

Building community capacity for improved and sustainable NRM in the Riverland West Area 2014-2017

That's what we set out to do and I believe we are on track to achieving this goal by the end of the current program and beyond. The money received through this funding has enabled the continued employment of one Project Officer and a part-time administration assistant.

Together with a committee of ten dedicated volunteers, Riverland West Landcare (RWL) aims to provide the local community with as many opportunities to be involved with natural resource management as possible.

During the past year, this has included working closely with our primary schools, supporting them to achieve their environmental goals and helping them share their knowledge. Our wetland group numbers ebb and flow like the river levels but we continue to encourage volunteers to participate in the quarterly monitoring.

Community engagement is

a high priority for RWL and we continue to seek and share opportunities for volunteers to value add to their knowledge through training and workshops.

Although the amount of on-ground works we have delivered is not as high as previous years, we continue to work closely with existing partners including local government, other community groups and organisations. Of course, the delivery of any of our projects would not be possible without the assistance of our volunteers and we sincerely thank them for their ongoing support.

I would also like to thank the RWL committee for the time and effort they have invested over the past year, not only on the RWL committee but also with the community and volunteer groups they are involved with. A special thanks goes to Nicole whose assistance has again been invaluable and very much appreciated.



RWL staff and committee from left Nicole Hahn (Admin), Karen Bishop (Project Officer), Renee Thompson, Roger Schmitke (Vice Chair), Elise Byrne, Frances Simes, Terry Byrne INSET Kym Webber (Chairman) MISSING Jeany Winter, Brenton Schmitt, Dawn Horton, David Peake



Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something

FREE Membership

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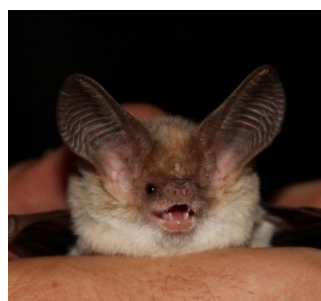
The new FrogSpotter app was launched in May and is available on both iOS and Android.



FrogSpotter

Story page 3

Bat Nights



RWL hosted a community Bat Night where those attending were given the opportunity to learn more about the 15 species of micro-bat that live right here in the Riverland.



Cat tracker

Story page 3

Breaking News..

Riverland West Landcare is now endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).

This allows non-profit organisations such as ours to receive income deductible gifts and deductible contributions.

It also opens up the field for sourcing funding as we are now able to apply to philanthropic trusts and foundations.



Government of South Australia
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin
Natural Resources Management Board





In December, the River Murray Youth Council (RMYC) held their forum at Maize Island conservation park.

Here they learnt about the local history, known cultural sites, the rare flax lily *Dianella porracea* and the damage 4WD vehicles are creating by driving off road.

A decision was made to focus the 2016 RMYC forums entirely at Maize Island.

A planning session ensued with the students compiling a list of actions and priorities that they felt they could manage.

The students decided their first task was working on addressing issues such as better signage for the park and mapping roads which can be blocked off to restrict 4WD access.

At the end of each forum, students are asked

to reflect on their day, and one of the questions asked at the end of Forum #1 was ‘what do you feel you achieved today?’

Their responses included comments such as ‘we started working towards solutions for it’s problems’ and ‘we are helping decide what needs to be done about unauthorised tracks’.

That’s a big thumbs up from us!



RMYC members brainstorming and planning for the 2016 Maize Island Conservation park program. One of the canoe trees at Maize Island to be protected.



Project Officer Karen Bishop with keen gardener Eleanor at the Waikerie Children’s Centre

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGE SPREADS KIDS TEACHING KIDS

In May, the Waikerie Primary School Youth Environment Team (YET) spent the morning at the Waikerie Children’s Centre (WCC) working with the kindy kids to plant up eight raised garden beds.

This is a great example of peer teaching with the YET students

taking on the task of sharing their enthusiasm of being outdoors and connecting with nature.

The vegetables and herbs, donated by RWL, were chosen so they could be used in the kitchen at the Children’s Centre.



YET teacher Jeany Winter supervising the planting of herbs

Also in May, the Ramco Primary Environment Group (REG) were involved with the planning, design and plant selection for the front garden at the school.

After visiting the home of Darren Schmitke, the students came away with some great ideas of what

native plants they could use in the front garden at school.

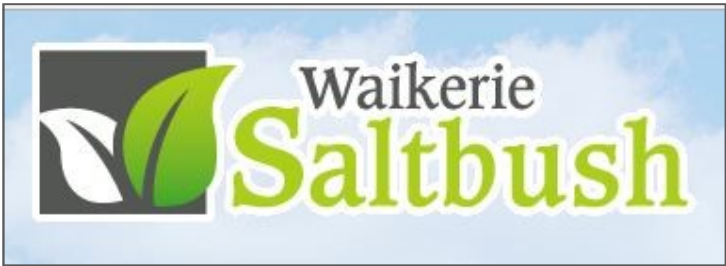
Students provided a list of native species that they wanted to use including Eremophila, Westringia, Pimelea, Dianella and Correa. RWL were able to source these plants locally and donated them to the school.

The hedge of Old Man Saltbush was very generously donated by Waikerie Saltbush, a strong supporter of our school projects.

REG members then took on the task of teaching smaller groups of younger classes what species were being used and how to plant the tubestock correctly.



REG members show the younger classes where and how to plant the hedge of Old Man Saltbush



Citizen Science.. What is it and how can you be involved?

Well, it’s nothing new and most of us have been involved in one way or another whether we are aware of it or not! It’s when professional researchers engage the public to collect or analyse data within a cooperative framework. So if you have ever been involved with wetland monitoring, flora or fauna surveys, or even tracking projects—you are a Citizen Scientist!

FrogSpotter is here!



Reggie talking to community members about how to use the new FrogSpotter app

FrogWatch SA, have developed a new app which allows anyone with a ‘smart’ device to gather information about their local frog species.

To help launch this great new tool, RWL held a FrogWatch information night to coincide with National Threatened Species Day and invited local

community members to attend.

Presenter, Regina Durbridge from Goolwa to Wellington LAP, brought along her collection of live frogs for everyone to see first hand, while she spoke about their individual characteristics.

The FrogSpotter app allows you to take part in a citizen science project that records the frog calls and is then submitted to FrogWatch SA for analysis.

The data collected will help understand the health and distribution of our local frog species.

For more information, visit the FrogWatch SA website at www.frogwatchsa.com.au

Discovery Circle Cat Tracker

In April, Waikerie Primary School were invited to participate in the Cat Tracker project led by Dr Phillip Roetman from the Discovery Circle, UniSA’s Citizen Science initiative. This project was developed to track the movements of domestic cats using a GPS.

RWL were able to assist by providing “Joey” to become the test subject. After completing an online survey, a GPS tracker was sent out and Joey wore it for six consecutive days. At the end of this, the tracker was sent back to the University for analysis.

The results came back and it appears that Joey did not travel too far from his home base which is interesting.



Joey was fitted with a GPS unit to track his wanderings over a period of six days.



Wetlands and Floodplains teaming with life



Photo supplied by Callie Nickolai

Quarterly monitoring events continue at our five managed wetlands. Although the number of community volunteers has declined in the last couple of years, we still have a few enthusiasts that join us each time.

In September 2015 large numbers of black swans, pelicans and ducks , including over 500 Pink-eared ducks (pictured at left) and 700 Grey Teals were recorded during a bird survey at Ramco and Hart lagoon.



RWL : Conservation and Community Engagement 2015-16

SA REGENT PARROT RECOVERY TEAM

RESOURCE DOCUMENT TO 2015



Report to the South Australian Regent Parrot Recovery Team, May 2016
Luke Ireland and Ellen Ryan-Colton
Photo credits: Clockwise from top-left Terry Minge, Ellen Ryan-Colton, Helga Kieskamp, Ellen Ryan-Colton

Regent Parrots still high on the agenda

In South Australia, the eastern Regent Parrot has been studied since the 1980s and considerable recovery efforts have occurred since the late 2000s under the guidance of the South Australian Regent Parrot Recovery Team.

This recovery program has relied heavily on community volunteer hours resulting in a number of actions and projects being undertaken with vast amounts of data being collected.

To date, this data has not been collated into a formal documented resource which has become a high

priority for the Regent Parrot Recovery Team (RPRT).

This project funded a contractor to collect and analyse all of the related information and produce the *SA Regent Parrot Recovery Team Resource Document*.

It will not only ensure the security of the information, but will validate the work contributed by volunteers which has equated to in excess of ten thousand hours over this period. This living document will also drive future decision making on the conservation of the species and the continued engagement of volunteers.

Innovation Trail 2015

The aim of this project was for Riverland Landcare/LAPs to work collaboratively in partnership with Sustainable Farming NR SAMDB, to develop a program for farmers to showcase their properties and network with other landholders.

This project was to initially build on Berri Barmera Landcare's funded project which focused on landholders who chose to accept the

Exit Grant offered by the Federal Government.

The inaugural 'Innovation Trail' was held over a week in October with free farm site visits on offer around the Riverland. A long lunch was held at the Field Day site in Barmera, where guest speakers from a variety of industries, shared their stories.

The day provided a fantastic opportunity for networking and discovering just what is innovative and available in the Riverland.

We look forward to developing and delivering a second Innovation Trail in 2016-17.



"Just a formal note to congratulate your team on the innovation trail. It is a great initiative showcasing some of the positive things in the district. This is the news we need to get growers thinking about."

Gavin McMahon
Chief Exec Officer
Central Irrigation Trust

E-Watering Events



In 2015, seven wetlands within the Riverland West Landcare area were identified for watering in spring/summer and autumn of 2015-16.

All sites required water to be delivered via pumping which was carried out by the Millewa Pumping Company from Lake Cullulleraine in Victoria.

Carpet python sightings

RWL were very excited to receive two separate phone calls regarding sightings of the rare Carpet Python *Morelia spilota*. The Carpet Python usually favours hollows in large River Red Gums and crevices in the cliffs so it was a treat to see them out sunning themselves.



World Environment Day



Held each year on June 5, RWL hosted a community event to raise awareness of the natural environment.

Visitors were encouraged to share their ideas for what we could do as a Landcare organisation to help improve Hart lagoon so more people can enjoy this unique community asset.



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Once you have read it, please consider turning it into a plant pot for your garden



For instructions you can visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sW8mD-APX78>