

Gooram Valley Newsletter

March 2014

Gooram Valley Landcare Group Contact List:

Chairperson:	Neil Devanny	Phone:	5795 2849
		email:	devannyneil@activ8.net.au
		Postal:	992 Longwood-Mansfield Rd. Gooram. 3666
Secretary:	Rowena Stubbe	Phone:	5790 3330
Treasurer:	Robert Colvin		
Facilitator:	Bethany Devanny	Phone:	5795 2849
		email;	devannyneil@activ8.net.au

Rabbit Control Program:

Poisoning

To be most effective, rabbit control must involve an integrated approach; first, the reduction of numbers by poisoning, second, the destruction of harbour by ripping burrows (guided by a 'spotter' who strategically leads the operator to burrows that have been located prior to ripping) and finally with regular monitoring of ripped areas to ensure that no burrows have been re-opened.

It is intended that the co-ordinated ripping program will start early in April. Landholders are asked to have rabbit populations reduced by then so ripping can follow. The cost of ripping will be reduced by co-ordinating the movement of the excavator from property to property.

Landholders are asked to organise their own poisoning. If you are poisoning and hold the necessary licence (ACUP) you may wish to use commercially available 1080 baits ... if you do not hold an ACUP, pindone based products are available.

Please contact Bethany if you need any advice or if you need to use one of the group's baitlayers. We have had a small baitlayer built. 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 – 50% subsidy – but a change in process is required

Given the advice provided to the Granite Creeks Project Management Committee, the landholder will need to pay the full 'up-front cost' to the approved contracting business, and on submitting evidence of this payment, 50% of the cost will be reimbursed. If you need to rip, please contact Bethany. To be eligible for the subsidy you must register your needs with Bethany prior to the ripping being started.

P.T.O.

Rabbit Compliance Program

The current Rabbit Compliance Program (as organised by DEPI field officers) is in the area bounded by Euroa-Mansfield Road, Wilkinsons Lane, Creightons Creek Road and the Longwood-Mansfield Road. If you are a landholder within this area you will be contacted by a DEPI Field Officer to inspect your property for rabbits. This program is an excellent example of how DEPI is working to support us to achieve our goals of pest plant and animal control. Most involved landholders will have received the letter notifying them of the program.

The DEPI officers will be making contact with some landholders from previous compliance programs as well. This is part of an audit of the effectiveness of the previous programs.

Inkweed

It is very important that we continue to map the places where the weed is, or has occurred. Evidence is that it continues to be spreading rapidly. Like blackberry, it provides significant rabbit harbour as well as reducing the agricultural and aesthetic values of your land. Our concern about the extent to which the spread of inkweed is increasing was raised and noted at a recent meeting with management of the Goulburn Broken CMA.

Roadside Weed Control

Strathbogie Shire received a grant of \$150 000 (to be spent over three years) to treat pest plants on shire roadsides. This is the second year of the program. At this stage, the contractor has treated only Killeens Hill Road. Other shire roads will be treated when the weather is more suitable to doing so. The priority weed is blackberry, but other weeds such as St. Johns Wort, briar, bridal creeper, horehound and prairie ground cherry will be treated.

Prairie ground cherry is a new weed to Gooram. It is very invasive and hard to eradicate once established. Over the past several years it has been identified at five locations (2 of which have been on roadsides). In each instance it has required repeated treatments. If you know of the location of this weed please contact Bethany immediately so it can be eradicated.

Feral Goats

The number of feral goats in Gooram is continuing to rise. It is well known that goats carry worms and footrot from property to property as well as damage native vegetation and pasture. The issue has also been raised in meetings with CMA and DEPI staff so that we can begin to address the 'goat problem'.

Gooram Valley Special Project

An advertisement was recently placed in the Euroa Gazette (Feb 19th) calling for expressions of interest in applying for support for a range of landcare projects from landholders in the Gooram Valley Landcare area. It referred people to the website www.gooramvalley.org.au. A number of people have reported having difficulty in accessing the site. If you wish to register interest and cannot access the site, please contact Bethany or Rowena on the numbers provided above.