

Activity Update August 2019

Meldanda;

1. Managed volunteers and administrations for Meldanda. Informed Cambrai PS of the monthly bookings.
2. Irene has been working on a grant application to upgrade the facilities at the back shed.
3. Rang the Cambrai CFS to discuss the burning of the rubbish to see if they can support the event.
4. We have been busy cleaning up the back shed to make it suitable for workshops, meetings and other events. We have made several trips to the dump and Chris O'Keefe has taken some of the gear back to the school.
5. Had a new portable toilet delivered to use at the shed. This was purchased through an FRRR grant.
6. Irene applied for a grant to hopefully purchase some gravel to put near the BBQ area and recreation hall to reduce sand/dirt drift.
7. Mid Murray Council kindly trimmed the trees that lead down to the back shed to make it safer, they also dropped off some mulch.
8. Ordered safety signs for Meldanda to have speed only 10km where people are walking.
9. Ordered equipment and materials to aid seed collection and storage, which is through a small grant we received.
10. Don Lester came to change the card on the bat detector.
11. Nuriootpa Scouts camped at Meldanda.



Figure 1 and 2 shed up the back of Meldanda before and after rubbish removal

12. We had 4 people camp at Meldanda and had the following comments;

'Thanks for a great weekend Aimee, It was perfect... got to the site around 330... drove to Sedan to go to the IGA The camp was perfect; didn't use the showers, but they are awesome - toilets were fantastic also, and even had toilet paper...We went to check out the stars a few times.... it certainly was dark - we all said we want to come back again and that we will...'

13. Met onsite with Kirsty Morgan from the council to discuss plans for shed up the back of Meldanda to see if it required development approval.

14. Met on site with Michelle Holloway to discuss a few ideas and seek approval. The school will spread some mulch around the spear grasses they planted.

15. Volunteers were busy at Meldanda, we had some planting in the front bush garden and they planted out a new plant community – *Eucalyptus odorata* – Peppermint box, new plants near the recreation hall garden, all of them put onto drippers. Other volunteers came out and put up all the bat boxes, up near the back shed, they also repaired some boxes on bat island.

Nursery;

16. Have still been busy at the nursery with plant sales and we held a winter propagation workshop to sow native pine, Christmas bush and native apricots.

17. Had a pallet load of soil delivered to the Cambrai council depot and the council kindly brought it around to the nursery for us. We were able to purchase this thanks to a small volunteer grant.

18. Supported National Tree Day with Keyneton Primary School.

19. Volunteers Sharon and Sheralee divided and potted some Kangaroo grass to see if it takes.

20. Donated some plants to volunteers from Nildottie who want to plant some trees around the Bakara Cemetery.



Figure 3 potting on kangaroo grass



Figure 4 winter propagation working bee

Committee;

21. Kept committee informed of relevant correspondence, workshops, and other information. Managed the office, volunteers, staff, and all necessary administrations including monthly accounts, reports. Held our monthly meeting at Rose Laucke's property near the Marne Valley CP and celebrated her 80th birthday.
22. Meeting with treasurer Lyn Carmichael to work through end of financial year accounts processing in preparation for audit.
23. Attended the LASA AGM in Adelaide.
24. Confirmed acceptance to present at the Landcare Conference and booked some accommodation.
25. Meeting with Kitty Schiansky to support their new group with a small volunteer grant.
26. Acquitted several of the small volunteer grants.

Murray Darling MEGA Microbat Project

27. Prepared a summary report of the 2-year project we were involved with.
28. Supported MEGA Microbat Mozzie event in Murray Bridge. There were about 50 people who attended as part of National Science Week. The results of the project were presented, we now have 3000 new bat records and found some species associations with vegetation types.
29. We have had a request from Victoria CMA to support their project with bat identification.

Increasing productivity of Irongrass grasslands

30. Drew up a services agreement for an environmental consultant to assist me with the Poonthie Ruwe monitoring for 3 days during the first week of September.
31. Weighed and labelled native grass seed with volunteer Sharon and sent off spreadsheet. Seed is stored at Meldanda.

INTG Trials (separate contract)

32. Attended planning day at Mt Barker for the INTG trials.
33. Received contract for services to support planning, design, implementation and monitoring of INTG field trials for 3 years.
34. Meeting with Nicola Barnes on 29th at Meldanda to discuss the trials.

Western Pygmy Possums in the Mid Murray/Murray Mallee region

35. Prepared documents for possum workshop at Mantung, will keep a record of where the boxes are installed for monitoring at a later stage.
36. We held our first western pygmy possum workshop at Mantung CP, this is a joint project with Murray Mallee LAP and the SA Museum. We had 22 people attend on the day and made 30 possum boxes. The boxes were prepared for easy assembling by volunteers Don Lester and Dennis Matthews. All the boxes were taken and will be installed on properties throughout the region. The location of the boxes will be provided to our group and we will survey them possibly next year. Rowena and Alex

cooked up a great BBQ lunch and Steve Donnellan from the museum spoke about their interest in genetic diversity, population structure and climate change.



Figure 5,6,7 Pygmy Possum Workshop at Mantung CP

Mid Murray Dark Sky Reserve

37. Local resident from Cambrai was having some visitors from the UK and requested the use of Meldanda to sit and gaze at the stars.
38. Meeting with Chris Tugwell, Deb Alexander, Julie Bates, Jake McVicar, Aimee Linke and Ben Scales to discuss pending approval of Dark Sky Reserve application. We should hear back from the IDA Committee during the week of the 23rd – 27th of September when they meet.
39. Sent a list of potential sites that could be included in a Dark Sky Trail to Julie Bates.
40. Contacted designer to draft up some potential logo ideas for the reserve.
41. Andrew Cool camped at Meldanda with students from Christians Brothers College to view the night sky. It was a Thursday night and football practice must have been on at the Cambrai sportsground as the lights were captured on some of the images taken that night at Meldanda. Maybe the next public light demonstration site can be at the oval.

Spiny Daisy Project

42. Attended a recovery team meeting in Hart (north of Clare), carpooled with Amelia Hurren from Trees for Life.
43. Took our seedlings up to show how they have grown, plus the new seedling that germinated from our trials. We will be doing more seeding trials in Spring. We will also grow some extra Telowie clones for a potential translocation site at Overland Corner.
44. We had a look at Magpie Creek, Kevin Jaeschke's property, with the project team, spiny daisy was planted out along the creek and has established itself well.
45. The next meeting is planned for Overland Corner in March next year, where the spiny daisy was discovered during a Burke and Wills expedition.



Figure 8 Recovery Team at Magpie Creek

Mid Murray Council;

46. Meeting with Russel Pilbeam and Jake McVicar regarding the Blanchetown Plan. It is proposed to make amendments by the end of October to have a report prepared by December MMC Committee meeting.
47. Ordered the interpretive signs for the Murray Darling Carpet Python which will be installed at Towitta Springs and Mannum Waterfalls. This was made possible through an MMC community grant.