

NLP Funding for WoNS Gets Results!

The National Landcare Programme (NLP) investments by South West NRM are having an impact as part of our war on regional weeds and pests. Our Ecosystems Services sub-project allows land managers and community groups to apply for support funding to tackle localised issues of containing pest and weeds which are impacting on matters of national significance within our region and catchments.

Through the last community grant round, over 15 land managers and Landcare groups received funding to tackle weed challenges, specifically weeds of national significance (WoNS). South West NRM field staff have conducted four progress visits to funding recipients thus far, and will be undertaking further site visits to all devolved grant recipients over the coming months. During these site inspections, land managers and South West NRM staff have been working together to undertake Fulcrum phone app mapping of the project areas to assist with tracking change over time. Data uploads of pest and weed control works can be found at:

<http://www.southwestnrm.org.au/content/fulcrum-data-maps>.



Above: Kevin Collins of South West NRM with Scott Sewell of Gundare inspecting *Opuntia* (cacti) and Mother of Millions works.

At Thurlby, west of Charleville, infestations of harrisia cactus, coral cacti and mother of millions have been identified along the Ward River floodplain, and spot spraying is in progress on isolated WoNS sites during routine property maintenance.

All NLP community grant recipients also contribute to their project - in the form of labour, diesel, setting up monitoring and implementing ongoing control works to ensure that the threat WoNS pose to the environmental and agricultural assets of the area are reduced and contained.

The initial results at Gundare north of Charleville are promising, with owners Scott and Tracey Sewell undertaking many days of field spraying with a 400L spray unit for the more accessible areas, and backpack sprayers in areas that were difficult to access. Their actions will reduce the impact that invasive weeds have on the upper Warrego Catchment area, specifically Yo Yo Creek.



Above: Josh McLeod, manager of Thurlby, undertakes Mother of Millions control along the Ward River riparian zone.

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NLP Funding for WoNS Gets Results! Continued...

Another WoNS weed targeted under NLP funding is Parkinsonia (*Parkinsonia aculeate*). Parkinsonia is native to the semi desert regions of Africa and the Americas, and is considered one of the worst weeds to be introduced into Australia because of its invasiveness, potential to spread, and its negative economic and environmental impacts. When left untreated, Parkinsonia displaces native vegetation, growing in dense thickets causing erosion, blocking water courses and lowering the water table in shallow riparian alluviums. The agricultural costs to land managers are numerous, with reduced access to water points, displacement of native perennial grass species, and increased difficulties in mustering stock.

Parkinsonia can grow up to 8m tall, and a mature tree can produce in excess of 5000 seeds per year. Since its introduction into Australia in the late 1800's as an ornamental tree, Parkinsonia now infests over 800,000ha of the rangelands of Australia. Parkinsonia is listed as a declared Class Two weed, and consequently, land managers and local council have a responsibility to take proactive measures to control Parkinsonia under the Stock Route and Protection Act 2002.

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Did you know?

- **Mother of Millions** (*Bryophyllum delagoense*) is a succulent native to Madagascar. It is one of the most common invasive weeds found in the riparian zone, and in all four catchments of the South West NRM region. It is well suited to our dry arid environment and can survive long periods of drought.
- Mother of millions (MOM) reproduces rapidly, producing hundreds, if not thousands, of tiny plantlets that quickly form new core infestations, if left untreated (see picture on right).
- MOM is toxic when ingested by livestock - it is also poisonous to humans and household pets.
- All parts of the plant are poisonous (due to the chemical compound *bufadienolides*, which can cause heart failure). These toxins are present in all parts of the plant, however, the flowers can be up to five times more toxic than the leaves or stems.
- Eating 5kg of MOM can kill an adult cow - there can be in excess of 5kg of vegetative matter in one square metre of a core infestation of MOM.
- MOM is classified as a Class Two weed under the Qld Stock Route and Protection Act 2002: land managers must therefore take reasonable steps to control and contain any infestations that they may have on their property.
- For more information about MOM or the support available to land managers and Landcare groups in addressing weed threats, contact your local council, Biosecurity QLD or South West NRM.
- Further information concerning MOM can also be found at these sources:
 - <http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/93>
 - https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/61461/IPA-Mother-Millions-PP33.pdf
 - <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/agriculture/species/declared-pests/weeds/mother-of-millions>



Parkinsonia is expensive to control, requiring herbicides such as Access or Grazon, which is mixed with diesel at a rate of 1:50 and applied as a basal bark spray. Given the expense, it is essential that preventative actions are taken early on when the seedlings are small otherwise the control of a core infestation can be financially crippling.

Through the last NLP community grant round, *Halbrook* (located in the Bulloo Catchment between Toompine and Thargomindah), jointly owned by Andrew and Michael Hall, received grant funding to address WoNS weeds including Parkinsonia and some rubber vine infestations.

Halbrook's grant funded the purchase of herbicide, marking dye and personal protective equipment. Andrew Hall is trained in the use of Fulcrum and is using it to map core infestations of WoNS within the project area. By containing, and hopefully eradicating, WoNS in the project area there will be less opportunity of the WoNS spreading further downstream and impacting on the Bulloo Lakes system which is listed as a High Ecological Value Aquatic Ecosystem (HEVAE) at a national level.

Andrew is also a member of the QLD Weed Spotters Network through the Queensland Herbarium. More community members are encouraged to apply to get involved with the Weed Spotters network at the following link:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/weed-spotters/>

For on ground mapping of the NLP project areas please refer to the South West NRM live data collation page at <http://www.southwestnrm.org.au/content/fulcrum-data-maps>.

Further information on Parkinsonia can be found at the following websites:

- <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/agriculture/species/declared-pests/weeds/parkinsonia>
- <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/Parkinsonia/>



Left: A young and healthy Parkinsonia seedling about to be treated at Halbrook in the Bulloo Catchment.

Right: A semi mature Parkinsonia tree, also at Halbrook, which is setting seed. This tree has been treated with herbicide mixed with diesel using the basal spray process (whereby the entire circumference of the tree trunk is sprayed from ground level up to a height of approximately 30cm).

