

# Gooram Valley Landcare Group Newsletter

## November 2014

Gooram Valley Landcare website: [gooramvalley.org.au](http://gooramvalley.org.au)

### Gooram Valley Landcare Group Contact List:

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### Annual General Meeting 2014:

The Gooram Valley Landcare Group AGM was held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of September. Rob Colvin was elected as Chairperson, Andrew Douglas Vice Chair and Charlie Brydon Treasurer. Rowena Stubbe will continue as the Secretary.

### Rabbits on Roadsides:

As you will know from previous newsletters, Strathbogie Shire received a State Government grant of \$150 000 (to be spent over three years) to treat pest plants and animals on shire roadsides. In our shire the work is supervised by each landcare group and administered by the Strathbogie Shire. So far the work has been extremely effective in treating weeds on our roadsides.

This is the third (and final) year of that funding. **There is to be a focus on rabbits on roadsides this season. If you know of rabbits on the roadside near your property, please locate the burrows and contact Bethany (phone number/email as above) stating the road name and approximate location of the burrows.**

Would you ensure that your report is made by **Monday December 15<sup>th</sup>**. The contractor will fumigate the burrows as soon as possible after that. A message will be sent out to our members when the work is to be done.

To ensure this work is effective it is critical that the adjacent landholder supports the work by completing their rabbit control programs at the same time. In addition, if a burrow on the roadside has holes over the fence on the adjoining private land, it is essential that these holes be treated at the same time. **We ask that you give approval** for this to occur when you make your report. Alternatively, **the contractor may contact you to seek your approval**, if roadside burrows are found to have holes within your property.

## **Weeds on Roadsides:**

Over the past two years all roads in the Gooram Valley Landcare Group area have been treated for Blackberry, St. Johns Wort, Briar, Bridal Creeper, Horehound and Cape Broom. The work has been highly effective. However, some (like St. John's Wort) are more difficult to eliminate because the plants are harder to see at the time when treatment is most effective and because the extent of each infestation is difficult to see. Some roads may have been inadvertently overlooked – for instance there was a huge infestation of Bridal Creeper on Golf Course Road that was only recently detected and treated. **Please report any weeds you see on our roadsides to Bethany ASAP.**

## **Prairie Ground Cherry and Inkweed:**

Prairie Ground Cherry and Inkweed are relatively new weeds to Gooram. Each is very invasive. While Inkweed is relatively easy to control, Prairie Ground Cherry is much harder to eradicate once it is established. Over the past several years both weeds have been identified at a small number of locations (some of which have been on roadsides). Since then it has become evident that **these weeds are much more widespread than previously thought**. Often landholders have not known what the weeds look like and hence did not realise what to look for. Photos of both weeds will be available (ASAP) on the Gooram Valley Landcare website. If you know of the location of either of these weeds please contact Bethany immediately so they can be eradicated. If you are not sure whether the plant is a weed contact Bethany to have an identification made and an action plan discussed.

## **The Gooram Valley Website**

The Gooram Valley Landcare Group has registered a website (web address above). The website is in the process of being developed but it is still in its infancy. It is intended to be a major method for the group to make information available to our landholders, members and beyond. Not everybody has access to computer technology so newsletters will continue to be sent to landholders for whom email addresses are not known. The website also includes a link to the Gooram Valley Fire Brigade.

Your suggestions of what other information might be included will be appreciated. Please contact Rob.

## **Gooram Falls Reserve**

See the Gooram Valley website for the detail of what has been achieved to date. This work is being done in conjunction with Parks Victoria.

**P.T.O.**

## **Rabbit Control 2014 - 15**

**Rabbit numbers ARE very visibly on the increase. Please contact Bethany** if you need any advice or if you need to use one of the group's baitlayers. We have a small baitlayer. It can be used to lay either oats or carrot baits and is designed for use behind a four-wheeled motorbike as well as a tractor or ute. A trailer is provided to transport it from property to property. The large baitlayer is also available if that suits your needs better.

## **Ripping Rabbit Burrows – 50% subsidy**

**As is clearly evident from years of experience rabbit control depends upon an integrated approach where a range of control methods is used in conjunction with each other. Ripping using heavy equipment is an essential tool in this process and unless done (and done properly) the effectiveness of all other work is very quickly undone.**

**Money is still available from the 2013-14 funding period for ripping of rabbit burrows. This must be spent before the next round of funding (already approved) can be accessed by Gooram Valley. If you have any burrows on your property now – even if they look inactive and you cannot see rabbits - it can be guaranteed that with the increasing number of rabbits, you too will soon have a rabbit problem! 50% of the cost will be reimbursed.** To be eligible for subsidy operators whose work has been approved must do the ripping.

If you need to rip, would like advice or you are not sure whether there is a problem on your property, please contact Bethany ASAP. To be eligible for the subsidy you must register your needs with Bethany prior to the ripping being started.

## **Rabbit Compliance Program**

The Rabbit Compliance Program for 2013-14 in the area bounded by Euroa-Mansfield Road, Wilkinsons Lane, Creightons Creek Road and the Longwood-Mansfield Road has been completed. The response by landholders has been positive but a small number of landholders were given notice of their need to complete work – in particular, ripping.

This program is an excellent example of how DEPI is working to support us to achieve our goals of pest plant and animal control. The Compliance Program for 2014-15 has been budgeted for and planned – the area on which it is to be done has not yet been decided.

## **Gooram Valley Special Project**

Four landholders have begun work as a result of the advertisement placed in the Euroa Gazette (Feb 19<sup>th</sup>) calling for expressions of interest in landcare projects in the Gooram Valley Landcare area.

## **New Landholders – keeping in touch**

Keeping the contact lists up to date is always challenging. If you know of somebody who does not get the newsletter, or is new to the district, would you advise them of the existence of Gooram Landcare Group and encourage them to contact Bethany. This way we can ensure everybody is kept informed.