-on as you choose. If you know of someone who:

- ◆ would like to get involved with some monitoring - *friendships - afternoon in the outdoors*
 - ◆ maybe has some ideas for the local environment
 - ◆ would like to get involved at Management Committee level, or
 - ◆ would simply like to be kept up to date with LBLAP activities
- please pass this newsletter on to them or ask them to get in touch with LBLAP.

If you've received this Newsletter via email, please feel free to pass it on to others. *If you'd prefer to receive future Newsletters by email, please let us know.* If republishing an article from this Newsletter, please acknowledge the source.

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- ◆ SA MDB NRM Board
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- ◆ Department Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
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- ◆ Dept of Primary Industries and Resources of South Australia
- ◆ Central Irrigation Trust
- ◆ Department of Environment & Heritage
- ◆ SA Water
- ◆ CARE Team
- ◆ Yatco Wetland Landcare Group
- ◆ Bookpurnong Lock 4 Environmental Association
- ◆ Pyap to Kingston Land & Water Management Planning C'tee

